

Korean Protestant Churches Inculcated in Confucian Habitus and Hereditary Pastoral Succession

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Abstract

This article explores the issue of hereditary pastoral succession of Korean Protestant churches in the light of Pierre Bourdieu's ideas. Due to the long process of Confucianization, Confucian teachings act like social ethics and common sense for Koreans. In other words, Confucian teachings are accepted as habitus for Koreans. Korean Protestants are no exception, and their deep-rooted Confucian traditions have also influenced their way of thinking. In other words, Korean Protestant churches are also inculcated in Confucian habitus. In particular, the issue of hereditary pastoral succession is emerging in some Korean Protestant churches in the 21st century. This phenomenon can be interpreted by considering the influence of Confucianism in them. Church members inculcated in Confucian habitus can legitimately accept hereditary pastoral succession by utilizing Confucian "capital." In other words, from Bourdieu's point of view, Korean Protestants inculcated in Confucian habitus in the "field" of Korean Protestant churches can distribute Confucian "capital" to (mis)recognize hereditary pastoral succession as legitimate.

Keywords: *Korean Protestant Churches, Pierre Bourdieu, Confucian Habitus, Hereditary Pastoral Succession, Confucian capital*

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국문요약

이 논문은 피에르 부르디외의 아이디어에 비추어 한국 개신교회안의 목회 세습 문제를 탐구한다. 오랜 기간 동안 유교를 지배 철학으로 삼아온 결과, 한국인에게 유교적 가르침은 사회윤리와 상식처럼 작용하게 되었다. 즉, 한국인에게 유교적 가르침은 아비투스로 작동하게 된다. 한국 개신교인들도 예외가 아니어서, 뿌리 깊은 유교 전통은 그들의 사고 방식과 입장에도 영향을 미쳐왔다. 즉, 한국 교회도 유교 아비투스에 각인되어 있다. 특히 21세기 한국교회에서 목회 계승 문제가 대두되고 있다. 이 현상은 한국 교회안의 유교 아비투스의 영향을 고려하여 해석될 수 있다. 유교 아비투스에 각인 교인들이 유교 '자본'을 적법하게 받아들일 수 있기 때문이다. 다시 말해, 부르디외의 관점에서 볼 때, 한국교회라는 장(場) 안에서 유교 아비투스에 각인된 한국교인들은 유교 "자본"을 사용하여 목회세습을 합법적인 것으로 오인하여 해석하고 받아들일 수 있다.

주제어: 한국 개신교회, 피에르 부르디외, 유교 아비투스, 목회세습, 유교 자본

I. Introduction

Neo-Confucianism was accepted as Korea's Joseon Dynasty's official state theology in the late fourteenth century. Due to centuries long Confucianization of the Joseon dynasty, Confucian teachings and traditions permeated the Koreans' way of thinking and worldview. In other words, in Pierre Bourdieu's terms, the Confucian teachings as *habitus* ("the matrix of perception") have inculcated in the Koreans' mindset (Rey 2007, 46-47; Chae 2014, 5). In contemporary Korean society, the Confucian teachings and traditions are still accepted in many ways as common sense in the human relationship or social organization, and they have played a role as the seat of their disposition and the filter of all that they perceive (Rey 2007, 46-47). For example, an age-based organization can still be observed in Korean society.

Korean Protestant churches were also no exception to the influence of Confucianism. Since Protestantism was first introduced to Korea in the late 19th century, Confucian teachings and traditions have influenced the culture and organization of Korea Protestant churches. Put differently, Protestantism embraced Confucian ethics and traditions to root in the land of Korea. Consequently, Confucian traditions and mores are resilient in Korean protestant churches today. For instance, they maintain age-based/age-valued organizations and systems, and the idea of *hyo* (filial piety), one of the typical Confucian ethical values, is actively respected and valued in them. That is, one can assert that the Confucian characteristics in Korean society can also be observed in the Korean Protestant church.

