Article

The Christian Landscape at Jongno in Early Twentieth century: Focusing on the Christian Literature Society of Korea

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Introduction

Jongno (Bell Road 鍾路) during the Japanese colonial period is a fascinating topic of research for its location as a boundary dividing the modern and traditional spaces as well as Korean and Japanese residential areas in the colonial capital. Previously, Kim Baegyeong (2009) and Todd Henry (2014) examined the space of colonial Gyeongseong (Keijō in Japanese, current Seoul) with analyses of the Japanese projects for ruling and assimilation. Building on their achievements that enable us to grasp the parallel experiments for modernity and consequent tensions between Koreans and Japanese, I would like to bring another competing agency for modernity that created a triangular power dynamics in that colonial space: western missionaries and their enterprise of publication. In this regard, cultural geography provides useful concepts and theories to study the space. A new trend in cultural geography emerged in the 21st century in line with post-modernism and post-colonialism, of which the scope is not limited to material aspects of cultural phenomena. As this approach interprets landscapes as a "text" riddled with symbols and signs of cultural struggles of power and resistance (Anderson 2009, 55-57), I attempt to review the Christian landscape in the contested space of Jongno in colonial Gyeongseong from this perspective with a focus on a missionary publishing institution, the Christian Literature Society of Korea.[1]

The Christian Literature Society of Korea (hereafter CLSK) was a Protestant institution established in 1890 with the purpose of distributing Christian evangelistic tracts and books in Korea. The organization played a pivotal role in Korea generating a revolutionary change in Korean printing culture from the 1890s by publishing books in vernacular language for public readers, disseminating not only Christian but also general knowledge from the west. Despite the fact that the long history of this surviving entity calls for diverse research, this paper will primarily focus on its location, landscape, and network during the Japanese colonial period, because the coexistence of Koreans, Japanese, and westerners in Jongno which resulted in tensions in that space in the early twentieth century is an interesting topic of academic discussion.

1. Its original name was "Korean Religious Tract Society" but it changed to the current name in 1919.

What makes the CLSK significant is its position at the ideological and spatial centers in the contested space of colonial Korea. It had a plan to spiritually enlighten Koreans and thus insisted on using Korean vernacular for their publication. Also it was sufficiently funded by British and American mother institutions and churches which enabled it to represent western civilization by its appearance and publications. These factors placed the CLSK in a competing position with Japanese colonial agenda of "civilizing" Korea. More importantly, the CLSK's relation with Koreans was complex. On one hand, the western dominance of leadership and authorship resulted in conflicts with Korean Christians. On the other hand, the CLSK was an important source of gaining access to books that Koreans longed for in partnership with bookstores and retailers across the country (*Annual Report of the KRTS*[2] 1906). Such complex networks surrounding the CLSK and its landscape centered in Jongno seem to be a fitting topic for addressing cultural geography.

Adding to the complexity is the fact that the CLSK was a religious institution with a strong religious identity. The delicate intertextuality of the landscape also requires the perspective of religious geography which offers useful concepts and insights as a subdivision of cultural geography. A religion in general affects behavior. It provides a particular belief, value, and a code of conduct of which results are materialized in space. This includes the dispersion of believers, structure of buildings, and ways to expand the power of the religion numerically and territorially (Sopher 1967, 4). Besides, a religious world view designates a sacred meaning to a certain building or a structure, or reorganizes a land (Sopher 1967, 24-40). The complex landscape on Jongno should be read from this perspective.

In this paper, I will thus examine the historical and cultural context of the landscape I mentioned above: how this western Christian institution nestled itself on the principal street of Seoul and what impact it had on the rapidly transforming landscape. In order to achieve this goal, the first and second sections of this article briefly address the historical contexts of the space of Jongno and the CLSK. As the society changed its name several times both in English and in Korean, different names will appear in these sections. Except this, the institution will generally be referred as the CLSK, because they used

2. *Annual Report of the Korean Religious Tract Society*, a digitized version is provided by Yonsei library archive. Hereafter, it is referred to as *Annual Report of the KRTS*.

this name during the colonial period. The third section discusses the formation of complex Christian landscape in Jongno in colonial Gyeongseong, with a focus on the CLSK along with the British and Foreign Bible Society (hereafter BFBS) and the Young Men's Christian Association (hereafter YMCA) which all stood side by side. The last section will introduce the relation of dynamics of three groups involved in cultural or power struggle in that space: missionaries, Koreans, and Japanese. While section three investigates the CLSK's location and landscape, section four maps out its intangible domain through which Protestant Christianity was transplanted and expanded upon Korea.

Jongno: The "Contact Zone" or the "Contested Space"

Jongno 鍾路 was a downtown street of Hanyang (current Seoul), the capital of Joseon. Its name, Bell Road, originated from a bell at the crossroad connecting the four city gates of the capital. The tolling of this bell twice a day regulated those four gates. With Jongno as the axis, the capital was divided into Bukchon (Northern Village) and Namchon (Southern Village): in the Northern Village were there major royal buildings such as Gyeongbok Palace, the Royal Ancestral Shrine, and the Altar to State Deities. It was only natural that the ruling class and men of influence dwelled there. On the other hand, the residents in the

