AN ATTACHMENT THEORETICAL APPROACH TO WOMEN'S FAITH DEVELOPMENT: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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A thesis submitted to

The University of Birmingham

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

School of Education

The University of Birmingham

October 2007

ABSTRACT

This study is an exploration of the experience of faith from a psychodynamic perspective. The main purpose of this study is to provide a coherent and convincing account of the roots and characteristics of Christian women's faith experience which will complement and, in some respects correct, existing accounts. Attachment theory is mainly employed as a conceptual framework for the research and the study pursues attachment as an important key factor for faith development. Examining the patterns of God-attachment in relation to human attachments, this study employs a qualitative methodological approach, focusing analysis on linguistic meanings, and using open-ended and unforced autobiographical narrative in-depth interviews with a group of 10 Korean Christian women. The main findings indicate what the key characteristics in women's faithing are: the language, means and context with or in which women practice their faith; the relational and affective understanding of faith within the women's accounts and the interaction of attachment issues in their experience of faith. Three major patterns are identified in which the women's faithing strategies and their representations of self and God are presented: these are Distance/Avoidance, Anxiety/Ambivalence and Security/Interdependence. Theoretical and practical implications of the findings are identified for Christian education, pastoral care and counselling for women.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

abundant experience not only provided crucial materials for my study but also broadened my life experience, it was as if I had lived another 10 lives, and I dedicate this study to them.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study emerges out of interdisciplinary interests in women's faith development and my own experience and commitment as a Christian woman. It offers a psychodynamic understanding of women's faith experience, focusing particularly on the relational and affective dimensions of faith, and exploring the relationship between human attachment and God attachment. This introductory chapter outlines the motivation for the study, its context and aims; sets out to clarify and justify the need for the research, and draws the nature of the study and its key characteristics. The chapter ends with an overview of the thesis.

1.2 The motivation of the study

The study is developed from my own personal interest and commitment as a Korean Christian woman. My faith is rooted in a devoted Christian family and was nurtured by hearing my grandmother and my mother's faith stories and by following their journeys, as a result of which I recently became more aware of women's ways of faithing. My faith, like other Korean Christian women's, is influenced by the strong conservative Christianity which is prevalent in Korea and which has been shaped by mixing with the hierarchical Confucian tradition. Women's struggles and faith conflicts have been neglected and rarely properly recognised in the church, even though women's faith has contributed in many ways to the church tradition.

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Furthermore, there is a large and persistent gap between the growing academic theories about faith development and the variety of women's real life experiences. There has been little change in the expectations and perceptions of women's struggles, conflicts and values at the grass roots level in relation to spirituality and faith development, and these concerns have been little heard or valued by both academics and the public. Since the 1960s, feminist theories and literature in women's spirituality and faith development have flourished and accumulated in depth and variety. In particular, Asian women's spirituality introduced by Hyun Kyung Chung (1990) motivated me at the beginning of the study, although I am aware that there are contentious issues in her theology; the comprehensive work on women's faith development carried out by British feminist educator and author, Nicola Slee (1999, 2004), has become a model for me in every aspect and level of this study.

The motivation for becoming engaged in a psychoanalytic study of this nature arises from my constant questions about the relationship between issues of faith, human character and life experiences. I have met many devoted ordinary Christian women both inside and outside the church, and have also learnt much from the differences between these women. Although they are devoted Christians and have played a significant role in the Christian community, I have seen their struggles, hurts, wounds, stagnation, anxiety and ambivalence, as well as their security and maturity in faith, all of which are closely related to their characters and life issues. Through these observations I became more aware of the variety of human experience and practice in faith development. In the last few decades, psychological and psychoanalytical studies have also become firmly established in the fields of faith experience. Among many studies, some academics and their literature particularly promoted and inspired my study: James Fowler (1981), Anna-Maria Rizzuto (1979), Chana Ulman (1989) and

Lee Kirkpatrick (1992, 1994 and 1995). In particular, Kirkpatrick's work has led me to explore the depth and scope of attachment theory, originally developed by British psychiatrist John Bowlby. I was struck by the potentiality that attachment theory could offer an interpretative tool for women's faith development, by highlighting the significance of early attachment experience in all aspects of our life and faith. This has challenged and also inspired me in every level of this study. My study, which explores and interprets women's faith experience in terms of ordinary Korean Christian women's experience, follows in the footsteps of these researchers, in the hope that my study will also make a contribution to this field. In particular, a key underlying motivation throughout this study has been to bring to greater visibility Asian and specifically Korean women's faith lives and to analyse them in terms sympathetic to their own context at the same time as using theoretical insights from other, mostly western, studies.

1.3 The background context of the study

This study is an exploration of women's faith experience from a psychodynamic perspective. The experience of faith, as we will explore throughout this thesis, has commonality and particularity. Many theories, such as Fowler (1981) etc, believe that there are common phenomena in the faith experience that all human beings share (see chapter 3) while we cannot deny that there are also varieties in the phenomena which are influenced by the context in which the individual's faith is woven. That is, various features can be exposed according to each traditional cultural form. A certain group of people share the particular and distinctive way of life including ideas, values and meanings, and practice in mores, customs and in patterns of life that are structured by the group. In fact, it is important to acknowledge how these structures

are experienced, understood and interpreted. As I chose to interview Korean Christian women and to understand and interpret their grass roots experience, it is important to describe briefly the religious, social and cultural context in which the women live and its impact on women's ways of faithing although this cultural context will come up at various points throughout this thesis. In particular, it is necessary for the reader to understand the ways in which Confucianism has impacted upon, and helped to shape, the context of Christian culture and practice in Korea – in both positive and negative ways.

In Korea over several centuries, a number of religious traditions have experienced varying fortunes of prominence and decline, influenced by wide-ranging cultural features. Religious and cultural values have been intermingled many times, in many different ways. Korea is one of the countries where people and their lives are very much influenced by the thoughts of the sages. A relentless quest for the Beyond, for the Ultimate, for the Divine characterises the very fabric of the Korean psyche.

Buddhism was the national religion until 14th century and since then Confucianism has been the prevailing norm in the society as an educational philosophy, ruling ideology and familial and national religion. With the richness of this existing religious tradition in place, when Christianity was first introduced to Korea, the Korean people adopted it alongside the existing Confucian teaching and incorporated the new religion into the framework of the old. According to statistics, in 1984, 91.7% of Koreans, including 76.4% of Protestant Christians, recognised themselves as 'Confucianised' while only 2 % of Koreans described themselves as Confucians[1]. Furthermore, Hee-sung Keel asserts that all Koreans "follow Confucian norms of behaviour and share Confucian moral values in their way of life and thinking" regardless of their religions (Keel, 1993, p. 47).

Confucianism, in fact, is very tolerant of other religions and cultures as it pursues high morality, harmonising life and enthusiasm in learning. Although it has influenced the society in some good ways, like other religions in practice, it has also a shadow side. As Confucian teaching is based on patriarchal and hierarchical social order between men and women and elders and youths, for a long time Korean women have been dominated by the social norm and suppressed their struggles to find their dignity and self-esteem. In practice, all sorts of discrimination against women distorted the image of humanity. Women were born into families who wanted a son, and grew up being poorly fed, less educated, overworked and were given less opportunity to develop their ability in the society. An ideal woman was passive, quiet, and chaste. They were expected to be obedient daughters-in-law, devoted wives, entrenched in the cultural values. A women was largely defined by her roles as a daughter who is dependent on her father, as a wife dependent on her husband, and as a widow dependent on her son. Their life cycle was continuously dependent on the males in the family. Priority has always been given to boys and men within Confucian culture. Ordinary women began to benefit from formal primary education only half a century ago and they were rarely able to go higher education as they needed to support their families and brothers' study financially. The above situation is far better now but the basic notions, expectations and norms still exist in the contemporary Korean society. Women still cannot even participate in the ancestral worship which is the most important Confucian ritual although all the preparations for the worship table, such as making food and cleaning dishes which are special for the use, are a woman's job. A girl's name cannot be recorded in a genealogical table, where only boys and males' names are listed, even if she is the first born. Thus, the level of influence by Confucianism in the family can be an important key to

understanding of the pattern of a woman's thoughts, feeling and behaviour. For example, a woman, who has experienced and internalised this gender discrimination in her attachment relationships with parents who have been defined or strongly influenced by this Confucian heritage, might have low self-esteem and show an insecure pattern of life, while a woman who was loved and tolerated particularly by her father might have confidence and competence to challenge the patriarchal and hierarchical society.

When Christianity was first introduced to Korea, in fact, it was perceived as a religion for women in which they could have some taste of their value as human beings created in God's image and equal to men, as it provided an opportunity for women to worship in the church and to receive formal education in the mission-based schools. However, as we have mentioned, the Korean Christian community has also been shaped and coloured by the Confucian heritage. It is very much influenced by Confucian thought and way of life. Although the communal life in the church played an important role for the Korean Christian women's lives in faith as they could help each other with personal and familial matters within the community, it cannot be denied that women have also experienced male dominance in the church system. A woman cannot participate as a leader of the church or the worship service as a woman is rarely allowed to become a minister or an elder in Korea, particularly no woman is able to become a minister or an elder in the conservative denominations. Women's ways of knowing, such as intuitive, inductive, bodily, relational and affective knowing, are undervalued in the church so that women become silent, talk less about their own experience or disguise their truth. Some women are shocked by their negative self-image based on centuries of the internalisation of the ideologies of patriarchy and gender hierarchy which is embedded not only in the family but also in

the church system. Most women don't even notice their internalised oppression since they are still struggling with their anxiety, agony, frustration and low self-esteem to overcome this mixed religio-cultural heritage.

Korean Christian women's desire for intimacy and their struggles to gain security in life and faith are based on their early experience with their parents in the family system and also their upbringing and experience in a church community and society which are influenced by this Confucian tradition. It cannot be denied that there are also differences among Korean Christian women's ways of faithing from a psychodynamic view point. In fact, as we will explore throughout this thesis, early experience with their parents is a key marker in the women's faith attachment and their attachment patterns. Although I do not attempt to represent all Korean Christian women's lives and faith experiences, it is important to realise the context in which the Korean Christian women as a group have common ground. Without understanding this, we cannot either truly understand them or interpret their ways of faithing.

1.4 The aims of the study

The main purpose of my study is to seek a way to describe women's manner of faith and spiritual development which will illuminate ordinary Korean women's faith. In detail, I hope to provide a coherent and convincing account of the roots and characteristics of women's faith experience which will complement and, in some respects correct, existing accounts. To do this, I have chosen not to review the considerable amount of work which has been produced by both feminist academics and attachment theorists. I will investigate, however, whether there are significant connections between attachment and women, and explore women's faith development from an attachment perspective. This is the quest for an integral understanding of

women's experience of faith in the midst of the experience of suffering, isolation, oppression, anxiety and ambivalence, as they search for secure relationships.

This study has two main aims: first, to evolve an attachment-theoretical approach and method for the study of women's religious attachment, and second, to examine patterns of women's religious attachments in a group of Korean Christian women. Regarding these two aims, three main research questions are developed.

a. Is there a relationship between human attachment and God attachment? Does the internal working model of attachment impact on God attachment as well as working on other attachment relationships?

b. What factors have impact on a woman's God attachment? Are there any differences between women's God attachment? What makes them different? Are there any discernable patterns in women's God attachment as well as in other attachment relationships?

c. Do working models of attachment guide the experience of God attachment or are working models influenced by the God attachment experience?

Guided by the main research questions, my study looks for the similarities and differences between and within the women's representational accounts, with particular attention to their language use, relational and affective conflicts and their ways of responding to these issues, hoping to see any patterns. These aims and questions will guide and lead to an appropriate methodology and will be used repeatedly in the processes of analysis.

1.5 The nature of the study

The above aims and three related research questions require two levels of study. One is related to theoretical issues and the other is related to practical issues. The former is concerned with conceptualising the study and the latter is concerned to develop an appropriate methodology. These are the core issues of the research which require an **interdisciplinary approach** including theology, social science, psychology and feminist studies. Employing such an interdisciplinary approach, the study provides an understanding of women's relational and affective dimensions of faith which is complementary to the cognitive-oriented and androcentric theories.

In this study, since I am searching for phenomena of religious attachments and their relationship with human attachments, this is an **attachment-related phenomenological study** of religion and religious experiences. Therefore, attachment theory and its development in adult attachment and attachment-related religious phenomena in the women's narrative discourse are explored. I focus particularly on women's attachments and their development, so feminist studies and their methodological principles are also required. That is, the study is grounded in a key epistemological principle that seeks to generate new knowledge in women's experience[2]. The research setting is naturally grounded in Christian women's real stories of life and faith, listening to what is their understanding of faith and how they relate and respond to self, others and God.

The study also follows the principles of **qualitative** studies. The study does not pursue quantity in a large number of interviews with women so that the outcome may represent the whole population of women or Korean women, but rather pursues quality in the depth of the women's accounts so that the findings may demonstrate patterns between and within the women's accounts. That is, the study is based on

data from 10 interviews only, but the auto-biographical narrative in-depth interview that is employed in the research method is used to look for the richness and depth of the participants' accounts. I am aware that there is a great variety of approach in the field of qualitative studies, but this study shares the characteristics of qualitative research as it has chosen inductive and reflective processes in data collecting and analysis, and it deals with words as data rather than numerical data.

Acknowledging some limitations of the study reinforces the uniqueness of the study and it also clarifies the nature of the study. First, the participants who I interviewed are all Christians, Korean women and well educated. The outcome would have been different, if the participants were differently chosen. This homogeneous group of 10 women, however, enables the researcher to do a qualitative study. Second, in the whole process of the interviews, the Korean language was used for the reason that most women who were interviewed were not sufficiently fluent to express their faith stories in depth other than in Korean. Making the transcripts in Korean was invaluable because some important meanings and nuances which were embedded in the language could have been lost during the translation process, although analyses were made in English as far as possible so that all literal and cultural meanings could be interpreted. However, this also became a valuable benefit for the interviewees to express themselves in their mother tongue and for the interviewer to grasp and convey the hidden meanings from their accounts. In fact, this practice is a significant feature of an in-depth study in a particular context as an experimental innovation. Third, in connection with the first and second limitation, the research has an intention of looking at the relationship between women's nature and religious practice in general. As I applied the psychoanalytic term "attachment" to religious experience, especially in this particular context, it cannot be denied that this is a Korean Christian practice.

That is, Buddhists, Westerners or other denominations of Christianity can argue about the use of the term and the result of the research although I am convinced that the findings and applications can also contribute to other contexts. Fourth, the study is not a comparative study of men and women, or of Western women and Eastern women, but it is a study about women's religious attachment from the perspective of psychology of religion. With a small sample, the study is able to access the women's inner world and the characteristics of their religious feelings, attitudes and behaviour. That is, the study is a **phenomenological** and **hermeneutic interpretation** of **women's faith experience**. As such, it is the first in-depth empirical study of Korean Christian women's faith attachments, to my knowledge.

1.6 An overview of the study

The thesis consists of three main parts: the first four chapters are the groundwork chapters, the following four chapters are the discovery chapters and the final chapter is an implication chapter. The present chapter has laid down a foundation for the thesis in describing the motivations and the background context and in elucidating the aims and the characteristics of the study. Chapter two outlines women's spiritual development in the light of recent insights into attachment theory. Attachment theory in general and the development of attachments throughout the life span are reviewed and discussed in the light of feminist views on attachment. This provides a rich theoretical perspective for understanding women's faith development and clarification of the key word 'attachment' in my thesis. Chapter three argues the necessity of the relational and affective dimensions of faith by critiquing cognitive-oriented faith development theory and examines more closely human experiences of faith and its dynamics from an attachment perspective. This chapter is a conceptualising chapter

that discusses God as an attachment figure and a person's faith system as an attachment system, which offers a theoretical basis for my research. Chapter four discusses the methodological issues raised by both attachment theoretical research and feminist research and builds up an appropriate research method for my research. It outlines the principles of the research and describes details of the research design. Chapters five to eight present the main findings of the research. Chapter five focuses on the key characteristics of women's faithing; the language, means and context with or in which women practice their faith, their understanding of faith, and the relational and affective dimensions within the women's accounts, followed by broad findings of the interaction of attachment issues in the experience of faith. Chapters six to eight are structured around three key patterns of God attachment: Distance/Avoidance, Anxiety/Ambivalence, Security/Interdependence, and each of these chapters has a similar format. Each chapter first discusses particular issues relating to the particular attachment type, drawing on relevant literature. This is followed by an account of the women's attachments, including their goals and strategies, their faith discourse styles and unique representations of self and God within the women's attachment narratives. Then each chapter ends with a summary of key findings in each pattern. Chapters six to eight describe in detail patterns in the women's ways of relating to God. Particular themes and characteristics that recur in the women's accounts of faith and life are presented in the three chapters accordingly. These patterns are deeply rooted in their attachment system that developed in their early attachment relationships with their parents, like other attachment relationships. These patterns are not sequential developmental stages, but inform the attachment experiences that the women were and are in and the characteristics of their differing responses to attachment relationships. In these chapters, attachment is suggested as a significant way of

women's meaning-making and responding to self, others and God. The representations of self and God are particularly described as important markers to consider when we understand women's faith, since the representations reflect the women's inner world and their relational and affective capacity. The final chapter draws conclusions about the implications of the findings for both theory and practice. It authenticates some contributions of my findings with reference to attachment theory, faith development theories and methodologies for researching women and suggests some implications of my findings for educational and pastoral practice for women in general and also particularly for insecure women.

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

AND ATTACHMENT THEORY

2.1 Introduction

My aim in this chapter is to provide a theoretical basis for new research and to show some examples of the way in which attachment theory might be relevant to understanding the attachment characteristics in women's spiritual development and their experience of faith. This may help to derive a complementary understanding and provide a theoretical basis for my research. I do not deal in detail with huge and complex works on attachment theory. I will, however, look for what I believe to be significant insights into women's spirituality and faith experience. I will argue that attachment theory, as developed by John Bowlby and extended and refined by other researchers, offers a relevant theoretical perspective. It is appropriate first to explore issues of women's spiritual development and their experience of faith, particularly focusing on attachment issues. Secondly, I will consider women's attachment characteristics using a psychodynamic approach as proposed by women researchers. Thirdly, I will explore the nature and functions of attachment theory in general which Bowlby and his followers have proposed, to see if it gives a potential and complementary basis for research into women's experience of faith.

2.2 Women's experience in spiritual development

When we consider spirituality and faith experience, the terms spirituality and faith are no longer exclusively religious or Christian. The terms are very ambiguous in their meanings and used with broader concepts; they are rather common human phenomena. From this point of view, spirituality is regarded as a capacity of human beings, which can be grown and developed, and faith is regarded as a set of belief behaviour systems. In fact, however, as we shall see, spirituality and faith, whether Christian or not, tend to be deeply religious, although Christian spirituality and faith – which is more personalised and relationally oriented than other religious spiritualities and faiths, particularly in contrast to Buddhism, which is influential in the Korean context – will be mainly explored throughout this thesis. Since the term 'spirituality' is used much broader than 'faith' in the context of religious experience, it is better to start with a broad sketch of women's spiritual development, which will draw attention to a discussion of women's attachment issues in psychodynamic theories and attachment theory.

In spiritual development most attention is given to life-changing experiences. Spirituality refers to "the totality of human life energised by an inner drive for self-transcendence, that is, for moving beyond self-maintenance to reach out in love, in free commitment to seek truth and goodness" (Conn, 1996, p. 9). Sandra Schneiders (1996, pp. 41-43) delineates characteristics of feminist spirituality. First, feminist spirituality is both rooted in and oriented toward women's experience. Second, it is deeply concerned with the reintegration of all that has been dichotomized by patriarchal religion. Third, it is related to the emphasis on the goodness and holiness of the body. Fourth, emphasising ritual, it rejects cerebral, rationalistic and abstract approaches to religious participation. Fifth and most importantly, it involves

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commitment to the intimate and intrinsic relationship between personal growth and transformation and the politics of social justice. Thus, feminist spirituality is involved in every area that is subject to 'interconnectedness'. It pursues both the rational and the affective, and is engaged in a dialogue of cooperation rather than competition.

Women as well as men obviously seek and find experience. Yet the meaning of experience has been different for men and women reflecting both differences in personality structure and the constraints of gendered life opportunities (Francis and Wilcox, 1998, p. 467). The experiences women have are also different from women to women and culture to culture. Among various models for women's spirituality and faith development, the 'dialectical' developmental model ('dialectical' implies here a model that is for the women who are not Western, white and middle class) has potential to interpret women's oppressed experiences by power and domination in the gender-biased culture (Slee, 2004, pp. 25-27).

Since my research is to do with Korean Christian women, I assume that their experience has a common ground and also has differences from the experience of Western women. In the Asian feminist theologians' workshop report (1978), Asian women's spirituality is described as "faith experience based on convictions and beliefs which motivate our thought processes and behaviour patterns in our relationships to God and neighbour" (p. 1 cited in Chung, 1990). It continues to say:

> Spirituality is the integral wholeness of a person concretising his/her faith through their daily life experience. Asian women's spirituality is the awakening of the Asian woman's soul to her concrete historical reality – poverty, oppression and suffering. It is a response and commitment of a soul infused by the spirit, to the challenge for human dignity and freedom, and a new life of love (ibid.).

From the above description, in fact, I found that this is not only a core statement of women's spirituality but also a rich explanation of women's attachment nature to seek integral relationships. For women, spirituality is a faith experience in their relationships with God and others. This statement by Asian feminist theologians emphasises the women's experience in concrete historical reality where human dignity has been challenged. This is their understanding of spirituality that is specifically 'Asian' and 'women' (Chung, 1990, p. 91).

Here, I would like to draw attention particularly to the formation of Asian women's spirituality briefly, introduced by Korean women theologian, Hyun Kyung Chung (1990). Chung explains Asian women's spiritual formation which blends into a spiral dance of three different rhythms: impasse – living death; choice for life – discovering true self; reaching out – building a community. First, it begins with the reality of impasse. This impasse is caused by their experience of exploitation, discrimination and sexual harassment and women feel 'stuck', and have a sense of separation, disconnection, isolation and rejection. In this situation, they "cry out and struggle in order to find a gate, which will lead them to the world of wholeness" (p. 87). Second, it is a journey of discovering true self by choosing life. To get out of the impasse situation, they begin to refuse to remain silent. When women begin to become aware of the 'false safety' given to them by a social system which keeps women in a socially inferior position, they start to discover their own identity and power. That is, they hope and have faith in the grace of God. This brings wonders and new creation that motivate their action and reflection. In the process of awakening, as they discover that they are created in God's image, they taste transformation from their development in self-knowledge, self-acceptance and self-esteem. Third, it is reaching out to others and building a community. Discovering self-esteem provides strength to reach out to

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other people who live under impasse. They can feel for others and come alongside for the needy one, and they work as if the self and the community are one.

Chung's rhythms of Asian women's spiritual formation are very closely related with Nicola Slee's (2004) findings in three patterns of women's faith development: 'alienation', 'awakening' and 'relationality' which will be looked at throughout this thesis. The important thing drawn from the above is an understanding of women's spirituality and faith experience. It is to value everyday experience embedded in their relationships to the self, others and God. In particular, it is noticeable that attachment and relationality are core issues for women's spirituality and faith experience.

2.3 Women's attachment and relationality from feminist psychodynamic viewpoints

With one voice, feminist psychologists indicate attachment and relationality as one of the most important and distinctive characteristics in women's nature and development (e.g., Miller, 1976; Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Jordan et al., 1991). The psychologists support the views of women as adapted to attachment and suggest that the processes of gender identification in early childhood produce a self which is autonomous in boys, but that in girls is experienced as connected to others. That is, girls and women establish their identity through attachment and relationality.

Jean Baker Miller (1976) suggests that women develop in a context where women constantly build attachments and affiliations with others. She condemns the context and frameworks built from a male perspective which have distorted and undervalued women's ways of developing.   She suggests that women's identity formation in attachment and relationality should be valued.

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On the basis of Miller's work, Nancy Chodorow investigates women's identity formation and describes the contexts where gender differences occur. She (1978) argues that the connected or relational self develops out of the universal experience of women's mothering. Males develop gender identity in households where mothers are present but fathers are largely absent. Boys therefore establish their gender identity by becoming 'not female'. Girls identify with their mothers, who are present and with whom they remain in relation. They never separate in the extreme ways that boys must. Chodorow (1989) suggests that women's experience comes from "deep within, both within our pasts and, relatedly, within the deepest structures of unconscious meaning and the most emotionally moving relationships that help constitute our daily lives" (p. 2).

Carol Gilligan's work (1982) on moral development shows girls and women with 'connected selves' working through moral choices in ways which are markedly different from the prevailing models developed among male subjects. She suggests that women have distinctive features in their moral thinking. That is, women's way of development is relational and contextual in terms of the ethics of care and justice. She calls attention to the reworking of male-biased developmental theories and suggests three phases of development in which women's experience is valued. According to Gilligan, the first phase pivots on care for oneself. A person cares for the self in order to ensure survival. A transition occurs when this first position is seen as egoistic. A concept of responsibility develops in a growing sequence in which caring for others is equated with what is good, but disequilibrium occurs if the woman neglects to give care to herself and to receive care. Caring is confused with self-sacrifice, which hurts and neglects the self of the caregiver. A transition occurs when this dilemma is recognized. In her third caring pattern, a new connection develops

between self and the other. Self-knowledge is essential for this perspective and leads to healthy relationships. It involves concern with the interrelationship between self and other, but condemnation for self-exploitation. Gilligan's three phases offer a developmental process in which self-other interplay occurs together with a transition from one phase to the next. Gilligan's framework (1982) about the complex interplay of self and other has become a stepping-stone for subsequent works by women researchers.

Miller's pioneering work, Chodorow's investigation and Gilligan's framework on women's identity formation and developmental issues are followed by the valuable works of Jordan and her colleague, in which many important aspects of women's development are discussed.   In their writings from the Stone Center, collected under the title, *Women's Growth in Connection* (Jordan et al., 1991), the authors have presented the self in women as self-in-relation. They consistently argue that this idea of women's experience and development has not been addressed by current psychoanalytic and developmental theories.   Jordan (1991) suggests empathic relationship as a rich model of women's development. Stiver (1991) argues that intimate and empathic relationships with parents provide much more significant implications for women's development than those of Oedipus complex proposed by Freudians. Giving great weight to women's quality of intersubjectivity in her definition of relationship, Surrey (1991) suggests a 'subject relations theory', which she distinguishes from 'object relations theory'. That is, "the 'object' based on the construction of the separate self, may not be experienced fully as a subject with his or her own comprehensive personal construction of continuous reality" (p. 61). In this regard, she thinks human relationships can be understood as "the ongoing, intrinsic inner awareness and responsiveness to the continuous existence of the other or others

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and the expectation of mutuality" (ibid.). She further insists that the intersubjective model of the self-in-relation will help a woman to form a new self-image derived from each new relationship and will lead to her being more mature in her emotional and relational life.

The key argument in feminist views on women's development is that the interpretation of women's attachment and relationality is different from men's. They argue that the differences are particularly visible around young adulthood and are less valued in androcentric developmental theories. Miller-Mclemore argues that androcentric theories beyond childhood "either simply do not include women or, if they do, fail to understand women as subjects, truncate expectations for women's development to complement male development, and generally give extremely limited space to the impact of bearing or raising children" (Treadway and Miller-McLemore, 2000, p. 182). That is, for women, issues of 'generativity', in Erickson's (1980, 1982) life cycle, arise at a much earlier stage when they face questions about their search for identity and intimacy, than during the stages which Erickson has proposed (Treadway and Miller-McLemore, 2000, ibid.).

In the same sense, women's distinctive characteristics and developmental passages are understood positively as different forms from men's. One of the distinctive features of women's development is that in women the passage through different developmental stages is not linear and sequential, as it is in men. The child psychiatrist Mary Lynn Dell (2000, p. 141) delineates the way in which a girl's life, death and perception of family and faith were affected not only by the course of her development, but by multiple spheres of development. This involved not only a linear timetable but multiple dimensions of living as a female. Presenting women's developmental passage in the form of a double helix, Stevenson-Moessner (2000) also

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suggests the uniqueness of women's development, with the striking feature of forming parallels throughout the life cycle.

Women academics point out that pregnancy, childbirth and parenting are the distinctive features in women's development (e.g., Belenky et al, 1986; Treadway and Miller-Mclemore, 2000). Many women identified childbirth as their most important learning experience, especially women who had been silenced by their particular life circumstances and by fear of external authority (cf., Belenky et al., 1986, p. 78). The responsibilities of parenting have the power to move such women out of silence and into a place of voice and mind (pp. 27, 35-36 and 142-143). That is, becoming a mother initiates a dramatic transformation in the way that a woman thinks and responds. Treadway and Miller-Mclemore (2000) also insist, on their article 'Two Views on Mothering', that from menarche to menopause, biological processes become passages unique to women. Treadway presents the view that in pregnancy a woman's identity is altered as she experiences time with another life inside her and later with another life to nurture (pp. 169-175). Miller-Mclemore explores the increasingly complex role which birthing and mothering play in women's development as forceful rites of passage (pp. 175-189).

Based on the above observation, in the psychodynamic views of feminists, women are seen as relationally oriented beings – 'the self-in-connection', 'the self-in-relation' or 'the self-in-attachment'. This does not mean that women are secondary beings, but that women characteristically establish the self in attachment and in relation. In women's development, it is important to emphasise women's ways of knowing and valuing and to define the concept of development as self-in-relationship and interdependence, rather than as separation and independence suggested by androcentric theories. Furthermore, it is also important to recognise women's

uniqueness in developmental phases, such as pregnancy and childbirth. As these views are focused on women's biological processes and claim universal validity, they lack the culturally embedded distinctiveness of 'other' women who are not middle class, white, well-educated and Western. However, feminist psychodynamic theorists reaffirm feminine values – such as care, affiliation, relationality and life-centrism – and propose them as alternative values for an over-competitive and dehumanised society.

This model of the self-in-relation-to-others has many ramifications for women's development, especially their spirituality and faith experience. For example, the formation of Asian women's spirituality also refers to feminist psychodynamic theories of women's development as we reviewed above. In particular, Gilligan's work on moral development which implies development of self-other interplay is closely related with Chung's Asian women's spirituality formation (Chung, 1990, pp. 87-89). Women feel secure when they find their true self, the self-in-relationship that can lead away from oppression or rejection. When they are secure, they can find a way to reach out to the community.

Above all, these views offer a complementary lens through which to see the relational and affective dimension of faith and spiritual development, alongside structural and cognitively-oriented developmental theories – which will be explored in more in depth with attachment perspective on the experience of faith in the next chapter. This brings to us focus on what attachment theory offers for the concept of 'attachment' and whether it is relevant for the characteristics of women's attachment.

2.4 Nature and functions of attachment

In general, the term 'attachment' can be broadly used for expressing our affection for family, work, hobby, land, one's home country, even to a very old possession. However, in psychoanalysis and social psychology, 'attachment' is regarded as one of the internalised emotions towards significant others which produce distinctive behaviours. Simply, we can think of a baby's behaviours when it depends only on its mother, crying persistently for her, and refusing to be held by other people. It is very visible in infants of 6-18 months up to 24 months. This is attachment behaviour representing the child's tie or bond to the mother. In fact, there is a word in Korean which corresponds to attachment behaviour, called *natgarim* (being displeased with strangers). Thus, the term attachment that is discussed in this thesis is not a generic word for affection. It is also distinguished from intimate feelings between any two people. It is rather a unique and special sense of intimacy to a significant other who cannot be exchanged with others, who makes the baby feel secure and protected and therefore such an object – 'the stronger and wiser', normally the mother, but not always – provides a secure base effect to the infant.

In basic understanding about attachment, some questions arise. What is 'attachment', in fact? Does it refer to emotion or behaviour, or both? What is the role of cognition in relation to attachment? Does it refer to a status or a system? What functions does attachment have? Is it natural to human beings? Is it normative or pathological? How do we detect attachment from other similar emotions such as affection and fear? How is it established? When is it formed? What factors do we consider to establish it? When or how does it begin (activate) or end (terminate)? What impact does it have on the child? Does it persist in to adolescence and adulthood? Does it change? How does it change? In this section, answering the

above questions one by one, we will explore the meaning and functions of attachment in our life experience.

2.4.1 Nature of attachment bond and attachment behaviour

A central issue of attachment theory is the nature of the child's bond to the caregiver, mostly the mother[3]. What are the attachment bond and attachment behaviour? What relationship exists between them? Although attachment theory pursues an ethological approach and focuses on attachment behaviours, an attachment bond is an emotional bond as he sees that attachment behaviours are language of emotion (Bowlby, 1969, pp. 104-123). Cassidy (1999) asserts "The existence of an attachment bond cannot be inferred from the presence or absence of attachment behaviour" (p. 12). This also indicates, however, that an attachment bond is defined by whether attachment behaviour is present or not. According to Bowlby (1973), attachment behaviour is "any form of behaviour that results in a person attaining or retaining proximity to some other differentiated and referred individual, usually conceived as stronger and/or wiser" (p. 292).

There may be many affectional bonds felt by infants and throughout life, but an attachment bond is a special affectional bond to a very few significant individuals. Ainsworth (1991, pp. 38-39) suggests that attachment relationships are a particular type of affectional bond and create a desire to maintain closeness to a partner who is seen as unique as an individual and who is not interchangeable with any other. In comparison with other affectional bonds, the individual seeks closeness from the relationship which results in feelings of comfort and security. Concerning the attachment bond, there are two issues to consider. First, the attachment bond is the

one of many features of the child-mother relationship which reflects and relates only to the child's protection and security in times of stress. The mother also serves as playmate and teacher, but these roles are incompatible (Cassidy, 1999, p. 13). Second, the attachment bond cannot be presumed to exist in every affectional relationship. Although such feelings as friendship are strong and have the effect of comfort, the loss of a friend does not usually have a long and devastating effect (ibid.). Thus, Bowlby's view on an attachment bond is specified in its nature as being particularly related to an individual's security.

How many attachment figures, then, can we have and do they have the same effect? Bowlby occasionally uses the phrase "attachment hierarchies". That is, a child can have multiple attachments, but there is a prime attachment figure, usually the mother (Bowbly, 1969, pp. 303-308; 1973, p. 205). This means that a child can be securely attached to one individual and less securely attached to another. Thus the child can behave differently in the presence of different attachment figures. The concept of attachment hierarchies also explains adult attachment more efficiently. In adolescence and young adulthood, individuals usually begin to develop attachments to an adult romantic partner. Although the early attachments to parents still remain throughout life, the adult attachment may become the most vital one in adult life (Cassidy, 1999, p. 15). Based on Bowlby's idea of multiple attachments and a hierarchy of attachments, Collins and Read (1994) later proposed a "hierarchical structure of working models". Although the issue of multiple attachments needs more investigation, it gives some insights into the transition from early attachments to adult attachments and also to the relationship between human attachment and religious attachment.

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2.4.2 Features of the attachment system and the formation of internal working models[4]

The most interesting and also important thing that Bowlby discovered is that infants' attachment behaviours can be regarded as an adaptive or survival process of natural selection (Bowlby, 1969, p. 58; 1973, pp. 38-39). That is, attachment theory takes off from a child's fantasy drive as proposed by Freudian psychoanalysis, and lays weight on the actual interaction between the child and the mother. On this basis, Bowlby (1969, pp. 65-84) hypothesized that attachment behaviours are organised into an 'attachment behavioural system'. That is, a variety of behaviours such as smiling and crying serves a single function, maintaining proximity to the caregiver. The attachment behavioural system is interrelated with other behavioural systems, such as the exploratory system, the fear system, the sociable system and the care-giving system (Cassidy, 1999, pp. 7-11). The goal of the attachment system is to regulate behaviours designed to establish or maintain contact and to produce "felt security" in the attached person (Feeney and Noller, 1996, p. 3).

In an attachment system there are the three defining features: proximity seeking (including protest at separation), a secure base and a safe haven, which relate to three functions (Bowlby, 1969, pp. 300-302). That is, attachment behaviour is defined in terms of the goal of proximity maintenance; the attachment figure serves as a secure base from which the infant can actively explore the environment; and the attachment figure also serves as a safe haven to which the infant can return for comfort on when under threat. During the first few years, the repertoire of the infant's proximity-seeking behaviours and the mother's care-giving responses become organized into a goal-corrected behaviour system, which guides the child's thoughts, feelings and

behaviours and which will also powerfully influence the child for the rest of her/his life as internal working models of the self and the other (pp. 350-354).

Bowlby (1969, pp. 266-267) proposes four phases in the ontogeny of attachment – the first three occur during the first year and the fourth phase in the preschool years. Four phases in the development of attachment and the process of the formation of internal working models are briefly described below (cf., Marvin, 1977, pp. 27-58; Marvin and Britner, 1999, pp. 55-65; Goldberg, 2000, pp.16-18)

Phase 1 (pre-attachment): from birth to a few months, babies respond with crying, grasping, clinging to all other people without discrimination. In this phase, the baby cannot distinguish self from other. Thus, the baby's internal working models are very primitive and the functions may be limited.

Phase 2 (attachment-in-making): at 5 to 6 months, infants improve their vision and hearing and some patterns of interaction with one or more discriminated figures become elaborated. The defining feature of phase 2 is that the simple behaviour systems turn into a complex and chain-linked behaviour system which the infant begins to control. Infants in this phase still cannot conceive of an attachment figure as someone with a separate existence from their own.

Phase 3 (clear-cut attachment): between 6 and 9 months, infants experience many changes in locomotion, cognition and communication. This leads to changes in the organization of her/his behavioural systems. In this phase, the infant actually becomes attached, due to the organizational changes in behaviour. The infant maintains proximity to a discriminated figure by locomotion and signals. Over the period from 6 to 18-24 months of age, they become more wary of unfamiliar people. In this phase, the infant has separate working models of caregiver and of self, which consist

of images and prospects of self and other. Although the infant's internal working models are more sophisticated than in phase 2, they are still primitive because the infant cannot comprehend that the attachment figure has unique perceptions and goals, and that these can differ from his/her own. The infant could have a few attachment figures, but tends to choose one figure as the 'primary' attachment figure.

Phase 4 (goal-corrected partnership): between 3 and 5 years of pre-school age, the organization of the attachment system changes significantly as children's skills in cognition and communication develop. Young children become less distressed and frightened by brief separations if they and their mothers have negotiated the terms of the separation. They still interact with their attachment figure on the basis of physical orientation, such as eye contact and nonverbal expressions as well as conversations about personal matters. These two elements are important in the development of attachment in the phase of the 'goal-corrected partnership'. According to Marvin and Britner (1999, p. 61), by their fourth birthday, most children have five skills: (1) the ability to recognize that the attachment figure possesses internal events (including thoughts, goals, plans, feelings, etc.); (2) the ability to distinguish between the caregiver's point of view and the child's own, especially when they differ; (3) the ability to infer, from logic and/or experience, what factors control the caregiver's goals and plans; (4) the ability to assess the degree of coordination, or match, between their respective points of view; and (5) the ability to influence the caregiver's goals and plans in a goal-corrected manner.

According to Bowlby (1969), an attachment system is its own distinct internal motivational system, which serves as a goal-corrected system (pp. 96-123). That is, if the child's health and survival are threatened, the child seeks the mother's attention. Attachment behaviours are the signals. According to Bowlby (1969), the degree of

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proximity considered to be "sufficient" – the set goal of the system – is itself variable. Signals of perceived danger, illness or injury, or other forms of distress serve to increase the desired level of proximity to the attachment figure. At such times the attachment figure functions as a safe haven from potential danger (pp. 300-303).

The set goal varies also as a function of age: in situations in which young children would require physical contact in order to feel security, for example, older children may be comforted by visual or verbal contact (pp. 206-207). For adolescents and adults, with their greater cognitive and conceptual abilities, mere psychological availability (i.e., knowing that the attachment figure is just a phone-call away) may in many circumstances suffice, although in times of severe distress physical proximity may be required. (pp. 207-208)

As the child gets older, the goals of attachment move from physical needs to emotional needs. The presence of the attachment figure for the child means a readiness of accessibility and absence of inaccessibility. Thus, the child's attachment behaviours are very much influenced by the child's perceptions of the availability and responsiveness of the mother although the child's attachment behaviour is influenced by initially the mother's actual care-giving quality, such as physical nearness and attentive presence (Hazan and Shaver, 1994, p. 5). That is, the mother's sensitivity increases the child's confidence in the mother's availability and responsiveness (Bowlby, 1973, p. 203). In contrast to other developmental theories, such as psychoanalytical theory and learning theory, attachment theory has focused on the processes whereby children develop confidence in their parents' protection and provision of safety and the psychological concomitant of security (Goldberg, 2000, p. 8).

How, then, does the child get confidence in the mother's availability and responsiveness? How does the attachment system work? Based on Bowlby's (1969, 1973) central idea on attachment, Hazan and Shaver (1994, pp. 2-7) illustrate the basic features of the attachment system, which demonstrate well how the system works (see figure 1). The basic features of the attachment system include the infant's feelings of 'security', 'fear', 'anxiety' or 'despair', according to whether the mother's care-giving is sufficient or not. They also include the infant's behavioural reactions based on the feelings.   These infant's feelings and behaviours also trigger the mother's care-giving.
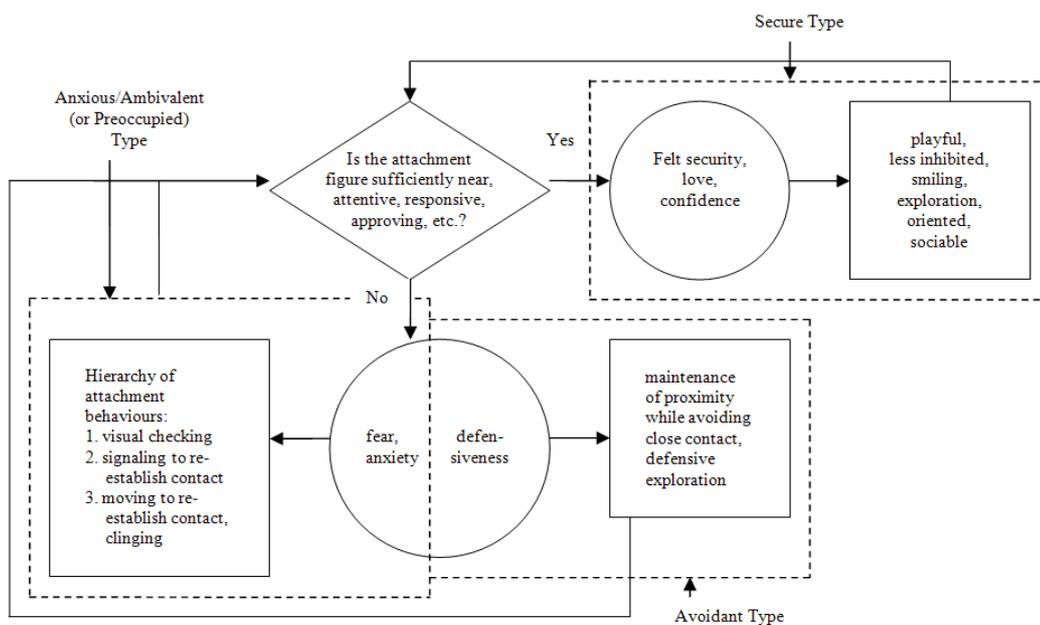
Figure 1 Basic features of the attachment system and three major patterns of attachment

Source: Hazan and Shaver (1994)

Hazan and Shaver (1994) are particularly interested in the effects of psychological availability of the attachment figure and the influences on the process of the

attachment system and the formation of attachment patterns. They note that the effects are "remarkably similar to the effects observed for physical availability" (p. 6). That is, in the scheme of the attachment system presented by Hazan and Shaver it shows how attachment behaviours are influenced by the child's perceptions or expectations of availability and the responsiveness of the mother. When children feel secure and confident in the mother, they are likely to be more sociable and less inhibited and to engage in more play and exploration. In contrast, when children feel insecure and lack confidence in the caregiver, they are likely to respond either with fear and anxiety or with defensiveness. Responding with fear and anxiety leads to such behaviours as crying and clinging, whereas responding with defensiveness leads to avoidance of close contact with the attachment figure. That is, a child uses her/his perceptions or expectations of mental representations proposed by Bowlby (1969); in his view, the internal working models include models of self and the attachment figure (p. 238). These internal models guide thought, feelings and behaviours in attachment relationships in childhood and throughout life. For the researchers who take on an epistemological approach to their research, these models are also important guidelines for looking at the internal world of the individual.

2.4.3 Individual differences and patterns of attachment

Influenced by John Bowlby, detailed empirical studies of individual differences in attachment were conducted by Ainsworth and her colleagues. They developed a laboratory procedure known as the 'Strange Situation' for assessing attachment style based on an infant's reactions to a series of separations from and reunions with the mother and a friendly stranger (Ainsworth et al., 1978, pp. 31-44). In brief, they demonstrated three styles of infant-mother (or caregiver) attachment: securely

attached; insecurely attached-avoidant; and insecurely attached-resistant or anxious-ambivalent. Secure infants are upset by initial separation from their mothers but respond positively to the mothers who are characterized by constant responsive care-giving to infants' attempts to gain proximity. Anxious/ambivalent infants are distressed at separation and respond with anger-ambivalent behaviours, such as crying and clinging. The quality of their mothers' care-giving is shown as insensitive, intrusive and inconsistent. Avoidant infants behave defensively and avoid close contact with their mothers, who tend to reject infants' attempt to gain proximity and to avoid contact with the infant.

In addition to the three patterns, Main and Solomon (1986 and 1990) have proposed a fourth group, the disorganized-disoriented category of insecure attachment, which tends to show contradictory reunion behaviour, confusion and changeable or depressed effect. The unusual behaviours do not reflect one of Ainsworth's classifications. Bartholomew (1990; Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991) also proposed a four-group model of adult attachment according to dichotomised models of self and the attachment figure as either positive or negative. Although such research testing kinds of attachment patterns has also been carried out, it is three patterns of attachment which are used as the basic and main patterns of attachment in much research.

Although Ainsworth and her colleagues (Ainsworth et al., 1978) assessed and described three patterns of attachment based on children's behaviours, they concern the attachment history and the quality of the attachment relationship between the child and the mother. That is, individual differences in attachment relationships do not arise suddenly, but are built out of the repeated interactions in which the child's proximity-seeking, the mother's response and the child's reactions subsequently occur

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and coagulate into a pattern. Individual differences in the quality of attachment relationships have been broadly divided into two, 'secure', and 'anxious' or 'insecure'. These terms do not describe simply the attachment behaviours but rather the child's perception of the availability of the mother (Weinfield et al., 1999, p. 70).

The above diagram (Figure 1) demonstrates more clearly the process of building an attachment system and the formation of three major patterns. The child who receives the mother's consistent love and sufficient care builds trust in the mother for the first time and this will also influence her/him throughout life. The child will establish a goal of 'felt security' and internal model of confidence in relation to the mother. The child develops a secure type of attachment in the internal working models. When the mother is inconsistently responsive to the child's needs, the child may develop a lack of confidence and becomes anxious about getting the mother's attention. The child lacks trust in the attachment figure's availability because the child is only sometimes satisfied by the mother's response, but not all the time. This can lead to an anxious/ambivalent (or preoccupied) type of attachment. If the child's attempts to attain physical and emotional contacts are repeatedly rejected, the infant may learn essentially to defend herself/himself from being hurt. The child may shut down activation of the attachment system and become defensive against her/his will to seek the proximity of the mother. This can lead to an avoidant type of attachment.

As Bowlby (1969, 1973) proposes, these descriptions are predictions of individual differences based on the attachment history, and the internalised or represented models are likely to be taken forward to serve later behavioural and emotional adaptation. These descriptions are related to individual differences in attachment security for the child's development and serve personality development. Internal working models concern not only the self, but also later relationships with the

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attachment figure and others as well (Weinfield et al., 1999, pp. 70-71). These descriptions of individual differences may offer some insight into the question of why people feel, think and behave differently and why people have different views of self, the other and the world. This will give some guidelines in interpreting individuals' differences in characteristics and ways of relating to others and God.

2.4.4 Attachment in adulthood

Researchers carried out adult attachment research based on Bowlby's idea that attachment is an integral part of human behaviour 'from the cradle to the grave'. Among adult attachment researchers, consistent with the basic tenets of attachment theory, Hazan and Shaver (1987, 1994; Shaver and Hazan, 1988; Shaver, Hazan and Bradshaw, 1988) suggest that romantic love is an attachment relationship which they argue may take on different forms. They propose that the three major attachment styles are manifested in adult romantic love, paralleling Ainsworth's three patterns of infant attachment and that these three groups differ in theoretically expectable ways in their experience of love relationships.

Hazan and Shaver's (1994, pp. 7-9) main arguments are on the nature of love as an emotion, the relationship between love and attachment, and the concept of love as the integration of behavioural systems. First, the nature of romantic love as an emotion is a complex pattern of appraisals and action tendencies, e.g., wanting to fulfil other's needs and seeking security from the other. This is consistent with the goals of attachment behaviour. Second, there are a number of features in infant attachment and adult romantic love which show strong parallels – similarity in behaviour and emotion, the desire to share discoveries and reactions with the other, powerful

empathy and also the dynamics of relationships. If the attachment figure is available and responsive, the individual feels secure; if not, the individual will signal or move closer until feelings of security are restored. Third, despite the similarities between infant and adult attachment Hazan and Shaver recognise that these bonds have fundamentally different characteristics. While infant care-giving relationships are largely asymmetrical, romantic love is characterised by reciprocal care-giving. Hazan and Shaver propose that romantic love involves the integration of three behavioural systems: attachment, care-giving and sexual mating.

Based on Hazan and Shaver's (1994) framework, many empirical studies have been made (e.g., Levy and Davis, 1988; Feeney and Noller, 1990, 1991, 1992).   This framework offers many contributions. First, it provides a developmental perspective which shows the stability and change of the internal working models, since it shows similarities and differences between those of child-parent and romantic love, and gradual transfer processes of attachment from parents to romantic partners. Thus romantic love is seen as an integral part of human affectional bonding. Second, attachment theory deals with issues related to the experience of love, which include the effect of love relationships on other personal relationships. Third, the attachment perspective enables both healthy and unhealthy forms of love to develop. Fourth, this framework provides further implications on attachment-related issues in adult life such as work and religion.

2.5. Some issues in attachment theory

As attachment theory was initiated by Bowlby as an alternative to psychoanalytic theories of object relations, attachment theory has some contact points with Freudian

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psychoanalysis and Object Relations theory. Attachment theory, like Freudian psychoanalysis, values early experience with parents as a developmental core; like Object Relations theory it values relational factors in development. Attachment theory also has points of divergence. Freudians emphasise a child's oedipal complex as a core concept of development, and Object Relations theory explains human development as a process of object seeking, such as a mother. However, attachment theory is interested in a child's security-seeking as part of the developmental core, rather than a pathological complex, and it is also grounded in a child's security-seeking rather than the object itself (for a full discussion, see Fonagy, 2001).

As attachment theory is related to other psychoanalytic theories and still in the process of development, there are some issues we should be concerned with including issues of the distinctively ethological approach of attachment theory and developmental issues and the light which they shed on my research; the conceptual background needed to work on attachment, attachment behaviour and attachment behaviour systems, and also its discipline as it advances to make a frame for my research.

