

로타 크라이식의 화해 사상에 관한 고찰*

A Research on the Reconciliation Thought of Lothar Kreyssig

최용준 (Yong Joon (John) Choi)**

ABSTRACT

This article investigates the reconciliation thought of Lothar Kreyssig (1898-1986). He was a German Christian judge in Weimar and Nazi times. He was the only judge who objected to the policy of euthanasia for the disabled, the so-called Operation T4 (*Aktion T4*) during Nazi times in Germany. This policy started on September 1, 1939 and stopped in 1941. About 200,000 people were killed in this operation in Germany and Austria and 100,000 people in other European countries. After World War II, he was again offered a judgeship, but declined. Later, he became an advocate of German reconciliation movement by establishing the Action for Peace Reconciliation Service and the Action for World Solidarity, a German development aid non-governmental organization. His idea of reconciliation is very important and has profound implications for the situation in the Korean peninsula. Therefore, this article first briefly examines his life, his thought on reconciliation and concrete action. Then it evaluates what influence he left behind and concludes what kind of lessons he gives to the Korean situation.

Key words: Lothar Kreyssig, Aktion T4, reconciliation, peace, service

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** 한동대학교(Handong Global University) ICT 창업학부 교수, 경북 포항시 북구 한동로 558, crosspower@handong.edu

I. Introduction

Lothar Ernst Paul Kreyszig (1898-1986) was a Christian judge in Germany during the Weimar and Nazi eras. He was the only judge who opposed the so called Operation T4 (*Aktion T4*)¹, that is, the policy of euthanasia for the disabled according to Nazi Germany's eugenics ideology, based on his Biblical worldview that all humans are dignified as the image of God. After World War II, he was again offered the position of judge but he declined. Instead, he attempted true biblical reconciliation by establishing Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (ASF: *Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste*) for the countries invaded by Germany, especially the victims of the Holocaust. This is a very noteworthy point and has significant implications especially in the situation of the divided Korean Peninsula, where North and South Korea face each other by military force after a ceasefire in 1953. Therefore, in this paper, I will focus on examining Kreyszig's idea of reconciliation.

There are many articles and books in German on his life and thoughts and on this topic (Baltes, 2006, Chung, 2017, Jeromin, 2014, Gruchmann, 1984, Kahl, 2008, Kammerer, 2008, Kramer, 1989, Kramer, 1949, Legerer, 2011, Rabe, 1983, Skriver, 1962, Weiß, 1998, Willems, 1995) Unfortunately, however, there are very few studies in English and almost none in Korean. Nevertheless, his reconciliation idea and concrete efforts are very important and have profound implications for the situation on the Korean Peninsula. Therefore, this paper first briefly examines his life, then discusses his reconciliation idea with a focus on Action Reconciliation Service for Peace. and Then conclusion is drawn by offering some the implications and lessons he brings to the Korean situation.

1) Operation T4 (*Aktion T4*) began on September 1, 1939, and was halted in 1941, but the policy of euthanasia itself continued. "T4" comes from the location of the headquarters, Tiergartenstraße 4 in Berlin, and was a name given after World War II. As a result of this operation, approximately 200,000 people with disabilities were massacred in Germany and Austria, and 100,000 people with disabilities in other European countries. On August 18, 1941, Nazi Germany officially announced that it was suspending the program, but it continued in secret thereafter.

II. A Research on the Reconciliation Thought of Lothar Kreyssig

1. The Life of Lothar Kreyssig

Lothar Kreyssig lived a turbulent life in German history, such as the German Empire (*Deutsches Kaiserreich*, 1871-1918), the Weimar Republic (1918-1933), Nazi Germany (*NS-Staat*, 1933-1945), and the division of East and West Germany after 1945. He was born in 1898 in Flöha, Saxony, eastern Germany, as the son of a grain wholesale merchant. After completing elementary education there, he studied at the Gymnasium in Chemnitz. When World War I broke out, he enlisted in 1916 and served in the German army for two years, fighting in France, the Baltic States, and Serbia. After the war he studied law at the University of Leipzig from 1919 to 1922, receiving his doctorate in 1923. He then worked at the Chemnitz District Court in 1926 and became a judge there two years later. Thereafter, from 1946 to 1964, he worked in various ways, mainly in Magdeburg.

