

IMAGINING RELIGION AND MODERNITY IN POST-COLONIAL KOREA
: NEO-LIBERAL BRAND CULTURE AND DIGITAL SPACE

by

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Imagining Religion and Modernity in Post-Colonial Korea

: Neo-Liberal Brand Culture and Digital Space

Dissertation directed by Professor Stewart M. Hoover

This dissertation explores the question of how new digital media, and neo-liberal brand culture and the post-colonial imaginary of modernity and the linear world history are entangled with the formation, mediation and circulation of contemporary social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism. Predicated on the post-colonial critique of Eurocentrism in Western theories of modernity and the position that the imaginary is not the opposite of the real but the condition of the production and perception of it, the dissertation appropriates Charles Taylor's idea of social imaginary as conceptual and analytical framework. Adopting multiperspectival approach to social imaginaries, it conducts 1) textual analysis on the branding of Templestay and the mainline liberal media representation of conservative Protestants in the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 Knife attack on the U. S. ambassador, 2) production analysis on the managers of the branding of Templestay and exclusive religion journalist and columnists in the Korean

mainline news media, and 3) reception analysis on the focus groups exposed to the branding materials of Templestay and the news representation of the Protestants. Lastly, to historicize the analyses, the encounters of the two religions with the modern and the neo-liberal are surveyed. In conclusion, the dissertation shows that Korean Protestantism is currently imagined as the pre-modern, irrational and inferior other becoming the enemy of, and obstacle in, the full modernization of Korean society, contrary to its being imagined as the symbol of modernity and Western civilization in the early modern Korea. Meanwhile, Korean Buddhism is ambivalently imagined both as authentic Korean tradition purifying the corruption of modern technology/lifestyle and as the forefront, modern religion adapted to neo-liberal times, contrary to its being imagined as the symbol of the pre-modern in the early modern Korea. In the social imaginaries of both Korean Buddhism and Protestantism, the dissertation finds both the working of Protestant semiotic imaginary dichotomizing spirit and matter, the pure(unmixed) and the corrupted(mixed), and that of the post-colonial imaginary of the linear and universal world history in which South Korea is imagined as uncivilized and retarded in the teleological transition of the progress of world history.

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Chapter I. Introduction

In 2008, as the social repugnance to Protestantism was critically rising in Korean society and neo-liberal order was engendering a great number of the unemployed and irregular workers, to get into graduate school was one of the most popular courses that devout Protestant youths could take after their university graduation for various reasons. First, for them, university was imagined as one of the most crucial institutions for the evangelization of Korean society and to become a graduate student was the most attractive and practical way to stay in university for their mission for more years. Second, it was considered as the opening up of a chance to become a university professor that can be critically influential to university students and the evangelization of them. Third, likewise other non-Protestant youths, to get into graduate school was the safest way to defer entering the job market and prepare their qualifications for their future job. And I was one of the devout Protestant youths who decided to become a graduate student for the reasons.

My research career started as a master student in the scholarship of Korean media and cultural studies which has pioneered the qualitative and cultural theory-oriented research on the intersection among media, culture and society in South Korea. I came to critically examine my Protestant worldview and experience by secular, scholarly and humanistic language such as the concepts and ideas of cultural studies and social science. The received conservative Protestant faith, imaginary and habitus of mine were considerably deconstructed, negotiated and newly shaped by the encounter with

literatures of post-structuralism. While my Protestant identity and its collusive relationship with neo-liberalism came to be the research object of my master thesis, religion was not a popular research interest in Korean media and cultural studies, whose previous research trend was focusing on a variety of post-modern theories, the play of interpretation and the politics of meaning in Korean popular culture including fashion, K-pop music, film, online game and reality TV show.

The intensifying miseries and agonies of people under the neo-liberal order, however, made such approach to popular culture look more or less naïve and inappropriate. Many students of media cultural studies in Korea, including me, came to critically examine neo-liberalism and its penetration into everyday lives.¹ Meanwhile, contrary to the cultural studies' being in favor of post-modern theories and applying of it into the alleged post-modern context of South Korea, the political response of Korean government to the risks and deaths constructed by neo-liberalism, made people doubt if Korea is really on the track of modernization and civilization, which also becomes one of the questions in which this dissertation project is interested. Although the so-called post-modern phenomenon of the cultural logic of mimicry, parody, hybridity and of the seeking of authenticity and spirituality were massively found in the media and cultural sphere of

¹ It is within this context that the identity formations, negotiations and politics of Protestant subjects living in neo-liberal order were investigated through my master's thesis research conducted in 2009. Attempting theoretical articulation between Foucault's theory of (neo) liberal governmentality and Hall's discussion on identity, I thought of the identities of Protestant subjects living in neo-liberal order as a dynamic location where the neo-liberal and Protestant discourse collude, compete, and negotiate with each other. And I found that, given the interviews with the research participants who identified themselves as conservative Evangelicals, Protestant discourses on God and the self were successfully colluding with the neo-liberal discourses on self-improvement and risk-taking.

Korean society, in its realm of politics and economy there were full of conducts which would be labeled as the pre-modern or the uncivilized such as dictatorship, cronyism and bribery. And Korean Protestantism, the birth place of my religious identity and humanistic research interest, is critically entangled with the seemingly pre-modern characteristics of Korean politics and economy.

Under the given context, my personal history and research interest have been entangled with the issues of modernity, neo-liberalism, religion and digital media which emerge as structural forces of producing and mediating the post-colonial experience of Korean people. And after my coming into a doctoral program in the United States, the research interest has been more abundantly developed and complicated in and through the encounter with the field of the religion and media scholarship, which has helped me think of such big issues of modernity, neo-liberalism and religion and digital media in South Korea from the crucial angles of imagination, mediation, practice, embodiment and sensorial experience.

Despite their being critical structural forces of the social formation of the post-colonial Korea, the research themes that fascinate me, however, have been partly disregarded by both Korean media and cultural studies and the religion and media scholarship. Korean media and cultural studies has conventionally disregarded the issues of religion, mediation, imagination and materiality under the influence of British cultural studies that rarely pays a fair amount of attention to them in its theorizing of the working of the contemporary social world. Meanwhile, in the religion and media scholarship, the issue of religion and digital media in South Korea, has been rarely examined although there

are pioneering studies focusing on religion and televised media in South Korea, mostly conducted by Jin-Kyu Park (2006; 2007; 2008). Thus, as much as religion, mediation, imagination and materiality have been peripheral issues to the field of Korean media and cultural studies, South Korea as a post-colony has been more or less the periphery of the religion and media scholarship. In this regard, this dissertation project which explores the interwoven relationships among modernity, neo-liberalism, imagination, mediation, materiality, and religion and digital media in South Korea, could be partly unfamiliar to, and exploratory in, both the religion and media scholarship and Korean media and cultural studies which are likely to be a potential readership with which I could discuss on this dissertation project.

Focusing on the, more or less, disregarded issue of the interplay among imagination, modernity, neo-liberalism, and religion and media in Korea, which has been crucial in the production and mediation of the post-colonial experience of Korean society, this dissertation project looks into the following primary questions:

I-1. How is Korean Protestantism represented, mediated, and discoursed in the mainline online newspapers' coverage of the two significant events of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 knife attack on U.S. Ambassador in South Korea?

I-2. How is Korean Buddhism represented, mediated, and discoursed by the branding of Templestay in digital spaces including its official websites and social media platforms?

2-1. What social imaginaries of contemporary Korean society, modernity and Protestantism enable and legitimize the mainline online newspapers' accounts of the two events?

2-2. In what social imaginaries of contemporary Korean society, modernity and Buddhism is the branding of Templestay executed, mediated, visualized and circulated?

And in order to explore the full dimension of the working of the social imaginaries in contemporary Korean society, the dissertation project concerns itself with the question of how and what historical factors involve in the social formation, mediation, and circulation of the imaginaries of modernity, Korean Protestantism and Korean Buddhism. Further, it is concerned with what affective and sensorial experiences are produced, aroused and shared among those who encounter particular images and texts mediating the representation of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism in the digital media space of South Korea. These questions need to be more unpacked with the elucidation of some crucial concepts employed in the questions.

First of all, it needs to be elucidated how this dissertation project approaches to modernity or the modern keeping in mind that it is a difficult task to define it singularly and precisely. Modernity will be discussed in four different dimensions that cannot be fully integrated into each other in this dissertation: The first dimension is a theory. In his book tracing the genealogy of modern ideologies, *Ideology and Post-Ideology*, Saeki Keishi (1996) argues that modernity can sustain only with its own thought, knowledge, and philosophy which locate and legitimize the modern and, thus, it can be understood as the self-

consciousness on modernity itself. Theories of modernity are a sort of self-consciousness on what intellectuals of the West and non-Western countries experienced their encounters with modernity. Most of the literatures discussing modernity in this dissertation, problematize Eurocentricism and universalism which underlie the self-understanding of Western theorists on modernity. I discuss this issue in chapter 2. The second dimension is the imaginary. Modernity comes up in one's mind with particular constellations of visual image, narrative, moral ethos, conceptual categories, judgments, and sentiments and sensorial experiences. When I question how Korean Protestantism and Buddhism are not only represented but imagined in and through digital mediation and space, I assume that there are constellations of modern imaginaries of world history and modernity on their making, in which a) secular media is provided with the interpretative and representational framework on Korean Protestantism, b) Buddhism acquires the narratives and discourses for the branding of Templestay in the neo-liberal market, c) the representations on the religious groups are taken for granted by most of Korean citizens, and d) particular moral judgments and emotions are aroused on the religious groups. This imaginary dimension of modernity is mostly discussed with the concept of 'social imaginary', which Taylor (2004) employs in order to illuminate the significance of new imaginaries on time, order, human agency, and society in the rise of 'Western' modern world. I exposit how the concept of social imaginary, particularly its relations to mediation and circulation, helps us understand the current project of making 'modern' and 'neo-liberal' realities in Korean society. The third dimension is a lived historical condition. By this, I mean particular historical facts, periods, and forces where Japan involved in opening

up, colonizing and modernizing Korea with the transplantation of capitalist production system with Western technologies since 1894 and where the state-driven project since 1960s achieved 'compressed modernization' while producing a variety of side-effects in its tragic encounter with colonial and Korean war experiences. The fourth dimension is a normative one. When I introduce some theorists on modernity trying to define modernity while avoiding adopting the "first in Europe, then elsewhere structure of global historical time (Chakrabarty, 2000, p. 7)," or some Korean theorists who insist that Korean society still needs the project of modernity in depth, modernity is understood as the project of rationalizing one's society. The theorists try to normatively define rationality as the core characteristics of modernity which leads a society to the betterment of itself (Shome, 2014).

Second, this dissertation project is predicated on the position that the imaginary is not the opposite of the real but the condition of the perception and production of the real. Drawing on the Spinozist understanding of human knowledge in which the rigid binaries between mind and body, true and imaginary, cannot be hold, this dissertation projects posits that all sensory knowledge and experience are crucially produced in and through the realm of imagination (Gaten & Lloyd, 1999, p. 12). That is to say, there are no embodied experiences without imagination. As Dawney (2011) puts it, imagination is "*a condition for there being a real* (emphasis in the original text) (p. 541)." In this regard, the imaginary has distinctive features from fantasy which has "a private, even individualistic sound about it" and connotes a sense of escape from reality (Appadurai, 1996, p. 7). In the

dissertation project, the imaginary is rather understood as having the capacity to generate action and practice in realities and further to transform the realities (Castoriadis, 1987).

Third, when the dissertation project mentions 'social' and 'society' in the questions, it does not presume that 'society' or the 'social' preexists as the static and fixed. Bruno Latour (2005) argues that conventional social sciences have taken 'social' as the essentially given which could glue particular domains of, for instance, religion, psychology, politics, and economics all together and thus could equally explain and be linked to all the other domains. Distanced from the presupposition of the existence of social ties as "the hidden presence of some specific social force" behind all the other domains, this dissertation project considers the social as what should be explained and analyzed from the outset as a problematic one (*Ibid.*, p. 5). The making of the social is not possible if there are no collectively shared experiences of the real which can be conceived and produced only through the mediation of the imaginary. In other words, the making of the social is critically predicated on the realm of imagination and the technology and practice of the mediation and circulation of the imaginary. In order for the imaginary to be collectively shared, that is, in order for what could be called social reality or social world to be enabled and formed, something carrying the imaginary has to be first mediated and collectively circulated.

Fourth, thus, the employment of the concepts of mediation and circulation, employed in the questions, aims to vividly capture and manifest the dynamics of the making of the social in contemporary social world. The concept of circulation reminds us of the fact that "images, representations, meanings, emotions, values, and practices" have

to be moved, distributed and shared for the making of the imagined collective social world (Valaskivi & Sumiala, 2014, p. 231). It critically represents the non-linearity and cyclicity of the movement, distribution and sharing for the making of the social. In this dissertation, the concept of mediation is preferred to that of media, since mediation better captures the imagery of process and that of multi-directionality which all characterize the circulation of symbols for the making of the social in the contemporary world. While media is a thing, mediation is “a non-linear process” of communication in which a variety of media unevenly, dialectically, and multi-directionally participates into the circulatory process of symbols and makes the social enabled (Couldry, 2008, p. 380).

Predicated on, and aligning with, the above discussion, this dissertation project employs the idea of ‘social imaginary’ as the conceptual and theoretical framework to explore the research questions. Social imaginary is a form of imaginary understanding which people as social being come to have about their selves, practices and positions in their collective social worlds. Taylor (2004) states that it refers to “the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations (p. 23).” Given that social imaginary offers “a widely shared sense of legitimacy (*Ibid.*, p. 6),” the concept of ‘moral order’ is often used instead of that of social imaginary.

Social imaginary is expressed and carried through a variety of encounters with “images, stories, legends, and modes of address (Gaonkar, 2002, p. 10).” That is to say, social imaginaries which glue society together, are created, sustained, reproduced and

negotiated by the ongoing circulation of media images, texts, practices and technologies. As Valaskivi and Sumiala (2014) simply put, “society is held together (Latour, 2005) by the social imaginaries (Taylor, 2004) created and maintained through circulation (p. 231).” Further, social imaginaries contribute to arousing and producing particular emotions among people through the circulation of particular media images and texts carrying and mediating the imaginaries. And the people are likely to “invest affectively in them (Dawney, 2011, p. 542).” Thus, the idea of social imaginary encourages us to think of the possibility of similar bodies, having similar affective responses to particular media images and texts that are circulated in a mass scale, and that of similar embodied experiences which are shaped by shared social imaginaries, which let the bodies quite similarly understand and feel social reality. This issue of the embodiment of social imaginary through the encounter with media images, texts and practices, are crucially examined in this dissertation project.

Meanwhile, what Taylor (1995) refutes through the idea of social imaginary is the received, ‘acultural’ understanding of modernity which is more or less identified with the cultural-neutral process of industrialization and enlightenment and thus in which it is expected that “any culture could suffer the impact of growing scientific consciousness; any religion could undergo secularization; any set of ultimate ends could be challenged by a growth of instrumental thinking (p. 25).” In this regard, what Taylor (2004) aims at by elaborating how the formation of new social imaginary and moral order in the particular time and place of Europe enabled and generated Western modernity, is to historicize and particularize the modern social imaginary of the West and thus to offer a ‘cultural’ theory

of modernity, aligning with Dipesh Chakrabarty's critique of the European idea of the universal, singular and linear History in *Provincializing Europe* (2000). The perspective seeing Western modernity not as universal and teleological but as regional, historical and cultural critically underlies this dissertation project.

What Taylor (2004) terms modern social imaginaries is characterized by the imaginary spheres of market economy, public sphere and self-governing people, whose fundamental principles are reciprocal interest pursuit and respect among equal individuals detached from any sacred order. In the modern social imaginaries, the meaning of their existences is only defined within and by the ordinary, equal ones without its anchoring to any transcendent beings such as God. This modern moral order is fundamentally separated from the prior pre-modern one where agents who were allocated their position within a particular hierarchy, co-existed in a mutually complimentary and dependent relationship saturated with transcendental meaning. In this way, social imaginary includes a broader grasp of history, time, order and the social. Modern social imaginaries of modernity and (world) history are crucial to understanding and unifying the seemingly disparate case studies of this dissertation since the Western social imaginaries emerge as a powerful background understanding in and through which Korean Protestantism, Buddhism and mainline media institutions in both cases studies, navigate their positions and influences, acquire social recognitions on themselves, and anticipate possible outcomes of their practices within the imagined community of Korean society.

Now, it is time to briefly introduce the two case studies that this dissertation project conducts to explore the research questions. The first case study focuses on the

mainline liberal media discourse of, and photographic images of, conservative Protestants which were massively mediated and circulated in the phases of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 Knife attack on the U. S. ambassador Mark Lippert. Let me first elucidate the two significant incidents of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 Knife attack on the U. S. ambassador Mark Lippert, which the first case study captures as symptomatic scenes where social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism, modernity and history are glimpsed, formed, articulated and circulated.

The controversy was generated by the fierce protest of conservative Protestants against the Lady Gaga concert that was scheduled to take place at Olympic Stadium in Seoul on April 27th 2012. The Korean Association of Church Communication (KACC) declared their opposition to the Lady Gaga concert with a statement titled '*the Problem of Lady Gaga Concert in South Korea*' on March 19th. On March 22nd, the concert was declared to be harmful to teenagers by the Korean Media Rating Board (KRMB). Civilians Network against Lady Gaga Concert on April 21st and Facebook Group against Lady Gaga Concert from April 23rd to 27th, organized demonstrations against Hyundai Card company in front of the Hyundai Group headquarters, claiming that they would call for a boycott against credit card products of Hyundai unless Hyundai Card the sponsor of the concert cancels it. On March 30th, Hyundai Card announced that only person of 18 and above will be allowed to attend the concert, which was initially open to anyone over the age of 12.

The protestors, mostly comprised of conservative Evangelicals, insisted that Lady Gaga's song and performance glamorized homosexuality and suicide and thus that her concert would have a tremendously dangerous effect on the overall morality and

spirituality of Korean youth. The severe protest of the Protestants against the Lady Gaga concert, however, reignited the prevalent hatred against Korean Protestantism which has prominently arisen since 2007. The mainline liberal media opined that the aversion of conservative Evangelicals to Lady Gaga, her concert and homosexuality, is inappropriate and anachronistic. The mainline conservative media, on the contrary, expressed their concern about the cultural and moral corruption by the Lady Gaga concert even though they did not overtly support the Protestants' protest. The South Korean controversy on the Lady Gaga concert came to be introduced by a number of international media, including some US and French online media. Despite the huge controversy, however, Lady Gaga performed her concert at Seoul Olympic Stadium on 27th April 2012 after all.

Meanwhile, on March 5th 2015, the U.S. Ambassador to South Korea Mark Lippert was attacked by a 55-year-old man called Ki-Jong Kim while offering his speech at the event in Seoul, which was organized by the Korea Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation that advocates peaceful unification between North and South Korea. Kim Ki-Jong, who slashed Mark Lippert's right cheek and left arm with a kitchen knife he prepared in advance, turned out to be a member of the council and to have been opposed to the joint South Korean-U.S. military drills which annually occur and generate the ire of North Korea. As soon as the South Korea news media reported the attack with the photographic images of the Ambassador Mark Lippert splattered with blood, Korean people at first expressed their shock and surprise.

But the tone of the reaction to the attack soon turned into guilt and apology as the South Korean conservative news media repeated the speeches of President Geun-Hye

Park and conservative political elites who defined the event as a terrorist attack on the South Korea-U.S. alliance and alluded to the link between Ki-Jong Kim and 'jongbuk.'² Although the Ambassador's injury turned out to be not that critical, more than a few people in South Korea felt the fear that the attack might make the United States enraged and destroy the alliance of South Korea with the most powerful country in the world. The extreme right-wing group Korea Parent Federation performed a ceremony of burning the North Korean flag in front of the headquarter of the Korea Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation. A senior citizen in his 70s brought a letter of apology and dog meat as a gift for consoling the injured U.S. Ambassador. This became a sensational international news.³ The brother-in-law of President Geun-Hye Park, Dong-Wuk Shin, who is the president of the Korean Republican Party, kneeled in contrition in front of the United States Embassy while asking for the Ambassador's, his family's, the U.S. government's and American citizens' forgiveness.⁴ Above all the reactions seemingly overdoing, however, what caused the biggest controversy in Korean society was the Korean traditional fan dance and ballet performed by some conservative Evangelicals who wished for the recovery of the injured ambassador. The photographic images of the Protestants' traditional fan dance were not

² For instance, President Geun-Hye Park quickly responded to Kim's attack on the U.S. Ambassador and denounced it saying that "this incident is not only a physical attack on the U.S. ambassador but an attack on the South Korea-U.S. alliance and it can never be tolerated." Accessed at, <http://www.cnn.com/2015/04/01/asia/south-korea-us-ambassador-attack-charge/>, on March 9th, 2016. And 'Jongbuk' literally means 'to follow the North Korea.' But the conservative news media and political elites have uncritically used this word in referring to the dissenters and critics from them.

³ Accessed at <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2015/03/06/well-wishing-south-korean-offers-dog-meat-to-injured-us-ambassador.html>, on March 9th, 2016.

⁴ Accessed at <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/10/world/asia/south-korea-split-over-how-to-respond-to-attack-on-us-ambassador-mark-lippert.html>, on March 9th, 2016.

only published in the mainline newspapers but circulated among a great number of social media users in South Korea while being considered as a huge disgrace to their own country.

The second case study looks into the branding of Templestay where Korean government and the Chogyae Order of Korean Buddhism together systemically produce, mediate and circulate particular social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism, tradition and modernity in relation to the discourses of authenticity, the self, purity and modern corruption. Templestay is a tourism program which offers both accommodation and the cultural experience of Korean Buddhism to foreign and domestic travelers in Buddhist temples scattered all around the country. The idea of the Templestay program at first came from Korean government, not from Korean Buddhism. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism was concerned about the lack of the accommodation for the estimated number of foreign visitors in the 2002 Korean and Japan FIFA World Cup. The ministry suggested that Korean Buddhism could accommodate some of the foreign visitors in Buddhist temples. Remaining the long-standing tradition of the Chogyae Order where in general praised and emphasized its monasticism and purity, its leaders stubbornly opposed the idea at first. In the long run, however, the ministry and the Chogyae Order reached an agreement that Korean Buddhist temples would offer not only accommodation but the cultural program to experience Korean tradition and Buddhist practices (Kaplan, 2010, p. 132).

Given the significant involvement of Korean government in the launching of Templestay and the development of Templestay into “businesslike cultural enterprise

(Kaplan, 2010, p. 134),” the active employment of a variety of new digital media in the promotion and branding of Templestay would be no surprise. The Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism, which has been in charge of the management and promotion of Templestay since 2004, has employed a variety of digital media including the official websites, YouTube, Facebook, Tweeter, Pinterest, E-Book and mobile app for the branding of Templestay. The program has annually developed and achieved a great success since 2004. The number of foreign visitors for the program in 2007 were slightly over ten thousand and reached thirty-seven thousand in 2011.⁵ It has come to be one of the most successful tourism products not only in Korean Buddhism but in South Korea.

In terms of understanding and exploring the branding practice of Templestay, this case study draws on Sarah Banet-Weiser (2012)’s discussion on the brand culture of neo-liberal times where the alleged authentic spaces, such as religion, creativity and the self, are increasingly visualized, mediated, formed and experienced in and through the logic of brand culture and thus authenticity itself becomes a brand. This dissertation project finds that her elucidation of the formation and working of brand culture in neo-liberal times critically aligns and resonates with the theoretical framework of social imaginaries on which this dissertation project is predicated.

⁵ Accessed at <http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=sec&sid1=103&oid=020&aid=0002363159>, on March 31st, 2016; Accessed at <http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=sec&sid1=103&oid=001&aid=0005463613> on March 31st, 2016.

Banet-Weiser crucially points out that the working of brand culture in neo-liberal times is significantly based on the making of communities of people who collectively share a common affect, memory, expectation and experience on a brand. And, according to Charles Taylor (2004), such collective sharing of affect, memory, experience and thus culture and history, is interwoven with the formation, mediation and circulation of particular social imaginary within a collectively imagined social world. In order for a brand to form communities of consumers who could invest themselves in it, the brand first produces, mediates and circulates particular imaginaries of itself in and by which consumers could collectively understand their and other existence, feel secure and authentic, and find “affective connection with others and themselves (Banet-Weiser, 2012, p. 219).” In this regard, this dissertation projects understands the branding of Templestay as an institutional practice and strategy to produce, mediate and circulate particular social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism and tradition.

In order to fully observe, examine and represent the mediation, circulation and formation of social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism in the two incidents and the branding of Templestay, this dissertation project takes a variety of methodological approaches, which aligns with the multiperspectival approach that Douglas Kellner (1997) suggests for cultural studies.⁶ By multiperspectival cultural studies, Kellner means the trans-disciplinary cultural studies that approach to media, culture and

⁶ But they only do except the fact that the employing of the idea of social imaginary in this project can lead us to the questions of body, affect, sensory experience and the non-representational where which one is not necessarily “engaging with the world by interpreting and exchanging meanings (Rose, 2012, p.8).”

communication “from the perspectives of political economy, text analysis, and audience reception” all together (p. 117). The dissertation appropriates the multiperspectival approach, but keeping aligned with the theoretical interest of social imaginary and noting the working of affect, body and sensorial experience in the encounters with media texts and images carrying and mediating social imaginaries in particular.

Exploring the political economy of social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism, this dissertation project identifies, and focuses on, among others, the following four factors as being critically involved in the production of the social imaginaries: 1) the politico-economic conditions that have affected the formation of current social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism in Korean modern history; 2) the politico-economic conditions that affect the dominant cultural logic, language and rhetoric which structuralize the way that the social imaginaries of Korean modernity, Protestantism and Buddhism are articulated, discoursed and visualized; 3) the technological affordance of new digital media as a material condition which enables the incredibly high-speed circulation of the media materials carrying the social imaginaries at a massive scale, particularly by shaping the enormous networks of social agents who spontaneously comment on, disseminate and publicize the media materials; 4) the social institutions that systemically and professionally produce particular discourses and imaginaries of Korean modernity, Protestantism and Buddhism, such as the mainline liberal online media in South Korea and the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism.

In order to explore the first factor, Chapter 3 focuses on examining how particular politico-economic conditions affect the historical formation of Korean Protestantism and

Buddhism, surveying the historical formation and trajectory of Korean Buddhism and Protestantism within Korean modern history. For instance, the Temple Ordinance in Japanese colonial era, the Law for the Control of Buddhist Property, the Cultural Assets Preservation Law and the Korean National Park System in the 1960s are brought as critical political conditions that have shaped the interwoven relationship among the State, tourism and Korean Buddhism, which later becomes the underlying condition for the creation of the Templestay program and for the formation of the social imaginary and expectation on it.

The second factor is primarily explored in Chapter 3 and further in Chapter 5 and 6 covering the case studies. For instance, Chapter 3 traces the political and historical events which have affected the cultural logic, language, and rhetoric of identifying shamanism with the uncivilized and of representing them inferior to the modern, back to the Western imperialistic invasion to the Joseon Dynasty in the late 19th century and the introduction of Western missionaries who colluded with it. Meanwhile, Chapter 6, which examines the social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism in the branding of Templestay, submits the politico-economic order of neo-liberalism as a critical force which shapes the contemporary brand culture by whose logic, rhetoric and language social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism are articulated and formed.

In order to explore the working of the third factor, this dissertation project concentrates on the theoretical discussion on circulation, (hyper)mediation and the social on its constant making in Chapter 2. In particular, the discussion on the increase of the speed and range of circulation and mediation in the contemporary social world, helps

understand how new digital media technology works in contemporary social world, how it affords the enormous networks of social agents who spontaneously comment on, disseminate and publicize media materials, and how it enables the incredibly high-speed circulation of the media materials carrying and mediating social imaginaries at a massive scale.

For exploring the fourth factor, this dissertation conducts semi-structured in-depth interviews with the professionals who actually work for the mainline newspapers and the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism in South Korea, which the case studies identify as one of the most influential social institutions that systematically produce particular discourses and imaginaries of Korean modernity, Protestantism and Buddhism. For the first case study, four professional journalists whose titles are exclusive religion journalist in the mainline press and two columnists who actually wrote the articles analyzed, participate in the interviews. For the second case study, the PR and R&D managers of the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism, who actually produce and run the branding of Templestay, are interviewed. And all the professionals are considered not only as an important informer who could enlighten me about the actual practices, rules, customs and process of news and branding production but as a crucial producer and carrier of the social imaginaries of Korean modernity, religion in general, and Korean Protestantism and Buddhism in particular.

Meanwhile, this dissertation's approach to the visual images, texts and interviews that are analyzed to examine social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism, draws on the prior research which captures a variety of texts, images, legends, myths and

modes of address as the critical material sites where social imaginaries are articulated, carried and shaped (e.g. Campbell and La Pastina, 2010; Kalantis, 2012; Ojala, 2011; Quayson, 2001; Valaskivi, 2013; Valaskivi and Sumiala, 2014). In the dissertation, texts are considered as “the material traces that are left of the practice of” articulating, carrying and circulating social imaginaries – “the only empirical evidence we have of how other people” imagine and understand their social worlds (Mckee, 2003, p.15). Thus, ‘texts’ include all the images, written texts, and verbal articulations carrying and mediating social imaginaries.

The material traces that the two case studies attempt to analyze are slightly different. The first case study focuses on the mainline liberal online news articles and photographic images, that cover the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the Korean traditional fan dance in the phase of the 2015 knife attack on the U.S. ambassador, as material sites where social imaginaries of Korean society, modernity and Protestantism are carried, mediated, circulated and formed. The second case study looks into some visual images and texts employed for the branding of Templestay in its official websites and other social media, as material sites in and through which social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism are glimpsed, mediated, circulated and shaped.

This dissertation project finds Foucauldian discourse analysis as a form of textual analysis that is suitable for examining the material traces mentioned above. This is because it offers helpful methodological concepts and tools to systemically and productively look into the factors that this dissertation projects highlight as involving in the production, mediation and circulation of social imaginaries. For instance, Foucauldian discourse analysis

as well critically focuses on the material sites of social institutions which systemically produce social imaginaries, texts and rituals(practices) that carry the social imaginaries, and the practices, positions, and bodies of the subjects who have embodied the social imaginaries, in order to explore the construction, deployment, employment, and reality effects of discourse in society.

The dimension of reception of social imaginaries is explored by conducting two focus group interviews and critically analyzing them in depth. This approach to the reception of social imaginaries is indebted to the prior studies that conduct interviews with particular social actors in order to acquire verbal cues to understand their affective and sensorial experience, embodied understandings, and social imaginaries that are involved in them (e.g. Bajde, 2012; Carnevale, 2013; Dawney, 2011; Heikkilä and Kunelius, 2006; Valaskivi, 2013). Following the studies, this dissertation project understands the bodies of the interviewees as both the carriers and reception sites of social imaginaries. The verbalized self-expressions of their imaginaries, affect and sensorial experience, that are produced in the course of interview, are considered as a critical representational cue to approach to the social imaginaries' non-representational formation and working in the bodies.

Lastly, this dissertation is comprised of seven chapters including this introduction chapter. Chapter 2 discusses literatures on theories of modernity and social imaginary which both are the fundamental conceptual framework to bind, and think of, the two case studies on Korean Protestantism and Buddhism altogether. First, theories of modernities are reviewed particularly focusing on the critiques of modernization theory and of the

Eurocentrism and universalism embedded in it. After the recent efforts to newly define modernity in a non-Eurocentric way are introduced, it is discussed what implications the trials have in thinking of Korean modernity where the two case studies are contextualized and historicized.

Then, I build up a theoretical framework to understand the working of social imaginaries in contemporary social worlds which are inevitably imagined, constantly (re)mediated, and thus multiply decontextualized and re-contextualized. The concepts of imaginary/imagination and social imaginaries are carefully explored. And it elucidates how the concepts of circulation and mediation crucially capture the images of process and multidirectionality characterizing the formation of contemporary social worlds that are held by particular social imaginaries. Lastly, it is explored how social imaginaries come to be embodied into social bodies and what implications of the embodiment of social imaginaries have in terms of the branding of Templestay and the media representation of Korean Protestantism in the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 knife attack on the U. S. ambassador.

Chapter 3 examines Korean modern history as conditions that have been lived by ordinary Korean people and have significantly contributed to the shaping of the conventional understanding and imaginaries of Korean modernity, Protestantism and Buddhism. That is, this chapter explores the question of what politico-economic events and forces in Korean modern history have conditioned the formation of the social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism. It takes the risks of more or less selectively simplifying the complexities, dynamics and ambivalences of Korean modern

histories and of temporally identifying Korean modern history with the historical time which Korean people in general consider as their modern time: from 1876, when Japan began its project of colonial expansion and domination in Korea by opening up Korean ports, to the present.

This chapter is very crucial in the dissertation project, given that it offers a historical perspective on the current formation, mediation and circulation of social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism. That is, this chapter contributes to historicizing the social imaginaries in the particular context of Korea. Further, by offering a comprehensive understanding of Korean modern history to potential readers who are not familiar with it, this chapter helps the dissertation avoid consciously and unconsciously taking advantage of the exoticism of South Korea. Chapter 3 covers, from the religious landscape of the late 19th and early 20th century to the introduction of Western missionaries in the early modern Korea to the troubled modernization movement of Korean Buddhism under Japanese colonial regime to the rise of anti-communism and pro-Americanism after Korean War to the hegemony of the Chogye Order and the self-deceptive purification of Korean Buddhist history in the 1950s and 1960s to the drastic rise of Korean Protestantism as urban religion under the compressed modernization of 1960s and 1970s to the interwoven relationships among the state, tourism and Korean Buddhism in the 1960s and 1970s to the 1997 Korean Financial Crisis and the formation of neo-liberal order in South Korea.

Chapter 4 introduces how the dissertation project explores social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism from multiperspectival approach (Kellner, 1997).

After the concrete research objects to be analyzed, are introduced, this chapter discusses the primary merits that the dissertation acquires by employing the conceptual framework of social imaginary, not on other prominent analytical frameworks of, for instance, British Cultural Studies or Foucauldian theory which could be employed to analyze the research objects. Then, this chapter offers the literature review of prior empirical studies examining social imaginaries. Based on the literature review, this chapter asserts the necessity to take multiperspectival approach to fully understand the working of social imaginaries and carefully elucidates how the dissertation examines the research questions and objects from the perspectives of political economy, text analysis and audience reception all together.

Chapter 5 critically analyzes the mainline liberal media discourse of, and photographic images of, conservative Protestants in the phases of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 Knife Attack on the U.S. ambassador Mark Lippert in South Korea. The analysis in this chapter shows that the mainline liberal online media formed, carried and mediated a social imaginary where Korean Protestantism is imagined and understood as an irrational, aggressive and uncivilized group which comes to be the enemy of, and obstacle in, the full democratization and modernization of Korean society. The analysis finds that the imaginaries, which are carried and articulated by the religious journalists and columnists and the participants in the focus groups, critically align and resonate with the social imaginary formed, mediated and carried by the mainline liberal online media.

Chapter 6 examines the branding of Templestay where Korean government and the Chogye Order of Korean Buddhism together systemically produce, mediate and circulate particular social imaginaries of Korean society, modernity and Buddhism in relation to the discourses of authenticity, the self, purity and modern corruption. The chapter critically analyzes some branding images and texts in the websites of Templestay and its other social media. The analysis in this chapter shows that the branding of Templestay constructs, mediates and circulates a branded imaginary where Korean Buddhism is imagined and understood as a cultural and historical heritage which has preserved for a long time tradition, monasticism, spirituality, essence and authenticity which all are imagined as what the outer modernized and Westernized world has lost. This chapter finds that the branded imaginary of Templestay significantly aligns and resonates with the modern imaginary of authenticity and with the neo-liberal discourse of the self and happiness. It also shows that the imaginaries, which are carried and articulated by the managers of the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism and the participants in the focus groups, align and resonate with the social imaginary formed, mediated and carried by the branding of Templestay.

In Chapter 7, I review the analyses conducted in Chapter 5 and 6. Then I reflect the relationships between new digital media and contemporary social imaginaries in Korean society and the affective and sensorial experience on the modern, Korean Protestantism and Korean Buddhism in digital space. After that, I offer an historical perspective on the relationships among the social imaginaries of modernity, Korean Protestantism and Korean Buddhism. Then I examine the modern social imaginary of the

linear world history that is detected both from the liberal mainline media and the branding of Templestay and critically reflect the implication of the post-colonial imaginary binary between the West and Korea, from which my thought and writing cannot be irrelevant. Lastly, I make some suggestions for Korean media and cultural studies and the religion and media scholarship in Korea as concluding remarks.

Chapter 2. Theories of Modernity and Social Imaginary

Introduction

This chapter discusses literatures on theories of modernity and social imaginary which both are the fundamental conceptual framework to bind, and think of, the two case studies altogether examining the branding of Templestay and the media representation of Korean Protestantism in the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 knife attack on the U. S. ambassador. First, theories of modernities are reviewed particularly focusing on the critiques of modernization theory and of the Eurocentrism and universalism embedded in it. The recent efforts to newly define modernity in a non-Eurocentric way are introduced. It is discussed what implications the trials have in thinking of Korean modernity where the two case studies are contextualized and historicized.

Then, I build up a theoretical framework to understand the working of social imaginaries in contemporary social worlds which are inevitably imagined, constantly (re)mediated, and thus multiply decontextualized and re-contextualized. The concepts of imaginary/imagination and social imaginaries are carefully explored as a form of social understandings through which people make sense of their existence, the world and social order in which they live. And it is argued that the concepts of circulation and mediation capture the image of process and multidirectionality characterizing the formation of contemporary social worlds that are held by particular social imaginaries. Lastly, it is explored how social imaginaries come to be embodied into social bodies and what implications of the embodiment of social imaginaries have in terms of the branding of

Templestay and the media representation of Korean Protestantism in the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 knife attack on the U. S. ambassador. Let me begin with theories of modernity.

Theories of Modernity

Modernity has been conventionally understood to be “the sole or even the original property of the West (Shome, 2014, p. 199).” In particular, the so-called ‘modernization theories’ have not only been built on but also naturalized and promoted an understanding of the priority, originality, and superiority of Europe in the (alleged) rise and dissemination of modernity in world history. Exemplifying classical sociology of Comte, Spence, and Durkheim and Marx’s historical materialism as modernization theories, Atsuko Ichijo (2013) summarizes the primary similarities among them - their legacy of the Enlightenment, idea of progress, valorization of human agency, and Eurocentrism- as follows:

They all intellectually draw from the legacy of the Enlightenment in that these are attempts to explain social changes without attributing them to divine forces but relating them instead to human endeavours. In this regard, ‘conventional’ modernization theories also entail an idea of progress in that society does not have to be perceived as an unchangeable given but as a site where changes can be induced by human activities. This affirmation of possibilities of human agency is claimed to have emerged first in Europe, which has provided the context in which these theories are often seen as uncritically Eurocentric (p. 8).

Although the reason why and the way society changes are very differently theorized between classical sociology (to attain equilibrium) and Marx's historical materialism (contradiction and conflict), both think of modernity as the universal process of the progress of world history in which enlightened human reason emancipates all the people from religions, traditions, and nature with the development of science, technology, and industrialization. They "claimed to be universally applicable and presented modernization as a homogenizing process by which various societies in the world would converge to the European Model (p. 9)." In the regard, such theories implicitly and explicitly expect that all the people in the world, who have been and will be on the process of modernization, should be homogenized into the Western modern world already achieved.

The Eurocentrism embedded in the modern idea of history is, in particular, well discussed by Dipesh Chakrabarty who suggested the project of provincializing Europe in the operating of philosophical and political ideas and the writing of non-Western histories.⁷ His book *Provincializing Europe* (2000) opens up its provocative discussion by illuminating the inevitable engagement of European thought with Postcolonial scholarship and social science in general. He argues that Postcolonial scholarship "is committed, almost by definition, to engaging the universals – such as the abstract figure of the human or that of reason— that were forged in eighteenth-century Europe and that underlie the human science." The universals such as the Enlightenment idea of the human, which were

⁷ I remind the insight of Saeki Keishi (1996) that a form of modernity is the self-consciousness of modernity itself.

originated from a particular place but universalized as a seemingly a natural fact/law, are the fundamental reference point on which Postcolonial scholarship addresses “issues of modern social justice” even when they stand against European imperialism, colonialism, and its violence (p. 5). In this regard, Charkrabarty states that

European thought is at once both indispensable and inadequate in helping us to think through the experience of political modernity in non-Western nations, and provincializing Europe becomes the task of exploring how this thought – which is now everybody’s heritage and which affect us all – may be renewed and for the margins (p. 16).

The universalism of European thought can be discussed in two different, but related aspects: First, European thought comes to be universal because “today the so-called European intellectual tradition is the only one alive in the social science of most, if not all, modern universities (p. 5).” For those who examine political modernity of non-Western worlds, to employ European thought is indispensable because the thoughts of non-Western thinkers are rarely invoked or studied as what can be significantly called as a ‘tradition’ of thought in the non-Western countries’ training of professional scholar, contrary to the frequent reference and citation of European intellectuals in their modernized scholarships. Second, European thought becomes universal since European thought, which dominated social science scholarships and modern universities in a global scale, are so deeply and broadly disseminated and embedded into the imaginary (p. 4),

habitus (p. 43), and myth(p. xiv) of those who think, write, and represent political modernity of non-Western worlds today.⁸

The most crucial and fundamental critique of Europe as a myth, imaginary, or habitus by Chakrabarty, heads to what he terms 'historicism' identified with the modern, European idea of history. For instance, exemplifying both liberal and Marxist theorists of 'late capitalism', he criticizes that both whether critical or favorable to capitalism, by picking up the word 'late', presuppose that the phenomenon of the so-called 'late capitalism' should belong "primarily to the developed capitalist world" while making it difficult for it to apply to "those seen as still 'developing'" although "its impact on the rest of the globe is never denied." In the above formulation, then, the "first in Europe, then elsewhere' structure of global historical time" is established and naturalized (p. 7). Non-Western worlds have to wait in "an imaginary waiting room of history" in order to arrive at the stage that European/Western world already accomplished (p. 8). These narratives, then, "turn around the theme of historical transition." He continues that most modern third-world histories are written within problematics posed by this transition narrative, of which the overriding (if often implicit) themes are those of development, modernization,

⁸ Modernity and Europe are closely mingled with each other in the levels of the imaginary, habitus, and myth. The term 'Europe' he employs in *Provincializing Europe(2000)* holds the sense of circularity, modularity, saturatedness, and inevitability of Europe in thinking and imagining the question of the modern nation-state, human being, history, and time not only in the West but non-Western world. Europe is "an imaginary figure that remains deeply embedded in *clichéd and shorthand forms* in some everyday habits of thought that invariably subtend attempts in the social science to address questions of political modernity in South Asia (p. 4)." This imaginary of Europe not only functions as "a founding myth for emancipatory thought and movement (p. xiv)" but also "as the primary habitus of the modern (p. 43)."

and capitalism (p. 31).” In the historicism, we are “all headed for the same destination” although some superior people arrive earlier than others (p. 8). Chakrabarty asserts that “historicism is what made modernity or capitalism look not simply global but rather as something that became global *over time*, by originating in one place (Europe) and then spreading outside it (p. 7).” The above statement, in effect, well represents his core argument in *Provincializing Europe*. He articulates that “the proposition that thought is related to places is central to my project of provincializing Europe (p. xviii).” One of Chakrabarty’s aims in his book is to historicize the particular European ideas of history, time, the nation-state, citizenship and the political in their own place and origin.

To historicize and particularize the self-consciousness on modernity in its origin and place is what Charles Taylor attempts in *Two Theories of Modernity* (1995) as well. In the article, Taylor contrasts an ‘acultural’ theory of modernity with a ‘cultural’ theory of modernity. While a cultural theory of modernity describes “the transformations that have issued in the modern West in terms of the rise of a new culture,” an acultural theory delineates them “in terms of some cultural-neutral operation” which is “not defined in terms of the specific cultures it carries us from and to, but is rather seen as a type of that any traditional culture could undergo (p. 24).” Once modernity is thought in terms of a cultural-neutral operation such as the growth of scientific reason and industrialization, then, it comes to be expected that “any culture could suffer the impact of growing scientific consciousness; any religion could undergo secularization; any set of ultimate ends could be challenged by a growth of instrumental thinking; any metaphysics could be dislocated by the split between fact and value (p. 25).”

When we rely on the acultural understanding of modernity such as conventional modernization theories, for instance, these transformations appear to be inevitable once any culture encounters the alleged cultural-neutral process of industrialization or modernization. The 'acultural' understanding completely prevents us from discerning the origin of particular ideas, imaginaries, and moral forces, which emerged from the place of Europe but became universal. Then, even "the ideas of individual freedom and the enlargement of instrumental reason" come to be often understood "not in terms of their moral forces, but just because of the advantages they seem to bestow on people regardless of their moral outlook, or even whether they have a moral outlook." Such understanding makes us "misclassify certain changes, which ultimately reflect the culture peculiar to the modern West, as the product of unproblematic discovery or the ineluctable consequence of some social change, like the introduction of technology (p. 31)."

In particular, the conventional thesis of secularization falls into the above error. It is, in a sense, an acultural theory predicated on the universalism of European thought given that it understands the decline of religious belief not as the result of the historical transformations of Western modern social imaginaries generated in particular time and place but as that of the universal growth of scientific consciousness and reason through which facts and values eventually became separate. The decline of religious belief is seen as the "'coming to see' the kernel truths as a sort of 'discovery' in science (p. 31)." The rise of modernity is seen "in terms of the dissipation of certain beliefs, either as its major cause ("rational" explanation), or as inevitable concomitant ("social" explanation)." Taylor

asserts that such acultural theory of modernity operates the universalizing power of European thought because this belief that “modernity comes from one single universally applicable operation imposes a falsely uniform pattern on the multiple encounters of non-Western culture with the exigencies of science, technology, and industrialization (p. 28).” Taylor’s description of Western modernity, however, is quite different from the above. According to him, there was a dramatic shift of background social understanding, habitus, and social imaginaries of God, the good, the cosmos, time, society and human beings. And the shift of the Western social imaginary of moral order is the core element of the rise of Western modernity.

The intellectual trials of discerning Eurocentric logics of the modern and of particularizing the origin of Western modernity have brought a variety of analytical concepts making us rethink modernity. Terms such as ‘alternative modernities (Gaonkar, 1999; Taylor, 1995),’ ‘multiple modernities (Eisenstadt, 2000),’ or ‘other modernities (Rofel, 1999),’ were suggested. Although there are ongoing critical debates on the assumptions such terms have and the associations they invoke, such trials have led to the efforts to imagine a new definition of modernity, which are not Eurocentric but applicable to a variety of locations, cultures and contexts. For instance, while noting the pitfall of “seeking and reifying a (somehow) pure, essential, ‘original’ ‘Asia (Shome, 2014, p. 206)” and trying to avoid cultural relativism and Asiacentrism (in a mere reaction to Eurocentrism), Shome defines modernity as “an expression of a society’s sculpting of a ‘good life’ through methods, techniques and processes that the society sees as appropriate for the betterment of itself and the development of its population (p. 202).”

Such intellectual efforts to radically re-define and re-imagine modernity are distinguished from the mere endeavor of discovering the modern, whose imaginaries have been colonized by the Eurocentric imaginaries of the West, in the time period of the alleged pre-modern era. In effect, in South Korean scholarship, the scholarly trial to demonstrate that Korea already had the seed of modernity within its inherent process of historical development before Japanese colonial domination – the so-called theory of intrinsic development—, has gained so much popularity in reaction to colonial modernization theory arguing that, without Japanese colonialism, Korea could not have been modernized at all. The intrinsic development theory made a considerable contribution to opposing the prior colonial discourses which see Korean nation as inherently inferior, lazy and heteronomous. However, it had to confront a great deal of criticism on its uncritical embrace of European thought on modernity and its historicism without examining how and why the modern comes to acquire its hegemony. It was understood as an effort to fit Korea into the Western imaginary of modernity and to legitimize and valorize Korean history in and through the Eurocentric logic of the modern without discerning the problem of seeing and imagining the self (Korea) through the view of the taken-for-granted superior other (the West).

If we think of modernity in such a way as defined by Shome (2014), however, Korean modernity comes to be “not a recent matter (p. 206)” emerged with the transplantation of capitalism and industrialization by Japan and, later, the United States. Korean modernity goes up to the old times we have conventionally imagined as the age of ‘tradition’ even before when Europe began to imagine itself as the modern. In his book

Lost Modernities (2006), Alexander Woodside shows how a certain type of modernity was already accomplished in the particular past histories of China, Korea and Vietnam which are generally considered as a pre-modern era for the reason that the period was far before the arrival of Western capitalism and industrialism. By precisely demonstrating how the embryonic bureaucracies, predicated on clear rules, and meritocratic civil service examinations of those countries already achieved “the rationalization process we think of as modern (p. 1)” in advance to the contemporary Western world, Woodside subverts our conventional understanding and imagination on world history and the coming of modernity. If I cite only the part the Korean civil service examinations are mentioned, it reads:

By the 1400s, for example, applicants’ answers in the Korean civil service examinations passed through the hands of collection officers, registration officers, recording officials, collating officers, and readers, whose tasks were to see to it that candidates’ names concealed from their examiners; that their answers were recopied in other people’s handwriting before examiners saw them, and that many examiners, not one, evaluated the candidates’ performances. Not even the examinations at contemporary Western universities take so many transparency-enhancing precautions (p. 2).

In such redefining of modernity and rewriting of non-Western histories, the “imaginary waiting room of history (Chakrabarty, 2000, p. 8)” for non-Western countries including Korea, is vanished. The “‘first in Europe, then elsewhere’ structure of global historical time (Ibid., p. 7)” also is abolished. In the regard, the radical intellectual effort to

newly define and imagine what the modern is, transforms not only our prior understanding of the histories of non-Western countries including Korea but our conventional understanding of ‘world history’ itself (Wang, 2007) and of writing it.⁹

Theories of Social Imaginary

Imaginary and Imagination

The notion of ‘imaginary/imaginaire’ has been more broadly used and discussed in French scholarships than in Anglo-American scholarships up to the present¹⁰. Sang-Gil Lee, who translated *Modern Social Imaginaries* in Korean, introduces the notion of imaginary in his elaborate postscript as follows:

In the tradition of history of mentalities (*histoire de mentalite*), many French historians routinely use this term. In addition, Louis Marin in Philosophy, Claude Lefort and Cornelius Castoriadis in Politics, Gaston Bachelard and Gilbert Durand in Anthropology, Pierre Ansart and Bronislaw Baczko, and Michel Maffesoli in Sociology, Jean-Jacques Wunenberger in Mythology are the prominent scholars who think and work by putting the notion of imaginary in the center of their

⁹ This trial, which notes the danger and limit of identifying the rise of modernity with that of capitalism and industrialization, also makes the modernity of the West re-thought. The work of the legal historian Harold J. Berman (1983), in the regard, is interesting in that he detects and demonstrates the undeniable significance of the papal revolution in cannon law, which had modernized Western legal system but conducted from the 11th to 13th centuries long before the rise of capitalism or industrialism in the West.

¹⁰ Adames (2012, p. 30) points out that the idea of ‘imaginary’ is particularly related and indebted to post-Heideggerian phenomenology in France from Castoriadis’s work *L’institution imaginaire de la société* (1975) to Lacan’s formulation of three orders of reality in *Ecrits* (1966) – the symbolic, the imaginary, and the real—to Sartre’s work *L’imaginaire* (1940).

theories. ... There is, however, no unified and clear definition of this notion.

Rather than precisely defining it, most scholars flexibly use it in the sense of ‘the whole of the representations overflowing the empirically proved facts and the logical linkages that the facts allow’ and a loose sense encompassing ‘image, memory, passion, and idea (2010, p. 308) (translated by the researcher).’