2.5.1 Ethological approach

The modern British ethologist, John Bowlby, developed attachment theory when he observed babies who become attached to a caregiver who did not feed them. Bowlby became dissatisfied with traditional theories which explain that the child is bound to the mother because the mother feeds the child, and he sought a new understanding adapting other fields such as evolutionary biology, ethology, developmental psychology, cognitive science and control systems theory (Bowlby, 1969). In other

words, Bowlby sought to update psychoanalytic theory in the light of modern developments in evolutionary biology and ethology. Attachment theory postulates the existence of a behavioural system in human and other primates which has been designed by natural selection to maintain the proximity between infants and their caregivers. Bretherton (1985) points out Bowlby's two major ideas: (1) attachment as grounded in a motivational-behavioural control system which is preferentially responsive to a small number of familiar care-giving figures; and (2) the construction of complementary internal working models of attachment figures and of the self, through which the history of specific attachment relationships is integrated into the personality structure (p. 3).

In the development of attachment theory, there are three important phases, which reinforce the ethological approach. That is, the development of Bowlby's original idea, Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth's refinement of the theory and the growing points of the theory as it was extended by other researchers to adult relationships (Bretherton, 1991, pp. 14-27). Although a considerable amount of research has been done, the following works may be distinguished.

In the first phase, with his colleague James Robertson's observational work, Bowlby, as the original developer, explored his new idea, and presented it in many seminars. During this time Bowlby departed from traditional psychoanalysis which he felt put too much emphasis on the child's fantasy world. He began to recognize actual events in children's lives which were later to become central ideas in attachment theory (Bretherton, 1991, p. 10).

In the second phase, Bowlby and Ainsworth refined attachment theory in further research and publications. Bowlby published his trilogy *Attachment and Loss* (1969, 1973, 1980), which became one of the fastest growing psychodynamic developmental

theories. Ainsworth's (1967) observational laboratory work was crucial in rooting attachment theory more firmly in ethological principles. Following Bowlby's ethological approach, Ainsworth and her colleagues (1978) proposed three main patterns of attachment which paved the way for subsequent research. In this phase, attachment began to be recognized more by researchers and academics in child development.

Third, based on Bowlby and Ainsworth's work, much extended research beyond the state of infancy was conducted. Using the Adult Attachment Interview (Main and Goldwyn, 1985 cited in Hesse, 1999), Main investigated adult attachment which also very closely followed the principle of the ethological approach, as it focused on the forms rather than the contents of the adults' accounts. Hazan and Shaver (1987; Shaver and Hazan, 1988; Shaver, Hazan and Bradshaw, 1988) and Collins and Read (1990, 1994) focus on adults' representation of the self and the other in the working models which had been proposed by Bowlby. Although attachment researchers have become more aware of the importance of cognition in attachment behaviours as the theory grows, attachment theory has not lost touch with its origins and ethological inspiration.

Bowlby and his followers expected that ethology would make a contribution to the understanding of human development. They conceived of social relations in humans as being mediated by instincts, which stem from biological roots and impel the individual to action. Their most significant contribution is to define attachment behaviours in human relationships and clarify them in the light of other related behaviours. They have sought to distinguish attachment behaviours from behaviours motivated by other affections while discussing the influences and defining factors of attachment behaviours. Combining ethology with the subjective insights of

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psychoanalysis has had a huge impact in the fields of child development, social work, psychology, psychotherapy and psychiatry.

Their findings give significant insights into human development. First, attachment behaviours are very much determined by the early experience of the relationship with attachment figures. Second, attachment behaviours are the signals of the individual seeking proximity and security. That is, attachment behaviours can sometimes be the parameters of the individual's internal world. This is perceptible for adults in their representation of the self and the other. Thus, the ethological approach of attachment theory gives significant insights for research into human relationships and faith development: hence, a study of women's attachment and faith, which requires conscious epistemological principles with the phenomenological approach and hermeneutical interpretation, could have benefits in the same sense.

2.5.2 Attachment and development

According to the attachment perspective, infant-mother attachment has a significant role in the patterning of the personality, affecting later sociability, relationship, and behaviours. Additionally, changes in attachment style may appear depending on one's circumstances, for instance, in severe life stresses or having to find an alternative attachment figure. Thus developmental issues in attachment theory are closely related to the stability and change of the internal working models.

In short, Bowlby's theory emphasises that the attachment system plays a vital role throughout the life cycle and that attachment behaviour characterises human beings 'from the cradle to the grave' (1969, p. 208; 1979, p. 129). The application of attachment principles in adulthood is supported by recent theoretical analyses of the

defining criteria of attachment relationships.   Extended research has emerged to refine the theory and further demonstrate the predictive power of infant classification to describe individual differences in personality, sociability, and other behaviour (Bretherton, 1985) and cultural differences in attachment classifications (Sagi, 1991). These findings support Bowlby's view (1980, pp. 441-442) that attachment patterns reflect the interaction between the child's personality, the family and the wider social environment; children develop internal working models of self and attachment figures which tend to resist change.   That is, attachment patterns are relatively stable across childhood and toward adolescence and adulthood.

In addition, the stability of working models is complemented by investigations into the correlates of change in attachment style and working models.   Changes in attachment style are related to family circumstances, such as severe life stresses or the availability of an additional caregiver (Egeland and Sroufe, 1981, pp. 50-51; Vaughn et al., 1979, pp. 972-973).   This is consistent with Bowlby's (1980) views on continuity and change in attachment behaviour.   Consequently, working models should be revised within the context of other relationships; new relationships could offer the opportunity to modify internal working models based on previous negative experiences (Ricks, 1985, pp. 224-225; Sroufe and Fleeson, 1986, pp. 51-71). Therefore the theory proposes a relationship between care-giving interaction and attachment quality, implying that the latter is sensitive to circumstances which influence the extent or type of interaction.   That is, the primacy and depth of the early attachment relationship is likely to serve as a prototype for later intimate relationships; thus, changes in working models of attachment in adulthood should be dealt with very sensitively and in context.

There are several distinctive features in the attachment perspective of human development: it is not in stages or structural; it relates both to unhealthy and healthy persons; it supports individual differences; and allows for sensitive non-quantitative change. The attachment perspective on human development is characterised by stability and the change of internal working models, as observed above, which is not orderly and sequential, but rather emphasises sensitiveness and individual values.

Attachment theory deals with the development of both healthy and unhealthy people, but Erick Erickson (1980) pays attention only to the development of healthy people. Attachment theory is relevant to all human beings, and especially to the oppressed or those suffering discrimination, notably women. From the attachment perspective, the emphasis is on qualitative relationships in development; it gives a potential solution to individuals, whereas structural developmental approaches cannot give answers to everyone's developmental problems. That is, the attachment approach tries to explain why a person reacts with certain types of behaviour or reactions, and what this means. In other words, the attachment perspective enables us to understand human development by exploring an individual's attachment relationship.

A particular feature of the attachment perspective on development is concern for its sensitive and non-quantitative change. During development the control system can change its operation and output in many ways. The most important things are changes in the system's set-goals, in the inputs to which the system is 'sensitive,' in the integration of system components, and in the behaviours which affect the adaptive response. The term 'sensitive' comes from 'sensitive phase of development' (Bowlby, 1969, p. 321), which Bowlby used to indicate that during this phase the course of development in question is more than especially sensitive to environmental

conditions. Attachment theory suggests a 6- to 18- (or 24-) month period of childhood as the 'sensitive phase of development'. Accordingly, it does not matter to the attachment perspective how the frequency of particular behaviour changes with age. It is concerned instead with detecting and describing change in the operation of the behavioural system. That is, developmental issues in attachment theory very much concern sensitivity and individual values in describing how and when changes occur. In the same sense, I believe that this can also be applied to adult attachment and descriptions of religious attachment.

Above all, attachment theory suggests that development during the sensitive period is crucial. Concerning developmental issues, both the stability and change of attachment system are suggested beyond childhood, but attachment theory strongly suggests that there is little structural change after this is established. However, what attachment theory overall is really concerned about, as a fast growing theory of human development, is a person's emotional security in relationships. As the theory follows a principle in a person's selective system, searching for security, it can be said that the theory emphasises the individual's development as moving from a secure, trusting dependence to a mature interdependence with a capacity to tolerate intimacy. This gives significant insight into the relational and affectional dimensions of faith and spiritual development which will be looked at more closely in the next chapter.

2.5.3 Conceptual issues

The term 'attachment' is used in a narrower sense, which neither refers to a social bond alone, nor refers to all interpersonal relationships, but is limited to ties with an individual perceived as stronger and wiser (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bretherton,1985;

Hinde, 1982). Attachment refers to dyadic relationships but the emphasis in the concept of attachment is on the less strong and less wise partner (Hinde, 1982, pp. 65-66). In adult attachment, as we have seen above, there are differences from child-mother attachment relationships. Although adult attachment has more dyadic characteristics than child-mother attachment, the emphasis in the concept of adult attachment is also on the individual's working models.

For the term 'behaviour systems,' Bowlby (1969, 1973) borrowed from ethology and described as control systems those which maintain a balance between exploratory behaviour and proximity-seeking behaviour, taking into account the accessibility of the attachment figure and the dangers present in the physical and social environment. Likewise, there may be confusion between the descriptive concept and the language of explanation in attachment theory and its application. Bowlby wanted to make psychoanalysis more scientific, but Holmes (1993) claims that attachment theory "was gradually moving away from science and in the direction of hermeneutics and meanings", and this provides a bridge between the scientific-explanatory and the semantic-hermeneutic disciplines (p. 145). In particular, a narrative account of a person's childhood, an attachment history and a person's capacity to verbalise these have played a central role in the forming of individual attachments since attachment research has been extended from infant-mother attachment to adult attachment.

As we have seen above, attachment theory is influenced by the ethological approach and intensely focused on behaviours. However, even though the attachment bond is observed from behaviours, it represents and carries an individual's feelings, and is guided by his/her cognition. Furthermore, although attachment is a part of human affections and a part of the whole support for an integrated person, the impact

of an attachment is huge and substantial to the whole of the person. It integrates a person in terms of emotional and relational well-being.

2.6 Women and attachment

We have explored attachment theory in general. Focussing on women's attachment, it is appropriate to discuss the issue from both points of view looking for a complementary understanding of women's spiritual development.

2.6.1 Women's attachment in attachment theory

Generally, attachment theorists agree that there are no considerable differences between males and females, as they understand that the attachment bond is a normative form in all human beings and in the process of development.

Attachment researchers suggest that there are a few shifts in the development of attachment beyond infancy, and a further major shift takes place with the onset of adolescence where hormonal changes and cognitive changes play a part in one's ability to reflect about one's own cognitive processes (Ainsworth, 1991, p. 34-35). Then, the time of pregnancy is suggested as a significant shift in adulthood although she asserts that there are not many gender differences until pregnancy occurs. She seems to disagree about gender differences in general, but does not deny that the time of pregnancy makes women more emotionally vulnerable. Ainsworth (1991) claims, "key changes in the nature of attachment may be occasioned by hormonal, neurophysiological and cognitive changes and not merely by socio-emotional experience" (p. 35). In addition, in the empirical studies of adult attachment, Hazan and Shaver (1987) report that gender is unrelated to endorsement of the secure,

avoidant, and anxious-ambivalent attachment styles (p. 521). It seems that empirical research in attachment-related study has found comparatively little evidence of differences between genders.

However, empirical research also does not deny gender differences in some phases and some patterns of attachment as following empirical research provides evidence of differences between genders. The gender differences are identified in 10-month-olds with 6 studies (Corter, 1997). In the five studies, 9 conditions of separation experiments were established, where girls stayed significantly longer in 4 of the 8 conditions and the gender differences were not significant in the rest of the conditions (pp. 97-99). That is, boys tend to seek the mother sooner than girls which is rather opposite to other studies, such as Goldberg and Lewis (1969). However, in the sixth study, Corter concludes that the reason why boys seem to be more attached while girls seem to be more independent is because mothers are more responsive to boys (pp. 103-104). Turner (1991, pp. 1483-1485) also notes gender differences in insecurely attached four-year-olds, where insecure girls are more compliant than insecure boys and insecure boys are more aggressive than insecure girls. The report suggests that gender role expectation played an important part where girls' antisocial behaviour is disproved by the peers and adults. It also suggests that the mother-daughter relationship might influence the girls' compliant attitude while the absence of fathers in the family might result in the insecure boys' aggressiveness. Similarly, in a study of undergraduate students, female students report more comfort with closeness than male students and greater confidence in self and others (Feeney et al., 1993, pp. 181-182). The report suggests that female avoidants and male anxious/ambivalents were the least likely to report engaging in sexual intercourse during the course of the study. It also suggests that attachment style and gender role expectations jointly influence

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relationship development. Gender differences in attachment style point to females' greater comfort with intimacy and greater preoccupation with relationships while males see relationships as secondary to achievement and are more dismissing of attachment (Feeney and Noller, 1996, pp. 122-126).

The above empirical findings commonly suggest that gender role expectation in the family system and the society influences significantly. From the evolutionary point of view, Simpson (1999, p. 122) explains that males and females are likely to have developed the same survival mechanism because they have been in the same situation of threats to survival. Gender differences are, however, generated only when men and women are confronted with different adaptive problems in personality, social, moral and cognitive development (Buss, 1995, p. 23-25). Simpson (1999) argues that men and women would have faced slightly different adaptive problems with regard to mating and reproduction. He goes on to say, "Their different roles in reproduction should have created different kinds of problems, generating evolved psychological mechanisms that either were different for the sexes or were calibrated for different activation thresholds" (p. 122).

The observed gender differences can be related to traditional sex-role stereotypes (Collins and Read, 1990, p. 660). Like the arguments of feminist psychodynamic academics, attachment researchers understand women's greater comfort with intimacy in terms of socialization patterns, with women being encouraged to be more nurturing and more relationship-oriented (Feeney and Noller, 1996, p. 123). That is, women are socialized to value emotional closeness, whereas men are socialized to value independence.

2.6.2 Discussion: two views

As we have briefly seen above, it is quite surprising to find that attachment theory gives very little information about gender differences, while feminist psychodynamic academics strongly suggest a nature prepared for attachment in women which contrasts with men's. Attachment theory focuses particularly on the narrow sense of 'special affectional bonds', while feminist psychodynamics uses the term attachment in both a narrow and a broad sense. For example, in suggesting her intersubjective model of self-in-relation, Surrey (1991) distinguishes this relationship from 'attachment' and from 'separation'. 'Attachment', she goes on to say, "implies a state of emotional connection where the presence of the object becomes related to a sense of well-being, security, and need gratification" (p. 61), while 'separation' "implies a process of internalizing the attachment and lessening the need for the other or the relationship" (ibid.). Thus, she suggests a sense of knowing oneself and others through a process of mutual relational interaction and the continuity of "emotional-cognitive dialogue" (p. 62). She, however, misses the point that the depth of attachment established in the child-mother interaction in a sensitive period and the development and activation of the attachment system grants enough security not only to lessen the emotional dimension but also to lessen the cognitive and behavioural dimension, of the whole person.

The differences are clearly inevitable because the starting points are different. That is, attachment theory is based on evolutionary biology and ethology and regards attachment as a normative process in all human beings, while feminist psychodynamics starts with gender differences in culture and tradition, and sets out to provide an appropriate interpretation for women's development.

However, there are some fruitful outcomes where the two views on attachment and gender differences find common ground. For example, although Chodorow (1989) does not use phrase 'attachment relationships', I believe without doubt that 'the most emotionally moving relationships' (p. 2) refer to the attachment relationships, as we have explored, with parents in early childhood as well as adult romantic relationships with an adult partner. She clearly believes that those attachment relationships are significant in constituting women's meaning-making and development of identity. Gilligan's (1982) view on self-other interaction in the development of self is a central concept of the internal working models in attachment theory.

Although these views have a different stance in some ways, as we have seen above the results of empirical research into gender differences in attachment theory are congruent with the feminist views on attachment in women that it is a by-product of adaptation and socialization, associated with survival from different sex-roles and gender-related expectations in society. Thus, the findings on women's ways of development need for both biological and contextual approaches run side by side.

2.6.3 Attachment and women's spiritual development

As we observed above, attachment perspective is deeply based on ethology and its approach is taken from learning theory and psychoanalysis, leading to an extensive understanding of human development. It provides different perspectives to look at things such as the characteristics of the attachment behaviour of human beings. Even though attachment theory has a different perspective from feminist psychodynamic theories, both give full attention to human development as an integrated partnership between the self and the other. Through relationships the self establishes, makes

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meaning, and cultivates awareness of the other. Both views on human development draw attention to the importance of attachment.

This is also a crucial area of understanding when we think about women's spiritual development. That is, attachments are significant elements in spiritual development; attachment relationships significantly influence women's spiritual development as women are more attachment oriented than men in their cultivation of feeling and awareness to others and God. For example, from the attachment perspective, the formation of Asian women's spirituality (cf., Chung, 1990, p. 87) may be delineated with the features of the attachment system and the patterns of attachment. That is, the oppressed experience and impasse is related to images of avoidant/distant attachment; the process of choosing life/discovering true self is related to seeking a safe haven and positive images of anxious/ambivalent attachment; the effect in reaching out/ building a community is very much related to images in the pattern of secure attachment. Although feminist theologians have a different stance from attachment theory as they pose a view of human liberation, they do agree that faith experience is based on human attachment in everyday life experience and relationship with God and others.

2.7 Summary and conclusions

Following a journey drawing on attachment theory and the feminist psychodynamic perspective, I have found that both could give significant insight for women's spiritual development, and provide rich and extensive understanding. Reviewing feminist psychodynamic view on women's attachment and exploring the ethological nature and internal working systems of attachment theory has confirmed that attachment is a significant issue in women's development. Although they have

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different stances on attachment issues, feminist psychodynamic theories and attachment theory have common ground. That is, women's attachment is a by-product of adaptation or socialisation. It gives significant understanding that self-esteem comes from discovery of the self-in-relation with others and God, and that is a very important factor for women's spiritual and faith development. The greatest benefit arise from the fact that the basis of attachment theory is ethological and representational, in the same way that contemporary feminist research values phenomenological and hermeneutical issues. I have delineated and discussed this only theoretically in this chapter. I believe, however, that this review offers a rich theoretical perspective for understanding women's faith experience and a relevant framework for my research. This chapter has focused only on attachment issues in women's development. Based on this review, the next chapter will fully look in relational and affective dimension of faith development.

CHAPTER THREE

FAITH DEVELOPMENT AND ATTACHMENT

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the relational and affective dimensions of faith to which the cognitive-oriented approach has paid less attention. Based on a review of attachment theory in the previous chapter, faith is seen in terms of religious experience, extended by Kirkpatrick (1992, 1994, 1995, 1999; Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992) from John Bowlby's attachment theory. The argument is focused on three related themes: faith as an attachment to God; the process of the faith experience as an attachment process; the different characteristics in three attachment patterns. A religious attachment model will be explored for its validation in the working models of self and other in relation to attachment proposed by Collins and Read (1994). This chapter ends with descriptions of three types of faith which are a summary of individual differences.

3.2 Faith and attachment

3.2.1 Faith as 'relational' and 'a knowing'

Many faith development theorists have studied faith as human activities and forms of human growth in their lifelong development (e.g., Groome, 1980; Westerhoff III, 1980; Loder, 1981; Fowler, 1981). Groome (1980) poses a view of liberation and freedom as he approaches faith development; Westerhoff III (1980) emphasises the role of Christian community in individuals' faith development; Loder (1981) pays attention to the role of the Holy Spirit in the moment of transformation in individuals'

experience of faith; Fowler (1981) and Oser (Oser and Gmünder, 1991) stance in the cognitive structural view of faith development. They have in common their understanding of faith as a dynamic process of lifelong development and the emphasis on the integration of whole aspects of the individuals' faith development.

Among them, Fowler's (1981) 'stages of faith' is the most comprehensive theory which has a vast impact on the field of psychological study of human development and faith development, and also has implications for Christian education and pastoral theology. His theory offers us many insights and also many issues to discuss. Since studies on Fowler and his theory are considerable, I will focus only on the concept of faith that Fowler has presented but which has not been appreciated by women academics in some ways.

Suggesting faith as 'a generic human phenomenon', Fowler (1986) defines faith as follows:

> Faith has to do with the making, maintenance, and transformation of human meaning. It is a mode of knowing and being. In faith, we shape our lives in relation to more or less comprehensive convictions or assumptions about reality. Faith composes a felt sense of the world… toward centers of power and value… (p. 15).

In the definition of faith, Fowler suggests a concept of faith as 'relational' and 'a knowing' (1981, 1986). What does Fowler mean by 'relational' and 'a knowing'? Are the meanings the same to men and women? For my study, I will briefly review the concept of 'relational' and 'a knowing' in Fowler (1981, 1986) and discuss it from a women's point of view.

First, for Fowler, faith is relational. Demonstrating a triangular diagram of faith, Fowler (1986) indicates that relationship is a basic notion of faith. "Faith begins in relationship. Faith implies trust in another, reliance upon another, a counting upon or

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dependence upon another, the other side of faith as trust is faith as attachment, as commitment, as loyalty" (p. 16). Influenced by Erickson (1963) and Niebuhr (1960, 1963), he understands 'trust' and 'attachment', 'commitment' or 'loyalty' as elements of faith. Concerning the quality of faith as relational that is bound in communities, Fowler (1986) presents a triadic diagram of faith (Figure 2). He describes an explicit faith structure, "In communities, a self (S) is bound to others (O) by shared trust and loyalty. But our ties to others are mediated, formed, and deepened by our shared or common trusts in and loyalties to centers of supra-ordinate value (CSV)" (p. 17). He suggests that faith is "an irreducibly relational phenomenon" (p. 19).

CSV

S ⟷ O
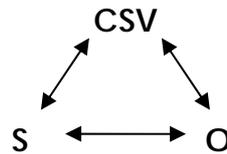
Figure 2 Triadic relations of faith

Source: Fowler (1986)

Although Fowler has suggested a relational element of faith, the concept 'relational' does come from androcentric sources (Slee, 2004, p. 32). Men's self-in-relation is based on the process of rationality, autonomy, separation and individuation while women's self-in-relation is based on the process of attachment, care and interdependence (see Chapter 2 in this thesis). In Fowler's (1981) stages of faith development theory, relational process in men is valued in the advanced and higher stages, while the relational process in women is not valued as much as men's. As a result, women's faith has scored lower in his stages than men's (Slee, 2004, p. 32). In particular, in the higher stages of faith, Fowler has attention excessively on the 'ethics of justice', abstract and universalised values. However, he misses the 'ethics of care',

the value of women's relationality in which women respond and care for the self and others, and create the self-in-relation in their concrete and everyday lives, as we have seen in Chapter 2.

Second, Fowler (1981, 1986) defines faith as 'constitutive-knowing'. He understands faith as "a way of being, arising out of a way of seeing and knowing" (1986, p. 19). Faith as 'constitutive-knowing', for him, means that faith involves "meaning the world of physical objects and the laws of their relatedness, movement, and change" and also "constructions of the self and the others, in perspective-taking, in moral analysis and judgement, and in the constitutions of self as related to others" (1986, p. 21). Influenced by Piaget (1962), Kegan (1982) and Kohlberg (1981, 1984), in making a structure of faith, Fowler focuses on 'logic of conviction' that is Piaget's main concern. On this basis, Fowler also distinguishes forms of faith from contents as he distinguishes 'inner structure' from 'outer structure' (Heywood, 1992, p. 154).

As a result, Fowler's (1981) faith development theory pays less attention to the affective dimension of faith. Although, as Hammersley (1997) points out, Fowler's definition of faith contains the expression of the affective elements of faith (p. 5), the tone of cognitive understanding gets stronger in adult faith (Slee, 2004, p. 165). Fowler has inevitably a dualistic view which is prevailing in the Western society. It gives high values to mind, reason and cognition over body, feeling and emotion. Consequently, women's way of knowing, which is rather embedded in the latter ways, is evaluated lower comparatively to men's (Slee, 2004, p. 32). He later admits fatal problems have occurred separating cognition from affection, the 'structural aspect of knowing' from the 'emotional dimension of knowing' (1986, p. 21). Fowler (1986) has revised the concept of knowing as "meaning-making as the self's total constitutive-knowing activity, an activity in which there is no thought without feeling

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and no feeling without thought" (p. 22). Knowledge cannot be owned unless it is experienced in all aspects of the person, including emotion, cognition and behaviour.

As we have seen above, women's relational and affective qualities have not much considered in cognitive-oriented and androcentric theories. For women, faith is experienced especially through their inductive process of bodily, emotional, intuitive, imaginative and everyday concrete experiences in relationship with the self, other and God. Thus, it is important to count and value that relational and affective dimensions of faith in which many women build their identity, respond to the self, other and God, and grow in their faith.

3.2.2 Relational and affective dimensions of faith

Since the single great classic of the psychology of religion *The Varieties of Religious Experience* by William James (1902), "there are no general overarching theories of affect guiding research on religious experience" (Hill, 1995, p. 355). This is why Hill (1995) claims 'the prominence-absence paradox' in the affective dimension of faith experience (pp. 354-355). This calls our attention to sketching the features of particularly relational and affective dimensions of faith experience before we proceed to attachment perspective on faith experience.

Many Christians say that they are in a relationship with God, which is not exchangeable with other relationships, that is a true attachment relationship (Kirkpatrick, 1995, p. 452). It is a unique religious experience that a person can have. In the same manner religion in reality is also joy in fellowship, warmth and belonging. Individuals are touched when they experience the community of believers, conjoined in faith, security and solidarity. They are satisfied when they find themselves

embraced by a warm welcome from the community in which they feel security and comfort by sharing the same values. If we see faith as a relational matter, this is a very important point, and also we cannot ignore this aspect of faith.   Close relationship is at the core of human nature, social experience, and central life tasks. The constant yearning for a deep relationship is a central issue of the faith experience.

There are quite a number of features of religious experiences from different religions and cultures, but they may have a common core that is 'relational' and 'affective'. Stance (1961, pp. 79) categorizes key features of people's religious experience: Unifying vision, all things are one, part of a whole; Timeless and spaceless; Sense of reality, not subjective but a valid source of knowledge; Blessedness, joy, peace and happiness; Feeling of the holy, sacred, divine; Paradoxical, defies logic; Ineffable, cannot be described in words; Loss of sense of self. Major religious writings have variously described religious experiences as: a feeling of unity with God, fear, awe and reverence, dependence, and journey inwards or upwards, love and marriage, the goal of union with the Divine (cf., Smith and Ghose, 1989).   These lists indicate that emotional factors are significant in our religious experiences.   Johnson (1945, p. 191) similarly remarked a sense of emotional security in the function of faith.   That is, faith experience is the core of religious experience and from the experience we feel security in relationship with God.

Introducing seven faith situations, Gillespie (1988) also describes, faith is not just cognitive knowing but is experience that produces a commitment, and is "being aware of God in the affective domain" (p. 31). He sees faith as a holistic personal experience which grows in concrete existential situations, "The nature of religious experience is related to its concomitant expression, faith experience" (p. 30). Introducing religious experience as a universal phenomenon, Gillespie argues that for

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a religious person, her/his total religious experience is inevitably centred in the experience of faith; a sense of the presence of God, having a relationship with God, and encompassing one's commitments and values. Greeley (1981) also emphasises faith as an experience in our whole aspect of life, which is all about relationships, "just as the story of any one's life is the story of relationships – so each person's religious story is a story of relationships" (p. 18). Thus, whether faith experience is seen with a perspective of psychodynamics or of social psychology, whether it is approached at an individual level or socio-political level, whether it is viewed in intrapersonal or interpersonal, it is inevitably relational and affective.

3.2.3 Faith as an attachment relationship

Attachment theory could offer crucial insights if we take full advantage of the above view on relational and affective dimensions of faith. The relationship with God is a unique experience and cannot be exchanged with other relationships. This faith experience is not an ordinary relationship but a very special one. Once you have faith in God, you feel security and comfort. When you are in a crisis or stressful situation you seek God as a haven. It can be said that faith is an attachment relationship, which is in this context "not a generic term," but refers to "a distinctive type of close relationship" (Kirkpatrick, 1992, p. 2). Ainsworth (1991, pp. 37-38) distinguished attachment from other kinds of close relationships like role-oriented relationships, and emphasized that attachment relationships have distinctive features that have functions for the secure-base and haven. Therefore, understanding faith as a special experience of affectional bond to God, so-called attachment, provides a significant and an alternative path to cognitive-oriented approaches.

Marris (1986) refines the term attachment as follows: "attachment itself is neither an emotion nor a purpose. Rather, like falling in love, it is the condition from which emotions and purposes arise" (p. viii). An attachment includes the passive-emotion experiences and the active-synthesis experiences. It is a complex pattern of appraisals and action tendencies (Campos and Barrett, 1984, p. 256; Feeney and Noller, 1996, p. 23). To describe faith as an attachment relationship with God is not to imply that faith is just a feeling or knowing, but is rather a meaningful or purposeful relationship with God. It is a special experience of affectional bond to God, which provokes strong loyalty and commitment.

In her psychological study of religious conversion, Ullman (1989) describes phenomena of religious conversion as an infatuation, a relationship with someone who lavishes acceptance and love, and a passionate attachment. In her descriptions of the encountering with a religious person or a group in the process of conversion, she uses many words that connote human affection and love, such as, 'attracted', 'impressed', 'impetus'. She indicates that religious conversion occurs against a background of great emotional turmoil. In fact, she presents religious conversion as a sudden attachment although she does not directly refer to attachment theory. These phenomena of conversion experiences arise in the emotional and relational context.

From an attachment perspective, faith, the experience of a relationship with God is the experience of a deep affectional bond. "This is why religious emotion is so often expressed in the language of human love", and "why religious conversions have frequently been likened to 'falling in love'" (Kirkpatrick, 1995, p. 452). As Shaver and Hazan (1988) have described romantic love as an attachment, faith can also be described as an attachment relationship with God, which is characterised by affectional dynamics between the person and God or a figure that can share the value

and power (cf., Fowler, 1986). Like human attachments, so with faith, possible elicitors include familiarity (or fondness) with God, that the person might find an affectional bond that satisfies the person's own needs, that inspires the person with trust and security. Possible reactions include feelings of security and self-confidence, wanting dependence, and wanting closeness to God.

Although Shaver and Hazan's (1988; Hazan and Shaver, 1987, 1994) suggest romantic love as an attachment, unlike the child-mother attachment, the bond has three components: attachment, care-giving and sexual mating. Greeley (1990, p. 249) indicates that an important component of adult romantic relationships is sexual attraction, but this component is absent from most people's experience of a relationship with God. In fact, the romantic love relationship is more symmetrical than the child-mother attachment. It can be said conversely that love for God and God's love is asymmetrical and is much more like a child's love for its mother and a mother's love for her child than adult romantic love. Kirkpatrick (1995) argues that divine love experienced by the worshipper is a more 'pure' form of attachment than adult romantic relationships (p. 460).

There are, however, some religious models such as McFague's, which stress more of mutuality in relationship with God. Demonstrating the importance of experimentation with available imagery in order to find appropriate ways of speaking about God, Sallie McFague (1987) explores images of God as lover and friend as well as mother.

Nevertheless, in this study, my concern is not only healthy, ideal or secure faith but also unhealthy and insecure faith as well. I believe that most of us can imagine what is mature or ideal and some of us are able to grasp and make this kind of healthy and secure relationship with God and others. In real life, however, we-in-relationship is

sometimes fallen and fragile, as undesirable situations prevent us from having mutual relationships like this. It can be said that faith is an individual's special affectional bond to God, that is, attachment. So what I am proposing is that all human beings experience the world and God, through a certain kind of a belief system which is established by attachment relationships with parents during early childhood and develops through their lifetime. It activates whenever they are in danger and guides their emotion, cognition and behaviour. In other words, if we can understand the importance of the relational and affective aspect of faith, we can also see that religious faith experiences are explained by this system. This brings us to look at relationship between the experience of faith and the attachment system.

3.3 The experience of faith and the features of attachment

Hazan and Shaver's (1987) theoretical and empirical work on adult romantic love as an attachment relationship links empirical work of adult attachment styles with religious belief and behaviour. Kirkpatrick has made a conceptual work on religious issues with this perspective, such as religion or God as secure base and safe haven (Kirkpatrick, 1992 and 1994; Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992). In this section, I propose the faith experience as an attachment process, which is a crucial step forward and may provide a fruitful theoretical model for approaching religious faith from a psychodynamic perspective.

3.3.1 God as an attachment figure

In the psychology of religion various empirical studies have been conducted on the parental image of God and pointed to some correlations: Father-God correlations,

one's preferred-parent-God correlations, opposite-sex-parent-God correlations, and mother-God correlations (see Beit-Hallahmi and Argyle, 1997, pp. 107-108). There are possible alternative interpretations, but the preferred parent represents the primary attachment figure, and because the primary attachment figure is more likely to be the mother than the father, the God image would correspond mostly to the mother image than the father image or alternatively, the preferred parent. Thus, Kirkpatrick's (1992) remark is reasonable: "God is not an exalted father figure, as Freud proposed, but rather an exalted attachment figure" (p. 13). He stresses that a phrase used by Bowlby "stronger and wiser other", for the attachment figure, inapplicable in many romantic relationships, but corresponds more closely to God as "the quintessential stronger and wiser Other," which retains the character of "awesomely powerful and usually protective" attachment figure of childhood (p. 21).

An attachment approach to religious faith maintains the view that God is regarded as an attachment figure. That is, believers seek God as a secure haven and they feel security and comfort with God, and the relationship with God offers secure base effect to the believers (Kirkpatrick, 1995, pp. 452-456). From an attachment perspective, God functions psychologically as an attachment figure for believers like the mother (caregiver) for infant and romantic love in adulthood. It is interesting to note that when many Korean Christian women are in danger or difficulties and feel fear or anxiety, they say continuously '*Jooyer!*' (Oh, Lord!) or '*Hananim!*' (Oh, God!), until they feel secure and comfort, like a child crying for 'mum' in the same situation.

Another important issue in this study concerning God as an attachment figure is the relationship of God-image to the self-concept. Bowlby (1973) emphasized that models of attachment figures and models of the self tend to be complementary. People who view God as basically loving and beneficent tend to have higher self-

esteem and more positive self-concepts (see, Benson and Spilka, 1973, pp. 11-12; Spilka et al., 1975, pp.163-164). In fact, Spilka and colleagues (Spilka et al., 1975, p. 164) conclude the report with that the long influence of individual's religio-cultural experiences in the family system might impact individuals God-image and self-esteem. Dickie and colleagues (Dickie et al., p. 40) assert that self-referencing is important when assessing God-concepts in adulthood. As we have seen in chapter 2 and will see fully in later chapters, for Korean women, discovering the true self, in which they taste inner liberation (cf., Chung, 1990), is very much related to finding themselves in God's image. So self-esteem for them is one of the important spiritual factors through which they have strength and reach out to other people. That is, the self-concept is directly complemented with God-image.

Thus, it can be said that for the believers, God provides a haven of safety and a secure base. God is an attachment figure in whom the believers feel comfort and security. Attachment to God also gives strength and confidence to the believers. This brings us to look at the characteristics and functions of God as an attachment figure in the attachment system in detail.

3.3.2 The experience of faith in the basic features of attachment

The attachment perspective enables us to integrate the experience of faith in God and its development into a dynamic attachment system. The close relationship with God can be described with the defining features of attachment relationships. That is, as we have considered above, God as an attachment figure has an important role in the process of individuals' faith experience. Kirkpatrick (1992, pp. 6-16) delineates the experience of God with the features of attachment: proximity seeking – many

believers use regular prayer as a way of maintaining contact with God; haven of safety – religious faith also plays an important role for believers in times of stress, providing them with a source of comfort, support, and strength; secure base – faith in the existence and presence of God seems to allay fear and anxiety and to provide a sense of confidence and emotional security.

As an interesting finding, Feeney and Noller (1996, p. 77) present the first lines of hymns related to each of the defining features of attachment relationships as follows:

> *Proximity seeking*: Abide with me, fast falls the eventide/ O, for a closer walk with God, a calm and heavenly frame.

> *Secure base*: Forth in Thy name, O Lord I go, my daily labor to pursue/ Awake my soul and with the sun, Thy daily stage of duty run.

> *Safe haven*: Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee/ Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to Thy bosom fly.

In fact, we can find the three features of attachment in the Psalms[5] which bring us to poetry and prayer in which metaphors and expressions are about God's wonder, discipline, love and care, and our human responses to them. The Psalms particularly express human affections in human emotional and relational language of awareness, sorrow and release a latent joy. From the attachment perspective, for example, Psalm 46:1 expresses God as safe haven – "God is our refuge and strength." Psalm 6 speaks about tears with which we express emotional and spiritual experience. Tears with crying of 'how long' (v. 3) and pleas for 'turn', 'deliver' and 'save' (v. 4) accord with the expression of our proximity-seeking. Tears can be indulged with self-pity or can be suppressed with loss of our feelings. Psalm 6 is full of many different emotional expressions. Most of them are about our desire for God's help, our despair with agony and cry for mercy, and confidence in God's deliverance.

For another example, the famous Psalm 23 also addresses our fear and God's comfort. Whether we are in childhood or adulthood, we feel fear and live in fearsome places and face complex matters in relationships and dangerous situations. Psalm 23 contains many expressions referring to God as a haven of safety, 'the shepherd' leading 'the sheep' to 'green pastures' beside 'quiet waters' where no vicious animals (or dangers) are around so that 'the sheep' feel safe and lie down having a rest (vs. 1-2). The metaphors of poetic prayer in Psalm 23 offer a strong connection between a notion of God and a haven of safety as well as a secure base for the believers. It expresses that the Lord provides not only physical, emotional but also spiritual care as he 'restores' the believer's soul and 'guides' her/him in right paths (v. 3). This is also paralleled in the second half of the Psalm. The Lord (the host) prepares 'a table' in the presence of 'enemies', and also 'anoint[s]' with 'oil' and offers a place to 'dwell' in God's house 'forever' (vs. 5-6). With the richest affective and relational language in human expressions, the Psalms address the basic features of human attachment toward God and the process of attachment.

In fact, the words in hymns and songs, languages in prayers and attitudes toward Christian activities in the church community and between people in the congregation have very strong tones of affective and relational terms, especially related to attachment relationships.

3.3.3 Prayer as proximity seeking

Several studies observe that prayer plays a significant role in crisis (Spilka, et al., 1985, p. 304). In stressful circumstances people turn to prayer (for *proximity seeking* attachment figure) rather than the church (for seeking other sorts of relationships). In

fact, in Korea there are many prayer houses, called G*eedohwon*, in remote places, which are rather distinctive places from the church for those who have urgent and pressing matters in health, family, business, and so on. Most people who go to prayer houses are church-attendants. Furthermore, as we will see in later chapters in Korean women's narratives, when they feel insecurity they mostly come to God in prayer intensively seeking the closeness of God who listens and answers their prayer. That is, the role of prayer provides a channel to God who is a safe haven in times of fear and distress. For many Korean Christians, it is quite common to use an expression referring to their ways of praying as 'clinging to' and 'nagging' God which represents attachment behaviour of a child seeking for the mother to give an attention and comfort. Kirkpatrick (1992, p. 15) delineates prayer as a proximity seeking activity that is most regarded as "asking God to speak and then trying to listen for God's answer" (cf., Poloma and Pendleton, 1991 cited in Kirkpatrick, 1992), rather than answering God, and as certainly helping "you in time of stress and crisis" (cf., Ross, 1992 cited in Kirkpatrick, 1992). In the same way, some Christians emphasise regular activities like attending the church and the Bible reading not only as a way of practising their faith, but also as a way of getting God's attention in quite a strict manner.

3.3.4 God as a haven of safety

Once God has taken the place as an attachment figure for a person's internal working model, in times of distress, the experience of God gives the same feelings of comfort and security provided by secure human attachments. God offers a haven of safety effect to the person. For Christians the *safe haven* provided by a relationship with God is experienced in very much the same terms as in human attachment relationships.

The experience of God as an attachment figure may be important when human attachment figures are either temporarily or permanently unavailable and under conditions of severe stress in which human attachments may be inadequate (Kirkpatrick, 1995, p. 456). Other reports support the view that religious faith is an important factor in successfully coping with feelings of alienation, where God is seen as providing comfort and a source of personal strength for getting through this difficult time (cf., O'Brien, 1982; Marris, 1986). According to the attachment system, loss of an attachment figure is particularly likely to activate attachment behaviour, thus bereaved persons engage in religious commitment positively as a way of coping with loss of a spouse (Kirkpatrick, 1992, p. 9). In some ways, the human bond is sometimes not strong enough to cope in distress or human attachment itself is in crisis. Faith in God may provide a greater comfort because God is, for the believer, immediately present and available (Kirkpatrick, 1995, p. 456).

3.3.5 God as the secure base

In the same way, the experience of God as an attachment figure in absence of fear or danger provides the *secure base*. The experience of attachment to God – who represents a responsive and available presence, and who will be available to the believer whenever s/he desires it, will give the person confidence, high self-esteem, and absence of anxiety, and enable an active exploration of one's environment. A number of studies have found religious people are more satisfied with their life as a whole. Faith in God who is supportive, caring and helpful is the strongest predictor of well-being in the elderly (Steinitz, 1980, p. 66). Religious people (intrinsic religious orientation) have lower fear of death (Kahoe and Dunn, 1975, p. 381), and positive control internal locus (Kahoe, 1974, p. 817; Strickland and Shaffer, 1971, pp. 368-

369). Religious people have half the divorce rate of non-religious, have lower rates of crime, work harder and are more socially integrated (Beit-Hallahmi and Argyle, 1997, pp. 210-229). In everyday life believers are assured by the emotional quality of faith that gives confidence and security. Johnson's (1945) remark shows that the functions of faith provide emotional security in religious life:

> The emotional quality of faith is indicated in a basic confidence and security that gives one assurance. In this sense faith is the opposite of fear, anxiety, and uncertainty. Without emotional security there is no relaxation, but tension, distress, and instability. Assurance is the firm emotional undertone that enables one to have steady nerves and calm poise in the face of danger or confusion (p. 191).

In this way, faith in God as an attachment figure, who provides a haven of safety and a secure base effect, is experienced as a source of strength and confidence to live everyday life and to reach out to others (cf., Chung, 1990, pp. 78-79).

3.4 A Dynamic model of religious attachment

As we have seen above, the relational and affective dimension of faith is significant and religious faith also functions considerably in our everyday lives. Certainly, God provides the believers comfort and security. The attachment relationship with God offers emotional support and becomes a source of strength and confidence. For more conviction of this, we need to investigate a few issues. Does the experience of faith relate to human attachment relationships? Or do human attachment relationships affect the experience of faith? How does it work in the general working models of self and other in relation to attachment? Can we find a dynamic model of religious attachment?

3.4.1 Working models of attachment in adulthood

As we have looked in chapter 2, according to attachment theory, an attachment system is established during infanthood and little change in structure is expected throughout lifetime unless severe changes occur in circumstances. With repeated experience of interaction with the attachment figures, the child develops beliefs and expectations about the availability and responsiveness of the attachment figures, as a goal-corrected system, which lessens the child's cognitive, emotional and behavioural responses when new relationships establish. This is called internal 'working models' of attachment, which are core features of personality and relationality.

Hazan and Shaver (1987) have concerned the role of working models of attachment in adulthood and Main (Main, 1991; Main et al., 1985) has focused on representations of the self and others. Although these studies provide a concept of a general model of self and others in relation to attachment, individuals may develop different models in different relationships. For example, an individual may be secure with mother but insecure with father or insecure in adult romantic attachment. Collins and Read (1994) assert that the concept, the processes and the functions of working models in adulthood are somehow vague and not well understood (p. 54).

In this sense, Collins and Read (1994) work on the structure and functions of working models for a lifespan view of attachment. Their comprehensive work is presented in multiple working models of self and others in a hierarchical structure (Figure 3). That is, individuals develop a hierarchy of working models, with a set of generalized models at the top of the hierarchy, models for particular classes of relationships (e.g., family members, peers) at an intermediate level, and models for particular relationships (e.g., father, spouse) at the lowest level.

Collins and Read (1994) articulate that as a general principle, models high in an individual's hierarchy apply to a wide range of others but tend to be less predictive for any specific situation or relationship, while models lower in the hierarch are highly predictive for particular relationships but less predictive for relationships in general (p. 58).

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                ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                │ General Model of Self and Others │
                │ in Relation to Attachment    │
                └─────────────────────────────┘
                   /                      \
        ┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
        │ Model of parent-child │   │ Model of peer    │
        │ relationships        │   │ relationships    │
        └──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘
           /        \                  /          \
    ┌────────┐ ┌────────┐      ┌────────────┐ ┌────────────┐
    │ Mother │ │ Father │      │ Friendships │ │ Romantic   │
    └────────┘ └────────┘      └────────────┘ │ Relationship│
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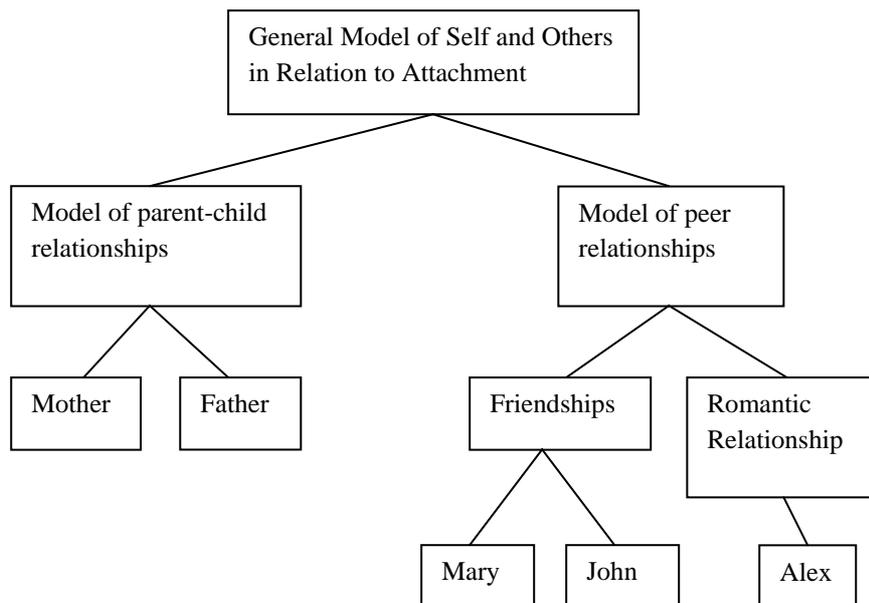
Figure 3 Hierarchical network of attachment representation

Source: Collins and Read (1994)

3.4.2 Religious attachment in the working models

If we consider the relational and affective dimension of faith, the above working models are inevitably influential in an individual's religious life and faith development. Attachment to God and relationship with pastors or with religious people as a group is significant for most Christians, because religious attachment is a very significant domain of Christians' lives and in some way affects and relates to other attachment relationships.

The model of religious relationships can be included in the intermediate level of the hierarchical structure of working models. God and other supreme figure (SF) or centre of supra-ordinate value (CSV) in Fowler's term can be placed in the lower level of religious relationships and so can pastors or religious community (see Figure 4). Kirkpatrick (1999, p. 809) supports the placement of God-attachment under the religious attachment domain and suggests that individuals may develop different models in relationship with God, Jesus or other supernatural beings. Although Kirkpatrick suggests the placement of God-attachment, he does not agree to do so for pastors or religious people. He assumes that pastors and religious people as a group refer to God-attachment relationship and they are not genuine attachment relationships in general and 'it is rather other psychological processes' (Kirkpatrick, 1999, p. 819) or other kind of bonds (cf., Ainsworth, 1993) as it involves other components like belonging or caring and so on.

In fact, pastors and faith community as a group also show the characteristics of peer relationships and can be placed under the peer relationships. I would, however, prefer to place them at the lower level of the structure under the model of religious relationships (see Figure 4) as another kind of religious attachment relationships. As we will see throughout this thesis, attachment bonds with pastors and faith community function differently to other peer relationships, as they are directed to the attachment relationship with God. Pastors and the faith community can serve as a transitional or medium figure of God that has power and authority as they play the similar function such as God's care and comfort and they provide a security effect for religious people.

Like romantic relationships or other peer relationships, pastors and faith community could have attachment and care-giving as components of the relationships. The relationship with pastors and faith community has belonging as one of the

components while romantic relationship has sexual-mating. For Christians, belonging

is a very important factor that gives feelings of bond, comfort and security as

Christian individuals find themselves in the community sharing the same value and

power in God. The women in my interview, as we will see more fully in the later

chapters, have mentioned relationships with pastors and within religious community

very strongly. These relationships are recognised as religious attachments. For the

women the relationships provide crucial functions in security and maturity of faith.
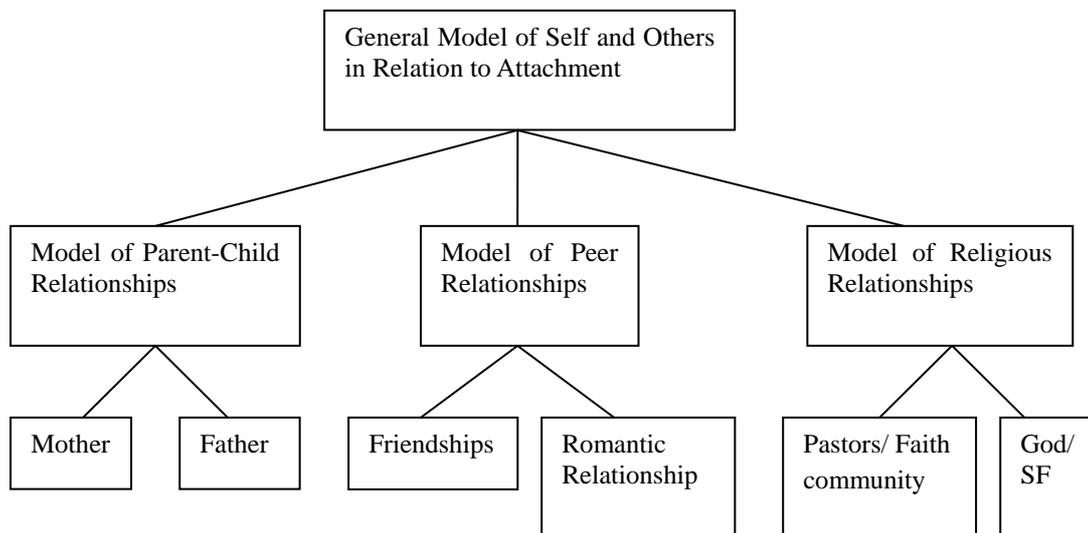
Figure 4 Hierarchical network of attachment representation including religious attachment

A phenomenological study of religious conversion supports this. Ullman (1989)

argues that religious attachment takes place with a real or imagined figure. In her

discovery she suggests three major forms that people take in their journey of religious

conversion: an infatuation with a powerful authority figure; a relationship with a

group of peers who lavish acceptance and love upon the person; a passionate

attachment to an unconditionally loving transcendental object that becomes as real and as concrete as a next-door neighbour.

Spero (1992) also draws religious attachment in an individual's relationship with the religious community and God as a series of developments. He suggests the relationship with God and the religious community as 'primary caregivers' throughout life. He also illustrates that the network of attachment relationships enable the individual to step forward in their religious development. He sees religious development as a process of the individual's attachment relationship with the religious community as well as God.