Before the National Socialists came to power, Kreyssig voted for the Nazi party, the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP: *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*). Even after this party took power, he initially conformed to the system and joined the National Socialist People's Welfare Organization (*Nationalsozialistischen Volkswohlfahrt*). In 1934, he also became a member of the National Socialist German Bar Association (BNSDJ: *Bund Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher Juristen*) and the German Civil Service Association (*Reichsbund der Deutschen Beamten*) (Klee, 2005: 340). However, in 1933, when he was pressured to join the Nazi Party, he refused, citing the need for judicial independence. Instead, as a Protestant, he joined the Confessing Church (BK: *Bekennenden Kirche*), a Protestant church founded in opposition to Hitler in 1934, and from that time on his full-fledged activities began. In 1935, as a judge, he became the Praeses of the Saxony Confessing Church and also participated in that year's General Assembly of the Barmer Confessing Church (*Barmer Bekenntnissynode*). However, the official Protestant Church in Germany at that time was dominated by the German Christians (DC: *Deutsche Christen*), which existed from

1932 to 1945 to follow Hitler based on anti-Semitism, racism and Nazism. Therefore, in this confessional church, his church-political positions continued to cause conflict with the National Socialist regime. Furthermore, he made his sons drop out of the Gymnasium and taught them at home to prevent them from being influenced by Nazi ideology.

Nevertheless, he was able to continue working as a judge, and in 1937 he became a mental health court guardian judge (*Vormundschaftsrichter*) in Brandenburg an der Havel, responsible for hundreds of mentally disabled children and adults. At the same time, he was interested in the preservation of the created world (*Bewahrung der Schöpfung*) and purchased a farmhouse (*Bauernhof*) in the nearby village of Hohenferchesar, calling it 'Bruderhof' and started organic farming (*biologisch-dynamische Landwirtschaft*). In other words, even as a farmer, he tried to harmonize respect for life, the integrity and preservation of creation, and agricultural production.

But even there, when he founded a confessional church, he was repeatedly investigated by the authorities, because he was the only judge who condemned the National Socialists' euthanasia killing of "people unworthy of life" (*lebensunwertes Leben*). He defended their human rights based on the biblical worldview that all humans are created equal in the image of God (Weiß, 1998). However, when he heard the news of death due to disabilities, he sensed that their death were related to euthanasia killings, and in a letter dated July 8, 1940, he raised suspicions that the sick were being massacred to the Minister of Justice Franz Gürtner (1881-1941), criticizing the Nazis' T4 euthanasia policy. Furthermore, he opposed the deprivation of rights of prisoners in concentration camps on solid legal grounds (Klee, 2005: 340):

What is right is what benefits the people. In the name of this frightful doctrine — as yet, uncontradicted by any guardian of rights in Germany — entire sectors of communal living are excluded from [having] rights, for example, all the concentration camps, and now, all hospitals and sanatoriums.

After being told that the euthanasia operation had been initiated by Hitler himself

and carried out at the Führer's responsibility, he accused Reichsleiter Philipp Bouhler of murder and banned moving the institution where his patients were housed without his consent. Then, on November 13, 1940, he was summoned by Justice Minister Gürtner, who showed him Hitler's handwritten letter, which became the only legal basis for launching "Operation T4." In that letter, Hitler sentenced 10,000 people to death. However, Kreyssig made it clear that he can not accept this while representing the rule of law with his famous saying, "The Führer's words do not create law (*ein Führerwort schafft kein Recht*)."

The question of the meaning of such life touches on the deepest questions of existence. It leads directly to the question of God... From this point of view, the 'destruction of life unworthy of life' is a serious offense to conscience. Life is a mystery of God. Its meaning can not be understood either in terms of the individual or in relation to the ethnic community.

Only what God tells us about it is true and helpful. It is therefore a monstrous indignation and arrogance on the part of people to be allowed to end lives because, with their limited reason, they do not understand it as meaningful or no longer understand it. Just like the existence of such a dead life, it is a fact given by God that there were always enough people who were capable of loving and caring for such a life, just as true love has its greatness and the reflection of its divine origin precisely there, where it doesn't ask about meaning and value."