Today, as Korean society and churches have modernized, many Confucian features have disappeared. Also, there can be competition between Confucian ethics and Christian ethics within Korean church members. Nevertheless, it is hard to deny that Confucian values are one of the strongest factors in the way of thinking and ethical behavior of Koreans. This is due mainly to centuries long Confucianization in Korean territory. The Confucianization process is so thorough that the values and morals of Confucianism are working as *habitus* for Koreans today. That is, one can say that Confucian ethics and traditions play roles as *habitus* in Korean Protestant churches and thus influence their members' way of thinking and worldview. Especially, the issue of hereditary pastoral succession (HPS) is emerging in Korean Protestant churches in the 21st century. This phenomenon can be interpreted in relation to the influence of *Confucian habitus*. This is because Confucian "capital" can be accepted as legitimate by church members inculcated in Confucian *habitus*.

The following chapters will deal more specifically with Confucian influences on Korean Protestant churches. Before doing so, the next chapter will briefly provide Bourdieu's concepts and terms, such as *habitus*, field, and capital, that will be used as a tool to delineate and understand the characteristics of Korean Protestant churches with Confucian tradition. Then, the following chapters offer the features of Confucianization in Korea and highlight the Confucian features seen in modern Korean society and Korean Protestant churches. In so doing, one can observe that Confucian traditions and values are still resilient and kept in Korean protestant churches. Especially, one can shed light on the issue of HPS from a Bourdieuan perspective. In doing so, one can observe that Koreans' Confucian *habitus* play a role as everyday ethics in Korean protestant churches.

II. Bourdieuan Lens for the Exploration of Korean Protestant Churches

For Pierre Bourdieu, sociology helps individuals, called "social agents," to "discern the sites

where we do enjoy a degree of freedom and those where we do not” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 198). That is, a sociological perspective allows individuals to recognize social mechanisms that influence their daily lives. Bourdieu asserts that social agents tend to internalize social structure and their behaviors influenced by society reproduce such social influences. In this sense, his theory is defined as “generative structuralism” or “genetic structuralism” (Rey 2007, 40, 56). Bourdieu’s theory consists of three concepts: habitus, field, and capital.

1. Habitus

Bourdieu raised a question which habitus can resolve: “how can [behavior] be regulated without being the product of obedience to rule?” (Bourdieu 1990a, 65). In his book *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Bourdieu defines habitus as:

systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively “regulated” and “regular” without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor (Bourdieu 1977, 72).

Also, habitus is understood as:

a system of lasting transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a *matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and action* and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks’ (Bourdieu 1977, 78).

That is, habitus comprises a “structured and structuring structure” (Bourdieu 1990a, 170). Habitus is “structured” in that it is constructed by one’s past experiences and present circumstances, such as family tradition and educational experiences, and it is “structuring” in that it helps individuals to form their present and future (Maton 2012, 50). For Bourdieu, disposition is “the result of an organizing action” and designates “a way of being, a habitual state (especially of the body)” and “a predisposition, tendency, or inclination” (Bourdieu 1977, 214). Dispositions are “durable” in that they continue for a long time and they are “transposable” in that they can operate differently and diversely on a variety of social stages (Maton 2012, 50). In this sense, one can assert that habitus is “the matrix of perceptions,” or “the basis of perception and appreciation of all subsequent experiences” (Bourdieu 1977, 78; Rey 2003, 335).

In addition, habitus is not an individual matrix of perception. Individual members of the same social group share similar social experiences so that they are likely to possess a relatively homogenous habitus (Rey 2007, 49). As Bourdieu asserts, the “homogeneity of the conditions of existence” results in “objective homogenizing of group or class habitus” (Bourdieu 1977, 80). Thus, one can assert that the habitus’ conceptions and actions are generally common to all social agents in the same group and class (Bourdieu 1977, 86).

2. Field

For Bourdieu, social spaces are the places in which interactions and transactions take place (Bourdieu 2005, 148). Social spaces are not only vertically differentiated such as class and

gender, but they also have horizontal differentiation (Crossley 2001, 100). Societal spaces in which the practice of social agent occurs are multidimensional and interrelated spaces. The term *field* conceptualizes this characteristic of social spaces. Bourdieu describes a field as:

[A] network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (*situs*) in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (domination, subordination, homology, etc.) (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 97).