Particularly, it is Cornelius Castoriadis who pioneered the notion of ‘social imaginary’ and stimulated the broader employment and elaboration of the idea which this dissertation research appropriates as a significant conceptual frame. Through his influential work *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (1987), Castoriadis challenged the idea of the imaginary as the mere reflection or copy of the real, of the outer world that exists there by arguing that the real can never be conceived and materialized without the mediation of the imaginary. Rejecting the traditional philosophy of determinacy, particularly standing against Marxism’s deterministic figuration of the social-historical world that a teleological law governs, he emphasizes the creative force of the imaginary through which, he argues, society can make, institute, and innovate itself. Historical society, for instance, the ancient Greek city-states that he often exemplifies, “is not the determined sequence of the determined but the emergence of radical otherness, immanent creation, non-trivial novelty (1987, p. 184).” As Gaonkar puts it employing Castoriadis’ terms,

a social-historical world is created ex nihilo in a burst of imaginative praxis carried out ... by anonymous masses who constitute themselves as a people in that very act of founding. This world-forming and meaning-bestowing creative force is the social imaginary of the instituting society (2002, p. 6).

Castoriadis' work is significant given that it has stimulated other scholars to think of the imaginary as a generative symbolic matrix within which a people imagine and act as if their practices create and transform their collective worlds and only through which social realities are understood and constructed (Adams, 2012; Arnason, 1989; Elliot, 2012; Gaonkar, 2002). In Anglo-American scholarships, however, Benedict Anderson and Arjun Appadurai have overshadowed Castoriadis' rich work and have been in general understood as central figures illuminating the significance of imaginary and imagination in the formation of the modern nation-states and the cultural flows of modernity and globalization.

In his book *Imagined Communities* (1991), Anderson highlighted the essentially symbolic and imaginary nature of the nation and the significance of mass mediation technology and culture in the construction of imagined political communities of the nation. The nation is imagined "because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (p. 6)." And it is highlighted the significance of print capitalism in the imaginary constructions of Western modern nation-states. As Ju (2007) emphasizes, it is his contribution to the studies of nationalism, which had conventionally limited the notion of nation in a certain geographical boundary and defined nationalism only as a sensibility conveyed by the people who inhabit the geopolitical location, to open up "a new dialogue about the notion of nation and nationalism beyond a traditional spatial concept (p. 7)." The conceptualization of the nation as 'imagined communities' brought to scholars a sense that our collective social worlds are inevitably imaginary and symbolic

constellations and thus modern phenomenon regarding the shaping of the collective social worlds cannot be fully explored without looking into the issues of the imagination and the media technology that the communities, which the scholars examine, have.

Arjun Appadurai, meanwhile, highlights that electronic mediation and mass migration increasingly impel not only individuals but societies to work on imagination in their everyday lives. In his book *Modernity at Large* (1996), suggesting the work of imagination as “a constitutive feature of modern subjectivity (p. 3),” he argues that “the imagination has become a collective, social fact (p. 4)” given that it enables and affords the multiple imagined worlds that “are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe (p. 33).” Appadurai’s exposition on the role of imagination in the era of electronic mediation and mass migration, which he makes three distinctions, is noteworthy since his account of imagination is substantially overlapped by and can be read as a prelude to Charles Taylor’s discussion on ‘(social) imaginaries’ that this dissertation research wants to draw on as a conceptual framework to explore the two case studies.

First, according to Appadurai, imagination, coming out of “the special expressive space of art, myth and ritual,” has incorporated into the logic of ordinary life and become “a part of the quotidian mental work of ordinary people in many societies (1996, p. 5).” Thanks to the affordance of electronic mediation technology and to the global condition of mass migration, now people utilize and invest their imaginaries in the practices and discourses of their everyday lives.

Second, imagination has distinctive features from fantasy. As Castoriadis (1987) highlights the capacity of the imaginary to generate creative praxis that can transform social realities, Appadurai states that imagination has a sense of “a prelude to some sort of expression, whether aesthetic or not” and thus can generate action in reality. On the contrary, fantasy has “a private, even individualistic sound about it” and connotes a sense of escape distant from projects and actions (1996, p. 7).

Third, overlapped with the above two distinctions, it is the collective sense of the imagination that Appadurai predominantly explores, as Charles Taylor (2004) does, rather than the individualistic sense of it. According to Appadurai, as political imagined communities of the early modern nations were enabled by print capitalism, “community of sentiment (Appadurai, 1990)” nowadays, in which members imagine and feel things together, comes to be enabled by what he calls electronic capitalism circulating particular collective imaginaries through electronic mediation technology. In other words, through and in the interconnectedness between the transforming capitalism which dominates social relations in a global scale and the transforming mass mediation technology, the collective imaginaries come to be constructed, circulated, and experienced beyond geopolitical boundary and a variety of imagined communities emerges.

Anderson and Appadurai might be one of the early thinkers who glimpse the inevitably interwoven relationships among 1) the increasing significance of imagination and its incorporation into everyday practices of modern subjects due to the affordance of the mass mediation technology, 2) the mass mediation technology which transforms prior forms of social production, consumption, and circulation of cultural texts and thus brings

into the change of social relations, 3) a variety of emergent imagined communities imagining and feeling together beyond geopolitical boundary by means of the new mass mediation technologies, and 4) self-transforming capitalism, as a dominant form of social relations, intervening into the other three factors of the collective imaginary, the mediation technology and the imagined communities (Banet-Weiser 2012, Castel, 2005; Couldry, 2012; Illouz, 2007; Mukherjee & Banet-Weiser, 2012) .

Modern Social Imaginaries

The common interest in the significance of collective imagination in the rise of modern social worlds between Arjun Appadurai and Charles Taylor is not a coincidence considering that the prominent two thinkers have co-worked in and through the platform of the Center for Transcultural Studies(CTS) and the journal of *Public Culture*. Meanwhile, Anderson's thinking of the nation as 'imagined communities' offered a considerable insight to Charles Taylor's discussion on 'modern social imaginaries' as Charles Taylor mentions in his book (2004). This dissertation research employs Taylor's idea of 'social imaginary' as a conceptual tool to explore the questions of in and through what social imaginaries of modernity and history Korean Protestantism and Buddhism are mediated and of how the imaginaries regarding modernity and the religious groups are expressed, circulated and constructed in digital media spaces. In order to illuminate what I mean by social imaginaries and how this concept binds the two case studies with its underlying theoretical assumptions and purposes, I scrutinize how Taylor conceptualizes and employs it in his theoretical world.

The notion of social imaginary, which Taylor (2004) formulates, relates to how people recognize their whole circumstances. It is a form of understanding which people as social beings come to have about their selves, practices and positions in their collective social worlds. Taylor states that social imaginary refers to “the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations (p. 23).” It offers a broader grasp of history, time, order and social existence. However, social imaginary is distinguished from theory which only a small minority can possess and share. Taylor articulates as follows:

I adopt the term imaginary (i) because my focus is on the way ordinary people “imagine” their social surroundings, and this is often not expressed in theoretical terms, but is carried in images, stories, and legends. It is also the case that (ii) theory is often the possession of a small minority, whereas what is interesting in the social imaginary is that it is shared by large groups of people, if not the whole society. (iii) The social imaginary is that common understanding that makes possible common practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy (p. 23).

As seen in the above statement that social imaginary is “a widely shared sense of legitimacy,” social imaginary encompasses prescription of practices. In this regard, he often uses the term ‘moral order’ instead of that of social imaginary. Explaining the dissemination of social imaginary in a society, he argues that “migrating from one niche to many and from theory to social imaginary, the expansion is also visible along a third axis, as defined by the kind of demands this moral order makes on us (p. 6).” Social imaginary,

which is shaped by and shapes moral order, “provides an imperative prescription (p. 7).”

By the idea of moral order, Taylor moves his interest into the regulatory expectations on the modes and results of the social which people come to experience and anticipate while living, working and experiencing together.

Taylor illuminates how the shaping of new moral order and social imaginaries, occurred in the particular place and time of Europe, enabled the rise of Western Modernity. The transformative social imaginaries are characterized by the imaginary and real spheres of market economy, public sphere and self-governing people whose fundamental principles are characterized by reciprocal interest pursuit and respect among equal individuals detached from any sacred order. In the modern social imaginaries, the meanings of their existence are only defined within and by the ordinary, equal ones without their anchoring to any transcendent beings such as God. This modern moral order is fundamentally separated from the prior pre-modern one where agents, who were allocated their position within a particular hierarchy, co-existed in a mutually complimentary and dependent relationship saturated with transcendental meaning. Taylor calls this qualitative change in moral order *Great Disembedding*. He articulates the modern transformation of the Western understanding of moral social order as follows:

To be an individual is ... to be placed in a certain way among other humans. ...

This disembeds us from the cosmic sacred – altogether, and not just partially and for certain people, as in earlier post-axial moves. It disembeds us from the social sacred and posits a new relation to God as designer. This new relation is

eclipsable, because the design underlying the moral order can be seen as directed to ordinary human flourishing (p. 65).

Modern social imaginaries of modernity and history are crucial to unifying and understanding the seemingly disparate case studies of this dissertation, given that the Western modern social imaginaries emerge as a powerful background understanding in and through which Korean media institutions and the religious groups in the case studies navigate their positions, acquire social recognitions on themselves, and anticipate possible outcomes of their practices within the imagined community of South Korea. At the current point, I need to make clear how Taylor locates 'social imaginary' in his formulation of social understanding, which is less distinctly manifested in *Modern Social Imaginaries* (2004) than his another article *Two Theories of Modernity* (1995). This trial will illuminate the reason social imaginary should be investigated in relation to media which I think of as a space for the formation, expression and circulation of the social imaginaries.

First of all, social imaginary is distinguished from an immediate practical understanding of how to conduct behavior in a variety of social settings such as how to ride a bus, greet each other, or make an everyday conversation or order coffee. Taylor expounds the idea of social imaginary as something close to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' or what some philosophers such as Ludwig Wittgenstein and Merleau-Ponty would call the 'background' against which "our explicit beliefs about our world and ourselves are held" and in relation to which "these beliefs make the sense they do (Taylor, 1995, p. 28)." As Gaonkar (2002) puts it, Taylor highlights "its role in the hermeneutics of everyday life." Social imaginary is "a complex, unstructured, and not fully articulated"

understanding of “who we are, how we fit together, how we got where we are, and what we might expect from each other in carrying out collective practices that are constitutive of our way of life (Gaonkar, 2002, p 10).” Taylor distinguishes social imaginary from both explicit doctrine and habitus-based embodied practice. Taylor, in *Two Theories of Modernity* (1995), formulates that three levels of social understanding might be distinguished: First, there is “the level of explicit doctrine, about society, divine, the cosmos.” Explicit doctrine is a self-conscious form of formulation which “can be submitted to the demands of logic” and “permit of a metadiscourse in which they are examined in turn.” Second, there is the level of the habitus or embodied understanding. Lastly, he adds, “somewhat between the two is a level we might call (with some trepidation, because there is a semantically overloaded term) the symbolic” which is a form of understanding that is expressed “in ritual, in symbols (in the everyday sense), in works of art (p. 29).”

Given the above, therefore, to be modern is not a mere matter of adopting or abandoning explicit doctrine or belief. Taylor criticizes that it might be a significant mistake to think that what distinguishes the modern from the premodern is primarily a lot of doctrine and beliefs that we do not follow any longer. With the rise of Western modernity, at least two other levels of social understanding went through transformation: 1) habitus or embodied background understanding and 2) social imaginary “which, while nourished in embodied habitus, is given expression on the symbolic level.” To be nourished in embodied habitus means that social imaginaries involves in the embodied, habitus-based, social practices practically conducted, by offering a sort of background understanding in which those practices make sense. In the regard, it is practical but not an

embodied practice itself. Meanwhile, it exists in “a level of images as yet formulated in doctrine (p. 29).” As Gaonkar (2002) puts it, social imaginary is expressed and carried through a variety of encounters with “images, stories, legends, and modes of address (p. 10),” which we could call media forms, and with the media-related practices which enable the encounters with the media forms from the outset (Couldry, 2012). Thus, Taylor’s understanding of social imaginaries in the making of Western modern worlds leads us to the issues such as the mediation and circulation of images and texts, the media-related practices, ongoing processes of social formation and non-linear model of media theory capturing the process. The next section discusses the issues.

Circulation, Mediation and the Social on Its Constant Making

We live in a world where people, machines, technologies, ideas, images, food, information, power and money are constantly traveling. The accelerating and intensifying movements of people and non-human objects from area to area, produce a great number of encounters and associations between people and people, non-human objects and non-human objects, and people and non-human objects.¹¹ But such movements of people and non-human objects are not something completely new. Mark Peterson (2003) points out that anthropologists have always noted the dissemination of cultural forms and material

¹¹ With the accelerating development of technology and machinery and the penetration of them into everyday lives in the late twentieth century, it came to be very difficult to take for granted a common sense that human subject and non-human object are completely and essentially separated and that only the former has agency while the latter has no agency. Encounters and linkages between the two are intensified and agency comes to be irreducible to the human or to the non-human in ever more complicated networks of associations between the two which are constructed only by their constant actions and movements (Latour, 2005; McMaster & Wastell, 2005). As Thrift (1996) insightfully points out, it is “their capacity for movement (p. 279)” that makes people and machines interwoven with each other.

objects from one location to other location and the crossing of cultural borders through trade and warfare. What makes the current phenomena new is, according to him, that contemporary people tend to take for granted such fast and immense movement of people and non-human objects as the norm. People individually and collectively imagine, act based on the recognition that “we live within a world-system and that a great many of the things of our everyday lives are interconnected with unknown others in distant places (p. 263).”

Confronting the age when local elements of people, cultural forms, technologies and material objects are constantly on the move, and thus, decontextualized and re-contextualized in a variety of other local settings, social theorists have employed the terms such as *mobility* (Thrift, 1996; Urry, 2007), *flexibility* (Castells, 2000), *flow* (Appadurai, 1996; Castells, 2000) and *liquid* (Bauman, 2005) to delineate contemporary social worlds which are constantly being mediated, networked and moved. In this regard, the concept of society as the static and fixed has come to be seriously questioned. Bruno Latour (2005) argues that conventional social sciences have taken ‘social’ as the essentially given which could glue particular domains of, for instance, religion, psychology, politics, and economics all together and thus could equally explain and be linked to all the other domains. Contrary to the presupposition of the existence of social ties as “the hidden presence of some specific social force” behind all the other domains, the social is what should be explained and analyzed from the outset as a problematic one. He argues that the social is what is glued together by many other types of specific associations and connections between things that are themselves non-social (p. 5). According to Latour, it can be visible

“only by the *traces* it leaves (under trials) when a new association is being produced between elements which themselves are in no way ‘social (p. 8)’.” In addition, John Urry (2007) perceives that there arises “a mobility turn” in social sciences, “a turn that emphasizes how all social entities ... presuppose many different forms of actual and potential movement” and how what we call society is “achieved in part on the move and contingently as processes of flow (p. 6).”

Drawing on Urry’s and Latour’s discussion, it can be argued that the social cannot properly understood without a tracing of such complex associations made by the encounters between a variety of the human and non-human actors on the constant move and processes of flow. And once one thinks of the social or society not as the static and given but as something on the continuing processes of its formations through the constant movement of a variety of the human and non-human actors and by the numerous encounters and associations between them, the concept of circulation comes to be a crucial issue to explore the formation of a society, the social and particularly social imaginaries (Latour, 1999; 2005; Lee & LiPuma, 2002; McMaster & Wastell, 2005; Taylor, 2004; Thrift, 1996; Urry, 2007; Sumialar, 2009; Valaskivi & Sumiala, 2014).

Circulation can be defined as “passing on” something whether it is material or immaterial goods, ideas, items, or beliefs that are being disseminated, distributed and exchanged (Sumiala, 2008, pp. 44-55). In *Circulating Social Imaginaries: Theoretical and Methodological Reflections* (2014), where the theoretical and methodological articulation between the concept of *circulation* and that of *social imaginaries* is productively conducted, Valaskivi and Sumiala (2014) suggests a mental image to think about circulation: “the idea

of the spiral or a cyclone” in whose circulatory process “certain ideas, items and actors become more powerful, while others may fade away or change their shape or consistency, thus taking other directions and creating new processes in circulation (p. 231).”

Circulation can be a very productive theoretical and methodological concept to approach to the social on its constant making and digital media’s role in it. Valaskivi and Sumiala (2014) insightfully theorize the core perspectives to capture the working of circulation in contemporary social worlds by employing the three principles— the principle of non-linearity, to analyze media as practice, and the materiality of representations – that Nick Couldry (2012) suggests to develop socially-oriented media theories and analyze digital media phenomena through them.¹² Let me examine the three main perspectives on circulation in detail.

First, circulation is a non-linear and non-static concept. It properly captures the dynamics of the social on its constant making through movement and circulation of people, items, ideas, images and so on. As Valaskivi and Sumiala (2014) put it, circulation “refers to social and cultural movement best described as cyclical, without any necessarily clear reference to the beginning, middle, or end of the movement (p. 232).” In effect, to employ the idea of circulation as a theoretical and methodological concept to think of the social on its constant making, encourages us to examine the ongoing formations of social

¹² Couldry (2012) suggests three principles in developing socially oriented media theories: First, media researchers need to avoid “linear accounts of how media change, how people respond to those technologies, and how effects flow from those responses (p. 29).” Second, researchers must “analyze media as practice, as an open-ended set of things people” actually do in the social world which is not a text in itself but “a vast weaving together of particular practices and resources (p. 30).” Third, it has to be fully explored and unpacked how the representations of media institutions shape and materialize our ordinary sense of ‘what there is’ from the outset.

dynamics, through the term of *mediation* and/or *mediated*, rather than only using that of media. It is because the notion of *mediation* properly captures the image of process and that of multidirectionality, which both are crucial to grasping the formation of contemporary culture and social worlds through circulation, while the concept of media does not. The appropriateness of the concept of *mediation/mediated* in thinking of culture and media through the image of process, is well highlighted by Martin-Barbero (1993; 1997) who understands culture as ongoing communicational process in which living people negotiate the meanings of their lives and act based on them, rather than as dominated by the ideology of media institution.¹³ Exploring the idea of ‘hypermediation,’ Carlos Scolari (2015) highlights that Martin-Barbero defines “his epistemological turn as a displacement from the object (the media) to the social process (the mediations) (p. 1097).” The concept of mediation helps us recognize and capture the working of contemporary media environment in social formations. It is not merely that the media (the object) shapes society (the object). Rather, it needs to be understood as ongoing communicational processes which people actually do with media images, texts, practices and technologies that constantly form the social.

¹³ Examining the phenomenon of what he calls the electronic church in the United States, Martin-Barbero (1997) defines the mass media as a sort of cultural process and places in which people come together and make their meanings: “The mass media are the places where many people... construct the meaning of their lives. The media offer the opportunity for people to come together to understand the central questions of life. Thus, I am suggesting that we should look for the process of re-enchantment in the continuing experience in communitarian celebration and in the other ways that the media bring people together (p. 108).” In the regard, he remarks that “communication began to be seen more as a process of mediations than of media, a question of culture and, therefore, not just a matter of cognitions but of re-cognition (1993, p. 2).”

Meanwhile, the image of multidirectionality in the notion of *mediation* is well illuminated by Nick Coulry's (2008) and Roger Silverstone's (2002) discussions on mediation. The concept of mediation delineates "the fundamentally, but unevenly, dialectical process in which institutionalized media of communication (the press, broadcast radio and television, and increasingly the world wide web), are involved in the general circulation of symbols in social life. (Silverstone, 2002, p. 762)." In contemporary social worlds, as Coulry (2008) puts it, media do not operate in a way that a separate type of media unidirectionally transmits its message to a particular recipient. Rather, a variety of media intervenes into the circulatory process of symbols in social life and thus constantly changes the velocity, dynamics and processes of the circulation of symbols. In turn, this continuing change of the circulatory process gives rise to the transformation of the conditions under which any future media can be created, mobilized and perceived. In this regard, mediation is "a non-linear process (p. 380)." In this way, the three concepts of circulation, (hyper)mediation and the social on its constant formation or process, are closely interconnected with and supports the use of each other to properly understand contemporary social worlds that are constantly on its making and multiply mediated.

In particular, given the two significations of process and multidirectionality which the idea of 'mediation' contains and implies, and the the Greek prefix hyper meaning 'excess' and 'exaggeration,' the idea of 'hyper-mediation' crucially captures the current, seemingly global, phenomenon where the speed and range of communicational process is being unimaginably increased and the multidirectionality of the process is being critically intensified by means of new digital media technology, which affords the enormous

number of networks of social agents who spontaneously comment on, share and circulate media materials. Thus, this idea of 'hyper-mediation' encourages us to focus on "the complex network of social production, exchange and consumption processes that take place in an environment characterized by a large number of social actors, media technologies and technological languages (Scolari, 2015, p. 1099)."

Second, circulation is a social practice, which can be ritualized, that people actually do with media devices in their everyday lives. Thus, "it is an open-ended process," a human-made and non-human-made movement that "brings ideas, items and people together, creating points and encounters for social imaginaries to be produced and maintained (Valaskivi & Sumiala (2014, p. 233)." As Peterson (2003) argues as well, what becomes central to the analysis of the transformation of the circulatory process of symbols in social life by media, are "the acts people perform with and through media, acts which simultaneously involve" cultural representation, circulation and social formation (p. 16).¹⁴ Couldry's work (2012) is useful as well in understanding a variety of media-related practices which enable and are enabled by cultural representation, circulation and ongoing processes of the making of the social. The four media-related practices he singles out as

¹⁴ Noting the anthropological studies of circulation and exchange, Peterson (2003) demonstrates that circulation, cultural representation and social formations can never be separated from each other. Exchanges and circulations "occur only according to a set of cultural representations that renders them meaningful," and it is through exchanges and circulations "that social formations are created, reproduced, and contested." Cultural representations offer "scripts and schemas for understanding the values of things" circulated as well as the model of circulation, while cultural representation exists only insofar as they are circulated and collectively shared (p. 15). Things and objects in society "have no meaning apart from those that human transactions, attributions and motivations endow them with (Appadurai, 1986, p. 5)." In the regard, social formations enable only through the circulation of things and people and the collective sharing of the meanings imposed on them (cultural representations).

primary are: 1) *searching and search-enabling* which increasingly affect social ontology in contemporary social worlds (pp. 45-46), 2) *showing and being shown* which make oneself and/or something publicly available and thus transform “everyday action and performance into spectacle and audiencing (p. 49),” 3) *presencing* through which “individuals, groups and institutions put into circulation information about, and representation of, themselves for the wider purpose of sustaining a public presence (p. 50),” 4) *archiving* which is “the individual’s practice of managing *in time* the whole mass of informational and image traces s/he continually produces, so that, *over time*, they add up something acceptable and perhaps even graspable as a history (p. 52) (emphasis in the original text).” Given the Couldry’s description of presencing, it can be argued that the practices of sharing, distributing and circulating particular media images and texts, inevitably involve the intention and expectation of social actors to maintain a public presence of the information about and representation of themselves or something they are interested in whether positively or negatively.

The last perspective that Valaskivi and Sumiala (2014) suggests to see is the materiality of circulation. They argue that circulation needs to be examined in terms of material conditions in and through which circulation is enabled. The role of media institutions and technologies is crucial in the control and transformation of the velocity, dynamics and process of the circulation of symbols and imaginaries through which the social is constructed and held. Valaskivi and Sumiala (2014) also offer a helpful insight seeing representations, such as images, texts and symbols, as “a material site” in and through which the circulation of “ideas, beliefs, ideologies, emotions, fantasies and fears”

are exercised (p. 233).” Further, the materiality produced by circulation also needs to be highlighted as an important scholarly subject. For instance, the invisible such as affect comes to gain materiality by the circulation of it. Sara Ahmed (2004) insightfully argues that it is not that affect resides within subjects but that it is “produced only as the effect of its circulation (p. 120).” The circulation of emotions creates “the very effect of the surfaces or boundaries of bodies and world (p. 116).” To conclude, the materiality of circulation can be thought of in three ways: First, circulation absolutely needs material conditions that enable it. Second, representations, as an analytical object, are “a material site” in and through which the circulation of “ideas, beliefs, ideologies, emotions, fantasies and fears” are exercised (Valaskivi and Sumiala, 2014, p. 233).” Third, the invisible such as affect comes to acquire materiality by the circulation of it.

The circulation of media images, texts, practices, and technologies have fascinated scholars who explore the formations of modern social worlds which are inevitably imagined, constantly (re)mediated, and thus multiply decontextualized and re-contextualized (Anderson, 1991; Appadurai, 1996; Couldry, 2012; Peterson, 2003; Taylor, 2004; Gaonkar, 2002; Valaskivi & Sumiala, 2014). Peterson (2003) remarks that “the circulation of media and its incorporation into multiple spheres of everyday life has become simultaneously a principle vehicle for the flow of ideas and symbols across time and space, but also one of the dominant signs of the modernities it produces (p. 24).” What binds people dispersed in distant locations into a *social* entity, what invigorates them to feel, experience and act as if they are living in a common *social* world, is the imaginaries, what Taylor (2004) would term *social imaginaries*, that they collectively share and practice

(Anderson, 1991; Appadurai, 1996; Gaonkar, 2002). The social imaginaries, which glue society together, are created, sustained, reproduced and negotiated by the ongoing circulation of media images, texts, practices and technologies. Valaskivi and Sumiala (2014) remarks the relationship among circulation, social imaginaries and society with concision:

It is through the circulation of images, representations, meanings, emotions, values and practices, and also of people and objects that a community formulates, maintains and re-formulates its value and shared understanding of identity in the social imaginary. In other words, society is held together (Latour, 2005) by the social imaginaries (Taylor, 2004) created and maintained through circulation. In short, without the circulation of ideas, items, emotions and/or people, no shared experiences – and thus no community – can exist (p. 231).

Empirical case studies on the circulation of social imaginaries substantially demonstrates the working of circulation in contemporary social worlds which are inevitably and constantly imagined and mediated (Campbell & La Pastina, 2010; Sumiala, 2009; Valaskivi & Sumiala, 2014). Johanna Sumiala's article *Networked Diasporas: Circulating Imaginaries of Violence* (2009) examines how social imaginaries of violence are (re)formed by the circulation of the violent media images of the school shooting event in Kauhajoki Finland on September 2008. By tracing the circulatory processes of the Kauhajoki school massacre images, she illuminates that it is "the cyclical logic of circulation" that mobilizes hate groups, who come together from distant locations and backgrounds, and makes them "get attached by violence, hate, and destruction (p. 78)" and that "keeps social imaginaries of violence alive in today's mobile social world (p. 79)." Campbell and La Pastina (2010),

through their article *How the iPhone Became Divine: New Media, Religion and the Intertextual Circulation of Meaning*, demonstrates that religious metaphors and imaginary are appropriated into popular discourse and shape the reception of iPhone which comes to be labeled as 'Jesus phone.' They carefully trace how the religious imaginary and languages are circulated and diffused among technology fans and bloggers, news media and even corporate advertising. In their article mentioned earlier, Valaskivi and Sumiala (2014) introduces their case study on the media circulation of the 2011 death of Steve Jobs and argues that the social imaginary circulated after Steve Jobs' death connects "Apple enthusiasts (people) with Apple devices (technology) in a shared social imaginary consisting of spiritual life embedded in high-end technology, material successes and prosperity (pp. 238-239)."

To conclude, by scrutinizing the concepts of circulation, mediation, and the social on its constant making process, I attempt to build up a theoretical framework to understand the working of social imaginaries in contemporary social worlds which are inevitably imagined, constantly (re)mediated, and thus multiply decontextualized and re-contextualized. Both concepts of circulation and mediation properly capture the images of process and multidirectionality characterizing the formation of contemporary social worlds (Martin-Barbero, 1993, 1997; Scolari, 2015; Couldry, 2008; Silverstone, 2002): That is, the social on its constant making through the non-linear movements and disseminations of media images, texts, devices and media-related practices, and the encounters, associations and networks between a variety of the human and non-human

social actors, which are made by the non-linear movements and disseminations (Couldry, 2012, Castells, 2000; Latour, 2005; McMaster & Wastell, 2005, Peterson, 2003).

Social imaginary is fundamentally but asymmetrically formed, maintained, reproduced and contested not only through the circulation of media images, texts and devices (Campbell & La Pastina, 2010; Latour, 2005; Sumiala, 2009; Valaskivi & Sumiala, 2014) but through the mass movement of people (Appaduari, 1996; Urry, 2008) and the dissemination and ritualization of habitus-based social practices (Couldry, 2012; Taylor, 2004). To employ and explore the idea of social imaginary can be a productive effort to examine the ongoing process of making the social in and through the circulation of particular media images, texts and media-related practice empirically found in the two case studies. The theoretical framework of social imaginary approaches to the social on its constant making, particularly by focusing on the aspect of imaginary/imagination which inevitably involves the construction of modern social worlds and realities that people in distant locations collectively believe in, share and experience (Anderson, 1991; Appadurai, 1996; Taylor, 2004).

The Materiality and Embodiment of Social Imaginaries

The last sentence of the prior section, then, gives rise to our reasonable questions: How can imaginary/imagination involve the construction of collective social worlds and realities? In and through what processes does imaginary/imagination come to be materialized and embodied into physical worlds and into the social realities that people can collectively sense and experience as tangible and authentic? That is, how and where

does social imaginary come to be embodied and materialized? How does social imaginary produce embodied social experience that collective people can share?

Recent scholarly works thinking of religion as a practice of mediation, offer to us an insight where the questions can be productively discussed (Meyer, 2006, 2014; Morgan, 2013; Osri, 2012; Stolow, 2005). Researchers exploring the intersection between religion and media, began to focus on, as a crucial theoretical and methodological starting point to explore the intersection of the two, the practices that people actually do with media in religion and/or religion-related phenomena, not merely on the institutions or systems of symbols of them (Hoover, 2006, Meyer, 2006, 2009, Morgan, 1998, Schofield, 2003). Particularly, anthropologist Birgit Meyer has highlighted the practice of mediation as the core characteristics of religion. According to her, religion, postulating and drawing a gap between human being and the transcendental, offers, teaches, circulates and passes on practices of mediation through which the distance between the religious subjects and the transcendental is bridged and which, thus, makes it possible to sense and experience the transcendental (Meyer, 2006, 2014). Similarly, Robert Osri (2012) remarks that “religion is the practice of making the invisible visible, of concretizing the order of the universe, the nature of human life and its destiny, and the various dimensions and possibilities of human interiority itself, as these are understood in various cultures at different times, in order to render them visible and tangible, present to the senses in the circumstances of everyday life (p. 147).”

What makes the transcendental, the invisible, into the visible and tangible, is a variety of media that simultaneously mediate and materialize the transcendental. At this

point, we do not define media “in the narrow, familiar sense of modern mass media, but in the broad sense of transmitters across gaps and limits (Meyer, 2014, p.216).” In effect, Meyer employs the term of *sensational forms* to properly indicate the media which she newly defines here. Sensational forms or media are the transmitters across the gaps between the transcendent and human beings, thus “make the transcendental sense-able” and help the human beings experience it (2006, p. 9). In contemporary social worlds that are constantly mediated, as Meyer (2006) argues, “media feature on two levels. Not only do modern media such as print, photography, TV, film, or internet shape sensational forms, the latter themselves are media that mediate, and thus produce, the transcendental and make it sense-able (p. 14).”

Before the practice of mediation through sensational forms, the transcendental is invisible but exists in and as the form of imaginary of religious subjects. After the religious imaginaries of the transcendental are mediated through sensational forms, that is, the imaginaries are presented to the bodily senses of the religious subjects through media and the practices of mediation, the imaginaries of it come to acquire visibility and tangibility.¹⁵

¹⁵ Although I formulated the relationship between the mediation of imaginary and the materialization of it by using of the sequential terms of *before* and *after* for verbal explanation, Appaduari (2015) argues that mediation and materiality always exist and work together as the two sides of the same things: “Mediation, as an operation or embodied practice, produces materiality as the effect of its operations. Materiality is the site of what mediation— as an embodied practice—reveals. Thus speech is the materiality from which language—as mediation—takes its meaning. ... The eye (and its sensory-neural infrastructure) is the materiality through which seeing—as a practice of mediation—takes its effect. Most generally, mediation may be seen as an effect of which some sort of materiality is always the condition of possibility. But this materiality does not preexist mediation, any more than speech preexists language, pictures preexist images, or the eye preexists vision. The two sides of this relationship always exist and work together, as two sides of the same thing (pp. 224-225).”

Imaginaries come to be materialized through the practice of mediation of the imaginaries. And imaginaries reveal their existence as their materiality and in the form of their materialization only through the mediation of the imaginaries. In this regard, imaginaries are material. The imaginaries that we come to perceive and talk about together, cannot but be material.

In addition, as already argued by Appadurai (1996) and Castoriadis (1987), imaginaries are not opposed to the real, but the conditions of the perception and production of the real. Part of them are “today a staging ground for action” and materialized into real actions (Appadurai, 1996, p. 7). When new imaginaries come to be collectively shared and shaped into what Taylor (2004) would call social imaginaries, through the ongoing circulation of mass-produced addresses, images and stories, then the social imaginaries can transform the overall perception, expectation and experience of people on their social reality and the social actions based on the newly experienced reality. Taylor demonstrates that modern social imaginaries of equal ordinary citizens detached from any transcendental and sacred order, gave rise to real market economy, public sphere and self-governing people in the West.

The locale where the modern social imaginaries are actually materialized and embodied, however, has not been thoroughly scrutinized by Charles Taylor as a conceptual and analytical unit. In this regard, it is noteworthy that Lelia Dawney (2011) offers the idea of body imagining, body embodying social imaginaries, by appropriating Spinoza’s idea of imagination. Spinoza suggest that all sensory knowledge and experience is

predicated on the realm of imagination.¹⁶ For Spinoza, there are no embodied experiences without imagination. As Dawney (2011) puts it, “the imagination is grounded in direct bodily awareness, and as such the body imagines external bodies as existing – *it is a condition for there being a real* (emphasis in the original text) (p. 541).”

Then, the ideas of *social imaginaries*, collectively shared, and those of bodies imagining and embodying such social imaginaries, encourage us to think of the possibility of similar bodies having similar affective responses to particular media images and texts circulated in a mass scale and that of similar embodied experiences, shaped by shared social imaginaries, which let the bodies quite similarly understand and feel social reality.¹⁷ For instance, the religious subjects in the same religious tradition are likely to have similar affective response to their sacred symbols since their religious imaginaries and practices of mediation are likely to have been identically disciplined and controlled by the religion that the subjects practice (Meyer, 2006; 2009; 2014).

¹⁶ In Spinoza’s understanding of human knowledge, the binaries between mind and body, true and imaginary are abolished. For Spinoza, “mind is the idea of body (Gatens & Lloyd, 1999, p. 12)” and “the mind is simply the body as understood through the attribute of thought (Dawney, 2011, p. 540).” Hampshire (1951) remarks that for Spinoza, “perceiving, entertaining images, feeling an emotion or having a sensation, are all cases of having an idea which is an idea of some bodily modification (p. 94).” And since Spinoza suggests that “it is through imagination that mind has body as its object in the most immediate way,” it can be argued that all sensory knowledge is predicated on the realm of imagination. Then, imagination has “a powerful ontological dimension – a direct and strong contact with bodily reality (Gatens & Lloyd, 1999, p. 12)” in which the boundary between real and imaginary is blurred. As Dawney (2011) puts it, “all knowledges produced through the senses (rather than through logic or intuition) are produced through bodily modification, the ideas of which are products of the imagination (p. 540).”

¹⁷ From the similarity of human bodies, Spinoza infers the possibility of the imaginary to be worked as social (Hampshire, 1951, p. 93). Similar bodies shaped in similar cultural and social worlds may imagine and experience objects in similar ways. Imaginaries and embodied experience enabled by the imaginaries are “produced in and through the power relations through which subjects emerge, and as such reflect institutional, social, and cultural practices (Dawney, 2011, p. 541).”

Social imaginaries are likely to be able to make the people sharing the imaginaries feel and experience quite the same about particular social objects and/or categories related to the imaginaries. In this regard, social imaginaries are “constellations of imaginary understanding of the world which directly arise from embodied experience and which are shared with other bodies that have similar experience of the world” and the object in the world. The images, texts and practice which are being circulated conveying particular social imaginaries, “contribute to the ongoing production of imaginaries” in their sensory interrelation with social bodies (Dawney, 2011, p. 542). As Ahmed (2004) shows, social imaginaries arouse and produce particular emotions among people through the circulation of particular media images and texts related to the imaginaries and the people “invest affectively in them (Dawney, 2011, p. 542).”

To conclude, Taylor’s idea of social imaginary offers to us a new sociological imagination where the examination on the issues of to be modern, to experience the modern, and to live in the era of modernity, need not be restricted only to the conventional scholarly focus on meaning and representations which has prioritized content over form, idea over sense (Asad, 1993). Given that social imaginary “occupies a fluid middle ground between embodied practices and explicit doctrines (Gaonkar, 2002, p. 11)” and that it closely relates to Bourdieu’s notion of habitus highlighting the issues of embodiment, body and embodied experience, the notion of social imaginary opens up a chance for us to look into the issues such as affect, sensorial experience and the embodiment and materiality of the imaginary that altogether are critically involved in the formation and expression of a collective social world. The inclusion of such issues as

conceptual and analytical ideas to think of social imaginary, enriches our further discussion on the media representation of Korean Protestants in the two incidents and the branding of Templestay and Korean Buddhism

To put briefly at this point, the media representation of Korean Protestants as an inferior other and the repugnance of Korean society on them can never be fully understood if it is examined only through the framework of the self-conscious recording and denoting of meaning in the representations. Rather, it should be examined and understood in terms of the question of affective and sensorial experiences (and their powerful materiality) which have accumulated and shaped by the formation, expression, and circulation of the media images and texts carrying particular social imaginaries of Korean modernity in which the existences and practices of the Protestants are imagined and made sense. Further, the neo-liberal branding strategy, practice and logic, through which particular imaginaries of Templestay and Korean Buddhism are shaped and mediated, are significantly based on making communities of people who collectively share a common affective and sensorial experience on a brand. Such collective sharing of common feeling and sensorial experience, is critically interwoven with, and indebted to, the formation, mediation and circulation of particular social imaginary which shapes a collectively imagined social world.

Chapter 3. Historical Perspective

:The Encounters of Korea with the Modern and the Neo-Liberal

Introduction

Noting the significance of the newly imagining, defining and writing Korean modernity and world history (Shome, 2014), this chapter examines Korean modern history as conditions that have been lived by ordinary Korean people and have significantly contributed to the shaping of the conventional understanding and imaginaries of Korean modernity, Protestantism and Buddhism. In other words, in order to look into the social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism and their interwoven relationships with those of Korean modernity that are mediated in the two case studies of this dissertation, this chapter explores the question of what politico-economic events and forces in Korean modern history have conditioned the formation of the social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism. In this regard, it looks into the interwoven relationships between some critical politico-economic conditions in Korean modern history and the two religions, while taking the risks of more or less selectively simplifying the complexities, dynamics and ambivalences of Korean modern histories and of temporally identifying Korean modern history with the historical time which Korean people in general consider as their modern time: from 1876, when Japan began its project of colonial expansion and domination in Korea by opening up Korean ports, to the present.

The Religious Landscape and Socio-Political Conditions of Korea from the Late 19th Century to the Early 20th Century

Before the Kingdom of Joseon opened its ports to Japan due to the 1876 Japan-Korea Treaty, which is conventionally considered as the starting point of the modern Korean history, the religious landscape of Joseon was dominated by Confucianism by whose teachings the Kingdom was sacralized as the extension of patriarchal family and its nation was governed (Kim, 2012; Lee, 2000; Park, 1995). Buddhism lost its socio-political hegemony, which it acquired in Goryeo dynasty (918-1392), and survived within the private area in the form of folk religion (Lee, 2000; Park, 1995). Catholicism, which was at first introduced in the notion of Seohak (Western learning) even long before the 1876 Japan-Korea Treaty,¹⁸ was critically suppressed by political elites who considered its antagonism to Confucian ancestor worship as radically threatening the contemporary patriarchal order of the Joseon dynasty predicated on Confucianism (Jang, 1999). Seohak and Catholicism almost decreased to the point of extinction around the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Any other religions except Confucianism were not able to come into the

¹⁸ The first introduction of Western culture/civilization to Korea happened long before 1876 when the Japan-Korea Treaty was made. It is 1784 when Seohak came to develop into a religious movement and it is known that Western scientific knowledge and technology came into Joseon long before Seohak became a religious movement (Cho, 1993). It is a modern myth to imagine that cultural exchange on a global scale was only enabled in recent 'modern' days. In the myth of the modern cultural exchange, there is an idea or imaginary of 'rupture' that is considered to characterize modernity (Bhambra, 2007). However, as Appiah (2006) puts it, "living culture do not, in any case, evolve from purity into contamination; change is more a gradual transformation from one mixture to a new mixture." Even though I agree with Appiah's argument in principle, I think that Koreans living in the late-19th century must have experienced the opening of their ports and the embracing of Western culture as more or less a drastic social change or even a rupture.

public area as ideology or worldview. Opening ports to Japan in 1876 and later to other Western imperial powers including the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Germany, however, gave rise to the transformation of its religious landscape with the overall change of its socio-political conditions (Lee, 2000).

Between 1890 and 1910, the fate of Joseon was critically declined.¹⁹ Internally, Joseon was beset by factional struggle and the corruption of political elites. Externally, China, Russia and Japan contended for dominating Joseon in order to acquire profits from its geopolitical location. These conditions engendered political disasters including the Donghak rebellion of 1894; “the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 (both won by Japan); the imposition of a Japanese protectorate over Korea in 1905, effectively terminating Korea’s sovereignty; and Japan’s annexation of Korea in 1910, formally ending Korea’s existence as an independent nation (Lee, 2011, p.648).” In particular, the 1894 Donghak peasant rebellion gathered the believers of Donghak religion,²⁰ ruined yangbans,²¹ peasants, servants, butchers and sons of concubines. It made a huge resistant movement which criticized ruling class, foreign intrusion and the

¹⁹ On October 1897, Gojong, who was the last king of the Joseon dynasty, declared the new establishment of the Daehan (Korea) Empire and Confucianism as the national religion (Kim, 2012).

²⁰ Literally, ‘Donghak’ means Eastern learning. Donghak was an academic movement in Korean neo-Confucianism. Growing into a huge social movement, Donghak’s teaching that human is heaven attracted a variety of the low-class people and offered social imaginaries for legitimizing and motivating its movement in a national scale.

²¹ Yangban was a traditional ruling class or nobles of the Joseon Dynasty which had lasted during about 600 years right before Japan colonized it and established the modern form of the colonial state in Korea.

contradiction of hierarchy system and further claimed the human rights and and sovereignty of ordinary people (Kwon, 2011).²²

During this period, while being criticized as the underlying cause of the reproduction of the ruling class and hierarchy system, Confucianism lost its dominant position as the official religion of the Joseon dynasty and its hegemonic power to control the whole Korean society into which Western religions began to officially enter. Some intellectuals and political elites were ready to embrace Western religions. They longed for the modernization of their motherland and perceived religion as the crucial instrument to transform the traditional politics, culture and disposition of the Joseon people into the ones of a modern nation (Kim, 2011, p. 266). However, increasing intrusions of the West and Catholicism's dissent from Confucian ancestor worship led even them to recognize Catholicism as the vanguard of the Western intrusion.

Western Missionaries and the Introduction of Protestantism in the early modern Korea

Protestantism, in its early propagation, gained advantages from the socio-political conditions discussed above. It was disseminated with the arrival of Western missionaries, in Joseon on 1884, who were not irrelevant to the unequal treaties made between Korea

²² The Korean scholarships of history and politics, in general, had found and highlighted the modern characteristics such as the ideas of nationalism, civil rights, equality, and sovereignty in Donghak rebellion while arguing that Korea was already on the track of modernity even before Japanese colonialism brought capitalism and industrialization in the paradigm of implicit development theory (Kim 2013; Kim, 1997; Kwon, 2011; Oh, 2005; Shin, 1978).

and Western countries. The dissolution of the hegemony of Confucianism and the eagerness of some Korean intellectuals and political elites to embrace the advanced Western civilization, helped the early Protestantism dominate the religious scape of the early modern Korea (Jang, 1999; Lee; 2000).

Although there is a few notable research arguing that the history of Korean Protestantism needs to be seen not as that of missionary and propaganda but as that of self-embracement (Lee, 1998; Seo, 1986), it should not be neglected the critical influence of the Western missionaries to the early shaping of Korean Protestants' imaginaries and understandings on Protestantism, the West, modernity and themselves. It was during the Pyeongyang Great Revival Movement of 1907 that Korean Protestantism acquired and confirmed its autonomous power and drive of growth.²³ Thus, the particular influence of the Western missionaries in the periods between 1894 and 1907 needs to be noted, which could shape and guide the early disposition, habitus, ritual, logics and ethos of Korean Protestants.

According to Man-Yeol Lee's research (1991, p. 445, p. 450), the number of the Protestant missionaries who propagated in Korea in the periods between 1893 and 1983 is 1,952. The portion of the American missionaries was absolute (1,710) and they were comprised of Northern/Southern Methodists and Southern Presbyterians. Their theology,

²³ "Partly owing to these missionaries, the Korean evangelical church experienced one of its most explosive growth periods between 1890 and 1907. In 1896, for example, the total number of evangelicals was 4,356; by 1900, the number reached 20,918, nearly a fivefold increase. By 1907, when a nationwide revival swept through the churches, the figure increased to 106,287 – a growth of more than 24 times in a space of 11 years. And in 1909-1910, twenty thousand more were added to this number as a result of a nationwide "One- Million-Souls-for-Christ" movement (Lee, 2010, p. 13; recited at Lee, 2011, p. 647)."

mission policy, and ethos on Western modernity and civilization was, in effect, heavily influenced to the disposition of early Korean Protestantism. The American missionaries were very conservative in terms of their theological stance, accusing the liberal theology of heresy and characterized by pietism with a rigid Puritan faith. They believed in the absolute authority of Bible and prioritized the experience of rebirth through having personal relationship with God (Lee, 1997).

Scrutinizing the missionary reports and letters of the early Western missionaries and examining their discourse on the civilization and modernization of Korea, Hyun-Bum Cho (2002) illuminates how the missionaries understood the contemporary Korea and how they dreamed of the civilization and modernization of Korea. The early Protestant missionaries perceived Korea as the country of barbarism, which remained in the pre-modern age. They frequently criticized the poverty of the people, poor hygienic conditions, and the backwardness of Korean legal system that the interrogation of suspect was in general conducted by torture, slavery system, discrimination against women, strong belief in superstition, and the absence of the idea of the nation-state and individualism (pp. 137-140). In response to the problems they perceived, Western missionaries tried to transform and discipline Korean manner of living (Ibid., pp. 141-142). For instance, they taught that to be involved with alcohol, cigarettes, and gambling was a sin and highlighted the ethics of diligence, abstinence, frugality, and punctuality. Such disciplines of lifestyle and body emphasizing the abstinence of 'evil' desires, are still a significant character of the contemporary conservative Protestantism.

Some researchers who argue that the early Protestantism in Korea aroused patriotism, often point out the fact that the early Korean Protestants raised the national flag of Korea in their home and church (Min, 1982, p. 216; Shin, 1999, p. 864). However, there is the other story about what made the Protestants raise their national flag. And this should be discussed with the general two motivations that made Koreans embrace Protestantism in the early period of its growth before the 1907 Great Revival Movement rose. First, most intellectuals and political elites who accepted Protestantism had a motivation to civilize and modernize their motherland, which is corresponding to the modernization and civilization discourse of Western missionaries. They believed that Protestantism would make their country civilized and modernized enough to save Korea from other powers such as China, Russia and Japan. Meanwhile, the motivation of low-class people who believed Protestantism was different. They wanted to acquire the protection of their lives and properties from the exploitation of the corrupted ruling class of Korea and other foreign powers. At that time, Western missionaries had extraterritorial rights that Korean government could not approach to the properties and lives of Western missionaries. For the low-class people who were in danger of losing their lives and properties, to be a Protestant under the guidance of the missionaries was a way to protect their lives and properties under the guidance of the Western missionaries (Kang, 1999, p.66). In the regard, Korean Protestantism in the colonial period was imagined as the religion of power which could protect and save ordinary people (Baek, 2014). Considering that to raise a national flag was perceived as a new, western and Protestant form of expression of patriotism at that time, it was not that Korean

Protestants' raising of the Korean national flag signified only patriotism. Rather, it indicated that they are Protestants and under the guidance of Western missionaries (Kang, 1999, p. 66).

The Rise and Dissemination of the Protestant Discourse on Religion, Modernity and Civilization in Modern Korea

The propagation efforts of the early Korea Protestantism were not limited to protecting the suppressed people or transforming the alleged uncivilized lifestyle of Korean people. The early Korean Protestants and Western missionaries attempted to demonstrate the superiority of Protestantism over other religions in the symbolic, discursive level and further to newly define what the authentic religion is (Lee, 1995). First of all, in its early introduction to Korea, Protestantism was eager to differentiate itself from Catholicism which aroused a huge socio-political conflict in Joseon. The competition between Protestantism and Catholicism proceeded pivoting around the discursive struggle on which one between the two the authentic Christianity is (Shin, 1998). For instance, the early Protestant missionaries argued that, first, Protestantism never intervenes into politics while Catholicism does; second, Protestantism is characterized by monotheism while Catholicism commits idolatry including its worship of the Virgin Mary; third, Protestantism is the religion of the United States while Catholicism that of France (Jang, 1999, pp. 255-256).

In addition, while being categorized as idol worship, Korean folk religion including its traditional shamanism was also disregarded. Right after their arrival at Joseon, most of

the early Protestant missionaries thought that Korean people were devoid of religion since no religious architectures, monks and priests were found in Hanseong, the capital of Joseon. As their missionary activities came to expand all over the country, however, the missionaries realized that there was a variety of folk religion which they could not admit as an authentic form of religion on the basis of their Protestant view on religion. In particular, many Western missionaries believed that shamanism was the core characteristics of Korean folk religion and even Confucian ancestor worship that it should be eradicated from the overall religious culture of the Korean nation (Lee, 1995, pp. 151-152).

Even Korean Buddhism fell into the category of idol worship and superstition (Kim, 2011; Lee, 1995). Western missionaries characterized Korean Buddhism as idols, unrecognizable chant and promiscuous monks (Gale, 1909, p. 67). They believed that Bodhisattva, a divine being worthy of nirvana who remains on the human world to help human to salvation, was a sort of numen shaped into the figures of dead saints and that to worship it was idolatry, the cause of sin (Lee, 1996, p. 105; Lee, 2002, p. 151). The first Korean Methodist pastor Byeongheon Choi criticized that Korean Buddhism had not accomplished its independence from political elites while Protestantism insisted the separation between politics and religion. And he also argued that Korean Buddhism had corrupted and remained stagnant while Protestantism helped ordinary people by establishing schools and hospitals (Jang, 1999, p. 262). Only in the 1920s and 1930, the criticism of Korean Buddhism by Protestantism reached the doctrine and philosophy of it. It concentrated into what Protestantism accused of the 'self-effort' of Buddhism to acquire

salvation. It was argued that the self-effort should be abandoned in front of God's grace. Early Korean Protestant thinkers criticized that Buddhism belittled objective truth and historical revelation falling into subjective emotionalism in which Buddhist believers trying to save themselves should end up after all. Its alleged subjective individualism was considered to be not appropriate for the Korean nation who should be modernized and civilized. Thus, Korean Protestantism actively tried to disqualify Korean Buddhism from the status of religion (Lee, 2000, pp. 154-155).

It needs to be carefully examined how Korean people came to understand the reason why Protestantism is distinguished from and superior than other religions. This is because it was closely interwoven with how what the modern is came to be imagined, understood and believed in the early modern period of Korea. Let me discuss the three important criteria that were highlighted in justifying the superiority of Protestantism over other religion and how the criteria related to the overall understanding of what the modern is.