(www.nordkirche.de/nachrichten/nachrichten-detail/nachricht/worte-des-gedenkens-gedenk-veranstaltung-fuer-die-opfer-der-euthanasie-und-zwangsterilisierung-i)

Gürtner then told Kreyssig, "If you do not recognize the will of the Führer as law, you can not remain as a judge," and forced him to take a leave of absence in December 1940 (Klee, 2005: 340). The Gestapo (*Geheime Staatspolizei*, secret state police) attempted to take him to a concentration camp but failed. Two years later, in March 1942, Hitler forced him to retire. He then put greater effort into organic farming

and church ministry. In particular, his organic farming can be said to be related to his stewardship mission to ensure that all creation is reconciled to God in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:19). Furthermore, in 1943, when Gertrude Prochownik (1884-1982), the widow of the Jewish painter Leo Prochownik (1875-1936), was about to be deported to a concentration camp, Kreyssig made refuge in his basement and hid her until the end of the war (www.juedische-allgemeine.de/unsere-woche/sie-waren-helden-2).

After the end of National Socialism in 1945, Kreyssig was recognized as an opposition fighter (*Widerstandskämpfer*). However, he was considered as a Prussian landowner in the Soviet occupation zone and so lost part of his property. Then, feeling that the rule of law in the Soviet-occupied territories was insufficient, he decided not to resume his career as a judge. Instead, he accepted the offer of Bishop Otto Dibelius (1880-1967), leader of the Protestant Church of Berlin-Brandenburg, and became the consistorial president of the Evangelical Church of the Church Province of Saxony in Magdeburg in 1945. In 1947, he became Praeses of the Synod of the church province and held this office until 1964. In 1948, he represented the Saxony Protestant Church at the founding general meeting of the World Council of Churches (WCC) held in Amsterdam and served in the department of Church and Society (*Kirche und Gesellschaft*). Furthermore, at the Kurmärkischen Kirchentag event held in Potsdam from May 29 to June 1, 1950, after the opening service led by Walter Braun, General Bishop of Kurmark, he addressed the Church and Society Department. He gave a lecture on Christian responsibility (*Neue Zeit*, 1950: 2). Afterwards, the general synod of the Evangelical Church of the old-Prussian Union elected him its praeses in 1952. He held this position until 1970.

From 1949 to 1961 he was a council member of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD: *Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland*), the Protestant umbrella in Germany. From 1949 to 1958 he was also eastern vice president of the German Protestant Church Day (*Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchentag*). Furthermore, he also participated in a spiritual renewal movement called the Michaelsbruderschaft. From 1953 he worked for “ecumenical Diakonie” and just relations between North and South (developed and underdeveloped countries) so that sustainable abundance and basic needs can be

combined in the right way.

On the other hand, his views were also controversial. This is because, while supporting the Christian unity movement, he insisted on including Jews as well. However, at the same time, he opposed military rearmament(*Wiederbewaffnung*) and rejected the division of Germany. He also started church institutions and programs such as the Protestant Academy (*Evangelische Akademie*) of the Saxony Protestant Church and the Spiritual Helpline (*Telefonseelsorge*). Furthermore, in 1957, he founded the Joint Action to End Hunger (*Aktionsgemeinschaft für die Hungernden*), which was formed by the non-governmental organization called Action for World Solidarity (ASW: *Aktionsgemeinschaft Solidarische Welt*). It became the predecessor of Bread for the World (*Brot für die Welt*).

But his most important achievement was the establishment of the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace. For many years he had in mind a plan for a ministry of reconciliation and discussed it with his colleagues, but most saw his idea as a mere ideal. He first tried it in 1956 but failed. However, he did not give up and again called for the creation of this organization in April 1958, encouraging young Germans to volunteer to atone for the crimes of World War II, thereby providing atonement for the victims of the past Nazi regime, especially the Holocaust. He argued that we should show the sign and ask for forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace from enemy countries and Israel. Eventually, young people responded and the first projects took place in Norway, the Netherlands, England, France and Greece. However, with the construction of the Berlin Wall, Kreyssig could no longer engage in international activities, so he founded this organization in East Germany and led it himself until 1969.

As a member of the standing committee and council of the General Assembly of the German Protestant Church, he was a mediator between East and West Germany and tried to protect the church through the Word from the world. He was an inspirational figure, worthy of respect, and a valuable leader in the German Church who fulfilled his responsibilities. Like few Protestants after World War II, he early called for public responsibility in church and society from an ecumenical perspective, and key areas of the post-conciliar process on justice, peace, and the integrity of creation were of

particular importance to him. (www.oekumenezentrum-ekm.de/lothar-kreyssig) In 1971 he moved to West Berlin, and from 1977 he lived in a nursing home in Bergisch Gladbach, where he passed away in 1986. During his lifetime, 14 universities around the world offered to award him honorary doctorates, but he declined them all (Honert, 2018).

