ELSEVIER

Words in motion and the semiotics of the unseen in two Korean churches

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Abstract

I analyze the self-anchoring metasemiotics of two pastors from two Christian churches in Seoul, South Korea. I argue that the conceptualization of 'The Word' as an *inerrable thing-in-motion*, rather than as an *iterable event of semiotic production*, provides the ideological grounds for explaining the sense of a shared experience of entities not available for systematic, public demonstration or manipulation. I show how sermonic directives provide denominationally distinct (Presbyterian and Pentecostal) models for conceptualizing non-linguistic but semiotically rich and religiously powerful experiences by linking the perceived behavior of the agents of such experiences to the perceived behavior of linguistic tokens.
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1. Introduction

Kingdom Awakening Portal, located at OpenHeaven.com, is a 'web based communication network connecting and encouraging the Body in kingdom awakening.' The following quote is an excerpt from a recent posting in one of the portal's forums called 'From Around God's Network,' where users report on Christian evangelism and revival activity outside the United States. In the quote, American revivalist Jan Jansen of Global Fire Ministries describes a 4000-person revival meeting in Seoul, South Korea, led by her husband, Jeff Jansen. During the event, a technological medium of communication designed to facilitate the transmission of voice or data between mobile users in a network—also known as a cell phone—becomes a channel for transferring the Holy Spirit and its charisms between persons.

> **EXCERPT 1:** Jeff released cell phone miracles one night. As he felt the faith of the centurion soldier rise up, he released healing into the atmosphere and released a healing wave that would not be limited by space or distance. Notably, one woman who was not intendance [*sic*], but in her living room at home, had been in a car accident and had a rib grossly out of place and a twisted spine. She was in great pain

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and required surgery. Someone in attendance called her on the cell phone when the healing wave was released, and she testified that she felt the heat and the power of God come upon her and that her rib just popped right back into place right before her eyes. [Jansen, 2008]

Reports of such 'cell phone miracles' and 'cell phone anointments' can be found in the publications of various Christian revivalists organizations (e.g., Morningstar Ministries), but I will have little more to say about them here. Rather, I offer this initial example as a straightforward illustration of the main argument of this paper, namely that *language ideology* (Silverstein, 1979; Jospeh and Taylor, 1990; Woolard and Schieffelin, 1994; Gal and Irvine, 1995; Schieffelin et al., 1998, Kroskrity et al., 2000, Inoue, 2003) provides groups with a model for characterizing and explaining their notion that they share deeply felt experiences of the same unseen things in the world. In the case of the cell phone miracles described above: as words travel, so does the Holy Spirit.

To make this point, I present two ethnographic cases that elucidate the mechanics of this process. I focus on the self-anchoring metasemiotics of two pastors from two denominationally differentiated Christian churches in Seoul, South Korea (hereafter Korea).[1] Reverend Jung-Hyun Oh of the Presbyterian Sarang Community Church and Reverend David Yong-Gi Cho of the Pentecostal Yoido Full Gospel Church both direct their congregants to engage in specific styles of communicative interaction and language-use, not surprisingly organized around 'the word,' i.e., The Word. These directives provide a model for conceptualizing other non-linguistic but semiotically rich and religiously powerful experiences (e.g., the 'fire' of the Holy Spirit, the 'grace' of healing) by linking the perceived behavior of the unseen agents of such experiences to the perceived behavior of linguistic tokens.

Reverend Oh encourages his congregants to circulate and share The Word in order to create a community of shared beliefs based on shared meanings that are immutably given in scripture. Adhering to these words in the company of others, the congregants set the conditions of possibility for the Holy Spirit to inhabit the social body of like-minded/like-worded Christians. On the other hand, Reverend Cho claims that only the sovereign God is able directly to plant The Word in each yielding person. Cho instructs his congregants to try to achieve some measure of spiritual likeness with God by praying and receiving His gifts, thereby becoming a channel for the Holy Spirit to enter their own individual bodies and then move on to others. Starting with Cho, the Spirit moves from person to person as a substantive entity participating in the goings-on of the world (and words) of the congregants. In both cases, I suggest that the conceptualization of The Word as an *inerrable thing-in-motion*, rather than as an *iterable event of semiotic production*, contributes to the communal viability (Munn, 1986, p. 3) of these institutions by providing the ideological grounds for explaining the sense of a shared experience of entities not available for systematic, public demonstration or manipulation.[2] Moving beyond a ritually instantiated iconism between words and material objects (see Keane, 1994), the likeness of conceptualization between The Word and The Spirit confirms for these particular congregants 'the reality of the unseen' (James, 1997[1902], pp. 59–77; see also Keane, 1997).

Below, I provide a very brief overview of Christianity in Korea. Then I outline the four steps each pastor takes to link ideologies of language-use to experiences of non-linguistic spiritual life. These steps outline a framework for socio-institutional behaviors, and confirm the organization of the church by relating the believers both to God and to one another as Christians (albeit in denominationally distinct ways). The greater part of the article is then committed to an analysis of the sermonic canons of Reverend Oh and Reverend Cho to show how their respective language ideologies, biblical hermeneutics, models of non-linguistic spiritual experience, and ecclesiastical structures come into alignment.[3]

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[1] The analysis is based on three months of pilot dissertation research (2005, 2006) and 12 months of dissertation-level fieldwork (2008-9) in Seoul, South Korea. All sermon recordings are available on the churches' websites.

[2] Silverstein (2005, p. 2, 18) reminds us of the analytical danger of using terms like 'circulation' or 'movement' to describe interdiscursive relations between events of semiotic production, and makes clear the distinction between the *text* as 'a completely socio-spatiotemporal entity' and the *text artifact* 'with its "thingy" quality of potential physical movement through time and space in its own regime of circulation, for example, in the commodity form.' The two pastors dealt with in this article display resistance to this distinction.

[3] The translations from Korean into English below are my own, although I did often refer for clarification to the English audio recordings made in real-time by the churches' English interpreters (available on the churches' websites). I follow the McCune-Reischauer system of Korean Romanization. However I did not make changes to the spelling of Korean phrases and names if quoted from a different publication. Within excerpts, when a speaker switches from Korean to English, I enclose the English phrases in single quotes and follow with a note in brackets, i.e. [*Eng.*].

2. Korea receives 'The Word' and catches 'The Fire'

Korean Christians often point out that Korea's first dealings with Christianity were in the form of self-evangelism. In 1784, a Korean Confucian scholar received a Catholic baptism in Beijing and returned to Korea to evangelize (Grayson, 2006), sparking enough Catholic conversions that the Confucian leaders of Korea began to suppress the religion with violence.[4] Protestant Christianity generally is understood to have come to Korea approximately 80 years later, when Robert Thomas, a British missionary to China, was martyred. Below I summarize Thomas's story, which was told to me in slightly different versions by Christians in Seoul.

In 1866, Robert Thomas caught a ride on the General Sherman, an American boat sent from China to Korea to establish trade relations. When the boat ran aground in the Taedong River headed for P'yŏngyang, villagers and soldiers were instructed by the local government to attack the boat. For two weeks, the foreign sailors and the Koreans battled one another. Finally, the Koreans set fire to the Sherman. Thomas leapt from the burning boat and cried out 'Jesus! Jesus!' while offering Bibles to his attackers. By some accounts, Thomas was decapitated. By others, he was beaten to death. However he may have died, one of his killers was supposed to have been so taken by the expression on Thomas's face that he became convinced he had killed a good man and decided to keep one of the Bibles. Making good use of this rare object, he used its pages to insulate his walls. The part of the story that is emphasized by Korean Christians is this: by seeing The Word every day (which at that time would have been in Chinese), the killer of a Christian missionary was himself converted to Christianity. Many people came to the killer's house to read the words on his walls, and they too were converted. His house became the first Protestant Church, and his nephew became a pastor.[5]

By the late 1880s, the Scottish Presbyterian missionary John Ross had finished translating the New Testament into Korean, and other foreign missionaries had established sites that would become some of the most important medical and educational institutions in modern Korea. After Japanese Colonial rule (1910–1945) and the Korean War (1950–1953), congregational growth was led largely by local Korean evangelists. In 1960, Protestant Christians accounted for only 2.5% of South Korea's population, but by 1990 more than a quarter of the population was Protestant.[6] Currently, 10 of the 11 largest Christian congregations in the world are located in Seoul (Lampman, 2007). Furthermore, Korea is outnumbered only by the US in sending missionaries abroad: some estimate that upwards of 17,000 Korean evangelists are working in more than 160 countries (Choe, July 26, 2007). The two churches treated in the analysis that follows—Sarang Community Church and Yoido Full Gospel Church—exemplify what has been called the 'evangelical ethos' of Korean Christianity (Lee, 2006, p. 332). The emphasis on evangelism is so great that, despite continued church growth, the size of congregations cannot match the output of new ministers, often leading them in search of missionary work abroad (Lee, 2006, p. 341). It is against the backdrop of this institutional history that I show how the pastors' directives are aimed at aligning individual belief and social practice with institutional viability and growth.