First, the separation between religion and politics was imagined and suggested as the condition and principle of the modern state and as the significant criteria to judge what the authentic religion is. Western missionaries not only needed the freedom of religion and the separation between religion and politics as the appropriate principles and conditions for its propagation but truly believed that they were the characteristics distinguishing between barbarism and civilization. They thought that it was their duties to disseminate not only their Protestant belief but the virtues of Western modern states into non-Western societies (Jang, 1999; Lee, 2000). The fact that the first Korean Methodist

pastor Choi accused Korean Buddhism of its failure to be independent from political elites (Jang, 1999, p. 262), demonstrates that some Korean Protestant leaders fully embraced the understanding of Western missionaries on what the authentic religion is and what the modern relationship between it and politics should be. Further, the 1886 treaty made between Korea and France and the struggle of interpretation over what 'the church' meant, which was invoked by the treaty, contributed to the critical rise of the concepts of the freedom of religion and the separation between religion and politics as a public discourse (Lee, 2000, p. 148). Jang Seok-Man (1999) argues that these concepts came to be a common sense after the freedom of Protestantism and Catholicism to evangelize was officially admitted and the separation between politics and religion and the missionary works of Protestants were culturally taken for granted (pp. 257-258).

Second, the making of the modern nation-state was represented, imagined and discussed revolving around the discourse of civilization (Kim, 2002; p. 94). And, as pointed out earlier, Protestantism was thought of as the symbol and basis of Western civilization by the early modern intellectuals and ordinary people in Korea (Cho, 2006; Kim, 2011; Lee, 2000; Jang, 1999). In the early introduction of Protestantism, Western missionaries paved the way for the dissemination of Protestantism by offering education and medical service to Korean people since they were not allowed to directly evangelize. And their new medical service and technology, education program and system were manifested as the evidences of the advanced Western modern civilization (Lee, 2000, p. 148; Yang, 2010, pp. 221-222). It is interesting that there was a discrepancy in the understanding of Protestantism between the Western missionaries and the Korean people longing for

modernization and civilization. Jang Seok-Man (1999) points out that Korean people expected and believed that they could accomplish the same level of modernization and civilization that the West had achieved by accepting Protestantism. On the contrary, most Western missionaries wanted to insist that Protestantism was the civilized, modern one only in the limited domain of religion which was separate from worldly affairs and politics. In the perspective of the missionaries, it was not appropriate to consider and employ Protestantism as an instrument to survive and empower one's nation. For the missionaries, the salvation of individuals was much more important than the rise and fall of their nation (pp. 260-261). When the issues of homosexuality and Protestantism's aversion to it come to be laid in the context of the economic interest and global image of South Korea in the contemporary age, such Protestant focuses divided into individual salvation and national interest, significantly recur.

Third, justifying itself as the only authentic religion that properly arranged its position in the modern world, Protestantism pushed almost every traditional Korean religion which existed earlier than the arrival of itself into the category of superstition/shamanism or philosophy/ethics. For instance, the intellectual tradition of Korean Confucianism and Buddhism was considered as a mere philosophy and ethics while their popular tradition a superstition and shamanism (Lee, 2000, p.161). In the formulation of Protestantism, ethics and philosophy were accused of its alleged self-effort and humanism which could not save the soul of human. Whereas, superstition and shamanism were critically accused of its irrationality and barbarism characterized as the pre-modern.

This Protestant mode of discerning religion and superstition dominated the overall scholarly and lay discussion on Western modern religions, Korean religiosity and shamanism in the early modern Korea (Jang, 1999; Lee, 2000; Yang, 2010). Under Japanese colonial regime, shamanism and superstition came to be a target to eradicate in order to transform the Korean nation into a civilized modern one (Lee, 2005). And, as You-Jin Jeong's research (2012) shows, in the dictatorial regime of President Jeong-Hee Park Korean people in general had a sense that only the people who were not modernized still believed folk religion and shamanism. Only the folk religion or shamanism culture which were closely related to the inspiration of Korean nationalism, were able to be designated as cultural assets while other significant heritage of shamanism were alienated and dissipated. And this Protestant, modern stigmatizing of Korean folk religion and shamanism as the pre-modern and uncivilized, appears to be still persistent in the media representation of the contemporary Korean Protestantism highlighting its shamanistic characteristics and its being of a crucial criteria through which Korean Protestantism is understood as the uncivilized in Korean society, which one of the case studies in this dissertation project tries to demonstrate.

Korean Buddhism before Japanese Colonial Era

In the early modern period, Protestantism was risen in the religious scape of Korea and it was being shaped the social imaginary where Protestantism is identified with modernity, rationality, civilization and (inter)national prosperity and power. Whereas, Buddhism had a difficulty in justifying its existence through the discourse of modernity and

civilization. As Jeong-Yeon Yang's research (2010) on the early modern perception of Buddhism and 'religion' shows, its image of monasticism tended to be prevailed and sustained among ordinary Korean people (p. 223). It was not well appreciated the effort of Korean Buddhism to modernize itself and cope with the early modern condition of Korea in which a variety of religion including Buddhism itself, Protestantism, Catholicism, Confucianism, Donghak and other folk religions came to compete with each other mostly through the discourse of civilization (Jang, 1992).²⁴

During the Joseon Dynasty, its ruling class honored Confucianism and oppressed Buddhism. Buddhism lost its socio-political hegemony acquired in Goryeo dynasty (918-1392) and survived within the private area in the form of folk religion (Park, 1995). It was thought of as the religion of hermit and of children and women (Lee, 2000; p. 149), who were rarely imagined to have a qualification to be a public and political existence. The arrival of Japanese Buddhism with Japanese colonial power critically changed the religious scape and the status of Korean Buddhism.

The Dilemma of Korean Buddhism under Japanese Colonial

Regime

²⁴ Seok-Man Jang (1992), in his doctoral dissertation, demonstrates that the meaning of religion in the modern period of Korea was perceived in terms of the discourse of civilization. Whether the two notions of religion and civilization were identified or contradicted with each other, the nature and function of religion was discussed in the social agenda of modernization and civilization (pp. 58-65).

After opening ports to Japan and Western countries in 1876, Japanese Buddhism began to actively propagate itself in Joseon. Japan offered to Japanese Buddhism a significant role of controlling Korean Buddhism and edifying and pacifying the colonized people of Korea in accordance with the colonial power and discipline of Japan. Japanese Buddhism was understood by Japanese government as an effective tool to colonize the consciousness of Korean people (Ryu, 2005). It was not explicitly manifested, however, that Japanese Buddhism would take the role of guiding and helping the colonization of Korea by Japan, until it was declared the Temple Control Regulation allowing the control over Korean Buddhism by Japanese Buddhism in 1906 and the Temple Ordinance that was characterized by the direct control and supervision of Korean Buddhism by the Japanese Government General of Korea in June 1911 (Kim, 2012, p. 75). In particular, the Temple Ordinance made Korean Buddhism subjugated under the political power of the Japanese colonial regime. For instance, the worship of Chonhwang the Japanese Emperor was emphasized and demanded on Korean Buddhism. In a long-term perspective, the Temple Ordinance significantly contributed to the shaping of Korean Buddhism into the Japanese form of nationalistic Buddhism (Kim, 2011, pp. 270-271; Kim, 2012, p. 76).

In the early introduction of it, leaders of Korean Buddhism actively tried to learn Japanese Buddhism and acquire its help. They saw a great chance to empower and modernize Korean Buddhism under the infrastructure which Japanese government offered to Japanese Buddhism in order to enable and prepare its colonial project (Ryu, 2005). Moreover, the prior anti-Buddhism policy of the Joseon dynasty in the favor of

Confucianism, encouraged the leaders of Korean Buddhism to embrace Japanese Buddhism.

It was not a mere illusion of Korean Buddhism the expectation that the introduction of Japanese Buddhism to Korea would benefit Korean Buddhism. Japanese Buddhism, in effect, contributed to the re-entry of Korean Buddhism into the public sphere of the late Joseon. Thanks to the official request of the Japanese monk Sano, the regulation that had prohibited Buddhist monks from entering Hanseong, the capital of Joseon, was abolished in October 1895 (Lee, 2000, p. 149; Kim, 2012, p. 71). Buddhism monks came to be able to officially propagate Buddhism in the center of Joseon culture, economics and politics. And this led to the rise of Korean Buddhism in the public sphere of the early modern Korea. Further, the Temple Control Regulation of 1906 and the Temple Ordinance of 1911 functioned not only as the technology of government and control over Korean Buddhism but as the official authorization and protection of it. Along with Protestantism, Korean Buddhism was admitted as a sort of authorized religion under the Japanese colonial regime, considering that other new folk religions risen in the chaos of the early modern period had a low social status and was categorized as quasi-religion (Lee, 2000, pp. 149-150).

As pointed out earlier, the attempt of Korean Buddhism to modernize itself confronting the emerging competition among religions, did not sufficiently catch the eyes of ordinary people. In effect, Korean Buddhism tried a variety of efforts to demonstrate its utility in the modern condition. For instance, it attempted to add the modern disciplines including physics, biology, geology, religious studies and history to the education

curriculum of Buddhist monks. And it also tried welfare works including establishing hospitals and educating prisoners in response to the missionary works of Protestantism which were perceived as modernizing and civilizing Korea (Cho, 2010, p.593).

The experimental trials of Korean Buddhism to be 'the modern' led to reforming some of its old tradition. In particular, Yong-Un Han, the most influential Buddhist intellectual and independence activist at that time, insisted the need for allowing monks to marry and to have meat in order to adjust to the modern condition and to transform the prior monastic, monk-centric Buddhism into the popular, ordinary practitioner-centric one. Although his argument failed to gain the general agreement of the Buddhist leaders who considered this issue as the lost of the traditional identity of Korean Buddhism, the number of the married monks rapidly increased (Auerback, 2008, p. 16).

Korean Buddhism Refracted by Japanese Colonial Experience and the Purification of It under Pro-/Anti-Japanese Historiography

The issue of married monks and the support of the most admired Buddhist leader on them, have not only generated the conflict among Buddhist leaders at that time but have been a scholarly controversy. In effect, the mainline Korean Buddhism studies have approached to significant historical events happened under the Japanese colonial power only by employing the singular perspective of pro- and anti-Japanese, in the favor of delineating the modern Korean Buddhism as the nationalistic Buddhism that aroused anti-Japanese nationalism and preserved the tradition of Koreanness against Japan (Auerback, 2008; Cho, 2010; Evon, 2001). In the perspective, all the Korean Buddhist histories, that

are understood as shameful by the dualism of pro- and anti-Japanese, including the destruction of celibacy, meat-eating and the voluntary embracement and admiration of Japanese Buddhism, have been narrativized as the result of what naïve Korean Buddhists were deceived and corrupted by the sly Japanese Buddhism that hid its political and colonial ambition (e.g. Kim, 2007; Park, 1995; Han, 2007). In the case of Yong-Un Han, for instance, it is argued that he tried to institutionalize the destruction of celibacy, which is pro-Japanese, since he did not know the truth of Japanese Buddhism hiding its colonial ambition, but he led independence movements against Japan, which is anti-Japanese, after he realized the truth later (Cho, 2010, p. 599).

The simplistic dualisms between the purity of Korea and the impurity of (and corruption by) Japan, anti-Japanese and pro-Japanese, have been mostly pointed out by non-Korean scholars while most Korean scholars examining the modern Korean Buddhism have had difficulty in distancing themselves from Japanese colonial experience. Auerback (2008, p. 17) argues that, in the dominant historiography of the modern Korean Buddhism by Korean scholars, the marriage of Buddhist monks is uncritically identified with the inferior, unclean Buddhist custom, the collusion with the Japanese colonial power and the loss and depravity of the self by the other which is Japan. The observance of Evon (2001) is also noteworthy:

post-liberation Korean Buddhist discourse might be unique for the very value it places on celibacy and the link it implicitly draws between celibacy and devotion to the Korean nation. ... It is argued that sexual purity is purely Korean and sexual impurity is purely Japanese (p. 15).

As Cho (2006; 2010) argues, however, it was not separable between impurity and purity, Japanese Buddhism and the modernization of Korean Buddhism, in the early modern Korea, since for Korean Buddhism modernity or the modern was imagined and perceived only by the mediation of Japanese Buddhism. In the colonial context, the boundary between Japanese and Korean Buddhism could not be purely and clearly cut. The modernization of Korean Buddhism and the preserving of Korean identity by resisting Japanese colonialism including its Buddhism were perceived as incompatible but neither one was abandonable. It was the dilemma for Korean Buddhism in the Japanese colonial era.

The Rise of Anti-Japanese Nationalism and the Contrary Approaches of Korean Protestantism to Socio-Political Participation

After Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910, the dilemma became more vivid. While Korean Buddhism was failing in producing their own anti-Japanese national discourse, Protestantism was coming to be the primary production site of civilization, modern and women education, and nationalistic discourse (Cho, 2006, p. 84). Tongnip Hyeophoe (the Independence Club) and Tongnip Sinmun (the Independent), whose core leaders strongly believed Protestantism and Westernization as the instrument of national salvation, were crucial and influential in the production and dissemination of the discourse that posited the Western mode of living, education, manner, hygiene and religion as essential to the

empowerment of and self-reliant independence of the nation (Kil, 2004, pp.92-94; Kim, 2011, pp. 267-268). Some of the political elites and intellectuals who embraced Protestantism strongly believed that Protestantism is the basis of Western civilization and that Joseon should be westernized and modernized by means of Protestantism if Joseon wants to empower itself and to be liberated from Japan (Kang, 1999, p. 69).

The anti-Japanese nationalistic discourse gradually developed to the extent that Japanese colonial power could not disregard. Many Korean nationalists gathered into the church despite its principle of the separation between church and state. The Western missionaries were concerned about the nationalists who were politically motivated. They not only prohibited political activities within the church but also discouraged the burgeoning of nationalistic sentiment. While the missionaries considered Japan “as a partner in their self-appointed task to enlighten Koreans” in favor of maintaining the colonial status, Korean Protestants “shared in and contributed to the collective aspirations of the people” desiring independence. And the 1919 March First Independence movement rose on a national scale, resisting Japanese colonial regime and attempting to actualize the liberation of Korea from Japan (Lee, 2011, p. 649). Sixteen of the thirty-three national representatives who signed in the Korean Declaration of Independence, were Protestants and a great number of Korean Protestants participated in the movement (Jang, 2012, p. 20).

Koreans were able to observe their own nationalistic aspiration, drive and power²⁵. After the movement failed, many Protestant leaders participated in establishing the provisional government of Korea in Manju and in the armies for independence. On the contrary, some other Protestant leaders, such as Seon-Ju Kil, concentrated on leading revival prayer meetings longing for afterlife while doubting the reform movements (Jang, 2012, p. 216). Such contrary approaches to the political participation on Korean society within Korean Protestantism have recurred in a variety of historical events such as pro-democracy movement in the 1970s and 80s and, more recently, the national protests risen by the 2014 Sewol Ferry disaster where almost three hundred people, mostly high school students, died because of the inability of Korean government to rescue them.

The Troubled Reformist Movement of Korean Buddhism under Japanese Colonial Regime

Meanwhile, the participation of Korean Buddhism in the 1919 March First Independence movement was relatively very low and less manifested compared to Protestantism. Only two of the thirty-three national representatives were Buddhists. The Independence movement, however, awakened Buddhists' national consciousness and craving for their political autonomy in Korean society. There arose reformist movements of Korean Buddhism attempting to abolish the Temple Ordinance and to seek the

²⁵ Robinson (2007) argues that the memory of the 1919 March First Independence movement plays a crucial role in the narrative and imaginary of modern Korea and Korean nationalism.

separation between politics and religion. (Kim, 2012, p. 76). Yong-Un Han, who is one of the two Buddhist national representatives, was influential and vocal in the reformist movements. He kept argued the abolition of the Temple Ordinance and the separation between politics and religion, believing that the core problem of Japanese Buddhism was not its custom that allowed monks to marry but its nationalistic nature which supported the totalitarianism of Japanese government. He thought that it was more important to be independent from Japanese political power than distancing from the custom of monks' marriage, in order to preserve the identity of Korean Buddhism. In a sense, his continuing efforts to popularize Korean Buddhism away from its monk-centrism and monasticism was to save Korean Buddhism from the political alliance between Korean monks and Japanese political elites (Cho, 2010, pp. 597-598). And, after the 1920s, the reformist movements discussed and insisted not only the abolition of the Temple Ordinance and the separation between politics and religion but the transformation of Korean Buddhism into the urbanized, lay Buddhist centric and popularized Buddhism. But under the political subjugation by Japanese colonial power and the Temples Ordinance system, such trials for reforming Korean Buddhism did not produce solid results (Kim, 2012, p. 76).

After Korean War: The Collusion of Conservative Evangelicalism with the Korean Military Governments from 1950s to 1980s

After gaining independence from Japanese colonial regime in 1945, Korea came to be divided into North and South Korea under the subordination of the contemporary two world powers: The Soviet Union and the United States. In 1948, the government of South

Korea was separately established from North Korea and the Korean War aroused in 1950. The period between 1945 and 1948 was crucial to the incredible future growth of Korean Protestantism (in particular that of Protestantism) (Baek, 2014, pp. 24-29): First, in the period, the US army assigned Korean Evangelicals who were fluent in English to important positions for translation in most cases. At that time, Protestantism was the most distinguished group that had the majority of intellectuals and political elites who studied in the United States. Second, the US army handed most of Japanese properties to Protestant churches and the properties came to be the important economic condition of the growth of Korean Protestantism. Third, thanks to Seung-Man Lee, who came to be the first president of South Korea by using his conservative Evangelical identity and political connection with the United States government, Korean Protestantism was able to make a very supportive and stable relationship with Korean government while receiving special institutional favor. All these factors came to be the early conditions for the drastic development of Korean Protestantism after 1950s.

The Korean War made a great number of North Korean Evangelicals against the communist government of North Korea move to South Korea. At first, in fact, it was the North part of Korea where Evangelicalism was most dramatically growing than any other regions. After the Korean War arose, however, a great number of North Korean Evangelicals persecuted by North Korean communism increasingly migrated to South Korea for their survival and Protestantism drastically revived due to the huge migration of the North Korean Protestants. In the context, anti-communism and Korean Evangelicalism came to have affinity with each other under the guidance and encouragement of the

Korean military governments in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Conservative Evangelicalism actively colluded with the military regime, sharing the ethos of anti-communism and pro-Americanism (Lee, 2011, pp .651-653). Whereas, some progressive Protestant intellectuals and pastors led the resistance movements against the military dictatorship of President Jeong-Hee Park in the 1960s and 70s. However, in the 1980s, the Korean Protestants in genera were almost invisible in the pro-democracy resistance movements which disseminated on a national scale, contrary to Korean Catholicism that played a primary role in the pro-democracy movement (Kim, 2012).

The Drastic Rise of Korean Protestantism as Urban Religion under the Compressed Modernization of 1960s and 1970s.

Meanwhile, the industrialization period of the 1960s and 70s, the era that is in general understood as that of 'compressed modernization,' offered a crucial chance for the growth of Korean Protestantism. The successive economic development policies since 1962 and the acceleration of urbanization by the state policies of Korean government, dismantled the traditional mode of living and community sustained by kinship and regionalism. People who were alienated sought for alternative communities, values to pursue and ways of belonging (No, 2005, pp. 268-269). In the period, the growing churches of Korean Protestantism became the communities where people in urban areas could easily belong to, share their life experience rooted in the urban setting and make their own meanings. The churches absorbed not only the low-class urban workers but the rural farmers who entered into the cities seeking new opportunities and jobs.

As shown in its contrary responses of Korean Protestantism to independence movements against Japan and to the Korean military regime, its approach to the intensification of urbanization and industrialization was divided into the two different poles. Conservative Evangelicals more or less concentrated on holding mass meetings aiming at individual conversion, gathering more people in their churches, and blessing the economic success of individual believers. In particular, conservative Protestantism which had huge prayer meetings attracted a great number of urban middle class people. Whereas, progressive Protestants generated the so-called 'Minjung (the people)' movement which focused on saving and voicing the poor, low class workers who were alienated (Baek, 2014, p. 10).

In this regard, the intensification of urbanization and industrialization in the 1960s and 70s, shaped significant conditions in which Korean Protestantism has grown to be a powerful urban religion. It came to be even called the religion of 'Gangnam' that is a wealthy district signifying the wealth and power of political and economic elites in Korean society in the 1990s, 2000s and 2010s (Yang, 2012, pp. 30-36). Further, the direct election system, which was enabled by the nationwide pro-democracy movement of 1987 ending the military dictatorship of the former presidents, also crucially empowered conservative Evangelicalism where huge mega-churches exerted their socio-political influence on Korean society (Baek, 2014, p.11).

The Hegemonic Rise of the Chogye Order and the Self-Deceptive Purification of Korean Buddhist History

From 1950s to 1980s, Korean Buddhism had been relatively alienated by and in the Protestantism-biased political decisions of Korean military regimes. For instance, while Christmas was designated to be a legal holiday in 1948 at the same time with the establishment of the first South Korean government, it was only in 1975 that the day of Buddha's Coming acquired the legal status of public holiday. In a similar vein, while the institution of military chaplain was allowed to Protestantism and Catholicism in 1951, it was open to Korean Buddhism only in 1968 (Park, 1995, p. 48). Besides the external conditions impeding its growth, Korean Buddhism was undergoing internal conflicts around the issues of the Temple Ordinance and the great increase of married monks. During the Japanese colonial era, married monks came to be the majority and to gain the hegemony of Korean Buddhism. Ironically, the maintenance of the Temple Ordinance even after the liberation from Japan, was the legal justification for the married monks to officially possess the Buddhist Office of General Affairs which took charge of the overall management of Korean Buddhism at that time (Ibid., pp. 44-46). While the mainline Korean Buddhism at that time wanted to acknowledge the destruction of celibacy as a given reality and justify it, the celibates were eager to expelling the married monks from Korean Buddhism, criticizing them for being the vestige of Japanese colonialism which corrupted the traditional identity of Korean Buddhism (Cho, 2010, p. 600).

In the dominant anti-Japanese sentiment of Korean society after liberation, Seung-Man Lee, the first President of South Korea, declared the 'purification' of Korean Buddhism in the form of presidential instruction, supporting the expulsion of married monks and identifying the recuperation of celibacy with the purification of Japanese

colonial vestige. The presidential instruction had repeated four times from 1953 to 1954. And it made the celibates, who was an absolute minority, acquire hegemony in Korean Buddhism all of sudden. And the small group of the celibates have developed into the most dominant sect of Korean Buddhism, the Chogye Order, which currently manages and brands Templestay with Korean government (Park, 1995, p. 49; Park, 2009, p. 471).

As highlighted earlier, it was the dilemma of Korean Buddhism that modernizing Korean Buddhism and preserving Korean identity by resisting Japanese colonialism were incompatible while neither one was abandonable. For Korean Buddhism, Japanese Buddhism was not only the medium of Japanese Colonialism but that of modernized Buddhism. Seong-Taek Cho (2010) insightfully points out that this intermingled relationship between modernization (by Japanese Buddhism) and Korean Buddhist identity (against Japanese Buddhism), has been simplified into the dualism between 'Chin-Il (pro-Japanese)' Buddhism and anti-Japanese nationalist Buddhism with the establishment and rise of the Chogye Order in the 1960s. And he argues that, by means of the anti-Japanese sentiment and the abrupt support of Seung-Man Lee for celibates, the Chogye order was not only able to become the most dominant sect defeating those sought the reformist, modernization movement on Korean Buddhism but to successfully shape its seeming ahistorical self-identity: the authentic inheritor and guardian which protected the traditional and uncontaminated teaching, practice and history of Korean Buddhism (pp. 600- 602). The branding rhetoric and practice of Templestay cannot be properly examined away from this self-understanding of the Chogye Order that has been historically constructed on the basis of the imagined, clear-cut dualisms between modernization and

the traditional Korean Buddhist identity, Japanese and Korean Buddhism, corruption and preservation, impurity and purity.

The Interwoven Relationships among the State, Tourism and Korean Buddhism in the 1960s and 1970s

Despite the ending of the struggle between married monks and celibates, Korean Buddhism did not acquire autonomy to the extent that it can completely monopolize the right to manage its own properties and human resources. In the 1960s and 1970s, Korean Buddhism had been substantively subjugated to the control of the state. While the former President Seung-Man Lee tried to diminish the leverage of Korean Buddhism and alienate it from the state, President Jeong-Hee Park wanted to enhance his political power by employing it (Park, 1995, p.52). In her noteworthy research on the development of the Templestay program, Uri Kaplan (2010) reasonably highlights that the critical contribution of Jeong-Hee Park to the shaping of the interwoven, ongoing relationships among Korean government, Buddhism and tourism. Under the heritage project re-established by President Jeong-Hee Park in 1962, the Law for the Control of Buddhist Property, the Cultural Assets Preservation Law and the Korean National Park System, which closely relate to the creation of the Templestay program, were established and executed.

The Law for the Control of Buddhist Property succeeded the elementary poisonous clauses of the Temple Ordinance. It invested Korean government with an authority to intervene in the management of the human resources and properties of

Korean Buddhism.²⁶ In the same year, the Cultural Assets Preservation Law was declared. It authorized Korean government to single out Korean cultural heritage and officially certify its authenticity to be worthy of selection and preservation for national interest. Through these laws, Korean government was not only able to designate Buddhist temples as the cultural heritage to be preserved and supervised by the state but to control over the properties of Korean Buddhism in the pursuit of economic interest of the state. Meanwhile, the Korean National Park System, which was established in 1967, brought a great deal of tourists and economic interests to Buddhist temples secluded in the national parks. Through and in the laws executed under the heritage project of Korean government, Buddhist temples began to be considered as both heritage site and tourist attraction which should be preserved and managed by the state for national interest (Ibid., pp.129-130).

The Change of Korean Buddhism in the Rise of Globalization and Consumer Culture in the Late 1980s and 1990s

In the late 1980s and 1990s when Korean society went through 1988 Seoul Olympic and democratization (at least in the level of its formal political system), consumer culture emerged as a dominant form of Korean society. The average wage substantively increased and the primary industry of the state, which was manufacturing earlier, turned

²⁶ Although the Control of Buddhist Property was substituted by the Traditional Temples Preservation Law in 1987 to impede the unnecessary intervention of government in Buddhist temples, it still leaved the possibility for the government to limit the properties of the temples and to interfere in the personnel appointment of Korean Buddhism.

into service industry. The mass-mediated popular culture powerfully burgeoned. Broadcasting and cultural industries in general achieved a great success as well. The mass society, which consumption leads production, drastically arose. In this period, as Seung-Kil Park (1995, p. 354) points out, the sustenance of everyday lives came to emerge as the most important salvation good and the religious scape of Korea turned into a department-store-like religious market in which a variety of religion was displayed and promoted to be sold by consumers ready to purchase religious goods, messages and experience. Further, globalization came to be a dominant social agenda, discourse and desire as the former president Young-Sam Kim emphasized it as a national project for surviving in the global competition among nations.

Although there has been a variety of efforts to adapt Buddhism to modern society since the Japanese colonial era, it was only the late 1980s and the 1990s when Korean Buddhism began to transform into a so-called urbanized, popularized religion, considering its prior monasticism and monk-centrism recuperated after liberation. New temples were built and grew larger in urban areas. Some of the large temples in urban areas opened and offered their monastic space, for instance, for the purpose of organic food markets, weddings and funerals in order to fit into the needs of the urban population (Yun, 2007, p. 189). There was also a growth of the Buddhist publication market since the 1980s. During the 1980s and 1990s when the public interest of the nation in Buddhism drastically increased, the number of Buddhist publishers kept rising and other large secular publishers also began to join in the competitive Buddhism publication market. The special KBS (the

national broadcaster of South Korea) documentary on Hyongak²⁷, an American Buddhist monk, ignited as well a great deal of public interest not only in Western Buddhists but also in the globalization of Korean Buddhism (Joo, 2011). In the emergent contexts of consumer culture and globalization of the late 1980s and 1990s, Korean Buddhism began to be imagined and understood as both the global heritage and tourism that Koreans should be proud of and develop in order to introduce and promote South Korea to the global market of cultural and religious goods. In other words, Korean Buddhism came to be perceived as a valuable inheritor of Korean tradition and Eastern spirituality that can be a distinguished attraction (and product) in the age of globalization. And the creation and branding of the Templestay program is significantly rooted not only in the state-driven heritage project controlling over Buddhist temples but the national aspiration and expectation where Korean Buddhism is imagined as the global heritage and tourism that can propagate and enhance the national prestige of Korea.

The 1997 Korean Financial Crisis and the Formation of Neo-Liberal Order in South Korea

Announcing the national agenda of globalization, the administration of Young-Sam Kim, whose presidency from 1993 to 1998 ended more than thirty years of military

²⁷ Paul Myunzen is a Buddhist monk called Hyongak. He “was born into a Catholic Family and educated at Yale and Harvard before coming to Korea to practice Buddhism as a disciple of Son (Zen in English) Master Sungsan (Joo, 2011, p. 618).” He “wanted to make people feel proud of being Buddhist” by telling his story of conversion and asserting the superiority of Buddhism teaching and Korean traditional culture than “the so-called global-American-standard (Ibid., p. 619).”

dictatorship, began to retreat from the strategic interventions that the prior governments made in the market and pursue financial market liberalization in order to join the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development(OECD) (Kang, 2012, p. 14). Opening the financial market of South Korea, its conglomerates began to import a great deal of foreign financial capital and haphazardly increased direct investment both in the domestic and international markets. Despite the enormous expansion of overinvestment, however, they could not gain an enough amount of profit to pay back the principal and interest of what they loaned. In 1997, eight of thirty conglomerates filed for bankruptcy. A great deal of foreign finance rapidly began to withdraw from the South Korean market. And the financial crisis arose in the long run (Kook, 2011, pp.142-144). Korean government requested bailout loan from International Monetary Fund(IMF). With its financial aid, IMF adjured the government to fulfill the following four requirements: Labor market flexibility; Structural reforms of conglomerates; Privatization of public enterprise; The absolute liberalization of financial market (Kang, 2012, p. 15). The Dae-Joong Kim administration which took over the financial crisis in 1998, began to execute the directions. And, since the 1997 Financial Crisis, what could be called 'neo-liberal order' has formed in, dominated, and transformed Korean society.

By neo-liberalism, this dissertation project signifies not only an economic ideology which revives classical liberalism against Keynesism in the contemporary way, criticizes the intervention of the state into the market, and emphasizes the value of free market, but a sort of political mentality which reconstructs and governs all domains of society, including religion, politics, everyday lives, intimate relationships, and even individual bodies and

minds, according to and based on its economic ideology, language and logic (Harvey, 2005; Rose, 1994; Lemke, 2001;2002). In this regard, although the economic conditions which have contributed to the shaping of the neo-liberal order, already began to arise right after the 1997 Financial Crisis, it was only in the presidency of Moo-Hyeon No from 2003 to 2007 and that of Myoung-Bak Lee from 2008 to 2012 that neo-liberalism came to be a powerful generic force and order that forms, governs and dominates even other domains of society than economy on the basis of its economic logic.

In and with the lack of maturation of political democracy and economic liberalism in Korean civil society, the administrations of Myoung-Bak Lee and Keun-Hye Park have downrightly colluded with a small number of economic elites and conglomerates and have been the protector and mouthpiece of them, rather than that of public interest. And during their presidencies, the collusive relationship between the two has been increasingly intensified under the guise of the revival of the national economy. Economic freedom has in effect signified the freedom of the economic elites and conglomerates to exploit workers and the market (Kang, 2012, p. 15). In particular, Myoung-Bak Lee, who himself was the former chief executive officer of Hyundai Construction, sought to govern the state as he managed the corporation. In his administration, his presidency was understood as a sort of chief executive officer which operates the state like business, the administration as an enterprise, and the nation as employer or consumer (Kim, 2010, p.263).

Under the presidency of Myoung-Bak Lee, the formation of neo-liberal order began to vividly take the forms of governing without political process and conversation,

strongly policing without proper social safety net, and suppressing the press that criticized the state-driven neo-liberal policies and executions (Jeon, 2008). Around that time, the animosity of Korean people against the Myoung-Bak Lee administration grew to the extent that huge protests against the government kept arising in multiple times, with the drastic dissemination and development of political participation culture through digital social media in South Korea. It is as well in the presidency of Myoung-Bak Lee that neo-liberalism came to be a popular discourse which not only scholars but the public employ to understand and criticize what happened to their everyday lives under the influence of social structure that is larger than themselves. Neo-liberalism came to be understood as the underlying cause of a variety of social problems such as severe economic bipolarization between the rich and the poor, increasing irregular labors, the collapse of social safety net, the decreasing rate of birth, the increasing rate of suicide and so on.

But the political project of transforming South Korea into a successful neo-liberal state did not break at all. Rather, the state successfully developed and elaborated its strategies and technologies to police such huge protests, block or manipulate the display of public dissent from the government online and offline, and, at the fundamental level, minimize political process and democratic procedures for pursuing its neo-liberal aspirations and policies. What could be called a sort of neo-liberal dominance without hegemony (in Gramscian sense), emerged in the presidency and the current Keun-Hye Park administration has successfully reproduced and intensified it. Let me discuss the Korean formation of neo-liberal dominance without hegemony in detail.

Since the 1997 Financial Crisis, to transform South Korea into a neo-liberal state has been not only the national project of conservative governments such as the administrations of Myoung-Bak Lee and Keun-Hye Park but that of liberal ones such as those of Dae-Joong Kim and Moo-Hyeon No. But what distinguishes the Myoung-Bak Lee and Keun-Hye Park administrations from the others is that they have critically contributed to the shaping of what could be called a South Korean form of neo-liberalism, where the state and conglomerates, instead of the free market, baldly plan and prosecute economic development, particularly, with and through the political imaginary and mentality of the 1960s and 1970s of South Korea (Kim, 2010, pp. 253-259). By the imaginary and mentality of the 1960s and 1970s, what I want to signify is the residual culture of developmental dictatorship in which the dictator Park Jeong-Hee is imagined and worshiped as the national hero who brought prosperity to the nation despite or only by means of his charismatic dictatorship, and thus which authoritarian leadership, communication and system are connived and even encouraged and aspired for economic development and prosperity.²⁸

Having the former president who was a successful C.E.O and the current president who is the only daughter of the dictator Jeong-Hee Park, the Korean administration and bureaucracy has adapted again to the culture of the developmental dictatorship from

²⁸ After having recurring experience of severe economic misery under the liberal administrations of Dae-Joong Kim and Moo-Hyeon No, which distanced themselves from the authoritarian dictatorship of the 1960s and 1970s but pursued the neo-liberal project as well, more than half of the nation chose the conservative administration of Myoung-Bak Lee and Keun-Hye Park in the presidential elections, longing for a strong and charismatic political leader who brought economic revival to them. Keun-Hye Park is the only daughter of Jeong-Hee Park.

which the former presidencies of Young-Sam Kim, Dae-Joong Kim and Moo-Hyeon No tried to distance themselves. Political conversation and process to persuade the nation has been critically decreased. The administrations of Myoung-Bak Lee and Keun-Hye Park rarely have made efforts to persuade the nation or acquire its consent in pursuing their neo-liberal project since they already have had a fair number of the firm supporters of their neo-liberal policies who long for the revival of the developmental dictatorship and most of mainline press also has already been colluded with and dominated by the authoritarian government and conglomerates. The dissenters against the neo-liberal projects, had to confront police and court, not politicians and political parties. The neo-liberal projects came to be rarely confronted.

Thus, the economic conditions of middle class and working class people have worsened and become precarious. At the 2011 statistics of Korea Labor Institute, the poverty rate of the Korean elderly, which was 48.6%, marked the highest among the OECD member nations.²⁹ At the 2012 statistics of the World Health Organization, the suicide rate of the Korean elderly, which was 116.2 persons per a hundred thousand ones, marked the highest in the world, and that of the Korean youth, which was 18.2 persons among a hundred thousand persons, marked the 9th in the world.³⁰ According to the 2105 OECE Factbook, the suicide rate of South Korea was the highest among the OECD

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<http://www.yonhapnews.co.kr/bulletin/2015/03/13/0200000000AKR20150313158200004.HTML?77228e00>, Accessed on Feb. 28th 2016.

³⁰ http://www.Ohmynews.com/NWS_Web/View/at_pg.aspx?CNTN_CD=A0002026740, Accessed on Feb. 28th 2016.

member nations. And the number one reason of the teenage death in South Korea was suicide at the 2012 statistics of the National Statistical Office.³¹ More and more people have lost a hope that their financial situation in particular and Korean society in general could get better, and committed suicide.

The Ambivalent Relationship of Korean Protestantism with the Neo-Liberal Formation in South Korea

What neo-liberalization of a society successfully dismantles is not only social safety net and secure labor conditions but the meaningful and continuative life narrative, sovereignty over everyday lives, social bonding and the sense of belonging. It is proper and right for David Harvey (2005) to point out the affinity between the drastic destruction of social bonding and safety net in the neo-liberal system and the sudden revival and dissemination of religious fundamentalism in the globe. He states that “the rapid progress of evangelical proselytizing in the chaotic informal economies that have burgeoned under neoliberalization in Latin America” and “the revived and in some instances newly constructed religious tribalism and fundamentalism that structure politics in much of Africa and the Middle East,” are deeply rooted in “the need to construct meaningful mechanisms of social solidarity” which have been dismantled by and under precarious labor conditions and social dislocations that are generated in the course of neo-liberalization (p. 171). In the similar vein, examining the Pentecostal faith and revival in the

³¹ http://www.Ohmynews.com/NWS_Web/View/at_pg.aspx?CNTN_CD=A0002026740, Accessed on Feb. 28th 2016.

neo-liberal era, Jean Comaroff (2009) argues that “foundational texts and prophetic callings speak to a quest for absolute sovereignty, an unquestioned basis for law and order, and a fixed correspondence between signs and referents, all of which are seriously undermined by” neo-liberal conditions (p. 20). In particular, Pentecostalism has been noted as being most successfully adapting its believers to the newly emerging neo-liberal conditions by offering its own theologies, languages, symbols, and imaginaries in and through which the believers can not only justify but develop their neo-liberal desires for prosperity, self-help, self-improvement and happiness (Ibid.; Maxwell, 2005; Meyer, 2009). It has burgeoned and been vibrant in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Evangelical Pentecostal churches are reported to gather almost 20 million new believers a year, “emerging as the major competitor to Catholicism in the third world (Nixon, 2003).”

Contrary to the vivid revival and growth of Pentecostal, charismatic and fundamentalist Protestantism under the neo-liberal formations in other regions, Korean Protestantism has had an ambivalent relationship with neo-liberalism. This could be discussed in terms of the following two striking points: 1) the critical bipolarization and unequal growth of Korean Protestantism in the neo-liberal formation of Korean society and 2) the drastic decline of public trust in overall Korean Protestantism despite the active embracement of neo-liberal logic and strategy in the management of Protestant churches.

In accordance with the global trend where religions find an opportunity to increase their members and power in the neo-liberal era, the rate of religious population in South Korea had constantly increased from 1985 to 2005. While the rate of religious population was 42.6% in 1985, it was 53.1% in 2005. During the two decades, religious population in

South Korea increased 10.5% (Kim, 2013, p. 360). To put it concretely, in the period between 1985 and 1995, a huge growth was achieved in the three primary religions of South Korea. Buddhism had the increase of 2,261,388 believers. Protestantism had that of 2,271,054 believers, and Catholicism that of 1,085,333 believers.

In the next decade (1995-2005), however, the tendency drastically changed. Buddhism maintained the number of its believers. Surprisingly, 144,000 believers leaved Protestantism (growth rate of -1.4%) while Catholicism gained 2,195,417 believers (growth rate of 74%).³² Comparing the statistics between 1995 and 2005, Korean Protestantism lost in a decade, about 300,000 believers in their 10s, 400,000 believers in their 20s, and 300,000 believers in their 30s. Contrary to the rapid growth of Pentecostal Protestantism in the neo-liberal formations of Latin America and Africa, the statistics shows the obvious decline of Korean Protestantism in the period between 1995 and 2005 when the neo-liberalization of Korean society had begun and proceeded.³³

However, it is not that all Protestant churches in South Korea have suffered under the neo-liberalization of Korean society. After the neo-liberal project began and

³² Accessed at [th 2016.](http://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT_11N0505&vw_cd=&list_id=&scrid=&seqNo=&lang_mode=ko&obj_var_id=&itm_id=&conn_path=K1&path=.)

³³ Although the 2015 statistics of the National Statistical Office does not come up yet, the 2014 Korean Gallup Report on the State of Korean Religion informs that the rate of religious population in South Korea has been declined to 50% (Accessed at [th 2016\).](http://www.gallup.co.kr/gallupdb/reportContent.asp?seqNo=625) It shows that primary cause of such decline is the decrease of religious population in the youth. On 2004, the 45% of the 20s were religious population but on 2014, only 31% of the 20s were identified as religious. Considering that overall religious population and the religious youth in particular have been declined since 2005, Korean Protestantism is likely to have declined since 2005 as well.

proceeded in full-scale, a small number of mega-churches and other large sized churches have maintained or even increased their members, finances, and power in their denominations. According to an article from the Economist, as of 2007, five of the top ten largest mega-churches are in South Korea.³⁴ The largest of them all, Yoido Full Gospel Church has 0.8 million members. On the contrary, 80-90% of Protestant churches have less than 150 adult members (Shin, 2007, p. 7). That is, human and financial resources have concentrated on a small number of large sized churches that survived in the competitive religious market while the other small churches that straggled in the competition, had to lose more and more members or even shut down themselves. In the course of the overall decline of Korean Protestantism, a small number of mega-churches and other medium and large sized churches have monopolized a great number of believers who left their small church where its finance, members and appeals came to critically diminish for the hardship generated by neo-liberalization (Kim, 2012, pp. 54-56).

The mega-churches and other large sized churches that attracted a lot of believers who migrated from small churches, had each different kind of features and appeals. In most cases, the mega-churches already achieved their incredible growth in the 1970s and 80s even before the formation of neo-liberal order in South Korea. As discussed about the collusive relationship between conservative evangelical churches and the authoritarian governments in the 1960s and 1970s, some evangelical churches were able to become mega-church under the guidance of and by the political and institutional help of the state

³⁴ Accessed at, <http://www.economist.com/node/10015239>, on February 29th 2016.

which dominated Korean society in and through the ideology of economic growth, anti-communism and pro-Americanism. The authoritarian Korean governments and the conservative evangelical churches in the 1960s and 1970s were sharing the common reverence for America, quantitative growth, power, wealth, and the charismatic leadership that would achieve them. In the course of their huge growth, the evangelical churches were already internalizing the mentality and leadership of the developmental dictatorship. The mega-churches not only acquired its tipping point under the developmental dictatorship but employed the dictatorship as their model and paradigm of church growth,

In his 2007 study on the identical code between neo-liberalism and the 'Gangnam' type of large churches, historian Jeong-Hoon Jeong (2007) categorizes such mega-churches as the 'Gangbook' type of large church, which is contrary to the 'Gangnam' type of large church that not only made its tipping point in the neo-liberal era but embraced neo-liberal ideas as their model of church management. In his categorization, the terms of 'Gangbook' and 'Gangnam' do not necessarily indicate particular district in Seoul. Rather, they signify a sort of paradigm or model which has come to be prominent and powerful in Korean Protestantism. Each different type of large churches originated from each Gangbook or Gangnam district, has come to be a different paradigm and model that other churches seriously follow for growth. In this regard, as Mi-Jeong Goo argues (2008), the 'Gangbook' style large churches still lie scattered in the neo-liberal Korean society. Although the 'Gangbook' style churches do not appeal much to the youth in their 20s and 30s who has embodied more democratic and individualist culture since the Korean pro-democracy movements in the 1980s, the paradigm of the 'Gangbook' type church growth still remains

powerful and is constantly working in Korean Protestantism, as the mentality of the development dictatorship is still and actively working in the neo-liberal Korean society after the 1997 Financial Crisis (p. 90).

There are other medium and large sized churches which have achieved a surprising growth in and with the neo-liberalization of Korean society. While the growth of the 'Gangbook' style large churches has slowed down or declined in the neo-liberal era, the 'Gangnam' type of large churches which mostly located in Gangnam, Seocho and Banpho districts, have acquired a considerable quantitative growth in their member and finance. And there are two socio-political conditions that affect to the rapid growth of the Gangnam type of large churches: 1) the outright withdrawal of the neo-liberal Korean state from the domains of public welfare and social safety net and 2) the dissemination and penetration of the logic, strategies and practices of neo-liberal enterprise management into almost every realm of society including religion, private life and the individual self.

As Jean Comaroff (2009) puts it, when, under their neo-liberal projects pursuing deregulation with a small government, "many states have relinquished significant responsibility for schooling, health, and welfare—in short, for the social reproduction of their citizens—religious organizations have willingly reclaimed this role (p. 20)." Religion in the neo-liberal state takes not only the roles of counsel, education, entertainment, and crime prevention but also those of preschool, recreation center, café, movie theater, and shopping mall. For the people who are left out of the guidance and protection of the neo-liberal state, religion offers not only the spiritual narrative of consolation and self-improvement but the comprehensive welfare programs and facilities (Jang, 2008, p. 21).

In offering their programs of welfare, education and entertainment, the 'Gangnam' type of large churches have focused on improving their building and facilities roomy, trendy and luxurious, decorating them more like those of luxurious and trendy department stores and cafés which came to be a popular socio-cultural space where people acquire not only products but education, counsel, entertainment, social caring and bonding, and self-esteem in the neo-liberal Korean society (Jeong, 2007, pp. 4-5; Park, 2008, p. 75). By arranging and offering their church spaces and programs, they have pursued both financial profit and evangelization. It is noteworthy that the consumption of such cultural spaces and programs provided by department stores and cafés has considerably functioned not only as a showing and distinguishing of the consumers' luxurious cultural capital and taste but as connecting to other distinguished and refined consumers in the neo-liberal Korean society. In this regard, the 'Gangnam' style large churches' emulating of trendy department stores and cafés can be understood as their strategic effort to correspond to and embrace the neo-liberal consumer culture, which simultaneously desires both the construction and differentiation of the self by consumption and the overcoming the boundary of the self and reaching to other existence by ethical, spiritual, and/or political consumption (Banet-Weiser, 2012; Clarke, 2008; Mukherjee & Banet-Weiser, 2012). But it is not that the churches come to achieve a great growth in their finance and members merely by arranging such luxurious material conditions for welfare and education. And at this point, the other factor needs to be addressed, which is the dissemination and penetration of the logic, strategies and practices of neo-liberal enterprise management into every domain of society.

As stated earlier, neo-liberalism is not a mere economic policy but a sort of political mentality which reconstructs and governs all domains of society in accordance with its economic ideology, language and logic (Rose, 1994; Lemke, 2001;2002). In particular, the practice, technology and discourse of neo-liberal enterprise management have dispersed and penetrated into a variety of areas including politics, religion, everyday lives, intimate relationships, and even the self (Kim, 2010; Park, 2011; Ryu, 2012; Seo, 2009). Jeong-hoon Jeong (2007) argues that the way how the 'Gangnam' type of large churches form and manage their organizations and execute their welfare program has great resemblance to post-Fordism which Korean corporations have employed under the neo-liberal order. By Post-Fordism, he signifies, for instance, the small quantity batch production and the specialized products and jobs for corresponding to a variety of consumer needs and the market situation which constantly change.

As enterprises in the neo-liberal era produce personalized commodities embracing the cultural logic of diversity, differentiation, and fragmentation (Hall & Jacques, 1989, pp. 11-12), the 'Gangnam' style large churches have established a variety of specialized programs fitting into diverse spiritual and social needs of their members and local people (Jeong, 2007). They offer programs about, for instance, motivation and self-improvement for the Youth and undergraduate, communication know-how and investment strategy for newly married couples, children raising know-how and the role of parents for parents, and the financial preparation for old age and the use of leisure time for the elderly. Some churches set up and provide English worship and bible group studies, aligning with the social trend of early study abroad and maternity trip to the United States (pp. 3-4). The

programs aim to be both spiritual and practical enough to make their members and local people to survive in the neo-liberal competition. And this kind of what could be called spiritual pragmatism “extends ever more tangibly to profane realms beyond the space of the sanctuary and the time of worship” and church programs, encompassing “diverse reaches of secular life—business, schooling, day care, athletic facilities, counseling, gourmet dining” under divine sovereignty and grace (Comaroff, 2009, p. 20).

In these various programs, the church members are not considered as depersonalized object, who is semi-mandatorily mobilized for the regular worship and meeting led by an authoritarian pastor, as their members are treated from time to time in the ‘Gangbook’ type of megachurches. Rather, the church members in the Gangnam’ type are understood and expected to be a self-conscious subject who individually and voluntarily participates into the specialized programs, based on their various spiritual and social needs and desires. And the dissemination and popularization of the specialized programs critically involve in the continuous success of Christian self-improvement books (Goo, 2008, p. 91). In and through participating such programs and reading the Christian self-improvement books, the church members are invited and requested to first know and problematize themselves, actively pursue their needs, and constantly improve and transform themselves. The entrepreneurial Protestant self, whose boss, the God, wants the improvement, success and prosperity of the self in this neo-liberal secular society, is actively imagined, discoursed and practiced in the ‘Gangnam’ type of large churches (Lee, 2010; Kim, 2010).

Despite the great success and growth of the ‘Gangnam’ type of large churches and

the popularization of its paradigm in the 1990s and 2000s, however, Korean Protestantism in general declined and lost 144,000 believers in the period between 1995 and 2005, as pointed out earlier, when the neo-liberal order had dominantly formed in Korean society. Particularly, the breakaway of the Youth in their 10s, 20s and 30s from Korean Protestantism was crucial. Korean Protestantism lost about 300,000 teenage believers, 400,000 believers in their 20s and 300,000 believers in their 30s in the decade. The aggressive and rude mode of evangelization, the ostentatious expansion of congregation, the excessive compulsion of tithe, and the moral corruption of Protestant churches and leaders have been pointed out as the critical causes of the decline of Korean Protestantism in the 1990s and 2000s (Kim, 2013, p. 364). Such unilateral, forceful and anti-democratic mode of communication and organization management of the 'Gangbook' megachurch paradigm, particularly made the Youth people distance themselves from Korean Protestantism (Goo, 2008; Jeong, 2007).

It is undeniable that the overall public perception of Korean Protestantism has drastically deteriorated in the neo-liberal era. In particular, an obvious social repugnance on Korean Protestantism was unleashed in 2007. Hee-Song Yang (2012) picks up the three critical events that overlapped in 2007 and then irreversibly transformed the overall ways of imagining and discussing Korean Protestantism in Korean society afterward: the wholesale discharge of non-regular workers by the prominent Protestant enterprise E-land, the kidnapping of the twenty-three 'Sammool' church members by Taliban in Afghanistan, and the explicit support of the mainline Protestant churches for the selection of the President Myoung-Bak Lee.

First, the strike of non-regular workers of E-land in 2007 made Korean people perceive that Korean Protestantism is not interested in protecting ordinary working class people but only in profiting from them. At that time, E-land was a well-known successful Protestant enterprise. And the way it treated and dismissed its non-regular workers generated a great deal of criticism by the progressive intellectuals and activists supporting labor movement, who pointed out the undeniable contradiction between the Protestant message of love and justice and the actual practice and strategy of a Protestant enterprise for making profit.

Second, there was a tragic incident where Taliban kidnapped the twenty-three believers of the 'Sammool' church and killed two of them in Afghanistan. Taliban released the rest of them about forty days later after Korean government paid a great amount of ransom. While the public sentiment on Korean Protestantism was critically deteriorating after this event, the Korea World Mission Association officially announced that the missionary work of Korean Protestantism would and should persist. And they even argued that the state does not need to assume the possibility for Korean missionaries going to the Muslim world because they sign the memorandum of agreement that they are responsible for their own lives if they are kidnapped in the area.³⁵ Although it was Taliban who killed the two citizens, most of criticism was directed to the 'Sammool' church and later to overall Protestant churches which had been carrying on the act of evangelizing in

³⁵ Accessed at http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/society/society_general/232755.html, on March 2nd 2016.

the public space, disparaging other religions and propagating their message in a rude and unilateral way.