Le champ, the French word for a field, refers to an action space and a “place of struggle” or battlefield. Thus, a field can be referred to as a place and space where individuals’ actions and struggles take place. To put it differently, it is in a field that social agents act and/or struggle for some social products. In Bourdieu’s words, a field is “a structured space of social forces and struggles” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 243).

For Bourdieu, habitus and field exist in relation to each other. That is, “the field structures the habitus,” and in vice versa, the habitus “contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 127). In a field, social agents practice their habitus and in turn, their thoughts and actions shaped by the habitus (Crossley 2001, 101). In this way, habitus and field have an interactive relationship.

3. Capital

For Bourdieu, the habitus affects the way in which social agents use and value “capital.” He defines capital as “the resources distributed throughout the social body which have an exchange value in one or more of the various ‘markets’ or ‘fields’ which, ..., he believes comprise the social world” (Crossley 2001, 96). Capital can also be defined as “attributes, possessions, or qualities of a person or a position exchangeable for goods, services, or esteem” (DiMaggio 1979, 1463).

Capital exists mainly in two forms: material and symbolic capital. Material capital is like “capital” as it is commonly understood in society. Symbolic capital, however, is non-monetary power that promotes social action. For instance, cultural capital, an example of the symbolic capital, means “the exchange value which accumulated forms of culture have within the social world” (Crossley 2001, 96). Cultural capital is not easily converted into money, but social agents hand down or reproduce their social power through it.

Symbolic capital is regarded as “capital endowed with a specifically symbolic efficacy,” and thus symbolic capital gains symbolic efficacy when it is “*misrecognized* in its arbitrary truth as capital and *recognized* as legitimate” (Bourdieu 1990a, 112). Likewise, symbolic capital take effects only when “it succeeds in generating a system of mutual interdependence in which all the actors in the field depend on recognition from all of the others and grant all of the others recognition-even if this is recognition of an inferior (or superior) status” (Steinmetz 2006, 454).

Moreover, all types of capital can be transferred to symbolic capital and vice versa. Symbolic capital can be conceived as “nothing more than economic or cultural capital which is acknowledged and recognized” (Bourdieu 1990a, 135). Also, symbolic capital can play a role as symbolic power and violence, and thus social agents take advantage of it to legitimize their

status and dominate others. Indeed, even though symbolic capital is not a “legitimated demand” but a socially produced source, it is recognized as legitimate and accepted without any resistance by social agents. As a result, symbolic capital can be used as a means of enlarging, maintaining, and legitimizing their (symbolic) power in their fields.

III. Confucianization of Korea

In 1392 when the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910 C.E.) was founded, Korea accepted Neo Confucianism as the state ideology. Scholar-officials (*sadaebu*) in the Joseon Dynasty had been steadily and thoroughly committed to Confucianize the country. They believed that Confucianism was the best ideology for restructuring the Goryeo Dynasty (918-1392 68 C.E.), which had been deeply influenced by Buddhist teachings. Scholar-officials in the Joseon Dynasty made efforts to eliminate and destroy the pre-Confucian traditions in social structures. That is, the political leaders of the Joseon Dynasty accepted and used Confucianism as “a tool for a government administration,” and they wanted to establish a “Neo-Confucian government” (Baker 2007, 21-22).

Scholar-officials of the Joseon dynasty promoted and emphasized Confucian rituals as a means of establishing social stability and order throughout the country. They encouraged their people to learn and follow Confucian teachings and values based primarily on the Four Books and the Five Classics. The Joseon Dynasty taught and trained people to follow social relationships based on the Five Relationships to establish and maintain a harmonized society. Indeed, Confucian teachings were thoroughly emphasized for social order in the Joseon Dynasty. As a result, even though it took hundreds of years for all masses to accept Confucian teachings as their basic ethics and common sense, Confucian teachings became inculcated in the habitus of Koreans and Korea became a Confucianized society by the eighteenth century (Haboush 1991, 84; Chae 2014, 42).