Delineating psychoanalytic studies about religious development Hammersley (1997) is convinced that "the character of the person's God representation and their pattern of relating to their religious community provide a significant litmus test for the pattern of object relations which operate in other areas of life" (p. 55). In fact, he meant to address 'attachment relationships' as a broad term. In his study he provides the constructs of religious rigidity referring to the person's defence mechanism: anxiety, grandiosity, splitting and detachment. The capacity for maintaining real intimacy in relationships yet capacity for distance and separateness contribute to the person's religious rigidity as well as to the mature and secure religious attachment which I am discussing in my study.

Ullman has focused on the moment of religious attachment and its individual differences, while Spero has looked at the process of religious attachment, through which the person progresses on their religious journey, and from a different angle Hammersley is concerned with the characteristics of the rigidity in the person's religious defence mechanism. Although they focus on different points of religious

attachment, they certainly agree that religious attachment is in place when we respond to others especially to the faith community as well as to God.

Thus I suggest that a model of religious attachment should be placed in working models of self and other, and also God, pastors and faith community should be placed under the religious relationships. I believe that religious attachment is one of the most significant elements of the individual's religious development, especially for Christians and for Christian women in particular.

3.4.3 A dynamic model for religious attachment

Although Collins and Read (1994) have presented a diagram in Figure 3 without indication of interactions between attachment relationships, their concept of the model is meant to be a network in which "the components of attachment models are connected through a rich set of links and associations, and models are expected to have many shared elements" (p. 58). In adulthood, working models are expected to be much more complex and intertwined, and at the same time, each model is supposed to be separated and flexible to adapt and satisfy the individual's attachment needs (ibid., p. 57). That is, working models in adulthood have a dynamic and interdependent nature. If we take advantage of the dynamics, the above views in the issues of religious attachment would be dynamic and multi-dimensional as presented in Figure 5, in which interactions in between the attachment relationships are apparent. The diagram shows the network of attachment relationships in a two-dimensional figure, but I would suggest that it should be a three-dimensional figure where each attachment figure and attachment relationships are influenced by interactions with each other.

As Collins and Read (1994, p. 59) have suggested, the quality of religious attachment may also be reflected by the differences of the network size and its density according to the individual's experience. The characteristic of religious attachment, whether it is secure or not, is very much influenced by other attachment relationships. In other words, the representations of the self and God are related to the representation of mother, father and the adult romantic partner in particular. The concept of dynamics and multi-dimensions of the working models suggests that general representations of the self and others influence religious relationships. Conversely, religious attachment also impacts on general representations of the self and others.
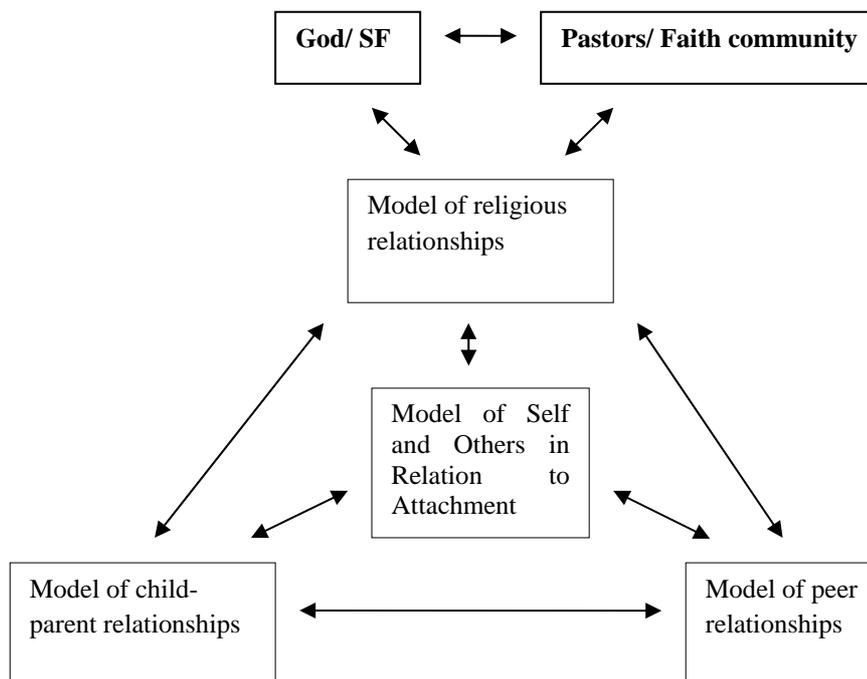
Figure 5 Dynamic model of attachment network for religious attachment

So then, what do they share and how do they impact on each other? According to Collins and Read (1994), working models include four inter-related components: (1) memories of attachment related experience, (2) beliefs, attitudes, and expectations about self and others in relation to attachment, (3) attachment-related goals and needs, and (4) strategies and plans associated with achieving attachment goals (p. 61). These components permeate individuals' working models of which functions trigger cognitive, affective and behavioural responses in the individuals' attachment relationships.

Now, it can be said that religious attachment relationships are inter-related with other attachment relationships. How, then, do they relate to other relationships? In other words, in what way is God-attachment interrelated with other relationships? Kirkpatrick (1992, pp.16-19) has pointed out two-fold hypotheses: a compensation hypothesis and a correspondence hypothesis. He thinks that an attachment perspective would lead us to view all religious objects in the process of searching for a project-figure of an inner object, as a compensation for the early failure to develop secure attachments, or as a continuation of the early pattern.

A religious group or a religion can be an attachment some people. The faith experience of youths and adults who have greater capacity for abstract thinking can "come to constitute for many people a subordinate attachment-'figure' and for some people a principal attachment –'figure'" (Bowlby 1969, pp. 207, 261-261). Kirkpatrick (1992; Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992) suggests that people are most likely to turn to religion during times of emotional stress and in the absence of adequate human relationships. The compensation hypothesis is supported by studies of religious conversion (cf., Ullman, 1989). Individuals who show avoidant type of attachment with their parents report the incidence of sudden religious conversion four

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times greater than other groups (Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1990, p. 326). In the same sense, God-attachment as a compensation for human attachment is consistent with the notion that Ainsworth has suggested. That is, attachment system is most strongly activated under conditions of stress, and that those who fail to establish secure attachments with parents are likely to seek substitute attachment figures (cf., Ainsworth, 1985).

On the other hand, as Bowlby (1969, p. 207) has suggested a continuity of internal working models throughout lifetime, an individual's religious attachment should directly reflect their pre-existing attachment relationships. That is, we may predict the individual's type of God-attachment based on the type of pre-existing attachment. An individual's images of God tend to correlate with images of preferred parent and with the self-concept as we have seen above. Kirkpatrick (1992) suggests that secure mother attachment and secure adult attachment result in directly secure attachment to God (p. 18). Several studies also show that atheism or agnosticism is associated with poor parental relationships (cf., Caplovitz and Sherrow, 1977). In her psychodynamic study of individual's God-images, Rizzuto (1979) presents a strong connection between parental images and the participant's God-images. These results support the proposition that internal working models of attachment are relatively constant and that new attachment reflects pre-existing attachment relationships.

Kirkpatrick (1992) argues, however, that these two hypotheses can be integrated by taking into account the time dimension. In this way, through compensation or correspondence of pre-existing attachment, God-attachment can be interrelated with other attachment relationships. Complex processes and functions of working models in relation to the experience of faith are apparent in differences in individuals.

3.5 Individual differences in the experience of faith

As the process of faith experience can be conceptualised as an attachment process, individual differences in the experience of faith may also be interpreted with an attachment perspective according to Ainsworth's (Ainsworth et al., 1978) three patterns of attachment: secure attachment, anxious/ambivalent attachment and avoidant attachment. As we have seen in chapter 2, individual differences in attachment patterns occur during early childhood when an attachment system is established as a result of interaction with mother, although attachment patterns in adulthood are much more complex as relationships in adulthood are extended and adults become able to have more capacity in cognition.

For adulthood attachment patterns, Hazan and Shaver (1987) have presented individual differences according to what the individuals say, while Main (1991; Main and Goldwyn, 1985 cited in Hesse, 1999) has focused a meta-cognitive model for AAI (Adult Attachment Interview) according to how the individuals describe a so-called 'state of mind'. Separating structure from content of working models, Collins and Read (1994) have tried to work out both the content and structure of working models presenting the components of working models (p. 61).

Interestingly, Kirkpatrick illustrates three patterns of attachment phenomena from Heller's findings. That is, images of God in children can be interpreted in attachment terms: the God-the-therapist image which refers to 'an all-nurturant, loving figure,' as a secure attachment, the inconsistent-God image as an anxious/ambivalent attachment, and the God-the-distant-thing-in-the-sky image as avoidant attachment (Kirkpatrick, 1992, p. 14).

Comparing romantic love with divine love can also give a clue to explain each of the attachment styles. Kirkpatrick and Shaver's (1992) work on this could give a brief outline of God-attachment patterns of secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant. Individuals who have secure God-attachment see God as more loving and responsible and the relationship with God is comfortable and full of satisfaction. Individuals who have anxious-ambivalent God-attachment describe God as inconsistent and unpredictable, so the relationship with God leads to ambivalent feelings and actions such as being 'clingy' and angry. Individuals who have avoidant God-attachment regard God as impersonal and distant and the relationship with God is described with very limited memories.

Kirkpatrick's work and interpretation, which states that individual differences in relationship styles parallel differences in religious behaviours (Hazan and Shaver, 1987), gives significant insight into individuals' styles of faith experience. It shows how different processes in an individual's faith experience; pre-existing human relationships with an attachment figure (infant-mother/caregiver and adult romantic love) play a significant role. Individual differences in the experience of faith can be described as below from research using a simple measure of individual differences in attachment to God, modelled after Hazan and Shaver's three-group measure of general attachment style (Hazan and Shaver, 1987), and developed by Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992), and finally refers to models of adult attachment representation of self and others developed by Collins and Read (1994). These are characterized in three main patterns: avoidant, anxious/ambivalent and secure.

Avoidant type: This type is characterised by people who describe God as impersonal and distant, and often seem to have little or no interest in their personal affairs and problems. They frequently have the feeling that God does not care very

much about them, and show less religious commitment than those who are securely attached. They have a vague memory of a personal relationship with God so that it is difficult to describe or recall the experience. They are more likely to be agnostics than other attachment groups. This type is not likely to be atheists or antireligious, but is the opposite of religiousness. This faith, however, has a very high potential to sudden conversion. Faith in this type feels fearful to have close relationships, so react negatively to the other people in relationships.

Anxious/ambivalent type: Individuals who describe God as inconsistently supportive and somewhat unpredictable practice this type of faith. They feel sometimes God seems very responsive to their needs but sometimes not. They are sure that God loves them and cares about them, but sometimes God seems to show it in ways they don't understand. They describe desires for a strong relationship with God, yet can be full of doubt and unfulfilled longing. They are most likely to describe themselves as antireligious and also the most likely to report extreme religious behaviours, such as speaking in tongues. This shows this type of faith to represent both extremes of religiousness, which appears to match its 'ambivalent' label – sometimes clingy and at other times angry. Faith in this type shows controversial reactions to others, sometimes expressing a negative reaction to the other but at other times a positive response. As this type tends to demonstrate low self-esteem, they also tend to show extreme desire for intimacy.

Secure type: This type of faith is seen in individuals who classified themselves as secure, rated God as significantly more loving, less distant/inaccessible, less controlling; more responsive and available. They have a secure feeling in relationship with God; it is always comfortable and full of satisfaction; they also have greater life satisfaction and less anxiety, loneliness and depression than other types. The

individuals of this type display the highest conventional religious commitment. They react positively to the relationship with others and the self, and whatever the situation they easily overcome it.

3.6 A complementary approach

Above all, it can be said that we can see the dynamics of faith experiences in the attachment system. We can also find that attachment perspective on faith experiences is beneficial in various ways. Before concluding this chapter, I would like to discuss some themes related to the experience of faith and development in the light of previous psychological studies of religion and faith.

First, from a psychoanalytic approach to religion, there are some similarities between Freudian approach and attachment approach insofar as religious beliefs provide comfort; that the sources are from the projection of parental image; that person's early experiences take a very important role in one's mental (spiritual) development. However, there are major differences insofar as an attachment perspective on religion is normative whereas Freudian view of religion is regressive, negative, childish or neurotic; an attachment approach starts from ethological ideas and a motivation of general human behaviour but Freudian approach is based on biological evolution and the centrality of sexual motivation (Kirkpatrick, 1992, 1995). In addition, individual differences in God-attachment are strongly linked to psychological well-being and life satisfaction, although other measures of religiosity are not (Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992). A measure of God-attachment is the only measure of religious faith related to mental health (cf., Feeney and Noller, 1996, p.78). It can be said that secure attachment to God also affects physical and mental health,

and life satisfaction, and developing secure relationship with God is linked with secure interpersonal relationships with others as well. That is, although attachment theory has its similarities with other psychodynamic theories, it has accountability to address individual's emotional and relational well-being and the relationship with faith development.

Second, the concept of faith and development, in recent studies of the developmental psychology of religion, is understood as relational, rooted in relationships of trust and dependence, as well as attachment and commitment. In Fowler's works, we can also find the description of faith as relational – the self is related, not only to the other, but also to those "shared centres of supra-ordinate value and power" (Fowler, 1986, p. 19). Although this account gives some recognition of the relational aspect of faith, he has limited dynamics of psychoanalytic interpretation of individual differences in a person's faith development. Although Fowler understands faith as a person's experience and its interpretation, he pays too little attention to the affectional aspect of faith, which is also a significant factor for faith experience and development. As influenced by structural theorists like Erickson, Piaget and Kohlberg, Fowler sees a person's faith in structural stages, which cannot be skipped. Hardy (1979) recognises an affectional aspect in the characteristics of the religious life as "a feeling of safety and a temper of peace along with a preponderance of loving affections" (p. 141). Beyond Fowler, Gillespie (1988) shows how faith grows not in stages but rather in concrete existential situations, which is a total personal experience rather than simply an intellectual way of construing the world. In other words, he linked faith growth not with abstract cognitive stages but more importantly with a person's own developmental progressions in concrete situations over the entire lifecycle. In fact, with attachment theoretical perspective we can

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overcome what liner stage theory has missed. It enables us to see faith as a dynamic system of a person's whole life experience.

Third, Fowler's theory cannot account for the central issues of women because it is based on the concept of development as the process of separation whereas women are concerned with relatedness or connectedness. As we have seen in chapter 2 and above, women's development and experience are different from men. Slee (1999) has discovered different patterns and processes of women's faith development from men's. Her work begins with a critique of Fowler and illustrates women's ways of faithing based on women's concrete experiences. She identifies three generative themes, which are patterns in women's faith – paralysis, awakenings and relationality, which are also consistent with Asian women's spiritual formation (see chapter 2). Like Slee's work, characteristics in women's ways of faithing should be valued and have to be explored, based on women's concrete experiences, particularly attachment issues in relationships. If we see faith as an experience of attachment relationship with God that each individual lives in a different but related way, the attachment perspective may offer a complementary way to other understandings of faith, a theoretically as well as an empirically grounded approach to the study of faith development, particularly for women who value attachment and relationality. This enhances the understanding of faith as human's total experiences, and enables us to explain both healthy and unhealthy (or secure and insecure) faith in individuals for both women and men.

Above all, understanding faith development by an attachment perspective focuses on the experience of faith as an attachment to God. It enhances not only the understanding of religious faith as human activities but also explains both healthy faith and unhealthy faith. It values whole aspects of learning and experiencing, and

gives another interpretation of our faith as interwoven in our daily lives and attachment relationships in which emotion, cognition and behaviour are deeply interrelated. Therefore, the attachment approach to faith development may contribute significantly in many ways.

3.7 Summary and conclusions

This chapter has offered an explanation to us that an attachment perspective gives a complementary understanding of faith development to structural and sequential, especially to cognitively oriented understanding of it. We need to consider not only cognitive knowledge but also emotional experiences like awe, fear, anxiety, security, comfort, compensation, and so on, to which James Fowler's faith development theory has paid less attention. Since a considerable number of studies of religious experience addresses the correlations of God-image and the close relationship with God, and faith is seen as the experience of relationship with God, this chapter has provided the ground and benefit of an attachment perspective in which faith can be seen as 'relational' and 'affective'. As observed, it can be said that an attachment perspective on faith development takes advantage of explaining faith as the experience of an affectional bond to God in which attachment processes and types appear differently through a person's own history. Considering relational and affective dimensions of faith, we have seen the emergence of a religious attachment model and three types of religious attachment. It is, however, required to develop a new method by which women's faith development can be interpreted thoroughly, which will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

A QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY: STUDYING WOMEN'S ATTACHMENTS IN FAITH DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Introduction

Since the study of women's religious faith from the attachment perspective involves both psychology and theology, the development of an adequate research method is also engaged in these two areas. Concerning methodology, researching women's faith development like this should start from and end in women's experiences. It is important to search for a relevant method for women's faith development in terms of exploring methodological issues not only in attachment approaches but also feminist approaches, considering both the universality and particularity of women's psychology. If I fail to take this into account, my research into women's ways of faithing will be meaningless. This is the quest for an appropriate methodology and theoretical frame that will enable more serious engagement between theory and practice, theology and psychology for women. For this, in this chapter, I shall propose that a critical appropriation of the principles and methods of adult attachment research and those of feminist research, which may provide a suitable response to this quest. This brings us to describe and inform the appropriate research design.

4.2 Adult attachment research methodology

Studying methodology is, in fact, not entirely distinguishable from studying attachment theory since attachment theory is very much grounded in the ethological

approach as we observed in chapter 2 in this thesis. Consequently, concerning methodology in the attachment research field, Ainsworth's 'Strange Situation' is the most influential one and has become a foundation of the following research. In short, 'Strange Situation' is a specific term of an experimental method devised by Ainsworth (Ainsworth et al., 1978) to study infants' attachment styles. Developing an observational longitudinal research for infant attachment styles, she set to extend Bowlby's conceptual framework on attachment. She explored how one-year-old children can cope with brief separations from their mothers. The series of separations, re-unions and the child's response are observed and rated from videotapes. On the basis of this rating children were classified into three groups: secure, avoidant and ambivalent (for more detail, see Solomon and George, 1999).

Ainsworth's observational method, classification and the three patterns of attachment also become the basis of conceptualisation and measurement for adult attachment research. Concerning research method in adult attachment, there are important divisions and considerable tension which cut across the distinction between interview and questionnaire method. Feeney and Noller (1996, p. 142) note that there has tended to be a division between developmental psychologists (following the work of Ainsworth, Main and her colleagues) and social psychologists (following the work of Hazan and Shaver and of Bartholomew). Focusing on the observational principle, the former use narrative interview and scoring system for classification, while the latter use self-report questionnaires looking at the individual's differences in romantic relationships based on Ainsworth's three patterns. These two paths focus on different aspects of attachment, ask different questions, and measure different constructs. For the development of my research methodology, both approaches will be explored briefly seeking for an appropriate research tool for religious attachment in adulthood

(for more detail, see Crowell and Treboux, 1995; Cassidy and Shaver, 1999).

4.2.1 The Adult Attachment Interview (AAI)

In the adult attachment area, based on Ainsworth's observational work in 'Strange Situation', Main and her colleague (e.g., Main and Goldwyn, 1984; George et al., 1984) have developed a semi-structured interview called an Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) and a scoring system for classification of adult attachment patterns. In contrast to the behavioural focused assessment of the child-parent attachment, they focus on 'a move to the level of representation' (Main et al., 1985). It entails a very labour-intensive procedure. In the interview the adult participants are asked about their childhood experiences with attachment figures (as early as can be remembered) and they are expected to give descriptions of relationships with their parents. The interview is transcribed verbatim, and a series of specific ratings are made and used to arrive at a classification that is based not on the content of the transcript, but on narrative coherence (Hesse, 1999).

The concept of coherence in the AAI is based on the notions of a linguistic philosopher, Grice (1975) who identified coherent discourse as being co-operative and adhering to four maxims: quality (be truthful and have evidence for what you say); quantity (be complete but succinct); relationship (be relevant); and manner (be clear and orderly). According to the scoring system Main and Goldwyn (1984) have developed, each attachment group is classified based on the participant's narrative coherency (cf., Hesse, 1999). Secure adults value intimate relationships and acknowledge the effects of those relationships. They are able to reflect their past attachment memories and their answers to the questions are clear, relevant and to the

point. Dismissing adults (analogous to avoidant infants) have little to say about the attachment experiences of their childhood, and they provide relatively short transcripts. They show an inability to recall their childhood and often idealise their relationships without providing concrete supportive details. Preoccupied (anxious-ambivalent) adults often provide extremely long, vivid but entangled narratives.

Thus, it is not what happened to an individual that is important for adult attachment theory, but how the person thinks and feels about it as revealed in the coherence of the story that is told. The AAI is considered to assess what is described as the adult's 'state of mind' with respect to attachment (Hesse, 1999). The AAI and its scoring system has developed from an original focus upon content-oriented aspects of categories in relation to attachment, but it assesses not only the contents of the adult's mind but also the ability to operate upon those contents, namely the use of forms (Main, 1991; Hesse, 1999). Since AAI classifications are based on analysis of language, it is important to know whether the characteristics of language used during the interview are specific to the topic of attachment or simply reflect general cognitive and linguistic abilities or style, because patterns of attachment are not generally related to measures of intelligence or memory (Goldberg, 2000, p. 45).

The AAI has focused on adults' 'unconscious mind' so that they can assess the representation of adult attachment. The assessment is, however, not much different from others which measure conscious mind in the participants' expectations about the availability of their attachment figures' care-giving and which "capture the same information as the AAI" (Crowell et al., 1999, p. 446). In fact, some think that the AAI is not at all different from other measures (ibid.). Although the AAI has many merits in holding the behavioural approach originally proposed by Bowlby and Ainsworth, since it draws attention to the link between attachment and cognition, it is

not "related to broad-based assessments of social competence or to reports of feelings in or about relationships" (ibid.). Furthermore, researchers (Feeney, 1999; Feeney and Noller, 1996; Crowell et al., 1999) point out that it has a complexity in administration and scoring, since it requires in-depth training. It is a complicated and expensive means of assessing adult attachment (Crowell et al., 1999, p. 446).

Nevertheless, it is probably "the most widely used and best-developed attachment measure" for adult attachment research (Goldberg, 2000, p. 43) and much research has followed using AAI. Alongside the AAI, several other measures have been developed which are also focused on current relationships. Crowell and Owens (1996) have developed the Current Relationship Interview (CRI) which is one of several interviews that parallel the methods of the AAI in both structure and scoring (Goldberg, 2000; Crowell et al., 1999).

4.2.2 Self-report measures

The other path of methodology development in adult attachment research is that used by social psychologists. The method they have used is self-report measures, while the AAI and other associated methods with AAI have used the narrative interview. Although the Attachment History Questionnaire (AHQ) has been developed (Pottharst and Kessler, 1990), containing demographic variables, family history, patterns of family interactions, and so on, it is not generally recognized by other attachment researchers (for attachment-related questionnaires developed by other researchers, see Crowell et al., 1999).

Among self-report measures, Hazan and Shaver's (1987) work was the most influential one. Based on the attempts to capture the attachment patterns identified by

Ainsworth (Ainsworth et al., 1978), they have worked on adult romantic relationships using self-report measures. They have adopted Ainsworth's threefold typology as a framework for organizing individual differences in the ways adults think, feel and behave in romantic relationships (Crowell et al., 1999). They have developed brief multi-sentence descriptions that correspond to each of the three attachment types: Secure, Avoidant and Anxious-ambivalent. The participants were asked to choose the most appropriate sentence for their adult romantic relationships from the descriptions which refer to a person's characteristic desires, feelings, and behaviours (for more details, see chapter 2 in this thesis and Hazan and Shaver, 1987).

Hazan and Shaver's (1987) categorical, forced-choice method was adopted by many researchers since it is brief, has validity and is easy to administrate (Feeney, 1999, p. 360; Crowell et al., 1999, p. 450). Despite these benefits, their method has also been criticised: "the forced-choice method assumes that variation among people within a particular category is unimportant... and that individuals do not vary in the extent to which they can be characterized by each pattern" (Crowell et al., 1999, p. 450).

Above all, a number of researchers have proposed a new measure of adult romantic attachment patterns based on Hazan and Shaver's (1987) work. Taking the criticisms that Hazan and Shaver's (1987) work has little flexibility in categorising people into patterns, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) have developed the Relationship Questionnaire (RQ), containing multi-sentence descriptions concerning both models of self and other as negative and positive. They have also focused on close relationships and provide four forced-choice sentences. Hazan and Shaver have also revised their work with others (e.g., Kirkpatrick and Hazan, 1994; Shaver and Hazan, 1988; Shaver et al., 1988). Other researchers also followed their conceptualisation of

romantic love as attachment (e.g., Feeney and Noller, 1990, 1991, 1996; Levy and Davis, 1988). These researchers identified two dimensions in adult attachment: comfort with closeness and anxiety over relationships. They also tried to capture the participants' ability to use attachment figures as a secure base and haven of safety as they observe the ability of dependence, openness and responsiveness.

Although the self-report method has the difficulty of assessing unconscious or automatic processes, it has validity in assessing individual differences in adult attachment. This method has the following basic concepts in measuring adult attachment. That is, it focuses on adults' ability to provide valuable information about their emotional experiences and behaviour; having sufficient experience in relationships enables most adults to recount their emotion and behaviour in the relationships; the process in consciousness and unconsciousness works in the same direction to achieve a goal (Crowell et al., 1999, p. 453).

4.2.3 Other approaches

The above two approaches are distinct from a methodological point of view. The AAI focuses on coherence of the working models while the self-report is based on the ability to provide attachment-related information. The former gives priorities to the form in interviews while the latter to the contents of reports. Collins and Read (1994) have tried to integrate the two approaches. They particularly work on the complex network of working models of self and others in adulthood and provide four components of working models in individual differences using Hazan and Shaver's (1987) three-group attachment model. As they recognise the complexity of adults' working models (see chapter 3 in this thesis), Collins and Read (1994) carefully

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present the characteristics of the four interrelated components of attachment which are represented according to each attachment group. They argue that each attachment group shows varied responses in four components of working models. They also elucidate that the adults' working models function in emotion, cognition and behaviours accordingly.

According to Collins and Read's (1994) work, Feeney and Noller (1996) present a visual table (see appendix 1). This shows how each attachment group responds with different characteristics to each component of attachment. The first component of the working models is related to memories of the relationship with parents. Secure individuals tend to remember their parents as warm and affectionate, avoidant individuals remember their mothers as cold and rejecting, and anxious-ambivalent individuals remember their fathers as unfair (Collins and Read, 1990; Feeney and Noller, 1990; Hazan and Shaver, 1987; Rothbard and Shaver, 1994).

Feeney (1999; Feeney and Noller, 1996) states that the second component reflects images of self and others in the working models. Secure subjects believe that they are worthy and loved by others and see others positively. They have few self-doubts and a high sense of self-worth. They tend to be interpersonally oriented and to see themselves as generally liked by others. In addition, they see others as well-intentioned and good hearted, as well as dependable, trustworthy, and altruistic (pp. 97-98). Anxious/ambivalent individuals see others as complex and difficult to understand. For this reason, they are wary (or perhaps ambivalent) about interacting with them. They also see themselves (and people in general) as having little control over their own lives. The beliefs and attitudes of avoidant/distant individuals are particularly negative to others. Avoidant/distant individuals tend not to be interpersonally oriented; rather, because of their lack of confidence in social situations,

they may be minimally involved in social relationships. They tend to see others as not trustworthy or dependable, to doubt their honesty and integrity, and to be suspicious of their motives (Feeney and Noller, 1996, p. 99).

According to Hazan and Shaver's (1987) proposal of individual differences in the group attachment model, the goals of secure individuals are intimate relationships but they seek a balance between closeness and autonomy in relationships. Anxious/ambivalent individuals yearn for extreme intimacy in relationships and tend to fear rejection and abandonment and spend a lot of time preoccupied with thinking or worrying about their relationships. Seeking to meet their needs for extreme intimacy, they are willing to give up autonomy needs (Feeney and Noller, 1996, p. 99). Goals of avoidant/distant individuals are maintaining distance and preventing others from getting too close. They tend to limit intimacy which may be motivated by a strong need to avoid rejection or may be motivated by concerns for autonomy, as reflected in an emphasis on achievement (Feeney and Noller, 1996, pp. 74-75).

According to Feeney and Noller (1996), secure individuals tend to acknowledge their distress and to deal with its negative effect in constructive and appropriate ways and they are able to seek help from others when they need to. Anxious/ambivalent individuals are sensitive to their emotional reactions and tend to experience more distress than others. They also display sharp levels of anxiety and frustration about unmet needs. They are predisposed to be submissive to gain other's acceptance and likely to express these emotions in destructive ways. Avoidant/distant individuals tend to minimize or even deny their emotional reactions and are less likely than others to express their emotions or let others know about their distress. As a result, they have difficulty seeking help from others to deal with their negative emotions.

The contribution of Collins and Read's (1994) work on adult attachment

methodology is that they have taken the criticisms of both paths in adult attachment research as seen above and tried to integrate them. In doing so, they have provided an important research tool which could assess both forms and contents of the attachment-related account. By working out the complexity of the adults' working models, they have offered a multi-dimensional approach toward adult attachment.

Although Collins and Read's (1990, 1994) work has not been recognised as a major work, it has become a significant framework in the field of adult attachments along with some researchers who work on attachment-related issues, such as pathological personality (e.g., Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991; Feeney and Noller, 1990), work (e.g., Hazan and Shaver, 1990) or religious attachment (e.g., Kirkpatrick, 1999). Feeney and Noller (1996) have discussed it fully in their study with regard to conceptualising love as an adult attachment. Following this line, in his recent work, Kirkpatrick has also acknowledged Collins and Read's (1994) work – on the networking system of attachment, four components of attachment and its functions in the attachment relationships – in the application of attachment perspective to religious attachment (see Kirkpatrick, 1999).

4.2.4 Discussion on methodological issues

Methodological issues have been prominent in adult attachment studies and they have centred particularly on problems of conceptualisation and measurement (Feeney and Noller, 1996). According to the research purposes and means, adult attachment research has proceeded into paths. As we have seen above, the developmental approach, as reflected in the AAI, is based on extensive questioning about childhood relationships with parents. This measure aims to assess individuals' responses in their

level of defensiveness about these early relationships. Although Main (1999) suggests combined methods for assessing attachment in adulthood, acknowledging that capturing women's 'state of mind' is needed because it is affected by present situation, this does not mean that she has given away her stance. The social approach, on the other hand, whether using self-reports or interview-related methods, focuses primarily on the quality of current romantic relationships.

Adult attachment research has been developed in various ways and covers many areas in adult life, particularly the adult romantic relationships. The study of adult romantic attachment has been developing along two paths: categorical measure and continuous measures (Feeney and Noller, 1996, p. 54). Categorical measures, which are based on finding styles of attachment group, have clearly been expanded from three-group models to four-group models of adult attachment (e.g., Bartholomew, 1990; Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). Continuous measures allow for a more complete description of subjects' attachment patterns, and tend to be less strongly influenced by researchers' preconceived notions concerning the number and nature of the various attachment groups (e.g., Hazan and Shaver, 1987).

In fact, whether they use interviews or self-reporting or integrate them, whether they focus on forms or contents of the participant's account, and whether they pursue categorical measure or not, both developmental researchers and investigators of adult attachment are commonly interested in the working models and their stability and change, which deals with two concepts: First, the working models guide experience in intimate relationships; second, the working models are in turn influenced by relationship experiences (Feeney, 1999, p. 363). Although these approaches stand on different assumptions and use different measures, they all start with same ideas: First, the attachment system is normative – that is, relevant to the development of all people,

and active and important in adult life; second, there are individual differences in the expression of attachment behaviour in the context of attachment relationships (Crowell et al., 1999, p. 435). That is, the key point of methodology in adult attachment research is that the activeness of the attachment system and individual differences are embedded in attachment representations (ibid., p. 438).

It is, however, important to recognize the research purpose when you choose research methodology as these adult attachment approaches have their own purposes. As Collins and Read (1994) have asserted, it is also important to have in mind that although working models of attachment have focused on adult attachment research, they are not very well defined despite the fact that adult attachment relationships are far more complex and complicated than those of infants (see chapter 3 in this thesis). Therefore, as Hesse (1999, p. 426) has claimed, it is necessary to assess the mental process or representations in the conversational context, which is consistent with Ainsworth's strange situation.

4.2.5 A method for religious attachment

Despite the extensive development of attachment-related studies and its measurement, studies in the area of psychology of religious belief and behaviour are relatively rare. As we have observed in chapter 3, there are Kirkpatrick's (1992, 1994, 1995, 1999; Kirkpatrick and Hazan, 1990; Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992) works and several similar studies of religious conversion (Ullman, 1989) and of religious rigidity (Hammersley, 1997).

As he was influenced by Hazan and Shaver (1987, 1988), Kirkpatrick (1992; Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992) provides three pre-designed statements where each

sentence represents one of the attachment groups and asks the participant to choose the most appropriate one for them. Although she did not mention attachment theory directly, Ullman (1989) developed her semi-structured interview and scoring system. Hammersley (1997) combined several measures of questionnaire and interview. Based on the Kirkpatrick's descriptions of three attachment patterns and Collins and Read's (1994) work on the complexity of adult working models, I have presented a dynamic feature of the working models in relation to religious attachment and three multi-sentenced descriptions of faith patterns (see chapter 3 in this thesis).

This cannot, however, satisfy research looking at women's subjectivity and the richness in women's way of faithing. Thus it is important to look at feminist research methodologies, their development and issues arising from their studies when looking for an appropriate methodology for researching women's faith development.

4.3 Feminist research methodologies

Since the late 1960's many feminist studies, especially into theories and methods, have emerged in psychology, social science, and theology. These studies provide a critical analysis of the forces that subordinate women to men. Feminist studies tend to be interdisciplinary and to employ various methods of inquiry and analysis. With particular regard to feminist theological methodologies, Rebecca Chopp (1996) believes that methodologies are "principles through which theology is crafted" and "provide both a framework of understanding and a way to provide internal coherence for the credibility of theology" (p. 181). Thus, it is important to explore the development of feminist research methodologies and the research principles the feminist researchers have a stance in.

4.3.1 Development in feminist research methodologies

Studying feminist research methodology, Slee (1999) points out three phases of feminist research development, which are loosely chronological. The first phase (the critical stage, the late 1960s and early 1970s) developed a critical awareness of the biases against women in social scientific methodology. In the second phase (constructivist phase) the basic assumptions and methods were changed: feminist research meant not just research about women, but research by and for women. Feminists allowed the subjectivity of women centre stage in research and adopted qualitative methods, especially ethnographic and interview methods. They also developed a more interactive approach with qualitative methods like the friendship model of interviewing and sharing of research findings. In the third phase, identified as a stage of diversification and self-reflective critical sophistication, feminist practice is widened beyond a narrowly methodological focus. That is, methods themselves are not as important as the underlying principles that shape and inform research design. Primary attention is given to the epistemological commitment of the research. Thus feminist researchers use both qualitative and quantitative methods as tools, according to the aims and specifics of the research.

In fact, the diversity in women-centred approaches is not only great in the development of research field but also multiple in their assumptions and stances (cf., Brock, 1996; Chopp, 1996; Kang, 1999; Travers, 2001; Slee, 2003). Graham (1996a, p. 231) points out that the feminist approach has sought to expose gender bias and androcentrism and to generate theoretical foundations for new patterns of women-centred theory and practice in areas as diverse such as psychotherapy, ethics, gender identity and spirituality. Chopp (1996) asserts that in their diversity of methodologies they share five common points: a pragmatic criticism; 'freedom from suffering into

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flourishing'; gender analysis; prospective; combines ethics and epistemology (p. 181). Thus, whether they have different stances and pursue different subjects, in terms of methodology they have common grounds in an epistemological position that starts from women's experience, particularly based on inductive approach that values the variety in women's experience.

4.3.2 Principles in feminist research

As seen above, a major issue in feminist research is the question of the epistemological principles that ground the research and shape the methodology. Based on this prime principle feminist researchers produce women-centred perspectives and a focus on women's 'subjectivity'.

Some exemplary works (e.g., Gilligan, 1982; Chodorow, 1989) are regarded as providing the grounds for a distinctively feminist or women-centred perspective. Gilligan's (1982) study in developmental psychology of the differential moral sensibilities of boys and girls concluded that girls derive a distinctive moral 'voice' from principles of *connectedness*, *relationality*, and *interdependence*. Similarly, the influence of feminist object-relations psychoanalysis, as in the work of Chodorow (1989), is seen as providing an account of the formation of women's gender identity in which women's propensity to *intimacy* and *nurturance* is rooted in the mother-daughter relationship.

Feminist psychoanalysis is also providing a radical new vocabulary for understanding women's '*subjectivity*' (consciousness or identity). Graham (1996a) asserts "authentic feminine identity exists in a literally unspeakable and unnameable realm, akin to the repressed unconscious, beyond the pale of patriarchal discourse" (p.

232). The search for such a distinctive psychic energy in this marginal world of women is leading researchers into an exploration of women's experience and women-centred expression.

Writing her thesis, Slee (1999) has developed her own research method for research purposes, to discern the ways of women's faith development. In particular, her research methodology itself is based on feminist theology and psychological studies of women's development, *for* women and *by* women. Based on epistemological principles, the research is grounded in women's experience as both '*source*' and '*norm*', which gives priority to women's faith narratives; looks for differences *between* and *within* women; practices women's '*subjectivity*' while conducting the research, and seeks to enable participants through the process of research, to liberate and empower themselves. That is, for research for women and by women, a qualitative method needs to be carefully designed, detailed and adequately fitted for the research purpose, such as subjectivity of interviewees, open-ended questions, a non-oppressive method and reflexivity in the unstructured interview.

Above all, we can see that feminist research methods are in a significant process of development in their conceptualisation and measurement. As Slee (1999, 2004) indicates, however, there is a limitation in diversity of sampling even though she tried to avoid it, and difficulties in interpreting Asian women's meanings in the interview. That is true because difficulties in interpreting not only come from language differences, but they also come from the fact that the language a person speaks carries a cultural meaning as well. Nevertheless, I believe that there are common grounds in women's nature and the above principles are important when doing the research.

4.4 The research design

As the research looks at women's faith development through the lens of the attachment perspective, so the research methodology needs to be shaped by principles and methods both of attachment research and of feminist research. Social science is also included since faith is seen as a human activity where all aspects of human experience interact. I identify here the key principles which have shaped my research design.

4.4.1 Principles of the research

a) Openness to variety in women's experience

Although I have discussed and suggested three attachment patterns of multi-sentenced descriptions of faith according to the existing attachment perspective in chapter 3, it is necessary to limit the research field in which I am exploring. Whilst examining religious faith from an attachment perspective, my priority concern is for women's issues in relation to faith development such as women's relationality and the experiences of oppression or impasse longing for intimate relationships throughout their lifetime; how they work out these matters in their faith development; and how their faith guides their longing for intimate relationships. I am also concerned to understand women's desire for full humanity and the realisation in God who gives them comfort and security, as they hope for life.

This way of working begins with the embodied truth of women's story-telling, the so called 'socio-biography' in which listeners hear, not cold data but actual people's suffering, crying, longing and survival strategies (Chung, 1990). Chung writes, "It is embodied historiography … because it deals with the whole person and not some

single aspect of personhood" (p. 105). Consequently, the foremost principle of the research should be clearly the openness to women's concrete experience because "women's experiences are the locus and source" (Isasi-Díaz, 1996, p. 95). Slee (2004) re-enforces the grounding of research in women's experience and writes that women's experience is the source, "the substance, material and evidence upon which theory is developed and built", and it is also "the norm against which theories and claims are judged" (p. 48). That is, the daily experiences of women struggling and hoping for fullness of life in intimate relationships are the starting place. So to speak, women's experience is placed in the centre of the research process.

Women researchers claim that women's experiences should be recognised as multiple. Isasi-Díaz (1996) asserts that women's experiences should not be assumed or referred to as "some sort of universal women's experience", and it is important to make clear that "no human perspective is dispensable" (p. 95). Women experience suffering personally as well as socio-politically and culturally: different aspects of the experiences among women show commonalities as well as particularities. Sometimes the varieties of discourse on women's experiences are not seen as objective facts (ibid). The research is, thus, in the position that women's narrative on their experiences offer essential access to the truth. With this principle in mind, the research is to have a concrete starting point and continuous process of radical openness to the variety in women's experiences, bearing in mind both universality and particularity.

This principle of the openness to variety in women's real life experiences is significant when we consider issues on faith development. Faith is relational and affectional and in this our whole life issues are embedded, as we have seen in the previous chapters of this thesis. Women talk about their concrete, cultural and

historical life experiences in their narrative on their faith journey.

The openness to variety in women's experience begins with listening; listening with awareness and sensitivity. Listening to the variety in women's experience enables listeners to enter into their real life rather than through the fabricated stories or modified theories of faith development by male academics. That is, listening to the women's narrative also allows access to their own understanding of faith and the impact of relational and affective issues on their faith journey. Furthermore listening to women's narrative enables researchers to realize individual differences in women's faith journey (Slee, 2004) as well as to grasp common ways of faithing.

b) The subjectivity of the participants

The whole process of the research will be rooted in the principle of women's subjectivity which is the most significant issue in practice raised in feminist research as we have seen above. This principle is related to the purpose of doing research and studying theology. In fact, the principle of subjectivity is related to the principle of openness in the variety of women's experience. That is, as Slee (2004) mentions, it is to do research for women, with women and by women. The role of the interviewees in the research is not limited to being objects of the research. The commitment of the researcher is not limited to being a conductor or analyser. Both parties work together in the process of the interviews sharing authorship in negotiation so that women can be empowered through the process of the interview. This principle will apply to every aspect of the research, to both interviewee and interviewer: in the design of the interview, in the processes of collecting data and in the processes of analysis although it has to be tempered by the use of attachment theory in the analysis of the data.

This principle is important for the researcher; as a woman researcher conducting research for women's faith attachment, it was crucial to consider how to resolve the tension between my commitment to the subjectivity issue and the imposition of theory-generated analysis. That is, the question of how to apply this principle was a very important issue for my research: how to disclose attachment issues in faith development without forcing the women interviewees. Throughout the literature review, however, I found that revealing attachment issues among women using existing methods (see above) was not appropriate because the participants were forced one way or another and were the object of the research rather than the subject.

I believe, therefore, that research with women needs a natural setting so that women talk about their everyday life experience and so that they feel comfortable as if they are talking to a close friend where the sequence of narrative is not limited by any other authority. It also requires little intervention so they can search for their inner world in depth. In other words, the research tool is to be designed to maximise the interviewee's subjectivity.

Allowing women's subjectivity to recount their experience in the interviews is consistent with Harding's (1987) assertion, "In the best of feminist research, the purposes of research and analysis are not separable from the origins of research problems" (p. 8). The principle of allowing women to be subjective is pivotal when the research is set in non-oppressive structures and inclusive strategies in the process of the interview and also the analysis methods.

For this, the research employed an autobiographical narrative interview. Narrative approach is more and more in use in recent research in pastoral care, counselling and education. Although the interests and the use of the term are varied, many academics value and pay close attention to it (Lynch and Willows, 1998, p. 4) as it allows for the

depth of human experience, whatever area is explored. Donald Polkinghorne (1988, p. 11) states that narrative is an important method to understand and seek for human existence. James Fowler (1991, p. 127) also affirms that telling religious and cultural narrative enables people to confirm their identity, self-acknowledgement, the fusion of personal and communal meaning, and the basis of faith. John Westerhoff III (1985, p. 27) says Christianity is a narrative community and narrative establishes the community's life and faith, change and challenge.

Narrative methods are used and valued, particularly for women as it encourages women's subjectivity as women's narrative has not been heard and recognized properly in the Christian community. Wimberly (1994, p. 22) and O'Neill (1990, p. 90) emphasise narrative method as an important way for women to awake their consciousness and to give power to their faith journey. Mary Moore (1991) states her passion for narrative method and her discoveries: "how one story generates another; how sharing stories ground people in their heritage and give expression to their present situation; how stories enflesh social critique; and how stories give hope for the future…" (p. 131). Through narrative, religious experience can be told, heard and shared, and give meaning to the abstract world in everyday life, in educational and pastoral practice and also in research. This is because of the fact that narratives function in the world as symbols. Symbols enable us to access individuals' feelings, ideas and recollections and religious emotions that are not easily elicited otherwise. Slee (2004) also calls our attention to the significant function of the symbolic and affective realm in faith development, she states that with the open-ended method, narrative method allowed "the distinctive shape and texture of each women's faith narrative to come into view" (p. 167). In particular, in the Korean context, women have been expected to listen to authorities – their father before marriage, their

husband after marriage and their son after their husband died. Even in the church women as individuals or as a group are assumed to be led by the religious authority such as pastors and elders who are mostly men. Traditionally women have been praised when they keep silence although feminist academics insist that breaking silence is the first step towards empowering women.

An autobiographical narrative method was beneficial as it maximised the women's subjectivity and authorship. The women who were interviewed in my study were allowed their full authority to weave their story in the unstructured interview. This enabled the women to explore their own experiences with their own authority without being oppressed. Telling their own story with their own authority enabled them to be the author of their own narratives in the edge or centre of their time of history. Some women started from the Christian heritage and wove their autobiography chronologically while others started with their present understanding of faith and a view of the self. Some women highlighted their enjoyable times or proud points of time while the others focus on their hard times. Some women recounted their autobiography as they unfolded several deeply significant events while the others used linked unresolved relational issues. Whatever way the autobiography was woven, it revealed their image of self and others, especially the significant other, such as mother, father, husband and God, as they are Christians. Thus, there were significant practical activities throughout the interview process, such as remembering, imagining, reflecting and refining in which the women's subjectivity was well practised.

c) Phenomenological and hermeneutic approach

As the experience of faith is regarded as the human part of activities in my research, with a phenomenological approach the research engages in studying human development and religious experience. This research focuses on attachment feelings and behaviours, such as attachment-related experiences, beliefs and attitudes, goals and needs, and strategies for achieving attachment goals. These are more or less phenomenological issues that the research explores in studying language or women's speech, which constructs women's meaning. It involves, on the one hand, at an individual level, exploring the relationship between a woman's inner world and outer world through studying coherence of the contents and the forms in the women's narratives: emotional expressions and nuances in every account in each episode and event; discourse style on every relationship; symbols and images that the women use. On the other hand, each woman's narrative is compared to other women's to look at the similarities and differences, again on the basis of coherence in their narrative.

The phenomenological method is "the attempt to perceive and interpret the inner meanings in people's experience" and "to understand the inner world of the individuals studied by understanding how they experience the elements in their life worlds" (Moore, 1991, p. 97). Investigating phenomena in religious matters has not been popular with conservative evangelicals regarding it as distorting sacred values. Although the phenomenological approach to religious matters has already had a huge impact on the Western society, it is still not welcomed among conservative sects in Korea. However, phenomenology is an important method in education and ministry because "it involves listening to the voice of the people and of God at work in the midst of people" (ibid.). It is also an invaluable method in research studies that are engaged in religious experience.

In fact, attachment perspective itself has phenomenological implications when it is applied in practice. Attachment researchers require sensitivity in looking at the person's behaviour, language and the operation of attachment systems. In the same way, my research explores religious matters and person's beliefs and values in the attachment relationships including faith issues. A phenomenological approach to faith experience is neither new nor exclusive, but the approach allowed the women's distinctive attachment nature to be revealed in the interview. In particular, sensitivity to women's language use and the women's ability to weave an autobiographic narrative enabled the researcher to look at the ways of relating to the self and others, the ways of searching for their goals and some strategies for attachment. It enabled me to distinguish the differences between the women which became the characteristics of each pattern. Although three patterns of God-attachment were presented based on existing patterns of attachment in general, the characteristics in each pattern were already there to be seen. That is, the phenomenological approach allowed patterns of God-attachment to emerge. The phenomena that were revealed in my study were already there in Korean Christian women's ways of faithing, but had hardly ever been heard and recognized as a proper way of faithing. The phenomenological approach enabled me to investigate the phenomena and any characteristics in them.

Women's construction of meaning cannot be, however, understood as a phenomenon itself, but it must be interpreted in an appropriate way. That is, the research is also to engage in hermeneutic processes, because the present cannot be understood without understanding of the past and also the past cannot be understood unless you understand the whole. It is also because the women's language cannot be understood without understanding it in the context where the women live and the

context where the women live also cannot be fully understood without qualitative involvement in interpretation of each woman's account. This series of interpretation processes enables one to reach a full understanding what women really talk about and what women's behaviour means. Jasinski (2001) indicates that hermeneutic thinking will help when we are looking for an answer to the question, "what is the best or most appropriate way of studying or comprehending human action, especially human linguistic or discursive action?" (p. 288).

While the phenomenological approach carries facts in phenomena, the hermeneutic approach involves interpreting the phenomena with cultural and contextual understanding. Hermeneutics was originally used in biblical interpretation, which is distinctive from exegesis, and allows contextual understandings to count. The psychoanalytic tool that I used enabled me to take full advantage of the contextual principle in hermeneutics as an aspect of my analysis. Hermeneutics in biblical studies presents the Bible text in the context that it was written millennia ago to the readers who live in the post-modern world of diversity. Likewise, the hermeneutical approach to a psychoanalytic study of women's way of faithing interprets the women's interview transcripts with cultural understanding. That is, my study presents the hermeneutic interpretation of the women's faith narratives to the readers who are interested in women's faith development and pastoral practice for women. This analytic method was beneficial because the women's attachment patterns could not be revealed with only a part of the present phenomenon itself. This approach enabled me to look at the whole from the parts and the present and the future from the past. It allowed me to listen to socio-emotional attachment accounts in the interviews that were culturally embedded. In the hermeneutic approach, deconstructive listening is a necessary and important tool because women's stories carry the culturally internalised

values and norms that have oppressed and even distorted the women's thoughts and ways of living. This enabled the listener to distinguish a problem or issue from the person, since, sometimes, the person herself does not acknowledge the problem has been internalised and intertwined with many cultural issues. Deconstructive listening, that is described and practised by Neuger (2001), offered a means with which the hermeneutic approach becomes more meaningful, especially for attachment issues in women's life and faith.

In my research study, I used several levels of analytic methods with phenomenological and hermeneutic approaches. Thus several levels of analysis were engaged in a series of steps: observing, describing, looking for patterns, theorizing, and practicing or testing. This also offered the researcher hermeneutic benefits. The process of interpretation signifies the method of "hermeneutic circle' in which the transcripts were referred to repeatedly in the course of interpreting and deconstructive listening. In fact, based on the epistemological principles, phenomenological and hermeneutic approaches were profoundly enriched in my research study since both approaches were sensitive to the language, such as the symbols, metaphors and narrative, experienced and used by the interviewees. Thus, autobiographical narrative interviews became more beneficial with analytic tools like phenomenological and hermeneutic approach.[6]

4.4.2 The research design

The research, based on the attachment perspective as a conceptual frame, but valuing feminist research principles, will draw on autobiographical, narrative, in-depth interviews (cf., Wengraf, 2001). It is unstructured, open-ended but loosely focused on

faith and attachment issues. The research started from arranging a meeting with the participants, conducting the interviews, and the development of a series of analysis processes.

a) The participants

10 Korean women aged 29 to 62 (at the time of the interview) living in Birmingham temporarily, participated in the interview. Some women are very close to me and some were met solely for the purpose of the interview. They are Christians from different denominations, and chosen to represent a range of ages and commitment to church life and variety in marital status and other aspects of life. A summary of the participants (Table 1) is as follows:

Table 1 A Summary of the Research Group

No.	Pseudonym	Age	Marital	Education	Denomination
1	Cynthia	38	Married	Graduated	Presbyterian
2	Ruth	62	Widow	College	Free in Denomination
3	Janet	47	Married	Graduated	Presbyterian
4	Rachel	29	Single	Graduated	Presbyterian
5	Hannah	41	Married	Post Graduated	Ex-Methodist, Presbyterian
6	Laura	35	Single	Graduated	N/a
7	Jean	33	Married	Graduated	Presbyterian
8	Libby	36	Married	Graduated	Ex-Presbyterian
9	Nancy	37	Married	Graduated	Presbyterian
10	Joan	33	Married	Graduated	(Pentecostal husband)

Most of them are Presbyterian or related in some ways because of the Korean Christian context where a vast proportion of the Christian population are Presbyterian. I would say, as we will see in the later chapters, the women do not differ in terms of

their denominations. That is, the women's affiliation to denominations was vague and inclusive. It can also be said that denominations in Korea are not particularly distinctive, at least at the grass-roots level. Above all, looking at the differences in denominations was not the intention of my research.