3. Sermonic strategy

Christian sermons construe the religious experiences of church members—individual experiences to which others in most cases do not have direct phenomenal access—as experiences of the same thing, most often of some manifestation of deity. Pastors Oh and Cho do this by linking the behavior of The Word with the

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[4] Neo-Confucianism was the official belief system of the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392–1910). Buddhism and Shamanism were widely practiced but suppressed by the government. In 1984, Pope John Paul II canonized 103 of the estimated 10,000 who died during the Catholic executions of the 19th Century (Kamm, 1984), raising Korea's rank to fourth in the world in number of Roman Catholic saints. In 1882, Korea and the United States signed a Treaty of Amity and Trade, which protected Christian missionaries from government interference.

[5] This story is so famous among Korean Christians that wallpapering rooms with Bible verses is often replicated. In March of 2007, I ate at a Korean restaurant called 'Ixthys' near Winterfeldtplatz in the Schöneberg neighborhood of Berlin. The owners had wallpapered the entire restaurant with Bible verses handwritten in German.

[6] These estimates are based on the numbers of Protestant Christians reported in Park (2003, p. 40, 45) and the historical populations for South Korea reported in Lahmeyer (2006). 1960: 623,072 Protestants in a population of approximately 24,989,000. 1990: 11,888,374 Protestants in a population of 43,520,199.

behavior of the Holy Spirit through a series of conceptual moves that connect a linguistic and broader semiotic ideology at one end, to the logic of the church institution at the other. They attempt to align institutional biblical hermeneutics, congregants' behaviors, and their individual and collective religious experiences of deity. I see this taking place through four (coincidentally alliterative) steps: semiotic and linguistic *ideology*, *interdiscursivity*, *intertextuality*, and *institutionality*. The steps are not so much discrete modes as they are conceptual nodes to which the pastors orient when making the case for the role of The Word in the lives of their congregants. I discuss each one in turn.

Webb Keane has explored the role of *semiotic ideology* (2003, 2007, pp. 16–17 and passim) in Calvinist missionaries' attempts to make the gospel 'efficacious' in Indonesia. Keane reminds us that the efficaciousness of semiotic forms is always being negotiated, and that participants in the negotiation must collaborate to achieve coordinated alignment within a religious frame. Such collaborations are based to a great extent on the 'ordinary domain of semiotic practices and the semiotic ideologies of everyday life' (p. 70). In a similar manner, the sermons I discuss below establish broad semiotic ideologies into which particular discursive practices are supposed to fit. Each pastor makes theological claims to 'truth' and 'reality' that provide the basis of a semiotic ideology, which characterizes the experienceable form of a spiritual entity or event as a certain type of readable sign or multimodal ensemble of signs. How should a congregant know the Holy Spirit? A pastor might answer with a statement of general truth, saying 'The Holy Spirit appears by fire.' This statement, delivered as what Whorf called a *nomic* assertion (1964, p. 113), would explain to the congregation the semiotic properties by which persons come to awareness of the Holy Spirit's presence.

Pastors Oh and Cho both attempt to recast the semiotic ideology of everyday life for their congregants, thereby laying a foundation to support the efficacy of significant religious semiotic forms and genres. The pastors focus to a great extent on The Word of God (*hananimŭi malssŭm*) and the act of speaking (*malhada*).[7] The pastors use the sermons to put forth a language ideology that characterizes The Word according to their respective theological positions. Their descriptions of The Word, and of the behavior of the Holy Spirit, oscillate between accounts of *interdiscursivity* and of *intertextuality* (Silverstein, 2005).

Interdiscursivity describes a relationship between events of semiotic production that seem to exhibit a kind of directionality between a source and a target. I use the term in my analysis to account for descriptions of semiotic tokens that appear to 'move' from point A to point B in some culturally conceptualized deictic plane (in time, through space, between minds, etc.). Pastors Oh and Cho mobilize local Christian theories of interdiscursivity by focusing on the means, mediums, and pathways by which The Word is understood to move. Within an Evangelical Christian framework, it is incumbent upon the recipient of The-Word-in-motion to support its holy trajectory through the world via further evangelism—to make one's own event of semiotic production a 'past' event from the point of view of some other 'future' event of utterance to which it bears an interdiscursive relation. I show how Pastors Oh and Cho connect their own particular theories of the related iterations of The Word (i.e., their personal theories of interdiscursivity) to reported experiences of the Holy Spirit by linking the two within a trope of movement among persons, through time and space. This conceptual linkage is present in statements such as 'As The Word spread so did The Fire.'

When the pastors characterize the parallel movement and ritual intersection of The Word and the Holy Spirit (which 'appears by fire') as capable of reproducing whole types of events that align denotational texts, participant roles, event structures, and even dramatic social transformations, they articulate a local theory of *intertextuality*. Logically achronic and directionally neutral, intertextuality describes a relationship in which 'two or more texts-in-context (individuable objects) become tokens of a type, thus ''the same'' in some respect

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[7] Like Japanese and Javanese, Korean has a rich system of speech levels that mark honorification and hierarchy in both the speaker-addressee relationship, and the speaker-referent relationship. '*Malssŭm*' is the honorific form meaning 'speech' or 'words.' '*Mal*' is the neutral form, and is used as the basis for the verb '*malhada*,' 'to speak.' The honorific form of 'to speak' is '*malssŭmhada*.' In the context of the sermon, '*malssŭm*' generally refers to the words of God or the Bible, hence 'The Word.' The plural marker is not obligatory and is generally used only when the plurality of a noun is emphasized or grammatically ambiguous. See Martin (1964) for a comparison of speech levels between Korean and Japanese, Errington (1985) for a study of the use of Javanese speech levels for strategic manipulation in interaction, and Choo (2006), Koh (2006), Park (2006), Sohn (1999, pp. 407–418) for overviews of the different aspects of honorification, etiquette, and politeness strategies in Korean. See also Agha (1993) for more on honorification.

or respects' (Silverstein, 2005, p. 9). The pastors in my analysis attempt to produce specifically Christian inter-textualities by directing their congregants to engage in denominationally sanctioned types of *entextualization*. Bauman and Briggs (1990, p. 73) defined entextualization as the process of 'rendering discourse extractable, of making a stretch of linguistic production into a unit—a *text*—that can be lifted out of its interactional setting.' Silverstein and Urban (1996, p. 1) elaborated this definition, stating, 'to turn something into a text is to seem to give it a decontextualized structure and meaning, that is, a form and meaning that are imaginable apart from the spatiotemporal and other frames in which they can be said to occur.'[8] Rather than focusing on the 'movement' or directionality of a text from a source to a target, potentially emphasizing the differences between originary and subsequent entextualizations, intertextual relations focus our attention on the elements of textual sameness (iconicity) across events. For example, a common experience of intertextuality might be the comfortable sense of reliable presupposition one has when entextualizing a familiar semiotic type in a familiar context of a familiar type of institution, such as daily greetings in an office setting. Imagine how a participant in such an event is unlikely to describe the iterated greetings in terms of a *chronotope* (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 84). Although the analyst might marvel at the consistency of semiotic form over time (different days) and space (different offices), the participant probably would not report that a greeting 'endured' or 'moved' from one day to the next—even if just such a chronotopic description were embedded within a particular exchange, e.g., Frank: 'What's new, Sally?' Sally: 'Same stuff, different day, Frank.'