2. Kreyssig's Appeal for the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace

The Action Reconciliation Service for Peace began as a response to the failure of German Protestant churches and resistance to the Hitler regime during the Nazi era. It was founded by Kreyssig in 1958 as a volunteer organization to promote reconciliation and peace in Germany after World War II. He resisted Hitler within the Confessing Church and was joined by like-minded pastors such as Martin Niemöller (1892-1984), Gustav Heinemann (1899-1976), Elisabeth Schmitz (1893-1977), and Franz von Hammerstein (1921-2011). They mentioned the church's failures during the war and called for repentance. They exposed a history of failure, namely, centuries of anti-Semitism practiced in the church. However, what is clear is that after the war, the German church and society had little will to reflect on what they had done and to truly understand what direction they should move forward. Even the official statement of repentance (*Das Stuttgarter Schuldbekentnis*), led by confessional church leaders, announced by the German Protestant Church at the Markuskirche in Stuttgart on October 19, 1945, did not mention genocide or systematic killing of Jews, Sinti, Gypsies and large segments of the population of Central and Eastern Europe. The few voices that pointed this out, such as Adolf Freudenberg (1894-1977), were ignored.

However, post-war German churches and society showed little interest in realistically evaluating their role in the Nazi era. They were reluctant to reach out to the survivors and ask for forgiveness, or even to care about their lives after their escape from torture, the brutal loss of loved ones, and humiliation at the hands of their former neighbors. The survivors' dream, described by Michael Bodemann in his book *Gedächtnistheater: Die jüdische Gemeinschaft und ihre deutsche Erfindung* (Memorial Theater: Jewish

Communities and Their Understanding of Germany), tells us about their longing, and more precisely, their request for forgiveness (Bodemann, 2001). However, this interest was not realized and there was no sign of sympathy.

Kreyssig pointed out this situation at a Church Day event in Leipzig in 1954, but his appeals went largely unheard. However, finally, from April 26 to 30, 1958, the General Assembly of the German Protestant Church was held alternately in West Berlin-Spandau and East Berlin-Weissensee. At that time, the division of East and West Germany had already been completed, but the General Assembly of the German Protestant Church was still a general assembly representing the entire German Protestant Church, and at that meeting, the General Assembly of the West German Protestant Church and the East German Protestant Church discussed together. On the last day of the General Assembly, Kreyssig read an appeal for the creation of an Action Reconciliation Service for Peace, encouraging young Germans born after the war to go to places previously invaded by Germany to seek forgiveness and peace, and to pursue reconciliation through practical ministries so that they can become a symbol of reconciliation. The theme scripture for this movement was 2 Corinthians 5:19-21.

that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them.

And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (New International Version)

In his appeal, he first acknowledged that Germans started the Second World War and for this reason alone, more than others, became guilty for causing unmeasurable suffering to humankind and that Germans have in sinful revolt against the will of God exterminated millions of Jews. He also confessed that those who survived and did not want this to happen did not do enough to prevent it. (Weiß, 1998: 455)

Furthermore, he clearly pointed out that Germans did not yet have peace because there has been so little reconciliation. He argued that they had thirteen years of muffled silence followed by a frightening self-assertion. Yet, he emphasized that they could still counter the self-justification, the bitterness, and the hate when they really forgive, are forgiven, and when they practice these convictions, regardless of the necessity to make conscientiously purely political decisions. (Weiß, 1998: 455)

He then boldly proposed the following:

As a sign we plead that the other nations, who suffered because of us, will allow us with our hands and with our means to do something good. A village, a settlement, a church, a hospital, or was else can be used for charitable purposes to achieve as a sign of reconciliation. Let us begin with Poland, Russia, and Israel were we had done the most harm.