As a result of the Confucianization of the Joseon Dynasty for more than two centuries, Pre-Confucian societal customs and structures had disappeared from Korea. Before the Joseon Dynasty, pre-Confucian social structures were widely observed. In the Goryeo Dynasty, for instance, there were matrilineal and a close-kin marriage system (Deuchler 1992, 81), and non-agnatic succession was still resilient until the end of the fifteenth century (Deuchler 1992, 82, 162). Yet, due to the thorough Confucianization, matrilineal(uxorilineal) residence was gradually replaced by patrilineal residence, and women had to leave their natal families and hometown in a patrilineal marriage. According to Jahyun Kim Haboush, the reformation of family systems based on the patrilineal system was “the greatest normative change in Korean society” (Haboush 1991, 86).

Likewise, family systems in the Joseon Dynasty changed to primogeniture structures. Compared to other siblings, the eldest son obtained more power and received more patrimonies from his parents. The distinction and inequality between primary and secondary wives also resulted from the Confucianization of the Joseon Dynasty. Unlike Chinese Confucianism, Korean Confucianism taught that people should be born into a privileged class in order to be an ideal Confucian gentleman(*gunja*) (Deuchler 1992, 119). By the same token, a woman needed to be born in a privileged group to be a primary wife. Contrary to the primary wife, secondary wives and their sons were discriminated and marginalized simply because of their social status. The severe and thorough distinction between primary and secondary wives in Korea was so unique that such a phenomenon was not found even in China (Deuchler 1991,

268).

At the end of the sixteenth century, pre-Confucian social systems disappeared in Korean territory, and gender and age became important factors in determining social class and power in society. Indeed, because of Confucianization, Korean society became a male-dominant society, and as Tu Weiming mentions, the Joseon Dynasty became “the most Confucianized” country among all the countries/dynasties in East Asia (Tu 1993, 180).

From the early Joseon Dynasty, Korean Confucianism emphasized Confucian rituals under the name of creating a harmonized society. In the seventeenth century, the Joseon Dynasty had focused more on *li* (禮; ritual, property) to the extent that the seventeenth century was called “the century of ritual” (Deuchler 1991, 173). Among other Confucian texts for rituals, Zhu Xi’s Chia-li(朱子家禮) was accepted as the most authoritative ritual book in the Joseon Dynasty(De Bary 1985, 28). That is, Korean Confucian rituals and rite were based mainly on Zhu Xi’s teachings and his commentary on Confucianism.

Above all, *hyo*(孝, filial piety) was highly emphasized in the Joseon Dynasty. Following the spirit of filial piety, people of the Joseon Dynasty should express unconditional love and respect for their parents. They believed that this practice of *hyo* did not end with the death of their parents. After their parents died, they were supposed to practice filial piety through performing ancestor veneration(*jesa*). Confucians, unlike Buddhists, believe that the parent’s mind-matter(氣 *gi, ki*) does not disappear but circulate between the living and the dead (Deuchler 1991, 175, 197). In this sense, one can say that the ancestors are like roots of trees, and the offspring are like the leaves and branches.

As mentioned above, in the Joseon Dynasty, the ritual of ancestor veneration was also considered as the most essential ritual to practice filial piety. It was believed that the ancestors and descendants were composed of the same mind-matter, so that the ancestor’s mind-matter was preserved in the offspring. Confucians believed that performing faithful *jesa* played a role in calling back the ancestor’s *gi* and thus unifying the descendants. In this sense, the relationship between father and son in Confucian teachings were regarded as an important and meaningful relationship to perform the correct ancestor veneration. In performing the ritual of ancestor veneration, the eldest son had the right and duty to offer true and sincere rituals more than anyone else.

In short, it is no exaggeration to assert that the Confucianization of Korea was a social transformation that moved from top to bottom. As a result of the "reformation" that lasted for hundreds of years, all the people of the Joseon Dynasty came to practice Confucian teachings and rituals as thoroughly as they could. In other words, the teachings of Confucianism became common sense to the Joseon masses, and Confucian values and world way of thinking were inculcated in their habitus.

IV. Korean Protestant Churches Inculcated in Confucian Habitus

Despite the Japanese colonial rule and the Korean War, Confucian traditions are still alive in Korean society today. As mentioned above, it took more than two hundred years for the Korean masses to accept and perform Confucian teachings as their common sense and moral values. To put it differently, the influence of Confucianism on Koreans’ way of thinking and worldview was so resilient that it did not disappear even after the tumultuous events of the

modern and contemporary era, such as the Korean war and modernization. Here, I would like to demonstrate two representative features of Confucianism observed in Korean churches: Practicing *hyo* and age-based organizations. Apparently, the Confucian characteristics observed in Korean Protestant churches are not limited to these two characteristics. However, here I limit myself to these two characteristics only to deal with topics related to the position of Korean Protestant churches on the hereditary pastoral succession.