Insofar as intertextuality concerns two or more tokens of a type, it also focuses our attention on the *con-textual* sameness across events—in a sense, 'outward' into the social rather than 'forward' or 'backward' between events. I use the term 'intertextuality' to explain the pastors' implicit recognition that iconically related texts themselves can link and structure events of semiotic production by 'incorporat[ing] aspects of context, such that the resultant text carries elements of its history of use within it' (Bauman and Briggs, 1990, p. 73; see esp. Silverstein, 1996, pp. 81–105 for an analysis of 'interactional residue' alongside repeated entextualizations). Pastors Oh and Cho move from a perspective of interdiscursivity to one of intertextuality when they claim that individual Christians can use The Word to join with one another and with God. The pastors' respective theories of intertextuality characterize the experience of fire that can accompany the reception and recitation of The Word as direct contact with the same Holy Spirit for everyone, regardless of time or space. This characterization is invoked by statements such as 'We receive baptism by fire.'

If techniques of interdiscursivity rest upon a semiotic ideology (which determines what counts as a semiotic token in the first place), and if intertextuality emerges through, and validates, interdiscursivity (by viewing the recursion of particular tokens as instances or members of a specific type), then the pastors treat each intertextual event as an indexical-iconic (Tambiah, 1985, p. 156; Silverstein, 2000, p. 117, 133n.22) building block that both signals the spiritual 'health' of the church and contributes to its particular institutional entailment. When a pastor calls out before a congregation, 'Throw the fire on our church!,' the pastor addresses the Holy Spirit and requests its help to confirm the church as a 'living' institution by bringing The Word to the entire congregation and baptizing all members as Christians in a unified church. The institution thereby becomes a compilation and concentration of presupposable intertextualities organized along genred communicative-interactional lines. By establishing normativities of communicative interaction, the church becomes the autho-rizing site to which various types of social relationships are oriented (e.g., relationships with the Holy Spirit, with fellow Christians, and with unbelievers). These four steps in the evaluation and manipulation of semiotic form—analytic categories that I myself have used to study the sermons, as they are not articulated as such by the pastors—ultimately align individual behaviors with the specific institutional structures and goals of each church. I now turn to the two cases in which this ritual linking and alignment takes place.

4. The Presbyterian model: Sarang Community Church

Sarang Community Church (*sarangŭi kyohoe*), or the 'Church of Love,' is a Presbyterian megachurch located in a wealthy area of Seoul, south of the Han River near the Kangnam subway station. It was estab-lished in 1978 by Reverend Han-Heum Oak, and with a self-reported 70,000 members (UCAN News, 2008) is

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[8] The textual, then, is not limited to the linguistic realm. It can refer to any semiotic assemblage matching the description above.

one of the largest Presbyterian churches in the world.[9] Recently, leadership of the church was transferred to Pastor Jung-Hyun Oh, who had been head pastor at the Sarang Church satellite branch in Los Angeles.

Sarang Church is known in Korea for its 'discipleship training' [*cheja hullyŏn*] program, a seminar designed to develop leadership among the laity. The program has been used to train hundreds of pastors and has been replicated in numerous churches throughout Korea, as well as in ethnic-Korean churches throughout the world. Pastor Oak's book on the subject, "Healthy Christians Make a Healthy Church" (2004), later titled "Called to Awaken the Laity" (2006), has been translated into English and has received endorsements from major figures in worldwide Evangelism, such as Rick Warren, Samuel Logan, an R. Paul Stevens. Discipleship Training at Sarang is based on the Nevius Method, named for the 19th-Century Christian missionary John Nevius, who emphasized 'the bible as the basis of all Christian work and [an] elaborate system of Bible classes by which that book could be studied and applied to the believer's heart' (Conn, 1966, p. 29). This missiological method is often characterized as stressing self-propagandizing, self-governing, and self-supporting missions, rather than straightforward evangelizing by foreign missionaries (Baker, 2006, p 290, Kim, 2006, p. 325). A version of the program is still carried out in the church's current operations, with a commitment to self-study and a belief in biblical inerrancy guiding the church's evangelical and exegetical style.

Along these lines, in 2006 Pastor Oh gave a sermon about the importance of 'words' in speech and Bible study, titled "How Do We Tame the Tongue?" (Oh, 2006). The stated aim of the sermon, based on James 3:1–4, was to convince the congregation that 'our small tongue controls all our body...Our words rule all our actions.' The reason: members of the congregation had been spreading rumors, threatening the potential 'discipleship' of other members. In this sermon, Pastor Oh claimed that the health of the church as a whole was threatened by the misuse of words among individuals who spread rumors. Congregants were instructed to open their mouths and display the health of their words before God:

> **EXCERPT 2:** When [children] say 'Ah' and stick out their tongues, they are ready to be examined for their health. Today, at this time, as you listen to this worship, as you listen to The Word, I hope that we all say 'Ah' before God. As you all stick out your tongues, I hope that we are given the grace to have our spiritual health examined, our spiritual temperature taken, our spiritual level measured (Oh, 2006).

The sermon culminated in Oh's instruction to church members to replace their un-Christian words with The Word in order to 'heal' the church. The directive was based on a language ideology that treats a particular unit of language as spiritually pregnant and socially efficacious. Oh's sermon implicitly made use of a central theory of linguistic anthropology: that presuppositions about the rules of *speech genres* (Bakhtin, 1986) and *potential footings* (Goffman, 1981) within them structure social events by invoking assumptions about shared norms of speech and behavior (Silverstein, 1997, 2004; Agha, 2005). The pastor instructed the congregants to *voice* (Bakhtin, 1981) themselves as Christians by asking them to assume a particular discursive stance in relation to The Word.

Similarly, in a sermon titled "Longing for a Revival of The Word" (Oh, 2005), Pastor Oh offered an example of how the 'good' words of the Bible stand in contrast to the 'bad' words of rumor. He also suggested that words more generally move like material objects in the world, and connected the spreading of the fire of the Holy Spirit with the spreading of the right kinds of words at the Pyŏngyang Great Revival (*p'yŏngyang dae-buhŭng*) of 1907.[10] Then to make the point that the fire of the Holy Spirit follows the pathway of The Word, Pastor Oh explained how the fire passed through time and space from person to person: from Martin Luther, to John Knox, to John Wesley, and finally to the Christians of Pyŏngyang.[11] This established a *chronotope* for the historical 'movement' of The Word among Christians:

> **EXCERPT 3:** Wherever The Word of God reached, the fire was set ablaze in people's hearts [*maŭm*]. They faced the flame. While we sang hymns and prayed, O God you sighed and wanted the fire to catch

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[9] Presbyterian churches have outnumbered all other major dominations in Korea by two to one, and the Presbyterian Church of Korea has the largest membership of any Presbyterian denomination in the world (Park, 2003).

[10] During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there were so many Christian conversions in Pyŏngyang that American and Canadian missionaries began to refer to the city as the 'Jerusalem of the East.' In 1907, Korea witnessed the 'Pyŏngyang Great Revival,' when Christians confessed and repented for their 'dirty' sins together, some writhing on the floor and crying out loud (Lee, 2007).

[11] Oh also provides an account of Robert Thomas's misfortunes on the General Sherman in this sermon as well.

at that moment. Throw fire on this church so that the glory of God will be revealed. Not only for our church, but use The Word to throw fire on everyone in Korean society today, so that once again the glory of God will be revealed. [Oh, 2005[12]]

Later in the Sermon, Oh reinforced this ethnotheory of language—that words travel among the people who speak them—by instructing the congregants to speak good words to one another, and thereby allow the The Word of God to enter their hearts.

When Oh directed the congregants to spread particular words throughout the world, he downplayed the possibility that these words might be recontextualized (Bauman and Briggs, 1990, pp. 74–75) differently in different situations. That is, he committed to an absolute, inerrable semiotic form, which he believes will not undergo transformation in its 'movement' from one context to another. This position is a departure from the standard linguistic-anthropological view of the situation, which sees speakers in simultaneous modes of entextualization and contextualization of semiotic forms. Oh appreciates this distinction, and even made a point of distinguishing 'words' from 'text' in his sermon (which we might gloss as situating *entextualization* and *contextualization* within an *agent-patient* relationship (Peirce, 1998[1903], pp.150-1), in which the former affects the latter, but not vice-versa, i.e., non-dialectically):

> **EXCERPT 4:** What is our nation's problem today? The problem is we cannot judge the truth according to The Word of God. These days our Korean churches have some inner problems. What is it? So-called biblical criticism, also called 'textual criticism' [*Eng.*], is having a lot of influence. What is the distinguishing feature of biblical criticism? One 'pick[s] up' [*Eng.*] only the things one oneself desires. I 'pick up' [*Eng.*] only the things that are good for me. I throw away the things I don't like. [Oh, 2005]

According to Oh's theory, which depends on a belief in biblical literalness (Crapanzano, 2000), The Word is made up of decontextualizable denotational nuggets that can be exchanged and circulated among individuals, creating Christian behaviors and institutions wherever they are 'received' (*patta*). For Oh, 'text' is a secular theoretical concept that ignores the eternal truth of The Word by treating words as situational, conditional, and open to interpretation.[13] Embedded in this ideology of linguistic form is an ethnotheory of the nature of signs more generally and a set of rules for taking certain signs as evidence for a greater reality.