Third, in the middle of such tragedies radically threatening its public image in Korean society, Korean Protestantism focused its resources and efforts on making Lee Myoung-Bak selected as the President of South Korea. Some conservative Protestant churches overtly persuaded their believers to choose him for the reason that he is a devout Christian, the elder of the rich and influential 'Somang' church, which is the perfect example of the 'Gangnam' type of large churches. They argued he would govern South Korea according to God's will. After being inaugurated as President, Lee Myoung-Bak appointed his church members to important political positions in the Presidential residence and ministry during his regime. Some famous Protestant churches and leaders explicitly manifested their support on Lee Myoung-Bak and some conservative political and economic elites, who in general advocated and benefited from the absolute dominance of the neo-liberal order on Korean society.

It is noteworthy that the Korean Evangelical Protestants in the events readily transcend and break away from the public imaginary and expectation on the order, sovereignty and public life of the modern nation-state that is predicated on liberal humanism. As neo-liberal projects often seek to easily transgress the boundary of state economy under the name of globalization and transfer the state's responsibility on public welfare and safety to the individual, the Evangelical Protestants and missionaries in the second event easily disregard the boundary, sovereignty and protection of modern nation-states (Jang, 2008, pp. 24-25). And they voluntarily and individually take the responsibility

of their own lives outside the order and sovereignty of their modern nation-state.

Meanwhile, the former President Myoung-Bak Lee and the conservative churches and leaders supporting him in the third event, readily neglect the order and logic of the public life and politics of modern-nation state, by imagining and desiring the ruling of the state according to divine imperatives and paradoxically by seeking only the private and profane interest of conservative Korean Protestantism.

The conducts of conservative Korean Protestantism in the events, well resonate with the observance of Jean Comaroff (2009) where fundamentalist Pentecostal Protestantism keeps countering the hegemony of liberal humanism and modern nation-states, while filling up the vacuum left by the neo-liberal state's renunciation of its responsibility for the social reproduction of their citizens, including schooling, health and welfare, and aspiring to govern every domain of society and everyday lives "in the name of revealed truths and divine imperatives (p. 19)." The project of liberal humanism and modern nation-state confronts "born-again believers across the world who suspend 'free' choice when acting on their convictions, manifesting a form of selfhood that is different from the idealized, deliberative Kantian subject considered by many as being at the core of modern rationalism (Ibid., pp. 19-20)." In this regard, Korean Evangelical Protestants revealed in the events have been perceived as a sort of half citizen who too easily neglect the sovereignty of and the political and economic interest of the modern nation-state of South Korea. And they have been criticized as well for their seeming irrational choices and selfhoods where Protestant conviction takes priority over the public and/or national interest of South Korea.

Apparently, in the neo-liberal era, the symbolic status of Korean Protestantism, which had been imagined and understood as the vanguard of modernization and civilization, critically collapsed. Korean Protestantism came to be imagined to disrupt the full maturation of Korean modernity, in that it neglects basic human rights as seen in the wholesale discharge of non-regular workers by E-land, modern rationalism as seen in the life-risking evangelization in the Muslim world, and the separation between religion and politics as seen in the explicit intervention of the mainline Protestant churches into the selection of Myoung-Bak Lee. The public image of Korean Protestantism has more and more worsened, particularly as conservative Evangelical Protestantism actively has intervened in the issue of homosexuality. The anti-homosexuality movements of conservative Protestantism started earlier in the early 2000s and, in the late 2000s, conservative Protestants began to overtly raise their voices in the public against homosexuality (Jeong, 2014). For instance, since 2007, it has kept tried to block the passage of Anti-Discrimination Law. And the trial has been successful. In addition, it attempted to cancel the 2012 Lady Gaga concert, which was held in Seoul after all. And in the last two years of 2014 and 2015, conservative Protestants have actively gathered and disrupted the Korean Queer Festival which was held in the public space such as Seoul Plaza in front of the Seoul City Hall.

Some Korean scholars were very critical of the interwoven relationship between the modernization history of Korea and the growth of Korean Protestantism (Cho, 2002; Kim, 1999; Ko, 2001). It was argued that Korean Protestantism offered practical strategies and worldviews for empowering the nation-state (Baek, 2014) and that it came to be

accepted uncritically as the symbol and drive of civilization (Cho, 2002). In particular, some post-colonial scholars who consider the project of modernity as that of global capitalist expansion and imperialism, argue that, by repressing sexual desires/differences and offering the nation the discourse and technology of absolute obedience to the transcendental signifier of the state, Korean Protestantism significantly contributed to the production of patriotic subject who stands for the modern nation-state but paradoxically fails to discipline oneself in accordance with the principle of rationality which is one of the core values of modernity (Ko, 2001; Kim, 1999; See also Comaroff, 2009). In the regard, it is argued that the existences and bodies of Korean Protestants have not only embodied but disclosed the complex dynamics, contradiction and ambivalence of Korean modern history, which could be called the contemporaneity of the unctemporary (Bloch, 1932) where the pre-modern, the modern and the post-modern, which cannot co-exist under the European, modernist idea of history, exist altogether in one society (Kim, 1999; Kim, 2010).

Templestay and Korean Buddhism in the Neo-Liberal Korean Society

When the mentality of neo-liberalism aspires to penetrate into and govern all domains of society according to its economic logic and discourse (Rose, 1994; Lemke, 2001;2002), it imagines and considers that everything can be treated as a commodity in principle. And while prioritizing economic freedom over any other freedom, the neo-liberal project arranges and executes every possible legal and institutional strategy to

protect and encourage such economic freedom to pursue profit from anything that the neo-liberal society approves. In the neo-liberal aspiration and the legal and institutional arrangement, almost everything is commodified including culture, heritage, nature, history, tradition, social relations and experience (Harvey, 2005, pp.165-166).

In this way, as Korean society has come to be more and more re-shaped according to the neo-liberal logic and imaginary, Korean local festivals, traditions, heritages and histories have been massively developed into and branded as tourism product since the 2000s (Woo, 2008, p. 13). In the similar vein, Korean Buddhism has as well found that not only its natural heritages and temples but its own religious tradition, rituals, meditations and foods can be a popular and successful tourism product for both Korean and international consumers. In particular, such Korean traditional local cultures, natural heritages, festivals have been branded into and with the discourses of 'wellbeing (well-being)' and 'healing' which have been massively circulated in the neo-liberal Korean society (Kim, 2007; Woo, 2008). The discourse of 'wellbeing (well-being)' has been popularized since the mid 2000s as the one signifying a sort of new culture and trend where Korean people pursue healthier, slower and more nature-friendly, organic lifestyle including food, tourism, architecture, costume and so on.³⁶ Meanwhile, 'healing' can be translated into 'chiyou' in Korean which is slightly different from 'chiryo (cure).' While 'chiryo' means the therapy conducted on body, 'chiyou' signifies more fundamental activity which eliminates the root of illness and sickness thus makes a human existence entirely recovered (Na,

³⁶ Accessed at <https://namu.wiki/w/%EC%9B%B0%EB%B9%99>, on March 28th, 2016.

2014). The discourse of healing has been popularized since 2012 as the one indicating a broad range of signification such as relaxation, rest, recovery, pleasure and the solution of stress and worry.³⁷ What both discourses thicken, are predicated on, is a social imaginary of the neo-liberal Korean society, whose members are excessively infatuated with materialism, speed, competition, efficiency and survival and thus come to be too much corrupted, exhausted and wounded. It is such social imaginary what enable and invite the branding of Korean traditional local culture, natural heritage, festival and religion in neo-liberal times.

Despite the overall commercialization and popularization of Korean traditional local culture, food, festival, tradition and history under the neo-liberalization of Korean society, however, Korean Buddhism was quite slow and behind in embracing such neo-liberal commercialization project until the early 2000s, partly due to its long-standing monasticism. And considering this long-standing monasticism of Korean Buddhism and the eagerness of the state to preserve and develop Buddhist temples as tourist attraction and heritage site since the late 1960s, it would not be surprised that the idea of the Templestay program at first came from Korean government, not from Korean Buddhism. The ministry of Culture and Tourism was concerned about the lack of the accommodation for the estimated number of foreign visitors in the 2002 Korean and Japan FIFA World Cup. The ministry suggested that Korean Buddhism could accommodate some of the foreign visitors in Buddhist temples. Remaining the long-standing tradition of

³⁷ Accessed at <https://namu.wiki/w/%ED%9E%90%EB%A7%81>, on March 28th, 2016.

the Chogye Order where in general praised and emphasized its monasticism, its leaders stubbornly opposed the idea at first. In the long run, however, the ministry and the Chogye Order reached an agreement that Korean Buddhist temples would offer not only accommodation but the program to experience Korean traditional culture and Buddhist practices (Kaplan, 2010, p. 132).

The program has annually developed and achieved a great success since 2004. The number of foreign visitors for the program in 2007 were slightly over ten thousand and reached thirty-seven thousand in 2011. Korean Buddhism found that the most successful way for Korean Buddhism to approach to the public and the globe could be the Templestay program where laypersons, non-Buddhists and even foreigners visited Buddhist temples to have a cultural and spiritual experience of the Korean traditional heritage.³⁸ The close tie between the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Chogye Order should not be disregarded in terms of its great success. In 2004, the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism was established in order to take charge of the creation of Buddhist products and the official temple websites, brochures and the operation of the Templestay program. It is noteworthy that this new department absorbed the Templestay Committee in 2004, which had been in the propagation division of the Chogye Order. The establishment of the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism and the redeployment of the

³⁸Accessed at <http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=sec&sid1=103&oid=020&aid=0002363159>, on March 31st, 2016;
Accessed at <http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=sec&sid1=103&oid=001&aid=0005463613> on March 31st, 2016.

Templestay Committee to the Cultural Corps department significantly illuminate that Korean government explicitly re-considered the Templestay program as “the businesslike cultural enterprise” that should be supervised and developed by lay professionals who specialized in management, tourism, heritage and branding (Ibid., p. 134).

Chapter 4. Methodology: Multiperspectival Approach

Introduction

This dissertation project has two case studies. The first case study captures the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 knife attack on U.S. Ambassador in South Korea as the two symptomatic moments where social imaginaries of history, modernity and Korean Protestantism are being shaped, carried, mediated and circulated. This case study examines online news articles and photographic images circulated in digital social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, as a material site where these social imaginaries are glimpsed, conveyed, circulated and formed. The other case study is concerned with the neo-liberal branding of Templestay where Korean government and Buddhism together produce particular imaginaries of Korean tradition and Buddhism. It looks into the official English and Korean websites of Templestay and its social media services including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube as a material site where the social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism are glimpsed, conveyed, circulated and shaped. Further, both case studies conduct interviews with those who systemically produce social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism (e.g. managers of PR team in Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism³⁹) and Protestantism (e.g. mainline religion journalists and columnists) and with the audience who

³⁹ The Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism takes charge of the creation and promotion of temple souvenirs and the official temple websites, brochures and the operation of the Templestay program. It belongs to the Chogye Order, but the Ministry of Culture and Tourism partly funds it. This new department absorbed the Templestay Committee in 2004, which had been in the propagation division of the Chogye Order.

are exposed, in a focus group interview setting, to the texts and visual images of the online news articles and websites which the case studies examine.

Research Questions

Through the case studies, this dissertation project explores the following primary questions:

1-1. How is Korean Protestantism represented, mediated, and discoursed in the mainline online newspapers' coverage of the two significant events of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 knife attack on U.S. Ambassador in South Korea?

1-2. How is Korean Buddhism represented, mediated, and discoursed by the branding of Templestay in digital spaces including its official websites and social media platforms?

2-1. What social imaginaries of contemporary Korean society, modernity and Protestantism enable and legitimize the mainline online newspapers' accounts of the two events?

2-2. In what social imaginaries of contemporary Korean society, modernity and Buddhism is the branding of Templestay executed, mediated, visualized and circulated?

And in order to explore the full dimensions of the working of the social imaginaries in contemporary Korean society, this dissertation project concerns itself with the questions of how and what political, economic, and historical factors involve in the

formation, mediation and circulation of the social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism. Further, it looks into the question of what social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism are invoked and aroused producing what affective and sensorial experiences in the bodies of people who encounter with the the images and texts circulated in the two events and the branding of Templestay.

The Methodological Merits of the Conceptual Framework of Social Imaginary

The kind of focus group interviews, texts and visual images that this dissertation project looks into, in effect, can be and have been examined by a variety of research methods predicated on their own theoretical tradition, perspective, interest and idea about the relationship between media and society. Some of them have been crucial in the media cultural studies scholarship. For instance, under the influence of British Cultural Studies which have re-discovered and developed the ideas of meaning, representation, signification, culture and ideology, the methodological frameworks of encoding/decoding and dominant/negotiated/resistant reading have been employed to examine texts, images and interviews as a site of ideological struggle around meaning and representation (Hall, 1980; 1982). And Foucauldian discourse analysis have been prominent as well with

emergent interests in the ideas of power, knowledge, and discourse (Foucault, 1972; 1977; 1978).⁴⁰

Considering the prominent, conventional approaches that have been employed to examine the meaning of texts, images and interviews, to develop this dissertation project in the theoretical framework of 'social imaginaries,' give rise to following critical questions in terms of methodology: For what theoretical, methodological reasons does this dissertation project employ 'social imaginaries' as the underlying conceptual framework to explore the research questions of the dissertation? That is, in terms of approaching to the research questions and objects, what are the merits of employing it, instead of using the conceptual sets of British cultural studies, such as signification - encoding/decoding - ideology, or those of Foucauldian analysis, such as power – knowledge - discourse? Does the theoretical framework of 'social imaginaries' have its own methodological strategies and techniques that are distinguished from, for instance, the encoding/decoding model or Foucauldian discourse analysis? Are research methods to examine social imaginaries necessarily incompatible with the methodological approaches of British cultural studies and Foucauldian analysis? If they can be compatible, in what ways these prominent methodological approaches can contribute to the examination of social imaginaries and what are the concrete research objects, methods and procedures which are proper to explore social imaginaries in relation with the conventional methodological approaches?

⁴⁰ Primary theoretical, methodological approaches that have influenced to the analysis of media texts and images are not limited to British Cultural Studies and Foucauldian analysis, however. They include Frankfurt critical theory, political economy, structuralist semiology, psychoanalysis, and so on (Rose, 2012; Ferguson & Golding, 1997).

Let me first discuss the two primary merits that this dissertation project acquires by predicating itself on the idea of social imaginaries, not on other prominent analytical frameworks of, for instance, British Cultural Studies or Foucauldian theory.

First, the theoretical explorations of the scholars who have contributed to the development of the idea of social imaginaries, such as Taylor, Anderson, Appadurai and Gaonkar, obviously include the most critical issues in which this dissertation project is interested: the seeming global spread of modernity (or secularization if you like), the various forms of modernity that are being shaped (alternative modernities), religion's constant influence to the various modernities and the constant negotiation of the position of religion itself within them, and the critical role of mass mediation technology in shaping the interwoven relationships between religions and modernities. This is a merit of adopting the idea of social imaginaries in exploring the research questions about modernity, religion and media, particularly given that British Cultural Studies and Foucault's works rarely pay a fair amount of attention to religion in their theorizing of the working of contemporary social worlds.

Second, the idea of social imaginaries entails not only the exploration of the representational but that of the non-representational in which this dissertation project is interested as well. By the non-representational, I mean the constellation of the perceptual, experiential, affective and sensory that does not involve in interpreting and exchanging meanings, which British Cultural Studies in particular have highlighted and prioritized in its framework of code, reading and encoding/decoding. Certain kind of visual image (and its materiality) can strongly affect the body exposed to it, even without or before fully

understanding the meaning of it. And, as Laura Marks puts it, “to appreciate the materiality of our media pulls us away from a symbolic understanding and toward a shared physical existence (2002, xii).” Such understanding of the materiality of media gives rise to the critical issues of body, affect and sensory experience in the making of the social. These have not been substantively examined and studied to the extent that the representational have been done. In this regard, it is a merit of employing the idea of social imaginaries to encourages us to focus on and think of the issues of shared affective, sensorial experience and similar bodies enabling such experiences and the role of media in them. As discussed in the theory chapter, the theoretical framework of social imaginaries helps us note the production of similar bodies having similar affective, sensorial experience that are shaped by the encounters with particular media images and texts that are circulated in a mass scale.

To sum up, the idea of social imaginaries encourages us to think of and examine not only the representational in which social imaginaries are expressed and articulated but the non-representational where the affective, bodily and sensorial experiences are shaped in the encounters with media texts and images. It helps us note the significance of the body, affect and sensory experience in the making of the social, in particular while predicating our discussion on the issues of modernity, religion and mass-mediation of them.

The Review of Prior Empirical Research on Social Imaginaries

Then, how can both the representational and the non-representational, in which social imaginaries are embodied and carried, be investigated? What research objects can be chosen to observe and examine social imaginaries? A variety of research methods have been used for the empirical exploration of social imaginaries. But, for the brief understanding on the overall research methods that have been employed to explore social imaginaries, it can be roughly categorized into the four methodological approaches: 1) to approach to the representational in which social imaginaries are expressed by conducting a kind of textual analysis on the materials, such as texts, images, myths and stories, that are assumed to carry particular social imaginaries; 2) to approach to the non-representational, such as the embodied understanding and/or affective, sensorial experience of particular social actors who are assumed to embody and carry particular social imaginaries, by conducting interviews with them and analyzing the verbalized self-expression of their imaginaries and experience; 3) to focus on, in particular, the circulatory process of social imaginaries by tracing and tracking the circulation of particular texts, images and stories in which social imaginaries are carried; 4) to focus on multi-dimensionally showing the shaping of social imaginaries by employing a variety of methodological approaches categorized above.

First, some studies examining social imaginaries conduct the analysis of texts, images, legends, myths and various modes of address positing them as the sites where social imaginaries are articulated, carried and shaped (e.g. Campbell and La Pastina, 2010; Kalantis, 2012; Ojala, 2011; Quayson, 2001; Valaskivi, 2013; Valaskivi and Sumiala, 2014). Taylor (2004) and Gaonkar (2002) as well remark that it is in and through the encounters

with images, texts, stories, myths, and modes of address that social imaginaries are carried. This methodological approach focusing on the representational is productive not only in that the texts, images, myths, and address are the material sites to which a researcher could most easily access for capturing the social imaginaries examined but in that there are already a variety of helpful conventional research methods to examine them including textual, visual and discourse analysis. For instance, Ato Quayson (2001) examines literatures and “urban stories and myths, rumours, sensational stories and folktales” as the sites where the conjunctural concept of the cultural hero in Africa “finds articulation (p. 723).” Konstantinos Kalantis (2012) analyzes a variety of visual images including photographic images, the airport’s global map poster and Big Brother in order to understand how the imaginary of Cretan-ness signifying the vernacular, rugged, and resistance is valorized in the crisis of Greek economy, political praxis and social imagination.

Second, some other studies critically employ interview in order to acquire verbal cues to understand the social imaginaries of particular social agents and their embodied understanding and affective, sensorial experience that have been shaped by the social imaginaries (e.g. Bajde, 2012; Carnevale, 2013; Dawney, 2011; Heikkilä and Kunelius, 2006; Valaskivi, 2013). In such studies, the bodies of the interviewees are imagined as the carriers of social imaginaries, and the verbalized self-expressions of their imaginaries, affect and sensorial experience, that are produced in the course of interview, are considered as the only representational cue to approach to the social imaginaries’ non-representational formation and working in the bodies. For instance, in addition to “a mobile ethnography of

the South West Coast Path,” that is a walking trail in South West England, Lelia Dawney (2011) conducts and analyzes interviews with two participants in order to examine how they come to “experience walking in the English Countryside as a therapeutic body practice” and in particular how they crucially “draw on certain imaginaries” in the therapeutic experience of walking (p. 536). Not only are the bodies of the interviewees understood as the sites where social imaginaries of positive self-transformation intervene in and color their therapeutic affect and sensorial experience. But the narrations of their therapeutic walking experience in the course of the interviews are highlighted and examined as a critical verbal cue to glimpse and capture the non-representational relationship between body and space, the self and world. Heikki Heikkilä and Risto Kunelius (2006) conduct semi-structured qualitative interviews on journalists in the mainstream news organizations in the European countries to explore journalists’ professional imaginaries in relation to EU news. In their research, the journalists are considered as the significant carriers of social imaginaries of the European public sphere and their imaginaries are traced by their answers on the questions about the proper locus of news, the professional role of journalists, and the political and communication problem within the EU.

Third, as already mentioned in the theory chapter, there are some empirical studies focusing on the circulatory process by which particular social imaginaries are increasingly formed and materialized. In this methodological approach, social imaginaries are examined by tracing and tracking the circulation of particular texts, images and stories in which social imaginaries are carried (e.g. Campbell & La Pastina, 2010; Sumiala, 2009;

Valaskivi & Sumiala, 2014). And, of course, in the studies, textual analysis on particular materials carrying and circulating the social imaginaries, precedes and is combined with the tracing of their circulation.

Fourth, as glimpsed in the studies which combine the textual analysis on particular materials with the tracing of the circulation of them, some studies simultaneously employ the different methodological approaches and research methods categorized above. And, by doing so, they attempt to represent the shaping of social imaginary in multiple aspects. There is a sense that the formation of the social imaginaries examined can be more substantively captured and understood by employing such different research methods that do not necessarily share the same methodological and theoretical concern. For instance, in her research on the social imaginary of the branded Japan, Valaskivi (2013) multi-dimensionally represents the formation of social imaginaries of Cool Japan by interviewing an international authority of nation-branding and critically analyzing Japanese official documents and scholarly literatures on national branding. It is noteworthy as well that Franco Carnevale (2013) examines the involvement of social imaginaries in the medical care of critically ill children in France and Canada from multiple aspects. He conducts interviews with a variety of agents who engage with the medical care of critically ill children, including their parents, physicians and nurses, and further with scholars having expertise on society, childhood and medicine. These interviews are complemented by and understood with the help of the analysis of relevant laws and of the review of “print media discussions of medical care of critically ill children, as well as related empirical research (p. 90).”

Exploring Social Imaginaries from Multiperspectival Approach

This dissertation project comes into line with the studies categorized as the fourth, in particular, given that it takes plural methodological approaches to observe, construct and represent the expression and formation of social imaginaries from multiple angles. To approach to the representational in which social imaginaries are expressed, this project conducts textual analysis on particular materials, such as texts, images, and interviews, that are assumed to articulate and carry the social imaginaries. Further, to approach to the non-representational, it conducts interviews with the producers and recipients of the social imaginaries examined and analyze their verbalized self-expressions of the imaginaries and experience. The methodological efforts that this project makes, in a sense, align with the multiperspectival approach that Douglas Kellner (1997) suggests for cultural studies.⁴¹ By multiperspectival cultural studies, Kellner means the trans-disciplinary cultural studies that approach to media, culture and communication “from the perspectives of political economy, text analysis, and audience reception” all together (p. 117). In particular, with concern about “populist celebrations of the text and audience pleasure (p. 116),” he strongly argues for the significance of examining the production process, institution, and political and economic conditions that engage with media texts and the reception of them.

⁴¹ But they only do except the fact that the employing of the idea of social imaginary in this project can lead us to the questions of body, affect, sensory experience and the non-representational where which one is not necessarily “engaging with the world by interpreting and exchanging meanings (Rose, 2012, p.8).”

Embracing his argument for the concurrent, complementary employment of production, textual and reception analysis, this dissertation project expects that the examination of the production process, social institutions, and politico-economic conditions that have involved in, for instance, the systemic representation of Korean Protestantism by mainline online news articles and that of Korean Buddhism by the official Templestay website, can substantively and plausibly inform and guide the analysis of the texts, images and interviews that the two case studies take as research object. This dissertation project appropriates the multiperspectival approach which takes all the three perspectives of political economy, textual analysis and audience reception studies together, but keeping aligned with the theoretical interest of social imaginary and noting the working of affect, body and sensorial experience in the encounters with media texts in particular. By doing so, it attempts to illuminate the full dimensions of the working of the social imaginaries of Korean modernity, Protestantism and Buddhism in which the two case studies are interested.

In this regard, plural methodological approaches and research methods that this project employs, are categorized into the three dimensions of political economy, textual analysis and audience reception which explore social imaginaries from each different angle. But, before discussing them, it needs to be highlighted that the rigid division and categorization of production, textual articulation, and reception of social imaginaries, is conducted only for the purpose of analytically thinking of and discussing the working of social imaginaries. In contemporary social worlds, the boundaries among the three dimensions are blurred, permeable and the relationships among them are never linear.

Nor are they unidirectional. Rather, the relationships are cyclical and multi-directional. For instance, a producer of particular social imaginaries is a carrier of the social imaginaries as well, as the text that she or he produces is. And the producer is also a recipient of them in the cyclical and non-linear process of social imaginaries. Thus, this dissertation takes this categorization of the three dimensions only for analytically capturing and constructing the particular moments of the formation and expression of social imaginaries that are constantly carried and circulated through bodies, texts, and practices. Now, let me discuss how the dissertation project approaches to the production, text and reception dimension of social imaginaries in detail.

Political Economy of Social Imaginaries of Korean Modernity, Protestantism and Buddhism

Exploring the political economy of social imaginaries of Korean Modernity, Protestantism and Buddhism, this dissertation project identifies and focuses on, among others, the following four factors as critically involving in the production of the social imaginaries: 1) the political and economic conditions that have affected the formation of current social perceptions, expectations and imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism in Korean modern history; 2) the political and economic conditions that affect the dominant cultural logic, language and rhetoric which structuralize the way that the social imaginaries of Korean modernity, Protestantism and Buddhism are articulated, discoursed and visualized; 3) the technological affordance of new digital media as a material condition which enables the incredibly high-speed circulation of the media materials carrying the social imaginaries at a massive scale, particularly by shaping the

enormous networks of social agents who spontaneously comment on, disseminate and publicize the media materials; 4) the social institutions that systemically and professionally produce particular discourses and imaginaries of Korean modernity, Protestantism and Buddhism, such as the mainline press in South Korea and the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism.

In order to explore the first factor, the third chapter which surveys the historical formation and trajectory of Korean Buddhism and Protestantism within Korean modern history, focuses on examining and illuminating how particular politico-economic conditions affect the historical formation, rise and fall of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism. For this purpose, the dissertation project takes a risk of more or less selectively simplifying the complexities, dynamics and ambivalences of Korean modern history. For instance, the Temple Ordinance in Japanese colonial era, the Law for the Control of Buddhist Property, the Cultural Assets Preservation Law and the Korean National Park System in the 1960s are brought as critical political conditions that have shaped the interwoven relationship among the state, tourism and Korean Buddhism, which later becomes the underlying condition for the creation of the Templestay program and for the formation of the social imaginary and expectation on it.

The second factor is explored in the third chapter and other chapters covering the case studies. For instance, the third chapter traces the political and historical event, which has affected and shaped the cultural logic, language, and rhetoric of identifying shamanism with the uncivilized and representing them inferior to the modern and modernity, back to the Western imperialistic invasion to the Joseon Dynasty in the late 19th century and the

introduction of Western missionaries who colluded with it. Meanwhile, the sixth chapter, which examines the social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism in the branding of Templestay, submits the politico-economic order of neo-liberalism as a critical force which shapes the contemporary brand culture by whose logic, rhetoric and language social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism are articulated and formed.

In order to explore the working of the third factor, this dissertation project concentrates on the theoretical discussion on circulation, (hyper)mediation and the social on its constant making in the second chapter. In particular, the discussion on the increase of the speed and range of circulation and mediation in the contemporary social world helps understand how new digital media technology works in contemporary social world, how it affords the enormous networks of social agents who spontaneously comment on, disseminate and publicize media materials, and how it enables the incredibly high-speed circulation of the media materials that carry social imaginaries at a massive scale.

For exploring the fourth factor, this dissertation project conducts semi-structured in-depth interviews with the professionals who actually work for the mainline newspapers and the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism in South Korea, which the case studies of this project identify as one of the most influential social institutions that systematically produce particular discourses and imaginaries of Korean modernity, Protestantism and Buddhism. I took a research field trip to South Korea from January to August 2015 to interview with the professionals. In the first case study exploring the social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism, four professional journalists whose title is exclusive religion journalist in the mainline press and two columnists who actually wrote the articles analyzed,

participate in the interviews. They were understood not only as an important informer who could enlighten the researcher about the actual practices, rules, customs and process of religion-related news production but as a crucial producer and carrier of the social imaginaries of the press, Korean modernity, religion in general and Korean Protestantism in particular.⁴² All the interviews were made in a face-to-face offline setting except one journalist who wanted to be interviewed by email. The interviews generally lasted between 60 and 120 minutes and mostly took place in their own office or cafes near to their workplaces.

The questions made for the mainline newspaper columnists and journalists can be categorized into the five main themes: religion-related news production practices, rules, customs and process; the current landscape of the religious field in South Korea; the overall evaluation on and newsworthiness of Korean Protestantism particularly in terms of homosexuality and other social issues; the role of journalist in general and religion journalist in particular in Korean society; the news production, exposure and circulation in the age of new digital media. And among many others, for instance, the following core questions were asked in common: Could you explain the overall process, customs and practices of religion-related news production? What is your evaluation on institutionalized religions including Korean Protestantism and Buddhism particularly in terms of their roles

⁴² In that the journalists are not only the informer on news production but the carrier of social imaginaries, their interviews can be approached from both the perspectives of political economy (production) and of text analysis. And this overlap is natural and reasonable, rather than problematic, as pointed out that the boundaries among the dimensions of production, text and reception, are blurred, permeable and that the relationship among them is cyclical in real social worlds. The textual analysis on their interviews will be discussed in the section on textual articulation.

in and relationships with Korean society? Was there a significant change in the landscape of the religious field in South Korea after the 2014 Sewol Ferry disaster? If there was, what changes do you see? What is your observation on the dissent of conservative Protestantism from the legal approval of the civil rights of sexual minority and from the public exposure of the LGBT communities? What do you think about the role of religion and the value of religion-related news in contemporary modern society of South Korea? What do you think about your public role as journalist in Korean society? Among a variety of media including TV, newspaper, online news website, portal websites, and social media, which platform do you think most powerful and effective in exposing your news article and getting public attention about it? And why?

For the second case study exploring the social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism, I conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with the managers of Templestay PR and R&D Team in the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism. The two managers are considered as critical informers who could enlighten the researcher about the actual practices, customs, expectations and process of the Templestay branding, given that they are the very producers of discourses and imaginaries of Korean Templestay, tradition, Buddhism and modernity.⁴³ The interviews with them were conducted in a face-to-face offline setting. The interview with the R&D Team manager lasted about 40 minutes and the other

⁴³ The interviews of the managers can also be approached from both the perspectives of political economy (production) and of text analysis. The textual analysis on their interviews will be discussed in the section on text.

one with the PR Team manager about 75 minutes. They all took place in the main office of the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism in Seoul, South Korea.

The questions made for the managers concentrate into the following issues: the role and position of Korean Buddhism in contemporary modern society of South Korea; the education, decision-making and censorship that involve in the branding of Templestay; a variety of digital media techniques, practices, and strategies that are actually employed in the branding of Templestay; the discrepancy between original Buddhist teachings and the rhetoric of the Templestay branding; the self-understanding and evaluation on their branding practices, strategies and capacity in the age of new digital media; the significance of visual image in the branding of Templestay. For instance, for glimpsing the discourses and imaginaries that they employ and deploy to explain the relationship between Korean Buddhism and the modern, a question was asked in what aspect and for what reason Korean Buddhism can be understood as and related to the modern. I also asked, for instance, following questions: if there is an explicit document that educates the purpose, direction and expectation of the Templestay branding; who has the authority to determine what images and texts can be uploaded in the social media that the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism employs; and what possibilities the managers see in digital spaces in terms of the Templestay branding.

Lastly, this dissertation project conducted interviews with three experts who specialize in religion, media and culture in South Korea, in order to critically approach to the discourses and imaginaries produced by the professionals who work for the social institutions of mainline newspapers and the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism. The

interviews generally lasted between 60 and 120 minutes and mostly took place in their own office or cafés in the universities they work. The dissertation project’s critical analysis on the interviews is considerably guided and enriched by the insight, knowledge and long-term observance that the experts have made on Korea Protestantism, Buddhism, Korean society and journalism in general, and religion journalism in South Korea in particular.

To sum up, in order to understand the discourses produced and carried by the professionals who systemically carry and mediate particular social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism, the following six discrete in-depth interviews were conducted (Table 1). In addition, I took three in-depth interviews with experts on religion and media in South Korea (Table 2).

<Table 1> In-Depth Interviews with Templestay Managers and Religion Journalists/Columnists

Name	Title	Institution	Gender	Type	Time	Date
M. S. Han	Columnist	Pressian	Male	Face-to- Face	55 min.	06/23/2015
H. Y. Kim	Exclusive Religion Journalist	Kyeonghyang Daily Newspaper	Female	Face-to- Face	120 min.	06/24/2015
S. H. Back	Exclusive Religion Journalist	Joonang Daily Newspaper	Male	Face-to- Face	56 min.	06/25/2015

H. Joe	Exclusive Religion Journalist	Hangyeorhe	Male	E-Mail		07/02/2015
G. W. Kim	Templestay Research and Developme nt Manager	The Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism	Male	Face-to- Face	33 min.	07/07/2015
D. I. Kim	Templestay Public Relations Manager	The Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism	Female	Face-to- Face	70 min.	07/07/2015
S. T. Ha	Columnist	OhmyNews	Male	Face-to- Face	45 min.	07/08/2015
G. S. Kim	Exclusive Religion Journalist	Donga Daily Newspaper	Male	Face-to- Face	70 min.	07/10/2015

<Table 2> In-Depth Interviews with Experts on Religion and Media in South Korea

Name	Title	Institution	Gender	Type	Time	Date
M. Y. Oh	Ph. D. Candidate	Korea University	Male	Face-to- Face	120 min.	04/12/2015

S. H. Yoon	Professor	Hanyang University	Female	Face-to- Face	58 min.	07/08/2015
J. K. Park	Professor	Seoul Women University	Male	Face-to- Face	56 min.	07/14/2015

Textual Analysis of Media Discourses and Images Carrying Social Imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism

This dissertation project's approach to the texts carrying social imaginaries draws on the prior research which examines a variety of texts, images, legends, myths and modes of address as the material sites where social imaginaries are articulated, carried and shaped (e.g. Campbell and La Pastina, 2010; Kalantis, 2012; Ojala, 2011; Quayson, 2001; Valaskivi, 2013; Valaskivi and Sumiala, 2014). In particular, this approach to textual articulation of social imaginaries, aims at the exploration of the representational.

First of all, 'text' needs to be clarified. Up to this point, the word text has been used as a generic term for written contents, for instance, when it is mentioned as one of the various materials and sites where particular social imaginaries are articulated, carried and shaped (Taylor 2004; Gaonkar, 2002). In this case, texts precisely signify written words, in a narrow sense, that are distinguished from images that can be presented without written languages and from other legends, myths, or various modes of address that can be written but in most cases are verbally told. But when 'textual analysis' is mentioned in this dissertation project or when the term text is employed to indicate one kind of multiperspectival approach for observing and examining the articulation and

formation of social imaginaries, as it is in this section, the word text signifies whatever we make meaning from. Thus, when this dissertation project discusses and takes texts as something that it approaches to for examining social imaginaries, texts include all the images, legends, myths, and modes of address from which meaning can be created and in which social imaginaries are articulated, carried and shaped. If I partly appropriate the definition of text which Alan McKee (2003, p. 15) makes within the conventional framework of textual analysis which focuses on on the interpretation of meaning, texts are “the material traces that are left of the practice of” articulating, carrying and forming social imaginaries – “the only empirical evidence we have of how other people” imagine their social worlds.⁴⁴

The material traces that the two case studies attempt to analyze are slightly different. The first case study examining social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism focus on several mainline news articles that cover the the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 knife attack on U.S. Ambassador in South Korea where conservative Protestants come under the spotlight and to be a controversy. Further, this case study looks into a few photographic images of Protestants that were critically circulated and commented by Korean social media users and other mainline online newspapers. Meanwhile, the second case study interested in social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism examines some significant texts and visual images that are employed in the official Korean and English websites of

⁴⁴ Given that texts are considered as the material ‘traces’ where social imaginaries are detected, this project’s approach to text partly includes the tracking and tracking of the circulation of the texts carrying them, which was discussed as the third category of methodological approaches to social imaginaries.

Templestay. It also looks into some texts and visual images that are posted and circulated by the social media services of Templestay including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

The texts, visual images and interviews mentioned above are selected and gathered, based on critical case sampling (Patton, 2002) where the researcher would “pick the site that would yield the most information and have the greatest impact on the development of knowledge (p. 236).” The employment of the critical case sampling is predicated on the post-structuralist approach that this dissertation projects takes to reality, which objects the idea of the singular reality and truth that waits out there to be found by a rigid scientist (McKee, 2003, p. 9; see also Guba & Lincoln, 1994, pp. 108-110). This dissertation project does not claim that it objectively selects and thoroughly gathers the exact research materials to describe the reality of the branding of Templestay and of the two events related to conservative Protestants. Rather, it believes that people from different worlds that share different imaginaries, experience reality differently, and thus that there are multiple realities related to the branding of Templestay and the two events. In this regard, this dissertation project can only capture particular realities of them by having particular theoretical interests and perspectives. Nor does it claim, therefore, that the analysis of this project can and should be generalized out of the context that it is predicated on.

Then, with what methodology does this dissertation project approach to the texts discussed above? There is no already given, designated and singular way of doing textual analysis. And this is in particular so, when it comes to the critical examination of social imaginaries that exist in in “a level of images as yet formulated in doctrine (Taylor, 1995, p.

29).” This dissertation project, however, finds Foucauldian discourse analysis as a form of textual analysis that is suitable for examining the material traces mentioned above. This is not only because the discourse analysis by and large shares its epistemological background with the post-structuralist approach discussed earlier, but because it offers helpful methodological concepts and tools to systemically and productively look into the factors that this dissertation projects highlight as involving in the production, articulation and circulation of social imaginaries. For instance, social institutions which produce social imaginaries, texts and rituals(practices) that carry the social imaginaries, and the practices, positions, and bodies of the subjects who have embodied the social imaginaries, are the material sites that Foucauldian discourse analysis as well focus on in examining the construction, deployment, employment, and reality effects of discourse in society. Let me discuss them in detail.

Foucault conceptualizes discourse “as relatively rule-bound sets of statements which impose limits on what gives meaning (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2012, p. 13).” He articulates the composition, formation, limit and working of discourses as follows:

We shall call discourse a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation [...Discourse] is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined. Discourse in this sense is not an ideal, timeless form [...] it is, from beginning to end, historical – a fragment of history [...] posing its own limits, its divisions, its transformations, the specific modes of its temporality (Foucault, 1972, p. 117).

The idea of discourse is crucial in relation to his other significant theoretical ideas such as discipline, subject, power and truth. As Gillian Rose (2012) puts the relations among them, it is not only that “discourse disciplines subjects into certain ways of thinking and acting” but that “human subjects are produced through discourse (p. 192).” In this regard, discourse is productive as power is. For Foucault, subjects, relations between subjects, and even truth are constructed in and through discourse, and “there is no possibility of getting behind the discourse to a ‘truer’ truth (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2012, p.18).” In the similar vein, Gillian Rose (2012) remarks that it is “a particular knowledge about the world which shapes how the world is understood and how things are done in it (p.190).” And such articulations of discourse well correspond with the idea of social imaginary that is described as a form of understanding which people have about “their social existences, how they fit with others, how things go on between them and their fellows,” and their social worlds (Taylor, 2004, p. 23).

The production, deployment, and employment of discourse entails reality effects. It is understood in the framework of discourse analysis that experiences of reality are constructed in discourses. As Parker (1992) puts it, “discourses do not simply describe” collective social worlds, “but categorize” them, “they bring phenomena into sight (p. 4).” Given these discussions on discourse, it is reasonable for Mounian (2009) to assert that discourse analysis is “not a method or a device in itself, but rather it is ... an analytical framework that highlights the importance of discourse in the production” and change of social worlds and history (p. 214). Such understanding of discourse analysis is isomorphic

to the idea of social imaginary whose significance is highlighted in the historical production and change of collective social worlds (see Gaonkar, 2002, p. 11).

Moutian (2009) continues and highlights that “using discourse analysis as methodology immediately implies taking into account a historical perspective and discourse as meaning production.” This is because that “discourses are historically situated, referring to present and past objects, events and practices (p. 214).” In this regard, the third chapter, which surveys the historical formation and trajectory of Korean Buddhism and Protestantism within Korean modern history, intends to offer a significant contextual knowledge on the past and present events, materials, laws, practices, and conditions to which discourses on Korean Protestantism and Buddhism are referred and anchored. And the perspective on the political economy (production) of social imaginaries, discussed above, cannot but closely relate to the discourse analysis that this dissertation project conducts on the material traces including the interviews with religion journalists and the PR and R&D managers of Templestay, the texts and images in mainline news articles, the official websites of Templestay, and its social media platforms.

When the interviews, images and texts are examined by the methodology of discourse analysis, there arise the six striking points in its analytical framework: 1) the deployment, connection and organization of discourses, 2) the institutional location of discourse, 3) the production of effects of truth, 4) the production of social categories and differences, 5) the position of the subject constructed in the interviews, texts and images examined, 6) to read what is not seen or said.

In understanding the first salience of the deployment, connection and organization of discourse, intertextuality is significant. It “refers to the way that the meaning of any one discursive image or text depend not only on that one text or image, but also on the meanings carried by other images and texts (Rose, 2012, p. 191).” Meaning of particular object is constructed by and in the relationships of it with other objects. In this regard, Foucauldian discourse analysis does not assume that meanings of particular texts, images and interviews are already fixed and can be solely found within them. Therefore, it is not the goal of discourse analysis to uncover the hidden meanings or discourses which underlie the surface appearance of texts and images (Parker, 2003, p. 7). Foucault rejects “such ‘penetrative’ models of interpretation at the level of method” and explanation (Rose, 2012, p.194). Rather, Foucauldian discourse analysis looks into how meanings are connected and constituted together in a particular discourse, how certain discourses are connected to other discourses, and how such discourses are deployed, employed and operated within a regime of truth, where the discourses are rather structurally connected to other in a particular historical conjuncture (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2012, p.13; Mounian, 2009, p. 15; Rose, 2012, pp. 191-195).

In terms of examining texts and interviews, therefore, it is crucial to observe and examine “how people use language to construct their accounts of” the social world (Tonkiss, 1998, p. 248). And in terms of analyzing images, it needs to be highlighted how images construct particular way of seeing the social world, how they construct accounts of the world (Rose, 2012, pp. 195-196). Further, some questions can be asked in addition as follows: What images, texts and languages keep recurring in the accounts of the social

world?; What associations are established between images and the texts that describe the images in the accounts of the social world?

All discourse is produced, occasioned, deployed and employed within a particular historical conjuncture that shapes and is shaped by specific social contexts. In this regard, the institutional location of a discourse, which is the second salience, is important. It is crucial to understand from what social sites particular discourses and imaginaries are constructed, how regularly, systemically and professionally the discourses are produced, and with and by what authority the discourses are written and carried. In this dissertation project, mainline newspapers and the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism are noted as the social sites, and religion journalists, columnists, and the team managers of Templestay as the social authorities.

The third salience arisen in discourse analysis is the production of the effects of truth. In the framework of discourse analysis, it is understood that, as Jørgensen and Phillips (2012) puts it, “truth is a discursive construction and different regimes of knowledge determine what is true and false (p. 13).” If this is the case, it is not possible to experience reality and access to universal truth “from a position outside discourse (Ibid., p. 14).” Effects of truth are produced within and through discourses. The following questions should be asked in terms of the exploration of the effects of truth: How does a particular discourse come to produce its effects of truth?; How are particular ways of seeing and accounts of the social world (discourses) constructed as natural or real or truthful in the texts, images, and interviews that are examined?; With and through what

rhetorical strategies does a discourse make itself persuasive?; What visual and textual devices are used to make truth claim?

In this regard, the fourth salience, which is the production of social categories and difference, is significant. Discourse analysis assumes that social categories and difference, which appear to be already given, obvious and natural, are constructed. And these constructions come to have effects of truth by and through their recurring appearance, deployment, employment and circulation in broader discursive structures. Social categories and differences are not only constructed but employed, naturalized and essentialized in a particular regime of truth. In particular, these constructions of social categories and differences “can take visual form (Rose, 2012, p. 12),” and discourse analysis should be “concerned with the production of social difference through visual imagery (Ibid., p.224).” The following questions can be asked: How are social categories and discourses constructed, employed, naturalized and essentialized in and through the texts, images, or interviews examined in the dissertation project?; In other words, how do the texts and interviews describe and articulate the social categories and differences? How do “images visualize social difference (or render invisible) (Ibid., p.11)?”

The fifth salience is the construction of the position of the subject who audience particular images, texts and the social others who are constructed in them. Considering that discourses are not just a mere knowledge but social practices which systemically discipline the objects and subjects of which they speak (Foucault, 1972, p. 49), the discourses constructed in a particular image, text or interview, structuralize and encourage the practices of seeing the image, reading the text, or articulating in the

interview in particular ways. And the combinations between the discourses and the practices formed by them invite a position of subject who see the image, read the text and articulate the interview in a particular way from a particular perspective. For instance, as Rose puts John Berger's argument (1972), "images of social difference work not simply by what they show but also by the kind of seeing that they invite (as cited in Rose, 2012, p.13)." In this regard, discourse analysis calls on the need for looking into how the interviewees position themselves in the interviews and how the texts and images examined construct and invite the position of their audience within what particular discourses they construct.

In terms of the issue of social construction of difference, in particular, the discourse of the 'Other' can be crucially related to the construction of the position of the subjects doing their interviews or audiencing the images and texts. Referring to Miriam Debieux Rosa's 1999 research that illuminates the significance of social imaginary in the subjective constitution of the subject, Moutian states that she argues that "the discourse of the 'Other' that is relevant to the constitution of the subject is impregnated by the imaginary production of the social group, that is, it includes fantasies of the social group (as cited in Moutian, 2009, p. 210)." The discursive production of the 'Other' is closely interwoven with the imaginary production of a particular social group against which the position of the subject is imagined and discursively constructed. In this regard, the following two questions are closely interwoven with each other: How do the interviews, texts or images examined in the two case studies construct a particular social group with the imaginary and discourse of the Other?; How does the position of the subjects comes

to be imagined and discursively constructed against the social group, which is imagined as the Other, while doing their interviews or audiencing the texts and images examined in the case studies?

Lastly, discourse analysis calls on the need for reading what is not seen or said. A regime of truth that discourses construct, implies and posits that there are the rules for for what can and cannot be said or seen and those for what is imagined to be true and false (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2012, p.13). As Rose (2012) puts it, “absence can be as productive as explicit naming; invisibility can have just as powerful as visibility (p. 219).” Trying to grasp and capture broader discursive structures where the images, texts and interviews are located, this dissertation project focus on reading what is not seen or said in the two significant social events related to Korea Protestantism and the branding of Templestay.

Reception Analysis of Social Imaginaries of Korean Modernity, Protestantism and Buddhism

Lastly, the dimension of reception of social imaginaries is explored by conducting two focus group interviews and critically analyzing them in depth. This approach to the reception of social imaginaries is indebted to the prior research that conducts interviews with particular social agents in order to acquire verbal cues to understand their affective and sensorial experience, embodied understandings, and the social imaginaries involved in them (e.g. Bajde, 2012; Carnevale, 2013; Dawney, 2011; Heikkilä and Kunelius, 2006; Valaskivi, 2013). Following the studies, this dissertation project understands the bodies of the interviewees as both the carriers and reception sites of social imaginaries. The

verbalized self-expressions of their imaginaries, affect and sensorial experience, that are produced in the course of interview, are considered as a critical representational cue to approach to the social imaginaries' non-representational formation and working in the bodies.

The focus group interviews were separately conducted by enlisting two different groups of participants. The first group is comprised of a fourth-year undergraduate student studying engineering, an incoming employee in a major Korean company, and a first-year graduate student majoring in sociology (Table 3). All the three participants are devout Protestants who have known each other in the Seoul district of the same campus missionary group that is predicated on conservative reformed theological tradition. They were recruited by personal connections with me. The interview took place in a café in Seoul and lasted about 45 minutes. The second group is comprised of six graduate students who major in Korean Studies in a university in Seoul, Korea (Table 4). This group was recruited with the help of an acquaintance who also participated in the interviews as one of the six graduate students. Except the acquaintance who is a devout Protestant, the other five participants identified themselves as atheist or agnostic. This interview was conducted in a classroom of the university and lasted about 40 minutes.

Both the two focus groups interviews were structuralized as follows: After filling out consent form, the participants in both groups were invited to articulate their overall sense on how each Korean Protestantism and Buddhism is represented by the media and how each Korean Protestantism and Buddhism is in general perceived and evaluated in Korean society. Then, I showed several photographic images of Korean Protestants that

were critically circulated in the events of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 knife attack on U.S. Ambassador in South Korea. And they were asked to articulate what they see, think and feel in their encounters with the images. In the similar vain, the research showed several visual images and texts that are significantly employed in the branding of Templestay in digital spaces. And the participants were requested to articulate what they see, think, feel and experience in their encounters with the Templestay images and texts.

<Table 3> Protestant Focus Group Interview

Name	Religion	Job	Gender	Time	Date
H. J.	Protestant	4 th -Year Engineering Undergraduate Student in a University in Seoul	Male	45 min.	07/12/2015
J. K.	Protestant	New Employee in a Major Company	Male		
D. S.	Protestant	1 st -Year Sociology Graduate Student in a University in Seoul	Female		

<Table 4> Atheist/Agnostic Focus Group Interview

Name	Religion	Job	Gender	Time	Date
M1	Atheist/	Korean Studies	Male	50 min.	07/15/2015
M2	Agnostic	Graduate Student	Male		

M3		in a University in	Male		
F1		Seoul	Female		
F2			Female		
F3	Protestant		Female		

Chapter 5. Social Imaginaries of Korean Protestantism :The 2012 Lady Gaga Controversy and the 2015 Knife Attack on the U. S. Ambassador

Introduction

This chapter captures the two significant incidents of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 Knife Attack on the U.S. ambassador Mark Lippert in South Korea as symptomatic scenes where social imaginaries of Korean society, modernity and Protestantism are being formed, mediated and circulated. After this introduction, the chapter offers the second section which analyzes the in-depth interviews with several mainline religion journalists and columnists who systemically produce religion-related news and explores how they imagine and discourse Korean Protestantism in particular, religion in general and Korean society and modernity in which the previous two are located. Then, the chapter proceeds to the third section which examines the mainline liberal online news articles and photographic images, that cover the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the Korean traditional fan dance performed by Protestants wishing for the recovery of the ambassador, as material sites where social imaginaries of Korean society, modernity and Protestantism are formed, conveyed and circulated. In the fourth section, two focus group interviews are critically examined in order to understand what social imaginaries of Korean modernity and Protestantism are invoked, carried and formed in the participants' encounters with the photographic images examined in the earlier section.

Production Analysis on Social Imaginaries of Korean Protestantism

This section aims to understand how some professionals who systemically produce religion-related news in the Korean mainline newspaper imagine and discourse Korean Protestantism in particular, Korean religion in general and Korean society in which the previous two are located. For this aim, the in-depth interviews with four religion journalists in the mainline Korean news media and two columnists who actually wrote the columns analyzed in this chapter, are critically examined through discourse analysis as discussed in the methodology chapter. In doing so, I do not presume a casual relationship between the mainline online newspaper's coverage on the two events which are examined in the next section and the imaginaries and discourses of the journalist and columnists on Korean Protestantism, religion and modernity.⁴⁵ Rather, this dissertation project considers the analysis on the interviews with the religion journalists and columnists as a crucial chance to illuminate the possible range, limit and kinds of the discourses, that the mainline online newspaper coverage on the two incidents could produce and employ, through which social imaginaries of Korean society, modernity and Protestantism would be articulated and carried.