We plead that Germans, men of all confessions and social status, who are prepared to do so, to go to Poland, Russia, or Israel. There one can set a sign of peace. (Weiß, 1998: 455-456)

He then offered the financial plan like this:

When someone is not capable, he or she can make a donation for his or her deed of reconciliation. This enables materials to be procured, the living costs of the workers to be paid, and other expenses to be financed. An account number will be made public in the printed press, radio, and in television after the approval of the assembly. Every participant shall receive the necessary compensation for travel and living expenses. (Weiß, 1998: 455-456)

Even he was convinced that this service should unite the Germans from the German Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic. And finally he concluded his appeal to the relevant governments as follows:

We ask that the governments of Poland, the Soviet Union, and Israel not to accept the service as in some way considerable help or as a rectification, from which many

are prepared to do so. The service is to be accepted as a plead for peace and forgiveness. We ask the those countries to help us that this service can be achieved. We ask the governments of the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic to permit and to support the action.
(Weiß, 1998: 455-456)

Numerous attendees signed the appeal that evening. However, there were still many who did not repent, justified themselves, showed great hatred, and criticized his proposal as a Utopian and unrealistic idea. Nevertheless, Kreyssig jointly admitted guilt and demanded specific results. His humble attitude rejected paternalistic interpretations of the concept of atonement. Rather, he demonstrated a willingness to participate, take action, and learn through dialogue. He pursued action and truth, which seemed too other-oriented to many at the time. But people sensed a new political explosion and spiritual insight in this proposal, and devoted themselves to collecting, restoring and maintaining what had once been destroyed. Kreyssig wanted to establish this organization as a pan-German organization, but joint work was impossible due to the division of Germany. In East and West Germany, the two organizations developed with common goals, but had different focuses in actual ministry.

What we can see here is that when he first made this proposal in 1956, there were not many supporters and he might have been very much discouraged. But he never gave up and proposed it again in 1958, gaining quite many supporters. Finally, he was able to start this project concretely in 1959. His proposal might have sounded too idealistic at first, but he presented a realistic plan and appealed to the post-war generation. When they volunteered, this work could begin and started to bear fruits.

Additionally, his reconciliation ministry was a joint movement between Protestant and Catholic Christians in East Germany at the time. This was very unusual at the time. When Kreyssig worked with Günter Särchen (1927-2004), the Catholic co-chairman in Magdeburg at the time, he received much criticism. However, he was convinced that while it was important for the Germans to reconcile with the people of the countries they invaded, it was also very important for Protestants and Roman

Catholics to cooperate and reconcile while carrying out this kind of ministry. This point has great implications for Korean society in the sense that the Protestants and Roman Catholic Christians need to cooperate more for such a good ministry in Korea.

3. The Action Reconciliation Service for Peace

1) West Germany

The Action Reconciliation Service for Peace in West Germany began in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, and Norway in 1959 in the form of projects to build the Social Academy, churches, and facilities for the disabled. Although there were many difficulties at first, results were gradually achieved. To this end, Kreyszig requested donations from various individuals and organizations, and miraculously was able to fill the budget at the last moment (Weiß, 1998: 355). Other projects soon began in other countries and volunteers helped. A Jewish synagogue was built in Villeurbanne, France, a church of reconciliation (*Église de la Réconciliation*) was built in the Taizé community in France, a kindergarten was built in Skopje, Yugoslavia. In Crete, Greece an irrigation system was installed and the international meeting place (*internationalen Begegnungsstätte*) in Coventry Cathedral, England, which was destroyed during World War II, was rebuilt. Afterwards, the work in Israel began as a kibbutz project in 1961 after the trial of Adolf Eichmann (1906-1962)² (asf-ev.de/ueber-uns/leitsaetze-und-geschichte).

Since the mid-1960s, the areas where volunteers work have gradually changed. Construction projects tapered off and were replaced by other memorials, senior and social work projects. In the 1980s, an office was established to pursue additional projects in the areas of structural discrimination, human rights, and neighborhood support. At the 21st General Assembly of German Protestant Churches held in Düsseldorf in September 1985, the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace Group presented five Düsseldorf Peace Theses opposing the possibility of military deterrence.

2) Eichmann was a German and an Austrian, and as the leader of Nazi Germany, he worked to achieve the “final solution to the Jewish question.” He executed and managed the deportation of millions of Jews to concentration camps in Eastern Europe during World War II. He was captured by Mossad agents in Argentina on May 11, 1960, found guilty of war crimes at a trial in Jerusalem, and hanged in June 1962.