This more general theory of signs becomes explicit in Pastor Oh's sermon titled ''The Reality of Wealth'' (Oh, 2007b). In this sermon, Oh argued against a belief in the reality of material accumulation. He did not go so far as to say that material wealth itself is sin or error, but rather that the belief in the reality of material wealth is a false belief because it takes as its object a false idol. The point is that through such false belief, individuals lead themselves to ruin. Oh used Howard Hughes as an example:

> **EXCERPT 5:** There was a very rich man abroad named Howard Hughes. He was very very rich. I used to live right in front of one of his factories. He owned several companies, including 'Rocket Boom' [*Eng.*]. One of his companies used to be in front of the apartment where I lived. Every morning I had the same thought: 'It's really huge. I would like it to be a church. How great it would be if the spacious parking lot were a church parking lot.' But although Howard Hughes was so rich, he finally got mysophobia [*kyŏlbyŏkjŭng*], and became nihilistic [*hŏmuhada*]. Because of mysophobia he couldn't believe [*mitta*] anyone. And because of his fear of germs, he couldn't believe, he couldn't believe in any food. And because of germs, he lined his whole room with aluminum and lived inside like a prison. And finally, because he couldn't believe in food either, he ate only canned food and became malnourished and ended up dying. Very, very nihilistic. [Oh, 2007b]

The argument was not that God inflicted direct material punishment on Howard Hughes for material-focused behavior, or that wealth has no materiality in the world. Rather, Oh argued that because of Hughes's un-Christian emphasis on the value of materiality, a kind of obsession with the material world, Hughes led

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[12] The word '*maŭm*' can be glossed as 'heart' or 'mind' and even, occasionally, 'spirit.'

[13] Note how Oh's use of the English loan phrases 'textual criticism' and '[to] pick up' marked the concepts as foreign. The foreign phrases are in competition with 'The Word' of the Bible, which, although still in a sense foreign, is nonetheless considered inerrable and true. Oh performed in his sermon the very selective advancement of particular words that he himself prescribed.

himself to ruin. The delusional self-destruction that results from an un-Christian semiotic ideology is the punishment. Oh also offered a similar depiction of a friendless, end-of-life Elvis Presley as an example.

According to Oh, those who have the right words available to them have the potential to experience material change, but they must first put the words to use in their social interactions. Many sermons dealing with this kind of change were dedicated to the concept of 'healing' (*ch'iyuhada*). However, in line with Calvinist theology (and in contrast to Pentecostal theology, one strand of which I will discuss below), Oh continually reinforced the claim that individuals themselves cannot call on God to make material changes on earth. He explained that miracles [*kijŏk*] cannot be commanded by humans, and especially not by those for whom the 'complete' [*wanjŏnhan*] Christian gospel is available. This explanation is meant to account for the presence of miracles in the Bible (the New Testament being the ur-account of the Christian mission encounter), and the relative absence of them in the present day. In fact, Oh's Sermon titled "God Who Heals" (Oh, 2007c) argued that the availability of the gospel in society—that is, the presence of The Word— is inversely related to God's direct involvement in individuals' material lives:

> EXCERPT 6: I did a little research on Augustine. I found that up until the fourth century, the fifth century, for just 300 years after the first church, there are many records of acts of healing and miracles. In fact, many very miraculous physical healings occurred. But after the fourth century, miraculous healings just ceased to be common. What is the reason? The reason is that around the fourth century the Word of God was complete with the Old Testament and New Testament, complete with the 66 books of the Bible. And from this time The Word of God became necessary and sufficient for our lives. Because of biblical thinking, there were not as many miraculous physical healings as in the former times. However, in places where the Bible has not yet been completely translated, where the Bible is not complete, for example in places like Papua New Guinea, the jungle of the Amazon, or churches in China in the past, miraculous physical healings have taken place. [Oh, 2007c]

The semiotic ideology that construes words as efficacious in the world depends on a shared social sense of the efficacy and consequentiality of discursive practice. Words command social action as they 'move' from places like Europe to places like Papua New Guinea, altering people's relationships with the material world and with one another.

Along these same lines, 'healing,' as a religious concept in this model, is treated not as a physical transformation, but as a socio-psychological one led by words (see Csordas, 1994 for a discussion of different genres of ritual healing among Charismatics). This is apparent when Oh declares, 'We cannot be limited to physical healing only. The healing spoken of by God is healing of a person's character' (Oh, 2007c). Oh argued this by setting his own theory apart from what he treats as three extreme perspectives:

> EXCERPT 7: Does God still heal these days? What do you think? There are three attitudes here. The first attitude, like that of Sigmund Freud, says 'No' [*Eng.*], these days there is no such healing. [. . .] Second, there are people who have a very extreme dispensationalist [*sedaejuŭi*] perspective and say that when Jesus lived it was possible, but now it is impossible. [. . .] And then there are people who are convinced that God is still healing today. Their view is that God is clearly healing. [. . .] But I am careful of this. [. . .] Extreme mysticism [*kŭktanhan sinbijuŭi*] is growing, and people carelessly issue many false promises. The healings people receive are too good to be true. Nowadays many spiritual quacks [*yŏng-jŏgin dolp'ali*] have even entered the Korean church. They lure in naïve Christians and use them to make a profit. [Oh, 2007c[14]]

One of Oh's points here is that God's command over materiality is not available for manipulation by humans, despite the claims of 'spiritual quacks.' Oh offered an example from his days as a theological student in the U.S., where a professor would anoint his ill students' foreheads with olive oil and pray for them. The professor cited James 5:14 as his authority: 'Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over

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[14] According to the Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms (McKim, 1996, p. 79), *Dispensationalism* refers to 'A view of God's activities in history expounded in "The Scofield Reference Bible" and traced to John Nelson Darby (1800-1882). Each dispensation is a different time period in which humans are tested in responding to God's will. Seven dispensations cover creation to judgment.'

him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord' (International Bible Society, 1973).[15] Oh admitted to his congregation that he didn't know how many of the students had actually been healed by the professor, and advised them to be 'careful' (*chosimhada*) of such things.

As we saw from the earlier passages, Oh wishes to make the point that Christians should focus on healing themselves socially and psychologically by controlling their tongues. That is to say, they should heal the 'whole person' (*onsaram*) by establishing social relations through discursive practice according to God's will as revealed by The Word of the Bible. This way, according to Oh, contemporary Christians presume neither to command nor to rule out the participation of God in their material lives. According to Oh, the speech that organizes the social world either paves or blocks the way for God's works. In the same sermon on healing mentioned above, Oh described the way in which the 'faith of friends' was necessary, even in the Bible, for a miracle to take place:

> **EXCERPT 8:** As you all know well, there is an amazing story of a healing by Jesus if you look in the Gospel of Mark chapter two verse five. What does it say the Lord did? There was a paralytic, and people accompanied that paralytic. Friends removed part of the roof and brought the paralytic to Jesus. Jesus healed him. Mark chapter two verse five is one of my favorite passages from the Bible. [...] Let's look at it and read it together. 'When Jesus saw their faith [*midŭm*], he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."' Hallelujah. Look closely. If you look here, when Jesus 'saw their faith,' the 'their' means the friends. The paralytic recovered from his illness, but Jesus saw the friends' faith, not the paralytic's faith, and he said 'Son, your sins are forgiven and you are healed of your illness.' Hallelujah. [...] Don't bear your pain and go forth alone. Share it in communion with others [*kongdongŭro daech'ehasipsio*]. [Oh, 2007c]

The interdiscursivity of words, put into circulation, spread through social interaction, and evaluated through a semiotic ideology privileging the social efficacy of speech, establishes the grounds for healing to take place. In this system, the physical miracle is the work of God, but this work will only be done if God recognizes the social work achieved through shared discourse among individuals. Social healing is treated as a precondition for a healing visit by the Holy Spirit, not a cause.