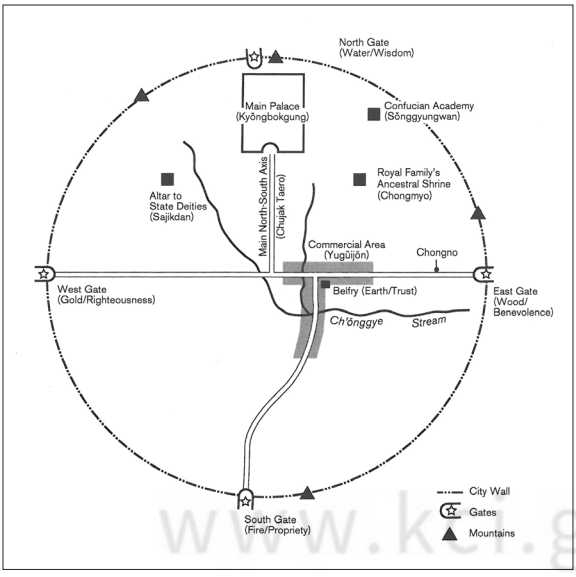

Figure 1. A Map of Hanyang (Seoul) in the 14th century
Source: Henry 2014, 24

Southern Village were a mixture of less prominent people from diverse factions such as the Disciples' faction (*soron* 小論) and the Southerners (*namin* 南人). Jongno was a marketplace and a meeting point connecting these two villages. Therefore, men and women, noblemen and commoners, and young and old would easily mingle in crowds on the street.

At the turn of the twentieth century, however, the space of Hanyang and Jongno faced several changes. When King Gojong self-claimed to be the Emperor of Korea, he formulated an urban planning to remake Seoul in 1896, construction for modern infrastructure such as tramways and streetlights. Besides, foreign community began to emerge in the capital that reshaped the landscape around Jongno. Western embassies gathered in the Jeongdong discrict, followed by missionary compounds including schools and hospitals. Japanese residents, though few in the beginning, began to expand their sphere of influence around Hwanggeumjeong (Kōgane-machi in Japanese, current Euljiro 黃金町) below the main street. During the Japanese colonial period, Jongno became the colonial capital and the traditional Korean residents were cornered to northern suburb in line with the colonial government's urban planning that turned Northern Village as the center of politics, Southern Village as the hub of

Figure 2. Jongno in the 1890s
Source: Seoul History Archives
http://www.museum.seoul.kr/archive/archiveList.do?type=D&arcvGroupNo=3215

economy, and Yongsan as the army base.

The intrusion of foreign influence reversed the existing spatial hierarchy: now the Northern Village was generally viewed as a detestable and outdated space of the colonized while the Southern Village, a modernized and civilized space of Japanese residents (Kim 2009, 515). Such a contrast of traditional and modern appearance turned Jongno into a space of collision between not only Koreans and Japanese but also westerners. From the late nineteenth century when Korean ports were opened, various agents brought about modernization fever to the peninsula forming their own territories, boundaries, and orders. In this sense, the colonial capital functioned as a "contact zone" (Henry 2014).

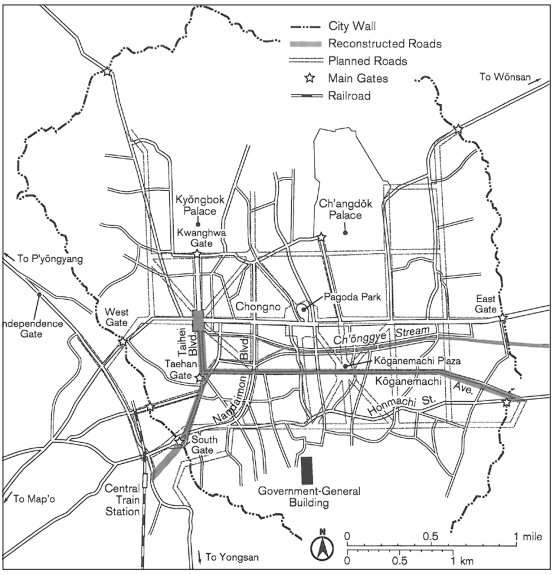

Figure 3. A Map of Gyeongseong Urban Plan of 1913
Source: Henry 2014, 33

Situated in the center of these changes, Jongno remained as a space of cultural hybridity. First of all, it was a place of coalition for religious groups such as Christians, Buddhists, and Cheondogyo believers. Several Protestant denominations gathered around Jongno, such as the Presbyterians on 5th Avenue, Northern Methodists in Jeongdong, and South Methodists in Doryeomdong.[3] As for Cheondogyo, the Central Cathedral, the Central

3. Doryeomdong is located between Gyeongbok Palace and Jeongdong, where Gwanghwamun Subway Station (Line 5) currently is.

Headquarters and the Suun Assembly Hall stood side by side in Gyeongundong 88 *beonji*[4] while the Buddhist Headquarters was located in Susongdong, a block away from the "Cheondogyo town" (Jang 2004).

Secondly, Jongno functioned as a hybrid cultural space for students, intellectuals, and artists influenced by modern knowledge. Bookstores, publishers, and printing houses in Jongno busily produced enlightening books and educational materials for students while nearby historic movie theaters became a nest for modern intellectuals and artists. In addition to this, capitalist market was emerging around Jongno with department stores in the Japanese shopping district in Hwanggeumjeong and Bonjeong (Honmachi in Japanese, current Chungmuro 本町) exhibiting modern goods. This resulted in a stark contrast between low class laborers and upper class "modern girls and modern boys," a scene that should have been criticized by conservative traditional intellectuals.