Seven of them are in the centre of the church context, such as belonging to a pastor's family, married to a pastor or themselves practicing a central role in the church community. Some of them were born in Christian families while some were not but came to faith when they were children, teenagers or even after marriage and a few of them are identified as newly come to faith. The various affiliations of the women to the religious community and Christianity were deliberately established. Some women who worked as educational or pastoral ministers were also intentionally included as a subject. This was because I wanted to look at similarities and differences between the women in the centre of Christian community and the edge of it, and also to explore the relationship and influences between human attachment and religious attachment.

Although I tried to look for diversity in other areas like education, financial situation and professional status, this was hard to establish since most Korean women here in Birmingham have come over to study or mainly to accompany their husband's study on a higher degree course. Consequently, most of the participants are well-educated and relatively well-off. They are mostly graduates, which is also a common phenomenon in contemporary Korea since educational drive is very high at both national and individual levels.

Most of the women who participated in the interviews were in or around their thirties. Although I tried to have participants from a wide age range, it was not easy to achieve this for the same reason mentioned above. This can, however, rather be

beneficial for re-enforcing my research into transitions in faith development when the women engage or settle in new relationships. Seven women were married with one or two children, one was a widow and two were single. In the same way, this marital status has offered significant information since my research considers the relational and affective dimension of faith.

One of the extreme cases that I wanted to include but was not able to pursue in my research group was the case of women who have experienced separation with their spouse with or without their intention and women who have been through their parental divorce which is assumed to cause many issues in women's attachment life. I contacted two women in this situation but they firmly refused to be interviewed.

Despite all the diversity in the women, the group of ten women is distinctively homogeneous with well-educated Korean Christian women, most of them in their middle adulthood. This could be a benefit rather than a demerit as I had not intended to represent the whole population of women in Korea or women in the world through this group. This focused group of ten women, however, offered the potential to do qualitative and in-depth research with auto-biographical narrative in-depth interview. In particular, the depth of my research is in catching the individuals' 'state of mind' and looking at the relationship between human attachment and faith experience. In this sense, I believe that a group of 10 women has its justification in the number of participants of qualitative research like this.

The women's names listed above and mentioned in this thesis are pseudonyms. This is to protect their identity and to maintain confidentiality which I promised the interviewees. The pseudonym was used throughout the research process, in any forms of analysis notes, report and publication related to this research (e.g., Joung, 2006).

b) The interview

An auto-biographical narrative in-depth interview was designed according to the principles identified above and has an open-ended, loosely focused structure. The design of the interview drew on a biographical narrative depth interview in Wengraf (2001), and attachment perspective in Kirkpatrick (1992; Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992) and Hammersley (1997) and women-friendly methods in Slee (1999).

The interview lasted about one and a half to two hours which was divided mainly into two parts: the first part was auto-biographical narrative interview regarding general faith issues and the second part focussed on the attachment issues, in between there was a break.

The interview was arranged one week in advance, with some prior preparation of the participant, alerting the women to the key themes to be explored. Both the women and I had negotiated to arrange place, time, date and duration of the interview to have enough time for full engagement in the interview.

Interviews were conducted in a friendly place for the interviews. The women had chosen the place wherever it was. Most of them chose their own house where they felt ease and comfortable, when it was school time, to minimise distractions from the children, even though there were some interruptions by visitors, family members or telephone. Some women chose my house for their convenience and at their request. Although there were disadvantages compared to being in familiar circumstances, the natural setting of a home environment helped the women to be safe and secure.

Some nervous feelings were expected as these women had never been in the same situation, where their personal story was the subject throughout the whole time of the interview even though the interview was in a close to natural setting. Thus, it was

important to be transparent about what would be achieved through the interview. For this reason, when the interviews were arranged and also before the interview started, the women were briefly informed about the research area and purpose, type of interview and the interview questions, to minimise feelings of anxiety or frustration about what would happen in the interview. They were answered if there were any questions about the research and the interview.

The woman was given a set of three questions and allowed freedom to weave her life story in an autobiographical narrative interview. It was up to the woman who was interviewed where to start, where to go and how far to go. As we have seen above, women-centred or women-friendly interview aims to minimise the oppressive situation in whatever stage of the interview, and to maximise the women's subjectivity. The woman was given time, space and authority to tell her story, to express her emotion, perspective and evaluation, and to explore her inner world according to her level of commitment to the interview. Thus, there was no time limit for the whole process. There were certainly no right answers to the questions. There was also no limitation on the narrative style only guidance in autobiographical narrative.

Looking at the attachment style in women's life in faith, as we have seen in chapter 3, the women's descriptions of their image of God and their self-concept were very important for the research. To assess the effect of a woman's working model on faith development, the following issues needed to be addressed by the women: their early experience of relationships with each parents, and the pattern of parenting, what they felt about this parenting, and any special memories of events which informed the relationship; other special experiences of relationships, especially that with their spouse, from childhood to the present which influenced them, description of these relationships; their capacity for representing the self; their experience of relationship

with God, description of representation, significant image and their feelings toward God and attitude to God; the meaning and purpose of their faith in present life; any experience of significant illness, loss, separation, or oppression in their life time, and how they felt about it and how they coped or what helped them cope with it. However, allowing women's subjectivity the narrative should not be forced in certain questions, but only roughly guided in the conversational context of the interview.

Based on the above and bearing in mind feminist research principles, I adopted interview questions that Slee (1999) has used. The women were asked a set of three questions:

a. What is your present understanding of faith?

b. Which people influenced your faith significantly from childhood onwards?

c. What were the significant situations or events which affected your faith and how did you cope with them?

The interview was loosely structured around the following elements: Introduction/ The first part of the interview/ Break/ The second part of the interview/ Closing. For a few minutes the interviewee was informed about the purpose of the research and the nature of the interview, especially the interviewee was encouraged to take the initiative in the interview. For this the interviewee was given 'a brief description of the interview' to understand and for a reference during the interview. The interviewee was also informed that her name would not be used and that her story would be used only for the purpose of the research. The interviewee was asked permission to make a tape recording and taking of notes during the interview.

The main part of the interview was divided into two parts and between them there was a break. For about 30-40 minutes, the first part of the interview proceeded asking

the set of three questions, which were not entirely separated. The interviewee was given some time to think about the area of questions and to consider how and where to start. In this part, the interviewee was expected to tell her auto-biographical narrative with little intervention from interviewer. When the interviewee seemed to have finished telling her story naturally, it was time for a break.

During the break of about 10 minutes, the interviewee was asked to think more about the themes and anything she missed out but wanted to tell. During this time I checked my notes and identify key words to be ready for the next part of the interview. Some women wanted to have a big break while the others went on with a little break. The interviewee was also answered if she had any questions about the interview during the break, and this carried on to their narrative naturally in some cases.

The second part of the interview started with reminding the interviewee of the key words or the main themes, and she was invited again to tell more particular stories, more focused on her feelings and reactions to key relationships including her relationship with God. This part of the interview was more conversational and involved more interaction, and lasted about 30 to 40 minutes.

When the interviewee seemed to be finishing her narrative naturally, the interview was brought to a close. The interviewee was asked to fill in a simple questionnaire about some personal details and her reflections on the interview. Then the whole interview came to an end with thanks to interviewee for giving her time and sharing her story, reminding them confidentiality would be kept. This breakdown of time was not used strictly as a limitation but roughly reflects the time by the women. So there were some women who did not fit in this time structure. This was, however, also valued and important data in the analysis.

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c) Making notes

A notepad was designed and was used in the interview. This was adopted from Wengraf's (2001), so called SHEIOT notepad, using the initial letters of the words Situation, Happening, Event, Incident, Occasion/ Occurrence, Time, which was developed for qualitative research interviewing with the biographic narrative method. I adapted so that it was appropriate for my research. The notepad was divided into five columns (see Appendix 2). It was important to put down the woman's own words or expressions, so that these could be used for questions in the second part of the interview (Wengraf, 2001, p. 135). It was also very useful for making any comments that were raised during the interview or after, in the process of analysis. Despite the many important merits of note making, Wengraf (2001) suggests that there must be a balance between listening and making notes, giving priority to listening. Keeping this in mind, making notes was very beneficial because an audiotape could not convey non-verbal expressions or any atmosphere in the conversational context. Making notes with this notepad filled the gap between interview and analysis. After 10 interviews, about 30 pages of notes were made.

d) The analysis

Based on the principles above, no one existing method was not preferred in the process of analysis. Rather, a system of analysis was devised based on the methods of attachment theory (Collins and Read, 1994; Kirkpatrick, 1992; Main and Goldwyn, 1984), but also inspired and informed by various qualitative methods, such as 'discourse analysis' (e.g., Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Edwards and Potter, 1992; Burman and Parker, 1993) and 'narrative analysis' (e.g., Riessman, 1993; Gergen,

1988; Josselson and Lieblich, 1993; Lieblich and Josselson, 1994; Josselson and Lieblich, 1995). The analysis involved a series of processes, including making transcriptions, making theory notes, text-sort sequentialisation, thematic analysis, the study of cases and rating analysis.

As the research method used language as the means of communication, the interview was transcribed as fully as possible, taking about 12 to 20 hours to do each interview (see a sample in Appendix 3). A blank transcription form was made with four columns: one for numbers which refers to speakers' turns and also to units of meaning; the next one for the way the words are said, for example, 'hesitantly', 'firmly', 'in a rush', 'with laugh', 'sadly' etc; the third column for the transcript with full accounts including pauses, interjection words like 'ah', 'um' as well, and any emphasising expressions such as high pitches and accents; the fourth column for other notes for DARNE (Description/ Argument/ Report/ Narrative/ Evaluation) (cf., Wengraf, 2001), which gives initial analysis of the accounts.

Each tape was listened to twice: the first time I just listened through to catch the whole aspects and recorded my impressions of the interviewee's narrative and also of myself as an interviewer at the end of the tape, which helped to improve for the next interview; the second time I listened repeatedly step by step to catch every aspect that I needed to complete in the transcription form.

After each interview was conducted, the blank transcription form was copied to use for an interview transcription, filling each column as appropriate. The volume of the transcripts varied depending on the interviewee: one has just 25 pages while a few women's transcripts have more than 50 pages. After 10 interviews, about 350 pages were filled.

Based on the notes and the transcripts with initial analysis of the accounts (DARNE), the interviews were sequentialised, which is called TSS (Text Sort or Told Story Sequentialisation) (Appendix 4). This involved some activities such as breaking the interview into subtopics, giving them subtitles, identifying the account according to the content of the woman's story, and describing her story using hermeneutic interpretation. The sequentialisation also included not only what the woman said but also how she spoke. That is, both the contents and forms of the interview were included, especially, for identifying the style whether the account was description, argument, report, narrative or evaluation. There were, of course, mixed styles, for example, if the account was mixed forms of mainly descriptions and narrative but with little evaluation but without report or argument, it would be sorted as 'D/N/e'. This required a sensitive- and open-listening to give priorities to the women's own speech. The notes and the transcripts were very useful for breaking down a woman's auto-biographical narrative into several small segments according to themes that the woman spoke of.

In fact, the sequentialisation has been done according to the sequence that the woman herself used. It was an important step in the analysis because it revealed the whole picture of the sequence in the woman's interview as they were not always in time sequence of her life journey. This work engaged not only in breaking down the stories the women told, but also in giving meaning and connection between contents and forms of the narrative. This enabled the researcher to see any patterns in the contents and forms of the narrative. In this process, the richness and variety of the women's narratives were revealed. Some themes and characteristics began to emerge.

The next stage was Central Research Analysis (Appendix 5) which was more focused on research questions; here the notes, transcriptions and TSS are combined as

a data set and examined with the research questions specifically in mind. The research questions were adopted originally from Slee's (1999) work, although I omitted some questions and also added others for my own research analysis. In this step of analysis, the accounts were looked at as a whole in order to understand the woman's way of thinking and valuing. With this analysis the woman's narrative was understood not as a part but as a whole, and present meaning was accessed through looking at past experience. The images and themes they used were highlighted. Appropriate evidence of what they told was pursued for an answer of coherency in their process of narrative and the forms of speech. Each question was answered in accordance with phenomenological and hermeneutical principles.

Each interview data set – transcription, notes, and analysis - is gathered as a case study. In the case study, the overall 'lived story' by the women were summarised based on the TSS and CRA analysis, and possible patterns were explored in the conclusive analysis. Each case study was dealt with a single case but was also compared with the other ones looking for similarities and differences.

I looked at the whole data set and the literature of attachment theory again looking for any patterns in the contents and processes of the women's way of faithing related to attachment. According to some studies such as Kirkpatrick (1992, 1994), Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) and Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), some themes and connections in women's narrative and their way of narrative related to attachment were revealed. In a complementary way, I kept reading the interview transcripts with awareness that adult's accounts would give the person's 'state of mind'. That is, especially the forms of the narrative and usage of verbal and non-verbal languages are correlated with the content of the narrative, looking for any evidence of coherency. Thus, the 'cooperative principle', as we have seen above, was necessarily and

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inclusively on my mind. This enabled me to access the women's inner world which was revealed in the coherency of their faith narrative (cf., Grice, 1975; Hesse, 1999).

I initially arranged this in a grid to see the whole picture and filled with some key words or phrases to identify the woman's characteristics in relation to attachment issues reading the transcripts repeatedly, making notes and using coloured pens to highlight any evidence. This work enabled me to reveal a concrete relationship between human attachment and religious attachment, and the similarities and differences between the women. In fact, some patterns were there to be seen.

After 10 interviews were conducted and all the data was gathered, more evidence was available for the construal of the attachment relationships. It was necessary to develop a defining tool to clarify the women's characteristics and styles of attachment relationships, other than using existing tools. 'Rating Analysis Sheets' (Appendix 6) emerged naturally. In these, women's attachment relationships could be rated according to the components of the working models (Collins and Read, 1994): attachment-related memories, beliefs and attitudes, goals and needs, and strategies and plans for achieving attachment-related goals. This rating sheet provided an apparent view on individuals' differences in relation to attachment relationships and faith type, and furthermore stabilities and changes throughout lifetime.

4.5 Summary and conclusions

The study and development of the research methodology was another huge project. Finding an appropriate method for studying women's attachment in faith development was a major challenge. For this, methodologies in attachment related research and feminist research were explored. Both areas have developed over the last several

decades and accelerated more recently. Despite the conflicting issues in these two approaches, under the epistemological principle, appropriate methods were explored, which could provide a common ground between the two and a more appropriate way of studying areas such as human behaviours including linguistic or discursive behaviour. For the research, three research principles were articulated, which were applied in designing the research. In the course of the process, several series of analysis methods were developed for my own research. In particular, unforced and autobiographical in-depth narrative interview was used, which has rarely been used before in the area of attachment research, in spite of it being very beneficial for research with women.

I am aware that the development of the research methodology was not as systematic as I described in this chapter. The methodology has further developed from the initial thought as the research went on and it was more time-consuming and labour-intensive than I expected. As the research principles highlighted, it has looked at any possible sources for women's faith development so that a considerable amount of data was obtained. Although some parts of them could not be included, the crucial and significant data is described in the following chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE UNDERSTANDING OF WOMEN'S FAITH DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Introduction

The in-depth interview and time-consuming analysis enable us to see the uniqueness and richness in women's faith development. Some of the findings have not been discovered previously. In these findings the relational and affective dimensions of faith are highlighted. It is necessary and appropriate to present some themes and characteristics that emerged from the interviews before we explore the patterns of God-attachment in the following three chapters. In this chapter, first, the women's ways of faithing will be explored in terms of their use of metaphoric language, narrative and the effectiveness of conversational context. Then, the women's understanding of faith is described and highlighted in relational and affective themes that the women implied. Finally, some influential factors in the women's faith development will be explored in a way explaining the structure of my findings on the experience of faith. The above three findings, which are connected and complement each other, are observed from different angles with which the women's faith is appreciated, understood and developed. They are drawn from phenomenological and hermeneutical approach to women's experience based on epistemological principle, although the finding of influential factors on the women's faith is presented with slightly different angle that is more or less the psychoanalytic interpretations.

5.2 The women's ways of faithing

There are many ways to express our faith experiences such as literature, drama, poetry, music and art in which we can appreciate divine love in human feelings and emotions (Karr, 2005, pp. 51-52). Slee (2004), in particular, presents women's unique styles which were identified in the processes of women's faithing. The faithing styles are drawn out of "recurring linguistic strategies" of the women in the process of the interviews (p. 61). Conversation, using metaphors and narrative are the most commonly used methods in the women's interview in my study, along with other ways such as personalised, conceptual and apophatic faithing which Slee has suggested (see chapter 4 in Slee, 2004). As we have seen in the methodology chapter, autobiographical narrative, in-depth interview and analysis enable us to discover women's unique ways to express their faith while the findings below of relational and affective faith are mainly grounded in their understanding. Here, I want to focus on the styles and strategies used predominantly by the women throughout the interviews: Metaphor, Narrative and Conversation.

5.2.1 Metaphor: Language of faith

Faith is explained by metaphoric language; symbols, metaphors and concepts are the unique language and voice of faith. Streib (1991) asserts, "Being introduced to faith means being introduced to understanding the symbolic world" (p. 11). He summarizes the significance of symbolic expressions as expression of faith based on Fowler's understanding: (1) Symbols, metaphors, and concepts are awakening and shaping stimuli for faith. (2) Faith is operating on and working on the symbolic

representations. (3) Symbols, metaphors, narratives and concepts are the expression of faith in the movement from imagination to symbolic expression.

The women in my study also articulate their experiences of faith using metaphors and symbols as a language and a voice of faith. Relational metaphors are used mostly, faith as yearning for good relationship with and closeness to God as human relationship to mother, father, sister, pastors, colleagues, friends, husband and granddaughter. As my research is looking closely at the nature of attachment, attachment language is very noticeable even in description of relational metaphors: for attachment characteristic images – dominant, interference, available, supportive, caring, responsive, recognizing; attachment feelings – comfort, beloved, felt warm, belonging, intimate; attachment reactions – leaning against Him, clinging, hugging, commit me in His care.

Conventional metaphors are frequently used by every woman. In a way of speaking of faith, from time to time referring to God they used theologically conceptualized terms – glory, will, existence, attribution, and calling; biblical usages – Israel, clay ware and potter, a person who sows seed and a person who does harvest. Alongside using concrete metaphors women also used abstract terms for status of faith such as: infantile, inheritance, morality, honesty, truth, purity, clean, tolerance, sincere, perfection, justice, peace, and harmony.

The freshest and most joyful feature occurred then the women used natural metaphors and similes: for example when describing the status of faith and growing of faith they used: deeply rooted, fertile soil, a support (for a plant), fine thread, like a feather little by little, dried grapes and sponge absorbing rainwater, a drizzling rain and getting solid. Faith experience is described with health conditions and physical metaphors as surrounded by air, melting frozen heart and good-deed-illness; the

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moment of experience of faith as gushing power, shivering, warmth and centre. Some images are used for expression of special memories when they felt holy – a snap of movie picture, a Christian neighbour who was cleanly and neatly dressed and a wooden floor of church building.

This metaphor is very important to the women because it enables women's imagery of faith and its growing to be visible and to be easily shared with others. The women create and use their own metaphoric language for weaving narratives of their faith experience. Metaphor is certainly language of faith.

5.2.2 Narrative: Means of faithing

The importance of narrative has been suggested in the field of faith development, Christian education and counselling, particularly for women. Fowler (1991) asserts that person's identity and self-realization, horizon of personal and collective meaning and the basis of faith are produced by telling religious and cultural stories (p. 127). Westerhoff III (1985) says that Christianity is a community formed with a narrative; narrative forms the faith and life of community and also changes, keeps and challenges it (p. 27). Groome (1980) also insists that the faith community needs to hear narratives repeatedly in order to know God and to discover His salvation in human history (pp. 192-193). Christ (1980) insists that the expression of women's spiritual searching is connected deeply and essentially to women's narrative (p. 1). Slee (2004) also points out narrative as a primary and fundamental mode of women's faithing. Narrative has several processes: remembering of the past experience – if it is a positive one it gives power to reassure, if it is a negative one exposing itself gives challenge to change; composing the individual's experience as weaving past

experiences to be a texture of present meaning for life and faith, that is, naming the experience; reflecting narrative as a told story which has continuity over time and will share in generations and in the community as a reference.

Narrative was predominantly used as a means of faithing by the women in my study although it has various forms in scale and styles. During the interview process, some women disclosed narrative with very hesitant and unengaged forms while the others were naturally open. The women's ways of narration were varied and noticeable in some features which informed and related to their faithing styles. Some features in the narration indicate a woman's capacity of faithing such as degrees of fluency or hesitancy, depth of involvement in narration, capacity of engagement in narration, levels of disclosure themselves in their voices and emotional expressions, and any hand and body postures and facial expressions. It was not hard to notice that the processes and styles of narration also told about the relational, emotional and spiritual well-being: how the woman established and developed her identity and developed in her lifetime, how she established attachment relationships and the internal working models, and how she worked across lifetime with other relational and emotional matters. The most significant role of narrative with the effectiveness of conversational context is disclosure of their emotions of impasse, anxiety and the moment of transformation, particularly suppressed ones, such as deep suffering, agony, fear and despair, which will be seen later.

In particular, autobiographical narrative gave an ownership of the story to the woman who provided the world of her past and present experiences. The women in my study could leave out some part of her shadow side, unwanted or insignificant parts, consciously or/and unconsciously. They could also reject any culturally biased perceptions against them recognising the ownership of their lives. In fact, in the

process of narrative, they used various forms of narration styles: some part of narrative went on with vivid description and even went further on evaluation but some part of narrative remained in simple report style without deep involvement (see, Appendix 2 and 3). This depended on the woman telling the situation or the event. However, with styles of narration the woman was also telling a story, whether she was deeply committed or not with the particular experience in the particular moment of life and event that she was telling, and whether she was able to look at her own story in objective view or not. It can be said that there is a story which was actually lived out but which was not told behind the 'told story'. The 'actual lived' story cannot be changed but the 'woven told' story can be revised by the teller over time. The women could, however, take full advantage of this to hold their present meaning and to capture their hope for the future.

Narrative helps us to remember past experiences, to find meaning, to reflect present experience critically and to search the vision for the future. In so doing, we are able to find our own meaning for life and become spiritually mature. Women's narrative in particular, which has been neglected or not appreciated in the Bible and in the church tradition, helps to reflect and express their own experience. Narrative has the power to remake reality, thus it enables us to become authors of our own lives (see also chapter 4).

5.2.3 Conversation: Faithing context

When we consider we are relational beings and make meaning through communication and conversation which are a significant means of finding our identity and meaning and to express our emotions, especially if faith is told and articulated by

human language in relationships (Slee, 2004, pp. 62-64). O'Neill (1990, p.104) says that from sharing narrative in conversation women are able to know each other's need or quest and to recognize oppression in the reality of society and to learn the way of effective defence. In the process of conversation women tell and listen to each other, and find similarities and uniqueness of their own. This helps women to experience the variety of life and to grow their faith together. In the process of conversation women can learn to agree and to refer to various values and to respect others. Conversation bridges individuals' narratives. When women are in conversation, they can find similarity and can establish solidarity. King (1989) asserts that sharing narrative of suffering, oppression and joy creates new solidarity between women called "sisterhood" (pp.19-20).

If we consider faith as relational, the conversational context is an important stimulus for faith development. Slee (1997) points out that "the conversational context may be a peculiarly appropriate means for women to articulate and shape their faith, in relation to an attentive and welcoming other," especially for women who are expected to be silent and to be valued when they do not speak up (p. 92). There is a traditional Korean saying 'Three women make plate break,' which gives a very negative connotation to women's every day conversation. This discouraged women to speak of their experience or to share their wisdom. In fact, with narrative strategy, the conversational context offers many opportunities for women to share their unique experience through quality and quantity of conversation.

As faith is seen in terms of attachment system, which is called goal-corrected behavioural system, conversation strategy is even more important for faithing.[7] Some women in my study were at first struggling to articulate their understanding of faith but they seemed to be challenged by the conversation process. For example, after the

long process of conversation about her understanding of faith, Laura, who was struggling to find faith for a long time, verbalised "Now I can tell people that I have a weak faith". In this process, her personal testimony was shared with the listener, which became a declaration in public (see chapter 6). Most women in my study expressed the positive and brighter side of the story directly and clearly or fluently. By contrast the conversation became vague, superficial, or dissembling when they told the shadow side of the story that can be unresolved, shameful or negatively influencing their life. In particular, engagement of conversation reflected the women's relational and affective capacity in quality and quantity: some women just remained in silence and did not go much further or finished quickly in a particular question or for marked events, while some women just scratched the surface the question or answered with too expressive or entangled endless talking. Tones of voice and exposure of emotions in conversation also gave extra indications: very emotional with quivering voice told a moment of the story in which impacted on her life significantly and also in the process of conversation; firm voices with little emotional expression could be found in the conversation in which evaluations and reflections were developed providing teaching or lessons.

Conversation gives a context to reflect our lives in faith. In the conversational context, the women shared and articulated their faith. The women, after the interview, reflected the process of the interview as good as "it helped to look back to the past, to adjust the present life and faith, and to make a plan forward". It was "beneficial to share my life with others". Most women thought that the process of conversation was enjoyable and beneficial because they experienced "vitality and living together".

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5.3 The women's understanding of faith

The women's faith experience in my study is deeply grounded in their everyday lives and every situation that involves relationships and emotional experiences. In a deep sense, for the women, faith **is** an ability to relate to the self, God, others and relate within a community, and it also **gives** this ability. For the women, the term 'relationship' is a definition of faith and also a strategy for having a faith at the same time. That is, the women's understanding of faith is signified in the relational and affective dimensions which the women have frequently and dominantly referred.

5.3.1 Relational self and relational faith

The relational dimension of faith has been a significant issue in spirituality and faith development theories. Eaude (2003) understands that spiritual experience is the search for identity and meaning in the centrality of relationships (p.157). "We become who we are by recognising our place in relation to other people, to the world and beyond" (p. 156). He suggests that thinking of spiritual experience as a type of experience rather than of spirituality or spiritual development may be helpful and that the integration of the personality as an end-point of spiritual experience avoids a linear, upward idea of spiritual development. Slee (2000) also emphasises that women's faith and spirituality is "rooted firmly in the everyday, mundane world of work, relationships, home life and contact with others", while many traditions of spirituality or faith development make the assumption that independence and autonomy are necessarily the desirable end-points of maturity (p. 8). As we have looked in chapter 3, Fowler (1986) suggests a strong theme of relational faith in a triadic diagram of relationship with self, others and supra-ordinate value. Slee (2004)

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also suggests three generated patterns of women's faith development which contain strong relational themes: 'alienation', 'awakening' and 'relationality'.

Relationship with self which is expressed in representation of self is the core ingredient of women's faith. Women's sense of self is developed in connection, particularly in attachment relationships. It is not developed in "lone action and in acting against or over others" (Miller, 1991, p. 16). When a woman is "a part of relationships and taking care of those relationships", she senses self-esteem or self-worth: "A sense of competence or effectiveness" rises "out of emotional connections" and bounds up with and feeds back into her (ibid.). The sense of self or representation of self – issues of loss of self, wounded self, anxious/ambivalent self, self-esteem, self-worth, competence, effectiveness, etc. – which are based on the relational theme in the women's narrative, will be explored in detail in the following chapters.

The most prevalent and strongest theme of the women in my study was a relational understanding of faith. This finding suggests a theme of relational self pursuing relational faith. Although each woman's account has its own meanings and nuances, a true faith refers to finding self-in-relation, that is, intrapersonal relationship meets an intimate relationship with the transcendent, God, and this also brings a good interpersonal relationship with other people and cooperative relationships within a faith community (Miller, 1991, pp. 16-17, Lartey, 1997, pp. 119-120). Here, I want to explore the women's understanding of faith in my study as an ability of the self to relate to God, others and faith community.

First, the women understood faith as an ability to relate to God. When the women in my study were asked about their present understanding of faith, they directly referred to their relationship with God. It is also not hard to notice that human relationship is an important factor in the relationship with God. A secure attachment

relationship with the parents is well illustrated in their ability to relate to God. Their faith was described in the similar manner of their secure relationship with their parents.

Women's understanding of faith as an ability to relate to God is, however, not always seen in such a clear form. It is revealed in their discourse, for some women, their lack of confidence, passivity or inability in their yearning for a relationship with God, which we can see from many women's accounts more fully in chapter 6 and 7. They raised some agonising questions themselves whether they are able or unable to make such a relationship. In fact, they knew what an ideal faith was but they could not conceal their lack of ability so far. It was evidenced in many pauses and silences, negative and passive words, past-oriented and/or entangled discourses. They displayed a conflict or a gap between their ideal faith and the lack of confidence in relationships. In some cases, it was also evidenced in their account in which they were reluctant to use religious symbols, metaphors and narratives, while borrowing the highly abstract and theological terms resulted in a lack of confidence and creativeness in their faithing and it became the obstacles for some women to represent their own concrete experiences. Lack of relationality to build any fulfilling relationships is clearly related to their difficulty in having faith in God. It can be said that lack of analogy between human attachment relationships and God-attachment relationship may cause their distance or anxiety in faith. Whatever attachment patterns they have established, faith is understood and signified in a notion of having a relationship with God. It also contains an element of the ability to relate to God, whether the ability is in a form of inability or lack, passive or owned by the women.

Second, the women's understanding of faith refers to a good relationship with others as well as with God. The findings suggest that a good interpersonal

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relationship signifies their faith in God. In fact, an ability to make secure relationship with God also gives the ability to have secure human relationship at the same time. Secure women pointed out that their parents' love and tolerance and their good relationships with each other gave them ability to relate to God and also to others, especially to have a good relationship with their husband. In some cases, this interpersonal relationship was very much emphasised. Some women were very conscious of a perfect life in faith which is very closely related in their relationships with other people. For some women this has caused anxiety and conflict in their expectation of perfection to others as well as themselves. This faith extensively illuminates our fragile nature and our hope for good relationships and full humanity. That is, the women in my study were strongly aware of faith as a mature relationship with others. They spent a chunk of time talking about their relationship with their mother, father and their husband in particular. Although some women spoke of pleasant memories of secure and interdependent relationships, many women spoke of unresolved relationships which prevented them from being mature in faith. Some women were still not sure they could forgive them after a long time of struggling with emotional conflict with their excessive, strict and discomforting mother or their absent, unavailable and unsupportive father. A disagreement, betrayal, or wound in the relationships with parents, husband, old friend or religious people made them close their hearts, avoid going to the church and unable to participate worship services. Conversely, experiencing the high cost of hurting their beloved ones, some women realised that a true and mature faith was to relate others but not to force their faith on others but tolerate and embrace others with love. The women in my study clearly understood that embracing, tolerating and serving one another were important aspects of their faith development although some women sometimes find it uneasy to live in

that way. Certainly faith is an ability to embrace others with tolerance as well as to relate to God.

Third, the women strongly mentioned a communal dimension of faith. They understood faith as belonging and being effective within faith community. A faith community could mean any sort of group gathering in the name of faith such as churches, Bible study groups, cell groups, prayer groups and QT (quiet time) groups. In particular, the church is a very important community where Christian women share the same beliefs and values with other religious people. In some ways, some women find a family-like atmosphere in the church where their happiness and sorrow are shared. The church community provides an opportunity for many women to encourage each other and grow together in faith. Some women who grew up in Christian family and within the church community, commonly value 'belonging' to a faith group or community.

The meaning of 'belonging' is not just becoming an attendant of a group or of a community, but becoming an active part of the community. 'Belonging' for them is having a relationship within the faith community collectively, to give and receive care and courage, to reflect one another and to share common values and vision. In particular, in a faith group or community they can find their own role or worth which gives or restores their confidence and vitality. Miller (1991) views women's sense of self as being an agency within community. She suggests that women are searching for their role in the relationships and states, "a more developed sense of her own capacities and her greater ability to put her views into effect" (p. 17). That is, belonging to a faith community is another dimension of life in faith in which they practice their ability as an effective agency within the community. In this way, women are vitalised in their life in faith. Belonging and being effective makes

women grow.

In fact, it is not hard to explain why the women in my study felt and reported 'hard times' in their faith journey particularly when they were not belonging to a faith community. They called it a 'stagnation period' when they were separated physically and psychologically from the church community. The common reasons for the separation were brought by being pregnant, having a baby and rearing a child. These were also complicated with some reasons like distance from the church, unwelcoming churches or being abroad.

Not belonging and being ineffective prevent women from practicing their faith, being involved in many activities and taking their chances of convincing themselves in faith. Some women found not belonging much harder than others, especially, those who used to play an active and a significant role in the church community and those who were in a position such as minister, pianist, leader or teacher and so on. One of the reasons that they found this difficult was that they did not want to be just an ordinary layperson, but rather wanted to do something actively and effectively in the community. As Miller (1991) asserts, they felt ineffective as they could not deeply involve and find their role in that community.

Not belonging physically and disconnection psychologically from the church community is a 'loss' for the women. They feel that 'my church' has disappeared. Many women have bonding feeling for the faith group or church community, which is similar to attachment, and they value the relationships within the church community highly. The church becomes 'my church' like 'my family'. Therefore, separation for the church in any form is not just a loss of 'a church' but of 'my church' where they find belonging and effective roles. The meaning of disconnection or not belonging is not only a loss of 'my church' but also a loss of power and vitality for many women.

In fact, for the women, belonging, connection and being effective empowers them; while disconnection, not belonging and being ineffective only gives the women 'agony', 'pain', 'frustration', 'helplessness', 'stillness', 'emptiness', 'nowhere to stand', 'nowhere to go', that is, nothingness and stagnation.

The relational dimension of faith was the most prominent feature of the women's faith. The women in my study constantly referred to relational dimension of faith throughout the interviews, although the differences and similarities in the women's approaching styles will be looked in more detail in the following three chapters. They saw faith as an ability to relate to God and to the other person and also within a community. Some women's accounts show their lack of ability to make or keep these relationships, while some do it with confidence and competence. In fact, there is much evidence that this ability is firmly and inevitably rooted in the early attachment relationships with parents, and goals and strategies are established toward other relationships later. It may also be changed or developed in life span, especially by other significant attachment relationships like an experience of God, other religious authority figures or/and a deep involvement within a faith community. In particular, a faith community is important for women's faith development where they are vitalized and empowered by sharing each other's story and experience of God in everyday life.

5.3.2 Affective self and affective faith

The affective dimension of faith is not separable from the above relational dimension of faith, they appear side by side in the women's experience of faith. Here, I want to focus on and explore the women's emotional expressions in my study which brought them into deep, true and life changing experiences, which are in the forms and styles

of metaphor, symbols and narratives. If we think of the particular strength of the psychoanalytic tradition, it is the emphasis on the centrality of emotion and role of pre-linguistic and unconscious influences along with close observation of young children. Early experience of emotion and how this is processed is seen to influence the personality profoundly and all relational matters including the experience of faith. Hay and Nye (1998, p. 18) delineate emotional wholeness which entails getting in touch with symbolic meanings expressed in fantasy. They believe that denial of these makes personal integration impossible. That is, the affective dimension is an important pathway through which we appreciate religious symbols and metaphors. In the same sense, emotions and feelings in the women's narratives are the closest and purest expressions of their faith.

When we experience faith, special emotional feelings come along, which are similar to attachment feelings and accompanied by changes of values, attitudes and behaviours. This kind of special emotional experience lasts a long time and is strong enough to describe it as happening now. For the women in my study, in their understanding of faith, the affective dimension was dominant over the cognitive dimension. The affective dimension has been one of the missing puzzles in cognitively based faith developmental theories (cf., Hay et al., 1996; Slee, 1992, 1996).

When the women in my study described their understanding of their faith experience, along with the key word 'relationship' they talked about their feelings, such as 'despair', 'fear', 'woe', 'awareness', 'comfort', 'support', 'peace', 'closeness', 'connectedness' and 'security'. These were used in the place where their feelings of the relationship with God were expressed as well as human attachment relationships. In fact, these feelings are not just feelings which become faint as time

goes on. This emotional experience is neither an unproductive nor a 'thin' experience, but it is deep, effective and powerful in transforming each woman's life and faith. These feelings signify particular meanings, significant signs or hallmarks in the women's faith journey.

As we will explore the women's faith according to the dominant themes and characteristics in the women's attachment patterns that they have and represented, some significant emotional experiences may not be delivered in the next three chapters. Thus, in this section, I want to focus on the moment when the women felt a faith experience and its meaning for their faith journey with the women's accounts, regardless of what attachment patterns they have and represent.

First, emotional experience and expressions are the women's way of discovering faith. In her study of the nature and the processes of religious conversion, Chana Ullman (1989, pp. 18-25) emphasises the importance of individual's emotional experience. She suggests that the typical conversion occurs against a background of great emotional turmoil. Although religious converts tend to exaggerate their pre-conversion 'suffering' or 'sins' so as to glorify their present salvation (Heirich, 1977, p. 685), according to Ullman (1989), emotional uproar particularly pivots around a sudden attachment which leads to the experience of faith. Some converted women in my study described their childhood and adolescence as being marked by emotional distress intensely. Libby said that she felt 'unhappy', 'lonely', 'neglected', 'discomfort', and 'anger' before she found God's everlasting love (see chapter 6). Janet also reported 'anxious' and 'discomfort' feeling as she was waiting a test result of brain tumour – "I was trembling. […] I was surrounded by anxiety for two days. […] I went before God while I was anxious." Laura spoke of feeling 'helpless', 'unfit', 'dissatisfaction', 'shame', 'depression', 'futility' and 'death' before she felt

warmth from God in a long narrative (see chapter 6). Some women whose faith was inherited also described their emotional distress as 'loss', 'emptied', 'stillness', 'disconnected', 'frustrated', 'anxious', 'ambivalent', 'powerless', 'spaceless' before a particular religious experience (see above and chapter 7).

That is, whether they are converted Christians or not and whether dramatically converted or not, most women reported some feelings of distress before they were seeking God. As we have seen above, feeling disconnection is the most common issue which causes distress. The women in my study were vulnerable because of all sorts of disconnection such as being single, becoming widow, having broken or insecure relationships. There were, of course, significant events or situations, such as the loss of an attachment figure, of self-confidence, of health and experiencing separation from the faith community which caused 'stagnation' of faith. These make them feel vulnerable but also lead them to search for God at the same time. That is, these frustrated feelings are the purist expression of discomfort, insecurity and disillusionment searching for living God who gives comfort, peace, vitality, wholeness and fulfilment. Harris (1991) claims that feeling our vulnerability in disconnection is one of the ways of discovering our spirituality which is uniquely women's (p. 41). In this way, Killen (1997, pp. 33-34) advocates listening to our overwhelmingly unfulfilled, anxious and ambivalent desire for God and encourage us to embrace and be friend with these longings, which we will see more in detail in the following chapters.

Second, some particular emotional expressions signify a sign of transformation. For the very moment of faith experience the women particularly used some emotional words to express their feelings and status of mind. Feeling of 'comfort' and 'peace' were mostly felt by the women when they encounter with God's love and presence.

They also felt that they were 'appreciated', 'accepted' and 'understood' by God. By the experience of God they felt 'warmth', 'trust', 'fulfilled' and 'hope'. They realised that they obtained 'security', 'confidence' and 'competence'. For Laura, a feeling of comfort was an initiation to look at God's work. As we have seen above, the imaginative and delight nature metaphors were used for the reality of the feeling of comfort and warmth – 'dried raisins' or 'a dried sponge' get 'rainwater' or absorbed 'moisture'. Laura's struggling and running away life had a turning point when she met a warm group of Christians and pastors, who sacrificed their time and money to practice God's love for others. This comfort feeling for her was not just one of many emotional feelings. It was a turning point where she started to find God's purpose and work in her life with which she had been struggling for a long time. She began to realise this after a long, exhausting, restless journey, when meeting a group of self-sacrificing people which led to feeling comfort from God (see chapter 6 and 7).

The feeling of peace is another significant emotional response for women when they find a faith in God and is a transforming moment of their faith and life. It is certainly had the opposite meaning of despair for Laura. Laura's long entangled narrative ends with her stating her increased feeling of peace. In fact, in the interview, she used many terms in many places that connote 'despair', such as 'death', 'depression', 'a sense of futility', 'nihilism', 'agony', 'pain', 'suffering', which mirror her state of mind that she was insecure, unstable, unable to believe, neglected and disconnected for a long time. At the end of the interview, however, she expressed her increased feeling of peace in relation to her understanding of faith, which was a significant moment of change in her emotional status – "I have changed, I [p] got much more peace in me than ever before […] less feeling of a sense of futility, of taking a pessimistic view and of despair than ever before". As we will see in chapter

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7, the experience of faith in God releases Janet from anxiety and fear, and gives peace. Through this experience, she found peace and security. This gave her hope and confidence to throw her worry away. It changed not only her attitude toward her illness but also enabled her to become brave enough to face life and death issues. The moment when she experienced God as the one who has authority was the moment when she felt peace. The miraculous feeling of peace was also the sign of transformation for Janet who had been through life with a health problem.

The types and scales of transformation were varied in the women's experiences. Conversion or awakening was recognised in various levels including spiritual and religious domain, relational and affective domain, societal and ethical domain. Although the transformation was varied, the women showed changes in their perspective, attitude and commitment towards life and faith issues. The changes were recognised by the women and also the researcher through their emotional status and expressions. These emotional feelings were reported with a life transforming stories as we have described above and also will explore in the following chapters.

Third, the faith experience was also traced in the women's expressions of special feelings. Their emotional feelings of warmth, joy, closeness, comfort, support, peace, connectedness, awe and wonder were expressed in the narrative of the experience of God's presence that provides them a hallmark with an energy, power and vitality. As we have looked above, comfort feelings, of course, have different meanings and nuances for each person and each experience. Some women, like Joan who was hardly in the centre of religious activities by her own intention and regarded Christianity as one of the institutionalized religions, understood that she at least could get comfort from Christianity. Comfort is, however, certainly a goal of God-attachment for some women who have been lonely throughout their life and were

constantly yearning for comfort. The descriptions of their image of God contain a considerable amount of emotion, which is evidenced in their broken sentences and lots of pauses. The experience of faith gave them comfort because it was their goal for all human attachment relationships which had never been fulfilled. It was the motivation for their conversion and also became a goal for God-attachment. A comfort from God and the faith community is certainly an essential benefit for the women who have experienced insecurity or disconnection in their human attachment relationships, health problems and lack of self-esteem (see chapter 7). The same effect was explained and seen in their understanding of faith as they described their feeling of intimacy and closeness to God who was near and available – "who listens to even a few words and a breath" and "who surrounds me and my whole life like air". For them, the feeling of closeness secures them in the relationship with God. They feel secure because whenever and whatever they are struggling with, God is near and available to listen and answer them.

'Awesome' feeling was also felt by some women when they experienced faith although 'comfort' and 'closeness' feelings were dominantly mentioned by the women. Hannah described several incidents of her experience of God: When she was a teenager once she was avoiding the church where everybody seemed hypocritical, and after she had woken up from a dreadful dream, she felt fear and awe as she realised that God gave her a lessen through the dream; on the other occasion, when she was listening to a sermon on a Sunday morning she felt wonder and a thrill with gooseflesh as she felt God's presence and realised God had answered her prayer. She felt awesome and ultimate trust as she experienced God's power and supremacy (see chapter 7).

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The richness of emotional expressions in the women's faith narrative leads us to understand the women's authentic meaning of what is meant by the experience of faith. The emotional feelings they expressed bridge a particular experience into an individual's whole faith narrative. That is, the feelings are the sole expression of a particular incident but are closely related to other life experiences sequentially. The above examples are a few of many, the details of which will be explored with the women's faith narratives in the following three chapters.

5.4 Some factors in the women's faith attachments

The above findings on the way of women's faithing and the relational and affective dimensions of faith are also complemented by the findings of psychodynamic approach. As we have noted in the previous chapters in this thesis, concerning issues in women's faith development with attachment perspective, attachment perspective on religious experience offers an understanding about how one's faith is experienced and what impact it has on one's life. Attachment theory offers a concept of representation of self and others by which we understand the central feature of availability of the attachment figure, of God for religious attachment. Fonagy (2001) explains representational system as "expectations of interactive attributes of early caregivers" which are "encoded and retrieved" by "attachment-related experiences" and interact with self and others (p. 13). The existing literature in the field of the experience of faith provides the following knowledge. The early infant-parent attachment relationship and adult romantic relationship *correspond* to one's faith, or *compensate* for it; human attachment relationships positively impact on faith (Kirkpatrick, 1992, 1994; Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992; Ainsworth, 1985). The faith experience is correlated with the representation of one's God-image and self-image (Beit-Hallahmi

and Argyle, 1997; Kirkpatrick, 1995; Bowlby, 1973; Benson and Spilka, 1973; Spilka et al., 1975). In fact, faith is relational and affective since we have seen it as how to relate to self, others and God. Security in faith is related to the individual's well-being; it helps one to cope with stressful situations such as loss, broken relationships, emotional and relational conflicts and so on (Feeney and Noller, 1996, pp. 128-133).

The time consuming process in the biographical narrative in-depth interviews and several stages of analysis (see chapter 4 and appendix 1 – 5) enable us to identify the depth, richness and power of women's attachment relationships in their faith experience, which will guide the overall findings of the research and fill the gap between literature review and the findings, and between existing theories and ordinary women's real experiences in faith.

5.4.1 Representation of God

First of all, the findings suggest that each woman had God-images which were strongly related to their parents' images. Parents' images that most women spoke of correspond to their God-images. Moreover, it is noticeable that a woman's God-image comes from parents or a parent who strongly influenced her relational and emotional life, irrespective of whether this influence was positive or negative.

In my interview, Cynthia spoke of a very close and available but controlling God which was exactly reflected by the dominant image of her mother; for Hannah, a revealing but dramatic God reflects her controlling and authoritative father and mother; whereas the affectionate God of whom Ruth spoke comes from her loving father. In fact, it is the matter of strong influence whether it is ideal or not, rather than that of preference or even that of opposite sex-parent's suggested by Freudians.

In another case, Janet represents an available, unlimited, perfect God-image that is opposite to her parents who were excessively loving mother and irresponsible father; Libby has a comforting God-image that is opposite to her parents who were strict and not available. This may be explained by the idea that God plays a role in compensation for a parental figure in insecure cases (Kirkpatrick, 1992, pp. 17-18). Their early insecure attachment with their parents made them long for a secure attachment relationship and a figure that provides security. By the compensation effect, it causes them to represent a God-image that is the opposite of their parents'. In fact, it is, however, apparent that the reflection of the ethical and stern images of their parents is in their God-images e.g., Janet's yearning for perfect and righteous God-image and in Libby's intimate God-image (see chapter 7).

5.4.2 Representation of self

It can be said that the self-concept is directly complemented by God-image in an individual's way of faithing. That is, the individual's internal working models of attachment are composed of the model or image of self and other (Collins and Read, 1994, p. 54) or God in the case of religious attachment. Whatever image of self we have it is relational in nature and is derived from meeting others. The image of self discussed here and in the following three chapters is related to "a faith relationship that the self experiences with the Other (God), where 'other' does not take away from the 'self'" (Heitink, 2001, p. 147). Women psychoanalysts also support this view that the self develops in relationships with others (cf., Jordan, et al., 1991).

My research findings suggest that women's self-image is built and developed through attachment relationships. Self-image is another factor, which interacts with

parental factors, and determines their attitudes and beliefs toward the others. The self-image is constructed by interaction with the outside world, in the early years with parents, and later with peer group. Feeling ineffectiveness in relationships may, however, cause women low self-esteem (Miller, 1991, p.16; Kaplan, 1991, p. 210). As we have seen above, this may also lead to their lack of autonomy and creativeness towards religious community and formal or traditional rituals, and shows their yearning for extreme intimate relationship with God and religious community.

In my interview, the women's images of self were expressed in relation to their experience of faith. Laura and Rachel who described themselves as failures or wounded, spoke of difficulties in their faith journey. Janet, who saw herself as limited and imperfect, has a very ethical view of herself and others, which is reflected exactly in her pursuit for perfection in faith. Libby expressed her loneliness and dependence, which exactly reflected her extreme dependence on God. Some women like Cynthia, Hannah and Nancy who developed their self-image as obedient people, valued God's authority and practiced their faith in terms of regularity and strictness with limited freedom (see chapter 7). Ruth and Jean who showed confidence and self-esteem have noticeable creativity and freedom in practicing their faith (see chapter 8).

It is necessary to highlight how self-image affects the women's faith with a few examples, which will be, however, looked fully in the next three chapters. Rachel felt distanced from her parents mentally, so her parents were described as good but too busy with other concerns so that she could not gain fulfilment through parents' care. This made her develop a very passive and distant reaction in attachment relationships. If conflict situations appear she always gives way and does not face up to them. She was not strong enough to be active, reflect, challenge or be involved in conflict

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situations. This is also evidenced in her narration which has a tendency of focusing on the past and also on passive ways; unengaged narration with a hesitant start, frequent stops and remaining in silence shows on an avoidant/distant style of faithing (cf., Collins and Read, 1994; Feeney and Noller, 1996 and see chapter 6 in this thesis).

In Laura's case, her feelings and reactions toward attachment relationships were described as unconcerned or apathetic. She developed a defence mechanism in herself like Rachel. She developed instead a very strong but false self-image as someone who is 'intelligent' and 'elegant'. Eventually, however, she lost her self-esteem, which prevented her from becoming involved in deep relationships with others and also with God but rather wandered around (see chapter 6).

Janet was dissatisfied with her parents' care and did not respect her parents at all. She developed anxious attachment internal working models seeking a figure from whom she would find perfect care, and she developed a self-image as a perfectionist. In her case, the self-anxiously-seeking-perfection has very strongly affected her way of faithing. In fact, this drove her to challenge and transform herself. She still, however, has a strong tendency to seek perfection; without it she cannot satisfy herself and others (see chapter 7).

These are a few of many examples. The depth and richness in the women's metaphors and narratives, especially in relation to connections between the women's self-image, attachment and the way of faithing, will be described in the following three chapters.

5.4.3 Adult attachment and faith

In my study, some cases have very clear attachment patterns throughout the women's lifetime. Ruth and Jean are women who have early secure attachment and secure adult romantic attachment followed by secure God-attachment; Laura and Rachel are insecure-avoidant/distant and Libby is insecure-anxious/ambivalent all along. It can be said that early parent-child attachment continues to be a strong influence in relational matters in later life.