In the sermon "Overcoming the Limits of the Flesh" (Oh, 2007a), Oh argued that one is eligible for material benefits from God only if the person has done the requisite socio-linguistic work. By accepting the social efficacy of The Word, one can overcome physical limitations. This involves shifting one's attention from selfish 'worldly pleasures' [*hyŏnseŭi chŭlgŏum*] to a communal 'holy concern' [*sinsŏnghan kŭnsim*], which paves the way for the will of God to be manifested materially:

> **EXCERPT 9:** Those who change pleasure into concern, who grieve and mourn, who truly cry, can become truly humble in the end. And then through this humbleness we overcome the limits of the flesh, as in [James chapter four] verse ten, 'Lower yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.' [Oh, 2007a]

In this ethnotheory, the interdiscursivity of appropriate words between events—good words, kind words, holy words, The Word—becomes the basis for intertextuality in the form of healing. Healing is necessarily a social act, and therefore is construed as a social event in which individuals are aligned to one another before God. Oh closed this sermon with a request that the wives in the audience trust their husbands enough to fall backwards into their husbands' arms, just as everyone should trust God enough to fall backwards into His arms with their 'whole bodies perfectly stiff' [*onmomi wanjŏnhi ttakttakhada*]. They were told to experience this alignment as socio-psychological healing and to link it to the evaluation of signs and discursive practices described by the pastor. One can achieve physical healing, Oh argues, only if one thinks beyond the flesh and views healing as applying to the 'whole person' and not merely the physical body.

Believers' relationships with one another, with God, and with their 'whole selves' depend on the words they use. The experience of fire as evidence of healing comes in the form of Christ-like relations among Christians, and is secured by spoken evidence of the movement and circulation of The Word among members of the

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[15] Presbyterian Evangelicals in Korea normally use the New International Version (1973) when referring to an English-language Bible.

group. This healing becomes the building block, the intertextual unit, upon which the institutionality of the church and Korean society more generally can be built. As the title of Senior Pastor Oak's book states, ''Healthy Christians make a Healthy Church.''

Presbyterianism, from the Greek word *presbuteros*, usually glossed as 'elder,' stems from Calvinism. Its theology emphasizes an ordered relationship to the absolute power of God and a commitment to spiritual understanding through study. Generally, Presbyterian churches are governed by elected 'elders,' who have responsibility for the institution, leadership of the congregation, and the selection of pastors. Doctrines taught in Presbyterian churches are normally compared to the standard Westminster Confession of Faith, and the institution itself is led by the discussion and deliberation of the Presbytery. The institutionality of the Presbyterian Church is based on a model of social alignment to public, shared denotational texts via communal decision-making.

In his sermon, ''Longing for a Revival of The Word'' (Oh, 2005), Oh told his congregants that all institutions—families, churches, nations—depend on receiving good words for their functioning: 'The Word of God helps us realize the main cause of destruction and disaster around us. The Word of God helps us realize the main source of conflict in Korean society' (ibid.). For Oh, this realization, this understanding, is the prerequisite for a healthy institution. Noting that the 'complete' Word had already arrived in Korea, hence accomplishing the necessary movement via discursive interaction of holy *tokens* from one place to another, Oh used the word 'revival' (*puhŭng*) to call for an a reinstantiation of a holy *type* of discursive interaction vital to the life of the church, which is experienced by Christians as the fire of the Holy Spirit. This type, according to Oh, had manifested during critical events in Christian history, starting with 'In the beginning was The Word' (John 1:1), and moving on to Jesus's teachings and the events of the New Testament, then to the birth of Protestantism when Luther translated The Word into German, and finally to the introduction of The Word into the Korean language—which, he added, was 'led by God' (*hananimi indohasyŏssŭmnida*). Oh aligned the attributes of particular events in a Christian timeline and made their relations to one another spiritually timeless, hence intertextual. The view of interdiscursivity as the circulation and exchange of good words leads to the view of intertextuality as the bringing about of good events of social healing based on the sharing of The Word. These events bring participants into structurally iconic relationships both with one another and before God. According to Pastor Oh, this is manifest institutionally as the healthy body of the church—as a macro-scale indexical-icon of the micro-scale events of social healing on which it is based.

5. The Pentecostal model: Yoido Full Gospel Church

Yoido Full Gospel Church (*yŏŭido sunbogŭm kyohoe*) was founded in a tent in 1958 by David Yong-gi Cho and his mother-in law.[16] With a self-reported overall membership of 830,000, this Assemblies of God Pentecostal Church is the largest Protestant church in the world (The Economist, November 3, 2007). More than half of the total Korean Assemblies of God members have belonged to this church since the early 1970s (Kim, 2003b). In 2008, Cho handed over leadership of the church to Lee Young-hoon, who had been the head pastor of the Full Gospel Church's Los Angeles chapter.

As a Pentecostal church, Yoido Full Gospel worship is characterized by glossolalia and on-site faith healings. At 18 years old, Cho, who was said to be sick and frail since childhood, was diagnosed with tuberculosis and was given three months to live. According to the story he tells in sermons and various publications, he prayed repeatedly to Buddha, but nothing happened. Then a girl from school brought him a Bible and convinced him to pray to Jesus. Shortly thereafter he was healed. He explains that this event, followed by training at the Full Gospel Theological seminary and personal experiences of glossolalia, formed the foundation for his personal theology.

Kim (2003b), a self-described 'simple Korean Pentecostal Christian' (p. ix), writes that Cho reproduces an 'original Pentecostalism' based on biblical principles that have been lost (p. 94). Conceived as 'pure biblical faith,' Cho's theology is a 'return' to the Bible's 'original' teachings: 'salvation, baptism with the Holy Spirit,

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[16] Although the Korean word '*sun*' can also be translated as 'pure,' Cho's church is known officially in English as the ''Yoido Full Gospel Church.'' In the McCune-Reischauer romanization system, the spelling is '*yŏŭido sunbogŭm*.' However, when quoting from other sources I follow the transliteration of the published source, e.g. '*yoido*' or '*sunbogeum*.'

healing, and the second coming of Christ' (p. 194). By focusing on healing the physical body with the help of the Holy Spirit, the Yoido Church 'regards itself as the body of the living Christ [and] emphasizes healing as an important factor in fulfilling its mission' (p. 195)—as Jesus himself was supposed to have done. Kim claims that Cho views his theology as 'clarify[ing] the relationship between revelation and experience because the ultimate object of God's revelation is focused upon humans, not upon the Bible' (p. 209).

Cho is often accused of infusing Pentecostal Christianity with indigenous Korean shamanism. Entertained by journalists (Cooper, 2006; Choe, 2001), theologians and researchers for faith-based organizations (Reynolds, 2000; Yoo, 1986, 1987), and scholars (Cox, 1995; Hyuck, 2004, Kim, 2003a) alike, this theory is a thorn in the side of those who assert that Christianity has been fully 'Koreanized' or 'inculturated' (e.g., Baker, 1998; Onishin, 2004). For example, Cox (1995, p. 222) is concerned that Korean Pentecostalism has the ability to 'absorb huge chunks of indigenous Korean shamanism and demon possession into its worship. . . . the degree of importation is so extensive that some wonder out loud what has absorbed what.' Indeed, members of Yoido Full Gospel Church generally belong to the working and lower-middle classes (Kim, 1995, 1997), a group historically associated with shamanic practices.[17] Notably, women constituted the majority of shamans in Korea (Kendall, 1985), and many shamans and their clients became Christians when Cho organized 'cells' [*sel*] in which responsibility often was delegated to women (Kim, 2003b, p. 198). Most theologians, however, are worried less about the church's history and more about the elements of current ritual practice analyzed in the present paper: 'To a visitor schooled in shamanism, the worship at the Yoido Full Gospel Church bears a striking resemblance to what is ordinarily known as "shamanism"' (Cox, 1995, p. 224).