1. Practicing *hyo*

Confucian influence is especially discerned in the Korean emphasis on filial piety, shown also in ritual mourning for the dead—a reason why Koreans have traditionally preferred to wear white (the colour of mourning in East Asia), since they were always mourning for some member of the large, extended family (Ching 1993, 165).

As Julia Ching mentions above, of many Confucian traditions maintained by Koreans, filial piety is the most common and universal. The ritual of ancestor veneration, which is a concrete ritual for practicing filial piety, is widely observed in modern Korean society. For contemporary Koreans, ancestor veneration rituals are still considered to be important Confucian rituals. Even though the numbers have fallen in the 21st century, young people, such as middle and high school students, still think that the ritual of ancestor veneration is an important ritual to be followed (Chae 2014, 62). In addition, according to a survey conducted in 2012 by *The Maekyung Economy*, one of the oldest economic magazines published in Korea, 95.3% of respondents answered that ancestor veneration rituals need to be simplified, but 65.4% replied that the eldest son of the families should keep hosting *jesa* (Kim and Noh 2012; Chae 2014, 62) In this way, the importance of sacrifice has been reduced by the wave of modernization, but the spirit of filial piety represented by the ritual of ancestor veneration is still alive to modern people.

In the Protestant Church of Korea, *hyo* (filial piety) is also respected as an important value to follow and obey. In his Sunday sermon on May 8, 2005, Rev. Yonggi Cho, who was the senior pastor of Yoido Full Gospel Church at that time, emphasized filial piety as follows:

Originally, there is no word like “*hyo*” in Western countries. It is translated into “filial piety” in English. “Filial” means children and “piety” means sincere, loyal, and faithful. However, “*hyo*” was mentioned by Confucius, and it was practiced by Jesus (Cho 2005; Chae 2014, 89-90).

When Protestantism was introduced to Korean territory, Koreans identified the teachings of *hyo* with the Fifth Commandment (honor your parents) of the Ten Commandments in the Bible. Although Protestant churches banned *jesa* because it was considered idolatry, the converted Korean Protestants practiced filial piety through the memorial service called *chumo(chudo) yesik* (a remembrance worship service). In other words, *chumo yesik* is a Christian ritual designed to replace *jesa*. In general, Korean Protestants can prepare the deceased’s photos and food for *chumo yesik*. Also, the descendants commemorate the deceased as they read the biography of the deceased. In these days, most Korean Protestant churches continue to encourage their adherents to perform *chumo yesik* instead of *jesa*. For example, when *chuseok*, the Korean Thanksgiving Day, is approaching, most Protestant churches distribute *chuseok* worship materials so that their members can give *chumo yesik* instead of *jesa*.

In addition, many Korean Protestant churches practice filial piety(*hyo*) by providing diverse programs for the elderly. Although the name and size vary from church to church, many churches practice *hyo* by operating schools, and/or welfare centers for the elderly. For instance, Younknak Presbyterian Church (YPC), one of the Korean mega churches, runs a school for the elderly, called *noin daehak* (college for the elderly) (Chae 2014, 91). Also, YPC founded a social welfare corporation and operates a nursing home, a welfare center, and a helping center for the elderly (Younknak Presbyterian Church n.d.).

Full Gospel Incheon Church (FGIC), more than any other church in Korea, vigorously applies the spirit of *hyo* in and out of the church. FGIC was founded as a regional church of Yoido Full Gospel Church in 1983 and eventually grew into a mega church. This church is especially famous for the emphasis on *hyo*. Since 1995, the Incheon Church has taken *hyo* as the core value of the church, leading the way in practicing and spreading *hyo* in Korean society. The church coined the term "biblical *hyo*." Biblical *hyo* consists of seven actions (behavioral ethics): "obeying God as our father," "respecting parents," "loving our families and neighbors," "caring for children and teenagers," "promoting the country," "preserving the environment," and "serving the world" (Full Gospel Incheon Church 2018; Chae 2014, 97). As such, this church has a positive impact on the community by practicing Confucian values along with Christian teachings. To spread its biblical *hyo*, FGIC also established Sungsan Hyo graduate school in 1998. The church hopes that through this school, more leaders will be able to communicate and practice biblical *hyo* in society.