However, adult attachment – especially, romantic relationships and attachment to a religious group or community – influence women's faith development significantly. It can be said that in the case of an early insecure attachment, security in adult romantic attachment plays a positive role in God-attachment. In Janet's case, meeting sincere religious people and security in marital status performed an important role in experiencing God, who gives peace and comfort, although that is not to deny that there is an element of anxiety in her relational life and faith (see chapter 7). In Laura's case, a romantic relationship plays a role because it was the first time she had found a deep relationship even though the relationship did not last. Despite this, the romantic relationship along with the relationship with a faith group brought her to God and faith in her own time (see chapter 6).

In contradiction, adult attachment can impact negatively in an individual's faith development. Insecure romantic relationships, broken relationships or bad experience in relationship with religious people sometimes damage self-image and lead one's faith to stagnation. Rachel is the woman who experienced all of these and showed total loss of herself in her relational life and faith (see chapter 6).

There are many examples of the impact of separation, alienation, disconnection or brokenness in adult relationships having a serious and significant influence on women's faith development. Concerning attachment and relational characteristics in women's nature, adult attachment is a very important factor, as we have seen above, particularly attachment to a faith group or community, for women's faith development, although Kirkpatrick (1999, p. 809) is not willing to affirm religious people or a group as an attachment figure (see chapter 3).

5.4.4 Attachment, faith and life

According to attachment theory, individuals who are secure find comparative ease in coping with stressful situations. They are relationally tolerant and creative. Individuals who are insecure, anxious and ambivalent, anxiously search for extreme intimacy but cannot find satisfaction. They are intolerant of relational distance but helplessly dependent. Individuals who are insecure and avoidant tend to avoid close relationships and find it difficult to know how to cope with relational matters and stressful situations (cf., Kirkpatrick, 1992; Collins and Read, 1994; Feeney and Noller, 1996).

Here are some examples. Ruth in my study was still grieving since her husband died of cancer two years ago. However, she has not lost her faith; rather her faith has emerged in a much more mature form. Secure faith like security in attachment relationship helps individuals to get through hard times – even though they lose their human attachment figure – and their faith grows more mature (see chapter 8). Janet had extremely stressful situations that she had to face with a major operation for a brain tumour and several other operations on her womb. Alongside her insecure

anxious and ambivalent attachment relationship with her parents in childhood, she had also been physically weak for her whole life and developed a very sensitive and worried temperament. After she found faith in God, she admitted that she became fearless and worried less. As we noted above, she has been transformed. Her faith in God helped her to cope with these extremely stressful situations and transformed her attitude (see chapter 7). Faith, however, sometimes does not help, as in Rachel's case. Her avoidant tendency had its peak when she faced difficult relationships with close religious people, which brought on a total loss of her self-esteem and faith. Her faith could not cope with the contradictory and painful situation. She found it very difficult to get out of the situation. She even doubted her faith in God (see chapter 6). There is certainly clear and significant evidence that secure faith or experience of faith helps women to cope with stressful situations. Insecure faith also shows that individuals, at least, rethink their faith and their relationship with God.

The interview results provide a more broadened and deepened understanding of attachment patterns in relation to the differences in the women's faith experiences Although this will be explored in more detail in the following three chapters according to what they said and how they said it, it is appropriate to summaries the three patterns of God-attachment: Distance/Avoidance; Anxiety/Ambivalence; Security/Interdependence, in a tabular form (see Appendix 7).

5.5 Summary and conclusions

The findings suggest that women's attachment relationships are very important when we think of women's faith development. We have highlighted some significant themes and characteristics in women's faith development. That is, women use

metaphors as language of faith, narrative as a means of faithing and conversation as a context of faithing. Their prominent understanding of faith as relational and affective was presented with various accounts of metaphoric language and narrative. The representations of the women's images of self and God were the core of the relational and affective dimensions of faith, where their attachment relationships played a crucial role. That is, it can be said that the issues of attachment, life and faith are inseparable but intertwined in women's development. Although this chapter offers only the outlines of the findings, the findings exhibit uniqueness and richness in the women's faith experience.

CHAPTER SIX

PATTERNS OF GOD-ATTACHMENT: DISTANCE/AVOIDANCE

6.1 Introduction

Based on the outline of my findings in chapter 5, subsequent chapters go on to explore three patterns of God-attachment: Distance/Avoidance, Anxiety/Ambivalence and Security/Interdependence. Each chapter begins with the theme within the literature on women's spirituality and faith development which is relevant to each pattern, and the ways of faithing particularly in terms of forms that the women's goals and strategies for God-attachment, then the characteristics in the women's representations of the self and God are illustrated in a style of case studies. Distant/Avoidant images are identified in many women's relationships with self, others and God in my study, but they are particularly prominent in two women's representations of self and God. Laura and Rachel particularly presented distant/avoidant faithing styles and very striking images of self and God which are derived from the women's narrative discourse.

6.2 Distance/Avoidance in the experience of faith

A distant/Avoidant image of self is connected with distant/avoidant image of God. It is focused on an inability to have an intimate personal relationship with God. The women in my study expressed this phenomenon as stagnation. It is an expression of their faith that they are unable to move forward in their faith journey, stuck in the situation, cannot fit in wherever they used to, should or want to.

Explaining the religious rigidity of this phenomenon with a psychoanalytic approach, Peter Hammersley (1997) suggests that loss is the key to understanding. The 'loss' he refers to is experiencing all sorts of loss that affects people's thoughts, feelings and behaviour, such as the death of an attachment figure (parent, partner, child), loss of faith, a serious illness, loss of limb and so on, which prevents people from developing a healthy self-esteem, sense of identity and the capacity for intimacy.

Women writers (e.g., Gilligan, 1982; Belenky et al, 1986) and theologians (e.g., Christ, 1986; Monk Kidd, 1996; Killen, 1997; Slee, 2004) particularly acknowledged women's experiences of disconnection with self, other and God, and inability to integrate. They argue that the ground of disconnection in women is from the problems in an androcentric society and also in some academic literature that support values of separation and individuation in human development. They also suggest some themes and metaphors so that women's experience could be heard and valued as one of women's developmental issues.

Carol Gilligan (1982) highlights women's dilemma in a society that rewards separation although relationships with others and life events are intertwined for women's development. She shows that some women cannot find the right words for their experience of self, which is "a crisis that centres on her struggle to disentangle her voice from the voices of others and find a language that represents her experience of relationships and her sense of herself" (p.51). Belenky and her colleagues (1986) also assert that the problem of women's 'silence' is a very serious but often ignored metaphor, which represents an extreme in denial of self and in dependence on external authority for direction. It is found especially in women who are underprivileged socially, economically and educationally and is present in women's 'deaf and dumb'

feeling, experiences of disconnection, obeying the wordless authorities and the experience of being seen but never heard (pp. 24-34).

Patricia O'Connell Killen (1997) mentions women's frustrated longing and dislocation using a metaphor, 'standing by a river, dying of thirst' (p. 23). She explains the phenomena of a journey into this frustrated longing: self-questioning and doubting, fleeing from frustrated longing into a diffuse, unfocused anger, and a numbing, deadening depression (pp. 26-28). She further asserts that many women, who are unable to acknowledge these longings and desires for themselves and do not discriminate their own longings from those of others, are caught in cycles of self-loathing, self-pity and rage and become caught between raging desire and denial of desire (p. 30).

Slee (2004) identifies this phenomenon as 'alienation', which is an experience of 'nothingness' for Carol Christ (1986), and 'deep sleep' for Sue Monk Kidd (1996). This is "an experience of a challenge to notions of development because it concerns a lack of movement, a sense of being stuck, the inability to grow and move forward" (Slee, 2004, p.82). In her profound finding, she explains that this experience of 'alienation' has many names and metaphors, and that demonstrates the metaphors of alienation which are exhibited in her interview (pp. 81-107). One of the images of the experience is characterised by silence and linguistic deprivation, along with apophatic faithing, one of her profound findings by means of which women could not speak or find expression of their own terms to articulate their faith. In another image of alienation, women's spaceless experience is exposed in wilderness and desert, confinement and enclosure. The impression of spiritual impasse is characterised in images of deadness, loss of feeling and reality, not knowing the self; as women lost their vitality or energy they experienced a loss of selfhood and spirituality. She also

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explains other images of alienation such as disconnection, fragmentation, division, alienation and breakdown, which are experienced when women find an inability to fit or reconcile themselves with family or church, and so on.   Images of paralysis and impasse, spiritually and psychologically, are particularly found in women who have been brought up in racial or patriarchal prejudice.   She indicates that the images suggest a developmental crisis for women although they are varied, and the account of the experience also demonstrates a powerful and painful experience of impasse.   She further asserts that the paradoxes of the experience may lead women to transformation; empowerment and wholeness.

Pamela Cooper-White (2000) also discusses the paradoxical issues in faith development.   She asserts that women's development does not necessarily proceed directly from stage 3 into a more rationally critical stage in Fowler's faith development theory.   She argues that "the emphasis on critical analysis over emotional relatedness privileges the rational mind" so that this view "does not give adequate attention to the emotions, bodily feelings and wordless images as parallel, equally valid ways of knowing, growing, and relating both in connection with other people and with God" (p. 99).   She asserts that "the persistent inner sense of emptiness, fraud, self-doubt, shame, and incipient depression associated with these experiences are often missed out from considerations of the developmental issues" (p. 100).

6.3 Distant/Avoidant Faithing

Distant/avoidant women's faithing styles have been revealed along with the striking images below and narratives of self and God which are related to attachment.   For

recognition of their faithing style, in particular, the characteristic features of their goals and strategies for gaining God-attachment are explored.

According to attachment theory, goals of avoidant individuals are maintaining distance and preventing others from getting too close. So they tend to limit intimacy which may be motivated by a strong need to avoid rejection (Collins and Read, 1994, p. 65; Feeney and Noller, 1996, p. 99). They are hopeless in seeking help as they minimise or deny their emotional reactions and are less likely to let others know about their distress as they have learned to manage distress by cutting off their anger and by minimising distress-related emotional displays (Collins and Read, 1994, p. 66; Feeney and Noller, 1996, p. 100). They are particularly uncomfortable with attachment-related topics and have difficulty recalling specific events (Crowell et al., 1999, p. 493). They recall sad memories without anger or anxiety, which distinguish them from anxious/ambivalent individuals (Mikulincer and Orbach, 1995, p. 923). As they use defensive strategies, they are less likely to engage in open communication about feelings (Fraley and Shaver, 1999, p. 742).

In her findings about women's faithing, Slee (2004) has particularly noticed 'apophatic faithing' as one of the means that women employed, which is "typified by its negative, denunciatory or contradictory quality" (p. 76). That is, the experience of God can only be described or expressed with "paradoxical and contradictory images and symbols and named as 'not this, not that'" (ibid.).

Rachel and Laura in my study were the women who used this strategy. They have experienced religion as negative and oppressive and are still struggling to find positive terms. They were also in a transition process and old terms are no longer adequate but they have not yet found satisfying ones (Slee, 2004, p. 77). In particular, they showed a tendency to deny or hide their desire for intimacy with God, using

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negative, contradictory terms. In their gaining God-attachment this tendency appears in their way or form of interviewing as well as the content of narrative.

6.3.1 Denial, minimising or hiding desires

Throughout her interview Rachel used particular phrases such as 'kept it to myself' and 'did it alone' several times which reflects her goals and strategies for human attachment and God-attachment as well. Rachel saw and learned church life and also experienced God in the early years of her life. However, she kept all the experiences to herself.

> I felt good that I could speak in tongues in fact I didn't desire it very much. […] [p]. Then I went
> to university, uh, I went to church and prayed alone [p] by myself, um [p] Friday evening prayer
> time, too [p] [remained in silence].

In fact, from this disjointed account, it is not hard to notice that her tendency of avoidance/distance in this experience and the way of telling the experience by minimising it. The same pattern appears in her narrative several times. She kept her dream of becoming a missionary to herself. Presumably, she did even not share her dream fully with her parents and also her parents' objection was too strong, "So, [p] I was discouraged." The reflection of this continuous conflict was not only in the content of the narrative which was about depressing and hopeless experience, but also in her way of telling the story from which we can obviously see that there are many pauses and a lack of full explanation.

Laura's description of her motivation for faith also shows a similar strategy but using different ways of denial such as denouncing, cynical and sceptical expressions – "Paradoxically, I had been thinking that I wanted to be a Christian. I don't know

where it was came from", "I wanted to do creative work […] I might have a good-deed illness".

6.3.2 Difficulties in recalling and verbalisation

Rachel's interview was a quite difficult one not only in arranging the interview but also in continuing the interview because there were many disconnections in fluency and disjointed narratives. There were many silences, confusions and hardness to engage in the conversation as she was asking for some examples. Belenky and her colleagues (1986, pp. 24-34), in their study of women's ways of knowing identifies the first and most painful perspective of 'silence,' which signifies women's experience of the absence of validation for their own self-expression, disconnection language and authoritative speech. Authority is viewed as external, unrelated, and uncaring.

This faithing strategy will be looked at below in the women's God-images. We can, however, see it more clearly in terms of how they present. The following excerpt of the first few minutes of Rachel's interview shows the difficulties in recalling and verbalising her understanding of faith and experience of God.

> *Joung: Could you tell me about your present understanding of faith, about significant people and particular events that affect your faith journey?*

> Rachel: [PAUSE – gathering her thought] [very long hesitation] But it seems not easy to tell [PAUSE]. I don't know how to answer the first question about my present understanding [p]. Just appeared a thought as looking at this [looking at interview questions in the sheet for 'a brief outline of the interview'] [p]. [Responding instantly] it seemed that faith was just always with me, because it was always with me [p]. If I was asked the purpose of my faith, I don't know what to say, easily.

> *Joung: Can you just say what you understand, thinking what faith is for you.*

> Rachel: But to be honest [p], I think it is all that I am living.

Joung: Yes.

> Rachel: I would just like to think that it is the whole way that we live. If there is no faith [p], there seems no purpose of life [P]. […] In fact, [laugh] I tried to prepare the answer in case somebody asked me. [P] But I just can answer that [p], there was no special moment for me. But I can say that I have never doubted the existence of God [firmly], the existence of God. I just say that I have never doubted the existence of God [with small voice] [p]. [PAUSE and remained in deep silence].

Long pauses, hesitation, remaining in deep silence, and small and fading away voice mirror her difficulty in thought and experience, and also reflect her lack of confidence in engaging in the interview. In the conversational context, Rachel was able to say "I have never doubted the existence of God" which was a striking contrast to all that went before because it was a clear affirmation of faith. As we can see her ending, however, the firm account echoed, became faint and disappeared in a deep silence. After this deep and long silence she could not continue her narrative at all. She could not give details or a concrete story. This pattern appeared several times whenever her story went deeper and farther.

Laura also showed inability to verbalise her God-image in personal and relational terms. Unlike Rachel, Laura's inability to recall and verbalise was expressed in her entangled, unsettled and long forms just like her attachment relationships (see below, her representation of God). In fact, the length of Laura's interview transcript was the longest of all and doubles Rachel's. She particularly spent most of her time in the interview to describe her inability largely with issues about a broken romantic relationship, 'having a faith' and 'wanting to be a true Christian' where relational and affective matters are significantly intertwined. According to Fraley and Shaver (1999, p. 378), avoidant individuals took longer in particular episodic memories of occasions when they felt anxious in their current relationships.

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6.3.3 Negativity and passivity

Laura and Rachel's narratives are particularly distinctive in their use of many negative and passive strategies. Along with the distant/avoidant images of self and God, they spoke many negative sentences such as "It is not ~", "I don't know ~" and "If there is no ~". To highlight negative strategy, the content of what Rachel said is omitted and only the structures of speech remains in the excerpt below from her answer to the question about her understanding of faith. It is obvious to see use of negativity.

> It is not easy …
>
> I don't really know how to answer …
>
> I don't know what to answer …
>
> If there is no faith, there is no purpose of life
>
> … but I just can answer that… there was no special moment for me …

For Rachel, explaining her understanding of faith is impossible without using negative terms. It is also noticeable in Laura's account that every time her narrative ended with negative expressions such as – "It does not come into my skin", "I still cannot define the relationship with God and Jesus" and "I don't know how to feel God". That is, Rachel and Laura could express and describe their experience only with negative terms.

In the next excerpt Rachel's image of God is seen.

> There were times when I really felt good even though I only said the word 'father'. Only if my faith was not in a stagnant situation, the word father, the expression of the word father would be so good to me.

If we focus on her tense, her tendency of using past tense or subordinate conjunction to describe her experience of God. It is because she could not find adequate terms for her present understanding which was influenced by traumatic experiences (for detail, see below in representation of self and God).

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6.3.4 Lack of hope

As we will see later in this chapter and later chapters, these two women are less relationally and affectively oriented than other women in my study, they avoided speaking about their feeling of distress to others or seeking help to resolve their problems. In Rachel's account her tendency of hiding or avoiding mirrors her tendency to sit back, shut down and cut off in her life. Her view on conflict with her parents was hopelessly expressed – "In fact, this conflict structure had been, is and will be continuously in my life." She did not tell her story of being wounded by religious people to anybody except her mother and a pastor although it had happened 4-5 years ago. She was also hesitant to tell the story until the end of the interview and opened her story to the interviewer saying "I didn't think I should tell this anybody till my life was ended." She was avoiding deep involvement in the conversation and afraid of revealing her story in public, but at the same time she showed a lack of ability to resolve the whole problems she had. After she explained why her faith was in stagnation and discouragement, she ended the story with saying:

> I sometimes wonder when this stagnation will end. […] I am sure I will regret these years. […] I don't know when my faith will rise up again. I am not sure if there is a moment, but till then this distressing situation will continue [with empty laughs] [remained in silence].

Probably it was not the right time for her to tell her faith story particularly in relation to attachment issues in such an auto-biographical in-depth interview. The content and form of her narrative throughout the interview, however, is enough to show that she was in despair and total loss which resulted in her lack of willingness to work her problems.

Although these two women's ways of faithing are distance and avoidance, as we have seen above and as Slee (2004) has suggested in 'apophatic faithing', they only express their desire for God in these ways such as minimising or denouncing, and

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negative or passive ways. Rachel was trying to find a way to appreciate her old meaning of faith that was very private and precious experience, but not yet find a new way as she has undergone through traumatic experience which contradicted her old meaning. Laura has always been searching for truth to find a new meaning by reading, doing creative work or trying to do good deeds – in fact, in the conversational context, she recognised and admitted that it was 'becoming a true Christian' that she was searching for – as fighting for her self-identity which was not fit in her family, society and the church community. However, as we have seen in chapter 5, this feeling of vulnerability is also one of the ways of discovering the deepest self and God, which paradoxically lead women to transform themselves in their own time and own way, although this has not been much appreciated as one of the ways of faithing. In the following sections, these two women's representations of self and God are explored in which the above distant/avoidant styles of faithing are fully described with narratives of their faith journey.

6.4 Distant/Avoidant representation of self

Some women in my interview reported some kind of stagnation in their faith journey at which time they could not confirm their faith or where they stood, which we have already explored in chapter 5. Although the situations and forms are various, many women experienced these strange, distant, odd and alienated feelings and situations that prevented growth although they sometimes led women to reflect their faith journey. For some women, stagnation is short and less complicated, while for other it is quite deep and complicated and a lifelong matter. In my study two women Laura and Rachel particularly showed distant/avoidant image of self and this permeated their whole autobiographical narratives. Laura's dejected striking self-image as 'an

unsettled outsider' and Rachel's passive avoidant self-image as 'a victim' of a religious family are shaped by the distant/avoidant experiences of childhood and adolescent years, which intertwined with identity and intimacy issues as they entered young adulthood.

As we have seen the outline in chapter 5, the establishment of these images and narratives is deeply related to their attachment relationships, and as Miller (1991, p. 15) suggests, these women's self-images are also affected by feelings of inefficiency as carers in the relationships rather than by a misinterpreted notion of women's dependency, which we will look at in detail below.

6.4.1 'Unsettled outsider'

Laura, aged 35, was single and studying for an MA at the time when she was interviewed. She has been wandering around to look for the meaning of life and a true relationship which would support her life. Recently the pain of wandering life reached its peak and she struggled to anchor on the Christian God. Laura was a seeker after truth. Her concern was always in the centre of religious matters in terms of anthropocentric view. She was always on the boundary of Christianity. Despite this, she could not feel that she was a true Christian. In fact, she was an 'outsider' or 'alien' to Christianity. Her autobiographical narrative tells how she got such distance self-image and why she was wandering around as an outsider.

In Laura's childhood, there is a lack of descriptions of parental images and of narratives about the experience of attachment feelings. In her childhood her parents were absent and withdrawn psychologically. Compared with other cases, she provided very little evidence about her attachment relationship with her parents,

except an account denouncing her parents' relationship with each other. Her parents were not well educated, not wealthy and not sociable but isolated from society. Her mother was physically weak and ill, and socially restricted and silent. Her father became stressed by her mother's long-term illness and by being isolated from society. Although her father was not a violent or vicious person, he gave her mother a hard time. Laura described her father's character as an 'ivy plant' implying that he is not relational but distant; her mother's as a 'mosquito's voice' implying that she was weak and a victim. Neither of her parents was stronger or wiser but rather frailer and more inclined to failure. She could not learn or have any meaning, hope or support from her parents.

Throughout her adolescent years, Laura kept distant from her parents psychologically. She recalled:

> I was terrible […]. I did not talk to anybody at home. [Pause] […] Although I had known that I had had to talk to and help my mum and that she could not have a chance to chat with neighbours, I did not talk to her and neither did she to me.

As women scholars have pointed out, Laura found herself in dilemma between caring for her mother and herself. In this dilemma she chose distance/avoidance. Having kept such distance, Laura fell into reading some books by authors such as Camus and Sartre from her early teens. She read these for the fulfilment of her intellectual and existential hunger, which was closely related to her seeking for a faith, for compensation – which might compensate for her parents' lack of education and lack of connection with the world. Instead, however, she felt a sense of futility. The more she read such books the more her mind became heavier and darker.

Consequently, although she was screaming inwardly for meaning in her life, her life was not meaningful at all. She described her young adulthood, which was denounced in her accounts:

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> What to say, it was the second year of middle school when I only studied hard, but after that, I did not study much so that I could just manage to enter university. After I graduated too, I got a job in a shabby firm but resigned very soon. Then just I ran a business with my little brother. Although I had been working continuously, nothing went well, in fact.

She could not fulfil her dignity and ran away from the situation where she could not find a meaningful life. She spoke about the experience of falsehood and her feelings of futility at that moment in a long and pessimistic narrative.

> I came here [England] with no purpose. I just ran away from the situation [P]. I reflected 'why I always live a running away life [p]', 'why I do not set a goal and why I do not get through'. […] At over thirty years of age, if I got married like others, at least my life would get secure. But the situation is that I am not married to a man, having no job, no career or living no purposeful life, too much [p] my life was false [p]. […] Compared with others, I still do not know what to do, I have nothing, nothing to do. I do not know what I want to do. A sense of falsehood, the worst enemy for me was the sense of falsehood that I did not know the reason to live my life'. So extremely, I had thought, 'I would not regret if I died right now, rather it would good to die [p]. After death it would be end', because I had no belief, 'if I died, just this pain would be ended'.

This depressed, dejected, weigh down nuance of her account permeated in her whole autobiographical narrative. Laura had lost her self-worth and self-respect; she became depressed and totally collapsed emotionally, physically and spiritually. It was total loss and 'nothingness'. She could not describe this despair and alienation without expressing her a sense of futility and falsehood, which was also related with the image of being 'spaceless' as she could not fit herself in society and find her role in relationships. Although, she said, depression had always pervaded her life, this phenomenon reached its peak when everything was stuck and out of control. Again, she expressed her despair feeling and sense of loss after baptism, "There were no signs of change even after baptism but there were still fears and a sense of futility, which rather increased so much to that I lost meaning in my life." Her tone and nuance was deadening. She needed at least a reason to tell or to support herself to get meaning of life and self-worth back.

From her autobiographical narrative we can see how her distant relationship with her parents affected her self-image and all aspects of her life, and how her wounded dejected self-image was also intertwined with her lack of relationality in adult romantic relationships and struggling with faith. She could not fit in the family and society; she could not find her worth and a role in the relationships and society; she felt inefficient and useless. Although she particularly mentioned the faith issue here, it was intertwined with her sense of self, and a sense of futility in relational and emotional matters.

6.4.2 'Victim' of a religious family

Rachel was a 29 year old single woman and was born as a fifth daughter of a church minister. Her account of her relationship with her parents appears as distance:

> I always felt an age gap deeply with my parents […]. I tended to hide things from my parents and to do everything by myself; I decided and thought by myself, then I told my parents about my problems and decisions afterward. My mother hated this. […] However, I had something in my mind that ministers had many concerns on their minds. […] I didn't want to give another concern of mine to them.

Rachel's account about her childhood is similar to Laura's as they both thought of caring for others but built a wall around themselves. Rachel also felt a dilemma between caring for parents and herself. She did not want to hurt either her parents or herself. To see her parents' worry by telling her concerns to them was also hurting herself. So she tended to hide her concerns. This caused her to develop a quite avoidant and passive character. Whenever conflicts occurred she could not stand up for herself. She could not find a way for her or any way of compromise. She just gave up and chose not to hurt anybody but these remained a scar and discouragement in her. Like Laura, Rachel was running away from the situation but choosing passive

ways. This happens several times – when her parents objected her going to seminary and later going to Fiji Island as a missionary; when she was not welcomed in her boyfriend's family; when a minister's wife misunderstood and rejected her, this discouraged, passive and avoidant self-image recurred. This directly resulted in her faith being stagnated and stuck. Her bitter and agonising feelings and helpless self-image were expressed in her account at the end of the interview.

> It was very hard when she [youth minister's wife who thought her husband and Rachel have a feeling for each other] misunderstood me [p]. I thought I got hurt by ministers, one-sidedly. […] Ah, I received such a [p] Rev. couple's [her boyfriend's parents who did not approve of Rachel having romantic relationship with their son] cold and distant attitude [p]. So then my faith went stagnant. I used to like the minister's [her boyfriend's father] preaching very much. But I felt he was not a preacher but just a human, a resentful person. I could not participate in the worship as I did before.

It can be said that the feelings of disconnection with others seriously impacted on her faith. A sense of helplessness, broken relationships and loss of faith occurred at the same time. It can be said that this stagnation also originated and evolved from the distance/avoidance experiences of childhood, adolescent years and recent adult attachment relationships.

6.5 Distant/Avoidant representation of God

Common consent of adult attachment theorists on avoidant/distant individuals is that their beliefs and attitudes are particularly negative in general human relationships. These individuals tend to report cold and distant images of others (Feeney and Noller, 1996, p. 97) or idealise them without concrete memories of experience (Goldberg, p. 44). These individuals tend to see others as not trustworthy or dependable, to doubt their honesty and integrity, and to be suspicious of others' motives because they are

not interpersonally oriented; rather, because of their lack of confidence in social situations (Collins and Read, 1994, p. 64).

The general self-other representational images of avoidant/distant individuals help to understand why some women have avoidant/distant images of God. From the interview some images emerged and are signified in depersonalised and un-relational, abstract conceptual and unavailable undependable images of God that Rachel and Laura are particularly and distinctively employed.

In fact, as McFague (1982, p. 23) asserts, this language that the women used requires hermeneutic interpretation because for one reason many Christians, especially Christians whose faith is inherited, can easily confuse or overlap these images and concepts; for the other significant reason some women can accept the possibility of the absence of God, imageless or objectless, that is, an experienced God may be denied, repressed, or displaced. Here are some images of avoidance/distance God that should be interpreted in the context.

6.5.1 'A thing-above-human being' – imageless, depersonalised and un-relational

Laura recalled her memories of what she thought about God in her teens and until recently, which is quite distinctive account from others.

> I thought 'if we were here, a being above human beings should exist [p]. We would not have existed obscurely.' I did not assume that the being might have a personality. […] Although we say 'a being' which notes a person, I thought, 'there is a thing and we [p] exist'.

For her, God was 'a being', in fact, 'a thing' that has no personality. She did not use the word 'God' at all in this account but 'a being' or 'a thing'. She just thought that there should be an origin of our existence; there were no connections between human and 'the origin' in her account. There was no thought of a God who created us in

God's image that was at all relational. Her God had no name and face; it was an anonymous God. This imagelessness also related to a depersonalised and un-relational image of God. It remained in her during later life and became an obstacle to grasping a relational image when she was aware of faith and Christianity and of making a deep involvement in any kind of relationship including adult romantic relationship. The imageless view did not help her to experience God and affected other views as well.

When we think about ultimate issues like eternity and death, this imageless objectless view became more seriously problematic.

> I was not afraid of death at all, rather I pondered on wanting to die. I assumed that our body was consisted of substances. So if we died, uh after death, our body might be decomposed into substances like H_2O and our soul might be also decomposed like material. So I was not afraid of death, and I never considered about eternal life after death.

In her view, whatever the image of God there is no intervention in our existence and death. She spoke of what were the core issues in our life and faith. In fact, her view was quite eloquently described. If we look at her account more carefully, it was the issues of personality and relationality which she could not grasp. It is all about her feeling of disconnection. For her, life and death just happens and disappears. She could not imagine or verbalise a relational and personalised God. All along she spoke about her struggle with disconnection to a personal and relational image of God. She had a highly philosophically developed concept of God, which vanishes and cannot be recalled; the imageless, objectless, depersonalised, un-relational thing-above-human being.

Ana-Maria Rizzutto (1979) and McDargh (1983) recognise that certain particularly suitable inner representations may, in some persons, develop further into what are recognized as explicitly 'religious' objects, whereas the same representations, in other

persons, may not so develop. Furthermore, Moshe Halevi Spero (1992) wisely distinguishes between 'imageless religiosity' and 'religious belief', just as James Fowler (1981) and Robert Kegan (1982) do with 'God relational perspectives' and 'faith relational perspectives'. Spero (1992) elucidates:

> Faiths without God representations are sometimes considered more advanced than God-oriented religiosities, based on a mistaken understanding of the concept of internalisation. That is, some writers presume that the higher the level of internalisation of a perceptual object, such as the "image" of the object known as God, the more abstract will be the concept of God, up to the point where ideally all image-bound representation of God vanishes. But along with this may vanish certain important and valuable qualities of relationship, demand, commitment, affection, and so forth that are entailed by this object. In fact, one may contend that … forms of religiosity without a God representation are only an aboriginal or precursor phenomenon and may indicate the failure to record or further to record or further utilize the kind of experiences that create that special space where God images are discovered, created, and rediscovered (pp.13-14).

Spero clarifies that we should not confuse imageless religiosity with forms of religious belief that revolve around some form of internalised God. He further explains that a specific object representation of God in theocentric view indicate emotional maturity, as in anthropocentric view god-oriented religious belief shows clinical qualitative differences from god-less religious belief systems (p.15).

How and why then does Laura have this imageless objectless view? There are several reasons why she might have this view. The most significant factor is Laura's parental images and their roles in the relationship. As we have seen above, her father was described as an 'ivy plant', which has no character or reactions, and which is still just out there on its own; her mother was described as a 'mosquito's voice', which represents an image of a small, quiet victim; and as weak, fragile and frail. They were not well educated, wealthy or sociable. In particular, memories of her attachment feelings in relationship with them hardly appeared in her narrative. Her parents' relationship with each other was also represented as not good or not working.

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Additionally, the common reason that she could have this view was that Laura's family has no religious identity, which is quite common in some families in Korea. The religious background of Laura's family was a traditional Buddhism, namely folk religion, which was mixed with totemism. Her father was cynical about Christianity calling Christians '*yehsoo jengyee*' – '*yehsoo*' means Jesus and the term '*jengyee*' is normally used after non-ideal characters or jobs to denounce them. Her mother's long-term illness and powerlessness could not affect Laura positively although her mother was basically a person of faith, who wanted to believe in Buddhism properly. Although Laura kept in touch with Christianity from the age of 7, she could not get deeply involved or settled in Christianity. She recalled an experience of visiting a church, which was not a congenial encounter at all when she was a teenager.

> Crying 'Lord' loudly, clapping hands and so on. […] [I]t was like a field of fanatical believers [P]. If you were a newcomer, you had to stand up in front of so many people. It was too embarrassing to do. On top of that they were praying and clapping. It did not suit me at all [p].

As Laura thought herself as "a girl with literary aspirations and wanted to be intelligent, elegant and graceful" in her teens, she could not fit in the church and Christianity. She could not relate to or find any common ground with the church community. She was embarrassed and uncomfortable when she encountered the enthusiastically welcoming atmosphere of religious people and their religious language and behaviours, because she was never allowed to feel those emotions and to use religious language at home. She did not have any positive influences that encouraged her to Christian identity or relational and personal images. As we have discussed above, and as far as Rizzuto (1979), McDargh (1983) and Spero (1992) are concerned, someone like Laura, who has a highly philosophical view or abstract image, tends to seek an ideal 'faith' rather than grounding personal image of God by internalising concrete experiences. This philosophical, depersonalised and un-

relational view could not help her when she needed it, especially when human relationships were not working.

6.5.2 'The [abstract connotation] of God' – abstract and conventional

Some women in my interview could grasp more descriptive or clear images of God while others struggled with it; in some cases aided by cultural and traditional usages but in some cases hindered by them. Other women, for a variety of reasons, perceive God only dimly through past experiences.

While Laura's account is highly philosophical, objectless, depersonalised and un-relational, Rachel's account is highly theological, abstract and conventional. The abstract concept she used is not itself problematic but the way of using it is a problem. Rachel particularly used these images to describe her understanding of faith and God. She used various theological conceptions from time to time in her narrative, as she explained her knowledge, confusion and doubt about God: "I never doubted the existence of God", "In fact, I don't know the character of God and the attributes of God", "It started from the will of God", "The attributes of God seem different according to the situation we are in", and so on.

Explaining the relationship between symbols and our experience with a circulating structure of symbols, Friedrich Schweitzer (2001) distinguishes 'symbol' from 'sign' discussed by Lorenzer (1972). Schweitzer asserts that abstract symbolic words can become signs if the affective aspect that the person experienced cannot be expressed or if the affective aspect is limited or suppressed by the language. Then the language becomes empty words which have no meaning and connection to the person (pp. 233-234).

Rachel said she never doubted the existence of God but when she was asked to describe her image of God she could not describe it with concrete images of her own, but rather repeated the terms which were given to her by religious authorities. This phenomenon appeared especially in some women in my study who inherited their faith, but Rachel was the extreme case. There is a conflict in her and her language between these given theological conceptual images and experienced concrete images. In other words, in Rachel's case the given theological conceptual images prevent the experienced concrete images from being maintained and refined to be used as it is owned. When she was asked about her own image of God she replied with a confused and unclear answer. Rachel admitted;

> To be honest I was confused about God two months ago. I had thought I had known God but in fact, I didn't know the character of God and attributes of God. I realised that I didn't know the God as I used to think he was.

She had experienced her own mysterious experiences from her teens and she thought that she was called to God's mission. As we have seen above in her self-image in this chapter, she had however to suppress what she wanted to do but had to follow what other ordinary women do as her parents told her to and as the traditional images of women suggest and as society expects. All her concrete experiences of God and her personal calling should be hidden and never be spoken out loud or never spoken of with her own words. She thought that she had known God very well but she found that she didn't. It is because of this, that the given abstract conceptions of God were never owned by her. The abstract symbol just remained as a 'sign' as it did not relate to her affective experience, as Schweitzer (2001, p. 34) has asserted. In other words, although she had experienced very concrete, real and mysterious personal experiences, she could not speak directly of them, rather indirectly using auxiliary phrases, 'the [abstract connotation] of God' because she was encouraged not to verbalise her own

experience of God with her own language but only with given conceptual, abstract, conventional terms. Thus, she felt unsure, unclear and confused; although she expressed various highly developed abstract theological concepts about God, she could not feel and use them as her own. Subjectivity is here a significant issue for her in owning and naming. For 'owning' and 'naming', as we have seen in Rachel's case, our affective interaction should be accountable and encouraged. Otherwise, whatever language we use and even though it is highly theological, expressions of our religious experience remain as just meaningless, contactless and baseless signs.

Both Laura's depersonalised God-image and Rachel's abstract conceptual language use were related to a distant/avoidant image of God. For both, these God-images are based on their doubts and questions about their existence and identity; avoiding and struggling with intimacy and security; feeling depression and stagnation.

The most serious problems of them are in their inability to grasp their image of God with their own words. That is, they are unable to feel, think and verbalise God because God is anonymous for them – with no face and no name; transcendental God – who reveals dimly and is unavailable to them when they need, or rather approach with a 'faith' based perspective that they minimise or lack recalling of their concrete experience of God. They are unable to express their feelings and their experience of God because it is difficult to do so with the abstract conceptual language that is traditionally given to them so they tend to suppress their own experience and find it difficult to recall it whenever they need. In particular, these emerging images are apparent in women who are struggling with their faith which is uncertain and who have also been and still are in an agonising situation with human attachment relationship problems.

As we have seen in chapter 3 and 5, human attachment relationships are surely related with their images of God since both are involved particularly in emotional commitment. Many women value and prefer concrete forms which are grounded in their human attachment relationships, although abstract conceptual forms of faith have been praised and valued by male scholars. Both Laura and Rachel reported their dissatisfaction, confusion and agony because they experienced difficulties speaking of imagery and concrete forms of faith in which their affective experience are exhibited.

Then, why are personalised and relational images of God important? This question is basic but raises a lot of attention in theology and religious studies, especially in metaphoric theology. Sallie McFague (1982, pp. 20-21) emphasises the significance of personal and relational images for God. As we were created in God's image (Gen. 3:27) we imagine God as a personalised image and as Jesus taught. That is, we personalise God and imagine God as relational images (father, mother, lover, friend, saviour, sovereign, ruler, servant, and so on). In the Bible and the Judeo-Christian tradition we can also find natural and depersonalised images such as stone, plant, river, power, lightening. These images are also found women's accounts and sometimes with these images women can express their feelings and their experience creatively and dynamically. In fact, McFague explains that the natural and depersonalised images need to be understood with openness and inclusiveness of the natural world in the relational aspect of our lives (ibid). Her emphasis on personal and relational images of God reveals the importance of our religious language which fuses images and concepts and which brings and requests various interpretations.

6.5.3 'Father God' - distant, hidden, unavailable, undependable

Distant images of God were found in both Laura and Rachel, but unlike the above images, this image has a personalised and relational image. However, in this image they still express their hidden, unavailable and undependable image of God.

Laura described her image of God which was still hidden, distant and unavailable although she said that she found herself having 'a little' faith very recently. We can see it from the very last minute of her account in the interview:

> For me, God is in heaven, yet. I want to have 'father God', 'my God', 'God who is always with me'. […] I call God up in prayer and put Him up in Heaven after prayer. Then I never think that God is here with me [p] […]. God is not yet 'my God', 'real father God' for me. We hear in general and sometimes sing a song, 'God creates all, listens our breaths, even a mere trifle [p]', but uh [p] it hasn't come into my skin yet.

Laura, who was struggling with grasping her own God-image and hardly used the word "God" during the most of her interview, but she began to use the word "God" at the very end of her interview, still struggling with distant images. The inability to internalise personal and relational images of God hinders her from having an intimate relationship with God. She desires to have personal experience so that she can say 'father God', 'my God', 'real father God'. She uses universal concept of 'father' here rather than one concretely experienced and internalised by her own human relationships.

What image of father could she have? As we have seen above, her father was described as 'just being out there' having lack of relationality. Thus, although she is able to say 'father God', it will be very difficult to internalise an intimate image of God, because her real father was too distant, unavailable and unreliable to be able to be always with her. Consequently, she tried to idealise the image of God, but still it

was too far away to be close and too vast to grasp. She explained this in more detail in a different account as she continues saying her inability to relate God and Jesus:

> So ah [p] I regarded Jesus as having more humanity. Just Jesus came to a human body to suffer and die. […] So Jesus is more like humanity [p]. Thus I understand Jesus as a historical man and sitting in the right side of God in heaven. Then I cannot explain with my own words. And God seems indeed much [p] vaster than Jesus so that I don't know how to feel God in my skin [in a very real way].

For her 'God' is still too vast to understand and too far away to feel. She tried to understand God through incarnated Jesus who seemed to have more humanity because she thought the suffering and dying images were much closer to her than the image that was vast and far away in heaven. However, she could not explain in more detail because Jesus is also sitting at the right side of God in heaven. Although she tried to understand closer image of God through Jesus, she still does not know how to experience God because she cannot relate the human image of Jesus to God who is far way in heaven.

Rachel also showed the same phenomenon. As we have seen faithing strategies above, it can be said that Rachel's account about God was insecure and was expressed with great difficulty and confusion. Although she was asked about her *present* understanding of God, she felt difficult and confused to describe it.

> The first image that comes up to me is God is my Lord, my Lord [p] that attribute of God is always to come first [p] um [p] so God seems exactly fair and loving. He is [p] also ah [p] fearful God. Three months ago He was a fearful God. Then the fearful God showed his love to me right after.

Still she depended on her past experiences to describe present understanding of God because she was not sure about her present and the future. She could only speak indirectly through the past experiences which were still suppressed in her mind.

Rachel also described her image of God without using abstract conceptual terms after long hesitation, which mirrors her confusion and inability to speak of her own image of God.

> Then, uh [p] Go~d, indeed, father, these two are the same word, aren't they? There were times when I really felt good although I only said the word father. Only if my faith was not in a stagnant situation, the word father, the expression of the word father would be so good to me. It seemed that everything resolved, and tears came out [p]. The expression of the word father seemed to make me like that.

The word 'God' is replaced here by the word 'father'. Whatever the general or universal concept of father is, unlike Laura, for Rachel the expression of 'father', rather than the word 'God', gave her comfort and peace. Here, she could express her feelings and experiences of her relationship with God in her life with her own concrete and relational images, without using auxiliary words that were abstract theological concepts. Although she still used patriarchal images like 'lord' and 'father' here in her account, they appeared to be an important bridge between abstract concepts and concretely experienced images. She began to express personalised relational images of her own in the process of interview. It was one benefit of the process of the autobiographical in-depth narrative interview in the conversational context.

However, it is noticeable that her present understanding of God was spoken of using only past experiences. She limited it saying "only if my faith was not in a stagnant situation". What situation was her faith in, and what image of 'father' could she have? As we have seen above, her father was a minister of very busy, newly built, countryside church and could not perhaps give much attention to her in her childhood. She felt distant from her father because of his father's busyness and the age gap. She was away from home for her schooling and she felt close to ministers and their families in the church where she worshipped. She opened her heart easily to

them and thought they were like father, mother and sisters, but she was also deeply hurt by them. The cold, distant and resentful attitude of a minister, who was a father figure to her, could be reflected in her image of God, and this had a deep impact on her and was crucial to the loss of her faith.

It is very interesting to see two women using the same word 'father God' in the same way through the process of narrative. Laura and Rachel both used the word 'father God' to express their present understanding of God; for Laura to bridge depersonalised to personalised God-image while for Rachel to bridge abstract concept to her concrete experience.

According to D. W. Winnicott (1971, pp. 1-4), between subjective experience and reality there should be a bridge in development of religious images, a so called 'transitional object' and the place the object occupies is called 'transitional space' – a space in between our experience and reality. Although Winnicott's theory explains the necessity of a transitional object and the space that it creates for children, it applies not only to children's religious development but also to adults' religious development because the space remains till later in life and continues to develop religious imagery and creativity in adulthood.

Why 'father' then? I am aware that a huge amount of research about this issue has been done especially for and against Freudian approaches. I cannot discuss this in detail here, but Ullman's explanation helps our understanding. Ullman (1989) notes that many religious converts both men and women equally expressed the father problem and compensated for it with an omnipotent image (pp. 29-30). Arguing Freud's oedipal urge, she identifies three functions of the father related to the image of God:

First, insofar as he [the father] tends to be perceived by the child as the stronger adult figure, the father endows laws and constraints with authority, inhibiting impulses and imposing a meaningful structure on behavior. Second, as the traditional mediator between the family and the outside world, he promises protection from external dangers, assuring the child of her or his own eventual ability to cope with them. Third, as a different "significant other" within the family orbit, the father offers a necessary counterpart to the mother-infant relationship, adding the differentiation of a separate sense of self (p. 50).

The issue of father is also raised in the pattern of security/interdependence but with more positive influence on women's faith development (see chapter 8). In fact, a point that we need to consider is that feminist theologians have argued the exclusive use of male metaphors and one-sided naming of God runs the risk of idolatry, the danger of confusing one human symbol with the divine reality which can also be destructive for women (e.g., McFague, 1982; Fischer, 1995; Zappone, 1995). McFague (1982, p. 21) strictly speaks about Christians using two words 'God' and 'father' interchangeably and asserts that God's name is not 'father'. She argues that when we speak 'God is father' it is true and also not true, because it does not mean patriarchal paternity. Asserting issues arising from the fact that the Judeo-Christian tradition has been very patriarchal, she claims that Jesus' teaching and metaphors and his life are focused on personality and relationality in persons.

Thus, it is also important to acknowledge that God may be mediated through the actions of loving care and a feeling of security from the relationship rather than a particular person or figure (Fonagy, 2001, p. 13; Yust, 2003, p. 146). Both Laura and Rachel use 'father God' to express a 'God' who is caring and loving and gives security and comfort. That is, although the 'father God' bridges the women's experience and reality of God, it is not the object 'father' but the actions of loving care and a feeling of security from the relationship that they created and imagined.

6.6 Summary and conclusions

This chapter has presented one of the patterns of God-attachment, distance/avoidance in which the women's ways of faithing have also showed the reflection of their characteristics of avoidance/distance where the women's image of self and God are apparently revealed. Pattern of distance/avoidance are significant reflections of being wounded and lacking relationality in human attachment relationships through which the women express themselves and their faith.

The women on whom we have particularly focused here have different encounters with Christianity, as Laura was brought up in a family that was cynical about Christianity, while Rachel was brought up in the centre of a Christian community. Both had distant parents in different ways, their adult attachment relationships were broken and they remained single. It is also interesting to see the role of the church community or religious people around them. After a long period of unsettling, the recent encounter with a Christian group gave Laura an initiation to melt her frozen heart. On the other hand, for Rachel, who was brought up in the centre of Christian community, wounds from the religious people were still present and affecting her faith negatively. Thus, it can be said that the influence and the importance of loving and caring Christian community for women's faith development is crucial, particularly for the women who show the distant/avoidant pattern of attachment.

We are particularly alarmed by the women's silenced, alienated, distant/avoidant narrative which signified denial of their desire for attachment relationships and inability to establish them which reflected in their ways of narratives. However, the most important finding that we should recognise and value from this pattern is that as Killen (1997, p. 44) and Slee (2004, p. 106) point out, paradoxically, for these women, doubting and questioning, fleeing and struggling, and numbing and deadening are

ways of journeying into longing for God. That is, it is the way they refuse traditional or others' understanding, words and conceptions and the way they scream to find their identity and struggle to accept and express their own image of God which is personally and concretely experienced. For women who particularly show the distant/avoidant pattern of attachment, particularly sensitive and attentive listening is required. Pastors and educators for women should be able to listen to the women's emotional and relational voices of 'silence' and 'denial' but which are powerful and creative at the same time. In this chapter, we have raised significant issues for Christian education and pastoral practice for women who show the distant/avoidant attachment pattern and also who have been in similar situations with particular reference to the representations of the self and God. This will be discussed more in the implication chapter in this thesis.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PATTERNS OF GOD-ATTACHMENT: ANXIETY/AMBIVALENCE

7.1 Introduction

Anxious/ambivalent feelings and attitudes are another way of responding to our desire for attachment. While distant/avoidant patterns of God-attachment are characterised by some women's detachment attitude as they fear the rejection of the attachment figure, some other women show their anxiety and ambivalence by not fulfilling their extreme desire for intimacy. In this chapter, first, meaning of anxiety/ambivalence in faith experience is discussed with psychodynamic and feminist views. Second, the recurring patterns of the anxious/ambivalent faithing draw out differences between the women, which are apparent in discourse and narrative of God-attachment relationship employed by the anxious/ambivalent women. This is followed by the women's representations of self and God, which is the distinctiveness in this group of six women. The chapter is concluded with significant findings and suggestions.

7.2 Anxiety/Ambivalence in the experience of faith

The feelings of anxiety/ambivalence in the experience of faith have various forms, but they are based on lack of self-confidence and self-worth, which make the person feel conflicts in relationships. Hammersley (1997, p. 90) sees that anxiety might be related to conflict, lack of internal harmony or integration, or conflict in external relationships. In terms of religious rigidity, he points out that it is related to the present conflict e.g., with authority figures such as pastors or religious people, with

spouse, or struggling to maintain the self in the social norm or church tradition. According to him, anxiety is related to lack of autonomy. Autonomy is a key issue of a person's cognitive, emotional and behavioural development. It springs out of a secure attachment relationship and is related to the capacity for intimacy. Consequently, lack of autonomy causes an anxiety in relational and social situations. The ambivalent individual fears autonomy because it might lead to the loss of the attachment while the avoidant individual is detached but not autonomous. Ambivalence seemed to be particularly characteristic of women while avoidance is more common in men (Hammersley, 1997, p. 115 and also see chapter 2 of this thesis).

It is right to assert that anxiety/ambivalence in longing for God results in a lack of autonomy and frustration in human relationships and in struggling to sustain the self in the social norm or tradition. However, we can see the positive side of it as women recognise their own desire in themselves rather than denying it and they begin to distinguish their own desire from caring only for other's desire. Women academics regard the phenomenon as a 'breakthrough', 'awakening', 'listening to the deepest self', 'listening to own longings' and 'resisting' rising out of 'deep sleep', 'nothingness', 'alienation', 'silence', 'impasse', 'stagnation' (e.g., Zappone, 1995; Christ, 1995; Fischer, 1995; Bons-Storm, 1996b; Killen, 1997; Slee, 2004).

Many women are anxious and ambivalent about whether God cares for them or not, particularly when they face difficult times in relationships, power dominant social structure and traditional gender expectations (Killen, 1997, p. 31). They may be uncomfortable about the desire that arises in them for God because the desire for God arises as they are in pain and surrounded by all sorts of rejection, discrimination or disconnection in relationships sometimes combined with health problems. That is, the

journey towards listening to the deepest self and awakening is "neither pain-free nor risk-free one" (Slee, 2004, p. 112). The painful journey of awakening is characterised with resistance and longing; resistance towards "what had become constraining and paralysing or death-dealing" (ibid., p. 114) and longing for new relationships with self, others and God.

In many ways we can embrace or control our longing. Explaining the woman bent over (Luke 13:10-17), Killen (1997) points that the woman was able to experience what happened to her and did not identify herself with her deformity or her pain (p. 33). That is, the importance of longing for God is self-acceptance which enables us to experience pain and to let it move through us without letting it define us. For this, Killen (1997) suggests 'acknowledging' and 'befriending' the longings: 'Acknowledging' is noticing longing without judging it, accepting the full range of human emotions that goes with longing; 'befriending' does not mean "soul-deadening or submission to infirmity that diminishes life, but relating to oneself and one's situation in a way that awakens possibilities and a range of freedom that one has not known until now" (p. 34). Defining women's frustrated and hope-filled longing as one of act of faith, she suggests a dual combination of 'resistance' and 'desire' (pp. 46-51). It is the power of faith for healing, awakening, embracing frustrated longing for an intimate relationship with God.