These layers of multiple functions and identities of Jongno reveal its historical significance to Koreans. Considering the aim of the CLSK was to distribute Christian books and tracts to people as many as possible, the decision to move to Jongno seems fitting. Jongno in the early twentieth century was a contact zone (Henry 2014) and a contested space dividing the old and new, the traditional Korean, the western, and the Japanese, each occupied with "civilizing mission" and respective agenda. At the center of this dynamic, the CLSK was forming its own landscape along with other Christian buildings.

A Brief History of the Christian Literature Society of Korea (CLSK)

The Korean Religious Tract Society (commencing name of the CLSK) launched in 1890 is a very significant organization in the history of Korean Christianity. Functioning as a union publishing house for all Protestant mission boards working in Korea, it published innumerous books and tracts for the purpose of distributing Christian literature to Korean readers. The publishing enterprise was financially reliant to its mother societies, the Religious Tract Society in London

4. Gyeongundong is right next to Insadong near Anguk Subway Station (Line 3), facing Unhyeon Palace where King Gojong resided before his enthronement.

and the American Tract Society in New York, along with other Christian charity publishers.[5] In the early years, from 1890s to 1910s, many Chinese books were brought to Korea to be printed and translated. These were known to be missionary products, but in reality, Koreans were actual translators and missionaries were examiners and editors (Lee 2018). Of course missionaries also authored or translated from English originals. There were few Korean authors in the early period because theological training was unavailable to Koreans at that time. Prominent Korean intellectuals such as Syngman Rhee and Cyn Yongwoo served on the examining committee from 1911, but Koreans' entrance to the board of trustees began in 1928, to the executive committee, in 1930. Missionaries' dominance in operating this institution was unavoidable because of its reliance on western patronage. This caused conflicts between missionaries and the locals.

The pioneers who established Korean Religious Tract Society (hereafter KRTS) in 1890 were pioneer Protestant missionaries mainly from Methodist and Presbyterian denominations: "On June 25, 1890, a special meeting was held at the home of Horace G. Underwood in Jeongdong to take steps toward the organization of a Korean Tract Society. Meeting adjourned with prayer by Mr. Underwood. Samuel A. Moffett, Chairman. D. L. Gifford, Secretary" (Koons 1940, 14). As the adopted name clearly demonstrates, those missionaries were establishing a branch of the Religious Tract Society[6] with the purpose of distributing Christian evangelistic tracts and books in Korea.[7] They decided the society's Korean name as "Joseon seonggyo seohoe" 朝鮮聖教書會 in the following year, 1891, but its name was changed several times after then.[8]

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5. The *Annual Report of the Korean Religious Tract Society* starting from 1911 reveals considerable amount of free grants from the following institutions: The Distribution Fund of Los Angeles, The Scripture Gift Mission of London, The World's Evangelical Alliance of London, and the Bible Success Band.
6. The Religious Tract Society was first established in London in 1799 and arose in the 19th century as a Christian publication institution serving as the parent institution of many branches outside Europe directing the worldwide publication and distribution of Christian literature. Representative non-European branches were located in Africa, India, and China.
7. The following remark provides the nature and objective of this institution: "The Society was formed in 1890 on the same principles as those of the Religious Tract Society of London and the American Tract Society of New York. Its object is to promote the circulation of religious books and tracts throughout Korea and in parts of Manchurian, or other lands, where large numbers of Koreans have now settled" (*Annual Report of the KRTS* 1915, 5).
8. In 1907, its Korean name was changed as "Joseon yesugyo seohoe" 朝鮮耶蘇教書會, and in 1919, its

The enterprise of the KRTS became active in 1893 with periodic financial support from the Religious Tract Society of London and the American Tract Society which was made possible through H. G. Underwood who worked as a liaison. The KRTS appointed three custodians at Seoul, Busan, and Pyeongyang to manage the sales business. As for the main office, the Seoul custodian C. C. Vinton's house in Jeongdong was used temporarily and then it moved to the building of British and Foreign Bible Society in 1900. This building was previously used as a Methodist mission hospital, Sibyeongwon, located in front of the First Methodist Church in Jeongdong (Daehan seongseo gonghoe 1993, 464). The early publications of the CLSK were printed in the Trilingual Press 三文出版社[9] in Baejae School also in Jeongdong and the range of publications was diverse including evangelistic tracts, the Bible, newspapers, periodicals, and school textbooks for both Presbyterian and Methodist denominations.

As the business grew, the need for an independent building became pressing. Fund-raising for the construction began in 1903 and by April in 1905, nearly ¥6,000 had been pledged in Korea for the site, and an effort was made to raise the money for the building in England and America (Koons 1940, 16). Finally, in 1906, the CLSK was able to purchase an old traditional *hanok* on Jongno 2-*ga*, "at the center of all things in Seoul." However, this building was insufficient due to the small entrance and low ceiling. Again, erecting a new building became a pressing issue (*Annual Report of the KRTS* 1906, 10). During this period a Korean named Yi Yong Kyun (also called as "Moses Yi" by missionaries of that day) was secured as a sales manager whose devotion

English name was changed to "The Christian Literature Society of Korea" of today. Its Korean name changed once more to "Joseon gidokkyo seohoe" 朝鮮基督敎書會 in 1939.