Imaginaries and Discourses on Korean Society

⁴⁵ This is not only because the religion journalists are not the exact ones who wrote the news articles which are examined in the next section but because it is not that social imaginaries shape media texts and images in a unilinear way as much as it is not that media texts and images shape social imaginaries in a unilinear way. As discussed in the theory chapter, social imaginaries in the contemporary world are multi-directionally mediated and thus they circulate and work as a non-linear social process.

It would be reasonable to discuss first how the journalists and columnists discourse social imaginaries of Korean society and modernity since it is common for them to talk about Korean religion and Protestantism by relating them to a broader context of Korean society and modernity. First, it is the discourse of ‘right-left division’ that the journalists and columnists most frequently brought up in a variety of conversational contexts of the interviews. For instance, G. S. Kim the religion journalist of Donga Daily Newspaper submits “the sense of balance” as the most important attribute of religion journalist in South Korea, in particular, by drawing on his imaginary of the politics and society of South Korea which is severely polarized based on the right and left ideology. He remarks that “Korean religions make too many political speeches and collective activities” and argues that religion journalist “has to be objective in approaching to such political speeches and activities (G. S. Kim, personal communication, July 10, 2015).” On the question of which religion seems to be best in making a public voice about the 2014 Sewol Ferry disaster, the religion journalist of Joongang Daily Newspaper expresses his concern about the intensification of the right-left division of Korean society by religions’ engaging with such controversial issues:

I doubt if the responses of the religious group [which supported the victims’ families] are genuinely for Korean society because they speak only through their own ideological spectrum. ... As you see, Korean society has increasingly separated into the right and the left since the Korean War. The wound of Korean society is not cured yet. But religion seems to more and more tear the wound (S. H. Baek, personal communication, June 25, 2015).

In this way, once again, South Korea and its nation are imagined to polarize into the conservative camp and the progressive one. Having a similar imaginary of the polarized Korean society, H. Y. Kim recalls that she decided to join Hankuk Daily Newspaper because it “is more or less free from ideological spectrum or staying neutral (personal communication, June 24, 2015).” Interestingly, as seen above, most journalists in the interviews imagined themselves to be, or to be readily able to be, objective and neutral in the middle of the severely polarized ideological spectrum of Korean society.

It is only M. S. Han, a Korean Studies professor in Dongkuk University writing column for Pressian, who recognized in the interview the fictiveness of the journalistic ideal of objectivity and neutrality in Korean society. Further, he unambiguously related the discourse of right-left division to the discourse of partial modernization, where Korean society is imagined to only partially embrace modernity, which is critically and frequently invoked and employed in the interviews with the religion journalist and columnists. His utterance is a bit long but worthy of quotation:

Korean society is already divided into those who read Joseon, Joongang and Donga and those who read Hangeore, Kyeonghyang, OhmyNews and Pressian. They do not watch other media and do not converse and discuss with the others reading other newspapers... Korean society does not have a unified public sphere but segregated sectors. ... South Koreans are the nation who have never experienced democracy in everyday lives. ... Some part of modernity was embraced but other part of it did not come in. Certain negativity of modernity has been intensified but

certain positivity of it did not come in Korean society, if you like (M. S. Han, personal communication, June 23, 2015).

In his comment, it is imagined that modernity existed outside Korea and it partially came into Korean society. He is not alone in carrying such social imaginary of Korea society that only partially achieved modernization. Regardless of whether one works in the right-wing or left-wing newspaper, religion journalists who employed the discourse of human rights, articulated and legitimized such social imaginary where it is imagined that modernity, existed outside Korea, came into Korean society, that was not modern, at some point but only partially and that Korean society failed to fully embrace modernity and accomplish modernization. G. S. Kim the religion journalist of Donga Daily Newspaper that has a conservative political stance, says that “when the world fully changed in the feudal society [of Joseon], that change could be called modernization,” and continues that “so it [what Koreans should pursue now] would be correct to call ‘contemporarization.’” However, despite his assertion that modernization is already completed even before Japanese colonial era, G. S. Kim contradictorily argues that “there are still some areas that need to be changed ... [such as,] basically, the issues of the socially disadvantaged, gender equality and human rights” which would be called the continuing concerns of Western modernity. He asserts that “[Korean society] has a bit of difference from Western societies although it has considerably come to be a human rights-centered society.” In this way, the modern ideal of universal human right, is imagined to be not fully accomplished in Korean society, in particular, compared to other “Western societies (G. S. Kim, personal communication, July 10, 2015).” In the similar vein, S. T. Ha, a columnist

in OhmyNews which has a liberal political stance, appears to carry and articulate the social imaginary where Korean society only partially embraced modernity, while associating the protection of human rights with both progress and modernization. For instance, he states that “to protect and support the women, disabled, and minority who are suffered and discriminated by social structure..., in effect, is progress.” And later he also remarks,

The value of human rights is universal and valid, right? But what did Korean Protestantism say in terms of homosexuality? They said God gave human rights. That’s non-sense! ... That the human right issues are controlled [by such Korean Protestantism], shows that we have a long way [to modernization]. We have a long way to go (S. T. Ha, personal communication, July 8, 2015).

Korean society is imagined and discoursed as falling behind on the seemingly singular way to progress and modernization. And such social imaginary crucially reminds of “an imaginary waiting room of history (p. 8)” and the “first in Europe, then elsewhere’ structure of global historical time (p. 7)” that Chakrabarty (2000) points out in terms of the universalism of European thought and its linear historicism. Considering the utterances of M. S. Han, S. T. Ha and G. S. Kim, what such discourse of partial modernization naturalizes and makes as truth, is a particular social imaginary, where modernity which existed outside Korean society came into it at some point but only partially, where Korean society failed to fully embrace modernity and achieve modernization, and where any sort of modernity never originated from Korean society before the point. What is never imagined and discoursed is a possibility where Korea

might already possess particular traits of what could be understood as modern even before it encountered the West, which is delved into by Alexander Woodside's work *Lost Modernities* (2006).⁴⁶

Another dominant discourse employed by the journalist and columnists, is 'the acceleration of social change.' In the interviews, Korean society was imagined to keep changing and its change to keep accelerating. The words of 'change' and 'speed' were frequently brought up separately and together. S. H. Baek finds the value of newspaper in its "depth of gage" and "insight" in the contemporary Korean society where "the media is ... getting faster (personal communication, June 25, 2015)." H. Joe the religion journalist of Hangyeore comments that "in the contemporary society, competition is getting accelerated and stress gets increased (personal communication, August 3, 2015)." G. S. Kim also states that "the standard of modernization keeps changing because the needs of the members keep changing in the contemporary society," and continues that "it cannot but keep transforming (personal communication, July, 10, 2015)." In the similar vein, S. T. Ha, a columnist of OhmyNews, also argues that

[In Korean society] it is getting harder to restore prior values. If something passes, then it is really hard to turn it back. ... everything keeps asked to be changed. ...

⁴⁶ As already discussed in the theory chapter, in *Lost Modernities* (2006), Alexander Woodside shows how a certain type of modernity was already accomplished in the particular past histories of China, Korea and Vietnam which are generally considered as a pre-modern era for the reason that the period was far before the arrival of Western capitalism and industrialism. By precisely demonstrating how the embryonic bureaucracies, predicated on clear rules, and meritocratic civil service examinations of those countries already achieved "the rationalization process we think of as modern (p. 1)" in advance to the contemporary Western world, Woodside subverts our conventional understanding and imagination on world history and the coming of modernity.

[The change of] our country is even faster [than other countries] (S. T. Ha, personal communication, July 8, 2015).

Lastly, the neo-liberal imaginary and discourse on the state and society critically emerged. Religion journalists in the conservative newspapers such as Joongang and Donga Daily Newspaper, in particular, employed the neo-liberal discourse on the state while imagining Korean religion to reclaim the roles that Korean government has relinquished. For instance, asserting that “there is a blind spot that the government cannot entirely take charge of,” G. S. Kim listed the issues of social welfare, the elderly and the multicultural family which could be considered as a public domain for the state to intervene in (personal communication, July 10, 2015). S. H. Baek even imagines and discourses Korean society a sort of neo-liberal individual whose self is problematized as an object of knowledge, therapy and self-help (Illouz, 2008). He states that Korean society “has not been healed yet ... since it was divided into the right and the left camp after the Korean war,” and asserts that, “for the healing of Korean society,” religion “is critically needed (S. H. Baek, personal communication, June 25, 2015).” In the interview, he repeatedly employed and deployed the words of “wound (sangch'ö)” and “healing (ch'iyu)” that have been massively circulated in the neo-liberal Korean society as a dominant discourse to problematize and articulate the self (Ryu, 2012).

Imaginations and Discourses on Religion

Considering that the neo-liberal imaginaries about Korean society and those about religion are closely interwoven with each other, it would be good to switch at this point to the analysis on how the journalists and columnists imagine and discourse Korean

religion and Protestantism in relation to the imaginaries and discourses on Korean society discussed above. As glimpsed above, neo-liberal social imaginary and discourse on religion, detected in G. S. Kim's and S. H. Baek's comment on Korean society, entails a "sense of legitimacy (Taylor, 2004, p. 6)" and "an imperative prescription (*Ibid.*, p. 7)." G. S. Kim asserts that "religion should be combined with local people, for instance, by operating local nursery or library, rather than yelling 'believe our religion!' (personal communication, July 10, 2015)" Korean religion is not only imagined and but asked to take in charge of the domain of social welfare and education such as running child care and local library. Such imaginary of religion considerably aligns with the current global phenomena where fundamentalist Pentecostal churches voluntarily fills up the public domain where the neo-liberal state has abandoned its responsibility for the social reproduction of their citizens, including schooling, health and welfare (Comaroff, 2009, p. 19).

Further, religion is imagined and invited to offer the precarious individuals in the neo-liberal Korean society "fundamental haven (S. H. Baek, personal communication, June 25, 2015)," "spirituality... healing, meditation (G. S. Kim, personal communication, July 10, 2015)," and "healing and wellbeing for the peace of mind (H. Joe, personal communication, August 3, 2015)." The words of healing, wellbeing, spirituality, and mediation were repeatedly brought up and used in order to articulate and suggest the suitable location for religion in the neo-liberal Korean society. Interestingly, the discourse of 'the acceleration of social change' also aligns with this neo-liberal imaginary and discourse on religion. H. Joe the religion journalist of Hangyeore states that "since, in the contemporary society, competition is getting accelerated and stress gets increased, people need the news

covering the religions which care about such competition and stress (personal communication, August 3, 2015).” In this regard, both the neo-liberal discourse on Korean society and the discourse of the acceleration of social change’ are likely to be the flip sides of the same coin.

While being slightly different from but still relevant to such neo-liberal discourse on religion, which imagines it to offer spirituality, healing and wellbeing to neo-liberal individuals, religion in general is imagined to essentially originate from, and thus professionally specialize, the immaterial, ideational, mental and inner domain of human life. Through and in the romanticized imaginary of religion, Korean religion is hopefully invited to take in charge of the immaterial, mental and inner domain of Korean society. For instance, answering the question on the role of religion in Korean society, H. Y. Kim the religion journalist of Kyeonghyang Daily Newspaper states that she “hopes Korean religion to become the space which can solve the mental agonies of the nation that are not well resolved or something like that (personal communication, June 24, 2015).” On the same question, G. S. Kim expects that “Korean religion should contribute to fulfill the mental life of the nation (personal communication, July 10, 2015).” H. Joe also highlights that “since religion deals with inner spirit, mind, thought and spirituality,” religion journalist should open to these areas.

In terms of the imaginary of religion which takes in charge of the mental and immaterial domain, it is frequently imagined to have distanced, or should distance from, the modern corruption of materialism, politics, institutionalization, or secularization. In the interviews, the journalists and columnists readily employed and articulated the

dichotomized, romanticized imaginary and discourse on religion in particular, relating it to what could be called a modern imaginary or anxiety about modern corruption, institutionalization, secularization, ephemerality and superficiality. In and through such dichotomized imaginary, religion is divided into the ideational, core, original, authentic, immaterial, pure, and ontological one and the institutionalized, secularized, materialized, and corrupted one.

S. H. Baek and M. S. Han employ such romanticized discourse on religion which dichotomizes between religion as a set of ideas which is core and religion as institution which is corrupted. “Religion is always a reason for being itself when it is first arisen, right?” S. H. Baek asks back, and continues that “at that time, there is no institution, hierarchy and standardization and only the core [of religion] itself, which flexibly exists as the reason for being.” Then, he worries:

As time goes, religion gets institutionalized, ... [it] comes to have a sort of class in it, and... [it] tends to be ideological. ... So, it is important for the contemporary Korean religion to be flexible ... to remember the spirit of their first establishment (S. H. Baek, personal communication, June 25, 2015).

In this way, religion is imagined to offer ontologically foundational meanings to human while contemporary institutionalized religion to be stratified, ideological and rigid.

Meanwhile, M. S. Han remarks that “apart from original teachings and the eagerness to live up to their teachings, regardless of whether the founder is Jesus or Buddha, the religious leaders are satisfied with remaining in the church or the temple, which is the institution made up afterwards.” And after mentioning the prayer of Korean believers wishing only

the success of their descendants in the Korean version of S.A.T., he states that “I am not sure if [such prayer] can be compatible with their religion,” and continues that, “rather, to protest against such institution would fit into the original teaching of the founders (M. S. Han, personal communication, June 23, 2015).” In this way, it is imagined that religion was at first an authentic, pure and ontological teaching but, as time goes on, it has gotten institutionalized, distanced from its first teaching and thus corrupted.

Through and in their comments on religion, the beginning of religions is imagined and romanticized as if religions were arisen only from a purely immaterial inner mind and spirit of the founders and no political, historical and material conditions interfered in or contributed to the formation of the inner mind and spirit of the founders. What such imaginary presupposes and naturalizes is the rigid dichotomies between spirit and matter, the immaterial and the material, idea and institution, the inner mind and the exterior environment, the unmixed and the mixed, and the pure (first) and the corrupted (latter). G. S. Kim’s concern about Korean religion employs this dichotomized discourse.

They [Korean Protestantism and Buddhism] are too much secularized. Clergies need to train their body and mind first based on their [own religious] performance, prayer and spirituality and then teach what they learn to their believers. It is basic. But they are too much involved in social system and value, such as money, power, ... honor. ... In Protestantism, there always happens what could be seen only in the secular society (G. S. Kim, personal communication, July 10, 2015).

In his statements, it is imagined and discoursed that there is a core, original and fundamental element of religion comprised of a set of purely religious ideas and practices

untouched by money, power and honor, in other words, secular social system and value. By pushing the elements of power, money and honor into the category of the secular social system-value and excluding them from the authentic and original part of religion, the clear boundary between the sacred religion and the outer secular society that is corrupted, is constructed.⁴⁷ In this way, it is imagined that the authentic religion should distance and had distanced from the modern corruption of materialism, politics and secularization.

The Dichotomized imaginary of Religion in the Criticism of, and the Expectation on, Korean Religion

It can be inferred that the dichotomized imaginary, which dichotomizes the authentic, immaterial, pure and ontologically foundational religion and the modern corruption by institutionalization, secularization and materialism, has two different employments in their discourses on Korean society, modernity and religion which the journalist and columnists construct and share. On the one hand, the dichotomized imaginary of religion enables and engenders the criticism of the contemporary Korean religion, which is imagined to lose its essence because of its excessive embracement of, and collusion with, modern institutionalization, politics and materialism. On the other hand, it enables for some to imagine and hope Korean religion to be a magical space,

⁴⁷ G. S. Kim's understanding and employment of the term secularization is surprisingly similar to that of conservative Korean Protestantism which easily dichotomizes the outer world and itself while religiously moralizing the term. And, of course, their understanding and usage of secularization is far from those of secular scholars studying secularization as a social scientific research object.

where is non-political, immaterial, peaceful, neutral, and thus mediative and integrative, in the right-left divided Korean society.

First, in terms of employing the dichotomy in criticizing Korean religion, the earlier part of this section already showed how the dichotomized imaginary excludes institutionalization, materialization and secularization from the category of authentic, original religion. And through the imaginary, Korean religion, imagined to be too much institutionalized and secularized, was easily denounced by the journalists and columnists. In this regard, one of the prominent discourses on Korean Religion was that of power-orientation. In particular, among other religions, Korean Protestantism was frequently imagined to crave power and collude with conservative political power. Expressing his frustration in writing about the issue of conservative Protestantism against homosexuality, S. T. Ha states that “it [Korean Protestantism] would not change at all” since “it is too powerful in Korean society.” In the similar vein, he criticizes the collusion of Korean Protestantism with the conservative “mainline media and broadcast” and the political power of “M. B. administration (personal communication, July 8, 2015).”⁴⁸ H. Joe also denounces that “conservative Protestantism colluded with the Geun-Hye Park administration trying to get out of the controversy on the Sewol Ferry disaster (personal communication, August 3, 2015).”

It is noteworthy that M. S. Han connects the discourse of power-orientation with that of partial modernization. After pointing out the partial embracement of modernity in

⁴⁸ M. B. is the nick name of the former President Myeong-Bak Lee.

Korean society, M. S. Han's comment on Korean religion all of sudden jumps to the issue of the power-oriented and money-oriented Korean Protestantism:

Some part of modernity was embraced but other part did not come in. Certain negativity of modernity has been intensified but certain positivity of it did not come in Korean society, if you like. (So... do you think Korean Protestantism failed to develop the ability for rational discussion and to make a public sphere?) Yes, ... Korean Protestantism would be the same case. It is not that only Buddhism is involved in the problem of money, right? ... If the material⁴⁹ and power get concentrated [to Korean Protestantism] all of sudden before people who can be qualified as clergy get increased, then, it gets corrupted (personal communication, June 23, 2015).

Possibly, this discursive deployment, which connects the partial modernization of Korean society with the corruption of powerful religious groups by the concentration of power and money, might predicate on a shared historical memory and social imaginary where, while being indifferent to public interest, Korean conservative power has privately appropriated the state's public resources and concentrated its accumulated capital and power to a small number of its ally since even earlier than the age of Jeong-Hee Park's developmental dictatorship.⁵⁰ And this assumption turns out to be persuasive as the social

⁴⁹ In Korean society, 'the material' often signifies money with the connotation of materialism.

⁵⁰ As discussed in the history chapter, the mainline Korean Protestantism has not been reluctant at all to privatize the public sources offered by conservative political power for its own growth and interests as much as conservative political elites in Korea have privatized its public, political power and used it for their partisan and private interests.

imaginary, that Korean Protestantism is indifferent to the public interest while selfishly pursuing its own interest, growth and success, keeps recurring in the interviews. For instance, H. Y. Kim points out the indifference of Korean Protestantism to public interest, dichotomizing religion as original ideas and religion as corrupted institution: “although the original spirit of Christianity is not [selfish], I think, what general Korean newspaper readers would percept is that Protestants selfishly pray only for their bless not for [the broader Korean] community (personal communication, June 24, 2015).” M. S. Han also criticizes the selfishness of Korean Protestants praying only for the success of their descendants before the Korean version of S.A.T. Again, reiterating the dichotomy between idea (teaching) and institution, he argues that “to protest against such institution, would fit into the original teaching of the founders (M. S. Han, personal communication, June 23, 2015).”

In the interviews, Korean Protestantism was frequently imagined to be far from its original teachings and to be indifferent to the public interest of South Korea, while pursuing only its private interest particularly by colluding with and resembling conservative political power. And interestingly, for some journalist and columnists, its privatizing of the public power and resource, colluding with the conservative political power, and indifference to the public interest, were imagined to manifest the partial modernization of Korean society. Arguing that Korean religion is even behind Korean society which is imagined to fall behind other modernized Western countries, G. S. Kim submits “the hereditary succession of Korean mega-churches” as a proof of the incomplete modernization of Korean society (personal communication, July 10, 2015). And criticizing

that Korean politics is controlled by conservative Protestantism in dealing with the issue of homosexuality, S. T. Ha points out this failure to the complete separation between politics and religion as a proof of the failure to the full accomplishment of modernization in Korean society (personal communication, July 8, 2015).

Meanwhile, the discourse which dichotomizes the authentic, immaterial, pure and ontologically foundational religion and the modern corruption by institutionalization, secularization and materialism, enables and encourages for some to imagine and invite religion as a magical space that is non-political, neutral, integrative, mediative, immaterial and peaceful in the politically divided Korean society. For instance, in such romanticized imaginary of religion, G. S. Kim excludes some religious issues partially overlapped with politics from the category of the authentic and pure religion news topic. After pointing out the problem of what he terms the secularization of Korean religion, G. S. Kim asserts that he is trying not to deal with the issue of conservative Protestantism against homosexuality because “that issue is, rather than a religious issue, a socio-cultural phenomenon and political activity [of conservative Protestantism] (G. S. Kim, personal communication, July 10, 2015).” It is inferred that he does not consider certain type of religion coming into the domain of politics as authentic religion. As discussed earlier, the location he allowed for religion is a neo-liberal gap that is made by the state’s withdrawal from the domain of social welfare and education, which could be imagined as public but not that political.

Further, the romanticized imaginary of the authentic, immaterial and pure religion is submitted as the solution of the right-left divided Korean society. Criticizing the left-oriented stance of some liberal Christian group against the conservative government, S. H.

Baek argues that Korean Protestantism should have “the eye of Christ, not that of the left camp, nor that of the right camp” confronting a variety of politically divided issues in Korean society. He continues that “if they can see [the issues] through the eye of Christ, Korean society will become more and more a unified society and get more mature.” And he asserts that “they [Religious groups] should not enter into the polarized [politics] and make Korean society more separated (S. H. Baek, personal communication, June 25, 2015).”

Textual Analysis on Social Imaginaries of Korean Protestantism

This section explores the mediation and circulation of social imaginaries of Korean society, modernity and Protestantism by focusing on some mainline liberal online news articles which cover the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 knife attack on the U.S. ambassador in South Korea. Further, it looks into a few photographic images of conservative Evangelicals, taken in the two events, which were prominently circulated and commented by social media users and other mainline liberal online newspapers. I conduct discourse analysis on the media texts and images, focusing on some saliences highlighted and discussed in the methodology chapter. With discourse analysis on the media texts and images, the circulatory process of the online news articles and photographic images is also intermittently examined. This section has three sub-sections. The first subsection analyzes the news articles that symptomatically mediated and prominently circulated particular social imaginaries of Korean society, modernity and Protestantism in the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy. And then, the second subsection examines some significant photographic

images taken during the controversy, which were considerably circulated carrying particular social imaginaries of Korean society, modernity and Protestantism. The last subsection focuses on the phase of the 2015 knife attack on the U.S. ambassador. A few photographic images of a Protestant group which performed Korean traditional fan dance wishing for the recovery of the U. S. ambassador and the media discourse around them, are critically explored and analyzed altogether.

The Analysis of the Korean Mainline Liberal Online Media Discourse on the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy

At the beginning of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy, the primary interest of the Korean mainline online newspaper concentrated on Lady Gaga the world-wide famous celebrity. Some mainline media covered her global fame and tremendous influence on the economics and cultural politics of the United States. However, the emergent public protest of conservative Protestants against the Lady Gaga concert and homosexuality changed the tone of the overall media coverage on the concert. In particular, a few mainline liberal online newspapers including Pressian, OhmyNews, Hankyoreh and Kyeonghyang, began to shift their media coverage focus from her to the conservative Protestant groups' public protests against her concert.

One of the prominent discourses, which the liberal online newspapers constructed and employed covering the controversy, is that of 'the violation of freedom of expression.' The discourse came to be predominantly emergent and frequently employed, in particular, as soon as the Korean Media Rating Board (KMRB) declared the concert to be harmful to teenagers on 22th March 2012 for the reason of its being excessive sensationalism and

thus Hyundai Card announced that only person of 18 and above will be allowed to attend the concert.

The ways in which the liberal media discourse produces effects of truth, are various. For instance, some straight articles effectively allude that the KMRB's judgment might be impacted by the protest of conservative Protestantism, without further journalistic investigation on the issue.⁵¹ And by doing so, they imply that Korean conservative Protestantism suppressed the freedom of expression in Korean society. Most straight articles dealing with this issue successively deploys the severe protest of conservative Protestant groups against Lady Gaga and her concert right before or after the news of the KRMB's decision without clearly illuminating whether or not the KRMB was actually pressured by the protest of conservative Protestantism. Online straight articles from both Hangyeore and Kyeonghyang, the top two liberal newspapers in South Korea, manifest such rhetorical deployment. After spending most of its space in quoting the seemingly irrationally denouncing remarks of conservative Protestant groups and some intellectuals' critiques on them, a straight news from Hangyeore⁵², finalizes itself with a paragraph introducing that the KRMB determined to ban the attendance of person under

⁵¹ There was no exploratory journalistic report which investigates whether the KRMB was actually pressured by the protest of conservative Protestantism during the controversy. Exceptionally, a news article from Hangyeore, titled *The Adult Only Lady Gaga Concert, Just Because of A Song Including the Word 'Alcohol' in its lyrics?*, covered the interviewed answer of the KMRB that explicitly argues it did not consider the protest of conservative Protestantism in making the decision (Accessed at, http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/society/society_general/526664.html, on March 16th, 2016).

⁵² Accessed at, <http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=shm&sid1=103&oid=028&aid=0002139157>, on March 16th, 2016.

18 to the concert, without delivering the reason why it made such decision or giving any explanation on the relationship between the dissent of conservative Protestantism and the decision made by the KMRB. The relationship between the two is only implicitly implied and detected by the successive deployments between the two. Rather, by starting the paragraph with the adverb of ‘meanwhile,’ the article represents itself as if it is not interested in making any implicit connection between the two, despite the fact that it spends its most space in covering the seemingly irrational response of conservative Protestants to the concert. A straight news from Kyeonghyang also spends its half space in covering how and why the KMRB made the decision and then right after that, its focus switches to the protest of conservative Protestants against the concert. Particularly, by making its title *the Youth Cannot Attend the Lady Gaga Concert whereas Protestant Groups Ask the Abolition of the Concert*, it implies a particular correlation between the decision of the KRMB and the protest of Protestant groups.⁵³

Meanwhile, some columns written during the controversy, quite vividly construct and employ the discourse of ‘the violation of freedom of expression,’ focusing on the incidents delineated above. For instance, in a column from OhmyNews, titled *The Secret of the Huge Success of the Lady Gaga Concert*, after stating that some might feel ashamed of Protestants who protest against the concert and pray around the stadium in which it is held, I. K. Kang argues that they do not need to feel that way because “everybody has a

⁵³ The title making of online news article is crucial in that most people in South Korea approach to news through major portal sites and they select which news to see only based on the news titles exposed on the portal sites (Accessed at, <http://entertain.naver.com/read?oid=032&aid=0002205703>, on March 16th, 2016).

right to express one's opinion in a democratic society.” He continues that, rather, what he worries is that “the Protestants attempted to cancel the concert,” because “it is an activity violating and taking away others’ right to watch the concert, rather than a mere expression of opinion.” Then, he highlights that such effort to cancel the concert by Korean Protestantism, “made the church stereotyped as an irrational group which is difficult to communicate with.” In and through the column, the public protest of Protestants against the Lady Gaga concert is discoursed as the violation and suppression of others’ basic rights and freedom which all have to be protected in a democratic society. While he represents himself in the column as if he is only describing and objectively delivering the outer situation where others consider the church as an irrational group, he intentionally selects and quotes the seemingly irrational remarks of the Protestants against the concert such as “Satan’s trick” and “the spirit of darkness and death.” In this way, the Protestant church is readily constructed not only as “an irrational group” insufficient to be a full citizen of Korean society but as an obstacle in its full accomplishment of democracy. On the contrary, Korean society is imagined and discoursed as a rational and democratic one, othering the seeming irrationality of Korean Protestantism.

C. Y. An, in a column from Kyeonghyang newspaper, titled *The Protest of Some Protestants Against the Lady Gaga Concert*, also employs the discourse of ‘the violation of freedom of expression.’⁵⁴ He asserts that “to express one’s own political opinion through

⁵⁴ Accessed at <http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=sec&sid1=103&oid=032&aid=0002212826>, on March 16th, 2016.

art is the artist's intrinsic right and freedom to the extent that the expression does not directly harm others." And he highlights that "there is no reason for one's support for homosexuality to be included in the kind of harmful expression." While admitting that the Protestants' right to express their dissent from homosexuality also should be preserved, he lists some examples of the corruption of Korea Protestantism, such as "the hereditary succession of some prominent Protestant leaders" and "pursuing their own private interests while living most earthly," which all clearly reminds of the interviewed journalists' and columnists' discourse of 'the power-oriented, selfish Korean Protestantism.'

Meanwhile, M. S. Han's column in *Pressian*, titled *Is Christians' Slogan "Non-Believers in Hell" Freedom of Expression?*, interweaves the discourse of the violation of freedom of expression with that of anachronism. After surveying the history of censorship from the time of the ancient Rome to the inquisition and witch trial in the Western medieval age, Han lists the examples of religious tolerance in Europe and the United States, then argues that "Korean Christianity did not learn the tolerance on the freedom of expression yet." Then, he simply asserts that "[Korean Christianity] made the Lady Gaga concert into the adult-only one" which excessively simplifies the KMRB's declaring of the concert to be harmful to teenagers and the Hyundai Card's embracing of the judgment. In this way, he makes a truth claim on the incident which he omitted or failed in fact-checking.

But whether or not it is true that "[Korean Christianity] made the Lady Gaga concert into the adult-only one," is not a critical issue here. Rather it would be more crucial to ask what social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and society afford and

encourage the assertions and following implications Han makes in his column. In other words, what such assertions and implications prove is not whether Korean Protestantism really involved in the decision of the KMRB or not, but the existence and working of social imaginaries which enable the journalists and columnists to easily imagine, believe and presuppose that Korean Protestantism must have exerted its power and influence over the KMRB.

In his column, Han invokes a historical memory, which is a form of social imaginary, where Korean Protestantism “protested against the screening of *The Last Temptation of Christ* and *The Da Vinci Code* for the charge of blasphemy” and “has reigned over as a censoring power.” Then, he asserts that the aggressive evangelism of Korean Protestantism which yells “Jesus-Believers in Heaven, Non-Believers in Hell!” is “dangerous as much as the terror of Islam.” In his argument, some familiar words are employed and deployed, like “terror,” “Islam,” and “dangerous” which could be anchored in the recent global imaginaries of the violent and brutal terrorism after 9/11. Reminding of the “terror” of “Islam” which has been imagined and discoursed, through mass-circulated media images, as the enemy of the West, liberalism, democracy and modern civilization since the late-1970s (Said, 1978; 1979; 1981) and in particular since the 9/11, he identifies the aggressive Evangelism of Korean Protestantism with something dangerous as much as the terror of Islam. Further, given that the freedom of expression is in general imagined as the core value of liberal democracy and modernity which have increasingly been universalized from the West to the globe, the column that delineates Korean Protestantism as the unenlightened who “did not learn the tolerance on the freedom of

expression yet,” successfully, constructs it as an imagined obstacle and enemy of the democracy and modernity which Korean society should further accomplish.

Having a slightly different focus from, but still a connection with, the social imaginary where Korean Protestantism is imagined and discoursed as an obstacle to the democratization and modernization of Korean society, there emerges the discourse of ‘the enemy of democracy,’ which is constructed with the recurring appearance of the name Adolf Hitler simultaneously employed in different columns. In a column in Pressian, titled *Is Christians’ Slogan “Non-Believers in Hell” Freedom of Expression?*, M. S. Han fears that “if it [Korean Protestantism] gets a certain chance, if someone like Hitler comes up, that exclusiveness would lead to a brutal violence.” In a column from OhmyNews, titled *The Declaration of ‘Adult-Only’ by Protestantism’s Satan Theory ... Is Lady Gaga Satan?*⁵⁵, S. T. Ha opens up his column by quoting a well-known Korean liberal scholar Joong-Kwon Jin’s tweet: “There was a government which illegalized homosexuality, which is Hitler! It is at least the 50% of true the saying that religion is the opium of the people. If one believes Jesus in a wrong way, s/he comes to be like junked up.” Lastly, I. K. Kang, in his column from OhmyNews, titled *The Secret of the Huge Success of the Lady Gaga Concert*, spends almost a quarter of the column in associating a Korean Protestant’s fundamentalist interpretation against homosexuality with Hitler’s slaughter of homosexuals. He states:

⁵⁵ Accessed at, http://star.ohmynews.com/NWS_Web/OhmyStar/at_pg.aspx?CNTN_CD=A0001715277, on 17th March, 2016.

[The Protestant believer] said that according to the old testament, the one who committed obscenity should be stoned to death. If he believes that that's the duty of a believer, why does he not raise a stone and exercise God's will? Although he did not use a stone, there was a man who exercise his faith in a similar way, that is Hitler. He ... arrested tens of thousands of homosexuals and sent to gas chamber. Hitler was a Christian, cursing atheists.

By bring the name of Hitler up, the columns call to mind a social imaginary of Hitler who has been repeatedly imagined, discoursed and invoked, through globally circulated media contents, as an insane but powerful and violent enemy of democracy, liberalism and humanity. And by deploying his name and what he did in relation to the objection and hatred of Korean Protestants to homosexuals, they connect Korean Protestantism with such imaginary of Hitler. In and through the association with the prevalent imaginary of Hitler, Korean Protestantism is plausibly imagined to be an insane and violent power which is hostile to rationality, democracy, modernity and even humanity. What is implicitly but effectively accentuated by such discursive construction associating Korean Protestantism with the imaginary of Hitler, is these traits of insanity, repressiveness, powerfulness, brutality and dangerousness. Now Korean Protestantism comes to be imagined, not as a mere obstacle to, or enemy of, democratization and modernization of Korean society, but as a potentially irrational, violent one whose brutality and insanity must be dangerous for Korean society and whose growth to power must be repressive of it. Above all, such imaginary of Korean Protestantism associated with that of Hitler, critically overlaps and harmonizes with the public imagery of the

authoritarian ‘Gangbook’ type megachurches which have been an immense power group, not only by means of the dictatorship of former Presidents Seung Man Lee and Jeong-Hee Park but by mimicking and internalizing the mentality and leadership of the developmental dictatorship.

Despite the construction of the social category of Korean Protestantism as a potentially violent and dangerous group to Korean society, some columns paradoxically find an inauspicious overlap between the two. And this imagined overlap brings up a self-doubt and self-anxiety about if Korean society is ‘really’ modern. The discourse of partial modernization and the social imaginary of the linear world history are re-invoked and re-employed, which both were glimpsed in the interviews with the mainline religion journalists and columnists. For instance, S. T. Ha’s column from OhmyNews, titled *The Declaration of ‘Adult-Only’ by Protestantism’s Satan Theory ... Is Lady Gaga Satan?*,⁵⁶ repeatedly employs the word of ‘anachronistic.’ Making the third strapline into “the Anachronistic 2012 Landscape of Korean Pop Culture,” he states that “we should use the expression of ‘anachronistic’ in such situation where the Lady gaga concert which teenagers were able to watch in 2009 turned into the adult-only one in 2012.” Then, making the last strapline into “the Anachronistic Self-Contradiction of the Korean Media Rating Board,” he again asserts that the 2012 decision of the KRMB is self-contradictory in that it counters its

⁵⁶ Accessed at, http://star.ohmynews.com/NWS_Web/OhmyStar/at_pg.aspx?CNTN_CD=A0001715277, on 17th March, 2016.

2009 decision on the same concert and further that “such discrepancy made by the pressure of some Protestant groups mentioning Satan” is anachronistic.

When he asserts that the situation is anachronistic, there are two propositions, which could be called a sort of social imaginary, that are implied but never explicitly articulated. One is that History should progress following the flow of the linear and singular time from the past to the present to the future. And the other is that the decision of the KMRB is the matter of progress given that it relates to the issue of freedom of expression. Thus, when the word ‘anachronistic’ keeps recurring, what is invoked and naturalized is the social imaginary of the linear and universal world history which progresses following a singular and linear time line. And in and through the social imaginary of universal world history, the Korean society, which is more or less identified with the anachronistic KMRB and Korean Protestantism in the column, is imagined to retrogress in the linear time line of world history which is supposed to progress from the past to the future, from the uncivilized to the modern.

Hee-Il LeeSong builds up his column, titled *Who Calls South Korea Modern* in Cine 21, by reminding the history of the Western Medieval Christianity which demonized the Jews and homosexuals in the name of God and overlapping it with the contemporary Korean society where “conservative Protestantism insanely abhors homosexuality.” He states that “there are perverts who are possessed by the dark history of the Western Medieval age in South Korea even 600 years later.” In the column, while being not differentiated from the insanity of conservative Protestantism, Korean society is described

and associated with the words such as “insanity”, “comedy” and “the Middle Ages.” The column reads,

Who calls South Korea modern? *Bernardino’s* ghost being called out of the Middle Ages wanders everywhere. If the ridiculous season of the Middle Ages where comedy and insanity intersect with each other does not end, modernity and democracy are merely distant. If there is only one that lays the wandering Ghost to rest in a coffin, it is reason opening clearly its eyes.⁵⁷

The “insanity” and “comedy” of Korean society and conservative Protestantism are imagined and discoursed as an obstacle to Korean society to reach to modernity and democracy. Further, by asking back “who calls South Korean modern” despite the vivid proof the “insane hatred against homosexuality” in Korean society, Hee-Il LeeSong rhetorically highlights that Korean society does not attain democracy and modernity yet. “Modernity and democracy are merely distant” if “the ridiculous season of the Middle Ages” not end up in Korean society. Korean society is imagined to still remain in the season of the Middle Ages and thus to be laid in what Chakrabarty (2000) calls “an imaginary waiting room of history (p. 8)” in whose singular and linear path some advanced Western countries already preceded and accomplished modernity and democracy. The imaginary Western history comes to be constructed as the single, universal and teleological History that Korean society should chase after. Employing and articulating the

⁵⁷ Accessed at, <http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=sec&sid1=004&oid=140&aid=0000020454>, on 17th March 2016.

imaginary of the singular, linear, universal and progressive world history, the column expresses a doubt and anxiety about whether Korean society is genuinely modern and further constructs the discourse of partial modernization.

Lastly, M. S. Han's column in *Pressian*, titled *Is Christians' Slogan "Non-Believers in Hell" Freedom of Expression?*, also constructs and employs the imaginary of the linear world history although, contrary to other two columns, it clearly others Korean Protestantism from Korean society. In order to criticize the unenlightened intolerance on the freedom of expression, he constructs a linear world history of censorship and tolerance. The history is traced from "the time of the ancient Rome" to "the inquisition" and "witch trial" in the Western medieval age to the censorship of Islam in the modern age to the tolerance of Christianity in the late-modern Europe and the United States, lastly to the intolerance of Korean Protestantism in the contemporary era. By comparing the tolerance of Korean Protestantism with that of the United States and Europe and asserting that "Korean Christianity did not learn the tolerance on the freedom of expression yet," he employs the "first in Europe, then elsewhere" structure of global historical time (Chakrabarty, 2000, p. 7).⁵⁸ In this way, he constructs an imaginary history of tolerance and censorship which flows away from the ancient Rome, to the medieval age, to the modern era, to the contemporary era.⁵⁸ And Korean Protestantism is imagined and discoursed as

⁵⁸ Given his construction of the linear world history of censorship, it is interesting that M. S. Han explicitly objected to "uncritically embrace modernism by bringing the frame of 'the already modernized Korea before' or 'the later modernized Korea by' [the Japan and Western imperialism] (personal communication, June 23, 2015)." But this discrepancy between what he conducted in his column and what he said in the interview, should not be considered as any sort of dishonest. Rather, it should be understood as an inevitable irony and trouble that a non-Western intellectual should confront to discuss modernity in his/her nation and universalized values such as

still unenlightened, pre-modern in that it did not learn yet the tolerance on the freedom of expression which “has been increasingly recognized in the West after the modern age.”

The Analysis of the Photographic Images of Conservative Protestants in the 2012 Lady Gaga Controversy

The media representation of particular groups as an aggressive, outmoded, and dangerous other, has been significantly explored in the media studies scholarships partly influenced by Edward Said’s series of works. Said’s works of *Orientalism* (1978), *The Question of Palestine* (1979) and *Covering Islam* (1981), deal with the problematic representation of the Islamic world, Arabs, and East by the Western intellectuals and mass media. Aligning with Said’s works, it has been analyzed how the mass media such as mainstream broadcasts and presses contribute to maintaining the existing social order and power by naturalizing, proliferating, perpetuating and (re)producing the distorted and misguided images of the marginalized ethnics, races, genders, and classes within the society (Hall, 1992; Nakayama, 1988; Shaheen, 2001).

Given the photographic images of conservative Protestants massively circulated in the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy, Edward Said’s argument in *Covering Islam* (1981) is noteworthy that the Western media produces untruth about Islam by portraying the Muslim and Islamic world as dangerous, outmoded and violent others in the name of objectivity, freedom, human rights, liberalism and modernity. Said illuminates that the

freedom of expression, tolerance and human right. In other words, what the discrepancy highlights is the inevitableness of European thought, such as a linear world history with the West as the center in discussing the issues such as tolerance, censorship and modernity (Chackrabarty, 2000, p. 16).

Muslim is described and categorized as the Other standing against democracy, liberalism, modernity and ultimately Western civilization that 'we the Western people' has made. What makes the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy in Korean society fascinating is the symptomatic scene where such image of 'the outmoded, aggressive and dangerous other' standing against democracy, human rights and modernity, comes to be projected toward Korean Protestantism which has been imagined and discoursed as a symbol and bearer of modernization and Westernization in Korean modern history.

During the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy, one of the most provocative events by which Korean and international online media fascinated was a collective Evangelist prayer meeting held at Shinchon Beautiful Church in Seoul on April 22nd, 2012. The photographs taken in the prayer meeting by A. P. (the Associated Press) were massively circulated by not only Korean online news media, major portal sites and social media sphere but international online news media.⁵⁹ Among the prayer meeting pictures, I focus on the three photographic images which all were not only employed in international online media such as Huffington Post, Reuters and Liberation but re-covered by Korean online media, such as Ohmynews and Wikitree, as examples of how other Western countries see the protest of Korean conservative Protestants against the Lady Gaga concert.

⁵⁹ For instance, http://next.liberation.fr/musique/2012/04/23/que-les-foudres-de-l-enfer-s-abattent-sur-lady-gaga_813724, accessed on 18th March, 2016; <http://www.buzzfeed.com/mjs538/south-korean-christians-praying-against-lady-gaga#.ui6RAEWMz>, accessed on 18th March, 2016 and <http://in.reuters.com/article/ladygaga-korea-idINDEE83Q07Q20120427>, accessed on 18th March, 2016

<Figure 1> The Photographic Image of Collective Prayer Meeting I⁶⁰



⁶⁰ Figure 1 was employed by news articles from BuzzFeed (Accessed at <http://www.buzzfeed.com/mjs538/south-korean-christians-praying-against-lady-gaga#.yonqn609X>, on March 21st, 2016) and Huffington Post (Accessed at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/04/23/south-korea-lady-gaga-christian-group-prays_n_1445192.html, on March 21st, 2016) and reemployed by a news article from Wikitree covering the international media coverage (Accessed at http://www.wikitree.co.kr/main/news_view.php?id=66106, on March 21st, 2016).

<Figure 2> The Photographic Image of Collective Prayer Meeting 2⁶¹



⁶¹ Figure was employed by a news article from Liberation (Accessed at http://next.liberation.fr/musique/2012/04/23/que-les-foudres-de-l-enfer-s-abattent-sur-lady-gaga_813724, on March 21st, 2016) and reemployed by S. T. Ha's article from OhmyNews covering the international media coverage (Accessed at http://star.Ohmynews.com/NWS_Web/OhmyStar/at_pg.aspx?CNTN_CD=A0001724965, on March 21st, 2016).

<Figure 3> The Photographic Image of Collective Prayer Meeting 3⁶²



<Figure 4> The Photographic Image of Public Protest in front of Hyundai Motor Company headquarter⁶³



▲ (아래 사진)양재동 현대자동차 본사 앞에서 일인시위를 하고 있다. 레이더다가 공연 반대 페이스북 그룹 회원들은 자발적으로 온라인 릴레이 시위를하고 있으며 앞으로는 현대그룹 계열사 앞에서 오프라인 릴레이 시위를 벌일 예정이다.

⁶² Figure 3 was employed by news articles from Reuters (Accessed at <http://in.reuters.com/article/ladygaga-korea-idINDEE83Q07Q20120427>, on March 21st 2016), International Business Times (<http://www.ibtimes.com/lady-gaga-south-korea-christian-group-prays-gaga-away-born-way-tour-kicks-seoul-440686>, on March 21st, 2016) and Liberation (Accessed at http://next.liberation.fr/musique/2012/04/23/que-les-foudres-de-l-enfer-s-abattent-sur-lady-gaga_813724, on March 21st, 2016) and reemployed by I. K. Kang's article from OhmyNews covering the international media coverage (Accessed at http://www.Ohmynews.com/NWS_Web/View/at_pg.aspx?CNTN_CD=A0001725201, on March 21st, 2016).

⁶³ Figure 4 was carried by a news article from Kukmin Daily Newspaper (Accessed at <http://news.kmib.co.kr/article/view.asp?arcid=0006018006&code=61221111>, on March 21st, 2016).

All the different photographs (Figure 1, 2 and 3) capture a particular moment when Korean Protestants are collectively closing their eyes, raising their hands and loudly yelling out in a fanatical atmosphere while praying for the cancellation of the Lady Gaga concert. These captured images of conservative Protestants are quite contrary to the photographic image of a protester, who calmly and firmly stares at camera without a word while picketing in front of the Hyundai Motor Company headquarter, which was carried by a news article from Kukmin Daily Newspaper (Figure 4). Compared to a seemingly normal young female who is picketing in a familiar way and firmly staring at camera in the Figure 4, the middle aged women and men in the prayer meeting appear to be remarkably more out of control, aggressive and fanatical. The figure 1, 2 and 3 are likely to arouse sentiments of unfamiliarity and even fear to general readers because the protesters in the prayer meeting clearly look heavily infatuated with a seemingly supernatural, unconscious and fanatical mood and world where most people in a secular society would not feel familiar, comfortable and safe. They seem caught not by consciousness and reason but by an unknown supernatural world and fanatical mood, thus appear to be even dangerous and abnormal.

The photographic images of the Protestants closing their eyes and loudly yelling out, are likely to amplify the effects of truth which the liberal online news articles produce by imagining and discouraging the Protestants against the Lady Gaga concert as an irrational, dangerous and pre-modern group. It is so in particular considering that, in a news article, photographic images in combination with texts produce a particular discourse on the subject and group the news article cover (Rose, 2012, pp. 195-196).

Thus, the photographic images are likely to be embraced to the readers of them as a sort of crucial evidence proving the irrationality and insanity of the Protestants, through which any further investigation and explanations on them seem to be unnecessary, as if the images objectively and transparently reveal who the Protestants really are. Despite the facts that photograph inevitably captures and represents only a particular moment of a continuing event, which could be narrativized with many other moments, and that the photographic images were selectively chosen among many other photographs of the conservative Protestants' protest, they produce the effects of representing and perpetuating the particular moment of the prayer meeting as the truth revealing the intrinsic nature of the seemingly irrational, dangerous and pre-modern Korean Protestants.

Such production of effects of truth on the Protestants and the prayer meeting is further intensified and perpetuated by the absence or lack of the mainline media coverage which illuminates the seemingly calm, rational and normal appearance of Korean Protestants during the controversy. That is, what is not seen or said in a broader regime of truth on the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy is the calm, rational, familiar and normal aspects of Korean Protestantism.⁶⁴ For instance, the liberal online media which covered the prayer meeting held on 22nd April 2012, did not cover another prayer meeting at all

⁶⁴ It would not be a coincidence that the news article from Kukmin Daily newspaper, which was established by Yoido Full Gospel Church in 1978, does not employ the photographic images of crazily yelling Protestants in the prayer meeting, but only carries the appearance of Protestants' back calmly watching a video clip on Lady Gaga (Accessed at <http://news.kmib.co.kr/article/view.asp?arcid=0006018006&code=61221111>, on March 21st, 2016).

which were held five days later and brought a self-reflexive repentance of Protestants for the deterioration of Korean society in a more rational atmosphere.⁶⁵

In and through the process of producing the effects of truth on the Protestants and the prayer meeting against the Lady concert, an imaginary and imagery of Korean Protestantism is successfully constructed as the fanatical, dangerous, uncivilized and abnormal other. In other words, all the photographic images of the Protestants closing their eyes and yelling out in the prayer meeting, particularly compared to the Figure 4, critically contribute to the social production of the differences, such as irrationality, insanity, dangerousness and abnormality, which make Korean Protestantism distinguished from, and make it look inferior to, the other members of Korean society,

Meanwhile, contrary to, but related to, the construction of such social other, the position of the subject, who audiences the irrational, uncivilized, abnormal and inferior other, is invited and constructed as the rational, civilized and normal and superior self. Considering that particular discourses constructed through media images and texts structuralize and encourage particular ways of seeing and experiencing them, the recurring photographic images of the seemingly irrational and fanatical Protestants not only construct and invite but naturalize and essentialize the subject position of the rational, civilized, normal and superior self who would repeatedly experience the ambivalent sentiments of unfamiliarity, fear and superiority while encountering with the images. In the

⁶⁵ Accessed at <http://www.christiantoday.co.kr/articles/255365/20120428/%EB%A0%88%EC%9D%B4%EB%94%94-%EA%B0%80%EA%B0%80%EB%B3%B4%EB%8B%A4-%EC%9D%8C%EB%9E%80-%EB%AA%BB-%EB%A7%89%EC%9D%80-%EC%9A%B0%EB%A6%AC-%EC%A3%84%EB%A5%BC%E2%80%A6.htm>, on March 21st, 2016.

similar vein, the produced category and differences of Korean Protestantism are not only exaggerated but essentialized, naturalized and perpetuated by the recurring appearance and circulation of the photographic images and news articles and, on the other hand, by the absence or lack of the mainline media coverage illuminating the seemingly calm, rational and normal aspect of Korean Protestantism.

The Analysis of the Korean Mainline Liberal Online Media Discourse on Conservative Protestants in the 2015 Knife Attack on the U.S. Ambassador

At the beginning of this dissertation project, it was only the Korean mainline liberal online media coverage of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy that was taken as the primary research object to explore the social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism. While proceeding the project, however, the knife attack on the U. S. ambassador Mark Lippert happened all of sudden on the early March, 2015 and some Protestants' performance of wishing for the recovery of the injured ambassador, received a great deal of media attention. The photographic images of the Protestants who performed the Korean traditional fan dance waving the Korean flag, taken in front of the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts, were massively circulated in Korean social media sphere, mainline online news media and portal sites. The mainline and social media discourse on the Protestants' traditional fan dance, critically developed to the extent this dissertation project could not disregard in terms of exploring social imaginaries of Korean modernity and Protestantism. In the phase of the 2015 Knife attack on the U. S. ambassador, the mainline liberal media discourses on the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy were being reiterated. Meanwhile, a newly emergent social discourse of 'migae (the uncivilized)' was being critically employed and

circulated in the Korean mainline media and social media sphere, where Korean society was imagined to remain uncivilized, pre-modern, and hopeless and further a social imaginary of the linear and universal world history was glimpsed again.

Let me first explore the photographic images of the Korean traditional fan dance which were massively circulated in the Korean social media sphere, mainline online news media and portal sites. In a very similar way that the Protestants in the prayer meeting against the 2012 Lady Gaga concert are represented, the photographic images of the Korean traditional fan dance, highlight the seemingly collective fanaticism of the Protestants. The photographic Figure 5 and 6 capture an imagery of Korean Protestants who collectively perform the Korean fan dance and loudly yell out while wearing Hanbok (the Korean traditional costume) and waving their national flag. Both images focus on a female figure whose facial expression makes her look infatuated with a fanatical mood and whose costume and instruments more or less signify something traditional, shamanistic and pre-modern in Korean society. They seem caught not by consciousness and reason but by an unknown world and fanatical mood, thus appear to be unfamiliar and even dangerous and abnormal. Such photographic images of the Protestants well align with and amplify the mainline liberal online media discourse which imagines the Protestants' performance wishing for the recovery of the U. S. ambassador as fanatical, irrational and pre-modern.