In these ways, *hyo* is accepted by Koreans as common sense, and they still regard it as a truth to be actively practiced. In other words, because Confucian habitus, such as filial piety, is deeply inculcated in Koreans, they are practicing filial piety along with Christ's teachings without any hesitation in their churches. In that sense, Korean Protestant churches can be called a "field" where the Confucian habitus operates. Indeed, Korean Protestant Churches serves as a concrete field to practice Confucian value, and one can assert that Confucian value is inculcated in Korean Protestants' habitus.

2. Age-based Church Organizations

Based on the Confucian teachings of decent behavior toward the elderly(長幼有序), one of the Five Relationships, age-based social relations are firmly established in Korean society. Although age-based decisions are not universal in all cases, seniors still exercise final decision-making power in private or informal gatherings. And, although it is weaker than before, obedience to those who have authority from age is still being encouraged and kept. For young people, respect and distinction based on age is no exception. Thus, there is a strong tendency to think that in order to be called "friends" in Korean society, they must be the same age. No matter how long they have accumulated friendship, it is awkward to call each other friends if there is a large age gap.

The distinction by age, which was emphasized in order to establish an orderly society in the Joseon Dynasty, is strongly seen in the Korean church today as well (Chae 2014, 93-96). Generally, there are two community organizations in Korean Protestant churches. Although the names and roles of the churches are somewhat different, one is "*guyeok*" a cell group divided by district, and the other is "*jeon-do-hoi*,"/ "*seon-gyo-hoi*," an organization divided by age. The former organization is primarily for group Bible study, and the latter organization is an organization to promote fellowship among church members. The name *jeon-do-hoi*/ *seon-gyo-hoi* literally means a meeting for evangelism(*jeon-do*) or missions(*seon-gyo*), but it is an

organization for mutual fellowship among church members. *Jeon-do-hoi* is divided by age for smooth and active social intercourse and friendship among church members. Korean churches tend to think that age can be a hindrance to communication among their members. In other words, Korean churches do not think that division by age is a form of social discrimination that should not be done within a Christian society as an equal community. Rather, they think it is right to be separated by age to become a more intimate community. To the best of my knowledge, it is common for all Korean churches to classify their friendship organizations by age. In this manner, Confucian habitus influence church members' way of thinking and their church organizations. One can assert that age-based church organizations are a result of Korean Protestant churches inculcated in Confucian habitus.

Age is an important consideration in selecting a church officer in Korean Protestant churches. Of course, age standards may vary from church to church, but many churches require a certain age or older to become church leaders. In Korean churches, if one is not old enough, he or she cannot take office even though he or she has been in church for a long time (Chae 2014, 150-151). Similarly, I had a chance to visit the Seoul Cathedral Anglican Church of Korea, a church affiliated with the Korean Protestant denominations, on August 26, 2018. I saw a list of 73 candidates for church officers on the bulletin (Seoul Cathedral Anglican Church of Korea 2018). It said that the names of candidates were compiled in the order of the year in which they were confirmed. It also stated that if the candidates were confirmed in the same year, they were arranged in order of age. Unlike other Protestant churches, the confirmation year seemed to be the most important condition for becoming a candidate, but I could realize that age still served as a condition for the election. In this way, age is an important factor in the selection of church officers or forming a church organization.

To put it differently, age plays a significant role as a means of obtaining power, namely, "capital." In Bourdieuan terms, as mentioned earlier, capital is "the resources distributed throughout the social body which have an exchange value" (Crossley 2001, 96) or "attributes, possession, or qualities of a person or a position exchangeable 222 for goods, services, or esteem" (DiMaggio 1979, 1463). Just as symbolic capital can be "misrecognized in its arbitrary truth as capital and recognized as legitimate" (Bourdieu 1990a, 112), in Korean society, power and dignity from age can be misrecognized in its arbitrary truth as symbolic capital and recognized as legitimate. In the "field" of Korean society, age is regarded as a form of symbolic capital and a legitimate resource used to expand power and obtain authority over things. That is, age, as symbolic power, is (mis)recognized as legitimate, and thus it is circulated and distributed as influential in Korean society. In this sense, age can be called *generational capital* and be categorized as a type of symbolic capital in Korean society (Chae 2014, 195).