Kim (2003b), however, views positively the infusion of 'indigenous' elements into the church. He characterizes it, like *Minjung Theology* of the 1970s, as an important localization strategy for gaining missiological traction in Korea.[18] He writes, 'the phenomenal aspects of shamanism can best be compared to those of Pentecostalism because both are connected with spiritual dynamism among the masses in modern Korea' (pp. 23-4). However, Cho himself offers his theology as the true alternative to shamanist practices, and has elaborated it in a number of publications and sermons. In 1979, Cho published "The Fourth Dimension" (*chesach'iwŏn*) in which he claims that the Fourth Dimension is a spiritual realm that exists beyond and controls the 'geometrically' analyzable three dimensions of physical space.[19] In the Fourth Dimension either good or evil can be created (pp. 45). It is a realm to which Christians are called to fight against deceptive, devil-induced fourth-dimensional phenomena, such as healing miracles attributed to Buddhism, Yoga meditation, and Japanese Sokagakkai (pp. 36) or the Unitarian Church (42).

Like Oh's sermons from Sarang Church above, Cho's sermons claim that The Word is the pathway to the experience of God. However, for Cho, the efficacy of The Word is based not on the social consequences of its circulation, but rather is realized through its power to make fourth-dimensional phenomena accessible to Christians. In Pastor Cho's sermon titled "Believe in God" (Cho, 2006c), he outlined the way in which forms of speech and modes of thought affect one's faith and ultimately one's salvation. Cho argued against praying

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[17] The different pastors and their churches obviously appeal to the different needs and conditions of their congregations. It is not surprising that there is a difference both in terms of language ideology and in terms of bodily concerns. With the former, one's education level appears to correspond to one's relative ability to 'master' words—or at least their confidence to do so. With the latter, one's socio-economic level appears to correspond to a life of working-class labor and to one's limited ability to access and pay for expensive medical treatment.

[18] *Minjung Theology*, or 'people's theology,' was conceived in the 1970s as 'a development of the "political hermeneutics" of the Gospel in terms of the Korean reality' (Suh, 1983, p. 17). Minjung Theology views the Old Testament Exodus account hermeneutically as a paradigmatic event, not merely as an historical event. Based on this view, it treats Christianity as a practice that is anchored not only to its practitioners' historical relationship to the crucifixion, but also to Jesus as spiritual presence and to their emulation of this figure. This allows the theology to treat the 'people as the subjects of history,' the impoverished Korean masses as ideal typical Hebrews, and Koreans as ahistorically and essentially 'Christian' (see Moon, 1981; Kim, 2006).

[19] It is important to note that, unlike Reverend Oak's books mentioned above, Cho's books cited here do not credit an English translator. Although he is a capable English speaker, it is unclear whether Cho translated his own books into English. It does suggest, however, that the pastor wishes to downplay the *evenementiality* of translation, and to emphasize the continuity of his words as they 'move' from him to both Korean- and English-reading audiences. The *evenemential* view of translation, as different from the *nomic* view of translation, was outlined in C. Handman's unpublished manuscript, "Events of Translation: Denominational Conversion and Christian Narratives of Change among Guhu-Samane, Papua New Guinea," presented at the Semiotics Workshop: Culture in Context, University of Chicago, February 19, 2009.

in the present tense (*hyŏnjaehyŏng*) or in the future tense (*miraehyŏng*), because such prayers are 'always accompanied by doubts.' Cho instructed his congregants to pray in the past tense (*kwagŏhyŏng*), telling them that God had already kept his promise in 'Christ on the Cross.' If we pray for what has already been fulfilled, Cho said, 'the devil [*makwi*] shuts his mouth' and cannot spread further doubt. If Christians pray properly, God will fill their mouths with the right words:

> **EXCERPT 10:** God wants to change total darkness into light, disorder into order, death into life, ugliness into beauty, poverty into wealth, disease into health, defeat into victory. God comes among us and wants to accomplish a new, glorious, and beautiful creation. If we open our mouth wide before God, God fills it up even today. [Cho, 2006c]

In this sermon, Cho argued for a semiotic ideology that draws vaguely on what Whorf called *fashions of speaking*, which influence the way experience of the world is analyzed and reported (Whorf, 1956a, p. 158; Lucy, 1992). Specifically, Cho's argument is based on what Whorf called *phenotypic* or *overt* tense markings. Notice here how the emphasis is on grammar, rather than on denotation. By situating the event of narration in relation to an narrated event that is marked as already accomplished, Cho seeks to regiment a belief in biblical narrative as historical fact, thereby positioning the gifts of the Holy Spirit as already accomplished and truth as already revealed.

Faith, expressed in part by words, becomes the ability to call upon and register the ongoing existence and participation of the Holy Spirit, manifested phenomenally in the Fourth Dimension. Cho claimed that 'ninety percent of the promises of The Word have already been fulfilled' (Cho, 2006c). He claimed that the rationality [*isŏng*] of science is a doubting rationality and is detrimental to faith. This becomes clear in Cho's recitation of the story of how Abraham and his wife were able to bear a child, even though he was 100 years old and she was 90 years old.

> **EXCERPT 11:** If [Abraham] had thought scientifically and rationally, doubts would have entered him; through his senses, through his experiences, doubts alone would have entered him. He was determined not to doubt, and he believed continually that God had fulfilled what He had promised, so he gave thanks and praise. [ibid.]

Or in a similar example:

> **EXCERPT 12:** Peter did not use medicine to heal the person crippled from birth. He did not heal him by injecting needles. He did not heal him with surgery. He healed him with The Word. [...] According to the proclamation of The Word, the miracle of moving a mountain to the sea had taken place. [ibid.]

Cho reiterated in the sermon that the events reported in the Bible, such as childbirth at 90 or moving mountains, are 'anti-scientific, anti-rational, anti-experiential, and anti-sensory' (*pigwahakchŏgigo pi'isŏngjŏgigo pich'ehŏmjŏgigo pigamgakchŏgin kŏsimnida*). Gifts such as these are already given and require fourth-dimensional consciousness for their manifestation in the lives of believers. Knowledge of and access to these gifts are not made through commonly circulating words among members of a group, but instead through direct individual intimacy—albeit *en masse*—with God. The socialization of a group of believers via discursive interaction is absent from the formula. For example, in the case of glossolalia, Cho argued:

> **EXCERPT 13:** If we share secrets with a good friend, then the person is a very close friend. We do not tell secrets to those who are not close to us. We tell secrets only when we become very close and become a community with a shared destiny. Ordinarily, if we tell everything to God, the person next to us hears everything. But if we speak in tongues [*pangŏn*], then the person next to us does not understand even though they hear us. It is because we are telling our secrets to God through the Spirit. If we speak in tongues, we become very close to God. [Cho, 2006b]

The function of this transformation of the public words of prayer to the private 'secrets of the spirit' is the alignment of the individual with God. That is, with the consciousness of the Fourth Dimension—the realm of spiritual perception in which pneumatological phenomena are known—the social space is transformed from one of individuals relating to one another via speech and interaction before God (e.g., in the Presbyterian model), to a structure of individuals united in their direct, individual relationships with the Holy Spirit.

EXCERPT 14: Thus, the coming of the fire means that God removes the frigidness in our life and restores the joy by filling our life up with the warm love of God. Then not 'I' but 'We' [*na-anin uridŭli*] hold hands, pulling from the front and pushing from the back, as God makes a family, a society, a nation, and a world in which we can live in cooperation. [Cho, 2006b]

Where the Presbyterian model depicted circulating words as setting the pathway for social cohesion through discursive interaction among members of a community, Cho's model depicts words placed directly by God in each individual's open mouth (or heart). Cho (1979) explains this process by differentiating between two senses of The Word: *logos* and *rhema*. He writes '*logos* is the general Word of God, stretching from Genesis to Revelation' (Cho, 1979, p. 90), but '*rhema* is a specific word to a specific person in a specific situation' (Cho 1979, p. 91). And he explains further how the Holy Spirit places The Word *qua rhema* directly in a believer:

EXCERPT 15: *Rhema* is produced out of logos. *Logos* is like the pool of Bethesda. You may listen to the Word of God and you may study the Bible, but only when the Holy Spirit comes and quickens a scripture or scriptures to your heart, burning them in your soul and letting you known that they apply directly to your specific situation, does *logos* become *rhema*. *Logos* is given to everybody. *Logos* is common to Koreans, Europeans, Africans, and Americans. It is given to all so that they may gain knowledge about God; but *rhema* is not given to everyone. *Rhema* is given to that specific person who is waiting upon the Lord until the Holy Spirit quickens *logos* into *rhema*. [Cho, 1979, p. 96–97]

In Cho's model, Christian groupness is a result of, rather than a prerequisite for, individual contact with God via the Holy Spirit. This groupness emerges out of the *chronotopic lamination* of one kind of relationship to The Word onto another kind. One relationship pertains to the historical timespace of The Word, emphasizing the interdiscursivity among past events in which The Word appeared (much like Oh's narrative of the way The Word eventually made it to Korea). The second relationship pertains to the narrative of the Holy Spirit delivering The Word directly into the mouth of the believer, when 'scripture no longer belongs to the 'said word' of God [*logos*] but is instantly the 'saying word' of God [*rhema*]' for many individuals at once (Cho, 1979, p. 105). The union of an historical human chronotope of The Word and a particular interactional chronotope of the Holy Spirit's movement as it carries The Word from the spiritual to the material realm creates for believers an experience of the 'anti-rational' suprachronotopy of the Fourth Dimension (i.e., a dimension not bound by the temporal and spatial frames of earthly human experience).