<Figure 5> The Photographic Image of Korean Traditional Dance Performance in front of the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts I⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Figure 5 was employed by a news article from Fox News (Accessed at <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2015/03/06/well-wishing-south-korean-offers-dog-meat-to-injured->



<Figure 6> The Photographic Image of Korean Traditional Dance Performance in front of the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts 2⁶⁷



지난 3월 7일 서울 광화문 세종문화회관 인근에서 개신교 신자들이 마크 리퍼트 주한 미국대사의 패유를 기원하는 예배를 열었다. 이날 등장한 난타, 발레, 부채춤 공연 등이 '위로'에 걸맞는 기독교적 형식인지 논란이 일었다.

[us-ambassador.html](http://www.pressian.com/news/article.html?no=124490), on March 22nd, 2016) and then reemployed by a news article from Pressian covering the international media coverage (Accessed at <http://www.pressian.com/news/article.html?no=124490>, on March 22nd, 2016).

⁶⁷ Figure 6 was employed by a news article from Hangyore (Accessed at http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/society/society_general/683706.html, on March 22nd, 2016).

Confronting the Protestant's inexplicable performance of wishing for the recovery of the U. S. ambassador, the mainline liberal online media employed the familiar discourse which constructs Korean Protestantism as the irrational, pre-modern, inferior and dangerous other as they did in the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy. For instance, quoting the well-known liberal scholar Joong-Kwon Jin's tweet, a short straight news from Pressian delivers his comment that the simultaneous appearance of the Korean traditional fan dance, ballet performance and kneeling in contrition is "a surreal situation" and "a mental terror" which "makes one severely laughing while terrifying and then again laughing and terrifying."⁶⁸ What his wording of "surreal" implies is that the Korean traditional fan dance, ballet performance and kneeling in contrition could not have simultaneously happened in the current reality, given that the Korean traditional fan dance and the act of kneeling in contrition are in general considered to be traditional and pre-modern while such ballet performance to be Western and modern in Korean society. Each of them is anachronistic and their simultaneous appearance is surreal. To the extent that the Protestants are imagined to be the outmoded and thus inferior other, they make one severely laugh. But concurrently and reversely, to the extent that they are imagined to be the irrational and thus dangerous other, they make one terrifying and fearful. Their performance "makes one severely laughing while terrifying and then again laughing and terrifying."

⁶⁸ Accessed at <http://www.pressian.com/news/article.html?no=124533>, on March 22nd, 2016.

Taek-Gwang Lee's column from Kyeonghyang Daily Newspaper, titled *Two Monsters We Made*, also describes the Protestants' performance as "the fanatical" and "the monstrous." In the column, he points out that "the Protestants displayed the tradition of the Korean fan dance," which is in effect "a modern product representative of invented tradition" of South Korea, "in order to erase the fanaticism of Ki-Jong Kim" and get "recognized by the other of the United States." He argues that the conservatives' and Protestants' efforts to recover the allegedly wounded relationships between the U. S. and South Korea by the fanatical, monstrous and abnormal attack of Ki-Jong Kim, are also fanatical, monstrous and abnormal, in that they are irrationally subordinated and possessed by "the gaze of other, that of the United States" and thus that, "abandoning their volition," "they follow" the United States. In this way, the Protestants with conservatives are imagined and discoursed as irrational, fanatical, and dangerous as much as Ki-Jong Kim's knife attack on Mark Lippert is.

As glimpsed in Taek-Gwang Lee's column, the seemingly fanatical fear for, and worshiping attitude to, the United States aroused the sentiment of shamefulness. This sense of shamefulness is detected in a variety of remarks from news articles covering the Protestants' traditional fan dance performance. A news article from Hangeore, titled *Why Did the Protestants Perform the Traditional Fan Dance?*, carries the comment of Pastor Jin-Ho Kim that "even conservative Protestant believers feel ashamed of this performance."⁶⁹ A short news article from Wikitree which delivers the Joong-Kwon Jin's tweet, also quotes

⁶⁹ Accessed at http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/society/society_general/683706.html, on March 22nd, 2016.

his comment that “it is shameful because this kind of happening is reported by international media and disseminated to the global world.”⁷⁰ As seen in Jin’s tweet and the liberal media coverage in the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy, the domestic media coverage of the international media reporting the alleged irrational Korean Protestants, is a recurring Korean journalist convention. And such journalistic convention is sustained by and predicated on the unrelenting desire of South Koreans to be recognized by other advanced Western countries, which Taek-Gwang Lee in his column already pointed out from the traditional fan dance performance of Protestants.

Thus, it would not be a coincidence that some mainline liberal online media kept focused on reporting some prominent Western media coverage of the seemingly fanatical prayer meeting in the phase of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy. Merely by delivering the international media’s reaction to such seemingly irrational incidents, the domestic mainline liberal media was able to successfully arouse the sentiment of shamefulness even without adding any comment on them. And such sentiment and sensorial experience of shamefulness is likely to produce effects of truth on the discourse and imaginary which the media construct and employ in their news articles. A news article from Pressian, titled *The Dog Meat Present with the Traditional Fan Dance ... Nervous South Korea*, is the same case.⁷¹ This news article delivers the coverage of Fox News titled *Well-Wishing South Korean Offers Dog Meat to Injured US Ambassador*, without any reaction to the coverage, right

⁷⁰ Accessed at http://www.wikitree.co.kr/main/news_view.php?id=210375, on March 22nd, 2016. According to its own statistics, this news article has recorded 696,428 views and 4,889 likes in Facebook and 544,623 views and 45 re-tweets in Twitter by March 22nd, 2016.

⁷¹ Accessed at <http://www.pressian.com/news/article.html?no=124490>, on March 22nd, 2016.

behind the paragraph reporting the placard, written that “I Am Too Shameful as A Citizen of South Korea”, which hanged up in front of the performance burning the North Korean national flag. Since it only delivers the Fox News coverage without any comment, it appears to take an objective and transparent stance on the Protestants’ performance and thus makes effects of truth on the Protestant group. But the successive deployment between the paragraph reporting the placard and the one delivering the Fox News is likely to provoke the sentiment of shamefulness among Korean readers, given the latent national desire of South Koreans to be recognized by advanced Western countries.

Among other media discourses on Korean society, modernity and Protestantism, it is the discourse of ‘migae (the uncivilized)’ what not only best captures but is critically predicated on both the sentiment of shamefulness and the desire of South Koreans to emulate, and to be recognized by advanced Western countries. The discourse of ‘migae (the uncivilized)’ was critically brought up and popularly employed in the Korean mainline and social media sphere in the phase of the 2015 knife attack on the U. S. ambassador. Interestingly, conservatives related this discourse to the attack of Ki-Jong Kim on the ambassador, while liberals did it to some conservatives’ excessive acts of apology to him and the United States, including burning the North Korean flag, presenting dog meat to him, and performing the Korean traditional fan dance.

The term ‘migae’ at first came to be popular to the public by the incident where a son of Mong-Jun Jeong a famous congressman, commented in his Facebook post, right after the 2014 Sewol Ferry disaster, that the national ethos of Korea is extremely uncivilized claiming that Korean people crazily pour out a raw denunciation of President

Geun-Hye Park, contrary to other nations which rationally respond to such kind of disaster. Since this incident which received a massive public criticism of his arrogance, it has grown into a popular social discourse critically employed and circulated whenever a controversial incident or a public speech emerges where the allegedly irrational, ignorant or uncivilized mentality of the Korean nation could be claimed.⁷²

Unethical crimes, unfair incidents, or accidents generated by an immature sense of citizenship in Korean society, have come to be captured, mentioned and discussed by the discourse of 'migae,' particularly interwoven with that of 'hell-joseon (the compound between hell and Joseon)' which carries a social imaginary of the miserable, pre-modern South Korea whose society is close to hell without hope. The discourse of 'hell-Joseon' brings up the imaginary of the chaos and breakdown of system in the 19th century of Joseon where there is no hope for a better life. It entails the public sentiments of suffer, despair, resignation and anger. This discourse of 'hell-joseon' has been massively popularized since the 2015 Middle East Respiratory Syndrome outbreak where Korean government completely failed to protect the lives of its own nation.⁷³ Associating the imaginary of hell with that of the alleged pre-modern stage of Joseon and appropriating the word 'migae (the uncivilized),' through which Western and Japanese imperialists looked down on the colonial Korea, the discourses of 'migae' and 'hell-joseon' inevitably

⁷² Referred to a news article from Kyeonghyang Daily Newspaper, titled *South Korea Is Uncivilized* (Accessed at http://news.khan.co.kr/kh_news/khan_art_view.html?artid=201603212342335&code=940100, on March 22nd, 2016).

⁷³ Accessed at http://news.khan.co.kr/kh_news/khan_art_view.html?artid=201509042213005&dable=10.1.1, on March 22nd, 2016.

naturalize and thicken the social imaginary of the linear world history. In and through the imaginary of the linear world history, Korea is imagined to still remain in, or even retrogresses to, the pre-modern stage in its ‘historical transition’ while it is imagined that other advanced Western countries have already progressed from the pre-modern to the modern to the late-modern. The reason why the discourses of ‘migae’ and ‘hell-joseon’ often contain and entail the sense and sentiment of self-cynicism is that they inevitably invoke such social imagery of Korean society remaining in or retrogressing to the pre-modern stage.

It is noteworthy that ordinary online newspaper readers employ the ‘migae’ discourse as they comment on the news articles covering the Korean traditional fan dance performance. In the Pressian news article delivering Joong-Kwon Jin’s tweet, which is sarcastic about the “surreal situation” of the simultaneous appearance of the Korean traditional fan dance, ballet performance, and kneeling in contrition, the top news comment reads that “the son of Mong-Jun Jeong was right when he sneered at the uncivilized [Korean] nation.”⁷⁴ And what the anonymous reader whose nickname is “advancedkorea” means by the comment, is that all the above incidents prove that the whole Korean nation, not merely the Protestants and conservatives, is uncivilized and pre-modern. This discourse of ‘migae (the uncivilized)’ is again appeared in the top news comment of another Pressian article titled *The Dog Meat Present with the Traditional Fan Dance ... Nervous South Korea*.⁷⁵ In the news article delivering the Fox News coverage on

⁷⁴ Accessed at <http://www.pressian.com/news/article.html?no=124533>, on March 23rd, 2016.

⁷⁵ Accessed at <http://www.pressian.com/news/article.html?no=124490>, on March 23rd, 2016.

the seemingly fanatical Korean fan dance, the top comment reads that “this shows the extreme of ‘migae (the uncivilized).”

Reception Analysis of Media Images Carrying Social Imaginaries of Korean Protestantism

As stated in the methodology chapter, two focus group interviews were conducted in order to examine the reception and embodiment of social imaginaries of Korean society, modernity and Protestantism. The focus group interviews were separately conducted by enlisting two different groups of participants. The first group is comprised of a fourth-year undergraduate student studying engineering (H. J.), an incoming employee in a major Korean company (J. K.), and a first-year graduate student majoring in sociology (D. S.).⁷⁶ All the three participants are devout Protestants who have known each other in the Seoul district of the same campus missionary group that is predicated on conservative reformed theological tradition. The second group is comprised of six graduate students who major in Korean Studies in a university in Seoul, the capital of South Korea.⁷⁷ Except my acquaintance who is a devout Protestant, the other five participants identified themselves as atheist or agnostic. At first, the participants in both groups were invited to articulate their overall sense and sentiment on Korean Protestantism. Then, after showing the photographic images which were already analyzed in the earlier sections of this

⁷⁶ Interview participants in the group will be transcribed into and distinguished by their initials such as H. J., J. K. and D. S..

⁷⁷ The group is comprised of three males and females. Interview participants in this group will be transcribed into and distinguished by M1, M2, M3, F1, F2 and F3.

chapter, the research requested them to articulate what they see, feel and think in their encounters with the images.

Prior Imaginaries of Korean Protestantism

To the question asking the overall sense and sentiment on the contemporary Korean Protestantism, the response of the Protestant group and that of the atheist/agnostic group are partly overlapped with and partly distinguished from each other. One of the saliences distinguishing the atheist/agnostic group from the Protestant group is that the differences between Korean Protestantism in general and conservative Korean protestant group in particular, are rarely discerned within the group. For instance, on the question asking if the missionary activity of conservative Protestants is felt contemporary, F2 answered that “I have no idea about what you mean by conservative Protestantism (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” M1 also states:

I don't discern well whether which one is a liberal one or a conservative one. ...
But, just dimly, when it [Korean Protestantism] is mentioned in the media, I saw a Protestant group in the media coverage on the Queer Parade, not long ago. And [Korean Protestantism] has an image that it conservatively responds to such social issues (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).

In this way, in his mediated imaginary, Korean Protestantism is not that much differentiated from the conservative Protestant groups mediated by the media coverage of the Queer Parade. In other words, conservative Protestants are overrepresented within their imaginary of Korean Protestantism. And during the interview, it came to be certain that, in their social imaginary, there is no distinguished category of conservative

Protestantism from the overall Korean Protestantism. On the contrary, the Protestant group clearly differentiated conservative Protestantism from the category of Korean Protestantism in the interview.

While being not that differentiated from conservative Protestant groups, in the atheist/agnostic group, Korean Protestantism was imagined and told to be indifferent to the public interest of Korean society while pursuing only its private interest and colluding with the ruling power. Pointing out the collusion between Korean Protestantism and the ruling class, M2 articulates that Korean Protestantism is “the so-called ruling class in society” and continues that “the upper class seems to use Protestantism as a means to sustain itself.” He adds that “[the upper class people] shape their community through Protestantism and make their own league by means of the acquaintance made within the community while the low class does not have that kind of community.” In a similar vein, F2 remarks that “it seems more like a profit group and is very exclusive and seems like pursuing a sort of [private] profit,” and continues that “it is from *I Want to Know IT* that I most saw Protestantism [in the media] (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” *I Want to Know IT* is the most well-known investigative reporting show which has exposed a variety of crucial corruptions and injustices in Korean society. Considering her saying that she saw Korean Protestantism most often in the show, it is likely for her to have and carry the social imaginary of Korean Protestantism that is very much power-oriented, money-oriented and thus corrupted. The way which the atheist/agnostic participants articulate their social imaginary of Korean Protestantism, reminds of the discourses of power-orientation and indifference to public interest, critically taken by the mainline

religion journalists and columnists, in and through which Korean Protestantism is imagined and told to crave power and collude with conservative political power while only pursuing its own private interest.

On the same question asking their perception on conservative Protestantism in Korean society, the Protestant group predominantly brings up the social imaginary, where Korean Protestantism is irrationally infatuated with its own non-secular world, which was already glimpsed in the media representation of the prayer meeting against the 2012 Lady Gaga concert. And such imaginary of Korean Protestantism is articulated with the words such as “stiff,” “stubborn” and “not listen to others.”⁷⁸ H. J. states that “[Conservative Protestants] do not listen to others” and continues that “they are sincere but very poor at communicating with others.” J. K. also remarks that conservative Protestants are “stiff” and that “they do not speak the same language with others while being confined to their own world (personal communication, July 12th, 2015).” Even before showing the photographic images of the Protestants at the prayer meeting and the traditional fan dance, the group carries the imaginary and imagery of Korean Protestants who are infatuated with their own world which non-Protestants in the secular Korean society could not understand or interact with. And their comments show that young Protestant participants presume and incorporate the existences of religious and secular others, their

⁷⁸ The Protestant group’s delineating of Korean Protestantism as ‘stiff’ and ‘stubborn’ and the religion journalist S. H. Baek’s earlier saying that “it is important for the contemporary Korean religion to be flexible (S. H. Baek, personal communication, June 25th, 2015),” show that they are likely to share the same social imaginary which presumes and appreciates the existence of secular, religious others and their voices, views and worlds. Their contrary articulations of ‘stiff-stubborn’ and ‘flexible’ might be two sides of the same social imaginary in which a particular religion’s view, voice and experience world is relativized.

voices, views and worlds in their social imaginaries, which seem to easily lead them to the sentiment and sense of shamefulness.

It is noteworthy that the sentiment of shamefulness, which was critically and frequently articulated in the news articles covering the seemingly irrational performance of wishing for the recovery of the U. S. ambassador, is brought up in the affective and sensorial experience of a participant in the Protestant group, even before she encounters the photographic images of the prayer meeting and the traditional fan dance. On the first question asking her perception on conservative Protestantism, D. S. states,

I am ashamed ... because I have come to realize that most of what I understand myself as a Christian has come from conservative Protestantism although I want to think that I, as a young Protestant, am different from conservative Protestants (personal communication, July 12th, 2015).

It could be inferred that she also has and carries the social imaginary of Korean Protestantism which seems to be anachronistic and inferior. And, according to the quotation, she seems to be troubled by her reflection that her Christian identity cannot be easily separated from conservative Protestantism despite her desire to other it. As much as the secular Korean media and society feel ashamed of Korean Protestantism while internalizing, and desiring to be recognized by, the imagined gaze of advanced Western countries, she appears to be also ashamed of Korean Protestantism and herself internalizing the imagined gaze of the secular Korean society.

Meanwhile, different connotations and usages of Korean words among 'geundae (modern),' 'hyeondae (contemporary),' and 'modeon (modernistic),' came to be

prominent in the midst of the focus group interviews because the words were being confusedly but differently employed to describe and discuss Korean Protestantism. And the different connotations and employments of them are symptomatic of the social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and modernity that the participants carry. The atheist/agnostic group told that the word 'modeon' is more used in relation to art and sensitivity while 'geundae', which can be translated into modern in English, seems to indicate a historical time such as "imperialistic [age]" or "Japanese colonial era (personal communication, July 15th, 2015)."⁷⁹ After asking back that "'modeon' can be translated into contemporary, right?," F1 states that "when it is said 'geundae,' it feels like something imperialistic [age] but if it is said 'modeon,' it seems like mentioning certain 'modernistic' sensitivity in art." M2 also adds that "'geundae' was imported to Korea in the Japanese [colonial] era." In the similar vein, F2 comments that "'geundae' seems to be based on a particular historical time ... while the word 'modeon' feels like more penetrated into everyday lives and close to the domain of art." And F3 also states that "'modeon' is associated with interior [decoration] or something refined in everyday lives (personal communication, July 15th, 2015)."

The Protestant group is not that different in terms of distinguishing the different connotations and employments between 'geundae' and 'modeon.' While the imageries

⁷⁹ 'Modeon' is the Korean word into which the English word 'modern' is phonetically spelled. But what the word 'modeon' signifies is not the modern, but something refined, polished, stylish, and modernistic. What signifies the meaning of the English word 'modern' in Korean is the word 'geundae.' So far, what is transcribed as 'modern' in the interview quotations has been the English translation of the Korean word 'geundae.' And 'hyeondae' signifies more like the contemporary age which is distanced from 'geundae' the modern age in South Korea.

brought up by the word of 'geundae' were quite diverse, the word 'modeon' was quite consistently said to be associated with sophistication, art, fashion, design, or architecture. On the request to articulate the imageries come up by 'geundae,' the Protestant group employed the verbal expressions such as "steam locomotives (H. J. & D. S.)," "industrial technology", "modern rationality and individual (H. J.)," "old-fashioned (J. K.)," and "cold, stiff, humid, and not flexible and fixed (D. S.)." And on the question asking their mental images on Korean modernity, they reminded of "the new community movement (H. J)" in the 1960s and 1970s under the developmental dictatorship, "democratization (J. K.)" in the late 1980s and "the pitifulness of our father's generation (J. K.)" Contrary to this wide range of historical time they invoke the word 'geundae,' their imageries on the word 'modeon' were confinedly put into the words such as "refined (D. S.)," "fashion and design (J. K.)," and "[the modernized] costume in the Japanese colonial era (H. J) (personal communication, July 12th, 2015)."

Considering such different imageries and imaginaries brought up with 'geundae (modern),' 'modeon (modernistic),' and 'hyeondae (contemporary),' the reluctance of both groups to associate them with Korean Protestantism and the articulation of the reasons for their reluctance, are crucial and symptomatic. Some were reluctant to associate 'geundae' with conservative Protestantism because of its seemingly 'pre-modern' traits. D. S. argues that conservative Protestantism "feels like very much pre-modern since 'geundae' has a bit a sense of newness" and continues that "but Korean Conservative Protestantism has all kinds of patriarchy and familism which Korea has had since the pre-modern era." She points out that Conservative Protestantism "does not match with

modern rationality and individual.” H. J. also argues that “if it [geundae] is like the pitifulness of our father’s generation, then it could match with conservative Protestantism but if it is modern rationality and individual, then it does not match with conservative Protestantism (personal communication July 12th, 2015).” Meanwhile, MI shows his reluctance to associate ‘modeon’ and ‘hyeondae’ with Korean Protestantism because of its irrelevance to being stylish and of its mentality remaining in the past of a hundred years ago:

Since ‘modeon’ is mainly used in terms of style, it seems irrelevant to Protestantism. Rather ‘geundae’ has historical connotation. ... So when ‘geudae’ has a positive meaning like opening up new age, then it can be associated [with Protestantism] since Protestantism did a lot of work coming into Korea at that time. But if it has a negative image which is contrary to that of ‘hyeondae,’ then ‘geundae’ means ‘the past’ and we can say like conservative Protestantism remains in the early modern age, in the mentality of a hundred years ago (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).

In any ways, as shown in the focus group interviews, Korean conservative Protestantism was imagined not to mingle with and fit into ‘hyeondae,’ which means the contemporary era, and ‘modeon’ which signifies polished, stylish and modernistic. If Korean Protestantism can be associated with the word ‘geundae,’ that ‘geundae’ should be the past which would be a hundred years ago or at latest the age of their father’s generation which restlessly strived for the goals of economic growth in the 1970s and of political democratization in the 1980s. The recurring differentiation between ‘hyeondae’

and 'geundae' and the reluctance to associate the word 'hyeondae' with Korean Protestantism shows that, in their social imaginary, it is anchored to a distant past which could be the 1970s and 1980s as the nearest one or the Japanese colonial era and even the alleged pre-modern era as the farthest one. Korean conservative Protestantism is imagined to be not only the irrational and stubborn other, but the pre-modern other remaining unenlightened and uncivilized in the distant past, that is, as the distant other falling behind from the present in the singular, linear historical time, in which Korean society is also often imagined to remain behind than the West but mostly ahead than Korean Protestantism.⁸⁰

***Imaginaries and Sentiments Invoked by the Encounters with the
Photographic Images of the Protestants***

Meanwhile, in the encounters with the photographic images of Conservative Protestants in the prayer meeting against the Lady Gaga concert and in the Korean traditional fan dance performance (Figure 1, 2, 5 and 6), some participants in both groups expressed the ambivalent sentiments of both ridicule and fear, which recall Joong-Kwon Jin's tweet that the fan dance performance "makes one severely laughing while terrifying and then again laughing and terrifying."⁸¹ After watching the figure 1 and 2 mediating the prayer meeting, F2 articulates that "such attitude looks very ridiculous" and continues that

⁸⁰ As seen in D. S.'s statement, however, not all participants in the groups successfully other Korean Protestantism.

⁸¹ The short straight news article from Pressian quoted his tweet was already analyzed in the earlier section (Accessed at <http://www.pressian.com/news/article.html?no=124533>, on March 26th, 2016).

“they look like people in a group hypnosis session.” F1 adds that “I also thought they are like fanatics.” In any ways, the Protestants in the figure 1 and 2, are not imagined to be rational and conscious. F2 puts their seemingly collectively unconscious appearance in the images into the phrase of “group hypnosis” and F1 does into that of “fanatics (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).”

But most participants’ interest concentrated on the Figure 5 and 6 which were taken in the public space of the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts. The participants kept trying to, but felt hard to, explain why the Protestants are wearing ‘Hanbok’ the traditional Korean costume and beating drum in the performance. F1 guesses that “[beating drum] would be for getting attention by making loud.” F2 says that “this is so weird.” As I ask to articulate how the images are felt and sensed, F3 answers that “[they look] wild and explosive ... unilateral ... not listening to other opinions ... (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” D. S. states that “they have only one thing” and continues that “while the modern feels like rational, like you have this and you also have that ... , but [they] look like solipsistic and [the performance] feels like coercive and irrational.” It is reaffirmed that the social imaginary, where Korean Protestants are irrationally infatuated with its own non-secular world and which the Protestant group earlier articulated with the phrases of “stiff,” “stubborn” and “not listen to others,” is being mediated, circulated and formed in and through the encounters with the photographic images of the fan dance performance (personal communication, July 12th, 2015). F1 argues that, for the public, such mediated imagery of the Protestants is taken as if it shows what Korea Protestantism really is:

These people are essentially like that. They have constantly done these things from the beginning. In effect, when one sees this kind of image, although this is only the problem of conservative Protestantism, for the public including me, such image makes one think that this is just the way Korean Protestantism is. We do not call them conservative [Protestantism] but just 'gaedok (Dog-Christianity) (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).'

The Korean word 'Gae' means a dog in English, which is used as an insulting expression in Korean society. And Christianity is phonetically transcribed to 'Gidok' in Korean. As a mockery of the corruption, rudeness or aggressiveness of Korean Protestantism, 'gae-dok (Gae +(Gi)dok)' has come to be a social discourse signifying 'Christianity like a dog' and indicating its negative traits which deserve to be insulted in Korean society. Thus, her employment of the word of 'gaedok' invokes such imaginary of the corrupted, aggressive and rude Korean Protestantism. And it shows that the mediated photographic images of the Protestants successfully fit into the discourse and imaginary of 'gae-dok' that has been powerfully dispersed among the public since 2007. FI highlights a likelihood where the non-believers would not discern between Korean Protestantism and the conservative group in it. And, as much as such conservative Protestant group is rarely distinguished from the overall Korean Protestantism in FI's imaginary, D. S. in the Protestant group also feels hard to differentiate herself from the Protestants in the photographs and articulates her sense of shamefulness and confusion:

[This is] very shameful... and confusing because ... such appearance makes me a bit disgusted but, on the other hand, I come to ask to myself such as ... what

would I do besides what they did? ... I want to face away from such appearance but [I come to think that] they are very enthusiastic. I wonder with what rationale they do such performance (personal communication, July 12th, 2015).

Another dominant sentiment on the photographic images of the Protestants in the Korean fan dance performance, was fear. For instance, F3 states that “[they are] scary,” and continues that “I am also heartbroken since this would make the public image of Protestantism worse (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” D. S. also comments that

I am a bit terrified ..., in particular, of the last image [Figure 5]. Such performing in the public space ... is a direct threat [to the public]. This is different than their praying in their own church. Although it is not physical [violence], it feels like violent (personal communication, July 12th, 2015).

M2 also employs the word of “violence” saying that “[they are] too much violent ... this is a horrifying and violent thought.” In the similar vein, F2 articulates that their performance “feels like extreme (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” In their comments, the conservative Protestants in the public space are captured with the words such as violent, scary, extreme, and threat. The tone and connotation of such verbal expressions, found in both groups, appear to well align with the liberal media discourse which visually and discursively constructed Korean Protestantism as the insane, powerful and violent enemy who is hostile to rationality, democracy, modernity and even humanity by associating it with the familiar imaginary and imagery of Adolf Hitler. As much as the mainline liberal online media imagine Korean Protestantism as the fanatical and violent other whose brutality and insanity would be dangerous for Korean society, the

participants in the focus group interviews imagine it as a scary, extreme and violent threat to other non-believers and further to Korean society. It is the ambivalent sentiments of both ridicule and fear what the bodies of participants who seem to embody the so-called secular or modern habitus and social imaginary, experience in their encounters with the photographic images. In and through the mediated, circulated, photographic images, the Conservative Protestants imagined to be distant from the present, all of sudden too much closely and vividly come up to the current landscape of Korean society. The pre-modern other displays its seemingly anachronistic, shamanistic and uncivilized existence in the public space of Seoul surrounded by the latest, refined and modernistic architectures. It is this discordance between the seemingly pre-modern costume, body movements and facial expressions of the Protestants and the stylish, post-modern architectures surrounding them what makes the fan dance performance 'surreal.' This 'pre-modern' existence of Conservative Protestants in the post-modern landscape, could be called the contemporaneity of the uncontemporary (Bloch, 1932) where the pre-modern, the modern and the post or late-modern, simultaneously exist in a post-colonial society, dislocating the Western social imaginary of the singular, linear and progressive historical time.

Conclusion

To synthesize the production, textual and reception analysis, Korean Protestantism is imagined and discoursed as the irrational, uncivilized, inferior, and dangerous other overall. In particular, the mainline liberal online media discourse represented Korean

Protestantism as the threat to the full democratization and modernization of Korean society. The sensorial experience aroused by the media representation of the seemingly pre-modern Korean Protestantism was articulated with the ambivalent sentiments of fear and ridicule both in the mainline media discourse and the focus group interviews.

It appears that the working of social imaginary of the singular, linear and progressive historical time makes the seemingly fanatical performance of conservative Protestants in the public space experienced and felt as anachronistic and surreal. Despite the construction of social category of Korean Protestantism as the irrational and uncivilized group, some religion journalists and mainline liberal media paradoxically find an inauspicious overlap between Korean Protestantism and society. This overlap generates a self-doubt or self-anxiety about if Korean society is genuinely 'modern.' In the social imaginary of the linear, universal and teleological transition of world history, Korean society is imagined to remain in, or retrogress to, the pre-modern stage. The discourses of partial modernization, 'hell-joseon' and 'migae (the uncivilized)' turned out to be critically predicated on the received Eurocentric imaginary of the linear and progressive world history that is imagined and discoursed as the matter of transition and thus as, more or less, singular, universal and teleological.

The allegedly advanced, modernized West in the linear world history, appears to be the imaginary object which Korean society desires not only to emulate but to be recognized by. The desire of Korean society for the recognition of the advanced West is detected both from the conservative Protestants worshipping and comforting the United States and the mainline liberal online media keeping conscious of the Western media's

reaction to the 'shameful' Protestants. The internalized gaze of, and the desire to be recognized by, the West aroused the sense and sentiment of shamefulness both to the conservative Protestants and the mainline liberal media. For the Protestants, the object of the shame was Jong-In Kim who knife-attacked the U. S. Ambassador Mark Lippert while, for the liberal media, rather it was the allegedly over-reacting Protestants.

The multiperspectival analysis of current social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism shows that Korean Protestantism is not imagined and discoursed as the symbol of modernization and civilization any longer, contrary to its introduction to Korea in the early 20th century (Cho, 2006; Kim, 2011; Lee, 2000; Jang, 1999). Rather, now it is imagined as the enemy of, and obstacle to, the modernization and civilization of Korea which it signified. The phases of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 knife attack on the U. S. ambassador critically reveal this radical change and re-formation of social imaginary of Korean Protestantism. However, the analyses in this chapter find that, despite its negated signifying of modernization and civilization, Korean Protestantism paradoxically still maintains its partial legacy in the overall understanding and imaginary of religion and modernity in Korean society.

The production analysis on the interviews with exclusive religion journalists and the reception analysis on the interviews with the focus group participants, manifest that their imaginaries and discourses on religion and modernity critically resonate and align with, and are guided by, the early modern discourse on religion through which Korean Protestantism was imagined to be distinguished from and superior than other religions. For instance, when both the focus group participants and religion journalists pointed out

its 'power-orientation' and collusion with political elites, as the problem and corruption of Korean Protestantism, the separation between religion and politics was imagined and suggested as the significant criteria to judge what the authentic and good religion is, which was argued and highlighted as the reason why Protestantism is a true modern religion by the early Korean Protestant leaders (Lee, 2000; Jang, 1999). In this regard, contemporary Korean Protestantism, particularly its collusion with political power and elites, is being criticized by the modern moral order, to whose formation and dissemination Korean Protestantism itself crucially contributed in Korean society where the modern nation-state and church are expected to have each own domain to govern and to be separate from each other.

This normative moral order (social imaginary) of the separation between religion and politics appears to be critically interwoven with, and indebted to, the rigid binaries between spirit and matter, the transcendental and the material, idea and institution, content and form, and the pure and the corrupted, which could be called "Protestant

legacy and bias (Meyer, 2014)⁸² or “Calvinistic semiotic ideology (Keane, 2007)⁸³” in which the former is essentially and morally prioritized over the latter. And impressively aligning with the Protestant legacy, religion journalists and columnists, the possible producer and disseminator of social imaginaries of religion, modernity and Korean Protestantism, show their frequent employment of the dichotomies between spirit and matter, the immaterial and the material, idea and institution, the inner mind and the exterior environment, the unmixed and the mixed, and the pure (first) and the corrupted (latter). The analysis of the interviews with the producers finds that, through the Protestant dichotomies, religion is divided into the ideational, core, original, authentic, immaterial, and pure one and the institutionalized, secularized, materialized, and corrupted

⁸² By “Protestant legacy and bias,” Meyer (2014) means “the modern take on religiosity,” echoing liberal Protestantism, which offers “a normative and theoretical template for how religion is understood, studied, and valued (p. 208).” She criticizes that, under the Protestant legacy, the study of religion tends to “think about and analyze religion in ways that privilege the ‘inside’ (concepts, ideas, beliefs, worldviews) above the ‘outside’ (rituals, objects, pictures, etc.) (Ibid., p. 207)” and that understand that “religions that prioritize outward expressions and forms stand intellectually and morally beneath those that value content, meaning, and inner feelings above all else.” Independent of her reasonable suggestion to explore the material aspect of religion, however, Pamela Klassen questions the usefulness of the employment of the term “Protestant” bias, wondering “if the label ‘Protestant bias’ obscures” the legacies of “other intellectual formations, shaped by a commitment to find ‘meaning’ within the logic of the social and the psyche (Ibid., p.233).” She also argues that “labeling a dualism of mind and body or mental and material as a product of a specifically Protestant bias” appear to “verge on a kind of essentialization or hypostasization of a particular ‘religious tradition’ that is both ahistorical and theoretically problematic (Ibid., p. 233).” Keeping in mind Klassen’s critique, I admit that the current understanding of religion in Korean society is not the sole legacy of Korean Protestantism. But it is undeniable that the early introduction of Protestantism to Korea critically shaped the early modern discourse on religion and modernity in Korean society, which appears to still vividly work in the current social imaginary, given the interviews with religion journalists and columnists in particular.

⁸³ According to Keane (2007) Calvinism’s semiotic ideology not only puts the rigid distinction between content and form, spirit and matter, immaterial meaning and material expression, and the pure and the corrupted, but morally prioritizes and essentializes the former over the latter (p. 67).

one. In and through this dichotomized, romanticized imaginary of religion, it is frequently imagined and discoursed that the authentic religion has distanced, or should distance from, the modern corruption of materialism, politics, institutionalization, and secularization. And, as seen in the modern criticism of the collusion between religion (the spiritual) and politics (the worldly matters), the so-called Protestant dichotomies not only enable but naturalize the discourses of 'power-orientation' and 'partial-modernization' emerged in the mainline liberal media discourse and the interviews with religion journalists. In other words, Korean Protestantism is criticized by the modern dichotomies between religion and politics, the spiritual and the worldly matter, and the pure and the corrupted, to whose formation in and dissemination into Korean society the early Korean Protestantism critically contributed. More interestingly, the romanticized, Protestant dichotomies crucially re-emerge in the interviews with the primary managers of the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism, the producers of social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism, and in the branding narrative of Templestay which will be discussed in the next chapter. Now, it is time to move to it and explore the working of social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism that are critically interwoven with the logic of new digital media and the branding culture of neo-liberal times.

Chapter 6. Social Imaginaries of Korean Buddhism :The Branding of Templestay in Digital Space

Introduction

This chapter explores the branding of Templestay where Korean government and the Chogye Order of Korean Buddhism together systemically produce, mediate and circulate particular social imaginaries of modernity and Korean Buddhism interweaving the discourses of authenticity, the self, purity and modern corruption. At first, this introduction section discusses Sarah Banet-Weiser (2012)'s research on brand culture in neo-liberal times and how the working of the neo-liberal brand culture is closely interwoven with the production, mediation and circulation of particular social imaginaries. Then, the chapter offers the second section, which looks into how the managers of PR (Public Relations) and R&D (Research & Design) team in the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism carry and mediate particular imaginaries of Korean Buddhism, tradition, modernity and the self in the branding of Templestay by analyzing the in-depth interviews with them. After that, the third section introduces the official English and Korean websites of Templestay and its social media services including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and discusses what kinds of new media-related practices are invited for, and contribute to, the branding of Templestay. Then, it critically analyzes some branding images and texts in the official websites of Templestay and its other social media as crucial material sites where social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism are glimpsed, mediated, circulated and shaped. In the last section, the focus group interviews with the audiences who are exposed to the

photographic images in the official Templestay Websites and its social media, are critically examined in order to understand what social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism are invoked, carried and formed in their encounters with the branded images of Templestay.

Neo-Liberal Branding Culture Producing and Mediating Social Imaginaries

In terms of understanding and exploring the branding practice of Templestay, this dissertation project draws on Sarah Banet-Weiser (2012)'s discussion on the brand culture of neo-liberal times where authentic spaces, such as religion, creativity and the self, are increasingly visualized, mediated, formed, recognized and experienced in and through the logic of brand and new digital media culture and thus where authenticity itself becomes a brand. According to her, the contemporary branding culture is closely interwoven with the making of authentic and affective relationships between brand and consumer and further with the forming of communities of consumers who collectively share authentic affect, experience and memory associated with the brand.

Her exposition of the formation and working of brand culture in neo-liberal times critically aligns and resonates with the theoretical framework of social imaginaries on which this dissertation project is predicated. In her book *Authentic TM: The Politics of Ambivalence in a Brand Culture* (2012), Banet-Weiser highlights that “building a brand is about building an affective, authentic *relationship* with a consumer, one based –just like a relationship between two people – on the accumulation of memories, emotions, personal narratives, and expectations (p. 8).” In addition, drawing on Lauren Berlant’s idea of “intimate publics” where “the consumers within a given intimate public share a worldview and an emotional connection that is bound together by a common historical experience,”

she argues as well that “brand cultures are much like “intimate publics,” in that they form communities of consumers who are bound together by affect and emotion, and by a sense of authentic experience and history (p. 218).”

What Banet-Weiser crucially points out is that the working of brand culture in neo-liberal times is significantly based on the making of communities of people who collectively share a common affect, memory, expectation and experience on a brand. Meanwhile, according to Taylor (2004), such collective sharing of affect, memory, experience and thus culture and history, enables, and is enabled by, the mediation and circulation of particular social imaginary, which shapes a collectively imagined social world. Then, in order for a brand to form communities of consumers who could invest themselves in it, the brand first produces, mediates and circulates particular imaginaries of itself in and by which consumers could understand their and other existence, feel secure and authentic, and find “affective connection with others and themselves (Banet-Weiser, 2012, p. 219).” As much as social imaginary offers a “shared sense of legitimacy (Taylor, 2004, p. 6)” and moral order, “participating in brand cultures feels like participating in an ethical or moral frame (Banet-Weiser, 2012, p. 219).” As much as the formation and circulation of social imaginary is about making and remaking of the social and culture, “branding is part of this making and remaking” of culture and the social, “and is part of culture that is produced and given meaning by consumers (*Ibid.*, p. 9).” Lastly, both the idea of social imaginary and Banet-Weiser’s exposition of the brand culture in neo-liberal times, open up a critical exploration on the significance of the collectively shared affect,

emotion, sensorial experience and embodied memory interwoven with the imaginary in the making and remaking of culture.

Neo-Liberal Branding and Invention of Tradition

It is the imagined space of tradition where the branded imaginaries and imageries of each Templestay, Korean Buddhism and South Korea overlap with each other. In other words, each branding of Templestay, Korean Buddhism and South Korea depends on, and is enabled by, the systemic production, mediation and circulation of particular social imaginary of Korean tradition. That is to say, Korean tradition is invented. In his book *the Invention of Tradition* (1983), Hobsbawm submits the notion of invented tradition to discuss a set of practices that are created, institutionalized, and ritualized by modern nation-state in order “to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past” (p. 1). Although Hobsbawm employs this term primarily for highlighting the formalized and ritualized aspect of tradition and the intention of modern nation-state to establish and symbolize “social cohesion, or the membership of groups, real or artificial communities (p. 9),” this idea offers a critical chance to understand and discuss the branding of Templestay as a set of the state-driven practices through which particular social imaginaries of Korean tradition are institutionally invented, mediated and circulated. To sum up the discussions on neo-liberal branding culture and invented tradition, this dissertation project captures the branding of Templestay by the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism, which is considerably managed by Korean government, as a critical space where particular social imaginaries of modernity, tradition and Korean Buddhism are institutionally produced, mediated and circulated.

Now Let me examine the in-depth interviews with the managers of PR and R&D team in the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism, who are the persons in charge of the Templestay branding.

Production Analysis on Social Imaginaries of Korean Buddhism

This section aims to understand how the PR and R&D team managers in the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism, the very producers of the Templestay brand, imagine and discourse Korean Buddhism in relation to other imaginaries and discourses of tradition, modernity and the self. The in-depth interviews with the managers are critically examined as valuable resources not only enlightening the actual practice, custom, expectation and process of the Templestay branding but revealing the social imaginaries that the producers of the Templestay brand carry, mediate and circulate. It would be reasonable to first discuss how the managers in the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism imagine and discourse their branding practices, strategies and purposes and a variety of media environment in which the branding of Templestay is conducted since these could inform and contextualize what is discussed later. After that, it focuses on analyzing what imaginaries the producers carry and mediate in talking about Korean Buddhism, modernity, tradition and the self. From now on, the PR manager will be transcribed into PR, the R&D manager into RD. The interviews with PR and RD were separately conducted on the same day.

The Branding Practices of Templestay and its Different Media Uses

On the question asking which media they think most 'efficient' in terms of the branding of Templestay, both PR and RD pointed out television broadcast for domestic consumers and new digital social media for foreigners. Asserting that "the effect of broadcast is bigger than digital media," PR adds that "if celebrities participate in Templestay in entertainment shows, they produce the biggest effect (personal communication, July 7th, 2015)." RD also comments that "entertainment shows with celebrities are best at positioning the [public] image of Templestay (personal communication, July 7th, 2015)." Such assessment on the efficiency of TV broadcast is predicated on their actual experience of being troubled by too many inquiries made by parents who watched 'Appa Odiga? (Where Are You Going, Father?)' one of the most popular Korean reality television show where celebrities expose their child-rearing in everyday lives.

However, interestingly, it was digital social media that the managers imagined as the space where the most "important (RD, personal communication, July 7th, 2015)" and "successful (PR, personal communication, July 7th, 2015)" way of branding has been and should be done. "It is a sort of social media including NAVER blog⁸⁴ that I think critically important since .. I think that the photographs taken by actual Templestay participants and their personal narratives on their experience [of Templestay] are most important [in branding] (personal communication, July 7th, 2015)," RD states. PR also argues that "the

⁸⁴ NAVER(<http://www.naver.com/>) is the most dominant portal site in South Korea. Its search market share in South Korea was 74.5 as of July 2013 (Accessed at http://news.mtn.co.kr/newscenter/news_viewer.mtn?gidx=2013102216260971285, on March 30th, 2016). It also offers blogging service, which is very popular among Korean people.

most important thing is viral [marketing] that people come to want to join Templestay by the texts or photographs which other Templestay participants posted sharing their [Templestay] experience of the participants.” She adds that “if these things grow virally, I think [our branding is] successful (personal communication, July 7th, 2015).”

Further, in the interviews, new digital social media was imagined and discoursed to be not only as the only available channel to reach potential foreign tourists with less cost but as the one which is much more suitable for the branding of Korean Buddhism than for the national branding of South Korea. For instance, on the question asking why they keep posting in social media the photographs of Templestay whose hits seem very small considering their high-quality, the PR manager abruptly states that “we [the Chogye Order] are not primary when we cooperate with Korean Tourism Organization, since it more focuses on the branding of South Korea” and continues that “in the online media we manage, however, we are the primary although we would need to publicize South Korea as well.” In her comment, it is glimpsed that she imagines and discourses digital social media as a better place for a specialized branding of Templestay and Korean Buddhism. After talking about the difficulty, inefficiency and limit of disseminating their branding brochures into the Korean cultural institutes, tourism organizations or embassies in foreign countries, PR comments:

This [spreading the brochures abroad] is like just a drop in the ocean. ... It is useless to just make good brochures if no one reads them. ... [The only answer is] digital media which can offer a platform that many people can come and see with less cost. Since it is only digital space where [foreign] people, who are really

interested in our tradition, can find and approach to our materials, we cannot help but more and more use such media (personal communication, July 7th, 2015).

In this way, their branding practice through new digital social media is imagined and discoursed to be a sort of making a rare but direct channel to approach to distant foreign tourists. This imagining of their branding practice as making a relationship with potential tourists is vividly shown in PR's another comment, as well. Arguing that "online media is about sustainability rather than an immediate effect," PR states that [the branding of Templestay online] is about making [potential tourists and consumers] our side." She adds as follows:

Through [digital social] media we inform [to them] that we do this and that thing.

Then, this becomes like a communication between individuals. In Facebook, though we don't know each other, we come to know like 'oh, this person came here' and like 'the post reached those people (personal communication, July 7th, 2015).'

As seen in her comment, PR imagines and discourses the branding of Templestay through new digital media as a sort of making individual, communicative relationships between Templestay and its target audiences, rather than disseminating its discrete message to the mass. As much as digital media user comes to know that Templestay does this and that thing, Templestay as well comes to see what kinds of digital media user visit and use its digital media platform. In this way, both come to recognize each other in digital space. Further, the branding of Templestay through new digital media is imagined and discoursed to make a close bond, such as a friendship, between Templestay and its target audiences to the extent, the visitors to its digital media platforms can even take a Templestay's side.

And such imaginary and discourse of Templestay branding practice appear to critically resonate with Banet-Weiser's elucidation of neo-liberal branding culture where affective relationships between a brand and a consumer come to be imagined, formed and experienced as authentic. The reason why "the photographs taken by the actual Templestay participants and their personal narratives on their experience [of Templestay] are most important [in branding] (RD, personal communication, July 7th, 2015)" is that, for other potential tourists, the photographs and personal narratives are likely to be embraced and experienced as much more affective and authentic than any other branding materials the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism produces. In other words, "the photographs taken by the actual Templestay participants and their personal narratives on their experience [of Templestay] (RD, personal communication, July 7th, 2015)," crucially contribute to the branding of Templestay, particularly, that of the authenticity of Templestay.

The Discourses Articulating and Carrying Social Imaginaries of Korean Buddhism, Modernity, and the Self

Given such desired forming of authentic, communicative, close and friend-like relationships between Templestay and potential tourists online, it is critical to explore what social imaginaries the producers of the Templestay branding create, carry and mediate within the relationships. This is because the branding of Templestay will be more likely to be the practices of making intimate and authentic relationships with the potential tourists online and further those of sharing not only particular social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism but some common affects, memories and experiences associated with

the imaginaries within the digitally mediated intimate relationships with them. And some parts of the in-depth interviews with the managers in the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism critically illuminate the possible range, limit and kinds of the discourses, that the producers could create, employ and circulate in the branding of Templestay by means of new digital media, through which social imaginaries of Korean society, modernity and Buddhism would be articulated, mediated and carried.

It is the dichotomy between 'the traditional' and 'the modern' that was most prominently invoked, carried and employed in the course of the interviews with the managers. And revolving around the dichotomy between 'the traditional' and 'the modern,' the dichotomies between 'the traditional' and 'the Western,' 'content' and 'form,' and 'essence' and 'appearance,' also kept employed and deployed. For instance, contrasting the traditional with the modern and the Western, PR states:

[For attracting foreign tourists] we need to show Korean traditional culture since Korean Buddhism has a history of more than 1700 years. Everything in our everyday lives is all modernized and contemporarized and thus some [Korean tradition] is disappearing. ... As the Western gets more pursued, our ways of living and environment have changed a lot. But, rather, this situation might attract foreign tourists to Korean Templestay. Experiencing Buddhism has come to be common even in the Western world. But foreign tourists will come rather than to experience Buddhism, but in order to see and experience Korean Buddhism and Korean traditional culture.

In her statement, Korean Buddhism is imagined as a cultural reservoir which has preserved Korean traditional culture up to the present in Korean society imagined as already too much modernized and westernized. Meanwhile, Korean tradition is imagined to be disparate from the Western and the Modern as if it has never been touched by and mingled with the modern before the Western came into Korea. Thus, it is told that what would attract foreign tourists in the globally modernized, westernized world is not merely Buddhism but the long preserved, particular tradition of Korea and its Buddhism. In this way, the discourse dichotomizing between the traditional and the modern, the traditional and the Western, is quite readily invoked and carried.

Meanwhile, RD explicitly relates ‘the traditional’ to ‘content’ and ‘essence’, ‘the modern’ to ‘form’ and ‘appearance,’ deploying the rigid dichotomies between the traditional and the modern, content and form, and essence and appearance in parallel:

The content of [Korean] Buddhism will not change. It [The branding of Templestay] is just to put the clothes of diverse new digital media on Korean Buddhism. ... Modernization means changing our ways to talk and delivering into polished and modern ones.⁸⁵ It is not that the content of Korean Buddhism is changed. Although human life has come to be modernized and more convenient, but human still and always has one’s own limit (personal communication, July 7th, 2015).

⁸⁵ As already glimpsed in the focus group interviews examined in the previous chapter, the word ‘polished’ is critically invoked as one of the most prominent characteristics of the modern again in this interview with RD.

In RD's statement, the process of modernization is imagined and discoursed by the analogy of putting clothes on someone. In and through the analogy, the modern technology of new digital media is imagined as something not be able to change the essence of Korean Buddhism, to the extent that a person putting clothes on oneself is not expected to be transformed and affected by the clothes. What is never imagined drawing on this analogy is a possibility that what is signified by the clothes and what is signified by the person who puts them on oneself, could interact with, and mutually shape, each other. Thus, the content of Korean Buddhism, identified with its essence, is imagined to be untouched and unchanged by its encounters with the technology of "diverse new digital media," which is here imagined to be a mere form and instrument which cannot influence to the content and essence of Korean Buddhism at all. In the analogy and his assertion that "the content of [Korean] Buddhism will not be changed," there emerges a clear-cut distinction between what the person signifies and the clothes signify, content and form, and essence and appearance, immaterial and material, and the unchanged and the changing. And RD's employment of this rigid dichotomy between unchanging content and changing form considerably recalls and resonates with the Protestant bias and legacy, discussed in the previous chapter, and more precisely what Keane (2007) calls Calvinism's semiotic ideology, which not only puts the rigid distinction between content and form, spirit and matter, immaterial meaning and material expression, and the pure and the corrupted, but morally prioritizes and essentializes the former over the latter. That is to say, it appears that the producer and circulator of particular social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism paradoxically draws on the received Protestant semiotic imaginary in which immaterial

meaning (content) is morally prioritized as something essential, fundamental, spiritual and unchanging over material expression (form).

In this regard, what underlies RD's assertion that "the content of [Korean] Buddhism will not be changed," is what could be called a Western modern imaginary or anxiety that a primitive tradition, imagined as having never been touched by and mixed with exterior civilization, might be corrupted by modern culture, technology and civilization. The analysis on the interview with the producers of the Templestay branding shows that the modern imaginary of, and anxiety about, the authenticity of tradition critically affects their official decision on which elements should be included or excluded in photographic images for the branding of Templestay. Admitting that the branding producers' intention cannot but intervene in the photographs of Templestay, RD states:

In the inside [of the Chogye Order,] there have constantly been critical comments about, for instance, the representation of propeller ceiling fan shown in some Templestay photographs. ... In the case of displaying the photographs to foreigners, we tend to pay attention to such point with the greatest care. In the worse case, we pay attention even to whether [the photographs show that] our Buddhist monks wear Nike shoes or socks (personal communication, July 7th, 2015).