9. The Trilingual Press 三文出版社 (also known as 韓美華活版所) was a printing house established by the Methodist Mission Board located in Jeongdong. In order to operate this printing house, Franklin Ohlinger, a missionary then working in the Methodist Publishing House in Shanghai was appointed to cooperate with Mr. Appenzeller, the school director of Baejae School. As the name indicates, this printing house possessed three types of languages—Korean, Chinese, and English. Although the Trilingual Press was a Methodist institution, its publication was interdenominational including newspapers and Sunday school books for both Presbyterian and Methodist churches. For example, *Geurisdo sinmun* (the *Christian News*), *Joseon geurisdoin hoebo* (*Korean Christian Bulletin*), *The Independence*, *The Korean Repository*, *The Korea Field*, *The Korea Methodist*, and *The Korea Mission Field* were printed here. In 1899, it was renamed as "The Korea Methodist Publishing House" with an expansion of its facilities, and a merger with the Presbyterian Press was planned in 1906; nonetheless, the press was closed down in 1909. No specific reason appears in the records. According to the *Annual Report of Korean Methodist Church* of 1906, the total number of pages printed was 22 million and there were no more records after then (Hanguk gidokgyo yeoksa yeonguso 2012; Kim 1987).

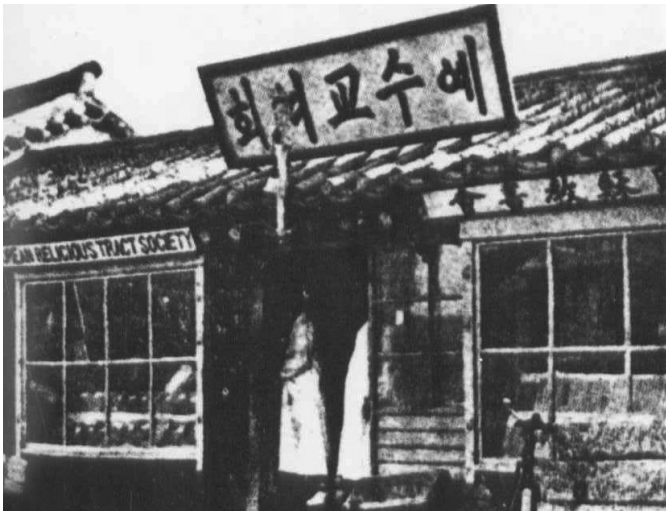

Figure 4. The First Building of the CLSK on Jongno in 1907
Source: Daehan gidokgyo seohoe 1990, 95

and comprehensive knowledge of the entire business of the society were highly praised by the missionaries.

In June 1911, the new (second) building was completed after six-months of construction. The size of this two-story brick building was 16×63 ft. There were three rooms on each floor. Rooms on the first floor were used as a director's office, main office, and bookstore while those on the second floor as an editing room, conference room, and an exhibition room (*Annual Report of the KRTS* 1911, 7). This new building allowed the CLSK more systematic management and preparations of manuscripts, publishing, and sales. According to an article from *Korea Mission Field* (1911), the year 1911 was marked as "The Tract Society Year" since the securing of a missionary full-time manager, Mr. Gerald Bonwick, and the newly erected two-story building.

At this time around, the KRTS placed a library in Hanseong Prison so that the open-minded Korean intellectuals who had been imprisoned there could read those books. A number of them converted to Christianity, and a good example of these figures was Syngman Rhee. Since 1912, all denominations of Korean churches designated the third Sunday of January as the "Day of the Korean Religious Tract Society" and donated offerings, which thus allowed Korean churches to become more involved in the business of the society that had been entirely managed by foreign missionaries.

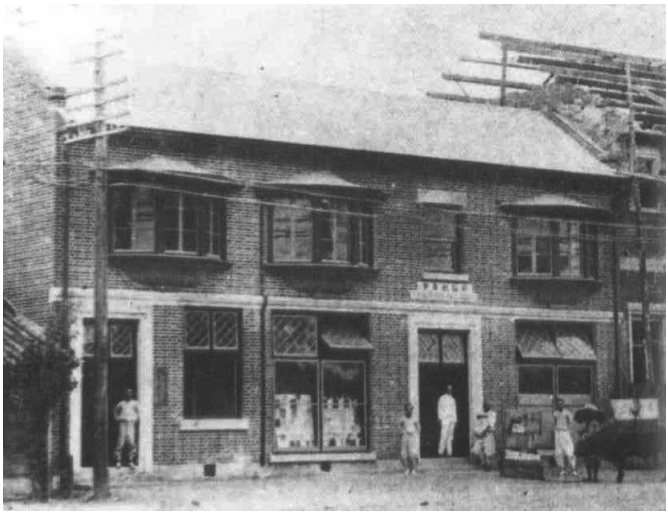

Figure 5. The Second Building of the CLSK Erected in 1911
Source: Daehan gidokgyo seohoe 1990, 20

After the March First Movement in 1919, the Japanese Colonial Government softened its stance shifting to the policy of "cultural rule." This allowed a conditional freedom of publication, at least on the surface. Due to this change and the rapid growth of Korean churches, Christians' involvement in cultural movement reached its peak and the CLSK played a pivotal role in it (Daehan gidokgyo seohoe 1990). The work of the CLSK quickly outgrew its premises erected in 1911 as it required more staff and more storage space for published books. Because of the cramped condition, some land was purchased in 1918 and a plan for a new building was revised and approved at the annual meeting of the Society in September 1923. Nonetheless, due to the social disturbance after the March First Movement and the consequent control and suppression from the Japanese colonial government aggravating the situation, the society had to delay its reconstruction plan.