The conceptualization of a Fourth Dimension is a transformation of semiotic ideology. Instead of focusing on the primacy of words as elements of a socio-linguistic medium with potential spiritual efficacy, Cho treats words as elements of a spiritual medium with potential material efficacy. Like Oh, Cho uses the metaphor of fire to conceptualize a theory of interdiscursivity and the experience of intertextuality among the congregants. However, it is fundamentally different from Oh's construal of fire as the sensation of the Holy Spirit accompanying the circulation of The Word via social interaction. Cho conceptualizes it instead as the unidirectional transmission of fire that takes place when the Holy Spirit itself 'enters' the body from the Fourth Dimension. This process seems to take place in one of two ways. When alignment to God through the presence of the Holy Spirit is achieved through glossolalia, prayer is the medium. When alignment to God through the presence of the Holy Spirit is achieved through physical healing, touch is the medium:

EXCERPT 16: [The disciples] expelled demons with the Word and healed the sick by anointing them with oil. When I lay my hands on the sick during the Wednesday service, I anoint the sick with oil and lay my hands on them and pray for them. [Cho, 2003]

When individuals come into contact with the fire of the Holy Spirit, it is manifested as glossolalia and healing, and both are considered cleansing processes: the former of the spiritual relationship with God, and the latter of the material being in the world. Both are processes of 'sanitation.'

EXCERPT 17: The fire of the Spirit is the sanitizing [*sodokhan*] fire that burns our filthiness. The best method in the world for sanitizing is burning with fire. The Spirit coming as fire means that God wants to sanitize us. [Cho, 2006b]

In keeping with the directive to pray in the past tense, Full Gospel semiotic ideology claims that 'sorrows and diseases are also false and vain images' because 'the truth is, when we come under the cross, Jesus has put an end to sorrows and diseases and has brought us joy and healing' (Cho, 1999). Communication with God becomes a process of manifesting materially the reality already posited in the denotational text, i.e., The Word. In Excerpt 8 above, Reverend Oh interpreted the 'faith of friends' story from Mark 2:5 as an account of Jesus's recognition of, and reward for, the socialization of faith through The Word. Cho offers a different interpretation. He writes 'Jesus saw their faith and responded by saying, "It will be done as you believed"' (1995, p. 47), and explains that that it was the power of the friends' faith—their faith that he would be healed—acting directly in that situation, which healed the paralytic.

The Word, then, is not a collection of linguistic nuggets bound in a book or shared among compatriots, but rather a fourth dimensional entity, characterized as a kind of goal or objective, that is believed in and expressed, but not always experienced:

EXCERPT 18: Therefore, if we stand firmly on The Word of God, meditate on The Word, believe The Word, speak The Word, go forth according to The Word, we will experience the ultimate true reality. [Cho, 1999]

Cho reinforces this point in the chapter titled "The Creative Power of the Spoken Word" from his book "The Fourth Dimension" (1979). By writing, '[Jesus Christ is] not high up in the sky, or below the ground. Jesus is in His Word' (1979, p. 81), Cho argues that in the very expression of faith through spoken prayer, one comes closer to experiencing Jesus. When a person's speech transitions from an orientation toward The Word (*logos*), to The Word itself placed directly in their mouth by the Holy Spirit (*rhema*), the person experiences the 'ultimate true reality.'

Similar to Pastor Oh's sermon on taming the tongue, Pastor Cho writes that 'ultimately your word molds your life' (ibid., p. 85). But then he diverges from Oh's Presbyterian socio-psychological model of words by advancing the neurological theory which posits that 'the speech center in the brain has total dominion over all the other nerves' (ibid., p. 67). Here, Cho goes so far as to claim that humans are biologically wired to be under the control of the Fourth Dimension: if the fourth dimensional Holy Spirit places The Word in a person, then the person's speech controls the third dimensional physical body. With the help of a heightened consciousness, believers can perceive and verify phenomena moving about in a higher realm. The possessor of this consciousness understands that fourth-dimensional entities are capable of entering bodies bound by the first three dimensions to produce glossolalia and physical healing. The Holy Spirit, which inhabits this Fourth Dimension, is viewed not as a substance or pure experience, but as a person, as a commanding being who carries The Word to individuals. In his book designed to help ordinary business men become 'great,' Cho writes,

EXCERPT 19: In 1964, I found out the Holy Spirit as a person. It was an epoch-making event that dramatically changed my life. Before that time I thought of the Holy Spirit as an experience, not as a person. From the time when I found the Holy Spirit as a person, when I went to bed I said, 'Dear Holy Spirit, I sleep now. Tomorrow morning I will see you again.' [1995, p. 69]

Some followers believe that Cho himself has healing powers. However, Cho argues that he merely is a channel for the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit does all of the healing. He writes, 'The Holy Spirit sees a need, and then follows the operation with a gift to flow through someone to meet that need' (1979, p. 84). In Cho's explanation, the social aspects of interdiscursivity—the recursion of semiotic form across social events involving biographical individuals—are maintained, but reconceptualized in terms of the properties of this Fourth Dimension. In church services and other sacred spaces, the Holy Spirit 'travels' via both prayer and physical contact 'from' one person 'to' another (hence, interdiscursively), and its works manifest as glossolalia and healing, both of which are interpreted as evidence of an instance of a more general structural relationship with God (hence, intertextually).

Pentecostalism, based on the biblical account of the day of Pentecost (Book of Acts, Chapter 2), places emphasis on personal contact with the Holy Spirit and the ability to effect material change through prayer. In the organizational structure of Yoido Full Gospel Church, Cho, before his retirement, acted as Senior Pastor, but Jesus Christ has remained the 'head' of the church (Kim, 2003b, pp. 314–315). Unlike Sarang's more 'public sphere'-like model (Habermas, 1962) of the circulation of The Word, the institutionality of Yoido Full Gospel is based on a broadcast model of communication, where the Holy Spirit enters Cho from Jesus Christ, and Cho passes the fire onto the congregants, either directly or via deacons and cell groups, by prayer and by touch.

I myself observed this organizational structure repeatedly diagramed in the healing performances that took place during Wednesday morning prayer services (see Excerpt 16 above). Following the sermon, Cho instructs the congregants to pray. The 12,000-person audience in the main sanctuary breaks into intense, ecstatic, audible prayer, accompanied by a hymn played on an organ. Many people rise from their seats, shaking their bodies and waving their outstretched arms. For approximately ten minutes, deacons roam the congregation, going from person to person, placing one palm on the person's head or back, and directing their other palm toward Cho, who remains on stage. Cho moves out in front of the pulpit and raises both hands, palms facing toward the congregation. With his head lowered and his body in line with the towering backlit cross mounted on the wall behind him, he positions himself as the channel through which the Holy Spirit enters the church. This way, the Holy Spirit has a direct route via prayer and touch to move from Cho to the deacons, and then finally to the congregants.[20]

The organizational structure of the church itself, and communicative interaction among its congregants, is organized around Cho's theory of the pathway of the Holy Spirit described above. In his sermon, "Acting by Faith, Not by Sight" (Cho, 2006a), Cho outlined the importance of receiving the Holy Spirit, which authorizes the ritual:

> **EXCERPT 20:** We see with the eyes of the flesh, hear with the ears of the flesh, and understand with the heart of the flesh. But the Kingdom of Heaven is seen through the Holy Spirit, heard through the Holy Spirit, and understood through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is your eyes; the Holy Spirit is your ears; the Holy Spirit is your heart of understanding. You can know nothing apart from the Holy Spirit. [Cho, 2006a]

Because Cho is the main channel through which the Holy Spirit enters the church, congregants can do little apart from Cho. Being able to 'act by faith, not by sight' means one must 'serve and obey God' [*hananimŭl sŏmgigo sunjonghaeya hamnida*], which involves 'proclaiming boldly' [*damdaehage sŏnŏnhada*] The Word. These bold proclamations are intended to 'overcome the test of seeing' [*ponŭn kŏsŭi sihŏmŭl igyŏnaeda*] through fourth dimensional realizations of God's ongoing work. This position, according to Cho, is the 'Full Gospel' part of his theology: to return to the 'full account,' which included the repeated and generous works of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians. This return has its foundation in Cho's own personal healing as a young man, which brings the full account of the Gospel, Cho's first meeting with the Holy Spirit, and the continuous manifestation of the charisms of Holy Spirit through healings and glossolalia for believers, into intertextual alignment one with another.