The reason why the propeller ceiling fan and Nike products are expected to be removed from the branded photographic images of Templestay, is that they are considered to signify Western modern civilization to some extent. In this way, in the branded imaginary, Korean Buddhism is expected and further prescribed to be not touched by and mingled

with any sort of the seemingly Western modern technology and civilization. It is ironic that, in fact, the branded imagery of Korean Buddhism aims at popularization and commercialization while the content, essence, and authenticity of Korean Buddhism keep imagined to be distanced from, and uncontaminated by, the commercialized and popularized technology such as propeller ceiling fan and new digital media. To reflect this Western modern anxiety about the authenticity of primitive tradition in relation to the Protestant semiotic imaginary rigidly dichotomizing content and form, spirit and matter, immaterial meaning and material expression, and the pure and the corrupted, it is inferred that the modern (media) is imagined more or less as technological, material, instrumental, corrupting and morally inferior while primitive tradition and/or religion (Korean Buddhism) as spiritual, immaterial, essential, pure and morally superior.

As already glimpsed in the prior quotations revealing the dichotomies between ‘the traditional’ and ‘the Western,’ ‘the traditional’ and ‘the modern,’ a critical discourse that should be noted and discussed in terms of the branding of Templestay, is that of exoticism in and through which Korean Buddhism is imagined as the exotic and primitive other in the gaze of the West. Some parts of the interviews with the managers crucially reveal the internalization of the gaze of the West which is symptomatic of the exoticization of Korean Buddhism. The great extent which the gaze of the West keeps recalled and internalized, is well manifested in the recurring identification of ‘foreigners’ with ‘Westerners’ in the interviews with the managers. Asserting that visual image is critical for attracting “foreigners,” PR keeps emphasizing the importance of appealing the unique

feature of Korean Buddhism differentiated from Japan or Chinese Buddhism to

Westerners:

But foreigners do know nothing. Then, they do not know the differences among Korean, Chinese and Japan Buddhism. [They] mostly recognize Japanese Buddhism. Particularly in the US and West, Tibet Buddhism is more prominent. ... Westerners have all the convenient facilities and shopping center. They are not interested in such things but what does not exist in their countries. So what attracts them is tradition, mountains... because Korean mountains are easy to conquer in a day while their mountains are not (personal communication, July 7th, 2015).

In this way, although PR starts his utterance with the word “foreigners,” it is soon substituted with “the US and West” and “Westerners.” What PR imagines as brandable is the indigenous, distinct tradition and nature of Korea, that are different from Japanese and Chinese Buddhism, which all could be exotic for the gaze of the West. RD’s below statement which informs the practical decision process of the branding slogan of Templestay, also crucially demonstrates the internalization of the gaze of the West in the branding practice of Templestay:

For foreigners, their travel to South Korea itself is an adventure. That is the point we are focusing on. It’s like ‘if you would come to South Korea, have the adventure of Templestay. (The researcher: Who determined such wordings of ‘adventure’ and ‘travel for happiness’ in the slogan?) ... Such wording like ‘adventure’ was determined by me. This is because Templestay has been

introduced as adventure to foreigners in [Western] news articles such as New York Times, where it was introduced as a thrilling but inexpensive and touching alternative (personal communication, July 7th, 2015).

The branding slogan of Templestay is likely to be critical in imagining and discoursing Templestay since it is supposed to deliver the essence of the overall branding message of Templestay. And, as already argued, the branding of Templestay is about producing, mediating and circulating social imaginaries of Templestay, Korean Buddhism and Korean tradition. In this regard, RD's utterance that the wording of "adventure" was borrowed from Western news media such as New York Times, crucially implies a strong possibility that social imaginaries of Templestay and Korean Buddhism, carried and circulated by the branding of Templestay, could be shaped through the gaze of the West, more concretely, the Orientalist imagination of the spiritual adventure to the primitive, exotic East in and through which the West expects and desires to find and encounter spirituality, meaningfulness, purity and authenticity that all are imagined as lost or contaminated by Westernized, modernized lifestyles and material culture (Lindholm, 2008).

Such internalizing of the gaze of the West in the systemic production of social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism gives rise to emphasizing the exoticism of Korean Buddhism and tradition in the gaze of the West for the branding of Templestay. At this point, PR's comment could be reminded that "what attracts them[foreigners]," who are mostly imagined as Westerners, is "what does not exist in their countries" such as Korean indigenous tradition or mountain. In this way, the managers consider what is imagined as exotic and adventurous in the gaze of the West as most brandable and selling. In other

words, the production of branded imaginaries and imageries of Korean Buddhism comes to revolve around the discourse of exoticism and adventure in which Western social imaginaries of the East, spirituality, authenticity and the self are critically interwoven with each other (Banet-Weiser, 2012, pp. 186-197; Lindholm, 2008, pp. 39-47). This issue will be further discussed in the next section analyzing the branding messages and photographic images shown in the official websites of Templestay and its other digital social media.

Lastly, another prominent discourse which I find crucial in terms of the branding of Templestay, is the one which the managers construct about the self and happiness. RD's comment is noteworthy that he makes in responding to the question about the transition of the branding slogan from 'Templestay, the journey to search for my true self' to 'Templestay, the happy journey for myself':

As far as we diagnose, the problem of the contemporary [society] is that people do not know themselves correctly and they consider others than themselves as more important. But, Buddha always preached the message of 'be happy right now.' And, to be happy right now, ... [you first solve your own problem]. You cannot solve social problems unless you solve your own problem (personal communication, July 7th, 2015).

In RD's comments, social problems in the contemporary world are quite simplistically imagined and discoursed to be the matter of, or caused by, peoples' ignorance of themselves. In the social imaginary he carries, social problems are considered as a mere sum of individual problems and further as a simple matter of knowing and ignorance while individual happiness is submitted as the solution of the individual and social problems.

Replying to the question about the branding slogan of “Templestay, the journey to search for my true self,” PR also carries and articulates a social imaginary quite similar to the one RD does:

Discovering oneself is the teaching of Buddhism. ... By recognizing my true self, other people also come to be happy. This is because I might wander and cause a lot of problems if I do not know myself. ... If I come to be stabilized once, then my relationship with my parent and friend could be comfortable and all could come to be happy (personal communication, July 7th, 2015).

In her utterance that “by recognizing my true self, other people also come to be happy,” what is not clearly articulated, but implied, is that the recognition of one’s true self would lead to one’s happiness and that the individual happiness would lead to others’ happiness. In both RD’s and PR’s remarks, searching for, recognizing and knowing one’s true self are imagined as a crucial ethical practice not only to make oneself and others happy but to solve both individual and social problems. In this ways, in imagining social process, the individual self is absolutely prioritized than others and the collective social world. While the social is imagined and expected to be changed if the individual self is changed once, the reverse is never imagined and articulated in the interviews with the managers.

Meanwhile, summarizing what Buddha always taught as the message of ‘be happy right now,’ RD continues to talk about happiness and Templestay:

Now the keyword we focus on is ‘journey’ and ‘happiness,’ particularly ‘happiness.’ People live in order to be happy, not to be unhappy. Templestay offers a clue or beginning to proceed to happiness, provides with the place of rest and an

opportunity to find one's self. In this aspect, the slogan was changed into 'the happy journey for myself (personal communication, July 7th, 2015).'

His affirmation that "people live in order to be happy, not to be unhappy," submits happiness as the ultimate goal of human life. And as already pointed out through the earlier quotations, searching for and knowing one's true self are imagined as a critical means to achieve the goal of life, which is happiness. What the managers discourse and imagine about the self, happiness and how to accomplish it, crucially resonates, and is interwoven, with the dominant neo-liberal discourse on human life where the ultimate purpose of human life is imagined to be the personal pursuit of happiness and to take care of the self, including finding and knowing the self, is imagined to be essential to one's happiness, self-empowerment and self-enterprising that neo-liberal society suggests as the ethics of the self (Banet-Weiser, 2012; Binkely, 2014). In this way, it is glimpsed that Buddhist and neo-liberal imaginaries align with each other, revolving around the overlapping discourses of the self and happiness, both prioritizing the individual self than others and the collective social world in their imagined moral order.

Textual Analysis of Social Imaginaries of Korean Buddhism

The Branding of Templestay and New Digital Media

Given the critical involvement of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the launching of Templestay and the development of Templestay into "businesslike cultural enterprise (Kaplan, 2010, p. 134)," the active employment of a variety of new digital media in the promotion and branding of Templestay would be no surprise. The Cultural Corps

of Korean Buddhism, which has been in charge of the management and promotion of Templestay since 2004, endeavors to make Templestay have a variety of media channels for target audiences including the official websites⁸⁶, YouTube⁸⁷, Facebook⁸⁸, Tweeter⁸⁹, Pinterest⁹⁰, E-Book⁹¹ and mobile app⁹². The official websites of Templestay and the other digital social media have quite different strategies and focuses in the branding of Templestay. And this could be more clearly understood by referring to Nick Couldry (2012)'s discussion on a variety of media-related practice in the new digital media age, which were introduced in the chapter 2 (pp. 45-52). To briefly point out here, while both Korean and English official websites focus on making a variety of information on Templestay and its media materials to be search-enabling and archived, its other digital social media services are dedicated to sustaining its public presence online and to mediating the everyday lives of Templestay as the object of spectacle and audiencing.

Both the Korean official website and the English one have basically the same composition and layout of primary sections on their main pages. The main pages in both websites deploy the primary four sections of "About Templestay," "Reservations," "Contents" and "Supports" on the upper side which lead website users to each own sub-

⁸⁶ Accessed at <http://www.templestay.com>; <http://eng.templestay.com/index.asp>, on April 4th, 2016.

⁸⁷ Accessed at <http://www.youtube.com/user/TEMPLESTAYALL?feature=watch>, on April 4th, 2016.

⁸⁸ Accessed at <https://www.facebook.com/templestay>, on April 4th, 2016.

⁸⁹ Accessed at <https://twitter.com/templestaykorea>, on April 4th, 2016.

⁹⁰ Accessed at <http://www.pinterest.com/templestaykorea/templestay-korea>, on April 4th, 2016.

⁹¹ Accessed at <http://eng.templestay.com/upload/board/2013101415472901493.pdf>, on April 4th, 2016.

⁹² Accessed at <http://eng.templestay.com/mobile/index.asp>, on April 4th, 2016.

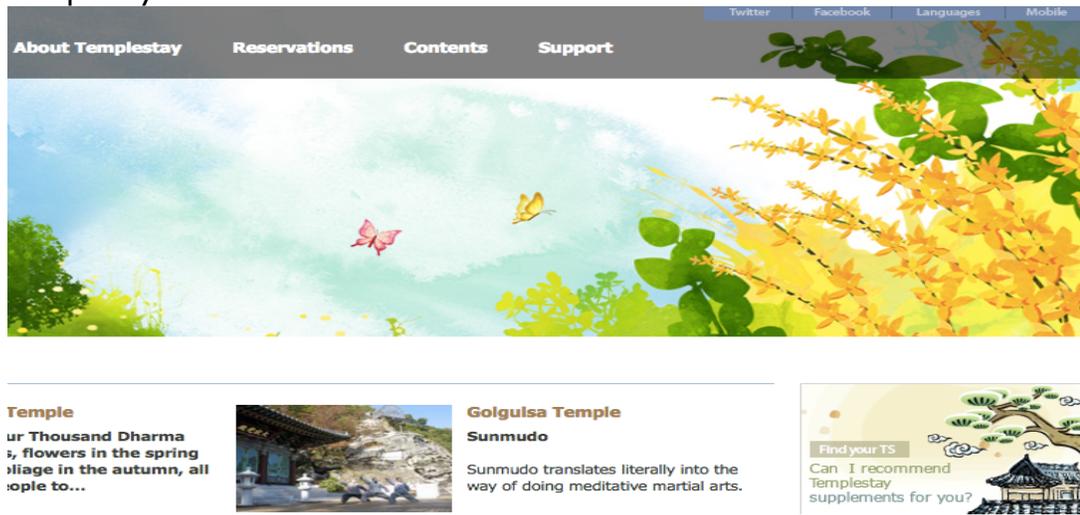
sections.⁹³ The “About Templestay” section primarily delivers textual information about what Templestay is, what one can get from the experience of Templestay, and what history Korean Buddhism has. The “Contents” section offers vivid personal narratives, professional photographic images and video-clips showing a variety of Korean Buddhist temples, their nature heritage, and Templestay program with the sub-sections of “News,” “Personal Narratives,” “Epilogue,” “Photos & Movies,” “Downloads,” and “Music.”⁹⁴ The “Reservations” section offers an easy path to reserve one’s Templestay participation online and further concrete information about a variety of Templestay programs, fees and the Buddhist temples which host tourists. The “Support” section offers the four sub-section of “FAQ,” “Q&A,” “Special Events,” and “Temple Etiquette.” But it is noteworthy that only the English official website has, on the upper right side, four small icons which named “Facebook,” “Tweeter,” “Languages,” and “Mobile,” which the Korean official website dose not (see Figure 7 and 8). This difference shows that, to a great extent, the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism is aware of the significance of multilingual assess to the information on Templestay and new digital social media for the global promotion of itself. Thus, only via the English website, one can approach to the multilingual websites made in other five languages: Japanese, Chinese, French, German, and

⁹³ Although the Korean website has one more section called “Temple Contents” than the English one, there is technically no difference in the overall composition of the website since all the sub-sections of “Temple Contents” appeared in the Korean website, are in effect included in the “Contents” section in the English website.

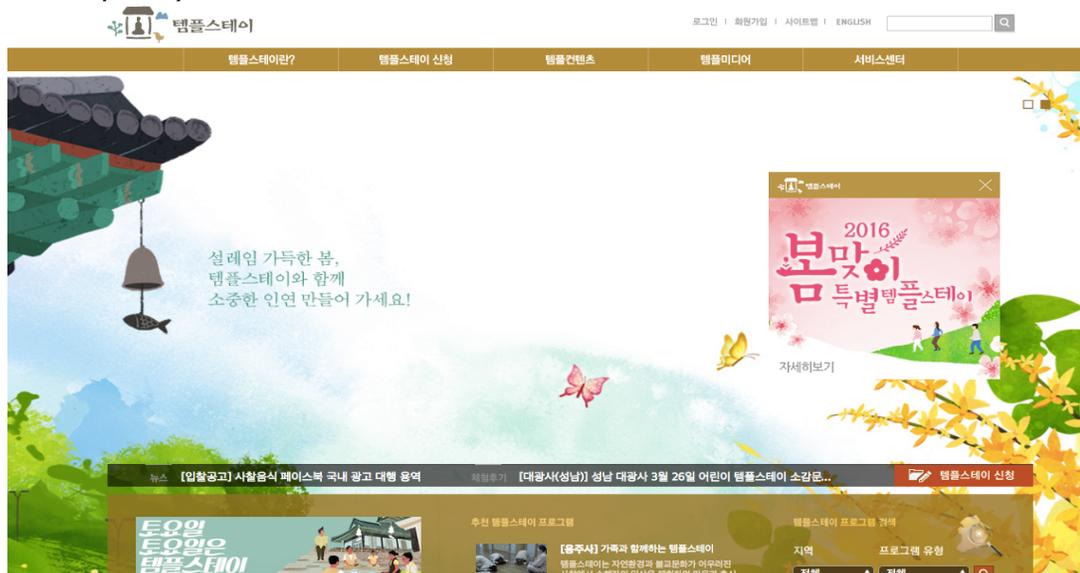
⁹⁴ Accessed at <http://eng.templestay.com/board/board.asp?bt=1&cid=12>, on April 4th, 2016.

Spanish.⁹⁵ In this way, the English official website functions as an informational hub networking a variety of digital social media and languages.

<Figure 7> The Captured Image of the Main Page of the Official English Website of Templestay⁹⁶



<Figure 8> The Captured Image of the Main Page of the Official Korean Website of Templestay⁹⁷



⁹⁵ Accessed at <http://eng.templestay.com/catalogue/what.asp?nation=2>, on April 4th, 2016.

⁹⁶ Accessed at <http://eng.templestay.com/index.asp>, on April 4th, 2016.

⁹⁷ Accessed at <http://www.templestay.com/>, on April 4th, 2016.

The composition and layout of the official websites shows that they critically invite and draw on the media-related practice of what Couldry (2012) terms 'searching.' Searching is a media-related practice, which one finds previously unknown content through online search tools, through which people shape their imaginaries of the social world, and thus which become "their distinctive conditions of action (p. 45)." And all the written texts, categories, (sub)section titles, visual image captions in the official websites make Templestay searchable by a search engine and thus make it exist in anonymous digital media users' imagined social worlds. That is, in order for Templestay to be branded in the contemporary social world which is constantly and excessively mediated by new digital media, it needs to be searchable by online search tools and must be able to be incorporated into and perceived in digital media users' social imaginaries. Another media-related practice which the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism performs through the official websites, is that of 'archiving' where the Cultural Corps manages "*in time* the whole mass of informational and image traces" it continually produces, "so that, *over time*, they add up something acceptable and perhaps even graspable as a history" of Templestay (*Ibid.*, p. 52; emphasis in the original text). Particularly, the sub-sections of "News," "Personal Narratives," "Epilogue," "Photos & Movies" and "Downloads" under the section of "Contents," are clearly dedicated to such practice of archiving while arranging a variety of Templestay-related materials in time and thus making them graspable as a history of Templestay over time.

Meanwhile, Templestay's other digital social media including YouTube, Facebook, Tweeter and Pinterest appear to draw on the media-related practice of 'presencing' and

'showing' for the branding of Templestay. By presencing, Couldry signifies a media-related practice through which "individuals, groups and institutions put into circulation information about, and representation of, themselves for the wider purpose of sustaining a public presence (p. 50)." And particularly Templestay's Facebook page, YouTube channel and Twitter account focus on circulating information on, and representation of, itself and thus constantly sustaining its public presence in digital space. Another media-related practice which the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism performs through the digital social media is that of 'showing,' which "makes oneself and/or something publicly available" and transforms "everyday action and performance into spectacle and audiencing (p. 49)." And, while mediating and circulating the professional, high-quality photographic images of Korean Buddhist temples, monks and food and the nature around them, Templestay's Facebook page, YouTube channel and Twitter account are dedicated to publicizing and branding the everyday lives of Buddhist Temples as attractive spectacles to possess, appreciate and further share with others. To sum up, such new media-related practices are essential to the branding of Templestay, in that the branding culture, strategies and practices in the contemporary era are critically based on the platform of new digital media in and through which both professional institution and ordinary consumers cooperatively, reflectively and dialectically participate into producing, mediating and circulating particular imaginaries of a brand.

***The Analysis on the Brand Narrative and Visual Images of Templestay
Mediated and Circulated in Digital Space***

Now, Let me explore what social imaginaries are constructed, mediated, carried and circulated in and through the branding of Templestay which are crucially interwoven with the new media-related practices of searching, showing, presencing and archiving. To examine the social imaginaries being constructed and mediated in the branding of Templestay, I focus on the two material sites of the “About Templestay” in the English official website and the English Templestay video clip in its YouTube channel, in which the branding slogans of “the journey to find the true happiness within myself” and “the journey to find my true self,” are visualized and discoursed. After analyzing what narrative the branding of Templestay constructs in the two sites, I examine how some photographic images, posted in the digital social media of Templestay, visualize the brand imaginary and narrative of Templestay.

As pointed out in the analysis of the interviews with the managers prioritizing and glamorizing the individual self and happiness, Buddhist and neo-liberal imaginaries of the self and happiness overlap with each other in the branding of Templestay. And to the extent the they priorities and glamorize the self and happiness, they do authenticity. What the branding of Templestay invites its target audiences to find, is not merely the self and happiness, but “the *true* self” and “the *true* happiness.” In this way, the idea and rhetoric of authenticity is appropriated by, and incorporated into, the branding of Templestay. Templestay is not alone in branding itself based on the rhetoric of, and desire for, authenticity. Banet-Weiser (2012) points out that “authenticity is itself a brand” in the brand culture of neo-liberal times (p. 14). However, authenticity, as a social discourse, imaginary and ethics, did not abruptly emerge in the neo-liberal era. Rather, there are

historical conditions, that have shaped what could be called the modern imaginary of authenticity in the Western world. And they are critical to understand the branding of Templestay, considering that, as shown in the analysis of the interviews with the managers, Templestay has internalized the gaze of the West in its branding and, more concretely, the Orientalist imaginary of the West on 'adventure' in and through which the authentic self is imagined to be found and realized.

It was after the collapse of the feudal system and the rise of capitalist system and urbanization in the West that the idea of authenticity was ripened to the extent to be regarded as a social issue. As, with the breakup of the feudal relationships, people left their families and communities which had offered the web of meaning and order of things including their roles and authorities, the collectively imagined order and web of meanings came to be fragile and unstable. In this social mood, sincerity, which one does what one says one will do, came to be imagined and expected as an important and desirable character for people to have (Trilling, 1972).

In *Culture and Authenticity* (2007), Charles Lindholm illuminates under which modern conditions sincerity gives its place to authenticity as a desired trait. First, although the emergent Protestant bourgeoisie welcomed the virtue of sincerity, their pursuit of egalitarian modesty and self-interrogation on intention paradoxically resulted in the shift of their focus "from being as one appears" to "discovering what one truly is (p. 4)." Second, the rise of scientific reason let the individual self become the subject of introspection free from the outer social structure and influence. Third, as such scientific reason enabled the adventure to, and import of, other advanced civilizations that could excel the European

one, there arose a collective awareness of new plural worlds, which “offered both the attractions and threats of exotic otherness.” While coming to imagine and understand the West among the plural worlds, there emerged an anxiety about the stability of the taken-for-granted Western customs and values. This anxiety offered an impetus to “ratify the Western experience as somehow absolute and true.” And this resulted in “a heightened concern with cultural and personal authenticity.” Meanwhile, the discovered other civilizations were often imagined not only as primitive and spiritual, contrary to modern humanity, but as authentic “in the double sense of being pure and original and of being without falsity (*Ibid.*, p. 5).” Lastly, capitalist system and wage labor alienating workers and thus separating the meaning of work from that of the self, critically ignited the desire of authenticity as a modern ideal. Such ideal of authenticity encouraged people to be eager to search for and accomplish one’s true self while refuting public roles imposed by the outer social structure.

Lindholm highlights Jean Jaques Rousseau as one of the earliest and most critical thinkers who influenced the dominant modern belief and imaginary that “the cultural/social surface represses the expression of the authentic natural self (*Ibid.*, p. 9)” and thus that, in order to live an authentic life, one needs to hold “communion with the unique inner self resistant to all social pressure (*Ibid.*, p.10).” Authenticity has come to be a modern ideal where people predominantly associate it with their own emotional lives, spiritual imagination and morality. In *the Age of Authenticity* (1991), Charles Taylor submits the idea of authenticity as a critical modern moral ideal:

This [Authenticity] is powerful moral ideal that has come down to us. It accords crucial moral importance to a kind of contact with myself, with my own inner nature, which it sees as in danger of being lost, partly through the pressures towards outward conformity, but also because in taking an instrumental stance to my self, I may have lost the capacity to listen to this inner voice (p. 29)

The modern narrative of authenticity tells that you have to listen your own inner voice, find your authentic self, and be free from any pressures of the outer social structure imposing conformity. And if one does not listen to your inner voice and find your authentic self, it is imagined as morally wrong.

What is fascinating about the branding of Templestay in digital space is that Templestay explicitly and actively associates itself with this Western, modern imaginary of authenticity. The “About Templestay” section in the English official website is noteworthy since its text introducing Templestay contains some critical sentences which manifest this embracing and incorporating of the Western, modern imaginary of authenticity and the self in the branding of Templestay⁹⁸ (Figure 9).

⁹⁸ In the website, “About Templestay” icon is located in the uppermost and leftmost side of the main section row. In terms of the general arrangement of information in website, the most used icon tends to be located in the uppermost and leftmost side of the main icon row in order to align with our habits of reading texts from the upper side to the down side, from the left side to the right side. In this regard, the one located in the uppermost and leftmost side of the main icon row is likely to have most essential, primary, and useful information among other sections. The significance of this section of “About Templestay” is perceived not only by the location of its icon but by the heaviness of textual information in this section. The “About Templestay” section is the most text-heavy one among the four main sections. Given the location of its icon, its heaviness of textual information, and its title, the section of “About Templestay” is expected to be the space where Templestay most explicitly represents its self-imaginary with its most obvious verbal expression.

<Figure 9> The Captured Image of the 'About Templestay' Page in the Official English Website of Templestay

You can realize the Buddhist method of eating ecologically, called BaruGongyang (monastic formal meal), which allows one to live in harmony with nature. Through the practice of Dado (tea ceremony) you can find true stillness and tranquility in a cup of tea. While walking along a peaceful forest path, you can listen to your inner voice, and through the practice of 108 prostrations you can learn the technique of putting down your inner desires and attachments.

It's a time to search for your True Self and become one with your Original Nature. We hope that Templestay allows you to clear your mind so that you can have a wider experience of the world, and that this serves as a turning point when you return to your everyday life.

A bowl of food and a droplet of water, learning compassion from a tiny blade of grass. Instead of the racket of the city, we can finally become our True Selves through the noble silence flowing within this place.



The last third paragraph of the introduction text reads that “while walking along a peaceful forest path, you can listen to your inner voice.” And in the last two paragraphs, it reads that “it's a time to search for your True Self” and asserts that “we can finally become our True Selves” by silence that is flown within Korean Buddhist Temple. The articulations such as “listen to your inner voice,” “search for your True Self” and “become our True Selves,” inevitably remind of the Western, modern imaginary where one needs to find and hold communion with the inner self while being resistant to the outer social structure and pressure in order to live an authentic life. In and through such discourse of authenticity, Templestay imagines and brands itself as a true experience and space where one could find and accomplish one’s true self.

The wordings such as “search for,” “find” and “inner self”, appeared in the introduction text and branding slogan, are noteworthy given the general Buddhist teaching of the self. The words such as “find” and “search for” tend to offer an impression that there already exists a substance that one could find and search for. In this regard, the articulations such as “listen to your inner voice,” “search for your True Self” and “become our True Selves,” offer an imaginary that there is one’s substantial self which already exists as an essence waiting to be found. However, the self imagined as already existing, essence or substance, is quite far from the original Buddhist imaginary of the self. The Buddhist doctrine of Anatman (no-self) teaches that there is no essence and eternality on the self. Exploring the difference and similarity of the concepts of the self between Buddhism and Western psychotherapy, Osamu Ando (2009) asserts that “the self is constituted, not of a substantial essence, but of thought, although we might mistakenly regard it as an essence that ‘exists (p.10).’”

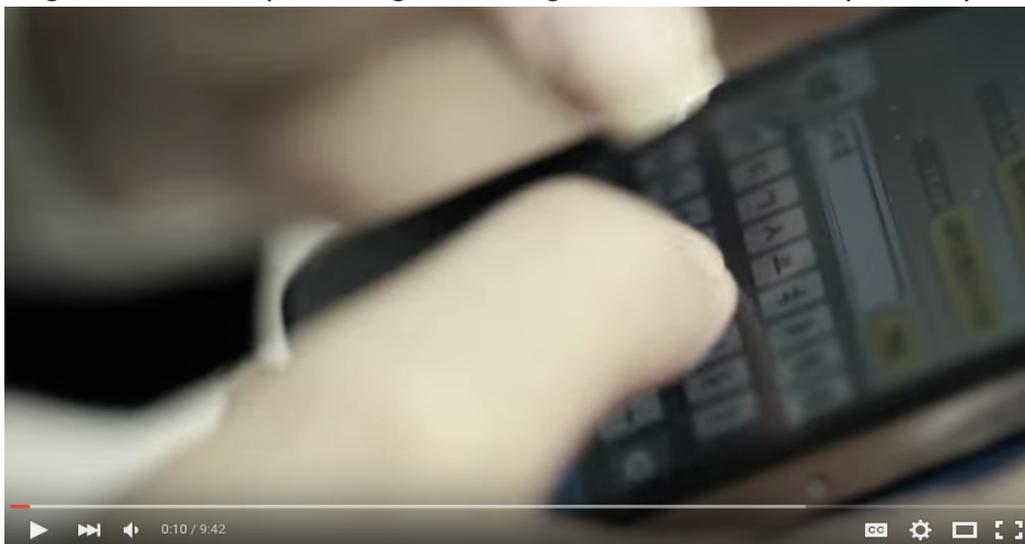
Thus, the branding rhetoric of finding one’s true inner self does not appear to correctly deliver and illuminate the original Buddhist imaginary of the self and no-self. Rather, it resonates with the Western modern discourse of authenticity, submitted as a moral ideal of the self, and further with the rhetoric of spiritual tourism which offers a romanticized imaginary where one will find and fulfill one’s true self through the exotic, educational, moral and authentic experience of adventure to the sacred sites and heritages (Olsen and Timothy, 2006, p. 5). This interweaving of the imaginaries of the self, authenticity and spiritual adventure is more clearly manifested in the English Templestay video clip uploaded onto its YouTube channel.

It is the English Templestay video clip that most crucially and clearly reveals, carries and mediates particular social imaginaries which the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism wants to shape, brand and circulate.⁹⁹ The beginning of the video clip impressively represents the branded imaginary and imagery of Korean Buddhism with its narrative contrasting between the lifestyle of modernized metropolis and that of Templestay. In the opening of the video clip, it shows four contrasting imageries of one's hands, feet, thinking, and eating between in a metropolis and in a Buddhist temple. While one's hands in the city touch computer keyboard and smartphone screen, another person in the temple calmly touches a flower and prays grabbing Buddhist beads with his or her hands. After showing these scenes, the clip shows an English subtitle that "give peace to your busy hands" with silence. And while people busily step their foot on concrete stairs in the subway, a Templestay visitor slowly walks up stone steps in the temple. As well, after showing these scenes, the clip shows an English subtitle that "allow your feet to relax" with silence. While one in a skyscraper elevator keeps ascending, a Templestay visitor modestly bows down in his Buddhist ritual. Then, English subtitle shows that "humble your mind and lower yourself" with silence. Lastly, while people leave food including heavy meat on their plates, other visitors in Templestay carefully savor the seemingly clear and neat Korean Buddhist food. Then, English subtitle shows that "emptiness and peace of mind" with silence as well.

⁹⁹ Accessed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKYMj4QGooQ>, on April 5th, 2016.

It is noteworthy through what imageries the video clip visualizes the dichotomized lifestyles of modernized metropolis and Templestay since they reveal how the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism imagines and discourses the so-called late-modern secular world and Korean Buddhism. For instance, in the scenes visualizing the message of “give peace to your busy hands,” what is touched by one’s hands in a metropolis is a computer keyboard and smartphone signifying modern technology while what another’s hands touch in a Buddhist temple is a flower and beads which would indicate nature and the spirituality of Korean Buddhism (Figure 10 and 11). Given the branding message of “give peace to your busy hands,” what the clip imagines and discourses about the metropolitan lifestyle and Korean Buddhism is that modern technology has made people busy and distracted so that they need the peace and mindfulness of Templestay.

<Figure 10> The Capture Image of the English YouTube video clip of Templestay I

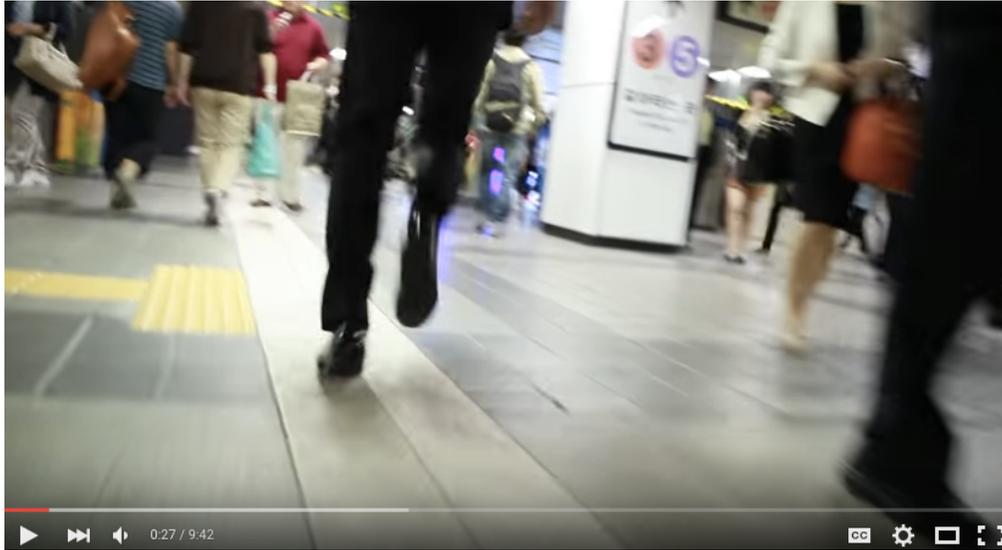


<Figure 11> The Capture Image of the English YouTube video clip of Templestay 2



In the similar vein, in the scenes visualizing the message of “allow your feet to relax,” what one busily steps foot on in a metropolis is the concrete stairs in the subway, which seem to indicate the artificiality, busyness and coldness of modern life, while what another slowly steps foot on in a Buddhist temple is the stone steps of the temple signifying its antiqueness and naturalness (Figure 12 and 13). Considering the message of “allow your feet to relax,” what the clip imagines and discourses is that the artificiality, busyness and coldness of modern life has made people exhausted and therefore they need the relaxation of Templestay.

<Figure 12> The Captured Image of the English YouTube video clip of Templestay 3



<Figure 13> The Captured Image of the English YouTube video clip of Templestay 4



Lastly, the messages of “humble your mind and lower yourself” and “emptiness and peace of mind” are visualized and maximized through the imageries of leftover food including heavy meat and of a splendid city light viewed from a skyscraper elevator which keeps ascending, which seem to signify the avarice of modern lifestyle desiring to

excessively possess and get higher. Given the messages, what the clip imagines and discourses about the metropolitan lifestyle and Korean Buddhism is that modern lifestyle has made people excessively ambitious and greedy but their selves need to get lower, emptied and humbled through the experience of Templestay (Figure 14 and 15).

<Figure 14> The Captured Image of the English YouTube video clip of Templestay 5

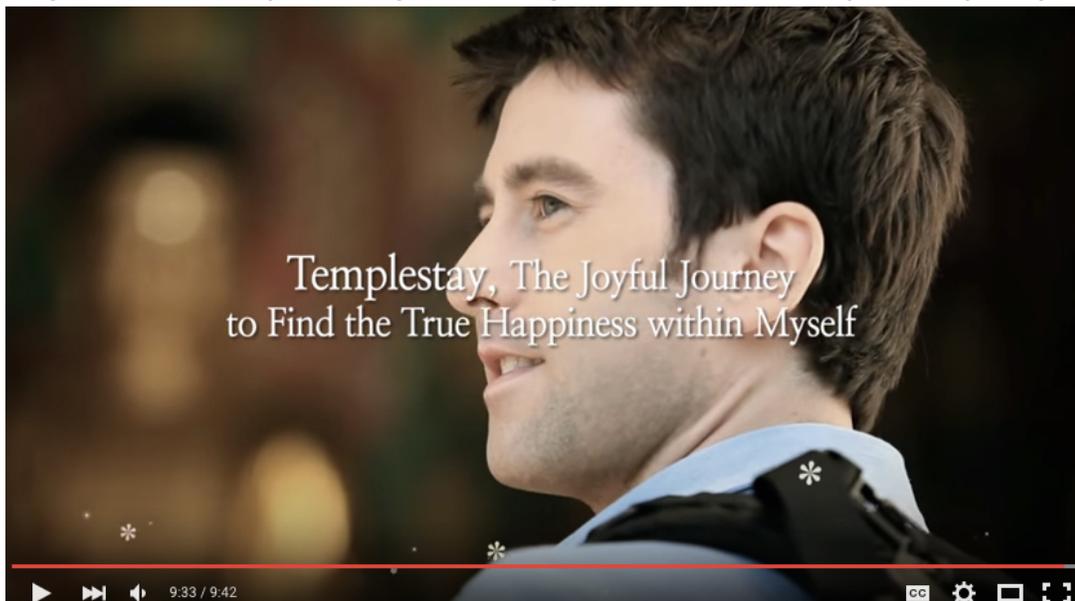


<Figure 15> The Captured Image of the English YouTube video clip of Templestay 6



To sum up, through the branding video clip, the metropolitan modern life is imagined to be busy, distracted, artificial, cold and greedy while the life in Templestay peaceful, nature-friendly, warm, humble and simple. More crucially, the clip implies that different lifestyles in different environments shape distinctive habits of body, mind and the self. By doing so, the modern metropolis is imagined, not merely as a physical location, but as a negative space (outer structure) which makes the self distracted, exhausted and corrupted. On the contrary, Korean Buddhist temple is imagined and discoursed, not as a mere tourist attraction, but as a spiritual space and authentic experience which transforms one's habits of mind and body and, more essentially, one's self.

<Figure 16> The Capture Image of the English YouTube video clip of Templestay 7



The YouTube video clip ends with the branding message of “Templestay, the Joyful Journey to Find the True Happiness within Myself (Figure 16).” Considering the earlier imageries and narrative which the video clip constructs and mediates, the narrative which the Cultural Cops of Korean Buddhism tries to circulate for the branding of Templestay, is

obvious:¹⁰⁰ You lost your true happiness by being alienated and corrupted by the metropolitan environment which has shaped the greedy, busy and distracted lifestyle in your body. But the nature-friendly, peaceful and relaxing experience of Templestay will be a spiritual antidote to your toxic life style, body and inner self. It will purify your corrupted habits, body, mind, and above all your inner true self. It will make you find and accomplish your true self and happiness.

Such branding narrative makes Templestay imagined and discoursed to be all about caring of the self and finding the true happiness. As pointed out in the earlier production analysis in this chapter, this branding narrative of finding the true self and happiness, considerably aligns and resonates with the dominant neo-liberal imaginary and discourse on human life, where the ultimate purpose of human life is imagined to be the personal pursuit of happiness and further caring of the self is imagined to be essential to the happiness, self-empowerment and self-enterprising that neo-liberal society suggests as the ethics of the self (Banet-Weiser, 2012; Binkley, 2014).¹⁰¹

Meanwhile, the visual representations of participants in Templestay, Buddhist monks, Korean Buddhist temple, food, and nature around the temple, mediated and

¹⁰⁰ It is crucial for a brand to offer an imaginary narrative in which one could imagine oneself as a central character. As Banet-Weiser (2012) puts it, “participating in brand cultures is partly about situating oneself as a central character in the narrative of the brand – of “writing” oneself into the story (p. 197).”

¹⁰¹ Binkley, in his book *Happiness as Enterprise: An Essay on Neoliberal Life* (2014), critically examines how the discourse of happiness has come to emerge as a central logic and mentality of self-government and self-enterprising, while being closely interwoven with economic neo-liberalism. And Banet-Weiser (2012), exploring the branding of commodity activism and consumer citizenship, captures the neo-liberal social imaginary, which is being branded, where “anyone, apparently, can become a successful entrepreneur, can find and express their authentic self, or can be empowered by the seemingly endless possibilities in digital spaces (p. 17).”

circulated by Templestay's digital social media channel, are crucially predicated on the brand narrative and imaginary, constructed and circulated by the Templestay video clip and the "About Templestay" section, where the outer modern social world is imagined as busy, distracted, artificial, corrupted and dirty while Templestay and Korean Buddhism is imagined as monastic, peaceful, nature-friendly, pure, and untainted. For instance, the photographic images of participants in meditation, traditional and antique Korean Buddhist temple and beautiful nature around them, are frequently employed to shape and mediate the imaginary and imagery of the monasticism and peacefulness of Korean Buddhism (Figure 17 and 18).

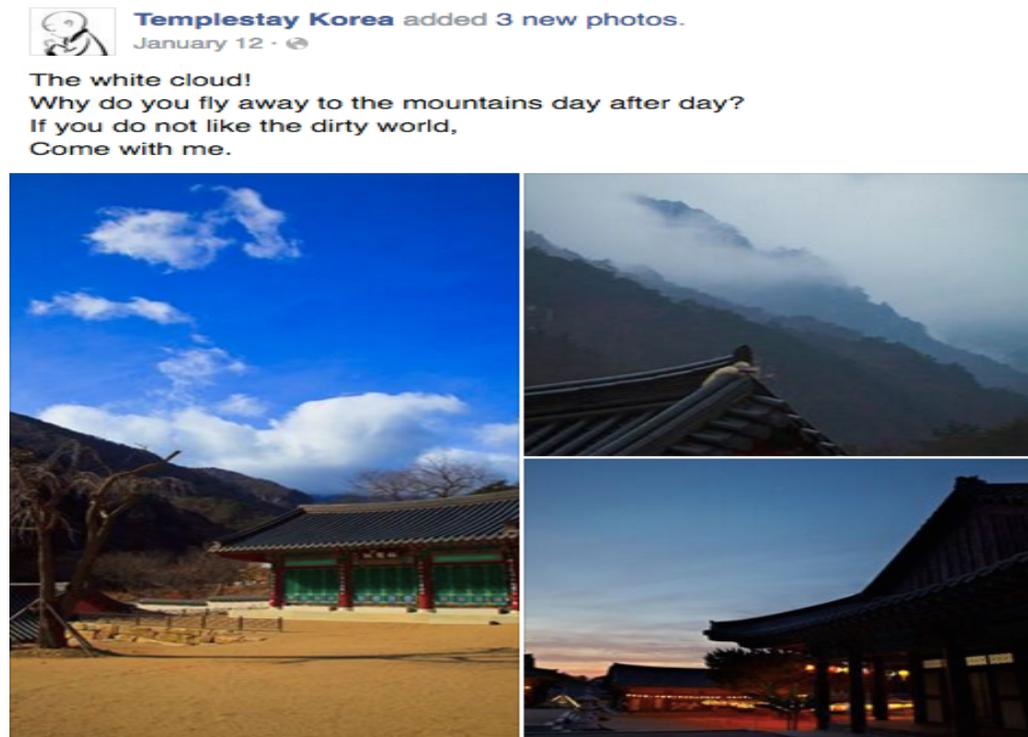
<Figure 17> The Captured Image of the Branding of Templestay in Digital Space I



<Figure 18> The Captured Image of the Branding of Templestay in Digital Space 2



<Figure 19> The Captured Image of the Branding of Templestay in Digital Space 3



Meanwhile, though already glimpsed in the figure 18, the imaginary of Korean Protestantism purifying modern corruption, is critically constructed and mediated by a variety of photographic images of meditation, clean nature, children and organic temple food. For instance, the figure 19 well shows the dichotomized discourse between the purifying Templestay (and Korean Buddhism) and the corrupted outer modern world. In other words, as its caption narrates, the outer world is imagined to be dirty while the traditional Korean Buddhist temple and clean nature around it including “white cloud,” are imagined and submitted as a sort of antidote to the corrupted modern world as if one could surely come and find a safe, purifying space in Templestay.

The imaginary of Korean Buddhism that is pure and innocent, is critically shaped, carried and mediated, particularly, by the imagery of child that the branding of Templestay frequently employs (Figure 20 and 21). Lindholm (2007) points out that Rousseau’s belief that “children were repositories of humanity’s fundamental innocence,” crucially influenced to the dominant modern imaginary of child with which the imageries of innocence and authenticity readily have associated (p. 9).¹⁰² In this regard, the frequent appearance of the imagery of child in the branding of Templestay is likely to provoke and carry this prevalent modern imaginary where children possess the primitive innocence of humanity while being untainted by socialization imagined to be the corruption or loss of one’s authentic self. This imaginary of the innocent, pure child who is untainted by the

¹⁰² Lindholm (2007) states that “Rousseau’s firm belief that children were repositories of humanity’s fundamental innocence ... has found its modern expression in therapeutic injunctions to achieve authenticity by ‘getting in touch with the inner child’ and in the American child-centered educational system (p. 9).”

outer social world yet, is likely to be the self-image of Korean Buddhism, given that the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism chooses the ink-wash-painted image of a boy monk in praying as the profile picture of the English Templestay Facebook page (Templestay Korea) (Figure2).¹⁰³

<Figure 20> The Captured Image of the Branding of Templestay in Digital Space 4



¹⁰³ Accessed at <https://www.facebook.com/templestaykorea/timeline>, on April 9th, 2016

<Figure 21> The Captured Image of the Branding of Templestay in Digital Space 5



<Figure 22> The Captured Image of the Branding of Templestay in Digital Space 6



This voluntary employment of the imagery of child as the branded self image of Templestay might look surprising, if it is reminded of that Korean Buddhism in the era of Joseon Dynasty suffered partly from the prevalent social imaginary in which Buddhism was regarded as the religion of hermit, women and children, who were rarely imagined to have a suitable qualification to be a public and political existence. (Lee, 2000, p. 149; Park, 1995). While the image of child in Joseon Dynasty was likely to be an obstacle for Korean Buddhism to acquire its public and political recognition, now in the contemporary neo-liberal Korean society the image of child invested to Korean Buddhism, helps it get positively imagined to be a purifying antidote to modern corruption and thus have an attractive public, but still non-political, image.

Lastly, the past history of Korean Buddhism, as surveyed in the chapter 4, tells us one more significant thing. In other words, what the branded imaginaries of Templestay in which Korean Buddhism confidently propagates that it purifies one's mind (figure 18) corrupted by the dirty outer social world (figure 19), truly purify, is the particular modern history of Korean Buddhism that has internalized, and been constantly interwoven with, what it imagines as contaminated: neo-liberalism including the commercialization and branding of itself as tourism product, the outer political power such as Japanese colonial regime and the developmental dictatorship of Jeong-Hee Park, and the modern technology of new digital media which enables, from the first, the systemic production, mediation and circulation of the branded imaginaries. In other words, contrary to the branded imagery and imaginary of purity, Korean Buddhism has never been pure in the sense that it imagines and brands itself. The current configuration of Korean Buddhism, that is alleged

as pure, is crucially indebted to, and shaped by the encounters with, Japanese colonial regime, the developmental dictatorship of Jeong-Hee Park, the economic logic of neo-liberalism, and new digital media technology which all are accused of being worldly matter, political, greedy, material, violent and modern in its branded imaginary and narrative.

Reception Analysis on the Branded Images Carrying Social

Imaginations of Korean Buddhism

Prior Imaginations of Korean Buddhism

On the question asking their previous thoughts and feelings about Korean Buddhism, both Protestant and atheist/agnostic groups invoked the imageries and imaginations of monasticism, tradition, purification and healing. In particular, the monastic imagery of Korean Buddhism kept articulated by the verbal articulations such as “leaving the secular world (J. K. personal communication, July 12th, 2015),” “the ... calm temple in the mountain (H. J., personal communication, July 12th, 2015),” and “not making one’s voice on social issues (MI, personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” This imagery of monasticism was imagined as the opposite of worldly matters including the conflict within religious group and the violation of religious teaching. For instance, the appearances of Korean Buddhism that D. S. invokes as “concealed by” its monastic image, are those of “sectarian strife” and “violating [Buddhist] eating habits (personal communication, July 12th, 2015).” H. J contrasts the imagery of monasticism with the inner conflict within the Chogye Order of Korean Buddhism:

When the church disappointed me, I often reminded of Buddhism, like the long-standing, restful and calm temple in the mountain. But I came to see that this [Korean Buddhism] also had such disappointing characteristics while I read about a conflict of the Chogye temple in Hangyeore (personal communication, July 12th, 2015).

In this way, the binary between monasticism and worldly matters was glimpsed in the focus group interview participants.

Another prominent imaginary of Korea Buddhism invoked in the interviews with the focus groups, is that of tradition. On the question asking the overall feeling about Korean Buddhism, both D. S. and H. J immediately invoked the image of being long-standing and traditional while stating that Buddhism “has constantly been since ancient times” in Korea (personal communication, July 12th, 2015). This imaginary that Korean Buddhism has constantly inhabited in Korea, appears to make some participants to consider it as a traditional cultural heritage, rather than as a kind of religion. M2 states that “Korean Buddhism has come to be more like cultural heritage, rather than religion (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” D. S. also remarks that “it feels like cultural heritage since it has constantly been since ancient times (personal communication, July 12th, 2015).”

The participants’ imaginary that Korean Buddhism is monastic, long-standing and traditional made them reluctant to relate Korean Buddhism with the concepts of ‘geundae, (modern)’ ‘hyeondae (contemporary),’ and’ ‘modeon (modernistic)’ whose precise significations are analyzed in the previous chapter. For instance, J. K. comments that it

“does not associate with any of them since Korean Buddhism has an image of being remote from the world (personal communication, July 12th, 2015).” D. S. rejects to relate it with the concepts of ‘geundae,’ ‘hyeondae,’ and ‘modeon,’ stating that Korean Buddhism “did not move into the urban area and just has been what it was” and continues that “it has rarely changed ... aligning with the changes generated by modernization (personal communication, July 12th, 2015).”

Contrary to the overall reluctance of the participants to associate Korean Buddhism with ‘geundae,’ ‘hyeondae,’ and ‘modeon,’ however, Templestay was imagined as “the only ‘modeon’ thing in Korean Buddhism” by M2 (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” And, interestingly, about the question asking if they have ever seen Templestay in any kinds of media, multiple participants in both groups mentioned their watching experience of ‘Appa Odiga? (Where Are You Going, Father?),’ which the managers of the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism already pointed out as the most efficient promotion in the history of the branding of Templestay as well. The participants in both groups invoked the imagery of child as the attraction point of the TV show. F3 remarks that “since the children looked so cute, wearing like a boy monk, I think, people would feel positively (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” D. S. also recalls her memory of watching the TV show stating that “in the child-rearing reality TV show, the boy monks... the children are too cute.” Then, she mentions another TV show in which “one has Buddhist food, labors and meditates in Buddhist temple” for “healing” like “detoxing (personal communication, July 12th, 2015).” It is noteworthy that she employs the wordings of “detoxing” and “healing” in order to contextualize and describe the

activities one does in the temple. As discussed in the chapter 3, in Korean society, the word 'healing' signifies the fundamental activity which eliminates the root of illness and sickness thus makes a human existence entirely recovered (Na, 2014). It has become a popular social discourse associated with the images of relaxation, restfulness, and the solution of stress and worry which all are concentrated on the caring of the self. As much as the word 'healing' aligns and resonates with the neo-liberal therapeutic discourse in and through which both the inner self and the outer world are imagined as corrupted, wounded, and thus to be cured and recovered, the word 'detoxing,' signifying the purification of toxic chemicals, well fits in with the branded imaginary and imagery of Templestay purifying modern corruption. During the focus group interviews, the discourses of purification and healing appeared to associate with other imaginaries of monasticism and tradition which all were invoked as the previous imaginaries of Korean Buddhism.

Imaginaries and Sentiments Invoked by the Encounters with the Branded Images of Templestay in Digital Space

In the encounter with the branded visual images of Templestay, both Protestant and atheist/agnostic participants predominantly articulated their affective and sensorial experience of restfulness and relaxation. Most participants expressed their imaginaries and feelings on the visual images with the verbal articulations concentrated on the idea of restfulness and relaxation, which has been critically interwoven with the neo-liberal therapeutic discourse of healing in Korean Society. For instance, F1 states that the visual images of Templestay "feel like relaxation and haven for the modern people exhausted by

their work (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” H. J. also employs the word “restfulness” and continues that they give an impression that “one could take a rest there [in Templestay] (H. J., personal communication, July 12th, 2015)” In addition, F2 in the atheist/agnostic group directly submits the word “healing (personal communication, July 15th, 2015)” as the idea capturing her thought and feeling on them.

The imaginary of monasticism was also often invoked and carried. Contrasting with the public image of Korean Protestantism, F3 argues that “the images give an impression that even a temple in a city would be separated from worldly matters since Buddhism has an imagery of leaving the secular world and existing in mountains while Protestantism inhabits in urban areas (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” D. S. also remarks that the visual images of Templestay feel like “*leaving city life... slow and relaxed* (emphasis added by the researcher) (personal communication, July 12th, 2015).” And F3 adds that the images are “well made to encourage modern people to *leave city life and take a rest* (emphasis added by the researcher) (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” Thus, participants in both groups consciously and unconsciously associated the imaginary of monasticism with the sensorial experience of relaxation whose imaginary and imagery are crucially interwoven with the neo-liberal discourse of healing. Meanwhile, it is also noteworthy that, after watching the visual images, F1 listed the inner experience of what could be called the ‘monastic’ self: “they [the visual images] appear to be somewhat no anguish, no agony, calm and peaceful (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).” Such inner status of “no anguish, no agony,” and being calm and peaceful in fact, crucially aligns and resonates with what the ‘healing’ discourse suggests as the moral ideal of the self

where one is expected to keep one's inner self calm and peaceful, distanced from the extreme distraction, corruption and brutality of the outer neo-liberal reality that is rarely imagined as changeable. In this way, the discourse of monasticism and the neo-liberal discourse of healing are critically interwoven with each other in the participants' articulation of their affective and sensorial experience on the branded images of Templestay.