In 1924, an American architect and treasurer of the Southern Presbyterian Mission, Martin L. Swinehart[10] volunteered to raise money in the U.S. for the

10. Mr. Swinehart was appointed by the Southern Presbyterian Mission to work for the Korean mission board developing rural churches and schools of the territory occupied by the Southern Presbyterian Church since 1911. He was also Chairman of the Sunday School Association of Korea (Choi 1931, 136). After the erection of the 3rd building of the CLSK, his devotion was acknowledged by the

construction. His support fueled the CLSK to implement its plan summoning in the U.S. $52,400 for the construction and $5,000 for an elevator. The cooperating Korean mission boards of six denominations donated $17,500 (Rhodes 1931, 138; Yi 1984, 50-51). Swinehart not only served as the chief engineer in the construction but also as the manufacturer of the materials used for the construction, running his own brick kilns and sawmills (Choi 1931, 136).

The third building served as a premise of union for many of the Christian organization of Korea at that time, being occupied not only by the CLSK but also by the Korea Sunday School Association, which was one-sixth owner of the building (Rhodes 1931, 139). Also other Christian organizations had their offices there, including the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Editor of the Korea Mission Field and the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (Rhodes 1931, 139; Yi 1984). Besides, its location in the

Figure 6. The Third Building of the CLSK Erected in 1931
Source: Daehan gidokgyo seohoe 1990, 41

CLSK and Mr. Swinehart became the Chairman of the Board of Trustees in 1933 and served till 1937. This was an exceptional case for a layman to become the Chairman as the previous ones were all clergymen. This demonstrates the influence that Mr. Swinehart exerted in the society.

central downtown area enabled the CLSK to form a distinctive landscape with other Christian organizations such as the British and Foreign Bible Society adjoining, the Korean YMCA standing across the street, the Evangelistic-Social Center for Korean Women a block away, and three leading churches of Seoul in close proximity.

As Japan-U.S. relations worsened after the Japanese Manchu Invasion in 1931, the colonial government adopted a hostile policy towards American missionaries. Even worse, the Pacific War broke out in 1941 as Japan bombarded Pearl Harbor. All U.S. missionaries had to leave Korea, consequently, leaving the property to the newly appointed secretary Rev. Yang Jusam. However, the Japanese colonial government confiscated and claimed it as "enemy property" in June 1942 (Yi 1984). From then to the liberation in 1945, the entire enterprise of the CLSK halted, including publication and sales. Its facilities were allocated and delivered to the government under the direction of a Japanese policeman named Kondo 近藤篤敬, and the building was heavily damaged (Daehan gidokgyo seohoe 1960). On October 10, 1945, Rev. Yang was appointed as the secretary of the CLSK by the U.S. Army Military Government in Korea and this enabled him to recover the property from the Japanese colonial government.

The CLSK's Relocation to Jongno: Formation of the Landscape

Cultural geographer David Sopher (1967, 4) suggested a way to divide religious systems into three groups depending on the geographic features: ethnic (tribal) religious systems, universalizing religious systems, and segmental religious systems. Among these categories, Christianity belongs to the group of universalizing religious system, generally known as "the religion of revelations." These religious systems mostly begin in a closed ethnic field with the identity of "chosen people" just as Jews in Christianity or Arabs in Islam. Therefore, in the process of disseminating their beliefs and widening their cultural horizons, universalizing religions acquires a certain ethnic character when faced with other religious systems (Sopher 1967, 10). A good example might be found in Christianity known as "the white man's religion" in much of Asia and Africa.

In Korea, it was the same for the CLSK being clothed with the frame, "white man's civilization." Not only the CLSK but also the British and Foreign

Bible Society (hereafter BFBS) and the YMCA did form a distinctive landscape in Jongno area with their western appearance, contrary to the surrounding traditional marketplace. Besides, when Japanese-western architectures appeared on Jongno following the Japanese urban planning from 1913, those Christian buildings formed a modern western landscape, if not more authentically western, different from that of Japanese. It can be suggested, therefore, that the main agenda of these institutions for "universalizing" the Christian message was to distinguish themselves from the local landscape by manifesting their belief in western civilization and Christianity. The transfer of the CLSK from Jeongdong to Jongno was, therefore, a rightful decision fitting to its aim. The locality of Jongno gives a good contrast to the original location in Jeongdong, which was a foreigners' compound in the vicinity of the newly established Korean Empire's palace. Such a condition hindered ordinary Koreans' access. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees H. A. Rhodes acknowledged the importance of the CLSK's location in Jongno as follows:

> At the corner of the street hangs the famous old bell that used to toll to open and close the gate of the city. May the Gospel that goes out from this centre, through the printed page and through the Christian organizations that have their headquarters here, open not only the city but the entire country to the appeal of Christ and may this open door never be closed until Christ shall appear and reign as King of Korea. (Rhodes 1931, 139)

It was in such a space that the CLSK formed a unique Christian landscape along with the BFBS and the YMCA sitting side by side. What influence did they exert and how did the locals perceive them?

To answer that question, we must consider the function of a space in religion. In the realm of religions, a space or landscape is utilized as a device to attract people's attention, and the structure of the religious space contributes to the identity of a religion (Choe 2009, 136). Considering this aspect, there arises another question, however: Can the building of the CLSK be viewed as religious, when the space was not intended for a religious ritual? The building was constructed not for worship but for publication, a purpose more practical. Yet a certain space is defined "sacred" by religious rituals conducted in that space. In this sense, the space should function as a channel for divine-human communication with a divine power that transforms men manifesting (Heo

2006, 57). Despite the accumulated discussions and interpretations in the field of religious geography regarding a "sacred space" originating from Mircea Eliade, the condition that makes a space "sacred" still accompanies rituals.