Within a semiotic ideology that views speech and physical contact as opening fourth-dimensional channels for the Holy Spirit to travel, glossolalia and physical healing become intertextual events built on a theory of the interdiscursivity of signs of Fourth Dimensional phenomena made entextualizable through faith. Cho told his congregants:

> **EXCERPT 21:** If we depend on God, believe in God, expect miracles, have dreams, have faith, confess with our lips, and do not doubt in our heart, going forth with praise, then miracles of God will certainly take place. We must experience miracles in our life. What is the difference between the Christian faith

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[20] From 1983 to 1986, the church building was expanded and smaller chapels were added to accommodate a total of 25,000 worshipers at each of the seven services held on Sundays (the first service begins at 7:00 a.m., and the final service begins at 7:30 p.m.). With video links to the smaller chapels in the church complex, and to other Full Gospel churches throughout Korea and the world, Cho can achieve mediated pneumatological transmission similar to the cell-phone miracle mentioned in the introduction to this paper.

and other religions? Other religions teach based on theory [*iron*] and logic [*nolli*], but we join with the living God to become one living family of God. [Cho, 2006c]

The miracles are proof of the theology and are manifestations of what the congregants should already believe to be true. The gap between faith and experience becomes a question of perceiving what one proclaims 'boldly' (*damdaehamŭro*) to be reality. When proclamation and perception coincide, the believer experiences healing and glossolalia—which means God has used the Holy Spirit to place The Word in the believer. In effect, one cannot truly speak The Word without also experiencing The Word. When this happens, individuals become aligned to semiotic form in structurally iconic ways, such as when an ensemble of sensations is entextualized as holy fire and construed as contact with the Holy Spirit via the Fourth Dimension. And these events of glossolalia and healing become the building blocks, the intertextual units, of an institution that has its foundational moment in Cho's own glossolalia and healing experiences. As with the Presbyterian Sarang Community Church, these structures of personal relations to the Holy Spirit become indexical icons of the larger institutional organization.

6. Conclusion

I began this article with a quote that demonstrated how a technology of speech transmission becomes a technology of pneumatological transmission for a particular group of Christians. For these believers, many of the properties of their particular phenomenology of language are transitive to a phenomenology of the Holy Spirit, relating the qualities and behaviors of one to the other. To be clear, this kind of pneumatological phenomenology is more along the lines of particle phenomenology in physics, which seeks the description and prediction of the behavior and characteristics of particles (Galison, 1999), than of the phenomenological philosophies of Husserl (1960[1931]) or Merleau-Ponty (1962). And this distinction seems to be precisely the point: the congregants are less interested in the logic of perception itself than in bending their perception to gain access to a reality they already believe in. They are interested in a system of reference and predication for a realm of personal individual experience not directly available to others. The phenomenological linking of two ontic realms of experience described in the cell-phone quote is the same sort of thing that Pastors Oh and Cho describe in their sermons—each in their own denominationally distinct way. Reverend Oh puts forth a rather Lockean model of Christian self-confirmation (of Christian baptism, really), resting on the notion that the circulation and sharing of The Word creates a community of shared beliefs through shared meanings. And Reverend Cho puts forth a rather Hobbesian model of Christian self-confirmation, in which only the sovereign God is able to plant The Word directly in a person.[21] Pastor Oh commands his congregants to open their mouths 'before God' to display the circulation of The Word to both God and to their neighbors; Pastor Cho commands his congregants to open their mouths wide so that God can 'fill [it] up' with The Word, which is carried by the Holy Spirit as it moves through the Fourth Dimension.[22]

In both cases, The Word of God, and words in general, are conceptualized as things that move through the world. Pastor Oh characterizes this movement as a kind of exchange among members of a community. Pastor Cho characterizes the movement as a kind of delivery from a supernatural realm that is carried out by a supernatural being. And as Pastor Oh pointed out, the notion of a 'text' as segmentable, analyzable, and recontextualizable is not compatible with a theology that posits The Word to be spiritually eternal, transcendent, and true. To explain believers' experiences of the fire of the Holy Spirit that accompanied The Word in Pyŏngyang in 1907 in terms of iteration, recursion, or role inhabitance would undermine the theological argument that God's words *do* spread and that there *is* a Holy Spirit that moves with them. Although a local theory of iter-

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[21] I thank Michael Silverstein for these charming and illuminating labels ('Lockean' and 'Hobbesian'), which he used to differentiate the sermons of the two pastors while he discussed the paper for the panel "Baptismal Moments," Michicagoan Linguistic Anthropology Conference, May 4, 2007.

[22] By arguing that there is a fundamental difference between the conceptual orientations of the two pastors, the two churches, and the two denominations, I do not wish to claim that elements of ritual from one cannot be found in the other. Glossolalia and ecstatic prayer are not completely absent from Sarang Church; it is merely that they are not present in the regular services. Likewise, quiet, careful Bible Study is also encouraged at Yoido Full Gospel church, however Cho's central method of preaching is to recite scriptural passages in full voice quickly and encourage the congregants to join him.

ation or recursive semiotic production could characterize congregant behavior (some people yield to The Word; some do not), 'movement' remains the descriptive metaphorical attribute of the behavior of the words themselves. Viewed this way, we might see this distinction—viewed from the local perspective—as simultaneous *replication* of congregant behavior and *transposition* of semiotic form (Shoaps, 2002).

Should this metaphor be surprising? Don't rumors spread? Doesn't news travel? Are there not ever more pervasive *cultures of circulation* (Lee and LiPuma, 2002)? In fact, both Sarang and Yoido models of semiotic evaluation are built on this implicit ethnotheory: words, like material things, move throughout the world, and it is up to individuals to respond accordingly to them by filtering out all but holy and eternal words, and by circulating the good words through further evangelism. In both Sarang and Yoido churches, the conceptualization of words as *things-in-motion* (whether carried by people or by the Holy Spirit) is necessary for the church's institutional viability. This conceptualization is invoked through sermons as a *higher-order indexical authorization* (Silverstein, 2003, p. 226) of the experiences congregants have in their own discursive practices. As long as words are conceptualized as things that move (i.e., created and sanctioned as such by God), then missionaries are authorized to direct that movement by 'spreading the Good News' and 'carrying The Word to the ends of the earth.' Likewise, average Christians in Pastor Oh's church can contribute to the trajectory of The Word by receiving it and sharing it with fellow Christians, thereby inviting the Holy Spirit into their lives and their communities. In Cho's church, average Christians invoke the fourth dimensional movement of the Holy Spirit as it carries The Word *between* sacred spaces by modeling this movement *within* the sacred space itself: at church services, individual Christian bodies become conduits for the Holy Spirit to move throughout the congregation, and glossolalic speech becomes the expression of The Word as it is placed directly in the mouths of these sacred vessels. Through their own discursive practices, members of these two churches index 'a complex, interlocking set of institutionally formed macrosociological interests' (ibid.) committed to, and dependent upon, the idea that words move. And it is this concept of movement that links their individual discursive practices to the church institutions of which they are a part. If congregants share words, shouldn't they also share feelings? And if they share feelings, shouldn't they also share experiences? How can members of the congregation share experiences if they are not, in fact, experiencing the same agent or object of experience? By linking a model of moving words with a model of a moving spirit, they gain assurance that they are not just saying the same thing, but are in fact experiencing the same thing—even if that 'thing' remains unseen.

Acknowledgments

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