Lastly, some verbal articulations delivering the participants' reflection on the branded visual images of Templestay, critically reveals the ambivalent imaginaries of Korean Buddhism in the contemporary Korean society. Among others who focus on the images of monasticism and restfulness, M1, the only participant who actually experienced the Templestay program, argues that the visual images are more about publicizing and experiencing Korean traditional culture, rather than about the religious meditation and practice of Korean Buddhism:

“The journey to search for my true self,” the phrase, highlights the aspects of meditation and practice, right? But, I think, the actual program and [branding] images are more focusing on promoting Korean culture, experiencing [Korean] traditional culture. ... [The images] feel like showing Korean traditional culture, not merely about Buddhism (personal communication, July 15th, 2015).

In the visual images of Templestay through which M1 imagines its being authentically Korean and traditional, however, other participants find its being of modern and polished. F4 states that, “as far as the visual images that you [the researcher] offered show, they look much more refined than those of Korean Protestantism (personal communication,

July 15th, 2015).” F3 also remarks that, “after watching the images, although [Korean] Buddhism seems like very old but what it does nowadays, feels like very much ‘modeon’ completely fitting into the needs of modern people.” Although Korean Buddhism is imagined to be still traditional and old given its signifying of Korean tradition, it is also imagined to be ‘modeon,’ polished and contemporary, in that it correctly responds to the needs of contemporary people. Aligning with, and reminding of, the dichotomy between content and form and the traditional and the modern, which the R&D manager employed, however, the way how the visual images of Templestay are organized, displayed and branded responding to the contemporary needs, is imagined as polished, contemporary and modern. On the contrary, what the visual images of Templestay represent is imagined and discoursed to be Korean traditional culture. In this way, Korean Buddhism was ambivalently imagined and discoursed to be both traditional and modern.

Conclusion

To synthesize the production, textual and reception analysis, Korean Buddhism is imagined and discoursed as a long-standing cultural reservoir/heritage, which has preserved Korean traditional culture from the outer force of modernization and westernization in Korean society, and even as a purifying antidote to the modern lifestyles and individual selves corrupted by the westernization of Korean society. The sensorial and affective experience aroused by the branded visual images of Templestay is articulated with the sentiments of restfulness and relaxation, whose imaginary and imagery have been critically interwoven with the neo-liberal therapeutic discourse of healing in Korean

society. Considerably aligning with each other, the imaginaries invoked by the branding materials of Templestay and those articulated by the focus group participants converge into the imageries of monasticism, tradition, purification and peacefulness.

Fascinatingly, the production analysis reveals that, imagining and discoursing Korean Buddhism in the allegedly modern Korean society, the producers and circulator of the social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism crucially draw on, and employ, what could be called the received Protestant semiotic imaginary, in which clear-cut dichotomies between content and form, and essence and appearance, immaterial and material, and the unchanged and the changing work and further the former is morally prioritized and essentialized over the latter. Aligning and resonating with the semiotic imaginary, the content of Korean Buddhism, identified with its essence, is imagined to be untouched and unchanged by its encounters with the modern technology of new digital media, that is imagined to be a mere form and instrument which cannot influence to, or reshape, the content and essence of Korean Buddhism at all.

The Protestant semiotic imaginary morally prioritizing content over form, essence over appearance, the unchanged over the changing, and the pure and the corrupted, appears to paradoxically invoke the seemingly 'modern' anxiety that primitive tradition identified with essence, the spiritual, the unchanged and the pure might be corrupted by constantly changing modern technology, civilization and lifestyle. The analysis on the interview with the managers of the Templestay branding shows that the modern imaginary of, and anxiety about, the authenticity of tradition critically affects the official decision on which elements should be included or excluded in the photographic images for the

branding of Templestay. In other words, drawing on the Protestant semiotic imaginary and driven by the modern anxiety about authenticity, Korean Buddhism is expected and further prescribed to be not touched by and mingled with any sort of the seemingly Western modern technology and civilization. In and through the brand narrative and visual images of Templestay resonating with the Protestant semiotic imaginary, Korean Buddhism, imagined as spiritual, traditional, immaterial, essential and pure, is morally prioritized and essentialized over modern lifestyle, technology and civilization which are imagined as material, instrumental and corrupted. And this embracement and employment of Protestant semiotic imaginary appears to be interwoven with, or led to, the internalization of the gaze of the West which foreshadows the exoticization of Korean Buddhism. The textual analysis demonstrates that the branded imaginary of Templestay incorporates in itself the Orientalist imagination on the spiritual adventure to the primitive, exotic East in and through which the West expects and desires to find and encounter spirituality, meaningfulness, purity and authenticity that all are imagined as lost or contaminated by Westernized, modernized lifestyle and material culture. Thus, what is imagined as exotic and adventurous in the gaze of the West is considered as most brandable and selling in term of the branding of Templestay.

Lastly, the production and textual analysis finds that the branded imaginary of Templestay is crucially interwoven with neo-liberal discourses on the self, happiness and healing in which the pursuit of individual self-realization is prioritized over other lives and public issues. In particular, the branding narrative of the official Templestay video-clip makes Templestay imagined as being all about caring of the self and finding the true

happiness, which both are considerably align and resonate with the dominant neo-liberal myth on human life where the ultimate purpose of human life is imagined and believed to be the personal pursuit of happiness and further the caring of the self is imagined to be essential to happiness, self-empowerment and self-enterprising that neo-liberal society suggests as the ethics of the self (Banet-Weiser, 2012; Binkley, 2014).

Chapter 7. Conclusion

:Imagining Religion and Modernity in Post-Colonial Korea

The Review of the Analyses of the Social Imaginaries of Korean Protestantism

Production Analysis

The analysis on the interviews with religion journalists and columnists, who systemically produce religion-related news and columns in the Korean mainline newspaper, finds that the professionals' imaginaries of Korean society are carried with the prominent discourses of 'right-left division,' 'partial modernization,' and 'the acceleration of social change.' Through the discourse of right-left division, Korean society is imagined to severely polarize into the conservative and the progressive camp. The discourse of partial modernization articulates and carries a social imaginary where modernity is imagined to have come into Korean society at some point but only partially. Thus Korean society is imagined to fail to fully embrace modernity and accomplish modernization. Lastly, through the discourse of 'the acceleration of social change,' Korean society is imagined to keep changing and its change to keep accelerating.

The analysis highlights that there predominantly emerges neoliberal discourse on the state, society and religion. Neo-liberal discourses on the state and religion appear to be closely related to each other. In and through the neo-liberal discourses, Korean religion is imagined, and further prescribed, to take in charge of the public domain of social welfare and education, while the relinquishment of Korean government from the

public area is imagined to be natural and inevitable. Neo-liberal discourses on society and religion also appear to closely align with each other. To the extent Korean society is imagined as, and identified with, a neo-liberal individual whose self is problematized as an object of knowledge, self-help and therapy, Korean religion is imagined and invited to offer therapy of haven, spirituality, healing and wellbeing to the precarious individual and society in the neo-liberal world.

The most critical point found in the interviews with the religion journalists and columnists, is their frequent employment of what could be called the Protestant semiotic imaginary rigidly dichotomizing between spirit and matter, the immaterial and the material, content and form, the inner mind and the exterior environment, the unmixed and the mixed, and the pure (first) and the corrupted (latter). Drawing on the Protestant dichotomies, religion is divided into the ideational, core, original, authentic, immaterial, and pure one and the institutionalized, secularized, materialized, and corrupted one. The beginning of religions is romanticized as if religion emerges only from a purely immaterial inner mind and spirit of the founders and no political, historical and material conditions interfered in, or contributed to, the formation of inner mind and spirit of the founders. Further, it is imagined that religion is at first an authentic, pure and ontological teaching and that, as time goes on, it has gotten institutionalized, distanced from its first teaching and thus corrupted. In this way, in the interviews, the journalists and columnists readily employed the binary discourse on religion, in particular, relating it to what could be called a modern imaginary or anxiety about modern corruption, institutionalization, secularization, ephemerality and superficiality. In and through this romanticized imaginary

of religion, it is frequently imagined and discoursed that the authentic religion has distanced, or should distance from, the modern corruption of materialism, politics, institutionalization, and secularization.

In this regard, religion in general is imagined to essentially originate from the immaterial, ideational, mental and inner domain of human life and thus it was expected to professionally specialize such domain. And Korean religion is hopefully imagined and invited to take in charge of the immaterial, mental and inner domain of Korean society that was imagined as materialistic. This is likely to be a broader context in which the neo-liberal discourses imagine and invite Korean religion to offer and teach spirituality, meditation, healing and wellbeing to neo-liberal individuals and further the neo-liberal Korean society.

The dichotomy between religion as pure ideas and religion as corrupted institution, turns out to have two different employments in the imaginaries of Korean society, modernity and religion which the journalists and columnists construct and share. First, the dichotomy enables and engenderes the criticism of the contemporary Korean religion. Drawing on the dichotomized imaginary, the discourse of power-orientation and that of indifference to public interest emerge as the criticism of Korean religion which is imagined as too much institutionalized and distanced from its original teaching. In particular, among other religions, Korean Protestantism is frequently imagined to crave power and collude with conservative political power while being indifferent to the public interest of Korean society and pursuing only its private interest. Second, it enables for some to imagine and discourse Korean religion to be a magical space, that is non-political,

immaterial, peaceful, neutral, and thus mediative and integrative, in the right-left divided Korean society.

Textual Analysis

The analysis on the mainline online media coverage of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy in South Korea, finds that the conservative Protestants' protest against the Lady Gaga concert is discoursed as the violation of freedom of expression that is imagined to be essential to democracy and modernity. In and through the discourse, Korean Protestants are imagined not only as an irrational group insufficient to acquire a full citizenship of Korean society but as a critical obstacle in the Korean society's full accomplishment of democracy and modernity. On the contrary, Korean society is imagined and discoursed as, more or less, a rational, democratic and modern one, and the seeming irrationality of Korean Protestantism is othered. Further, there emerges the discourse of 'the enemy of democracy,' which is constructed by the recurring association of Korean Protestantism with Adolf Hitler who has been imagined as one of the most dangerous, violent and brutal enemies of democracy, modernity and humanity. In and through the association with the prevalent imaginary of Hitler, Korean Protestantism comes to be imagined, not as a mere obstacle in the democratization and modernization of Korean society, but as an active enemy whose brutality and insanity must be dangerous for Korean society and whose growth to power must be repressive of Korean society.

Despite such vivid construction of the social category of Korean Protestantism as the irrational, violent and dangerous group, some mainline online media paradoxically finds an inauspicious overlap between Korean Protestantism and Korean society. And this

imagined overlap brings up a self-doubt or self-anxiety about if Korean society is genuinely 'modern.' In and through the liberal media discourse, Korean society is imagined to retrogress to, or remain in, the pre-modern era in the linear time line of world history imagined to progress from the past to the future, from the uncivilized to the modern. In this way, the discourse of partial modernization and the social imaginary of the linear world history, which both are glimpsed in the interviews with the religion journalists and columnists, are re-invoked and re-employed

And the analysis finds that the photographic images of conservative Protestants in the prayer meeting against the Lady Gaga concert successfully represent the Protestants as the irrational, dangerous and abnormal other. The photographic images produce the effects of representing and perpetuating a particular moment of the prayer meeting as the truth revealing the intrinsic nature of the seemingly irrational, dangerous and pre-modern Korean Protestantism. The images likely contribute to the social production of the differences, such as irrationality, insanity, dangerousness and abnormality, which makes Korean Protestantism distinguished from, and makes it look inferior to, the other members of Korean society. Contrary to, but related to, the construction of the social other, the position of the subject, who audiences the irrational, uncivilized, abnormal and inferior other, is likely constructed and invited as the rational, civilized and normal and superior self. The recurring photographic images of the seemingly fanatical Protestants not only likely construct and invite but naturalize and perpetuate the subject position of the rational, civilized, normal and superior self who would repeatedly experience the

ambivalent sentiments of unfamiliarity, fear and superiority while encountering with the images.

The analysis of the mainline online media discourse on the Protestants' traditional fan dance in the 2015 Knife Attack on the U. S. ambassador, finds that the mainline liberal online media re-employed most of the discourses constructing Korean Protestantism as the irrational, pre-modern, inferior and dangerous other in the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy. The photographic images of the Protestants' traditional fan dance appear to well align with, and amplify, the mainline liberal online media discourse in and through which the Protestants' performance wishing for the recovery of the U. S. ambassador is imagined as fanatical, pre-modern, and inferior. Carrying and mediating this imaginary of the pre-modern, inferior and dangerous Korean Protestantism, the mainline online news articles articulate the ambivalent sentiments of both fear and ridicule. To the extent that the Protestants are imagined to be the outmoded and thus inferior other, they make one laugh. But concurrently and reversely, to the extent that they are imagined to be the fanatical and thus dangerous other, they make one terrifying and fearful. Meanwhile delivering some prominent Western media's reaction to the Protestants' seemingly fanatical fear for, and worshiping attitude toward, the United States, the mainline liberal online news articles articulate the sense and sentiment of shamefulness as well. The desire of Korean society for the recognition of the West was detected both from the Protestants worshiping the United States and the mainline liberal newspapers keeping aware of the Western media's reaction to the Protestants.

It is the discourses of 'migae (the uncivilized)' which, in the phase of the 2015 knife attack on the U. S. ambassador, not only best capture but is critically predicated on both the prevalent sentiment of shamefulness and the desire of Koreans to emulate, and to be recognized by, other advanced Western countries. Through the discourse, Korean society is imagined to remain uncivilized, pre-modern, irrational, chaotic and hopeless. Ordinary online newspaper readers popularly and frequently employed the 'migae' discourse as they commented on the news articles covering the Korean traditional fan dance performance. And the analysis show that the discourse of 'migae (the uncivilized),' with that of 'hell-joseon,' inevitably naturalizes and thickens the social imaginary of the linear world history where other advanced Western countries are imagined to have already progressed from the pre-modern to the modern to the late-modern.

Reception Analysis

The analysis of the focus group interview with the atheist/agnostic group finds that the atheist/agnostic participants predominantly employ the discourses of 'power-orientation' and 'indifference to public interest,' revealed in the interviews with the religion journalists and columnists as well, in order to articulate their previous imaginaries of Korean Protestantism. In and through the discourses, Korean Protestantism is imagined to crave power and collude with conservative political power while only pursuing its own private interest. The analysis also finds that, in the social imaginaries of the atheist/agnostic participants, conservative Protestantism was being over-represented. In their social imaginaries, there is no distinguished category of conservative Protestantism from the general Korean Protestantism. Meanwhile, the Protestant group predominantly brought up

the social imaginary where Korean Protestantism is imagined as irrationally infatuated with its own non-secular world, which was already glimpsed in the media representation of the prayer meeting against the 2012 Lady Gaga concert.

Noting the differentiation of the words among 'Geundae (Modern),' 'Hyeondae (Contemporary)' and 'Modeon (Modernistic/Refined)', the analysis finds that, in the participants' social imaginaries, Korean Protestantism is imagined to be not only the irrational and stubborn other, but the pre-modern other remaining unenlightened and uncivilized in the past, that is to say, the distant other falling behind from the present in the singular, linear historical time where Korean society is imagined to remain behind than the West as well but mostly ahead than Korean Protestantism.

Meanwhile, after exposed to the photographic images of the prayer meeting and the traditional fan dance, the participants in both groups expressed the ambivalent sentiments of both ridicule and fear, as the mainline online news articles expressed them carrying and mediating the imaginary of the pre-modern, inferior and dangerous Korean Protestantism. In the encounter with the images, they carry and invoke the imaginary, that Korean Protestants are irrationally infatuated with its own non-secular world, with the verbal articulations such as "irrational" and "not listen to others." A Protestant participant expressed the sentiment of shamefulness and confusion, failing to differentiating herself from the Protestants in the images. But the most dominant sentiment articulated in the encounter with the images is fear. The participants employed the words such as 'scary,' 'horrifying' and 'terrified' to articulate their affective and sensorial experience on the images.

The Review of the Analyses of the Social Imaginaries of Korean Buddhism

Production Analysis

The analysis of the interviews with the managers of the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism finds that their branding practice in new digital social media is imagined and discourses as a sort of making and sustaining individual, communicative, affective and authentic relationships between Templestay and its target audiences, rather than disseminating its discrete message to the mass. Although the managers imagine television broadcast as the most efficient channel for the branding of Templestay, it is digital social media that they imagine as the space where the most important and successful way of branding has been done and should be done. Given such desire to shape authentic, communicative, and friend-like relationships between Templestay and potential tourists online, social imaginaries that the managers carried, mediated and articulated within the relationships that they hope to create, turn out to be very critical.

The analysis finds that the managers prominently employ the dichotomies between 'the traditional' and 'the modern,' 'the traditional' and 'the Western,' 'content' and 'form,' and 'essence' and 'appearance. Drawing on the dichotomies, the managers identify Korean Buddhism with content, essence and the traditional. On the contrary, they associate the new digital media they employ for the branding of Templestay with form, appearance and the modern. New digital media is imagined to be purely technological. Both new digital

media and technology are imagined as formal, peripheral and modern. Korean Buddhism is imagined to be purely traditional. And both Korean Buddhism and tradition are imagined as a sort of content and essence that should be preserved from the modern, while the modern was imaged as corruption in any way.

In the interviews, there emerges what could be called a modern imaginary or anxiety that tradition imagined as having never been touched by, and mixed with, exterior civilization, might be corrupted by current modern culture, technology and civilization. The analysis finds that such modern anxiety on tradition actually affect the official decision on which elements should be included or excluded in photographic images for the branding of Templestay. For instance, the propeller ceiling fan and Nike shoes had to be removed from the branded photographic images of Templestay. In the branded imaginary, Korean Buddhism is expected and even prescribed to be not touched by and mingled with any sort of the seemingly Western and modern civilization. In this way, based on the dichotomies between 'the traditional' and 'the Western,' 'the traditional' and 'the modern,' there arises the discourse of exoticism in and through which Korean Buddhism is imagined as the exotic and primitive other in the gaze of the West. In the interviews with the managers, the gaze of the West appears to keep being recalled and internalized. And the analysis finds that the incorporating of the discourse and imaginary of 'adventure,' borrowed from Western news media, into the branding slogan of Templestay is symptomatic of the internalization of the gaze of the West.

Lastly, the analysis finds that what the managers of the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism discourse and imagine about the self, happiness and how to accomplish it,

crucially resonates, and is interwoven, with the neo-liberal social imaginary where the individual self is prioritized than others and the collective social world. In the interview, searching for and knowing one's true self are expected and prescribed as an ethical practice to achieve the goal of life, which is imagined to be happiness, to make not only oneself happy but also others happy, and further to solve not only individual problems but social problems.

Textual Analysis

The analysis of the texts and visual images employed for the branding of Templestay, illuminates that Templestay explicitly and actively associates itself with the Western, modern imaginary of authenticity. In particular, the branding slogans of Templestay and the introduction text in the English official website turn out to fail to correctly deliver and illuminate the original Buddhist teaching of the self and no-self. Rather, they appear to resonate and align with the modern and Western imaginary of authenticity that is submitted as a moral ideal of the self and further with the rhetoric of spiritual tourism which offers a romanticized imaginary where one is imagined to find and fulfill one's true self through the exotic, educational, moral and authentic experience of adventure to the sacred sites and heritages.

Meanwhile, the analysis of the English Templestay video clip finds that it constructs and mediates a particular social imaginary in which the metropolitan modern life is imagined to be busy, distracted, artificial, and greedy while the life in Templestay is imagined to be peaceful, nature-friendly, humble and simple. The analysis note that the brand narrative of Templestay is constructed in the video clip as follows:

You lost your true happiness while being alienated and corrupted by the metropolitan environment which has shaped the greedy, busy and distracted lifestyle. But the nature-friendly, peaceful and relaxing experience of Templestay will be a spiritual antidote to your toxic lifestyle and inner self. It will purify your corrupted habits, body, mind, and above all your inner true self. And thus it will make you find your true self and happiness.

The analysis finds that such branding narrative makes Templestay imagined and discoursed as being all about caring of the self and finding the true happiness, which considerably align with the dominant neo-liberal social imaginary where the individual self is always prioritized than others and the collective social world and the ultimate purpose of human life is imagined to be the personal pursuit of happiness.

The visual representation of Templestay, including the branded images of Buddhist monks, participants in Templestay, Korean Buddhist temple, food, and nature around the temple, appears to be crucially predicated on the brand narrative. For instance, the photographic images of participants in meditation, traditional and antique Korean Buddhist temple and beautiful nature around them, are frequently employed to shape and mediate the imaginary and imagery of the monasticism and peacefulness of Korean Buddhism. The imaginary of Korean Buddhism purifying modern corruption, is critically constructed and mediated by a variety of photographic images of meditation, clean nature, children and organic temple food. Lastly, the analysis on the visual images of Templestay illuminates that the imaginary of the pure and innocent Korean Buddhism is critically shaped, carried and mediated, particularly, by the imagery of child that the branding of Templestay frequently

employs. The image of child invested to Korean Buddhism is likely to help it get positively imagined as a purifying antidote to modern corruption and thus have an attractive, but still non-political, public image.

Reception Analysis

On the question asking their previous thoughts and feelings about Korean Buddhism, both groups of Protestant and atheist/agnostic participants invoke the imaginaries of monasticism, tradition, purification and healing. The participants' imaginary that Korean Buddhism is monastic, long-standing and traditional made them reluctant to relate Korean Buddhism with the concepts of 'geundae, (modern)' 'hyeondae (contemporary),' and 'modeon (modernistic).' Contrary to the overall reluctance of the participants to associate Korean Buddhism with 'geundae,' 'hyeondae,' and 'modeon,' however, Templestay is imagined as the only 'modeon' thing in Korean Buddhism.

Meanwhile, in the encounter with the branded visual images of Templestay, most participants expressed their imaginaries and feelings on the visual images with the verbal articulations concentrated on the ideas of rest and relaxation, whose imaginary and imagery have been critically interwoven with the neo-liberal therapeutic discourse of healing in Korean Society. The imaginary of monasticism is also often invoked and carried. And participants in both groups consciously and unconsciously associate the imaginary of monasticism with the sensorial experience of relaxation. The analysis finds that the imaginary and imagery of the 'monastic' self crucially aligns with what the 'healing' discourse suggests as the moral ideal of the self, where one is expected to keep one's inner self calm and peaceful without anguish and agony, distanced from the extreme

distraction, corruption and brutality of the outer neo-liberal reality that is rarely imagined as changeable. Lastly, aligning with, and reminding of, the dichotomies between content and form, the traditional and the modern, which the R&D manager employed, the way how the visual images of Templestay are organized, displayed, and branded responding to the contemporary needs, was imagined discoursed as polished, contemporary and modern. On the contrary, what the visual images of Templestay represent was imagined as Korean traditional culture. In this way, in the focus group interviews, Korean Buddhism is ambivalently imagined and discoursed as both traditional and modern.

New Digital Media and Social Imaginaries

This dissertation illuminates the significant role and working of new digital mediation technology and culture in the formation and circulation of contemporary social imaginaries of religion and modernity in Korean society. The production, textual and reception analyses in chapter 5 and 6 vividly capture the mobility and circularity of social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism, Buddhism and modernity. They show how certain photographic images, verbal expressions and discourses mediating and carrying the imaginaries are being multi-directionally circulated and shared in and through digital space. New digital mediation technology enables and affords a variety of human and nonhuman social actors such as journalists, brand managers, texts, visual images, online commenters, scholars, and interviewees to institutionally, individually, and collectively participate into, and experience, the production, mediation and circulation of social imaginaries.

In this regard, digital space is truly a place of social formation where particular social imaginaries, discourses, and the media materials carrying them are tremendously and multi-directionally moving, circulating and being shared. For instance, the Orientalist discourse of adventure was brought from Western mainline press to the producers of the Templestay branding. And, by new digital mediation technology, the imaginary and discourse of adventure was materialized into particular digital media contents of Templestay that can be circulated and shared. In addition, the photographic images of the fanatically praying Korean Protestants were disseminated from Korean mainline online media to the Western mainline media and social media sphere. In reverse, the comment of the Western mainline online media to the images were re-introduced to Korean society by the Korea liberal mainline online media. The discourses and wordings of 'power-oriented religion,' 'partial-modernization,' 'migae,' and 'healing' were being simultaneously invoked, employed and shared by, not only the producers of social imaginaries and the digital media contents carrying them, but the focus group participants exposed to them. The analyses of this dissertation project shows that new digital media not only multi-directionally connects a variety of social actors having different physical locations, social positions, language and culture with each other, but shapes and affords a variety of interrelated social spaces in which social imaginaries can be mediated, materialized, circulated and shared among the social actors even in a global scale. New digital media turns out to be crucial in the mobility and circularity of social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism, Buddhism and modernity through which the collective

understanding, habitus and sensorial experience of Korean people on the religions, the social and the modern, are constructed.

The Affective and Sensorial Experience on the Modern, Korean Protestantism and Korean Buddhism in Digital Space

As highlighted in chapter 2, social imaginaries are “constellations of imaginary understanding of the world which directly arise from embodied experience and which are shared with other bodies that have similar experience of the world (Dawney, 2011, p. 542).” In other words, social imaginaries are likely to make people who share the imaginaries feel and experience quite the same about particular social categories and objects that are imagined, posited, understood and located in the imaginaries. Partly, this dissertation project explores the relationship among social imaginary, the media materials carrying it, and the body and sensorial experience affected and shaped by the circulation of them. And the affective, bodily and sensorial experiences shaped in and by particular social imaginary, which is the non-representational, is tracked by the representational that is the verbal cues of the focus group interview participants.

In the encounter with the media images carrying and mediating the social imaginary, a Protestant participant in the focus group expressed the sentiment of shamefulness and confusion while feeling hard to differentiate oneself from the Protestants in the images. While some participants stated that they feel the ambivalent sentiments of both ridicule and fear toward the images, most participants dominantly articulated their affective experience of fear by employing the words such as ‘scary,’ ‘horrifying’ and

'terrified.' The participants' sentiments of shamefulness, ridicule and fear correspond to the overall affective expressions revealed in the mainline liberal media coverage on the two incidents. It appears that the sentiments of shamefulness, ridicule and fear toward Korean Protestantism are socially produced, mediated and circulated in the phases of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 Knife attack on the U. S. ambassador and that the participants in the focus group interviews as well share, carry and embody the social imaginary which the the mainline liberal online media formed, carried and mediated.

Meanwhile, in the encounter with the branded texts and images of Templestay carrying the social imaginary, most participants in the focus group interviews expressed their affective, sensorial experience of relaxation, restfulness and calmness. And such feelings well align and resonate with both the imaginary of monasticism and the neo-liberal therapeutic discourse of healing which the branding of Templestay explicitly tries to incorporate into itself. Considering that similar bodies collectively sharing particular social imaginary are likely to have similar affective response to particular media image and text, the social imaginary which the participants in the focus group interviews share, carry and embody, appears to substantially overlap with the branded imaginary produced, mediated and circulated by the branding of Templestay. Thus, the sentiments of relaxation, restfulness and calmness toward Korean Buddhism are likely to be socially produced, mediated and circulated in and through the branding of Templestay, given the participants' feelings invoked by the brand images, and the contemporary brand and digital media culture in which people actively participate into the searching, showing, sharing and circulating of branded materials.

Historical Perspective on Social Imaginaries of the Modern, Korean Protestantism and Korea Buddhism

Considering that social imaginary is a sort of imaginary understanding of the world that is collectively shared, Korean Protestantism, Korean Buddhism and modernity can be thought of as an imaginary social category which is posited, understood and experienced as reality in and through the social imaginaries collectively shared by Koreans. The mainline liberal media in the phases of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy, the 2015 Knife attack and the branding of Templestay, crucially carries, mediates and circulates the social imaginaries where the imaginary of modernity, Korean Protestantism and Korean Buddhism is interwoven with each other. And the analysis shows that the imaginary relationships among modernity, Korean Protestantism and Korean Buddhism have been constantly changed along the modern Korean history up to the present.

The current social imaginary imagining and discoursing Korean Protestantism as the pre-modern, irrational and inferior other, is fascinating particularly considering the modern Korean history in which Korean Protestantism has been the symbol of Westernization, modernization and civilization (Cho, 2006; Kim, 2011; Lee, 2000; Jang, 1999). For instance, most of early modern Korean intellectuals and political elites who embraced Western Protestantism, strongly believed that Protestantism would make their motherland civilized and modernized to save Korea from other powers such as China, Russia and Japan. And the new education and medical service that Western Protestant missionaries brought into Korea, represented the advance and superiority of the Western

modern civilization (Lee, 2000, p. 148; Yang, 2010, pp. 221-222). In addition, right after Korean war, in the process of establishing the new government of South Korea, Korean Protestantism showed its strong connection with the United States which is indelibly associated with modernization and Westernization in the social imaginary Koreans share. Further, in the 1960s and 1970s when South Korea achieved the so-called 'compressed modernization,' Korean Protestantism also accomplished an incredible growth aligning with the intensification of urbanization, industrialization and westernization of Korean society. In this way, in the modern Korean history, Korean Protestantism has been inseparable from the social imaginaries of civilization, modernization, and Westernization.

More importantly, the discourses which Korean Protestantism employed and circulated to justify its superiority and authenticity over other religion in the early modern Korea, have undeniably affected how the early modern Koreans imagined and discoursed on what the modern is. First, Protestantism asserted and suggested the separation between religion and politics as the condition and principle of the modern state and as the significant criteria to judge what the authentic modern religion is. Second, the making of the modern nation-state was imagined and understood revolving around the discourse of civilization (Kim, 2002; p. 94). And, as stated earlier, Protestantism was thought of as the symbol and basis of Western civilization by the early modern intellectuals and ordinary people in Korea (Cho, 2006; Kim, 2011; Lee, 2000; Jang, 1999). Third, Protestant discourse differentiating religion from shamanism, religion from philosophy, was popularly circulated and employed in the early modern Korea. The Protestant discourse pushed almost every traditional Korean religion into the category of superstition/shamanism or

philosophy/ethics. The intellectual tradition of Korean Confucianism and Buddhism came to be understood as a mere philosophy and ethics while their popular ritual and tradition as shamanism (Lee, 2000, p.161). In the Protestant discourse, superstition and shamanism are critically accused of its irrationality and barbarism which both are imagined as the opposite of the modern. Protestantism contributed to disseminating among Korean people what could be called the modern dichotomy between religion and philosophy, religion and superstition.

All the discourses of civilization, the separation between religion and politics, and the dichotomy between modern religion and traditional shamanism, have been crucially incorporated into the social imaginaries of the modern world. The analysis of this dissertation project demonstrates that it is in and through the received Protestant discourse on religion and modernity that the contemporary Korean Protestantism comes to be imagined and understood as the pre-modern, uncivilized and inferior other, paradoxically. First of all, some religion columnists such as S. T. Ha and M. S. Han crucially employed the discourse of the separation between politics and religion when they submitted the collusion of Korean Protestantism with conservative political power as the proof of partial modernization. And the 'migaе (the uncivilized)' discourse, in and through which some Protestants' traditional fan dance are submitted as the proof of the irrational, pre-modern and uncivilized mentality of the Korean nation, is undeniably based on, and appropriates as self-parody, the discourse of civilization through which not only Protestantism acquired its hegemony in the early modern Korea but also Western and Japanese imperialists including Protestant missionaries looked down on the Korean nation.

Lastly, it was the Protestant stigmatizing of shamanism as pre-modern and uncivilized that enabled the mainline liberal online media to imagine the Protestants in the prayer meeting against the Lady Gaga concert and the Korean traditional fan dance as the pre-modern and uncivilized other.

To sum up, there has been a critical change in the imaginary relationship between Korean Protestantism and the modern in the social imaginary that Koreans share. In the early modern Korea, Protestantism was more or less identified with civilization and modernity. In the contemporary era, however, it is imagined as their opposite: the uncivilized and the pre-modern. But, ironically, the historical perspective shows that the Protestant imaginary and discourse on religion and modernity which were received in the early modern Korea, is still pervasively working in Korean society as the criteria which Korean people employ to judge if Korean Protestantism is modern or not. The analysis in chapter 5 finds that the interviewed religion journalists' discourse on religion and this early modern Protestant discourse on religion and modernity share the rigid dichotomies between spirit and matter, immaterial and material, content and form, the unmixed and the mixed and the pure and the corrupted. Keane (2007) calls this rigid dichotomy Calvinism's semiotic ideology while Meyer (2014) does Protestant bias and legacy. More interestingly, the Protestant semiotic imaginary crucially re-emerges in the branding narrative of Templestay and the interview with the managers of the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism, the producers of social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism.

Contrary to Korean Protestantism associated with the imaginary and imagery of civilization, Westernization, modernization and urbanization, Korean Buddhism had been

understood and imagined as the religion of tradition and monasticism before the launching of Templestay. Korean Buddhism was not able to make its voice in the public sphere of the late Joseon until Japanese Buddhism helped the abolition of the relation that had prohibited Buddhist monks from entering the capital of Joseon (Lee, 2000, p. 149; Kim, 2012, p. 71). It was thought of as the religion of hermit and of children and women (Lee, 2000; p. 149), who were rarely imagined to be a public and political existence. Even in the Japanese colonial period when a variety of reformist movement was made in Korean Buddhism, the overall image of monasticism was prevailed and sustained among ordinary Korean people (Yang, 2010, p. 223).

There were some crucial efforts in Korean Buddhism to modernize itself including the destruction of celibacy, the allowance of meat-eating and the learning from Japanese Buddhism that was already substantially modernized in its systemic management and scholarly research on Buddhist philosophy. But since the Chogyae Order came to hold hegemony by means of the intervention of Seung-Man Lee, the first president of South Korea, under the name of the purification of Korean Buddhism from Japanese colonial vestige in the 1950s, such efforts to modernize Korean Buddhism have come to be increasingly stigmatized as the pro-Japanese acts which corrupted the alleged original and authentic tradition of Korean Buddhism. In this way, Korean Buddhism which has come to be represented by the Chogyae Order since the 1950s, has successfully othered the prior efforts to reform and modernize itself which were actually made within Korean Buddhism. The destruction of celibacy, the allowance of meat-eating and the learning from Japanese Buddhism are excluded from, and erased in, the imagined history of the alleged authentic,

original Korean Buddhism. Korean Buddhism successfully constructed the seemingly ahistorical self-identity: the authentic inheritor and guardian which has protected the uncontaminated teaching, practice and history of Korean Buddhism and tradition (Cho, 2010, pp. 600- 602).

In a sense, Templestay is an institutional branding strategy and practice to make this 'ahistorically' imagined self-identity of Korean Buddhism into a sort of social imaginary which a lot of people could share, participate into and experience. And as highlighted in chapter 6, new digital media is crucial not only in mediating, materializing, visualizing, carrying and circulating the social imaginary but in encouraging and enabling people to participate into and experience intimacy and authenticity in the branded imaginary. But what is most noteworthy in this making of the self-identity of Korean Buddhism into the branded imaginary of Korean Buddhism, is the recurring discourse of purification and the dichotomies between purity and impurity, corruption and preservation, modernization and Korean Buddhism. It is the obsessive dichotomy between the purity of Korean Buddhism and the impurity of Japanese Buddhism and modernization, that underlie and enable the construction of the ahistorical self-identity of Korean Buddhism. It prevents the histories of the collusion with Japanese Buddhism, including the destruction of celibacy and the allowance of meat-eating, from entering into the self-constructed imaginary of the authentic, original Korean Buddhism.

This shows that the branding narrative of Templestay is also predicated on the rigid binary between the pure and the corrupted, the purity of Korean Buddhism and the corruption of the outer modern world. Chapter 6 finds that, imagining and discoursing

Korean Buddhism in the allegedly modernized Korean society, the producers of social imaginaries of Korean Buddhism also crucially draw on, and employ, the Protestant semiotic imaginary dichotomizing content and form, essence and appearance, immaterial and material and the unchanged and the changing. And aligning and resonating with the semiotic imaginary, the branding narrative of Templestay appears to morally and essentially prioritize the former over the latter.

The semiotic imaginary desiring the purification of the latter, appears to paradoxically invoke what could be called the modern anxiety that primitive tradition identified with essence, the spiritual, the unchanged and the pure, might be corrupted by constantly changing modern technology, civilization and lifestyle. The analysis on the interview with the managers of the Templestay branding finds that the modern imaginary of, or anxiety about, the authenticity of tradition critically affects their official decision on which elements should be included or excluded in the photographic images for the branding of Templestay. In other words, drawing on the Protestant semantic imaginary and driven by the modern anxiety about authenticity, Korean Buddhism is expected and further prescribed not to be touched by, and mingled with, any sort of the seemingly Western modern technology and civilization. In and through the brand narrative and visual images of Templestay resonating with the Protestant semiotic imaginary, Korean Buddhism, imagined as spiritual, traditional, immaterial, essential and pure, is morally essentialized and prioritized over the modern lifestyle, technology and civilization which are imagined as material, instrumental and corrupted.

This embracement and employment of the Protestant semiotic imaginary appears to be interwoven with, or led to, the internalization of the gaze of the West foreshadowing the exoticization of Korean Buddhism. The textual analysis in chapter 6 demonstrates that the branded imaginary of Templestay incorporates in itself the Orientalist imagination of the spiritual adventure to the primitive, exotic East in and through which the West expects and desires to find and encounter spirituality, meaningfulness, purity and authenticity that all are imagined as lost or contaminated by Westernized, modernized lifestyle and material culture.

Contrary to the purified self-imaginary and imagery of Korean Buddhism, however, it was not separable between impurity and purity, Japanese Buddhism and Korean Buddhism, in the early modern Korea. This is because, for Korean Buddhism, the modernization of itself was imagined and understood only by the mediation of Japanese Buddhism. In the colonial context of the early modern Korea, the boundary between Japanese and Korean Buddhism could not be purely and clearly cut. The modernization of Korean Buddhism and the preserving of Korean Buddhist identity by resisting Japanese colonialism, were incompatible but neither one was abandonable. The easiest way to solve this dilemma was to stigmatize the modernizing efforts as the pro-Japanese acts which corrupt the purity of Korean Buddhist tradition and other them as if nothing was changed and modernized in Korean Buddhism.

This kind of dilemma recurs in the branding of Templestay. Despite the self-constructed imaginary of Korean Buddhism as uncontaminated from and further purifying the outer modern world, the analysis of this dissertation project finds that the branding of

Templestay is undeniably interwoven with the late-modern branding rhetoric and discourse of the self, happiness and life. Further it is also critically based on the modern technology of new digital media which not only enable the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism to systemically visualize, mediate and circulate the self-constructed imaginary but enable people to participate into the imaginary and to experience intimacy and authenticity in it, to the extent it appears to be a sort of social imaginary in which people can understand their and other existence, feel secure and authentic, and share an ethical or moral frame. And such active appropriation of the late-modern media technology and cultural rhetoric would be the reason why Korean Buddhism is ambivalently imagined and felt as both traditional and modern by the focus group participants.

Social Imaginaries of Korean Protestantism, Korean Buddhism, Modernity and History in Post-Colonial Korea

In the phases of the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 knife attack on the U. S. ambassador, the mainline liberal online media formed, carried and mediated a social imaginary where Korean Protestantism is imagined and understood as an irrational, aggressive and uncivilized group which comes to be the enemy of, and obstacle to, the full democratization and modernization of Korean society. While some mainline liberal media try to differentiate Korean Protestantism from Korean society, other mainline liberal media find an overlap between the two. What is revealed in the divided responses to the anxiety on the democracy and modernity of Korean society, is the social imaginary, prevalent in Korean society, where it is imagined that modernity, existed outside Korea,

came into Korean society, that was not modern at all, at some point but only partially and that Korean society failed to fully embrace modernity and accomplish modernization. For some othering Korean Protestantism, it is submitted as the cause of this failure. For others imagining Korean Protestantism as a part of the whole Korean society, it is submitted as the proof of the failure. In either way, the mainline liberal online media in general forms, mediates and carries the social imaginary of the linear world history where civilization in general is imagined to progress from the pre-modern to the modern to the late-modern in its secular and universal historical time. And in and through this imaginary of the linear world history, Korean society is imagined to still remain in, or even retrogresses to, the pre-modern stage in its historical transition in the phases of the the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy and the 2015 knife attack on the U. S. ambassador.

The critical difference made the 2015 knife attack on the U. S. ambassador distinguished from the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy is the massive circulation and employment of the 'migae (the uncivilized)' discourse in the mainline online media and social media space. What the active circulation and employment of the 'migae (the uncivilized)' discourse illuminates, is not merely the working of the social imaginary of the linear world history where Korea is imagined to still remain in, or even retrogresses to, the pre-modern stage in its imagined historical transition. Rather it reveals that the social imaginary, which already began to be formed and circulated, revolving around the media representation of the seemingly fanatical Protestants in the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy, has increasingly thickened, disseminated, and developed to the extent that it acquires the popular social discourse of 'migae' through which Koreans come to be able to more

vividly capture, carry, circulate and share the imaginary. Further, it demonstrates that the imaginary and imagery of the uncivilized, that was intermittently associated with Korean Protestantism in the 2012 Lady Gaga controversy, has increasingly colored the overall social imaginary of Korean society by the time of the 2015 knife attack on the U. S. ambassador.

Meanwhile, in and through the branding of Templestay, the Cultural Corps of Korean Buddhism constructed, carried and mediated an imaginary where Korean Buddhism is imagined and understood as a cultural and historical heritage which has preserved for a long time tradition, monasticism, spirituality, essence and authenticity which all are imagined as what the outer modernized and Westernized world has lost. In the branded imaginary that aligns and resonates with the modern imaginary of authenticity, the modern individual is imagined to lose one's authentic inner self in and by the modern world which is imagined to be urban, artificial, technological, inauthentic and corrupted. And aligning with the neo-liberal discourse on the self, Korean Buddhism and tradition are imagined and expected to be a therapeutic space in which one could purify the corruption made by the outer modern world which is imagined to stain and alienate one's authentic self. As for the social imaginary of history which the branding of Templestay mediates and carries, Korean history is imagined and discoursed as dichotomized between tradition and the modern times, as if what is imagined as Korean tradition has never been touched by and mingled with exterior culture, technology and civilization before the arrival of the Western modern culture, technology and civilization in Korea.

In both social imaginaries carried, mediated and circulated by the branding of Templestay and the mainline liberal online media, world history is imagined and discoursed as the matter of transition which sounds more or less linear and teleological. While Korean history makes transition from tradition to the modern times identified with Westernization in the social imaginary circulated by the branding of Templestay, in the social imaginary circulated by the mainline liberal online media, world history is imagined to make transition from the pre-modern to the modern to the late-modern stage where other advanced Western countries already arrived. Aligning and resonating with the European idea of the universal and singular History, this transition narrative makes modernity “look not simply global but rather as something became global over time, by originating in one place (Europe) and then spreading outside it (Chakrabarty, 2000, p.7).” What is rarely imagined and discoursed by the mainline liberal online media and the branding of Templestay, is a possibility that Korea might already possess particular traits of what is imagined as the modern even before it encountered the West, which Alexander Woodside critically demonstrates in *Lost Modernities* (2006), or a possibility that modernity could be the matter of cultural translation, through which a variety of different modernities would be enabled.

The vividness of the imaginary of the linear world History in the current social imaginaries of Korean society, however, does not have to be read as the mere dominance of Western social imaginary in Korean society and the subjection of Korean people to the imperial Western imaginary of time and world history. If my analysis of social imaginaries of time and history in Korean society sounds like that, it would be likely because the

notions such as “Korean modernity” and “Western modernity,” that are intended to deconstruct and criticize the Western-centric idea of the singular modernity, are found to be themselves paradoxically essentializing and thus contradicting the very deconstruction and critique of the idea they pursue to engender. I frequently employ such notions of Korean modernity and Western modernity in this dissertation while trying to criticize the universalized idea and imaginary of the singular, linear modernity, and they more or less tend to offer an impression, that there is already a fixed boundary between the West and Korea, Western modernity and Korean modernity, and the essence of each of them, which I do not aim to make and demonstrate. Let me exposit this point.

In fact, contrary to this unintended impression generated by the uses of the notions such as Korea/Korean and the West/Western, what this dissertation has attempted is to complicate what the modern is and to refract the Western-centric social imaginary of modernity in which the non-West is imagined to confront modernity only by the arrival of the West. For instance, as surveyed in chapter 3, it was Japanese Buddhism that played the prominent role as the mediating transmitter of Western civilization and the rationalization and systematization of Buddhist institution in the modernization of Korean Buddhism. This triangular relationship among Korean Buddhism, Western civilization and Japanese Buddhism problematizes and complicates the received social imaginary of Korean (the non-West)’s confrontation with the West in and through which, it is believed, Korean society was only modernized. Further, as already argued in chapter 2, the Korean embryonic bureaucracies, predicated on clear rules, and meritocratic civil service examinations, already achieved “the rationalization process we think of as

modern” in the 1400s, which is conventionally imagined as the age of ‘tradition’ and even before when Europe began to imagine itself as the modern (Woodside, 2006, p. 1).

Considering the above discussion, to regard the prevalent working of the imaginary of the linear, progressive world History in Korean society merely as the unilateral dominance of the West in Korean society and the subjection of Korean people to the imperial Western imaginary, might be rather the result of being easily captured by the received binary model of the non-West’s ‘modern’ confrontation with the West and by the binary model of history dichotomizing between tradition and modernity. Contrary to the conventional social imaginary of the modernization of Korea, it is not that Korean society was pure and traditional before the arrival of the Western modern civilization in 1876 and then abruptly dominated, colonized and corrupted by it. As stated in chapter 3, the first introduction of Western culture/civilization to Korea happened long before 1876 when the Japan-Korea Treaty was made, which is conventionally considered as the starting point of modernization of Korean society. It is 1784 when Western scientific knowledge and technology came into Joseon and after that, they gradually developed into a religious movement called Seohak (Cho, 1993). It is a modern myth to imagine that cultural exchange on a global scale was only enabled in recent ‘modern’ days. In the myth of modern cultural exchange, there is an idea or imaginary of ‘rupture’ characterizing modernity (Bhambra, 2007). However, as Appiah (2006) puts it, “living culture do not, in any case, evolve from purity into contamination; change is more a gradual transformation from one mixture to a new mixture.”

Yes. Social imaginaries are such a mixture, that is, constellations of a variety of imaginaries whose relationships, and themselves, are gradually transformed. Although we cannot easily avoid calling them Korean or Western in specifying, thinking, analyzing and criticizing them in this dissertation project, in effect, the Korean has never been purely and exclusively Korean and the Western has never been purely and exclusively Western as much as what we call the modern, such as the global spread and hybridization of culture, has never been exclusively modern in that, as Appiah (2006) highlights, they are not a recent development at all.¹⁰⁴ The historical survey on the encounters of Korean Buddhism and Protestantism with the modern in chapter 3, well demonstrates this point. Despite the post-colonial desire of purification, which was embodied into Korean society's othering of Korean Protestantism and the self-exoticization of Korean Buddhism, Korean Protestantism has never been purely pre-modern and uncivilized as much as Korean Buddhism has never been purely traditional and Korean.

For some, Korean Protestantism would be still imagined as the symbol of modernization and civilization while, for others, it is imagined as the enemy of them. For some, Korean Buddhism would be still imagined as traditional while, for others, it is imagined as modern especially in terms of the branding of Templestay. In this way, there are different imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism which are being simultaneously formed or dissolved in the post-colonial Korea. And, according to Mbembe (2007), the collision between the imaginaries that are being formed and those being

¹⁰⁴ Appiah, K. A. (2006). The case for contamination. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/01/magazine/01cosmopolitan.html?pagewanted=all>

dissolved are the intrinsic nature of postcolony.¹⁰⁵ This collision is sometimes called the contemporaneity of the uncontemporary (Bloch, 1932) where the pre-modern, the modern and the post-modern, which cannot co-exist under the European imaginary of the linear world history, exist altogether (Kim, 1999; Kim, 2010). In the postcolonial context where the being formed and the being dissolved are brought into collision, Mbembe (2001) argues, “we need to go beyond the binary categories used in standard interpretations of domination, such as resistance vs. passivity, autonomy vs. subjection, state vs. civil society, hegemony vs. counter-hegemony (p. 103).” Such insight on the postcolonial social space including Korea, offers one more reason for us not to think of the prevalent working of the imaginary of the linear world history in the current social imaginaries of Korean society as the mere proof of colonial passivity or subjection. As Jeremy Weate (2003) puts Mbembe’s thinking of the post-colonial African lived experience, social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism are “a messy intertwining of ruler and ruled, oppressed and oppressor, executed and executioner; a nonlinear controlled chaos that resists Western Manichean modes of analysis, requiring a new form of writing to capture the imaginary at work (p. 33).” And this dissertation is just the beginning of this writing to capture the post-colonial social imaginaries in South Korea on their constant making, mediating (and being mediated), circulating and transforming.

¹⁰⁵ Mbembe, A. (2007). Africa in motion: An interview with the post-colonialism theoretician Achille Mbembe. Retrieved from <http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/africa-motion-interview-post-colonialism-theoretician-achille-mbembe>.

The notion of the post-colonial “refers to a timespace which is simultaneously in the process of being formed and of being dissolved through a movement that brings both the being formed and the being dissolved into collision.”

Concluding Remarks

As illuminated in the introduction chapter, as much as religion, mediation, imagination and materiality have been peripheral issues to the field of Korean media and cultural studies, South Korea has been more or less the periphery of the religion and media scholarship. And this dissertation has attempted to explore the intersection and interplay of these overlooked research interests, by interweaving the themes of modernity, neo-liberalism, imagination, mediation, embodiment, and religion and digital media in South Korea with each other. This dissertation conceptually and analytically captures the formation, mediation and circulation of the contemporary social imaginaries of Korean Protestantism and Buddhism and the underlying imaginaries of modernity and history in which Korean Protestantism and Buddhism are situated, prescribed and moralized. It shows how the imaginaries are materialized and embodied into particular affective, sensorial experience on Korean Protestantism and Buddhism. Further, the dissertation has tried to reveal the historical continuity, rupture and transformation of the relationships among the imaginaries of modernity, Korean Buddhism and Korean Protestantism and to unpack and accentuate what politico-economic, historical conditions have affected the construction and transformation of the relationships among the imaginaries. Lastly this dissertation has attempted to highlight the significant role and working of new digital mediation technology and culture in the formation and circulation of contemporary social imaginaries of religion and modernity in Korean society.

Through these attempts, I expect Korean media and cultural studies to get interested in the importance of the interwoven relationships among religion, imagination and digital media in the construction of the contemporary social world. Meanwhile, I also hope this dissertation could help the religion and media scholarship in Korea explore the questions of religion and media in relation to the broader theoretical, empirical and historical issues of modernity and neo-liberalism which the scholarship in Korea has more or less disfavored. For the more integrated understanding of the role, location, working and implication of religion and media in the contemporary Korean society, the Korean religion and media scholarship needs to broaden its research interest and conversation up to the theme of modernity and neo-liberalism. This is particularly so because the exploration of modernity and neo-liberalism is inevitable considering that they are the primary names of powerful orders, myths and projects shaping the contemporary social life, process and reality. If the Korean religion and media scholarship wants to pursue what Couldry (2012) calls socially-oriented media theory foregrounding “how media are put to use in, and help shape, social life and how the meaning circulated through media have social sequence,” and “the social process that media constitute and enable (p. 8),” which this dissertation project is pursuing, these structural forces of modernity and neo-liberalism in the post-colonial Korean context, needs to be fully unpacked and critically analyzed. Thus, I hope that this dissertation project could contribute to offering a part of foundation in which other following research can be nourished and the scholarly exploration and discussion on the interwoven relationships of Korean religion and media

with neo-liberalism and modernity, can develop.

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