2) East Germany

On the other hand, the East German Action for Reconciliation (ASZ: *Aktion Sühnezeichen*) was no longer able to send volunteers to Western European projects after 1961 due to the construction of a wall between East and West Germany. Therefore, the project of action for reconciliation was initially limited to the territory of East Germany and the inner ecclesiastical regions. In 1962, the work began by establishing and developing summer camps where people from many countries lived and worked together for two to three weeks. However, this humble and arduous beginning became the foundation for future development on which the structure and concept for reconciliation work in East Germany can be built. In 1965 and 1966, a group of volunteers collaborated with the Catholic Pastoral Office in Magdeburg to visit the Nazi concentration camps in Auschwitz, Majdanek, Stutthof and Groß-Rosen, etc. Further trips to memorial sites in Poland and Czechoslovakia in 1967 and 1968 failed due to government refusal of visas, despite invitations. In 1969, Kreyssig stepped down as the leader, and only after the introduction of a visa-free agreement between East Germany, Poland and the Soviet Union in 1972 East German youth could participate in summer camps in Poland and become volunteers in Poland and Czechoslovakia. In 1979, a group first worked in Buchenwald, a site of a Nazi forced labor camp. In this way, some summer camps were held outside the church, and from 1981 the number of these summer camps was expanded including other Nazi concentration camps in Sachsenhausen, Ravensbrück, and Mittelbau-Dora. From that time on, this organization participated in the maintenance and restoration of Jewish cemeteries in almost all regions of East Germany.

3) After German Unification

After German unification, the two organizations were merged. Two different forms of volunteering were maintained: long-term volunteering in West Germany and short-term volunteering and summer camps in East Germany. Since the late 1990s, this organization has expanded its projects to respond to changing demands and new opportunities, such as volunteering in Europe. Through its volunteer and peace efforts

in Europe, Israel and the United States, it takes concrete action to address the crimes of National Socialism and its consequences.

To this end, those volunteers support survivors of Nazi concentration camps and help people who are mentally ill, homeless, refugees or disabled. Additionally, they try to find answers how the murder of millions of people could have happened, how a beloved father became this cold-blooded murderer, why only a few people prevented the extermination of the Jews, how all of this relates to us, and how the history of the Nazis affected those born after it. This organization encourages young people to find answers for themselves, and this often leads to reconciliation, acceptance, and a commitment to justice. Furthermore, this organization takes action for reconciliation through cross-border meetings. Seeing that memories shape the present, this organization strives to make people aware of their collective memories and the impact they have made, and to encourage mutual understanding through discussions. In addition, it regards reconciliation as encompassing not only interpersonal conflict but also historical guilt. This becomes clear through encounters with people who suffered under Nazi rule. It is the first meeting of Holocaust survivors with a German since World War II when they met volunteers from this organization. The pain caused by past wounds makes us feel the need for reconciliation, and the process of reconciliation can begin through recognition of historical sin and through concrete and practical actions.

Reconciliation also includes the theologically important concept of atonement. In other words, atonement is about healing a destroyed life, not compensating the damage. The suffering of the victims of violence and injustice can not be compensated, but atonement can be the first step toward a better future. This organization, therefore, believes that the long journey toward lasting and comprehensive peace depends on individual and societal change. Reconciliation is more than peace without war; it becomes possible when individuals learn to see others and themselves in a new way. Creating peace means supporting a world where everyone is guaranteed equal rights. There are still many conflicts in this world, but how to handle these conflicts peacefully requires allowing different opinions to exist, learning to deal with contradictions, and

understanding the inviolability of human rights. Therefore, this organization seeks to contribute to a social atmosphere that allows for diversity in values, opinions, characteristics, worldviews, and lifestyles. Volunteers strive to continuously learn and apply this. (www.asf-ev.de/ueber-uns/organisation/verein/kuratorium/ziele-und-leitsaetze)

Furthermore, the current work of this organization is first of all, a long-term volunteering currently with approximately 180 volunteers per year in countries that suffered particularly a lot from Nazi rule, such as Belarus, Belgium, France, Greece, the United Kingdom, Israel, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, the Czech Republic, Ukraine, and the United States. Those volunteers are mostly young people between 18 and 27 years old. They support and accompany Holocaust survivors and their descendants, work at memorial sites, care for the elderly, the disabled, socially disadvantaged and refugees, and participate in earth projects and anti-racism initiatives.