Although there are some strategies which are not ideal, as they desire for God-attachment and resist any discomfort, women can eventually experience faith in God. For the experience of faith, Christ (1995) prefers 'awakening' to 'conversion'. She thinks "awakening implies that the ability to see or to know what is within the self" while "conversion often seems to imply that one has turned from one source of authority to another" (p. 18). It is also because that conversion, for men, means

giving up worldly power while for women, "awakening is not so much a giving up as a gaining of power" (p. 19). She articulates that "women often describe awakening as a coming to self, rather than a giving up of self, as a grounding of selfhood in the powers of being, rather than a surrender of self to the powers of being" (ibid.).

Most of the women in my study expressed their distress in longing for an intimate relationship with God. Some women particularly showed these characteristics in their feelings and attitudes towards relationships: their images of self and God were distinctively anxious and ambivalent; their goals and strategies for attachment were different from the distant/avoidant women who showed denial of their desire and also from the secure/interdependent women who acknowledged their longing as well as others'. Anxiously seeking for love and security was a lifelong issue for some women. Thus, the level of anxiety and noticeable ambivalence make these women distinctive from other women in their relational and affective dimension of faith and life.

7.3 Anxious/Ambivalent faithing

Anxious/ambivalent individuals are sensitive to their emotional reactions and they tend to experience more distress than others and they display high levels of anxiety and frustration about having their needs met (Feeney and Noller, 1996, p. 101). Seeking to have their needs for extreme intimacy met, they are willing to give up autonomy needs (ibid., p. 99). Anxious/ambivalent women in my study also showed desire for an extreme intimacy with God. Some women seek the emotional comfort and support that their human attachment relationship did not give so they want compensation from God-attachment (cf., Kirkpatrick, 1999). Some women desire to live as God wants, just like they wanted recognition and acceptance from their human

attachment relationships. Their strategies for God-attachment are also accordingly expressed. This type of women in my study is very aware of their emotional reactions and tends to engage in displays of distress to get a response from God. Some distinctive strategies were employed by these women such as 'intensive prayer', 'regularity' in their God-attachment.

7.3.1 Desiring extreme intimacy

According to Collins and Read (1994, p. 65), anxious/ambivalent individuals in general desire extreme intimacy in relationships and tend to fear rejection and abandonment and spend a lot of time preoccupied in thinking or worrying about their relationships. Here, I want particularly to focus on anxious/ambivalent women's goals for God-attachment from the interview.

Libby has had a tendency towards emotional dependence throughout her life, which has never been fulfilled, Libby's goals and needs are comfort from God and extreme intimacy with God – "To have a true faith in God [p] like Job or David, it is to keep an intimate relationship with God. I think that it is the goal but still hard to be like that." Libby's yearning for emotional comfort has been manifested in her human attachment relationships throughout her life. Consequently it constructs her image of God which is still the main pursuit of her faith. Here I want to demonstrate another example of her yearning for comfort in another dimension of religious attachment.

Libby has been blessed as she was trained by leading pastors and scholars in Korea throughout her late teens and twenties. She was proud of this, which was mirrored in the beginning of her narrative which jumped straight into the influences of the pastors. What she was actually pleased about was not the privilege of learning from their

preaching and theological teaching but the privilege of meeting with those whose lives are coherent so that she did not feel any conflicts between "the essence of faith and the people who transmitted it". Libby's description about one of pastors in her youth gives a hint about this.

> The pastor was great [p], em what to say [p], to take good care of us [youths in the group]. He accepted me very well and gave me a direction where to go. Whenever we phoned, whatever we talked about, he always opened his heart and put himself in other person's place. And uh [p] although he walked the right path for his study and was a well recognized person, he was always humble himself.

Libby emphasized the words *whenever* and *whatever*. This shows the significance and intensity in the issue of emotional comfort. She was searching for comfort through the relationship with pastors who opened their hearts to her and understood her needs, which she could not obtain from her parents.

Laura, whose attitude was a very distant/avoidant, also mentioned that she kept a desire for an intimate relationship like anxious/ambivalent women, which became clear as the interview went on; "I needed a support to lean on", "I needed something to depend on", "My desire for faith comes from a need for peace of mind and dependence." Her desire for God became explicated as she got through some emotional engagement in an adult romantic relationship and heart-warming experience in a local Christian group. She began to realise God's initiative in her life and said, "God gave me comfort through people's good deeds." She began to desire extreme intimacy. She showed anxiety and ambivalence, as she still struggled to grasp how to understand or how to believe, "I could not understand why God does not give me a gift [faith]." This is also evidenced in her very last account of a goal for the future – "I hope that God always be there for me, even if I am alone, I will not feel alone."

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Along with the desire for 'emotional comfort' in the anxious/ambivalent women's accounts, desire for 'recognition' or 'acceptance' is also frequently used words. In fact, desire for comfort and desire for recognition are two sides of a coin, which we will see later comparing the women's images and narratives. Janet expressed her strong desire to be a person entirely accepted by God; "I desire and seek a God-centred life not a self-centred life", "I want to be a person who is respected by others and recognized as a being created in God's image". As we will see later, Janet's cry for love from her mother is reflected in her desire for being accepted and recognized as a physically, psychologically and spiritually perfect person by God.

In the other dimension, desire for recognition and acceptance can be fulfilled by a sense of belonging to the religious community. Nancy in particular mentioned her strong desire for "security in faith", for "belonging to religious community", for "being recognized by them", and for being "released from spiritual starvation". Most women who participated in my study were aged around late thirties and early forties. Their recent memories of leaving a faith community are a big issue for their faith (see chapter 5). These women's narratives of desire to live as a proper and respected person and to feel accepted by God and the religious community are very strongly embedded in their life and faith matters.

7.3.2 Intensity and regularity

Anxious/ambivalent women desire comfort and support, or acceptance and recognition of God while they tend to resist any discomfort for getting their goals of extreme intimacy. They tend to seek and value regular activities such as prayer, Bible

reading and attending services for getting God's attention (or that of the religious community) and they also lack confidence.

Some women in my study particularly desire extreme intimacy and anxiously seek for it. They frequently spoke about 'clinging' and 'nagging' as a metaphor of intensive prayer, although these words refer to an infant's attachment behaviour (cf., Ainsworth et al., 1978). In fact, as we have reviewed in chapter 3, Kirkpatrick (1992, 1994 and 1995) also delineates prayer as the most distinctive form of attachment behaviour in believers. The women in my study expect God to listen to their prayer, cry and even a word or a sigh, and to recognize their needs. When they cannot fulfil their desire they mostly come to clinging to and nagging God as a way of resisting their discomfort in loneliness, ill-health, discrimination, unbearable gender-expectation in tradition and society and any kinds of separation. They are sometimes ready to give up their autonomy to have their needs for intimacy met. For this, these women mostly mention and focus on their prayer life and how they intensively pray and how God has answered their prayer.

Cynthia and Nancy are the women who particularly mentioned that their prayer life and their prayers needed to be listened to and answered. Cynthia said that the biggest event in her life was her intensive prayer for a spouse being answered by God. The next excerpt of her prayer life inherited from her mother along with her faith gives a picture of how these women approach prayer.

> My mother made me pray for finding a spouse and marriage. She made me train myself very hard, like doing 40-day-promise-prayer or joining special early morning-prayer meeting. In spite of doing this, still nothing had appeared, and then she made me leave my job and worship on my own three times a day. I did worship three times a day. [p] I started to concentrate on clinging to God entirely.

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When Janet found that she had brain tumour, she concentrated on prayer for two days. She did it because she needed 'an assurance' that God would work for her illness and would be responsible for her. Hannah spoke about her intensive Bible reading and her recent special experience. Laura also mentioned about prayer and reading the Bible to assure her faith and said "After forty days of doing this, I can say that I have a faith now". Libby said "To have a deep relationship with God, I detach everything but only to pray and think about God". This is a form of attachment to get her desire for intimacy met. Paradoxically, most anxious/ambivalent women choose this kind of 'detachment' to human connection in order to achieve connection and attachment to God. That is, the anxious/ambivalent women show extreme tendency in God-attachment while they refuse and detach other human relationships in some circumstances such as broken relationships, insecurity in marriage, serious problems in health, finance, and so on. In fact, for them this kind of selective 'detachment' is not an opposite of attachment, but is rather another form of resistance in anxious/ambivalent attachment. It is the main strategy in the avoidant/distant attachment pattern in which they develop and exercise defence mechanism to prevent them from hurting (see chapter 6). Both forms of detachment were not obvious in the secure/interdependent attachment pattern (see chapter 8).

Anxious/ambivalent women regard prayer as a way to get God's attention for their needs. Although their purposes of prayer are different – such as getting married, having a special experience, assurance about a brain tumour and of faith – the basic motivation was in getting attention and answers from God to show that he cares for them whatever the difficulties and situations they have faced.

This type of women also particularly value regularity and habitual practice, along with intensive activities, in their ways of faithing. Although they show some changes

in their view on regularity in their accounts as they got older and, as their interview went on, in a conversational context, overall they still value regularity in prayer life, reading the Bible and attending church activities. Nancy, who used to value regular faith life and practiced it strictly, tells her recent change – "I used to value regular prayer and reading the Bible but now I started to be free from it"; at the end of her interview speaking about an unchanged aggressive self-image, she said – "I think I cannot change because I neglect to pray for myself, … So I think I have to pray for myself continuously". She expressed her doubts, displayed her distress and showed high dependency – "It is hard to assure my faith here [in England] because there are not many religious meetings and activities. This is why I want to go back to Korea soon." Like Nancy, these women valued and expressed prayer life or regular religious meetings and activities.

7.3.3 Destructive and Submissive

Strategies of anxious/ambivalent women for achieving their God-attachment-related goals are also paralleled with the descriptions that Feeney and Noller (1996) suggest. According to them, anxious/ambivalent individuals are predisposed to be submissive to gain others' acceptance and are likely to express these emotions in destructive ways (pp. 99-100).

Expressing anger is one of the strategies. Joan mentioned her strategies of expressing her anger and complaining in her prayer. Nancy has developed a particularly anxious character after failing an exam and her ill-health after childbirth. It made her lose her self-esteem and become negative and passive. As she became angry easily and blamed others, her faith also diminished.

While these women sometimes expressed their anger, they showed lack of confidence at other times. The following excerpt of Cynthia's account about developing her own view of prayer demonstrates not only regularity and intensity but also a submissive way of faithing.

> Prayer is really important. At the same time belief is to wait rather than to insist [p]. In my mother's case, when she goes to the church she prays several hours even overnight. In my case, though I used to do like that [p] but what I experienced is that prayer is rather only a path way to a dialogue with a deep hearted mind. I found that prayer is not what God answers when we pray for long hours, but it is a dialogue with God. When we want to grumble or mutter I feel that God listens even to a few words or a breath.

The above excerpt indicates also the way that she made an enormous effort to figure her own view out of her mother's in which we still notice some degree of confusion. As we will see later, her mother's influence on Cynthia's way of faithing is great, which shows particularly on her prayer life. In fact, the above excerpt was taken from at the end of the first part of the interview, after a long narrative she finally figured out her own way of faithing. Her narrative sometimes showed confusion of her own view with her mother's in many places. Significantly, she confused and identified God and her mother – "I did always bear my mother's dominance […] I think that this made me control myself with God's intervention", "I was willing to follow God's guidance and my mother's choice rather than my choice in choosing my spouse." This slip of a tongue is one of what Main and her colleagues (1985) called 'the state of mind' of the adults. Cynthia's submissive tendency to gain God's acceptance and recognition also implied in her thought – "I wanted to be led by God rather than choosing what I like". This is a very noble statement as a Christian. It can be said, however, that submission to God can be sometimes a disguised form of lack of confidence, which we will discuss later in this chapter.

These strategies seemed 'highly religious' and 'devoted' which would probably be praised by the church. However, as Killen (1997) firmly argues none of these strategies, such as "denying the longings, running away from the conflict and dissonance through extensive involvement with people or rigid adherence to a technique of prayer" will work for the intense experience of frustrated longing for God (p. 43). What these women need is to resist the tendency that they used to use as their strategies particularly the destructive and submissive ways. These women need to tolerate the anxious/ambivalent feelings, to be free from the conventional ways and to be more creative in their ways of faithing. In fact, these women knew and found the strategies were not ideal.

The women in my study also presented stories of more positive and constructive faithing as they resist and desire God-attachment. Telling about her repentance experience, Joan said that she blamed God and felt agony and difficulty but in a prayer, she confessed she was sorry and she would not worry any more. Nancy, who had struggled with separation from the church, went back and found her own way to commitment. Cynthia, who had been distressed by not sharing her life with others, went back to the QT group and found vitality in her life. Janet, who was always worried about her health and wondered if God cared for her, found peace and comfort after intensive prayer (see chapter 5). These are not lone emotional experiences but transforming experiences that change their attitudes and behaviour after a long period of frustrated longing. This will be also seen later in this chapter.

7.4 Anxious/Ambivalent representation of self

As we have reviewed in the early chapters, attachment theory offers significant insight for these individuals and their feelings and attitude. It suggests that anxious/ambivalent individuals see themselves as less confident in social situations, less interpersonally oriented and less assertive as compared to secure individuals (Collins and Read, 1994, p. 64).

It is, however, important to value the acknowledgment of their desire for intimate relationships. As feminist academics have asserted, anxious/ambivalent women acknowledge and express their frustration and desire for intimate relationships while avoidant/distant women deny these longings. Ursula King (1993) also points out that lack of autonomy is one of the obstacles of women's development and emphasises "To accept others and relate to them in a positive manner a person must first accept herself and be truly integrated and centred in herself" (p.79). It is, thus, important to identify their longings in themselves. Without it, women's caring for others is easily misunderstood under the disguise of dependence or insecurity. For this issue, King argues as follows;

> Too often women have accepted the notion of simply 'being' rather than 'doing' as a rationalisation for their exclusion from the actions and decisions of the real world. Superficially this may give the impression of greater self-acceptance and maturity, even of greater religious capacity in women, but at a deeper level it often masks a vulnerable sense of dependence, insecurity and self-refusal. Traditional religious institutions whose activities are so often supported by women can turn out to be hiding-places from women's wholeness (ibid.).

For this reason, inevitably women's anxious/ambivalent feelings and attitudes become obstacles in their self-development.

There is another issue to consider for women's self development. That is, some women in my study expressed conflict issues with their mother particularly intensely

and showed anxious/ambivalent feelings and attitudes in the mother-daughter relationship. Beyond the Freudian assumption, Stiver (1991b, p. 232) points that the mother's tendency – to project feelings of inadequacy onto her daughter – can contribute ambivalent aspects of mother-daughter interrelations although it may give a bond in the relationship. In fact, for women's self development, we need to look at 'dependence' and 'autonomy' issues from women's point of view because it has not been appropriately understood in androcentric self-development theories. Stiver delineates the women's ambivalent feelings particularly with dependence and autonomy issues in adult life through the ambivalent feelings in the mother-daughter relationships.

> [D]daughters … often struggle to defend against their identification with their mothers, whom they see as critical, devalued, and unhappy. Yet these same women fear betraying their mothers and experience considerable guilt if they move ahead and demonstrate "differences" from their mothers. In attempting to break this bond, the women may feel that the only alternative is complete independence… But the woman is left feeling absolutely alone in the world, without any support and with a significant sense of loss in disconnecting from her mother. A woman's attempt to resolve this dilemma by looking for a strong man who will take care of her results frequently in considerable disappointment. In other words, efforts to gain vicarious gratification through identification with the powerful man only leave a woman with longstanding resentments and low self-esteem (ibid.).

These ambivalent feelings of mother-daughter relationship were found in many women's cases in my study. In particular, their images of self are reflected by the result of ambivalent relationships. Libby sees herself as a loner; Janet as imperfect and discriminated; Nancy as a failure and improper; Joan as a wounded person; Cynthia and Hannah as obedient/obliged. The images are different but they are representations of their anxious and ambivalent feelings and attitudes towards their mother-daughter relationships. For evidence, their narratives are long and extensive in particular matters; there are conspicuous recurring words and phrases such as 'comfort', 'support', 'intimacy'; in relational issues, 'I' is much highlighted with

anxious tones and nuances while relational issues are generalise to everyone in secure women's account (see, chapter 8); they show some confusion in their views. This brings us to explore the women's images and narratives which they characterise themselves with anxious/ambivalent self.

7.4.1 'Lone child'

Libby's narrative offers an example of Stiver's (1991b) anxious/ambivalent mother-daughter complication. Libby is a 36 year-old intelligent married woman with a child. Her narrative is very focused on a theme of loneliness by emotional deficiency and yearning for a comfort throughout her whole life. Libby's childhood was not happy at all as she mentioned firmly, "I do not want to go back to my childhood." Her mother was described as "the swish of a skirt" which connotes a dominant mother in Korea and also a very intelligent and professional woman, and fearful and very busy with her career and social life. Libby said that her mother-daughter relationship was an "anxious relationship". Libby was afraid of her mother wanting her to be independent and scolding her dependency, while she was very sensitive about getting emotional comfort and wanted to depend on her mother. Her father was quite invisible in her life psychologically. She described her father as rather "a sweet spouse for my mother rather than a good father for me". Although he had a nice and family based character, he seemed not able to give her as much comfort as she wanted. She felt extreme loneliness as she had to control her emotional needs by herself.

This pattern of searching for an emotional comfort did not stop here. It repeated in her marriage as well. After she got married, she again set a goal of getting emotional comfort from her husband. She could not, however, get the emotional comfort from

her husband that she wanted, as her husband was very rational and had a very modern and critical view on faith and family issues, even though he was a Christian. She had to face a very difficult time in the relationship.

> Uh the person on whom I have emotionally depended mostly, uh [p] so to speak, more than God [p] when he became the one on whom I could not depend, [p] when I confirm that he was such a person.

Her words were broken. The sentences were not completed and she could not deliver any reasons or facts about the situation she had faced. She was avoiding the detail consciously and unconsciously about what exactly had happened. In place of her narrative, however, she gives a little hint, with a nasal and moved voice, using metaphors about how she desperately wanted her husband's comfort and how she was deeply hurt.

> When I got through the hard time, again I was convinced uh [p] everything in the world is futile, and thought about David [in the Bible] who was betrayed by his most loved son, Absalom.

For Libby, her husband was 'the world' and meant everything to her, but he became 'Absalom' who betrayed the most loved one.   Libby spent a quite long time talking about her husband's character and the relationship with him here and there in the interview, and the issue was that there was an emotional conflict in the relationship.

> He is very intelligent and a very good speaker huh huh huh yhe very good at it, and very rational. […] Frankly speaking, we do not act as we say quite often [p]. But he did not accept em.. not accept this and it was the main conflict between us. […] He criticized 'you say that you yourself are faithful… but you are incoherent [in your word and action],' 'it is no use for me to accept and to take care of you because you are not getting better,' like this, huh huh.

Her empty laughs vanished in the air. Her emotional conflict was still present and seemed not completely resolved because she thought the problem was not yet ended.

7.4.2 'Imperfect' and 'improper'

Let's look at another form of crying for love and attention. Janet is a 47 year-old married woman with a late-teenage-daughter. Janet was a physically weak and sensitive child, and throughout her whole life she had to struggle with many sorts of illness and diseases. She was also the second child in four daughters of boy-preferring parents where she thought that she was discriminated against. She yearned for healthy life and fair treatment by others for her whole life.

Both her parents were described as 'disreputable'. Her father was described as 'withdrawn' and her mother as very 'anxious' and 'loving excessively'. When Janet's mother was pregnant with her, her father had an affair and did not look after the family, and her mother had to cope with crisis in finance and emotional breakdown. So, her mother, the primary caregiver, could not give her proper care. This nutritionally and emotionally insufficient feeding caused the unborn and newborn baby to become a weak child physically, emotional and mentally, which also became an obstacle in Janet's later life. This caused her a lot of health problems. She had to receive a blood transfusion in her early childhood; a serious operation for a brain tumour, four operations for her womb in adulthood; recently, one more operation to remove it completely supported by a major blood transfusion and additionally facial paralysis. The lack of care affected not only her physical life but also her emotional, mental and spiritual life. As she grew up, she became sensitive about the fact that people did not treat her as an independent person or as a proper person. In fact, it seemed that she had anxious and ambivalent feelings between the self who wanted real comfort from others and the self who had to receive other's care. She was even jealous of her older sister because of her mother's friend-like attitude towards her sister, despite the small age gap between her sister and her. She also hated her

parents' preference for boys and their discrimination against the maid who helped with their house work. She did not respect her parents because of their way of life which was not coherent with their teaching and acting. She also could not stand gender discrimination in society, which was too deeply embedded in the cultural system. She spent quite a long time describing and evaluating the above issues with vivid details here and there in her interview.

This kind of upbringing brought Janet to establish her self-image as 'limited' and 'imperfect', pursuing extreme perfection. Her narrative was focused on moral issues quite extensively particularly comparing what she had experienced in her upbringing to the relationship with people in a mission organisation at the university. In fact, this conflict brought her to Christianity.

> I was always unhappy about why people did not respect others as they were, why they measure others with their own yardstick [p]. But teaching in Christianity was different from it. God ah God is such One, then this was why I could open my heart to the attribute of God more and more, and I realized that He was the one I could trust.

Her sensitiveness to the issues of gender discrimination was embedded in her perspective and also in a way distorted her attitude in misunderstanding of her husband. Unlike Libby's case, however, Janet's husband was quite a respectful pastor and her relationship with her husband was quite secure. She thought that he was 'like a teacher' for her, in fact a moral teacher who "lives a perfect and coherent life with his words".

Her narrative has a strong theme of perfection in faith and life. Her seeking for perfection not only comes from her desire to escape from physical weakness but also from her pursuit of life without inequality and injustice in the cultural and social norm. This theme of desire and resistance is very revealing as her narrative goes on, but the first clue comes out at the very beginning when she spoke of her understanding of

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faith. She started with briefly telling about how Jesus saved her from a physically limited life and also from a morally limited human life – "According to my character, as I see myself, [p] uh [p] I am not perfect and humans are not, yearning for perfect thing, expecting such things, I cannot explain in detail." So to speak, there is a tension between the self who lives by faith in Jesus and the self who desires perfection and still experiences limitations physically, morally and spiritually. Her searching for perfection affects her relationships with other people as well. She experienced limitations because she could not fulfil her moral perfection in herself and in others as well because she realised that all human beings are sinners, fragile and limited.

In fact, Janet's narrative was not ideally constructed. It started with her recent understanding of faith which was like an ending of her narrative. This pattern appeared on several occasions before she started new stories. Maybe her entangled situation was not fully resolved which made her internal working system activate again and again whenever she spoke of similar situations. Her narrative and evaluations with a strong moral tune recurred several times and at some length.

Let's look at different motivation of yearning to be a proper person. In Nancy's case, her mother did not appear excessive, dominant or strict but 'benevolent', a 'proper person' and in fact a 'pastor's wife' rather than her mother. Nancy's self-image was devalued and denounced while her mother's image was praised and idealised in her narrative. She wanted to be like her mother who was respected as a pastor's wife. She had the thought that becoming a pastor's wife was the best thing for her to achieve. Later she became a pastor's wife like her mother, but in the process she experienced a conflict between her strong desire and her lack of self-confidence. There are several narratives about this conflict.

Nancy was quite a bright child. As her father was a pastor at a church she used to get lots of attention. However, she spoke about two experiences that she carried as a burden and made her lose self-esteem. The first one was about her failure to enter university. The second was about a visit to a pastor's house with her friend. This event was recounted quite extensively.

> The pastor's wife prayed for my friend and said that she would become a pastor's wife. After she prayed for me, she said that I was not such such such a person to be proper for a pastor's wife, pastor's wife. Then, [p] she prayed prayed prayed and said that I seemed to serve for the church [ordinarily]. Then, she said that she felt uneasy when she prayed for me. [p] I was very upset. [p] It was a big shock.

The above account about the shocking experience exactly shows the conflict in her strong desire and lack of self-confidence, which also mirrored in her way of using a word repeatedly which occurred a few times in this excerpt.

After this event, she made a vow to be a pastor's wife. When she wanted to marry a prospective pastor, her mother also opposed her with the same reason that she was not the proper person to be a pastor's wife. Talking about this process was painful for her. The phrase 'making a vow' rose to her lips here and there in her interview many times intrusively and repetitively in disorder. She even confused when she had made the vow. Her narrative was disengaged and disrupted suddenly by the same recurring phrases many times in many places. The phrases 'a pastor's wife' and 'a proper person' raised an important issue in her narrative and so as her life. The same phrases also exactly rose when she described her mother. Although she did not mention it directly, she must have experienced some degree of complication in the mother-daughter relationship. The relationship with her mother who has a faultless image as a person, the respected by many and a 'proper person' as a pastor's wife must have a pressure on her presumably expecting herself to be the same. Those unpleasant comments about her that said she was not a 'proper person' meant for her that she also

could not become like her mother. In fact, her life was not her own but an attempt to copy her mother. The extreme desire to be a pastor's wife was strongly related to her pursuit for recognition by others through becoming a pastor's wife in identification with her mother as a respectful and proper person.

7.4.3 'Obedient child'

Cynthia and Hannah both have some common grounds in their self-image and pride in their faith as both valuing their parents' coherent life and faith. Their parents are, however, very dominant in certain ways. Hammersley (1997) states, "intrusive parenting can inhibit the development of autonomy by restricting expectation and exploration and producing fear of separation" (p. 94). Although the children respect their dominant parents, the dominance produces the children's obedience and obligation whether they want or not. This can cause the children's lack of self development.

   Many Korean parents are dominant and strict in educating and transmitting their value to the children. If the parents are Christians, so called 'devoted Christians', it gets worse. When Christianity first came to Korea, it encountered Confucianism which was a dominant social and ruling philosophy and a family-based religion. Confucianism values hierarchical orders in human relationships between parents and children, men and women, and elders and youths. Although its teaching has a great accountability as a social norm, like all philosophy and religion, it has a shadow side that can cause ill effects. There are concerns of social and national levels, but here I highlight concerns of personal and familial levels.

Cynthia and Hannah's parents are just like 'the Confucianised Christians', loyal to pastors and the Church and very strict with their children so that they follow their footsteps. The descriptions of their parents show it clearly. Both report their parents as very strong and strict; they didn't like it but had to obey them. In the process of development of self-in-relation this affected their self-images. Hannah described her parents as a 'channel of spiritual authority' to pastors and God. So her parents' spiritual power was absolute. This influence caused lack of adaptation and exploration in her way of faithing. Cynthia also described her mother as very 'strong', 'strict' and 'determined what is right and wrong' in relation to faith, as having a very 'pure' and 'clean' faith, and always having a loyalty to the church with sincerity and truthfulness while her father was totally invisible. Her mother's influence on her life and faith was so great, "every moment directly and peremptorily not only giving wisdom and knowledge but also financial help". For this reason, her husband called her 'mama's girl'. Consequently she became an 'obedient child' of her mother. In fact, her husband, who is a pastor, also influenced her to have a balanced view on faith. However, this process cost a lot of tension in the marriage and hurting her husband by insisting on her mother's faith to him. It is mirrored in her difficulties in the process of figuring out her own perspective between her mother and husband in her interview. Her auto-biographical narrative told her mother's story while her father's story was totally absent and the story of Cynthia herself was just hinted at the end of each story about her mother and her great influence.

Lack of self-confidence and dependency are the visual characteristics of anxious/ambivalent women, which usually comes from very excessive, dominant, strict and 'faultless' parents especially mothers, and also comes from loss of internal self-integration. In these anxious/ambivalent women's self-images, women have

many obstacles to becoming secure and mature women. These anxious/ambivalent feelings are painful and life-long matters for these women. As they desire for God-attachment, this may bring them to secure God-attachment if they accept themselves and get more confidence in themselves (cf., Killen, 1997, p. 85).

7.5 Anxious/Ambivalent representation of God

As we have seen above, in the representations of self, anxious/ambivalent women have experienced emotional conflicts in relationship with their excessive, dominant or 'faultless' attachment figure in the past or in their marriage in the present, which are still not resolved completely and remained a scar or wound in their mind. Differently from avoidant women, however, they recognize and appreciate God's work at present and in their life from time to time.

However, it is noticed that these women's anxious/ambivalent experiences in their human attachment relationships appear exactly in their images of God. The stunting of women's self-development directly relates to their internalised God-images. Hammersley (1997) states that anxiety results in conflicts in their relationships and this could be reflected in the people's God representation in particular and "detected in expressions of nervousness and doubt about personal faith and meaning" (p. 90).

In my interview, anxious/ambivalent women showed their attachment-related beliefs and attitudes toward God with dual and split images and a great deal of use of phrases such as 'God is the only one', which makes them distinctive from the other groups of women. For these women, God is the only one who gives them support and understands them. As they lack self-confidence, even though they believe that God is good and reliable, they still think that God is sometimes strict, interfering and

controlling. Collins and Read (1994) found that "anxious adults thought that others are complex and difficult to understand and that people have little control over the outcomes in their lives" (p. 64). For this reason, they are ambivalent toward the relationship with the attachment figure.

These women's images of God are represented as personal and relational while those of distant/avoidant women are impersonal and un-relational, and they have dual and absolute images of God while secure women have generalised and balanced images.

7.5.1 Dual images of God

Their God-attachment-related experiences are most likely to appear in emotional phrases about their connectedness and closeness to God, for Cynthia, "I feel very intimate as I feel emotion from physical parents", "God listens to even a few words and a breath", "God is like a being who surrounds me like air but not a being who is in the distance, far away in heaven." For Joan, "I feel connected with God; it seems that there is always like a find thread between God and me." They also see God as having little control over their own lives and represent God as strict and severe to lead them to God's own way. Their anxiety and ambivalence in human attachment relationships is reflected in their emotional description of the relationship with God. The dominant mother image is reflected in their close but interfering image of God and their obedient self-image is reflected in their lack of confidence and extreme desire for assurance in their ways of relating to God. For this reason, these women's accounts of their images of God have dual images. Joan speaks of God who has a 'fine thread' that expresses God is connected but also jealous; for Nancy, God is strict

and, at the same time, benevolent; for Libby, God is the one who gives trials and the one who resolves them as well; for Janet, God is righteous who gives both blessings and curses.

Joan used a metaphor 'fine thread' for two meanings in her relationship with God. It expresses her being connected at one time but God's jealousy at another time. Joan used the phrase several times when she talked about narratives of how she connected to Christianity and God;

> Whenever I tried to let God's thread go, God always sent someone [to me] to go [to the church]. There is a fine thread and it is invisible but does not let go of me [p] indeed [p]. It seems to me I am connected all the time. I think God gives a way to return by holding and pulling us with his thread.

At the same time she also thought of God;

> [W]ho was sometimes too bad and selfish because He wanted us to believe only Himself. When my car was broken down, I prayed like this, 'you revenged me because I did not go to the church, didn't you? [p] You are disgraceful'.

In fact, many women identified having a faith with going to the church. To discuss this issue is beyond the argument of my research, but it is noticed as a quite common phenomenon in many Christians in Korea, not only women but also men, particularly newcomers to Christianity like Joan.

Although language usage is different from woman to woman, it is very interesting to see the similarities in these women. In the next excerpt, we can also clearly see Nancy's ambivalent feelings towards God and her dual image of God who is benevolent but also strict.

> I think God is like very warm love, whenever I grumble and ask, God accepts it with benevolence all the time and in the right time […] At the same time I think that God is very strict [p] because when I am distant toward faith, God gives a situation that I have to pray. God does not leave me alone; does make me communicate with God constantly, God makes me pray by letting me feel

things are hard and get hurt, and so on. So, in a way, I feel that God seems severe to me to keep my faith.

Alongside the narrative of faith and her marriage problems and anxious/ambivalent self-image, Libby also reveals a dual image of God who gives trials and also a way to get through at the same time;

God did not let the loved one to be easy on Him. God promises. God never betrays the promise but keeps it, and He also asks us to keep the promise sincerely as well. At that hard time [in my marriage], I experienced that God was the one who also gave a space to breath step after step [p], so sometimes very dramatically, like a miracle [p] the other times very gently.

She continues;

I think this conflict [between my husband and I] will not end completely [p] because God knows my character very well [p] uh. I would tend to live a comfortable or negligent life if I depend on other person rather than on Him [p]. I think God will not end this conflict until I overcome this tendency clearly.

For Janet, God is "fair because he gives blessings to the good people and curses to the bad people." Even though she is speaking of God's fairness, her beliefs and attitudes are somehow different from those of secure women, for example, Jean's account of fairness which is generalised and well balanced to everybody which will be explored in the next chapter. Janet's belief in God's fairness has a nuance of judgment as "God hates injustice and evil".   This shows that her emotional conflicts in the anxious/ambivalent mother-daughter relationship reflected on her image of God.

7.5.2 'The only one'

This type of women uses a particular phrase 'the only one' before their descriptions of God, which signifies the women's emotional anxiety to attach to God very well. The phrase, 'the only one' is the best described image of God for the women who have experienced God very personally and concretely in the variously oppressed and

conflicted situations. This image is particularly found in some women's account of their conversion experiences in the past after their long emotional conflicts with their possessive mother and, in the present, their entangled emotional conflicts in their adult romantic relationships or relationships with other people.

Libby's next two accounts show both the dual images of God and 'the only one' image. When Libby was asked to speak about her image of God, she answered immediately with theological and conceptual terms, as if she was trying to make an impression.

> God, eternity, everlasting [Pause] em [p] a sovereign [Pause] transcends [p] omniscience [p] my protector [p] and [p] uh [Pause].

After this statement with occasional intervals with many pauses and many ems, uhs, she remained in silence, she started again a little more fluently and apparently more significantly than before.

> … [p] em [p] the one who always [p] follows me [p] so [p] accepts my [p] my cry, the one who can accept my cry and my sigh. Yeh, the only one on whom I can lean and the only one on whom I can rest [pause].

Her descriptions of her image of God – similar to her descriptions of her other human attachment figures – were split between the very conceptual conventional theological terms and the personally and emotionally based phrase 'the only one'. Between the two accounts there exists a great deal of differences. The indefinite article, 'a (an)', was noticeably replaced by a possessive pronoun 'my' in the second statement. Strictly speaking, it can be said that the latter one is the real descriptions of her internalised image of God. In fact, as McFague (1982, p. 23) mentioned, conceptual language needs a hermeneutic interpretation. Libby's loneliness in relation to her excessive mother formed a basis of searching for a warm, everlasting and unconditional love and comforter. Although she started to go to church when she was

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a teenager on the invitation of her friend, it was in her second year of university that she found a faith in God. The whole city and the nation fell into political confusion and she was involved in many anti-military government demonstrations with other Christian students. During the chaotic time, she hardly enjoyed her university life, and her loneliness reached its peak. She found that nobody loved her enough except God and that even her parents' love was conditional. She questioned herself if there was an everlasting love. Her experience of the everlasting God who gives comfort and shelter for her was the moment that she converted and found a faith in God.

> At that time, I accepted Jesus and [I found] the meaning of life [p]. There was no one whom I could trust, friends, other people, even parents. I realized that even parents love [for their children] with their convenience and nothing ever lasts. But as I started my life in faith and reading the Bible I was convinced that God is the only one who trusts me *e.v.e.r.m.o.r.e*, believes me forever and takes care of me, and I prayed and accepted Jesus.

Her emphasis on the word is in italics above. This explains that she was longing for God who was always available and responsible. This image is very much related to the image of an ideal pastor who listens to her whenever and whatever, while it is opposite to the image of her mother who loves only within her own convenience (see above).

Like Libby, Janet converted when she was at university. The motivation of her conversion was also emotional conflicts in anxious/ambivalent relationship with her parents, particularly, her mother as we have seen above. Like Ullman's (1989) finding from her psychological study of conversion, Janet found God's acceptance and recognition through a relationship with a group of peers who lavished acceptance and love.

> Being in the hall of residence, a cold had relapsed and I felt serious pain. At that time close senior and junior in the hall took good care of me. Then it has happened that I accepted Jesus in a whirlpool of pain. […] I think I was always ill and nobody understood it. I have got a kind of

mind that people did not understand well but God did. I think my desire to be understood properly has not been fulfilled before.

For Janet, God is the only one who understands her physical and psychological pains and the only one who fulfils her spiritual hunger to be a proper person. Libby and Janet's cases demonstrate the compensation hypothesis very well (cf., Kirkpatrick, 1992 and 1994). In particular, the anxious/ambivalent women's dual images and the process of forming the images, in fact, provide us to more comprehensive understanding to Kirkpatrick's view on the compensation.

7.5.3 Absolute power and authority

The anxious/ambivalent women's descriptions of God are particularly focused on God's absoluteness, power and authority. With the above image 'the only one', this image of God reminds of the phrases 'the exalted one' and 'a stronger and wiser' as an attachment figure in attachment theory (cf., Kirkpatrick, 1992, p. 13). For Janet, God is perfect, almighty and unlimited; for Hannah, God is powerful and awesome.

In Janet's case, both physical illness and emotional turmoil intertwined in the motivation of her conversion. She described several times of encountering Jesus the saviour and God. She experienced a significant event in which she found God who has the power and authority to take care of her illness. When she was waiting to hear the result of a test for a brain tumour, she experienced God who was perfect and the Almighty.

> For two days I was shrouded in anxiety and read the Bible, and I went before God I concentrated with my whole heart on 'who is God'. I found that God is love, and then I was released. It was like a miracle. I began to trust God whatever happened. I realized that God would take care of me because ah God is such a good person and loves me, and because God is completely perfect and the Almighty.

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Hannah also has the authority image of God, but unlike Janet, her human relationships were the channel for her early religious experience of spiritual power. Several stories show how she got this absolute power and authority image of God. Hannah's parents were loyal to the church community and the pastors in an absolute manner with their whole time, finance and heart as a way of devotion to God. So an early healing experience after receiving anointing and prayer from a pastor was imprinted in her memory and she could accept the spiritual power and authority. In her dreams and experiences of prayer and Bible reading, she experienced the power of God. Her present image of God is not far from these several experiences of God, which rooted in her relationship with her powerful and authoritative parents.

> Recently, I feel God is very personal, concrete [p] and very dramatic [p]. God does not reveal himself when we are comfortable, in situations, such as people who have a very strong desire [p] or in a marginal situation, or such a situation that we cannot do anything but pray [p]. […] I think that God does not show himself to us until we surrender [p] and admit that we cannot resolve the problem without His help.

For Janet and Hannah, God has an absolute power and authority while human beings are imperfect and limited, so that we have to surrender to His authority and power.

7.6 Summary and conclusions

Most women in my study reported anxiety/ambivalence towards their God-attachment relationship. Some women, however, demonstrated their anxious/ambivalent feelings and attitudes intensively and constantly in their relational life and faith. This group of women was characterised by both or one of their insecure human relationships either mother-daughter attachment relationship or adult romantic relationship. Particularly, their parental images appeared strict and stern and/or 'faultless' and excessive in some ways. They desired extreme intimacy, comfort and support in the attachment

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relationships, and their strategies for getting their goals were to cling and nag or sometimes display excessive dependence for getting attention and recognition. Their images of self and God and narratives of the faith experience were presented accordingly.

The key point of this pattern of God-attachment is that they recognise God's work in their life but still show ambivalence in their ways of relating to God. These are evidenced in their dual and powerful images of God, extreme desire for seeking for comfort or recognition from God, pastors or bonding to religious community, lack of confidence in their ways of faithing like displaying their anxiety and distress to get recognition from God or religious community. The anxious/ambivalent pattern appeared in women who had experienced emotional conflicts in the past, which are still not completely resolved and remained a scar or wound in their mind. They recognized God's work in their life from time to time although they were still struggling with doubt and ambivalence. This pattern particularly showed the emotional and relational dimensions of faith extensively. My findings on the anxious/ambivalent feelings and attitudes, particularly images of self and God broadened and strengthened the compensation process that Kirkpatrick has suggested briefly.

They are similar to secure attachment pattern in valuing intimacy. They show, however, a great deal of anxiety in human relationships, and dependency and desire for extreme intimacy in God-attachment. Thus, it is a matter of the level of anxiety and ambivalence. Although their strategies were not entirely suggestive, their desire and resistance to become 'proper' and 'whole' are powerfully represented in their images of self and God. They were also revitalised and empowered through the

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awakening experiences which were not 'pain free'. The above findings will be reinforced in the final chapter with educational and pastoral implications for women.

CHAPTER EIGHT

PATTERNS OF GOD-ATTACHMENT:

SECURITY/INTERDEPENDENCE

8.1 Introduction

Security/interdependence was one of the attachment patterns that derived from my

findings. Emotional security and interdependence is considered to be an essence of

relational life and faith as we have seen in chapters 2 and 3. In this chapter, I want

first to explore some themes and characteristics that signify a secure faith pattern, as

suggested by some feminist theologians and psychoanalytic theorists on faith

development. Then, we will explore the women's goals and strategies for attachment

that signify the women's ways of faithing, which are distinctive and apparent in the

discourse of two women, Ruth and Jean. This brings us to look at their confident and

secure faith narratives in which their representations of self and God appear different

from those of other women.

8.2 Security/Interdependence in the experience of faith

In chapters 2 and 3 we have discussed issues of faith development and spirituality in

general. In this section, we will focus on mature, secure and healthy faith and its

development. 'What is mature faith or spirituality' and 'how is it achieved' – this

two-fold question is the main concern for many academics. The common

understanding of many feminist theologians and psychoanalytic theorists is that a

person who is mature and healthy in relational and spiritual life has a capacity to

relate to the self, others and God securely and to value interdependence. That is, security/interdependence is a crucial quality that psychologically and spiritually healthy and mature person have.

In fact, as we have seen in chapter 5, faith **is** an ability to relate to the self, God, others and relate within a community, and it also **gives** this ability. Relationship is a definition of faith and also a strategy for having a faith at the same time. Security/interdependence in faith is understood as a capacity for relationship, 'relationality'. Suggesting the awareness and experience of relationality, Killen (1997) explores finding voices and wisdom as wise faith, that is, secure faith in my study. She affirms that "wise persons have a capacity to be open to their lives, both the inner and outer dimensions" (p. 121) and they have "the desire to live with people" (p. 123). Slee (2004) illuminates 'relationality' as a major theme in her findings in the patterns of women's faith development. Faith is seen as being in relation with God and interconnectedness with deep involvement with other people, which gives women a source of "power to sustain the self" from all sorts of discrimination and oppression (ibid., p. 145). The capacity to have secure/interdependent relationships is a significant quality in mature and healthy faith and spirituality, and such relationships also give individuals the power to sustain themselves in relationships.

Relationality involves other qualities, such as seeking connectedness through empathy, experiencing integration and finding the sacredness from ordinary everyday life experiences, it is also conceived as maturity in faith (Slee, 2004, pp. 146-159). Secure/interdependent faith pursues a relational quality that does deny superiority or oppression in relationships. Slee (2004) strongly argues that "the denial or distortion of relationality, unwillingness to take up our passion and power to make right

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relation" is sin (p. 136). It is not about "possession or control, or achievement, or conquest, but it is about perception, participation, sharing, equality, individuality, and self-transcending delight in the welfare and good of others" (Killen, 1997, p. 123-124). Relationality includes many different components, such as a rejection of dualism, an affirmation of interdependence, the determined quest for wholeness and integration (Heyward, 1982; King, 1993; Zappone, 1995; Slee, 2004).

Security/interdependence is also recognised with a quality that tolerates and integrates the differences between 'I' and 'you' and also between ideal and reality. Slee (2004) suggests faith as "a holding together of apparent opposites" seeking "to hold all in a balance and interconnectedness not fully graspable by the intellect but intuited by faith" (p. 149). The important thing we need to consider is that secure and mature people do not deny experiences of loss or grief but show a striking comfort with their feelings "without being caught in or defined by them" (Killen, 1997, p. 121). Security/interdependence in faith is a significant quality that involves some activities, such as caring others' souls as much as her/his own and balancing between autonomy and intimacy. A person's capacity for security/interdependence comes out of her/his inner security and is demonstrated in their interdependence, which enables the person to tolerate and integrate the contradiction.

It is interesting to see the common phenomena of mature spirituality, that is, the characteristics of security/interdependence, from a psychoanalytic point of view. Susannah Izzard (2003) appreciates Vaughan's (1991) view that the criteria for mature or healthy spirituality are very much related to those for psychological health. She lists them as "authenticity – a commitment to being responsible for and true to oneself; letting go of the past; facing our fears; insight into, and forgiveness for oneself and others; love and compassion; a sense of altruism and realism towards

one's community; awareness of both inner experience and external reality; living in harmony with others and with nature; liberation from limiting egocentric self concepts and excessive self concern" (Izzard, 2003, pp.3-4).

Delineating faith as dealing with the life-long project of becoming a self, John McDargh (1983) understands the maturity of faith as the ability for solitude, relationship and toleration of the ambivalence between intimacy and autonomy. On the one hand, the maturity of faith is related to "the ability to endure, let alone to value, separateness actually becomes a factor then in the later capability of the person to pursue intimate relationships or make commitments to other persons, causes, or ideals without the trammelling fear of devastating abandonment" (p.82). On the other hand, it is also related to the ability to tolerate a mature dependence as he argues, "Without a fundamental sense of trust in the reliability and the availability of love and care, without the processes of faith that renew and sustain that sense, one can be left with an intolerable sense of weakness and vulnerability in which the self is constantly at risk" (pp. 86-87). He states, "The fullness of faith development is most adequately reflected in human capacity for love and self-commitment" (p. 90). For him, the person who is becoming mature in faith is to have the capacity to be alone and the capacity to accept dependency and also the capacity to tolerate ambivalence between them. McDargh's argument is focused on the mature and healthy faith which is an inseparable dimension of our relational self-becoming and the tolerance of difference and the ability to love despite difference.

Both feminist theologians and psychodynamic theorists commonly argue that maturity in faith is not clear cut or an end point or lone achievement, but a capacity and a continuous process of becoming true self and tolerant self in relationships. In particular, psychodynamic academics suggest that relationality, connectedness,

interdependence and tolerance are not modified without secure dependence and a sense of the real self in our representational process. This enables us to move away from childhood dependence to more secure and mature interdependence with others (cf., Fonagy, 2001). That is, the capacity of the relationship to the self, others and God basically originates in secure attachment in childhood. It is also achieved by revision of mental models in the representational process with supportive adult attachment relationships such as romantic relationships and loving and caring relationships within the faith community (for more detail, see chapter 5).

Izzard (2003) understands that early experience in the relationship with parents lays down in our ongoing relational life – she uses a very strong expression – 'template' – for the significant effect of the early influence. However, in suggesting a healthy spirituality as the capacity to revise internal representations of God in the light of experience and exploration, she argues that a healthy and mature person has the capacity to encounter a God who is more than the God we carry around. The healthy person can "constantly refine and elaborate their internal objects" and "maintain a 'good object' despite this object's absences and limitations" or despite difficult experiences such as having a 'template' which is dysfunctional, unsatisfying or unpleasant (p. 5). Her emphasis is focused on one of the key characteristics of mature or healthy spirituality, which is tolerance and holding contradictions together, so the person can continually develop her/his image of God. That is, refining and developing a secure image of God is "an essential ingredient" or "a key hallmark" of healthy spirituality (Izzard, 2003).

The above writings explain the capacity and the process of forming mature, healthy and secure form of spirituality and faith well. That is, security/interdependence tolerates the difference and balances autonomy and intimacy in our relational life and

faith. Security in relationship to the self, others and God is evident in the capacity to be autonomous, to be intimate and to overcome the ambivalence between them. It is also continually refining one's image of God and maintaining a secure relationship with God.   Thus, the secure/interdependent person has the capacity genuinely to be able to love and to relate to oneself, others and God.

Then, what patterns are exhibited in secure women's faithing and their images of self and God in my study? What makes them distinctive from other patterns of attachment? Some characteristics of security/interdependence were exhibited in some women in anxious/ambivalent pattern as their narrative interviews went on. These were, however, very comprehensible and apparent throughout Ruth and Jean's narrative in general. These were particularly exhibited in their goals and strategies for attachment relationships, and their representations of self and God, which we will explore below.

8.3 Secure/Interdependent faithing

As we have seen throughout this thesis, attachment theory, particularly descriptions of self-other models and goals and strategies for gaining attachment offers us understanding of individuals' faithing styles. In the same way, attachment theory provides the knowledge that secure individuals show balance between intimacy and autonomy in their pursuit of attachment relationships; when they encounter distress, they resolve it in constructive ways; their anxiety level is relatively lower than anxious/ambivalent individuals (Collins and Read, 1994, pp. 64-66; Feeney and Noller, 1996, pp. 97-100). These features are detected in the content and also in the form of Ruth and Jean's interviews. In this section, their distinctive narrative and its

discourse are explored under the three characteristic styles for attachment: balancing between intimacy and autonomy, coherence and ease, and tolerance and integration.

8.3.1 Balancing between intimacy and autonomy

Secure individuals desire intimate relationships but seek a balance between closeness and autonomy in relationships (Collins and Read, 1994, p. 65; Hazan and Shaver, 1994, p. 15). In my study, securely attached women, Ruth and Jean, particularly showed a balance between intimacy and autonomy in searching for God-attachment.

After her husband's death from cancer two years ago, Ruth was still grieving when she was interviewed. Her description of her husband and narrative about the relationship was very vivid and emotional as if it was happening at that moment. This was evidenced in the exhibition of quivering voices, weeping and laughter that signified commitment to her life in marriage with her husband and also her deep involvement in the interview. In some places, her ambivalent accounts recurred – "[After my husband died], I became strong but sometimes I am also uselessly weak" [her voice trembled as she spoke]. Although she showed some degree of ambivalence and distress, it is a common exhibition of an individual who has experienced loss and bereavement, which is one of the most stressful situations and times (Bowlby, 1980; Ainsworth et al., 1978; Marris, 1986) and when people most often seek for God (Ullman, 1982; Kirkpatrick, 1999). Her approach to the bereavement period seems comparatively calm and does not suggest chronic grief (for full discussion of loss and bereavement, see Fraley and Shaver, 1999). This also can be seen by her relatively calm and organised account throughout the interview. We can see in the following excerpt that she did not show denial or resistance anxiously, but she clearly

recognised the distress (cf., Collins and Read, 1994, p. 66) while she was not being caught in or defined by it (cf., Killen, 1997, p. 121).

> I blamed myself for not clinging to God, 'if I had clung to God this would not have happened,' like that. Despite that, I did not defy God because it is the work that only God would do. […] I thought about them [issues of life and death] deeply and I did not reproach God. I think I had a little faith. I thought that God, who gave life for him, took it back. But I still found it difficult.

Ruth's narrative went on to how her husband was good to her and about her need for a friend. Her expression about her need for a friend supports her relationality that pursues interdependence. It is also balanced comparatively to other groups of women.

> I used to comfort others but I need the comfort now. [p] I need a friend. It does not matter whether woman or not and whether young or old, but just someone who is willing to be my company […]. […] It is impossible to throw all my sorrow away and live only for Jesus.

In the similar context of loss or any disconnection, distant/avoidant women displayed a very strong expression of despair and helplessness and anxious/ambivalent women displayed a heightened anxiety and showed a lack of confidence (see, chapter 6 and 7 in this thesis, and Fraley and Shaver, 1999).

Ruth clearly displayed some degree of distress and anxiety between her life in bereavement and a life to follow as a faithful Christian, which was expected in this context. However, she also showed her desire for God and a friend, which was reasonably balanced between intimacy and autonomy, and showed integration of her feelings and experience.