For this reason, I view the spatial identity of the CLSK as a hybrid of Christianity, western civilization and modern progressivism rather than a purely religious one. What I mean here by western civilization is a visual display of modernization with their western style architecture. Progressivism manifested in the modern form of knowledge spread in the publications. It was a manifest strategy for Christian communities in Korea at that time to establish schools and hospitals together with churches (Yi 1987, 51). In this context, newspapers and books published by missionaries functioned as a means of introducing western civilization. As the author of the *Centennial History of the CLSK* described, "The Christian literature movement of the CLSK was first and foremost to disseminate the Gospel for converting the people and to enlighten the society toward a new civilization" (Yi 1984, 26).

However, the CLSK did not intend to confer such an identity to its space from the beginning; even if it desired to do so, financial shortages hindered this hope. The first independent building of the CLSK was a shabby *hanok* that required a renovation. It was soon reconstructed to a second-story brick building in 1911. Still this was unsatisfactory for the original plan due to financial shortages. There had to be another reconstruction of the building so that the CLSK can clothe itself in an authentic western style architecture.

The third building established in 1931 finally manifested the spatial identity that the CLSK desired: an appearance exhibiting the enlightened and progressive western civilization. It was a high-rise building equipped with cutting-edge facilities. The building was fifty-two feet long, five stories high including the basement, only four feet below the surface of the street. The façade of the building was covered with Japanese brown tiles and the other two sides with Korean bricks. All window sashes and frames, and outside doors were of Truscon steel from America. The halls, passage ways, and floors were of best Japanese tile and all wood finish in the building, including the furniture, was of oak from Hokkaido in Japan (Korea Mission Field 1931, 137). Not only that, the building was equipped with a complete house telephone system carrying thirty phones, an Otis electric elevator, and heating and plumbing from the best American manufacture. There was even a spacious roof garden on the rooftop with tile flooring and a lunch room in the penthouse (ibid.).

Figure 7. Jongno in the 1920s and the YMCA Building (right)
Source: http://www.koreanart21.com/column/artMap/view?id=5594&page=1

Here is an article from a Korean paper that helps us to assume the influence the new building of the CLSK exerted there: "Hwasin department store established in 1937 was the first building in Korea to have an elevator placed in it and thus it was a hot issue for Korean modern boys and girls at that time to go visit there and take the elevator" (Noh 2013). Although this article is not mentioning the CLSK, such a remark is useful in understanding the atmosphere of Jongno at that time.

It should be remembered though that the CLSK was not the only western-styled building functioning as a marker of western civilization in Jongno at that time. Right beside the CLSK stood the building of the BFBS facing the YMCA. Actually, the first western building set up in Jongno was Hanseong Electric Company erected in 1898 which managed the business of setting up electric poles, lamps, and trams on the street. Next to this company building stood the YMCA since 1908. Standing side by side, these buildings composed a landscape unfamiliar to the locals.

The YMCA was established by various sources of donations, particularly of John Wanamaker (1838-1922), a wealthy American businessman.[11] The construction began in November 7, 1907 with the crown prince Yi Eun attending the ceremony. The building was completed and opened to the public in December 1908. Concerning the impressive outlook of this building, a Korean intellectual named Hwang Hyeon left a comment: "The building

Figure 8. Original Building of the BFBS in Jeongdong (left)
and the New Building Erected on Jongno in 1911, Next to the CLSK (right)
Source: Daehan seongseo gonghoe 1993, 258; 357

looked like a mountain. It was the biggest building in the city and the scenery was as magnificent as the Jonghyeon Cathedral in the north" (Jang 2004, 44).

As for the BFBS, its advancement to Jongno was much earlier than that of the CLSK or the YMCA. It was even before the Sino-Japanese war, that the BFBS launched a book depot in Jongno in 1893. This book depot had been managed by Chinese colporteurs of the BFBS but after the war, H. G. Appenzeller and Choe Byeonheon, the Methodist leaders in Seoul, took charge of the management and named it "Daedong seosi" 大東書市 in June 1894 (Daehan seongseo gonghoe 1993, 249). The history of the BFBS in Korea becomes a little complicated since then, because it went through a period working as a joint agency incorporating the BFBS, American Bible Society, and the National Bible Society of Scotland. Yet this joint body soon dissolved. The joint agency of the Bible Society (1904-1907) nestled in Jeongdong, although short-lived, renting several offices in a building owned by the Northern Methodist Mission. After the separation, the BFBS gained dominance in Korea and decided to move to Jongno 2-*ga* 92 *beonji*, right next to the CLSK (Daehan seongseo gonghoe 1993, 355). The building was designed by an agent of the BFBS, Hugh Miller, during his furlough in London. It was in 1911 that construction of the building was completed, a two-story brick building, sponsored by the BFBS of London. This building was equipped with a basement to store a hundred thousand bibles, and in front of it was a set-up exhibition for passersby (Daehan seongseo gonghoe 1993, 357).

11. For further detail, refer to Encyclopedia of Korean Culture. Available at http://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/SearchNavi?keyword=황성 청년회관&ridx=0&tot=401.

In this regard, we can assume that the landscape created by the CLSK, BFBS, and YMCA exerted significant influence on the traditional market place Jongno. These western buildings with a Christian affiliation represented western civilization and modern progressivism which was possible by material and financial support from the west. It can also be said that they succeeded in transplanting the intended cultural scenery to Korea, not only with their appearance but also with the publications containing new knowledge and the people adhering to a new belief. This unfamiliar landscape created on Jongno must have been foreign and daunting to Korean eyes at first sight, but such an impression might have shifted to admiration, just as the missionaries had intended.