Since partner organizations encouraged volunteering in Germany in the 1980s, 15-20 volunteers from the United States, Israel, and various European countries have come to Germany to volunteer, and about 300 people participate in about 25 summer camps in Germany and abroad every year, living and working together. They are often former long-term volunteers who want to pass on their experiences to the participants. For two to three weeks, volunteers work in, for example, Jewish cemeteries and memorials, social institutions and participate in inter-cultural projects. Additionally, opinions are exchanged on current and historical issues.

Young and old volunteers continue to work in local groups and friend circles. Other volunteers are hired to perform short- and long-term volunteer work, and some also contribute to promotional and educational work. For publicity purposes, this organization publishes a regular magazine “*zeichen*” three times per year, which reports on the latest work of volunteers and project partners and is dedicated to specific topics (asf-ev.de/veroeffentlichungen/?filter=zeichen). It also talks about current political issues, such as taking a public stand against anti-Semitism, right-wing extremism and racism. It argues the compensation for those who were persecuted by

National Socialists, and promotes inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue for justice and peace. Another focus is determining the annual theme, which will be decided at the General Assembly. The biennial theme for 2022 and 2023 is “Antisemitism, Anti Judaism, and Anti Israelism.”

As for the educational ministry, this organization strives to stimulate social debate through events, workshops, seminars, and conferences on memory politics and inter-religious dialogue. As sponsors or collaborative partners, it also contributes significantly to the following meetings such as the International Youth Conference Center (IJBS: *Internationale Jugendbegegnungsstätte*), the House of Peace in Jerusalem, Beit Ben Yehuda, and the Paris International Conference Center, Foyer Le Pont.

4. The Legacy of Lothar Kreyssig

To this day, Kreyssig is known as the only judge who attempted to stop the systematic murder committed under the Nazis’ T4 program. As a result, Plöha, Brandenburg an der Havel, Magdeburg, Karlsruhe and Bergisch Gladbach have streets named after him. There is a school named after him in Plöha and a nursing home named after him in Lehnin. Weiss points out that many people who participated in the 1989 Peaceful Revolution in East Germany, which sparked the unification of East and West Germany, and began political activities, were in fact greatly influenced by his reconciliation movement (Weiss, 1998).

To commemorate his 100th birthday, a plaque was unveiled at the Upper District Court (*Oberlandesgericht*) in Brandenburg an der Havel in 1998. On the site of the former lower court, where the public prosecutor(*Staatsanwaltschaft*) of Brandenburg is now located, there are two monuments, inside of which are the monuments to Konrad Weiß, who called Kreyssig the ‘Prophet of Reconciliation (*Prophet der Versöhnung*)’ and published his biography. There is also a plaque with an inscription and the Brandenburg Law Society donated this plaque to commemorate the 50th anniversary of his founding of the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace on May 50, 2008. On October 22, 2006, the Federal Ministry of Justice held a memorial service sponsored by Minister of Justice Brigitte Zypries to commemorate the 20th anniversary of his death.

On July 5, 2008, a monument was unveiled in Hohenferchesar, where he lived from 1937 to 1972.

Lothar & Johanna Kreyszig were recognized as righteous by Yad Vashem, Israel's official memorial service which was founded in 1953 to commemorate the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis and to remember those who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust, without any financial or religious purpose.

In 2009, Hans-Joachim Döring founded the Lothar Kreyszig Ecumenical Center (LKÖZ: *Lothar Kreyszig Ökumenezentrum*) of the Protestant Church in Mitteldeutschland (EKM: *Evangelischen Kirche in Mitteldeutschland*) in Magdeburg (Döring, 2011). The current activities of this organization include providing services and advice to local churches, dioceses and synods, working with local churches, institutions and ministries of the Protestant Church of Central Germany to address contemporary social ethical issues and in the political and social spheres and to promote dialogue with ecumenical partners. The center's core themes are peace, justice, migration, ecumenical partnerships, environment and development (www.oekumenezentrum-ekm.de). Furthermore, the Lothar Kreyszig Peace Prize was established here and has been awarded every two years since 1999.