In the same sense, Jean also showed from time to time her desire for an intimate relationship with God and she expected that God would listen to her and work for her, but she sought a balance of closeness and autonomy in an attachment relationship with God – "I do not think that God's work always should be in my favour".

In fact, these two women's goals for God-attachment were not much highlighted in

their narratives, unlike other attachment groups of women, as a result of balancing between intimacy and autonomy. Through the process of analysis, it was understood that secure attachment history enabled them to cope with 'strange situations' reasonably well and also enabled them to attach to God securely. Thus, they did not need to heighten their needs or desire for God-attachment and this was also evidenced in their narratives, while anxious/ambivalent women exhibit many names of goals for attachment such as extreme intimacy, comfort, recognition, perfection (see chapter 7).

8.3.2 Coherence and ease

According to Feeney and Noller's (1996 pp. 97-100) explanation about the differences of working models in attachment groups, secure individuals tend to deal with their negative experiences in constructive and appropriate ways and they are able to seek help from others when they need to. Their positive attitude toward attachment issues was evident in their confidence and competence. This is related to attachment goals, as we have seen above, but here I want to highlight their strategies in their life and narrative styles which are evidenced in their coherency and ease in the process of interview.

Ruth and Jean in my study showed satisfaction and contentment about their life issues which were evidenced in their comfort and ease in God-attachment. As we have seen above, Ruth dealt with the experience of loss and bereavement comparatively well. Jean also showed a constructive way of dealing with all the issues raised by having a different religion from her Buddhist husband. Jean mentioned the process of change in her husband's attitude toward Christianity and said "God's grace" in many places in her narrative. In fact, in Korea, problems

arising from having different religions are one of the largest causes for divorce or complication in marriages. It can be also said that in Jean's case dealing with religious differences was a big issue for her marriage, but she dealt with it in a very constructive way. She did not force her husband into her faith as anxious/ambivalent women would do (compare to Cynthia's case in chapter 7). She did her best to compromise over this matter with her husband and influenced him in various ways; praying for him, making a good relationship with him and making chances for him to become familiar with Christians and Christian teaching, such as inviting him to a church's sporting event rather than to a worship service, and telling Bible stories rather than Christian doctrine. These constructive and compromised ways are carefully planned and practiced in a good relationship. The following example was one of them.

> I told him Bible stories little by little [like telling a bedtime story] in bed. Soon I felt a lack of knowledge of the Bible [laughs]. So I studied the Bible in advance and then told him more [laughs]. Such ground work for familiarisation made him interested in a formal Bible study when I suggested it to him.

This strategy appeared in many occasions in her narrative. If we look carefully at the content of her account, there is a circular pattern of the constructive way: good relationship – dialogue – development of better relationship – religious influence – good relationship.

In the above excerpt from Ruth's interview, we can also see comparatively balanced and well organised discourse. The above account gives a very good reason why she needs a friend. She also evaluated that seeking a friend did not mean that she was not faithful to God. This is evidenced in the process of her narrative. The form of her narrative has all the ingredients of autobiographical narrative and also balanced between them: report – description – narrative – analysis – evaluation (cf., Wengraf,

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2001, pp. 243-244). One of the characteristics of secure individuals is that they are able to provide truthful evidence, relevant story and balanced evaluation in quality and quantity that are consistent with what they say (cf., Main and Goldwyn, 1984).

Collins and Read (1994) remark that coherency of secure individuals' discourse is distinctive "by an ease in recalling events" (p. 67). Effortless ease at figuring out their understanding of faith and describing their attachment relationships was another result of confidence and competence. In the process of narrative, she figured out that it was not difficult to think of faith because God was available just like her parents were.

> I thought about it easily and simply. My parents gave birth to me rather than I chose my parents [p]. In the same sense [p], I thought that it was like that the child phones and visits to see its parents [p]. If there is so called a trial, as religious people said, I interpreted it in the same manner, 'If I do something wrong, my parents would be upset and unhappy.'

For her, whatever happened, seeking God is just an everyday life activity like she sees her parents or asking their help. The above account demonstrates that Jean was not only comfortable and at ease with finding a way to deal with trials in her faith journey, but also comfortable and at ease to answer to the interview question as this excerpt was taken from the very beginning of her interview: It is more apparent if we compare it to Rachel's difficulty in discourse that was uncomfortable in character with long pauses and silences, negative and passive accounts, as was demonstrated in chapter 6.

Ruth and Jean's confidence and competence also flowed out in their attitude toward the interview which was an autobiographical narrative in-depth interview. They were deeply involved in the interview, which was evidenced in the fact that their interviews were the most emotionally involved interviews of all. In particular, Jean's was the most pleasant one with lots of laughs for both interviewer and interviewee, while Ruth's raised empathy with a voice which trembled occasionally but overall was very

pleasant with vivid descriptions. Affective response is one of the most important features and functions that are guided by internal working models (Collins and Read, 1994, p. 74), as the models are based on reinforcement and application in attachment relationships. That is, these women's delightful and comfortable emotional experiences triggered their confidence and competence enabling them to deal with this kind of very private interview with enjoyment and pleasure.

8.3.3 Tolerance and integration

Collins and Read (1994) also assert that secure individuals show "an ability to integrate both positive and negative feelings and experiences" (p. 67). McDargh (1983) points out the secure person's way of faithing as tolerance and integration – "It is a trust that endures the realisation that most objects of my attachment are at their best less than my idealizations would have them and at their worst better than my severe judgment upon them" (p. 95).

   This faithing strategy is exhibited mostly when women talk about prayer and their prayer life. Ruth and Jean treated prayer as an ordinary life activity so that it was not much highlighted in their narrative while women in anxious/ambivalent attachment group emphasised their prayer life with high tones and intentions, and spent quite a long time in describing their prayer life and arguing about the issues. We have discussed anxious and ambivalent cases in chapter 6, but I particularly want to indicate Cynthia's account to compare to Jean's.

   Cynthia showed one of the anxious/ambivalent characteristics and her narrative was very much focused on the issues of prayer and her prayer life. The following excerpt was taken from the end of her long argument on prayer in which her recent view,

which was figured out of her mother's, was expressed.

> […] Praying is really important. At the same time, belief is waiting rather than insisting [p]. As I got through the difficult time because of my father's illness, I experienced that prayer is rather only a pathway to a dialogue of a deep-hearted mind. I realised that prayer is not what God answers when we pray for a long hours, but it is a dialogue with God.

Let's look at Jean's strategy. In her narrative about her life in faith after marriage with a Buddhist man, Jean spoke a lot about how her husband was getting interested in Christianity and got involved little by little. As she saw the change in her husband, she realised that God did it when His time for her husband had come. Her view on prayer was particularly integrated.

> I think God solves all our problems whatever they are. However, if we prayed for this but God did not give it to us, it is not because God does not want to give it to us, but because it does not suit us now.

As we can see from the excerpt, there was no anxiety, no frustration and even no doubt but tolerance between what she prayed for and what she expected from God and in this we can see her trust and security in God. Jean's objective view on prayer has come from her secure attachment relationships, which we will explore fully later in this chapter. This security gave her an ability to tolerate positive and negative feelings and experiences and integrate them, as Collins and Read (1994) assert.

Secure women pray with belief that God listens to their prayer but do not need to cling because they know and internalise God's availability that God gives them the best thing for them whatever they pray for. For them, prayer is just an ordinary everyday activity so that they do not need to highlight it in the interview, while prayer is a special activity to do intensively and regularly so that it is very much emphasised by the other women, especially anxious/ambivalent women's (see chapter 7). We do not deny that prayer is an essence of becoming whole and becoming a mature Christian who lives interdependently. However, from a phenomenological point of

view, people have different attitudes toward prayer and their approach is a key in understanding their style of faithing.

Another distinctive strategy of tolerance and integration in secure women is exhibited in the women's relational life in which they particularly pursue interdependence, reaching out to needy people and seeking and taking care of souls. This is well expressed in Ruth's narrative in which she spoke of becoming an acupuncture physician.

> This acupuncture service did not suit me. […] It was a rare area so that I didn't even know where to learn. I was one of the first people to learn it. It was very hard and required a good care to do because it treated the treat human body. I was about to give up several times but I endured and challenged despite my age. Eventually, it became mine now.

Her description about the process of becoming an acupuncture physician showed that learning it was not easy at all. However, her evaluation about the service explains more clearly that it was a way of reaching out to people in need in their body and soul, and that it was to relate to others as well as to God – "It is very good because people come to me, otherwise I need to go out to evangelise people", "I was very thankful for people who came to me for treatments so that I could evangelise them". Being a pastor, grandparent and acupuncture physician, Ruth's story of late adulthood is told as a carer for the needy and a soul seeker. Jean's narrative is also like Ruth's. Other groups of women, particularly anxious/ambivalent women in my study saw the husband as a person who gave care for them. However, Jean's account shows that she was the happy and efficient carer as well as the being cared securely in the marital relationship. In fact, both women showed that they were in the mutual relationships and pursue interdependence.

As we have seen in chapter 5, secure attachment in human relationships enabled Ruth and Jean to attach to God securely, and the secure attachment relationship with

God also enables them to reach out to the other people who need care physically, psychologically and spiritually, rather than clinging to God for their own need to be met. This was prevalent and distinctive throughout these two women's interview while this was hinted a little as the interview went on in the anxious/ambivalent women's interviews. This pattern of security/interdependence shows that relationality springs out of secure attachment and moves away from immature dependence to interdependence. Reaching out is different from simply recognising others' need. It requires an active action with tolerance, compassion and integration. Ruth and Jean reached out to needy people. They tolerated and integrated their own needs with those of others. They even did things that did not suit them with willingness. They constantly sought for souls as much as other needs. They endured and challenged. Thus, their strategy of God-attachment is to become God's partner or 'a deliverer of God's love', to be involved in God's work, which we will see more later in this chapter.

8.4 Secure/Interdependent representation of self

Attachment theorists suggest a common characteristic of a secure self. Delineating secure/interdependent self, Hammersley (1997) explains development of "non-rigid self", the self with resilience. He explained that a secure child develops the capacity to sense the self and to reflect on feelings, and consequently develops the capacity for autonomy and intimacy (p. 19). In the same sense, the secure/interdependent self is understood as "a stable true sense of self" by Winnicott (1971) and the capacity of the self in relation to others as "the reflective self function" by Holmes (1996). Collins and Read (1994, pp. 63-64) delineate that secure adults remember their relationships with their parents as more affectionate and warm than do avoidant or anxious adults;

they also view themselves as having fewer self-doubts and as being better-liked by others compared to anxious and avoidant adults.

As we have seen in chapter 5, security in a person's relational life and faith is strongly influenced by the person's early attachment experience with her/his parents. By the representation process, a person can establish secure mental models of the self and others. The secure/interdependent representation of self is explored in this section and it is followed by secure/interdependent representation of God in the next section which is dominantly exhibited in Ruth and Jean's narrative. Ruth and Jean in my study see themselves as confident and they exhibit self-worth throughout the interview. These are explored below with the women's self-images and narratives, reminding us of their pattern of attachment.

8.4.1 'Bold' and 'valiant'

Ruth's narrative enables us to understand how a secure relationship with a father helps a girl become confident and competent. Ruth was born as a second child of five. When she was interviewed, Ruth was a 62-year-old widow and came to Birmingham to support her sister's teenage grandson whose parents live elsewhere for employment purpose while her sister was busy looking after her newborn grandchild in Korea.

Ruth saw herself as 'loved' and 'favoured' by her father, and this resulted in her boldness and ease in relationships in childhood and onward. Receiving her father's love, she thought she became confident and brave, and her life was vitalised. In the following excerpt, we can see her self-confidence that is mirrored in her poised discourse.

> [In my marriage] I squared my shoulders. I was not servile. In my school days, I was valiant and I kept boys under my thumb. [p] I was the bravest one of all my brothers and sisters. […] [p] In particular, if women were loved by their father, as they grew up, they have vitality in their lives.

As she herself strongly mentioned throughout her interview, her father's love for her was special. When she was asked about her parents, she mostly talked about her father, describing him as "a gentleman", "very smart", "well educated in those days", "very handsome" and "a very honest man in his whole life". It was told in a very succinct form of speech and followed by many relevant stories of her father (cf., Main and Goldwyn, 1984).

In a very fluent style, she continued telling several happy memories of being with her father in her childhood.

> Wherever I went to my father's work place, people said 'uh she resembles Mr Smith, the head of the department' [p]. […] My father often took me with him to his work place and we stayed together. When we went out, my father used to carry me on his back.

Compared to other types of women especially distant/avoidant women, Ruth's early memories of her father and the intimate relationship were most comprehensive, detailed, delightful and vivid even though she was the oldest of all interviewees. It is more obvious when we compare this with other women's representation of themselves and their parents, especially Laura's which was dejected, depressed and denounced (see chapter 6).

In the same sense, Ruth also explained an episode about the last moment of her father's life.

> He kept the affection until the last moment of his life. In the bed, before he died, [I heard it later that] he told my mother that I was there standing by the bedside, 'she is standing there and crying, but why don't you welcome her', although my mother told him that I was not there [p].

Each episode finished with similar sentences 'I was loved by my father very much', 'I was favoured by my father', 'He loved me most among five'. Her father's

availability physically and psychologically in her childhood could affect her relational life in her childhood and onward. Internalisation of her father's availability enabled her to become confident in her relational life. In fact, Ruth's narrative about the relationship with her husband was told with the same content and form of her relationship with father. Ruth was a secure individual who was influenced by secure relationships throughout her life, which is represented in her confident self-image. This secure and confident self-image is mirrored in her discourse in which she was able to provide relevant evidence in a succinct and truthful manner (cf., Main and Goldwyn, 1984).

8.4.2 'Relatively tolerated'

Jean is 33 years old and married with two children. Jean's self-image is presented as positive and optimistic as her parents loved her and they were supportive and trustworthy. Her self-image is represented and interwoven with her parental images and relationships with them.

  She was born late in her parents' life as the youngest child of four and grew up with less pressure. She described her father as very strict and conservative as he was a teacher. Her father's strictness was severe, especially to her older brother: as her father expected much from the first-born, her father treated him with strictness which became a heavy burden on him.

> My father might think that the stricter he is with the children the better the children do. I thought my father did it too severely to my big brother. [p] Sometimes my father did not respond to my brother's greeting. In the summer my brother could not go to the toilet if my father was in the communal area. I felt sorry for my brother. In contrast, […] my father raised me comfortably but not my brother. [p] My father relatively tolerated me.

Although her father did not show his love to her dearly, she knew that her father loved

her but expressed it in his own way. In the above excerpt, Jean showed high empathy on her brother, which makes her self-image distinctive. Empathy is an important quality that secure women have, although feminist academics warned of the danger in unbalanced empathy between the needs of the self and the other (Belenky et al., 1986; Jordan et al., 1991; Hess, 1997; Slee, 2004). In fact, Jean's empathy flourished out of security and confidence. Despite the harshness and severity of her father, she was able to internalise that she was 'relatively tolerated'. From the above account, we can see her evaluation of her father's parenting style, which was also less anxious than other attachment groups of women. She was able to balance the desire for intimacy and autonomy.

In the view of coherency, we can see that she also provided truthful, succinct and relevant evidence of what she said (cf., Main and Goldwyn, 1984). This prevailed in her whole narrative, but in the next excerpt, it was particularly apparent.

> My big sister was very pretty. Comparing to her, my father used to say 'you have to study hard otherwise no one will want to marry you'. […] One day when it was raining outside and somebody knocked on the door, my father said teasingly 'it is your mother baking rice cake who wants to see you'. [laughing brightly] [interviewer: I see] You know what it is like. I always cried because of it. My father teased me, and I was upset and cried. When he returned from his business trip, he gave me a set of dolls 'the ugly brothers and sisters' for a present, saying 'they are your brothers and sisters', ha ha ha [p] [laughing loudly] always like this. I think he expressed his love for me in an opposite way. [p] I think this influenced my character and I became more active, made many friends and good relationships with others. […] In my high school years, when I told him that I was appointed for the head of the class, my father also responded teasingly saying 'is there only you in your class?' [laughing very loudly] [p] Despite this, I have always thought that basically my father loved me very much.

Although her narrative does not show total happiness about her father's care, her evaluation of father's parenting style and its influence which is presented with bright tone, lots of laughs and detailed descriptions. This, in fact, indicates that her ability to hold the contradictions together and to internalise and refine the 'good' image of

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father, as McDargh (1983) and Izzard (2003) have pointed out.   Her mother was described as an out-going and sociable person and had been 'a big castle' for her since her mother was represented 'always believing', 'protecting' and 'supporting'. Although her description of her mother is shorter than that of her father, it was told in several episodes.   Overall, her confident self-image is mirrored in the relaxed and delighted form of her narrative with fluent speech and lots of laughs, and also with giving relevant and succinct stories (cf., Main and Goldwyn, 1984).   It is more understandable when we compare the above account with Laura and Rachel's in chapter 6.   As we have mentioned earlier, Jean's interview was the most well-organised, enjoyable and pleasant one out of ten interviews.

8.4.3 Relational and tolerant self

The common ground of Ruth and Jean's narratives was in their representation of becoming a relational self and tolerant self. Secure women could bear and tolerate the differences between 'I' and 'you', and between 'ideal' and 'reality'. They did not imprison themselves in their old perspective but moved on from it. It is interesting to see that these women's self-images are presented in the relational context. Their description about 'who I am' was rather faint except "I was loved", "I was tolerated". This is the major difference in the images of the self among the women in my study. In the distant/avoidant women's accounts the whole interview was about searching for their identity helplessly in a lone context while anxious/ambivalent women's accounts highlighted becoming a self very anxiously dependant on others (compare representations of self in chapter 6 and 7).

A distinct point in Jean's narrative was that she valued her parents' relationships to

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each other. This was the basic motive or spring that enabled her to grow confidently in her life journey. Based on the parents' secure relationships a person can grow confidently and see the world of fairness, like a secure child can explore the world around her/him creatively and actively without being anxious or frustrated whether her/his mother is present or not (Hammersley, 1997, p. 19). This can be seen in Jean's particular account about fairness in the world.

> A friend of mine always thought that the world was not fair while I said to her the world was fair. She had everything, intelligence, beauty and wealthy parents, and after the university she even got a job everybody wanted. Although she had got everything she had hoped for and married a rich man, she thought the world was not fair. [p] She achieved everything, but I think her worldview might have been influenced by the unhappy marriage of her parents. Compared to her, I had and achieved less but I thought of the world as fair because of the influence of my parents' happy marriage.

Her view on 'fairness' appeared again when she described her image of God, which will be seen later. Similar to this, valuing secure relationships appears again when she talks about the relationship in her marriage and her husband's faith growth. Although she said, with laughs "we are suited for each other except for religious matters", her answer for the question about her marriage was focused on how she cared for her husband's faith and how it grew. She told several stories about how he changed little by little at every moment. The most important thing was that, she said, "It was our relationship" that "made us to talk about Christianity". That is, the security that she had enabled her to overcome the difference.

Ruth also explained that becoming a tolerant self was related to becoming mature in faith. She did not use the term 'tolerance' but her account on the issue clearly explained that our view should not be forced on others, and that we should not be bound to old view and hierarchical tradition and let others be free from being seen through our representational structure.

> They [pastors] should not be bound by old custom and hierarchical tradition. We have to understand that they are the same people as us. […] We need to allow them [to be free]. We used to make 'the pulpit' too big and high and expect too much from it.

These women's reports of the memories of their parents or others were not all of warm and dearly loving ones. As Collins and Read (1994) point out, they also reported memories of other relationship experiences with others as well as their parents; their evaluations of their relationships with their parents and others were comparatively stable and balanced in the process of the interview. They were able to overcome the anxiety/ambivalence in their relationships and tolerated the difference. Their early secure relationship enabled them to tolerate the contradictions in the relationships and in their feelings, and also enabled them to relate interdependently. Their self-image was represented as relational and tolerant. The above images of self were also very much related to the women's faith experience and their images of God which will be explored in the next section.

8.5 Secure/Interdependent representation of God

Ruth and Jean, the secure women in my study, spoke of God as loving and caring. Kirkpatrick (1999) asserts that secure individuals tend to remember God as more loving, responsive, available, less distant or inaccessible and less controlling than other groups of individuals (p. 810). It is consistent with Feeney and Noller's (1996) explanation that "they see others as well-intentioned and good hearted, as well as dependable, trustworthy, and altruistic" (p. 97). In their research, Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992, p. 272) found that individuals who were in a secure adult romantic relationship were significantly more likely to report a secure attachment to God than were insecure lovers. In fact, secure romantic attachment is dominantly influenced by secure attachment relationship with their parents during childhood.

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Ruth and Jean reported security in their adult romantic relationship as well as the relationship with parents. They experience God as they experience love of their own parents who showed affection in their early secure relationships. These images are explored based on the women's narratives, particularly focusing on the relationship between 'I' and 'loving and caring God', in which the women's representation of God exhibited 'I' as 'a child of loving God', 'a carer like loving God' and 'one of God's people'.

8.5.1 God as loving and caring – I am a child of a loving God

For Ruth, God is love and freely available – "God's love is unconditional like our parents' love. He wants to give more than what we want". Ruth's image of God is a reflection of the image her father. The following account shows it clearly.

> Parents' love is unconditional. God's love is the same. As much as my father loved me, God loved me very much. I feel that God might love me unconditionally more than the way my father favoured me […]. […] I think […] God is great because He treats our souls.

Her feelings and attitudes toward God are different from other types of women, who think that their parents' love is conditional and who have emotional conflicts in their relationships with their parents (see chapter 6 and 7). This is firmly embedded in her mental models. She compared God's love with her parents' love. In the process of narrative, she explained God's love as the parental love for the child.

As we have seen in chapter 7, the image of God as loving and caring was also presented as one of the images in anxious/ambivalent women's accounts along with a dual image and an authoritative image. However, Ruth and Jean's accounts are different in some ways. The following section of Jean's account clearly expresses her view on parental image of God through the representation of her own parents.

It is my parental image. […] Even if the parents seem to do a favour for one child to the others [p], as I see it now, the parents' heart goes equally to every child to be well. So I think that God's heart for us would be the same although God gives a test to one and a sweet to the other.

As we have mentioned in chapter 5 and earlier in this chapter, the fundamental difference from others is in Jean's ability to understand faith easily and effortlessly. This is the most significant finding of all. Jean was able to tolerate both loving and stern images and represent an integrated image of 'ultimate good' – "God's heart would be the same", while anxious ambivalent women could not yet integrate the split images (see chapter 7).

The women in my study spoke of their understanding of faith in relational dimensions, but secure women, such as Ruth and Jean, are the ones who feel easy and confident in describing their experience of God. As is shown in Ruth and Jean's accounts above, secure women have developed their mental model of self which is securely attached to God who is loving and caring and always available. Whatever situation they face, they are able to think that God is good. The other characteristic difference from other groups of women is that through this process, they refined and maintained their secure mental model of God. As we can see in Jean's account, she has the capacity to tolerate the contradictory image of God – "I do not think that God is always in my favour", "God's heart would be the same". This security also enabled Ruth and Jean to further refinement which is described in the following section.

8.5.2 God as loving and caring – I am a carer like loving God

This image is a unique feature that only secure/interdependent women present, while an image of 'I am a child of a loving God' is found in many women expressed in a variety of ways, such as with lack of confidence and with extreme desire in other

patterns of attachment. However, secure women have the capacity to represent God as loving and caring in terms of not only themselves as 'a child of loving God' but also as 'a carer like loving God', as they explore or experience parenthood of or care for others.

Alongside stories of her experience as a favoured child, Ruth explained and confirmed God's unconditional love through her parenting experience rearing grandchildren. Although she had no space for herself, raising grandchildren was the most priceless and invaluable one she could have ever experienced, because it enabled her to realise God's heart for His people.

> I appreciated how God might feel [for His children]. [p] I understood God's affection as I reared my grandchildren […]. […] For five years, I spent all my time on rearing them [p]. I had no time for myself. However, I realised that God would do the same for us as I cuddle them and raise them with devotion. I felt deeply that God would do for us just as I do when I hug them, carry them on my back and put them in bed. As they grow older I feel it more.

She put herself in God's place and said:

> From time to time, when they were sick or happy, I realised God's grace [p]. 'God's love for us would be the same'. As I raised my grandchildren I became closer to God. I tell young mothers 'do not see them but see their souls. See the soul that is created in God's image and raise the child'.

She understands God's affection to his people through her affection for the weakest grandchild.

> I am more concerned for him. I miss him most. [p] When I think of him, I am reminded of God's love for His people. The Bible says, 'I chose you because you are the smallest and weakest of all. God's heart would be like that.

This is also seen in Jean's representation of God. She was also able to take on a carer's position although Jean's motive was a little different from Ruth's.

> After I gave birth to my son, I as a parent started to think of God. For example, if I get a complication with in-laws, I see my son and think that I could do the same to my son.

As seen above, here again, Jean showed her ability to tolerate differences with in-laws

and integrate the difference. This was a unique quality that Jean displayed throughout her interview. This quality led to her very constructive outcome in which she empathised and put herself in the parents' position. She was able to reflect on uncomfortable experiences from which she also refined her representation of God. Ruth and Jean's accounts of their image of God showed the characteristics of security. Throughout their interview the image of God as loving and caring was well spread and woven with their concrete everyday life experiences as carer.

8.5.3 God as fair – I am one of God's people

The third distinctive image that secure women represented is fairness in their image of God. For these women, God is freely available whenever they need. They think God loves them and knows them very well. At the same time, the important quality in these secure women's representation is that the availability of God is not limited only to them. This is a distinct feature of their representation of God. It is apparent in the women's view on 'God's fairness' that makes them different from other groups of women. For secure women, God is fair to everybody and they are one of God's people, while for anxious ambivalent women, particularly for Janet, God's fairness is displayed in extreme bi-polarity (see chapter 7).

For Jean, the representation of God is generalised and integrated in a phrase, 'God is fair and good for everybody' as she said, "I think God is fair because God gives people different things but the results are the same". Let's look at the excerpt that we have already seen above.

> Even if the parents seem to do a favour for one child to the others [p], as I see it now, the parents' heart goes equally to every child to be well. So I think that God's heart for us would be the same although God gives a test to one and a sweet to the other.

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It is very interesting to see the difference in secure women's representation of God from those of the other attachment groups. These secure women speak of God's unconditional love and fairness for everybody, as much as for themselves. They are able to be in God's position and consider how God would feel. They have an ability to not only represent God as a parent for 'me' but also to consider God as a parent for 'everybody'. This is consistent with the previous findings in a securely attached child who is confident and can play creatively and imaginatively (cf., Ainsworth et al, 1987). Having a secure representation of God and refining and maintaining it, is very important to an adult faith experience. It enables an individual to obtain self-esteem and to tolerate differences in the old self and the new self, and the world of the self and that of others. It gives strength to overcome any difficulties and ability to tolerate and integrate any differences. Live life in a connected and integrated way is a significant quality for becoming adult, becoming whole and becoming a secure Christian.

8.6 Summary and conclusions

Secure feelings and attitudes are presented in the psychologically and spiritually secure women, Ruth and Jean, who value interdependence. It is noticeable that they have no common ground in their age, education or involvement in Christianity, but only in their happy and secure human relationships in the past and present. They are different from other groups in their faithing and images of self and God; they especially show less anxiety and ambivalence; they also value subjectivity while recognizing God's work in their life and faith journey. As a secure child plays actively and creatively whether her/his mother is present or not, these women go on their faith journey and get stronger and more mature whether they face difficulties in

their life journey or not. They are concerned with others' souls as much as their own and become 'deliverers' or 'messengers' of God's love so that they can grow together in faith.

Exploring the secure women's strategies for attachment and representations of self and God, those of other insecure women were compared. There were few differences since all the women in my study valued relational and affective dimensions of faith which also embedded in their everyday life experiences. However, there were small but significant differences from other groups. The findings suggest that secure faith is signified in their ways of faithing, confidence and tolerance in relational and affective issues. As they became adults – through their marriage, rearing children and grandchildren, getting through bereavement, living everyday life, within the church community and outside, serving in a small church, serving as a pastor and doing acupuncture service – they became more secure and mature psychologically and spiritually. This quality was also represented in their self-images in which they saw themselves as being loved and relatively tolerated and as relationally and emotionally tolerant beings. They saw God as loving and caring, and not only put them themselves in a position as those who are cared for but also as carers and they were also able to tolerate their ambivalence between old and new views and between 'ideals' and 'reality' in terms of generalisation and integration. The quality of security/interdependence that is focused and emphasised in the secure women's faith journey is congruent with the understanding of feminist theologians and psychodynamic theorists that faith development and spirituality pivots on the person's relationality, connectedness, tolerance and integration.

The most significant finding in the pattern of security/interdependence is that a secure adult has a capacity to refine and maintain 'good' representations of self and God.

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This is important to reinforce in practice of pastoral counselling and Christian education for women, particularly for insecure women. That is, it is crucial to provide a secure environment to explore every possible ingredient for faith development in which some activities to experience and refine their representation of self and God should be included. This will be discussed further in the next chapter including theoretical and practical points for women's faith development and pastoral and educational practice.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION: IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL

AND PASTORAL PRACTICE FOR WOMEN

9.1 Introduction

My research study is largely based on the perspective of attachment theory to see whether it offers a complementary path to interpret women's faith experience. Thus, it is focused on two main areas. First, it is based on the application of attachment theory to the religious dimension. Second, it is grounded in women's concrete experience, with which all research for and by women is practised and methodological issues are resolved. Each has much to contribute to faith development theories and educational and pastoral practices. In this final chapter, first, the focus will be upon the positive contribution to the religious domain of attachment theory, faith development theories and women's development. Then the educational and pastoral implications in practice for women, particularly for insecure women will be sought.

9.2 Implications of my findings on faith development theories

9.2.1 Attachment and faith experience

My research study has concerned women's faith experience using an attachment perspective while attachment theory was originally developed and largely has been used in the area of psychoanalysis in human personality and relationships. As we have seen in chapter 3, Kirkpatrick (1992, 1994, 1995, 1999; Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992) has made an important contribution in applying attachment theory to the

religious domain. He suggested God as an attachment figure and also a placement of God in the self-other attachment model. In fact, my research has largely been based on his conceptual framework. The conceptualisation of God as an attachment figure has come across strongly in the narratives of the women's experience of faith in my study. The categorisation of women's God-attachment in three types matches closely the previous findings of attachment research and of Kirkpatrick (e.g., Hazan and Shaver, 1987; Kirkpatrick, 1992). It can be said that my findings confirm and extend attachment theory to the field of faith experiences and the relational and affective aspects of life and faith development.

There are, however, some new findings in my study which go beyond Kirkpatrick's view. His two-fold hypothesis of correspondence and compensation was also evident in my findings. In fact, the compensation hypothesis in attachment theory in general and in Kirkpatrick's work does not seem to provide great illumination (cf., Kirkpatrick, 1992, pp. 16-21). My findings show that compensation is a reality in the women's forming of the God-image. Along with that, my findings reveal that the insecure women have kept a God-image through the process of correspondence. The result was that the insecure women, especially the anxious-ambivalent, showed dual and split images of God, as was presented extensively in chapter 7. That is, when a child compensates for the parental image in their insecure attachment relationship, they do not just throw away their own parental image and idealise it. They have still kept their parental image along with an idealised or an abstract image in the Christian tradition. This suggests that for the women of insecure attachment neither Christian teaching nor tradition seem to help, unless they are free from seeing Christianity or God as a compensation for their desire for intimacy.

Another aspect of my findings which goes beyond earlier studies is in the role and placement of religious attachment in the mental model of attachment. Kirkpatrick (1999) did not agree with the placement of faith community or pastors being included under the religious attachment model for the reason that they are not genuine attachment figures as they are defined as another kind of bond that is guided by another mechanism (p. 819). My findings, however, indicate that pastors, religious people and the faith community appeared to be a significant other figure (see chapter 5). In fact, for the women, pastors or religious people as individuals were viewed at least as initiators or transitional figures of divine love. Also the church or faith group as a faith community plays a very important role to which the women seem to attach. Without it or when they are separated from it physically or psychologically they feel discouraged, abandoned, isolated or anxious about not belonging and about not having their desire for intimacy met. From the faith community, they get emotional support and the power to revitalise themselves. Therefore, my findings suggest that a faith community could be placed under religious attachment in the self-other attachment model (see chapter 3 and 5). These two findings point up the significance of the religious community in women's faith development, and the role of the religious community is considerable and crucial for women. The implications on women's education and pastoral practice will be discussed later.

Along with the above findings, I want to highlight two key findings from employing an attachment perspective to the experience of faith. First, faith as relational and affective is a complementary perspective to cognitive-oriented faith development theory. In chapter 3, I mentioned that Fowler's (1981, 1986) theory offers an understanding of faith. His understanding of faith, as a constructive meaning-making and attachment experience with the ultimate, was an initial influence

for my approach to faith development. I asserted, however, that his theory had focused on cognitive dimension and that it had a male biased view. My question of whether the term 'attachment' is relevant was posed in the relational and affective dimension of faith. For this, from the beginning I have drawn extensively upon attachment theory at a number of levels. My findings suggest that an attachment perspective provides a valuable theoretical basis and interpretational tool for relational and affective dimensions of faith. The women in my study understood that attachment relationships with God, others and within the faith community were the important aspect of their faith. Their faith was also told with considerable emotional descriptions, symbols, metaphors. As Slee (2004, p. 165) has asserted in her findings, women in my study showed their concrete, emotional and relational knowing is more dominant than abstract, cognitive and analytic knowing. My research illuminated and further investigated criticisms on Fowler's theory by some feminists which suggest that women's faith development is different from men's (e.g., Parks, 1986a; Harris, 1986; Slee, 2004). That is, my findings strongly suggest that attention to attachment narrative, metaphors and representations is required not only in the early stages but also in the later stages of faith.

Second, my findings suggest that seeking secure attachment is an important aspect of faith for women. Throughout this thesis, the women's security issues in faith and life were highlighted. The women's goals and strategies for security and their representations of self and God, which were guided by their attachment system, were persistently displayed in the three patterns. My research study is quite closely related to Rizzuto's (1979) conceptual framework of the transition process from parental figure to an object known as God. Her object relations theory provides an important hypothesis that people conceive God as an object and it makes the process of

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transition in object relations visible. My findings have also illuminated Rizzuto's notion about religious object and the relationship between parental representations and religious representations. However, my findings suggest that the women's pursuit is not only the object itself. That is, the goals of God-attachment are the status and effect that God-attachment provides such as comfort, support, peace, acceptance, recognition, confidence, empowerment, revitalisation and self-worth. That is, the women's security-seeking in attachment relationships is their meaning-making. Although individuals' goals for attachment were different, seeking secure attachment is the core of the women's faith. This is the most important finding of all.

Attachment theory values a person's early experience and environment of growth and pays attention to close relationships, as a framework. Looking through the lens of attachment theory at faith development is beneficial to see and raise affective and relational issues in faith development which have not been considered fully as a significant way of faithing. Slee (2004) suggests that relational and psychodynamic theories could offer interpretative tools for "analysing the function of the symbolic and affective realm" not only for faith development at an early age but also for adults' faith development (p. 165). In this sense, my findings enable us to see faith not only through a cognitive lens but also an affective lens that offers a dynamic dimension in which the person's whole experience is revealed. My findings offer the suggestion that it could be beneficial to consider the attachment perspective as a complementary view along with other faith development theories, especially for women. This is the uniqueness of my findings and I believe that this is beneficial not only for women but also men, although other studies would be needed to look at men's religious attachments.

9.2.2 Attachment and women's development

The main purpose of my study was to seek diversity in women's ways of faithing rather than looking at developmental stages. Thus, based on socio-emotional differences, I have presented three patterns of God-attachment in adulthood, which does not proceed in stages. I have also found a major developmental shift for women in mid-adulthood which is evident in the Korean cultural context. In this section, I draw attention to the existing developmental theories for women, which will relate to the reality of the major shift in attachment development.

I reviewed and focused on the meaning and functions of attachment which were highlighted by many women academics. Among them, Carol Gilligan's work (1982) about the complex interplay of self and other was a stepping stone for subsequent work by women researchers, as it was for mine. My two patterns, distance/avoidance and anxiety/ambivalence, illuminated and expressed the characteristics of Gilligan's first two phases and transitions although some elements overlap the two phases. The concept of responsibility and the occurrence of disequilibrium in care for oneself and receiving care in transition phases are also found in my patterns. In Gilligan's third caring pattern, a new connection develops between self and other. Likewise, the pattern of security/interdependence in my study signifies the women's awareness of interdependence between the self and other. In fact, Gilligan's three phases suggest a developmental process from one phase to another while my three patterns of attachment present characteristics of attachment in which each group of women's goals and strategies for attachment and the interplay of self-other are revealed.

Slee's work in women's faith development (2004) has also offered great insight to my research studies. My findings are congruent with her work in many ways. In fact, her passionate work is more comprehensive, while mine is very much focused on

attachment issues. The characteristic of avoidance/distance attachment is similar to her apophatic forms of faithing and the pattern of alienation. The pattern of avoidance/distance in my study shows inability and a negative and passive way of faithing. It signifies clearly the women's feelings of total loss and despair, and disconnection form the self, others and also to God. The pattern of security/interdependence seems to show the characteristics of Slee's patterns of relationality as the pattern indicates women's ability to hold contradictions together and to reach out to needy people to share God's love with them. The pattern of anxiety/ambivalence does not however, completely match any of the patterns in Slee's findings. I think this comes from the fact that my research study focuses on attachment issues and pays close attention to affective dimensions and psychoanalytic interpretation. Thus in my study the characteristic of claiming the self is given a paradoxical meaning with regard to women. That is, it appears as a socio-emotional and ambivalent cry for attention or recognition under the role of dominant parents and the patriarchal cultural context, while it has also the meaning that they are figuring out their own values as positive and recognizable features of awakening as described by Slee.

An issue about the attachment characteristics of women is whether they are culturally established. This has been debated by developmental theorists and among women academics. Although they conceive different views, what they all agree and focus on is that the attachment characteristics in women affect the whole dimension of women's development and last throughout the lifetime. I want to point out here some significant issues in women's development, which have become clearer as my research has carried on.

First, my findings suggest that the women's attachment characteristics are quite closely related to their culturally biased socio-emotional experiences. The women's autobiographical narratives in my study were more or less about attachment issues, although I cannot deny that my research focused on listening to the women's attachment feelings and attitude, and their goals and strategies for attachment in their narratives. A significant level of anxiety and ambivalence was obviously presented. At the same time, struggling with low self-esteem, high levels of dependency, false identity and avoidance as a defensive attitude were quite common in the women in my study. The descriptions of each pattern of God-attachment were presented in detail with cultural issues. In modern Korea, this cultural bias seems less oppressive than a few decades or centuries ago, but in some ways my findings prove that it still exists. Assessing this is not the purpose of my study, but the existence of a preference for boys and discrimination against women, which plays a role in women's attachment, cannot be denied because this is embedded in the women's way of life and faith development.

Second, along with culturally biased socio-emotional issues in women's upbringing, my findings suggest that the father's role is crucial in women's upbringing and later on in their lives, although the mother's role is important too. In particular, in the pattern of anxiety/ambivalence, the issues of the dominant mother were significant while the father's role was weak or absent. Comparatively, in the pattern of security/interdependence, the father's role was crucial to the women so that they could grow in confidence. In fact, the father's availability and love were highlighted by the secure women while feelings of conflict about the mother's dominance were heightened in the anxious-ambivalent women. My findings suggest that the mother's care is important but the father's love and emotional support especially for the girls is

significantly necessary. In particular, for Korean women who grew up and are living in a patriarchal society, the father's responsible care and love gives girls confidence to go out to challenge the culturally biased world. In fact, we have seen it in the patterns of God-attachment that secure/interdependent women who received the favour of their father's love feel much more at ease in relational life and faith compared to other women whose fathers were absent and unsupportive which resulted in the women's lack of self-esteem and their impersonal and un-relational images of God.

Third, a major developmental shift in adulthood occurs with the effect of romantic attachment relationships. This was another significant issue that was demonstrated in my study commonly and persistently. Adult romantic relationships were a significant factor by which the women reflected their early attachment relationships and formed their self-image and the image of others. Attachment researchers suggest that there are a few shifts in the development of attachment beyond infancy, and the time of pregnancy is suggested as a significant shift in young adulthood (Ainsworth, 1991). I would, however, suggest that a major significant shift comes by making adult romantic relationship rather than by the single issue of pregnancy in adulthood. As my interviewees are mostly in their thirties, a developmental shift was recognised when they were making and settling into new but significant relationships. In fact, it did not suggest a clear cut timeline for everybody. This is the period when some women see themselves as productive and responsible as they become lovers, wives and even mothers, while they feel also a certain level of anxiety to be settled in a relationship, while for others there is a sense of failure and unworthiness when their romantic relationship turns out to be broken or insecure. The process of transition of the attachment figure from parents to adult romantic partner becomes an important issue in this period. Emotional autonomy from parents is required in a new

attachment relationship. Cognitive change needs to adjust to a new view of the self and of the attachment figure while still exercising the old attachment system. Making a new relationship and settling the ambivalent feelings in the relationship, including adjusting the view of the self and the other, the romantic partner, is a hugely transforming experience while their mothers' influences still existed and loomed largely. This ongoing process of adjusting their attachment feelings reached its peak in this period. My research study shows this process extensively. Anxious/ambivalent women showed much confusion and frustration in settling into adult attachment relationships (see chapter 7), while distant/avoidant women displayed high emotional depression and stagnation (see chapter 6).

It was noticeable that the women experienced difficulty around this shift period as this process was accompanied with dramatic separation from their old relationships. When a Korean woman gets married, it is expected in the society that parents and relatives become remote not only physically but also emotionally, as also do their friends. In particular, for Christian women, they need to leave the church where they grew and have been attached for a long time. Instead, they are expected to settle in a new environment, new place and new groups where the husband has belonged. If women become pregnant, the difficulties are even worse (see chapter 5 and 7). This process of transition causes turmoil for many women. It impacts the women's entire dimension of life. Although insecure attachment is very much influenced by the early attachment relationship, if the adult romantic attachment relationship is insecure, the pain and despair is unbearable so that the women lose self-worth and faith as well. If the women can cope with the whirlpool experience well, they get stronger in confidence and mature; crisis has two meanings, risk and opportunity. In fact, secure women tend to cope with crisis comparatively easily, since they have developed an

ability to hold the contradictions together.   Although my research study is not a comparative study of Western women and Eastern women, my findings of Korean women's attachment development can contribute in this area, since most research studies in attachment are taken in Western countries.

Fourth, along with the findings of a major shift and cultural influences in women's development, I want to highlight some methodological implications for researching women's development.   An autobiographical narrative in-depth interview was used in my research study as the research was engaged in issues of women's attachment life and faith.   The narrative method is already used in the research field of attachment theory to some degree but I employed an open-ended unforced method with the autobiographical interview.   This has many benefits for any qualitative research, in particular with women.   First, it may enable researchers to measure the quality, quantity, relevance and manner of the narrative more efficiently (cf., Hesse, 1999).   It provides a tool for researchers to access the participants' ability to recall and evaluate their own lives and whether their narrative is in a relevant, truthful and succinct form or not.   It is suitable to access the participants' response to attachment experiences, particularly accessing the participants' representational world.   Second, it also stimulates creativity, imagination and insight into life experience that could have been ignored or distorted in the patriarchal cultural heritage.   It can be thus a valuable tool for research on pastoral care, counselling and education.   In particular, for women who have always been somebody else's daughter, wife and mother, the autobiographical narrative interview may provide a conversational context and a great opportunity to practise their subjectivity.   Third, the interview was divided into two sections with a break between the sections.   The first section can be used with less intervention of interviewer while maximising interviewee's subjectivity based on a set

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of roughly guided questions.   The second section can be used with questions which are a little more focused and which arose from the first section.   This may be an alternative option to other in-depth interviews.   In fact, the in-depth interview requires a subsequent interview to pick up unanswered questions and to explore in depth. However, in practice, an additional interview in another day may not be guaranteed or possible.   Having a break may have the effect of doing two interviews in a manageable time although it cannot be denied that the effect is less great than doing the subsequent one on another day.   Nevertheless, it gives both interviewer and interviewees some space and time for reflection.   Above all, the autobiographical interview is valuable in any qualitative study.   However, it is crucial to employ open-ended and unforced tools, particularly when researching women's attachment issues on the experience of faith.   I believe that the above research tools will contribute to future research, particularly with women, for women and by women that requires sensitivity to the variety of women's experience, different words, symbols, metaphors and concepts that the women use.   The above methodological findings also offer some implications on educational and pastoral practice which we will see in the following section.

9.3 Implication of my findings on educational and pastoral practice for women

There might be several dimensions of implication of my findings on education and pastoral practice for women.   My findings suggest that having a sensitive view of the attachment perspective on development and the differences of attachment between individuals is crucial knowledge for Christian educators, pastors and ministers, especially for those who work with women.   The use of the term 'attachment' and attachment perspective in human development and religious development will be the

first and most fundamental implication. Awareness of representations of the self and God and its significance in educational and pastoral practice will be discussed, which is followed by creating relational and conversational settings in which the role of the faith community will be highlighted. Then, for educational and pastoral tasks, the ways to help insecure women will be considered.

9.3.1 Use of the term 'attachment' and attachment perspective

The most fundamental implication of my findings on education and pastoral practice could be the use of the term 'attachment' and attachment perspective in the religious domain. Throughout the study, I aimed to specify the meaning of attachment in religious experience. Articulating the meaning and functions of attachment in the women's life and faith journey was the main purpose of the research. It also became a significant finding which will have some implications for educational and pastoral practice.

First, the term 'attachment' is not an opposite to 'detachment', but it rather includes 'detachment' as one of the forms of attachment. The term 'attachment' is often used as an opposite meaning to 'detachment' in general use. In fact, it has not been used positively in religions in general, especially in Buddhism, where detachment is regarded as an ideal or a mature form of faith. In fact, Buddhism is not interpersonal in its origin[8]. Although Christianity has both transcendental and immanent qualities, Christianity also is not far from any other religions in this case, especially Korean Christianity. In fact, it cannot be denied that Korean Christians have still internalised the Buddhist way and regard detachment as a highly commendable form. Examining this was not my research purpose but my findings suggest that it still exists in the

women's ways of living and faithing. Christian teaching about attachment is distorted and ill-connoted while detachment is very much praised. However, my findings suggest that attachment cannot be regarded simply as an opposite form of detachment. That is, detachment is one of the forms of attachment that people pose when they desire an attachment but cannot achieve it. There are two examples. The first one is that people detach when they are in total loss. This is the reaction of a defence mechanism that they long for an attachment but do not want to be hurt again. This appeared as a form of avoidance/distance in my study. The second one is that people detach from everything else for an attachment when they feel insecure. For example, people detach from human attachment completely for God-attachment when their human attachment relationships are insecure. In my study, this appeared as a form of anxious/ambivalent attachment.

Second, it is not desirable to view attachment as an opposite form of detachment from an educational and pastoral point of view, particularly for women. That is, in a way, to view attachment as an opposite form of detachment can be dangerous. The view has brought about prejudice which regards detachment as a better form than attachment. As a result, 'men's way' is praised more than 'women's way' because detachment is normally recognised as 'men's' while attachment as 'women's'. This view has been internalised in our minds and has been practiced unconsciously in our religious lives and even encouraged in educational and pastoral practice. Numbers of girls and women coming to study higher education and theological education are increasing and women have outnumbered men in the congregations all the time. However, the decision making process has always been by men, of men and for men. My findings suggest that this context does not help women's development but rather discourage women. This is embedded in our society, the church system, every

component and process of education. In fact, women establish their self-identity as they are seeking security in attachment relationships with which women pursue caring, relationality, life-affirmation and tolerance. Women have many positive characteristics while they are not yet quite valued as proper ways of faithing. Educators and pastoral practitioners should value this attachment quality that women have. They should particularly promote that women's unique ways of faithing are not inferior to men's ways of faithing. The quality of caring and attachment is beneficial not only for women but also for men. It should be counted in the Christian education curriculum, any resources for education and the process of education. It is very much something to seek as an alternative value in a competitive and dehumanised society.

Third, an attachment perspective offers a systematic understanding of the anthropological view of faith. My findings suggest that attachment has a comprehensive function relating to cognition, emotion and behaviour. That is, attachment includes some particular feelings including distance, detachment, anxiety, ambivalence, dependence and security that the person's beliefs and attitudes come along with and that the person's goals and strategies for attachment are set for. A consistent argument in my thesis has been that faith development was to be understood in the context of relational dynamics in which the crucial influence of human attachment – in the early attachment experience with the prime attachment figure and with other significant relationships later on – has been considerably intertwined. So, a person's faith could not be separated from the person's attachment experiences, the way of responding to the self, others and God. Christian leaders who are engaged in adult Christian education and pastoral work should acknowledge that faith is rooted in human attachment and it is experienced through the unique attachment system. With an attachment perspective, a Christian adult can be seen as a

relational and affective self: A self who has a past and crucial attachment experience with her/his parents which could be secure or not; a self who sees, feels and acts through the attachment system and the internal working models; a self who seeks security which has many forms.   In fact, many Christian leaders, who are conservative and against the enrichment of theology, psychology and psychoanalysis, simply do not know or even ignore this view.   Using anthropological view on Christian education and pastoral care is regarded as 'sinful act' in the conservative Christian context.   However, Christian education and pastoral care is dealing with people who have various backgrounds in their experiences, and it is to help them to find their own value, to integrate the conflicts that they may face and to grow in connection and reach out to others in need.   What is 'sinful act', using attachment perspective to understand and to help the people grow in faith effectively or not? Christian leaders should be aware of the variety and the power of human attachment experiences and its influence on faith development.   They should be able to see Christian adults as relational and affective selves, and help them to encourage themselves to have a healthy and secure attachment relationship with others, God and the religious community. Thus, having an attachment perspective enables the Christian leaders to be more effective and accountable in educational and pastoral practice.

My findings of an attachment perspective point up the variety of human experience and women's development. Christian education and theological education in seminaries and in any formal and informal education should deliver this attachment view to the prospective teachers and pastors, perhaps in the form of practical theology. Formal education should also run a life-long programme to re-educate Christian leaders about the attachment perspective.   At the church level, this view should also

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be delivered in the sermons and educational programmes for the church teachers and leaders. At the same time, educational and pastoral programmes should provide the relational and affective context to Christian adults. The following sections will deliver more detailed implications.

9.3.2 Awareness of representations

My findings suggest that representations of the self and God could be significant factors in seeing the quality and uniqueness of an individual's faith. The women's faith in my study was characterised by their images of self and God in which each woman's attachment relationships are revealed and reflected significantly. The women's representations of the self and God became very important components of the women's faith. As they are Christians, faith in God is the core of the self. An expression of the self is a manifestation of faith. When the self is expressed the self's values and beliefs are disclosed. When the self speaks the self's pursuits and commitments are revealed: "The self is the dynamic embodiment and enactment of faith" (Armistead, 1995, p. xvii). In other words, the image of God is the core of faith with which the self can be truly the self. Representation of God is important in maintaining a person's sense of mental balance (Rizzuto, 1979). Thus, it can be said, "A God-image is self-revealing" (Armistead, 1995, p. xvii).