The CLSK and its Network: Cultural/Power struggle as an Element of the Landscape

Various cultures in the world have progressed through contact and communication (Jordan-Bychkov 2003, 12). When cultures meet, their elements disperse to create a fusion or their boundaries are solidified to reflect their differences. All these reactions require a space. Therefore, the relation between a space and the people, including how a space defines its orders and boundaries, how different cultural groups use power to cross boundaries and orders, calls for our study and interpretation (Anderson 2009, 292). From this perspective, Gyeongseong, the colonial capital, is a very interesting space. From the late nineteenth century, Korean ports were opened and consequently various agents brought about modernization fever to the peninsula. They formed their own territories, boundaries, and orders. In this sense, the colonial capital functioned as a "contact zone" (Henry 2014).

Thus this chapter discusses the subtle intertextuality surrounding the CLSK in the space of the Japanese colonial capital. What makes the CLSK and its landscape meaningful in this sense was its position at the ideological and spatial centers of the collision. Keeping this aspect in mind, the network of the CLSK will be explained as follows.

The dynamics among the three groups surrounding the CLSK during the colonial period involve the western missionaries, Koreans the colonized, and Japanese the colonizer. In these relational dynamics, Koreans were in the most

subordinate position due to the heavy reliance of the CLSK on American and British patronage. At the same time, Koreans were the subjects under direct surveillance and control of the Japanese colonial government, and the foreign missionaries were also constantly monitored by the Japanese government.

The relationship between those missionaries and Koreans were unsatisfactory because the missionaries dominated the leadership. This was an unavoidable outcome of the management of the CLSK exclusively relying on foreign financial support. Since the nature of the CLSK business was non-profit, it usually ran a deficit and the missionaries continuously requested fundraising from the mission boards and churches in their home countries. This aspect hindered missionaries' response toward the demand of Korean Christians who wanted to express their opinions by the means of literature. While the Koreans were armed with nationalist and anti-Japanese sentiments, missionaries tried to avoid political issues insisting on the neutral position of the church.

Actually, there was no regulation that banned or discriminated Koreans from being selected as a committee member or a board member of the CLSK. At the annual conference of the society in 1927, the need to secure the services of more good Korean writers, both as helpers to missionaries and as independent authors, was acknowledged because "the real need for Christian literature can only be met by Korean writers" (Korea Mission Field 1927, 214). Nonetheless, there was no Korean on the executive committee until 1930 when O Geungseon, Jeong In-gwa, and George Paek Rakchun were elected.

Due to the conflict with the missionaries, a group of Korean Christian leaders including Yun Chiho established Changmunsa, an indigenous Christian publishing house. According to the Korean church historian Kim Yangseon, the establishment of Changmunsa was prompted by the vigorous demand of Korean churches craving for new knowledge, their frustration with the CLSK due to the missionaries' dominance, and limitation on Korean writers (Yi 1987, 327). Those who established Changmunsa were Korean leaders from YMCA and Andong Church in Seoul. In 1924, Yi Sangjae took over DongA printing house and opened a bookstore named "Changmundang" in the building of YMCA on Jongno street. Next year, Yun took over ownership and donated a significant amount of money for the bookstore which prompted the rapid growth of the store to incorporate publishing, printing, and sales. The editing board of Changmunsa consisted of newly rising, anti-missionary Korean scholars. They published religious and educational books including a periodical

Sinsaengmyeong (Yi 1987).

In addition to the conflict between the foreign missionaries and the Korean intellectuals, the relation between Japan and western missionaries constituted another aspect of the dynamic. As the Japanese and western missionaries had different plans for "civilizing Korea," collision was inevitable. The missionaries who dominated the management of the CLSK were foreigners (mainly Americans), yet their affiliation with Christianity made them a confounding variable in the legal system of the Japanese colonial government that divided the subjects into three categories, namely Koreans, Japanese, and Foreigners (Kim 2015, 9). This was because the foreign missionaries aimed for a wider dissemination of the Gospel and tried to communicate with Koreans in Korean vernacular, which seemed menacing to the Japanese. The aim of the CLSK, from the very beginning, was "to publish and circulate Christian tracts and periodicals and to distribute them throughout the entire peninsula" (*Annual Report of the KRT* 1899, 4) in Korean vernacular language and such a stress on using the vernacular language must have been a threat to the Japanese colonial government. From the Japanese perspective, the CLSK and the missionaries were enough to create a disturbance in the colonial rules that regulated the territory, language, and identity (Kim 2015, 42).

In this sense, the record of Aoyagi Tsunataro 青柳綱太郎 written in 1915 provides a clue for understanding the Japanese view on western missionaries. He was a scholar studying Korean history and the leader of the Research Institute of Korean History (Aoyagi 2011, 5). He was also the head journalist at *Keijō shinbun* 京城新聞 since 1917. He wrote *A Recent Guidebook of Gyeongseong* 最近京城 案內記 in 1915 for Japanese readers and criticized missionaries in Korea as follows:

> Missionaries are protected by extraterritoriality and thus Korean people who have endured the abusive treatment of the Korean government are drawn to seek refuge behind them…As they hold authority on one hand and bread on the other, it is natural for poor Koreans to gather around them to seek pity. (Aoyagi 2011, 118-19)

Aoyagi (2011, 120) also commented, "missionaries inspirited anti-Japanese sentiment among Koreans and caused no little disturbance in our policy toward Korea." His perception on missionaries was contrary to the missionaries' actual

strategy that emphasized political neutrality and the separation of church and state. Nonetheless, he saw that "missionaries as representatives of God overstepped their duty and took a political stance" (ibid.).