On May 27, 2018, the 60th anniversary ceremony of the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace was held at the French Friedrichstadt church (*Französischen Friedrichstadt kirche*) in Berlin. Here, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier concluded his congratulatory speech as follows:

Accepting responsibility for your own story has been a long and sometimes difficult process. It was not a forced reeducation or humiliation but a slow but steady self-awareness and ultimate self-liberation. We Germans do not have any alternative yet. I say this with some new historical revisionists' maneuvers in mind. Those who trivialize the sins of war and genocide bring shame upon themselves. We must recognize that historical enlightenment and political responsibility are at the core of our democracy...This path not only brought Germany back to being a European country,

but also transformed the Federal Republic of Germany into the country it is today, i.e. in Europe. It was also a prerequisite for becoming a respected and trustworthy neighbor. According to this self awareness, our country owes a lot to Lothar Kreyssig and many volunteers who followed his calling and example. (www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/service/bulletin/rede-von-bundespraesident-dr-frank-walter-steinmeier-1147280)

III. Conclusion

So far, we have looked at the reconciliation thought of Lothar Kreyssig and his concrete practices. First, we briefly looked at his life and then looked at his specific reconciliation efforts, the Peace Corps. First of all, based on the biblical worldview, he made it clear that all humans were created in the image of God and should be respected regardless of disability or illness. In this respect, he was the only Christian judge with true courage who opposed the T4 project.

Second, he carried out a very specific reconciliation movement for countries invaded by Germany after World War II. This also serves as an example of practicing the Christian worldview. Although he belonged to a confessional church that opposed the Nazis, as the president of the German Protestant Church, he had a clear sense of responsibility before God and clearly knew what the social responsibility of German Christians was at the time. It became a symbol of and practiced sincere peace service to many victims of the Holocaust and victims of World War II. At first, his appeal sounded like an unrealistic ideal, but in the end, this reconciliation movement continued to unfold, and he cooperated with the Roman Catholic Church. Thousands of German young people are still devotedly serving, and eventually Germany was recognized again by neighboring countries. Finally, we received the blessing of reunification. In this respect, Kreyssig's faith was clearly a living faith with action, and therefore it can be said that he was a very important Christian thinker and practical leader as an 'apostle of reconciliation' that we must remember as much as D.

Bonhoeffer. For Joachim Garstecki, he was a “visionary realist”. (asf-ev.de/en/lothar-kreyssig-a-visionary-realist)

This point has many implications for the Korean Peninsula. In North and South Korea, which have been divided for over 70 years after the Korean War and have not been able to reconcile and are hostile to each other, a peace service movement for reconciliation should be launched like this and disabled people should be treated more humanely. If Korean Christians and churches take the lead in putting this idea of reconciliation into concrete practice and North Korea also responds, not only will the Korean Peninsula be finally unified, but it can also become another exemplary example that concretely demonstrates the spirit of reconciliation and peace to the entire world. will be. Therefore, Korean Christian intellectuals should continue their efforts to study and apply Kreyssig's reconciliation ideas more deeply.

“Hereby I confirm that this paper has not been published or requested for publication in other journals or publications.”

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로타 크라이식의 화해 사상에 관한 고찰

A Research on the Reconciliation Thought of Lothar Kreyssig

최용준 (한동대학교)

논문초록

본 논문은 로타 크라이식(Lothar Kreyssig, 1898-1986)의 화해 사상에 관한 연구이다. 그는 바이마르와 나치 시대의 독일 판사였다. 그는 독일 나치 시대에 소위 작전 T4(Aktion T4)라고 불리는 장애인 안락사 정책에 반대한 유일한 판사였다. 이 안락사 정책은 1939년 9월 1일에 시작되어 1941년에 중단되었는데 독일과 오스트리아에서는 약 20만 명이 이 작전으로 사망했으며 기타 유럽 국가에서는 10만 명의 장애인이 사망했다. 제2차 세계 대전 후, 그는 다시 판사직을 제안받았지만 거절했다. 나중에 그는 화해의 사도가 되어 독일 개발 원조 비정부 기구인 화해를 위한 평화봉사단(ASF: *Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste*)를 설립했다. 그의 화해 사상은 매우 중요하고 한반도 정세에 깊은 함의가 있다. 따라서 이 논문은 그의 생애를 간략히 살펴본 후 화해에 대한 사상과 그 구체적인 열매인 화해를 위한 평화봉사단을 고찰하고 그의 사상이 한반도 상황에 대해 주는 교훈을 평가하는 것으로 결론을 맺는다.

주제어: 로타 크라이식, 작전 T4, 화해, 평화, 봉사