My findings further suggest that the most important insight which educators and pastoral practitioners can learn is that these representations of self and God are also related to beliefs and attitudes, goals and strategies for attachment by which the person practises her/his faith. The self might pursue intimacy but rather chose to be distant and avoidant since it has been learned as a safe way not to be rejected by

others. The self might pursue autonomy but rather chose to be anxious and ambivalent since it has been learned as a way of survival of getting the attention of others. The self feels confidence and secure whatever happens as it learns how to be loved and tolerated, and how to love and tolerate in attachment relationships. Thus, the women's faithing styles are exhibited according to *how* they respond to the self-other models. Then, what should be considered and delivered in educational and pastoral practice particularly for women?

First of all, women's representations should be heard in terms of *what* and *how*. With one voice, feminist academics emphasise the need for women's voices to be heard and their experiences to be counted because women's inner voices have not been heard properly. I believe that the best way to hear women's voices and experiences is to listen to *what* the individual's representations of the self and God are, and *how* they respond. Educators and pastoral practitioners should be able to get into the women's inner world. They should be able to access the women's representational world where their religious metaphors, images and stories are revealed, where the past experience is dissolved in the present representations and hope for future. They must have sensitivity to look behind the women's language and the ways of weaving their images of the self and God and feelings and reactions toward the self-in-relation to an attachment figure, God. They should listen to the women's silences, pauses, accents, tones, negative or positive words, past-oriented or present or future-oriented narratives and also the message behind how the representations are presented. They must give time for moments of silence and pause before hurrying on with 'empty' or 'disconnected' interpretation when they hear the women's representations. That is, women's representations can be accessed not only by what they are saying but also how they are saying it. It is important to hear not

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only the contents but also the forms of narrative. This requires an ability to look at the phenomena rising out of the women's inner world.

Second, women's representations should be heard in their own terms. As many feminist theologians suggest, finding images of God in women's own experiences, rather than male biased and traditionally given images, is important for women to understand the self, others and the world. The most important thing is that women's representations carry their past and present experiences and future hope whether the images are gendered or not. We need to remember the relationship between the woman's experience of God and the self that is intertwined and that is also traced in her use of language in attachment narratives. As we have seen in the finding chapters, 'borrowing' languages from authorities and tradition including church or theological institutions even from parents can cause a problem. If the languages are abstract or 'theological' so that they are disconnected with the person and remains just as a 'sign' rather than a meaningful 'symbol' to the women, they do not mean anything but rather become obstacles to the women's self-language and God-language development. Owning language of her own in which her experience becomes alive and shared with others is invaluable. Thus, the most significant educational and pastoral issue is to encourage women to speak out their own language that is derived out of their own concrete experience. This requires a special listening, empathic listening with a readiness to discover the languages and imagery in the women's representational world and learn from the images of God they find. Educators and pastoral practitioners need to encourage women to find their own language and to break the silence and speak out whatever the images they have. At the same time, an open, unforced, warm and revering conversational context is very much required for women.

Third, women's representations should be heard in context. Representations of self and God and the ways of responding are very much cultural ones. Consciously and unconsciously they are internalised. Many women in my study spoke of vulnerability under the patriarchal roles, rules and expectations to women. They were struggling to be themselves under the high expectation for women in the patriarchal family, church and social system. Their emotional cries for wanting to be a perfect and proper woman and struggling to find their identity and self-esteem in the male preference society were very much present in the women's representations of self and God and their faithing strategies. Many women in my study did not know these representations were the result of their experiences in the patriarchal culture. They believed and pursued the false images that the patriarchal cultural system produced. They need to be encouraged to resist any exploitation, dehumanisation and discrimination against them. They need to be told that they are precious human beings as individuals and as they are, created in God's image, equally to men. Thus, in educational and pastoral practice, it is important to hear the women's representations that are formed and spoken under the influence of patriarchal culture and also to support them to become the true self (Saussy, 1991). The messages of resistance, equality and hope have to be noted and praised in the process of conversation. These also need to be delivered in the act of preaching, education and pastoral care. This requires both deconstructive and reconstructive conversation as Neuger (2001, p. 90) has suggested, which we will see in more detail later.

Fourth, women's representations should be heard in terms of variety. Language and experience are interrelated and reciprocal so that "religious experience is not only conditioned by, but also shapes, our language for the divine" (Fischer, 1995, p. 55). Thus, the exclusive use of male God-language results in women's difficulties in

experiencing sacredness, power and capacity to image the divine (ibid, pp. 53-54). Examining gendered God-language is beyond my study. However, it is important not to limit our God-language because our God-image is a significant element of our relational life and faith. Educators and pastoral practitioners should encourage women to express their own representations of the self and God. At the same time, it is also essential that they should be equipped with a variety of approaches to expanding our 'God-language'. There can be a few steps and strategies to practice the variety of God-language. Zoë Bennett Moore (2002, p. 71) suggests gender inclusive language, an increase of our range of images and a change of traditional male imagery and symbolism for God. Rebecca Chopp (1995, pp. 85-91) also suggests three related processes of expanding our God-language. That is, they start with deconstructing patriarchal images of God and meanings. This is followed by constructing new symbols that deliver the multiplicity and diversity of human beings. This brings us to a transforming act through new processes, new liturgies and new practices in community. Many women academics suggest that educators and pastoral practitioners for women need to develop and to use resources from the variety of women's literature, poems, arts, drama and music that deliver and stimulate women's own symbols, metaphors, narratives of attachment experience (e.g., Saussy, 1991; Chopp, 1995; Slee, 2004). In particular, Chopp (1995) suggests that written works by women should be used in the educational and pastoral practice because they "teach us an imaginative process of reconstructing women's lives, the church, and the very nature of reflection as aimed toward the future" (p. 109).

The importance of representations of the self and God is myriad, especially when it comes to a pastoral counselling context. Before ending this section, I want to demonstrate a significant issue that pastoral practitioners need to be aware of. The

counselee projects an image of 'other' – that is established through the course of the early attachment relationship with their mother and father and, later, their spouse in adult life – to the counsellor. In fact, mentors, counsellors and pastors are viewed as an attachment figure for some people. In some cases, the counselee might reflect their own representation of God onto the counsellor. Women in my study also mentioned about pastors or a particular pastor who opened their heart to them with quite a similar manner of attachment. The women's expressions of appreciation in this kind of relationship appeared quite significant, especially when they were in despair and lonely or in situations of stagnation. Thus, counsellors need to prepare themselves fully to understand the counselee's representational world and to prepare themselves to be a part of the world. In other words, an emotionally deprived woman could find an idealised 'God-figure' from the very open-minded warm pastor. The fully-prepared pastor could give a God-given comfort to the woman. Through a counsellor-counselee relationship, the counselee could obtain or recover trust. This trusting relationship is very important because it could offer an opportunity to the counselee to feel confidence that she/he is worthy and is created in God's image. This is an initial step to resolve the counselee's problems and toward the healing process. Above all, in a pastoral context, pastors, counsellors or caregivers need a clear understanding of women's representation of God and "how this came to be part of personal history", so that it "may guide, sustain, heal and reconcile" the women "toward relationships of greater depth and scope and hence a more productive future" (Armistead, 1995, p. 127).

9.3.3 Creating relational and conversational settings[9]

My findings affirm that women's development occurs in relationships and in the conversational process. The women felt worthy and vitalised when they were related

to and connected with others, especially a significant other, such as parents, adult romantic partners or to God and the faith community and when they shared their stories with others in my study. Many women writers suggest connected and relational knowing and dialogical and conversational knowing or creating such a context, as an important practice and act in education and pastoral care for women (e.g., Moor, 1991; Chopp, 1995; Hess, 1997; Neuger, 2001). Creating relational and conversational settings thus is a crucial principle of Christian education and pastoral practice for women who live as a 'resident alien' in a society where reality and ideal, old and new and mono and multi collide but the confusion has not yet been clearly overcome. Such settings will then bring confidence to women who live in 'an age of uncertainty' (Graham, 1996b) and face 'a crisis of post-conventional society' (Kim, 2004). In this section the importance of relational and conversational settings for women is emphasised, which brings us to the benefits and tasks of faith community in Christian education and pastoral practice.

Creating relational and conversational settings is a very important educational and pastoral act. It offers an opportunity to reconnect people in a relationship, like the woman at the well who has never truly been in relationship but found herself-in-relation to Jesus and to other people in the village (Stevenson-Moessner, 1991, p. 219). It may also offer a transforming experience similar to this one where Jesus invites the woman into a deep and penetrating conversation to bring her to reflect and lead her to new thought, life and vision. In this relational and conversational setting, the woman's feeling of despair and avoidant attitude towards the self and others, including Jesus, has transformed. In educational and pastoral practice, a true relationship and conversation with the self and others is the most important principle of all. Good practitioners should know how to invite women into a true and 'good

enough' relationship and conversation to themselves which also lead them to a true relationship and conversation to Other, God. As Jesus did with the woman at the well, practitioners who are fully aware of representations of the learners or the counselees should first offer themselves as a true relational and conversational partner. As Jesus did with the woman, practitioners should not have just a 'sweet conversation' but 'hard dialogue and deep connection' and 'deconstructive and reconstructive conversation' (Hess, 1997; Neuger, 2001).

Relational and conversational settings should be created in every aspect of the educational process regarding the principles of relationality, equality and openness. Teaching is a significant relational activity. It is intended to connect teachers with students, students with themselves and with other students, students with the object of teaching, the Bible, the tradition and God. It is "revering the wholeness of the body" (Moore, 1991, p. 201) and interacting with a learning community in which "the lives of students and societies are nourished and transformed" (p. 202). In fact, 'revering' does not mean that one is dominated, used, or discriminated against, by the other. It refers to openness, equality, diversity or multiplicity (cf., Graham, 1996b; Kim, 2004). Thus, Christian education should be an invitation all participants to 'hard dialogue and deep connection' (Hess, 1997, p. 182). It is 'real-talk' that fosters genuine relationality and that does not avoid painful questions, argument, or listening to the margins (Hess, 1996, p. 65). That is, it is open and earnest conversation among the community of faith, God and tradition (Scripture) that leads women to be partners for the well-being and healing of the entire community (p. 66).

Reflective relational and conversational settings can be established in a faith community including small gatherings such as prayer groups, Bible study groups and fellowship meetings. Women-only groupings and settings are sometimes very

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effective to enable them share their own stories in which they feel they are not only heard but also effective contributors. Such women-only gatherings may offer a context where they support and comfort each other. They trust and bond with each other and can "begin to articulate their own needs, name their own experience, gain a sense of voice and agency, and awaken to critical consciousness" (Slee, 2004, p. 174). Such faith community encourages individuals to share their stories and build a tradition in them. Women-church communities are "the crucible of theological regeneration and renewal" (Graham, 1996b, p. 1989) where women's own intuitive, inclusive, communicative and creative liturgy, ritual and worship become a tradition. Such faith community connects individuals in solidarity and with society to overcome the conflicts between socio-cultural challenge and individuals' ability. Stevenson-Moessner (1991) suggests that a faith community does not need to be limited or defined by denominations, religious orders, or a particular culture, but it should support women with care and provides a spiritual family (p. 219). Slee (2004) mentions the necessity of "new conversational practices in which women and men listen and talk to each other in more mutual and cooperative ways" and "each can find a new way of connecting" (p. 174 and 175).

A faith community is very important for women and may naturally provide a relational and conversational context if it is *not* run and organised in an oppressive way to women or with a male-imposed culture of conversation. In this sense, Neuger (2001) establishes her understanding of the minister's response as organized by an understanding of church as community. Women desire a listening, supportive, non-threatening and compassionate presence. Women desire a sense of connectedness within the faith community. Women find confidence when they feel that they belong and are effective in the community. Faith community should have certain

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characteristics conducive to this because connectedness and closeness within the faith community can be "a means of restoration through relatedness" (Stevenson-Moessner, 1991, p. 219).

My findings raise issues that belonging within the church community should be carefully considered in pastoral practice for women. A variety of people who have different attachment patterns co-exist in the faith community. Although the variety sometimes makes troubles in the community, if it is run and used well, the community will be a transforming and healing community. Intimate human relationships, especially within a faith community, play a crucial role for women who are frustrated and long for security in God-attachment. The faith community can play the role of giving a warm welcome to those who have distant/avoidant characteristics. This will enable the women to experience safety and peace. It also gives energy for survival for those who are having a difficult time. This experience will lead them to a new and restored relationship to the self, others and God. The community can also play the role of helping people who have anxious/ambivalent characteristics to become tolerant of the self and others so that their anxious/ambivalent enthusiasm for the faith community does not get in the way of their faithing. The faith community can encourage these individuals to be free from rigidity in their faithing. It can also provide them with an opportunity to experience God's grace despite their weakness and fragility. The faith community that is oriented by God's love and care can enable these individuals to tolerate the self and others, and to be inspired by God's love and grow in confidence. The basis of educational and pastoral care is found in "the sustaining internalizations of love within the self, in the continuing power of community, and in divine hope beyond ourselves, that is, in God" (Glaz and Stevenson-Moessner, 1991, p. 196). In future accounts of faith development,

women's experience of relationality in harmony and of learning in conversational settings should find a more central place in the competitive contemporary society (Slee, 2004, p. 166 and pp. 173-175)

9.3.4 Educational and pastoral practice for insecure women

Although Bowlby's (1979) phrase 'from the cradle to the grave' suggests the characteristics of stability in internal working models of attachment, Bowlby (1988, pp.138-139) has also suggested several possible routes to change a person's internal working models. The first one is the capacity to think about and reflect upon one's own working models. The second is 'corrective' relationship experience. He has also proposed that both changes come into play in good therapeutic relationships. In other words, some form of 're-parenting' is required for insecure women by someone who will offer nurturing, accepting and encouraging support (cf., Saussy, 1991).   This gives important insight into the implications for educational and pastoral practice for insecure women.   There might be a number of levels and ways of practice, but here I want particularly to focus on the most important practice for practitioners and insecure women: empathic listening and imagination.

a) Empathic listening

Pastors and educators must recognise the images represented by insecure women. They must listen sensitively to women's expression of struggle, despair and stagnation of distance/avoidance, and anger and cry of anxiety/ambivalence. Most importantly, they need to acknowledge that these are also one of the ways of women's faithing.   At the same time, more positive and secure images also need to be

encouraged in educational and pastoral practice, which will be seen in the next section.

In *Women in Travail and Transition* (Glaz and Stevenson-Moessner (eds.), 1991), a variety of essays about women's experiences that have previously been invisible and hidden in discussion of pastoral care and counselling are presented. Ramsay (1991) particularly discusses and insists that the pastor must listen to women's experiences, women's ambivalence and anger with God and women's deadening feelings of distance from God (p. 119). Educational and pastoral practice should include particularly listening to women's feelings of avoidance/distance from God. As my findings suggest, women who experience maltreatment, abuse or broken relationships were not able to have usual approaches to God. Sometimes the church and the Christian tradition may seem to hinder them rather than to assist and abide with them. Sometimes they do not feel that Christian teaching is relevant to them so that they cannot participate in formal worship or practice their faith in a 'normal' way. These women speak of despair, stagnation and depression. Their reactions to these experiences are exposed in the vulnerability of traditional images of God. Educators and pastors need to encourage them to express these feelings and listen to their expressions and accounts carefully. The abstract and impersonal images of God, the cutting off or passive attitudes and lack of hope should be acknowledged as one of the ways of struggling to get a sense of self and also one of the ways of crying out to reach God. In this sense, Harris (1988) suggests that teachers and students should "talk about silence to address the theme of silence by refusing to be silent" (p. 27) and "must have room for prayerful silence … care-filled listening, quiet reflection, abundant prayer, and deepened awareness" (p.30). Educators and pastors need to acknowledge "the potential creativity of such experiences" and "exploring through

prayer, poetry or painting images such as the dark night of the soul, the cloud of unknowing and the desert may provide fruitful ways" (Slee, 2004, p. 179).

In the same sense, women's anxiety and ambivalent feelings and attitudes should also be recognised as one of the ways of women's faithing. As my findings suggest, women who experience all sorts of discrimination and overcome them were not confident to have freedom in their approaches to God and in practicing their faith. Sometimes they could not acknowledge religious authorities have harmed their development. Their anxious and ambivalent approach toward God appeared as 'faithful' in the church context. Sometimes this attitude is even encouraged by the church leaders. In this atmosphere in the church authority, these women can easily falsify themselves as 'a devoted Christian', while their cry and frustration of longing for intimacy still exists. These women speak of insecurity in their attachment relationships, extreme desire for comfort and perfection in the self and others. Educators and pastoral practitioners should be able to listen to their frustration and anger as one of the ways of women's faithing. Their images of God which are split and disintegrated between abstract, theological images and concrete, experienced images should be heard and recognised in the educational and pastoral context. These women need encouragement to express their frustration and also to be free from falsified enthusiasm. Educators and pastors need to deliver some messages and images of 'confronting' and 'resisting' patriarchal structure and process in the tradition, the church and society.

Empathic listening to women's experience requires 'deconstructive' conversation to find the falsified representations of self and other and separate them from themselves and also requires 'reconstructive' conversation to help the women to redirect the problem for themselves (Neuger, 2001, p. 45). This requires several

phases: externalising, naming the problem and looking for unique outcomes (pp. 90-91). In this way, "problems are resisted or resolved as new narratives are built" (p. 91). Effective education and pastoral care and counselling include response with accountability to these women's experience. It also encourages women to experience and live within the power of God who suffers in the midst of human pain, shares it, embodies it and redeems it (Ramsay, 1991, p. 120).

b) Imagination

My findings suggest that there are qualitative differences, particularly of imagination or of imagining ability, between secure women and insecure women. In chapters six to eight, we have explored why these phenomena occurred. That is, secure women were able to refine the working models which were presented in their representations of self and other while insecure women show rigidity or lack of ability in imagination to refine their working models. This resulted in the women's lack of use of their own language which signifies their inability to access an experience of God. Lack of access to their own image of God is also very much related to their low self-esteem. The capacity to grasp and speak about their own God-image signifies their ability to have an intimate relationship with God. In fact, the capacity to have their own voice about the experience of God is significantly related to all dimensions of relationality to the self, others and the world. As we have seen above, awareness of women's representations of the self and God is significant in educational and pastoral practice. It is particularly important for those who are less privileged or deprived emotionally, physically and spiritually. Here, I want to highlight how imagination helps the insecure women to refine their working models in educational and pastoral practice.

Imagination and imagining is an important way of self-development and faith development suggested by academics in feminist theology (e.g., Parks, 1986a; Moran, 1991; Slee, 2004), metaphoric theology (McFague, 1982; Green, 1988), phenomenological hermeneutics (e.g., Casey, 1976; Ricoeur, 1974, 1984, 1985, 1988), narrative education (e.g., Moor, 1991) and narrative counselling (e.g., Neuger, 2001), although in cognitive structure-oriented theories the emphasis of imagination fades as the developmental stages reach adulthood. Although Harris (1988) prefers 'artistry' to imagination, imagination is regarded as an effective way of education and psycho-therapy in contemporary society. This is rather a different way from that which is based on asceticism or reason.

Wiersbe (1994) explains imagination as a 'womb' which gives birth to image and says that imagination is an image-making capacity (p. 61). It enables people not only to remember the past and to foresee the future (Vanek, 1992, p. v), but also to experience God's revelation through the moment they imagine (Parks, 1986b, p.125). In fact, imagination, image and revelation are interrelated.   As we see through image rather than believe the image itself, image functions like a lens through which we can see an object and the reality (Fischer, 1983).   As we see God through creation indirectly, we experience God's revelation in us through images. Thus, imagining is an essential way of practicing our faith and its development.

Imagination and imagining can be a key issue for educational and pastoral practice and it is important to note that the image is not absolutely unchangeable.   In fact, faith is transformed when the image is transformed.   In other words, Christian education and pastoral counselling encouraging imagination and imagining activity can be a revolutionary work for helping women, particularly insecure women. Through the process of refining the working models, imagination will provide a

stimulation of reforming their images of self and God. Imagination encourages multiple images. Green (1989) suggests the use of metaphoric language since it effectively delivers variety in the way we imagine God. We appreciate the reality of God more abundantly if we use and encourage multiple images. It is a way we overcome the underlying dichotomy in the God-language that remains in either 'fact' or 'fiction', 'is' or 'is not' (pp. 134-141 and also see McFague, 1982). Ambiguity of images or symbols does not confuse Christian theology but its variety is rather "the sign of its utter dependence on the grace of God" (Green, 1989, p. 104). Thus, ultimately, accepting the perspective of the multiplicity and variety of images can be beneficial so that our own image is valued as much as others' in the process of forming an image of God.

This is also essentially related to understanding of the self that is made in God's image. Christian education ought to pursue self-understanding and God-understanding together to the point where both meet in God-image. This is why imagining God in human images is important. Christian education needs to encourage people to learn self-understanding and God-understanding through interpreting the Bible and sharing their concrete experience. In fact, lack of imagination is caused by lack of connection between human beings' thought and action and God, which is evidenced in my finding of insecure women's faithing. Loss of ability to imagine God means that there is no positive analogy between the self and God. It can be said that bad imagination or misuse of imagination is 'sin' by which we become slaves of false images.

How, then, do imagination and imagining activities help insecure women restore 'good' and secure images of self and God? Imagination is the ability to hear and draw what we cannot see. Thus, restoring imagination or imagining ability is restoring

God-image and God's revelation in us. The process includes reshaping and re-forming. For this, Casey (1976) suggests three important interrelated activities of imagining: image-forming, imagining-that, and imagining-how (pp. 41-48). That is, image-forming is contemplation with our whole sense. Imagining-that is an activity of imagining an object-in-relation. Imagining-how is a rehearsal of the imagining activity as an active being. In narrative pastoral counselling, Neuger (2001) also suggests re-imagining as one of the most important and effective ways for helping women gain clarity and imagine new directions and choices (p. 144). She emphasises the paradoxical power of the imagery experience of the 'I' being able to observe the 'me' in the image, which allows the women to participate in the transforming process (p. 145). In the process, the women are encouraged to use a powerful image or metaphor of God and the self-in-relation which serves as a vehicle for generating new views of self (ibid.).

Self-confidence and self-worth based on our creation in God's image are the important message that Christian education and pastoral care and counselling should deliver for insecure women. For this, practitioners need to listen attentively to the insecure women's experience with empathic listening and encourage the women to imagine secure images of self-in-relation with a loving and available God who works in a mysterious and miraculous way. This is an essential task of educational and pastoral practice for insecure women. It is also necessary to develop appropriate programmes for the insecure women to practice imagining activities, in small group settings or big, in formal education or informal education, in in-church educational and pastoral settings or outside. It includes developing new liturgy, new ritual and worship such as contemplative prayer, resisting and confronting narratives and drama, a musical, a cantata that stimulate women to identify one of the characters, or a Bible

study which simultaneously asks women to imagine themselves to be in a situation or to be a character in the Bible story and encourages women not to be trapped or caught in but to challenge patriarchal and dehumanised messages and images.

9.4 Summary and conclusions

This research has consistently explored a complementary path of understanding faith in the relational and affective dimensions that cognitive structural theories have failed to discuss, particularly in the context of faith in adulthood. It has especially focused on the relationship between human attachment and God-attachment. The significant differences in the patterns of God-attachment offer an explanation that women's experience of faith could vary according to their past and present human attachment experiences. Conversely, the experience of God is also the source of their power or energy to respond to the self and others. In fact, my findings suggest that attachment is the core issue in women's faith development and the phenomenological and hermeneutical approach are a crucial methodology for researching women's faith experience. The phenomenological differences between the women were described and interpreted with social-emotional and cultural understanding and this led to important implications for educational and pastoral practice for women. That is, some implications were raised for an appropriate use of attachment perspective, understanding representations of self and God and creating relational and conversational contexts and their benefits for Christian education and pastoral practice for women in general. This shows ways of enactment grounded in some principles such as inclusiveness, multiplicity, relationality, equality and openness. In particular, for the insecure women, empathic listening and imagining is the most effective principle and activity that educators and pastoral practitioners could and ought to offer.

A specific programme and curriculum is also urgently needed, to reinforce the women's imagination, as imagining activities are crucial ways for helping the insecure women to refine their images of self and God. Although detailed programmes are not proposed, broad guide-lines and principles are suggested in the implications on women's faith development. The implications are neither new nor unique, but they particularly address and focus on women's attachment development issues in relation to faith development. I believe that the power of attachment and the functions of representations on faith development, that in-depth autobiographical interview has provided, can make a significant contribution to fields such as anthropological study of faith experience and women's developmental studies. Although I interviewed Korean Christian women and sought implications for them, the implications can be applied to others: women and men, Easterners and Westerners, adults and children and Christians and non-Christians.

Appendix 1: Attachment Group Differences in Working Models

Secure	*Avoidant*	*Anxious-Ambivalent*
Memories		
Parents warm and affectionate	Mothers cold and rejecting	Fathers unfair
Attachment-Related Beliefs, Attitudes		
Few self doubts; high in self-worth Generally liked by others Others generally well-intentioned and good-hearted Others generally trustworthy, dependable, and altruistic Interpersonally oriented	Suspicious of Human motives Others not trustworthy or dependable Doubt honesty and integrity of patents and others Lack confidence in social situations Not interpersonally oriented	Others complex and difficult to understand People have little control over own lives
Attachment-Related Goals and Needs		
Desire intimate relationships Seek balance of closeness and autonomy in relationship	Need to maintain distance Limit intimacy to satisfy needs for autonomy and independence Place greater weight on goals such as achievement	Desire extreme intimacy Seek lower levels of autonomy Fear rejection
Plans and Strategies		
Acknowledge distress Modulate negative affect in constructive way	Manage distress by cutting off anger Minimize distress-related emotional displays; withhold intimate disclosure	Heightened displays of distress and anger to get response Solicitous and compliant to gain acceptance

Source: Feeney (1999; Feeney and Noller, 1996)

Appendix 2: Sample Notes

Pseudonym: Ruth (Security/Interdependence)

Key words	General terms	Particular terms	Non-verbal language	Comments
Childhood	Sunday school	Tried to remember verses of the Bible, Awarded first prize, Built a new church, Great fun, excited	Very bright like children, laughter, explained very vividly and expressively	Could imagine her joy because of her rich and detailed descriptions
Early 20's	Life as a Sunday school teacher	Naughty children became better, Impressed by Mee-ae's sincerity	Difficult to recall the memory initially but vivid detailed expression, Passionately	Significance (speaking firmly) Validity (Speaking earnestly)
Middle aged	Raising grandchildren Pastor	Understand God deeply Giving hard work, happy	Being moved to tears, lots of laughter Hesitation first, then fluent again	Didn't go much further compared with other events or relationships Seemed to avoid past negative experience
Present	Death of husband	The year of reviewing, regretting	Very emotional, lots of tears, choked up her voice,	Showed her painful and still vivid memory
Older sister	Personality Relationship	sincerity, sharing life Caring, very close, similar to each other and no conflict		Used very positive terms
Father	Personality Relationship The last moment of life	Honest, handsome and fascinating Very close, easy to get on, most beloved child, comfortable	Tears with quivering voice	Interrupted by her grandson returning home. Very close father-relationship rather than mother

Husband	Personality	Faithful, caring, humorous		Very detailed memory, identified father-relationship and romantic relationship
	Relationship	Very close, supportive, beloved, leaned against him, great comfort	Very emotional, Lots of tears, Wiped tears with tissue continuously, Sometimes hard to continue her narration	
	Died with cancer	Shock, lost memory of him initially then in process of recovering, Felt regret, faith didn't help very much, but didn't complain to God, Obtained new habit like looking up at the sky		Showed fear of new relationship but strong desire to make friends
Acupuncture service	Learning it	Husband's recommendation, hard to learn, positive.		
	Servicing	Opportunity of evangelising, Realized how great creation (human body) is, Stood in awe, An important role in coping with the loss of her husband		Really appreciate doing this, with hope and passion

Appendix 3: Sample Transcript (Extract)

Pseudonym: Cynthia (Anxiety/Ambivalence)   Code no.: 101-ISR   Hours: 1.30hrs

Line No.	Notes	Transcript	Other notes
1		*Interviewer: Please tell me about your present understanding of faith and its purpose and meaning, and tell me about people who influenced your faith from childhood onwards, and then about particular situations or events which had a deep influence your faith.*	
2		C: Um um until now I can tell you two people who influenced my faith. From before marriage to the present, it was my mother, and from marriage up to now, my husband who has influenced and changed my faith, and sometimes given me courage.	N
3	stressed	In changing my faith it was my husband but the root of my faith comes from my mother.	E
4		Until now, when I make a QT (quiet time) and apply what I have read to my life, I realize *how much* influence on my life she has had.	N
5	body language 'no'	In my husband's case, he has given me a sense of theological direction, is it too fast?	N
6		The influence on my life particularly seems to come from my mother, she had influenced my life every moment directly and peremptorily but my husband had just an academic influence, in detail, the one who has given wisdom and knowledge not to mention financial help seems to be my mother.	N
7		This is because, my mother has a very strong belief, and from childhood I have grown up with it all the time, sleeping and waking, seeing, hearing and learning it,	E
8		not only me but also my brother and sister as well.	N
9		So this felt very difficult, but [her] belief is strong as well as her will, so although it was hard for me -	E
10		- my husband also calls me 'mama's girl' - I have been influenced.	N
11		In fact, I tried to reject it, and because I left my parents to get married, my husband insisted very strongly that I should do it [stand on my own feet].	N
~			
31		Does this answer your question?	
32		*I: Yeh, yeh.*	
33	hesitate	C: And uha… if my perspective on the gospel is changed, from listening to sermons or tapes, blessings, especially, the Full Gospels are like, in fact, - well, something like a vision.	N
34	quite fluent

yield | For example, pastors encourage us by saying if our belief is right, if we pray a lot, then we'll do very well, for example, have a good job, going to a good university, meeting a good husband, living well, and being generous with our offering, ah and doing it all to the glory of God, well, at least Miss Korea also says "glory to God". It depends how you define 'glory'. | D/E |
35		As I grew up with that kind of preaching, I thought it could keep its promises, so I had wild dreams in my youth.	N
36		But it cuts no ice in the end. The thing is that it is not a proper understanding of the gospel.	A
37		My thinking and my belief are not like this, getting prosperous through exploiting my religion.	A
38		Sometimes, I think something like this, 'if I pray more I could be better, but I do not….,'but I suppress it and stifle the thought.	N
38		This is not essential and I have been wrong in understanding this until	E

		now.	
40	her own words	So my understanding of the gospel and belief is that life is not to make us prosperous or to do well by believing in Jesus. If I were rich, I should make myself poor and I should share what I have. And Jesus' teaching seems different from what Christians wealthy or healthy, if we look at what [Jesus] always says.	E
~			
47	getting smaller voice	… as I got married. Before I got married I was influenced to believe this sort of thing by a pastor, but after I got married I realised that it wasn't true.	N/E
48	suddenly the voice changed and became louder, brighter	Auh.. then, if mum's influence on my faith got greater and if I have met with God individually, it was to do with the question of marriage.	N
~			
62		In spite of doing this, still nothing had happened, and then she made me leave my job and worship individually three times a day.	N
63		So I started to worship three times a day.	N
64	hesitated	And another reason for doing this was if a meeting with a person who I preferred had gone unsuccessfully and I had been upset, ah…	N
65		*I: In case like that …*	
66	didn't go further	C: then, in case like that ah… I went through such a lot of cases.	N
67	started again	As the purpose was only a marriage, my mother and I, too, had felt a sense that it was to be solved only by praying rather than by any other ways, I wholly started to concentrate on clinging to God.	N
~			
81		In my mum's case, when she goes to the church she prays one hour or several hours even overnight.	E
82		In my case, though I had done this, I also got through a hard time because of my father, what I experienced was that prayer was rather only a path way to a dialogue with a deep hearted mind.	N
83		And I found that prayer was not something God answered when we prayed for a long hours, but prayer was a dialogue with God.	N/A
84		When we want to grumble or mutter I feel that God listens to even a few words and a breath.	E
85		I just feel very close to God, and I understand that God is a being who surrounds me and my whole life like air, but not a being who is in the distance far away in heaven like a great thing, rather I feel great intimacy as I feel emotion from physical parents.	A
86		I changed as through this kind of great experiences...	N
87		*I: Do you want finish?*	
88		R: Yes.	
89		10 minutes break	

Appendix 4: Sample Told Story (Text Sort) Sequentialisation

Pseudonym: Libby (Anxiety/Ambivalence)

1-4   Interviewer's introductory and interview questions

5-15   Report/ Argument: Understanding of faith
Faith - a process of knowing God and continuous changes. She indicated her hope to change – from scolding God and giving God to intimate God (a true faith) – 'but it seems to be difficult for me.' For an example of a feature of a true faith – Job and David – ideal.

16-89   Report/ Evaluation/ Description/ narrative: Building her faith
She missed out many things and jumped to her university days. She mentioned some people who were well-known and leading pastors and professors, who influenced her faith fundamentally. With a very detailed and long description, she evaluated that their teachings or preaching about faith, and their life go together, 'his life was an example' (79), so 'I did not feel any estrangement between the essence of faith and person who transmits it' (86).

90-145 Narrative/ evaluation/ argument: A period of stagnation
After marriage and many years of deep involvement in the church, she was too tired and she moved to another church looking for a critical preaching, she became a 'Sunday churchgoer.' She told just briefly about how she accepted Jesus when she was in the second year at the university. She turned back to the place where she was talking about the stagnant period, said she faced inner difficulty – in fact, she seemed to avoid telling the fact and wandered around with related other general arguments or evaluations, hardly using description. 'I satisfied myself doing my work …but for lack of supporting resources I have compromised by doing it roughly' (118), 'Faith too.. I regarded roughly.. being lazy and compromise …,'(119) '…though the Bible says God gives suffering to loved one… there was any hardship.. in a way I felt unrest but in the other way I lived an easy life' (120). '… an inner difficulty, rather than an outer one, a terrible difficulty' (122). Using a metaphor from the Bible – David being betrayed by a loved son, she admitted that God might want her to reflect on herself through this hardship and criticized the typical Korean faith life with appearance of fast growth but lacks inner growth.   She even compared the differences of life styles in between Korean and English, and Protestants and Catholics. Finishing her narrative of faith journey, said a true faith should come with personality change.

146   10 minutes break

147-149 Asking more detailed story about her knowing God

150-181 Argument/ Description: Knowing God and image of God
She has quite a firm opinion that there are different ways of knowing God between a well-educated person and an illiterate person, so in her case 'when I look into the Bible with different angles or when I experienced an event, ..I ah I can judge in my head. So the process of knowing God is the process of accumulating an image of God in my head through experiences.. …' (157-158).
She was asked about her God-image and she answered with mostly conceptual images like 'eternity, everlasting, …em.. the sovereign……transcends time… knows …my guardian .. and .. uh ……' (162). Then she was asked some more description from her experience and she hesitated for a very long time and struggled to find right words for her, '.. em …always.. follows me.. me.. so.. one who can accept my.. my cry, one who can accept my cry and one who can accept my sigh ……em …' (177), 'yhe, only one whom I can lean on, only one whom I can lean upon and I can rest on, such a .. ' (179), she added, 'God is the first and the last reason for my existence …' (181).

182-247 Report/ Narrative/ Argument/Evaluation: Inner difficulty and relationship with her husband
She was asked for more detail about what she mentioned of inner difficulty, and she still avoided telling the facts – 'I depended on him emotionally in such a way more than God, but when I found that he was not the one I can depend on …' (186), 'it was that I realized I misunderstood..' (187), 'He was such a person but I have not known' (188). She said it was an awful event that gave her a shock, and

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she argued about the marriage system and conflicts. Through the event she said she experienced God giving you a space to rest, 'sometimes dramatically.. just like a miracle.. and the other times very.. tenderly..' (203), and 'reconfirmed that God is alive' (204).

She said that it was about conflicts between her and her husband, 'our characters really did not suit' (208). Her husband had a humanist view on faith while she had a conservative view. She doubted, 'I still do not know what the meaning of God's existence in his life is' (215). She pointed that he has also a modernist view on family, and later she realized it was because of differences in their backgrounds of growing, - 'it is not hopeful to expect to be completely harmonized and have same family views'(221). She described her husband's character and care, 'he is very intelligent and a good speaker huh huh huh yhe very good, and is very rational' (231), he cannot accept her emotional parts and mistakes, which is a cause for conflict, and he does not accept and cover but rather criticizes.

She finished telling about her husband's little change, still did not tell the fact of change, only changes of circumstances surrounded him like Birmingham community life, seeing other couple's cases and regular faith life.

248-326 report/ evaluation/ Narrative/ description: Relationship with her parents
She indicated that telling about her faith journey her parents story was absent, and she instantly said her parents had no faith (not Christians) and lately just started to go to the church. Her mother is very intelligent and has a financial ability while her father is emotionally dependent on her mother even though he himself has a social ability – 'my mother's power is stronger in my home, my mother's voice' (255). She said her mother's faith, which is prosperous, is different from hers and she has conflicts emotionally and in values, still has no common, 'we just do our duties as parents and as a daughter but are not sharing emotionally.. it is not' (262). Relationship with father – 'just comfortable.. only he can help if I have a problem' (264), 'does not support me for what I wanted emotionally' (266). Saying her parents and her husband both do not give such an emotional support, she told her realization, 'certainly we live alone and we are provided energy only from God.' She told a positive memory of her mother: she stole some money from her mother's business, was worried a lot about being smacked by her mother, but very pleased when her mother just told her off. She had never been happy in her childhood, she never wants go back, 'it is because it was to keep on stress, a continuous oppression, I was oppressed by such a thing..' (299). The sense of oppression has come from her mother, who was too busy with her social life and was absent from home and her life everywhere, she felt lonely and was hurt by differences between her mother who is bold and herself who is cowered and is sensitive. She was very dependent on her mother while her mother oppressed her.

327-361 Narrative/ Description/ argument/ evaluation: Relationship of her parents themselves and her faith
She said that her mother and father have been in a good relationship, her father loves and is proud of his wife, they have been doing everything together like hobbies, and they trust each other, equality in their life. Again she reflected this for differences from her husband's family background.

Her mother's character appeared again in telling her faith influences that her mother's dominant and sociable character, being busy and not being expressed motherly affection made her lonely, 'because of it, the second year of the university she reached extreme loneliness and did not feel any hope for life, it was basically a start in finding a meaning to live in God' (354). She remembered that at the beginning of her faith life, 'it was difficult to forgive my mother.., to accept her, to have to love.. there were many conflicts, how to hope with it..'(355-356). When her mother was immersed in faith, as a minor help her mother supported her with prayer.

Appendix 5: Sample Central Research Analysis

Pseudonym: Laura (Distance/Avoidance)

1 Description/ analysis of faith
1.1 What images/ metaphors/stories are used?

Non-Christian family background - Buddhist mixed with totem, a folk religion, cynical (to Christians) father and religious mother. Wandering around the church and being in agony with existential questions; critical and negative mind to Christianity. Ironically wanted to be a Christian; needed a support to lean against; a family going to the church – very nice to look, 'holy,' 'beautiful,' 'pious.' She had only a desire to have a faith while she tried to understand with her head – expecting peace and support. She found that her existential question was based on faith and wanted to grow. She tried to do creative work because she thought it might give a reason to live but it didn't work; she wanted to do fruitful work, which might give a reason to live – she found that it was a religious base. Faith grows – impressed, touched by people's good deeds, comfort, tears, 'Dried grapes, absorbing water like sponge', still accepting logically in head not emotionally in heart. She thought baptism was a way of having faith but disappointed and struggled with that matter thinking, talking, praying and reading. Now she can tell that she has a weak faith and it is growing.

Laura has a very strong desire to have a faith and to grow in faith. From her narration we can see the changes in use of her language from negative - 'a sense of futility,' 'nihilism,' 'thinking of death,' 'depression,' 'agony,' 'pain,' 'suffering,' 'irony'; to positive – 'impression,' 'touched,' 'comfort,' 'heartfelt,' 'thanking,' 'broadened mind,' 'latitude of mind,' 'God's grace'.

She used quite a few terms related to situation (state) of faith - faithless, religious base, a weak faith, an infantile faith, a true Christian, having a faith; she used some metaphors – dried grapes, spongy absorbing water, crockery and a potter, child and parent.

We can also notice changes in her way of faithing as described as needing a support, wanting to be a true Christian, putting every matter under faith, finding right direction with keeping on talking, arguing, clinging, thinking, and trying to pray and read the Bible, and hoping to change, pleasing God and expecting to feel God.

1.2 Does an ideal of (mature) faith emerge?

She shows a strong desire and a significant change, which is gradual and steady, and potential to go further, but she still needs to grow her faith much firmly as she hoped.

2 Description/ analysis of self
2.2 How is the self represented?

She described herself as a first child and a daughter not very close to her parents; being sensitive by nature, an intellect, elegant and dignified girl; critical; lost self-esteem - not a successful life, single without a certain social position or career, anxious, fear, running away, lazy; easily becoming emotional; difficult to make relationships; irony and unbalanced – critical of Christianity but wanted to be a true Christian, accepted in heart not in head while trying to understand God in head but not in heart; clinging to her boyfriend but tried to be rational.

2.3 What is the relation between the self- and faith-description?

The anxious, unbalanced self is shown in her seeking a faith.

3 Description/ analysis of the dominant relationships
3.2 How is the relationship represented? Metaphors/ images/ stories used?

With parents: not really ideal, negative influence on her, not many memories and descriptions; father - 'plant,' 'ivy'; mother – 'introvert,' 'victim,' 'mosquito's voice,' 'naturally religious'; parents – not social and isolated; 'I was not a good daughter to my mother.'

With a friend: 'a true Christian' and always prayed for Laura, Laura might have good influences from her.

With male friends: kept the relationship, as an equal person to person, didn't develop as a lover.

With an English boyfriend: first boyfriend, felt love but realized it later, breaking up the relationship – very hard time, felt being left.

Pastors: touched by their good deeds.

3.3 What is the relation between the relationship- and faith-description?

She had difficulties in making relationships or she might be afraid of getting involved in deep relationships. In faith description you can hardly find any relational or personal descriptions except being touched by pastors' good deed in Cheltenham.

3.4 Are there any obvious silences/ gaps in relationship?

She mentioned about her father but there is no description of the relationship; mother-relationship also very little mentioned and it is even negative. Especially with male friends, she seemed to be afraid of being involved deeply.

4 Description/ analysis of the dominant events

4.1 How does the events represent? Metaphors/ images/ stories used

Even though she mentioned, 'there were not very many particular events,' she got through very significant moments, which may not find in others' life - coming to England with heavy burden situation; being touched by pastors' good deed; having a romantic relationship with her first ever boyfriend and breaking up; seeing her family changes; being baptized.

4.2 What is the relation between the event- and faith-description?

As the dominant events have mostly happened in recent 2 years and dramatically changed, her description about faith shows significant change from negative, anxious terms to positive, affirmative terms.

5 Attachment nature

5.1 How is the attachment relationship represented?

Parents: there is not very many signs that she had a good relationship with her parents, except 'only one reason not to die was about my parents' and we can hardly see memories and descriptions about attachment relationships with her parents, if there is, it can be said rather avoidant attachment relationship.

Boyfriend: descriptions of the relationship with her boyfriend are full of attachment expressions – 'he was an object itself, an attachment figure for me,' 'I needed a person to love and to depend upon as I was lonely, painful and unreliable,' ' … I was very happy to do washings for him, ha ha … ' 'I was excited even though he was driving exceeding speed of 180'; but her attachment relationship with him was an excessive one (anxious type), 'I gave him everything,' 'I totally depended on him like a puppy wanting only to be loved,' 'I couldn't accept him going a weekend trip without me,' 'I wanted to be involved in every moment of his life'; as much as she expected from him, she was too deeply hurt – she felt 'being left,' 'guilty about,' 'useless'.

God: she was not an atheist at all but like a nihilist and had a materialistic understanding – 'I assumed that there was a something above human being but not a personal one.' But she still cannot grasp how to describe God, how to feel God and her description is still impersonal – 'God is still in heaven to me, … still not my God or truly father God to me, … it still does not touch my skin.' She does not seem to be sure - 'it is very difficult to tell the relationship with God, how to tell, just .. who I call only when I need.'

5.2 What is the relation between the attachment relationship- and God-description

Seeking an attachment figure from her boyfriend is quite identical to seeking a faith and wanting to feel (experience) God. However her impersonal God-description may show that it is related to her parent attachment relationship which can be said to be avoidant type.

6 Developmental patterns

6.1 Are there identifiable points of transition

Running away from uncertain or unsatisfied situation – felt a heavy burden, she might have looked for a change or got away from all her burden.

Being touched by pastors' good deed – realized how faith grows and a significant point to start to change.

Meeting her first ever boyfriend – looking for a support to lean upon and made the first deep relationship.

Being baptized – a great expectation and disappointment, again she put all her hope under it, this time she didn't run away but faced with it to find out.

6.2 Are there identifiable developmental conflicts?

She mentioned a hard time for 3 months after being baptized. During that time she had to suffer from many things together: disappointed from not being changed after being baptized; aftermath of breaking relationship with her boyfriend, which made her burden deeper, once again felt an agony from being left by a loved one; she tried to ask many people how to get a faith but they didn't give an answer.

6.3 Are there evidence of paralysis/ wound/ loss of self?

She suffered with heavy depression for a very long time; it peaked after when she was baptized and caused physical pain as well; as about to become mad; took anti-depressant.

7 Process

7.1 What are the key notable features of the process?

Changes of her descriptions from negative to positive; being moved to tears by saying about the time when she was impressed by pastors' good deed; little hesitation for describing her God-relationship.

7.2 Is there evidence of process mirroring content?

Plenty. Her calm, honest and gradual but serious narration and repeated words mirror how her pain and agony was heavy and how her faith grows.

Appendix 6: Sample Rating Analysis Sheet

Pseudonym: Janet (Anxiety/Ambivalence)

	Mother	Father	Partner	Religious community/ pastor/ people	God
Memories of Attachment-Related Experiences	'disrespectable' 'excessive' being discriminated as a second child, a girl & boy-preference	'disrespectable' 'irresponsible' boy-preference	good personality, 'like a teacher' 'coherent life' 'respectful'	clean, dandy, nice feeling, obey, change, being disappointed	'good', 'perfect', 'love', 'only one', 'fair' dual & split images – God who gives blessing and curse
Attachment-Related Beliefs, Attitudes	sensitive, self-centred, unwelcomed child	did not respect, sensitive, hatred	a little anxious, not satisfied herself as she could not reach his level	changed life, harmonious life, equality, expecting perfection	accepted as we are low self-esteem: self as 'imperfect' & 'limited'
Attachment-Related Goals and Needs	recognition, being understood, equality, fair treatment, forgiving, respect	enough love	finding harmonious life, equality, reaching his level of faith and life	responsible, coherent life,	recognition, being understood, God-centred life, perfect life, extreme desire for intimacy
Plans and Strategies for achieving attachment-related goals	seeking other attachment, attacking, distress, angry forgiving or interrelating with her mother which is still hard		clear, immediate answer	angry, arguing, long & pointless narration repeated words – perfect life, coherent life…	concentration, intensive prayer, reading, living perfect life did not want she was identified in the recoding
Attachment Group	Anxious/ ambivalent	Anxious/ ambivalent	Secure (anxious)	Anxious/ ambivalent	Anxious/ ambivalent

Appendix 7: A Summary of the Three Patterns of God-attachment

	Distance/Avoidance	Anxiety/Ambivalence	Security/ Interdependence
Participants	Rachel and Laura	Cynthia, Janet, Libby, Hannah, Nancy and Joan	Ruth and Jean
Goals for God-attachment	Denial, minimising or hiding desires	Desiring extreme intimacy ; Yearning for a true relationship; Searching for comfort and recognition	Balancing between intimacy and autonomy
Strategies for God-attachment	Difficulties in recalling and verbalisation; Negativity and passivity; Lack of hope	Intensity and regularity; Destructive and submissive; Anxious about not belonging and ineffective	Coherence and ease; Tolerance and integration; Reaching out for others
Representation of self	Unsettled outsider; Victim of a religious family	Lone child; Imperfect and improper; Obedient child	Bold and valiant; Relatively tolerated; Relational and tolerant self
Representation of God	A thing-above-human being – imageless, depersonalised and un-relational; The [abstract connotation] of God – abstract, conventional; Father God – distant, hidden, unavailable, undependable	Dual images of God; The only one; Absolute power and authority	God as loving and caring – I am a child of a loving God; I am a carer like loving God; God as fair – I am one of God's people

NOTES

[1] Korean Gallup carried out a significant survey to analyse the religious characteristics of Koreans, based on a survey designed by Yoon Yi-hum, professor of religious sciences at Seoul National University. The survey was conducted on a sample of four hundred people picked through quota allocations. Along with the conventional self-identification method, it attempted an in-depth investigation through one-on-one interviews. The results are summarized in the following table (see Liu, 1996, pp. 216-217).

Religion	Acknowledged membership	'Confucianized' according to the results of the survey	%
Buddhists	77	77	100
Protestants	106	81	76.4
Catholics	20	18	90
Confucians	2	2	100
Others	6	5	83.3
No religion	189	183	96.8
Total	400	366	91.7

[2] I am aware that the notion of 'women's experience' is a complex one which has been debated extensively in feminist methodology and I will discuss this further in my methodology chapter.

[3] The terms 'mother' and 'caregiver' are interchangeably used in my discussion of attachment theory. I am aware of that there is a tension in using both terms in some context. In fact, 'the mother' happens to be 'the caregiver' in most cultures. However, I prefer to use 'the mother' as a prime caregiver and also as an umbrella meaning of caregiver, except in some contexts where 'the caregiver' is more appropriate than 'the mother'.

[4] The terms 'internal working models' or 'mental models' are used by Craik (1943) on the basis of cognitive psychology, in fact, his definition of internal working models bears a resemblance to Freud's notions about the inner world. For attachment theory, Bowlby uses this idea for affective life. In his theory, human beings have two such models, an 'environmental' model, telling us about the world, and an 'organismal' model, telling us about ourselves in relation to the world. We carry a map of self, others and the relationship between the two. The map is built from experiences and is influenced by the need to defend against painful feelings. The relationship with an attachment figure is generalised in internal working models, which leads to a picture of the world, and stays throughout life unless it revised in the light of later experience (for more detail, see Holmes, 1993; Bretherton and Munholland, 1999).

[5] The words and verses in the Psalms used here are taken from NIV (New International Version) of the Bible (1973) published by International Bible Society.

[6] I am aware that the term 'phenomenological' and 'hermeneutical' used here does not fully refer to Paul Ricoeur's notion of phenomenological hermeneutics and also there is a considerable amount of reference concerning the benefits of phenomenological hermeneutics (For more discussion, see Paul Ricoeur, 1974, 1984, 1985 and 1988).

[7] For assessing attachment normally is taking place in laboratory so called "strange situation", but for adolescents and adults conversation can be useful for it (Kobak and Duemmler, 1994). Grice's criteria for conversational practices are useful, which we have already seen in methodology chapter. Grice (1975) proposed that conversational coherency could be evaluated with four maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner.

[8] It cannot be denied, however, that there is a positive image of attachment in Buddhism. There is a figure, Kwan Yin, bodhisattva, who is venerated as the goddess of compassion and wisdom. Although she can go into nirvana anytime, she refuses to go into nirvana by herself but stay in the world to help all suffering beings to achieve enlightenment (Chung, 1994, p. 394).

[9] In particular, Slee (2004, pp. 173-175) suggests 'creating relational and conversational settings' as one of the educational and pastoral implications of her research.

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