For this reason, Japanese colonial government censored publications of the CLSK and restricted its activities by Koreans and missionaries alike. Originally, missionaries as foreigners were to have applied "regulations" equal to Japanese, unlike Koreans who were bound under the publication "law" (Kim 2015, 17). However, Japanese police continually controlled and surveilled all aspects of the CLSK business including manuscript preparation, printing, and sales. An example of Japanese censorship on CLSK publications can be found in a missionary's journal. Mattie Noble, a Methodist missionary and the author of *Victorious Lives of Early Christians in Korea* (1927) recorded her unhappy experience with the Japanese police as follows:

> My book was published by the independent Korean Christian Literature Society and they had believed that a book put out by a foreigner stood no chance of being censored so had printed it before presenting a copy to the police for review. On reviewing it they sent for me or my secretary to come to the police station. I sent Tai Won Kim. They said a good deal had to be censored. He spoke well to them and they were lenient and censored only in seven places, and those seven places had to have blocks of letters printed over them. I was appalled at first till my secretary said that censoring anything in Korea might increase its value, and it would, but Korea yet isn't a great reading people, so I'm wondering how the sales will be. (Hanguk gidokgyo yeoksa yeonguso 2003, 396-97)

In response to the Japanese censorship, the missionaries continued official protests to the Japanese governor-general that their freedom of religion, speech, and the press were being violated. To illustrate, the six mission boards[12] working in colonial Korea submitted a petition to the Japanese governor-general Saito 斎藤実 in September 1919 after observing the brutal response from the government to the Korean independence movement. Among the six headings being petitioned, the most relevant ones—"No. 2 On Education" and "No. 4

12. These include the Northern and Southern Methodist Episcopal Church, The North and South Presbyterian Church in the U.S., Canadian Presbyterian Church, and Australian Presbyterian Church.

On Religious Publishing"—seem worth mentioning here (Kim 2006, 320).

No. 2 On Education

1) Allow Christian private schools to have courses on the Bible and religion.
2) Abolish the ban of Korean language so that Koreans can use their mother tongue.
3) Allow more freedom of management at private schools and no more intervention from Japanese officials, which is unnecessary.

No. 4 On Religious Publishing

1) Abolish censorship on Christian publications.
2) Contents of church periodicals, papers, and other publications should not be limited to religious matters.
3) Local officials should not hinder the business of booksellers who distribute the Bible, tracts, and Christian literature.

As we can see from the protest, foreign missionaries were forming a cultural territory and its order in the space surrounding the CLSK not only with is appearance but also with its publications. Interestingly, those missionaries' project corresponded to Japanese colonial agenda for assimilating Koreans in the spheres of spiritual, material, and civic infrastructures that was pointed out by Todd Henry (2014). Nonetheless, the turbulent relation of Japanese-missionaries came to an end during the late period of colonial rule (1931-1944) due to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the subsequent Pacific War. For the CLSK, it was truly a "dark age" as their business almost halted (Yi 1984).

Conclusion

This paper explored the Christian landscape on Jongno street formed by the CLSK from the perspective of cultural geography. My aim was to examine how this western Christian institution nestled itself on the principal street of Seoul during the Japanese colonial period and what impact it had on the rapidly transforming landscape and culture. Also I intended to "read" the intertextuality of the Christian landscape by describing the cultural/power struggle surrounding the CLSK and the relational dynamics among Koreans, western missionaries, and Japanese. I suggested that the presence of the CLSK, nearby BFBS, and

YMCA was meaningful because it formed a cultural territory and order, thus generating tensions in the space with its appearance and publications.

Nonetheless, this paper possesses some limitations and implications for future research. Mapping out the geography of Protestant Christianity's transmission to Korea requires an understanding of the CLSK as a global enterprise. Through the missionaries' transnational network of publication, the business of the Religious Tract Society of Korea (later CLSK) crossed the borders (both physically and intellectually) between China, Japan, the U.K., and the U.S. importing, translating, cross-referencing, and distributing each other's publications. However, this paper is limited in that sense because it did not incorporate such a wider scope of the scene. Understanding the transnational network will allow a broader comprehension of the cultural diffusion behind the establishment of the Religious Tract Society of Korea in 1890, but this will lead to future research.

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Abstract

This paper explores the Christian landscape on Jongno street in the early 20th century from the perspective of cultural and religious geography. The examination centers on the Christian Literature Society of Korea, a missionary publishing institution, specifically on how it nestled on the principal street of Seoul and what impact it had on the rapidly transforming landscape and culture during the Japanese colonial period. I attempt to depict the historical and cultural context of the space and the network of this institution in relation with other western Christian buildings. In addition, I try to uncover the implicit tensions generated by multiple nationalities who had different interests on its publishing enterprise. My suggestion is that the spatial identity of the Christian Literature Society of Korea (CLSK) was a hybrid of Christianity, western civilization, and modern progressivism along with other western buildings. Also the network of the CLSK and the relation dynamics among the three groups involved, namely, western missionaries, Koreans, and Japanese reveal the cultural/power struggle within the contested space. In this way, I attempt to investigate the CLSK's tangible property and landscape on one hand, and on the other hand, its intangible domain through which Protestant Christianity was transferred to Korea.

Keywords: Christian Literature Society of Korea, missionary publication, Christian landscape, Colonial Jongno, cultural geography

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