Indeed, one can assert that Confucian mores are inculcated in Korean church members' habitus. Confucian traditions, such as practicing *hyo* and respecting age, function as symbolic capital in Korean Protestant churches. Activities, events, and organizations based on these Confucian values are widely accepted as symbolic capital and power in the field of Korean protestant churches.

V. The Issue of Hereditary Pastoral Succession in Korean Protestant Churches

Currently, one can observe a "hot potato" inside and outside the Korean Protestant church:

the issue of hereditary pastoral succession (HPS). The causes of this issue are not simple. Some assert that the cause basically stems not from a theological reason but from a “political” reason, such as the “smooth” transition of “power” of the church. That is, the issue of HPS of large churches can be derived from a practical reason. The hereditary handover of ministries from father to son can minimize the conflict between the predecessor and the successor in the operation of the church. Similarly, others say that HPS is used to cover secret problems within the church, such as financial corruption. In this way, somewhat complicated situations can be hidden in the background of the issue.

Then how can the HPS issue be properly accepted without great conflicts within church members? In Bourdieuan terms, the issue can be accepted by the congregation as symbolic capital. In other words, one can shed light on the issue of HPS by considering the situation in which Confucian values, such as *jesa* performed by the first son, are accepted as symbolic capital among church members who are inculcated in Confucian habitus. Therefore, this chapter attempts to delineate the issue of HPS from a Bourdieuan perspective.

1. “Impeccable” *Jesa*

Although it is weaker than before, in Korean society, Confucian teachings still act as social ethics and plays a role like civil religion. For instance, many Koreans emphasize “impeccable” *jesa* to be performed by the first son. To put it differently, Koreans still value *jesa* being held by their eldest son. For Koreans, rituals (*jesa*) are considered another expression of filial piety and the first son is regarded as the best person to perform impeccable *jesa*. In this respect, one can assert that today Confucian traditions inculcated in Koreans’ habitus still affect their ethics and mindset.

The main purpose of *jesa* is the practice of filial piety, but it also plays a significant role in enhancing cohesion among families. As mentioned earlier, during the Joseon Dynasty, they tried to maintain pure lineage for impeccable *jesa*. They regarded the rituals of ancestor veneration performed by their biological sons as “the purest” ritual. Accordingly, Koreans came to put the emphasis on the solidarity of inner groups based on pure blood ties.

Just as the Confucian tradition boasts pure lineage for “pure” *jesa*, Korean Protestants also tend to maintain and emphasize their “pure” theology without exogenous theological influxes (Chae 2014, 88). For example, the General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea (GAPCK, a presbytery of *hapdong*), one of the largest Presbyterian denominations in Korea, keeps its theology from being mixed with other theologies. To be qualified for applying to Chongshin University Graduate School of Theology, the main GAPCK seminary, people must pass a preliminary test, administered by GAPCK presbyteries and be recommended by a GAPCK presbytery. Put differently, no matter how good people are in faith, they will not be eligible to apply to the seminary unless they receive faith training from a church affiliated with the same denomination and recommended by a GAPCK leader. In this way, some Korean Protestant churches are stalwart in conserving their theological doctrine (Chae 2014, 88).

2. Familism

Young Shin Park, a Korean sociologist, described the characteristics of Korean society as follows:

The organizational principle of our society is familism, and our ethical orientation is based on this. An important value in familism is consideration and concern for the family. Familialism values the maintenance of family relationships that

maintain hierarchy (Park 1998, 186).

Park also argues that in a “familial” society like Korean society, the relationship between parents and children is regarded as the most intimate and natural one (Park 1998, 186).

In this way, compared to other fields where the Confucian habitus does not “work,” the hereditary handover of ministries from father to son can be described more positively in the field of Korean Protestant churches where the Confucian habitus is “active” and influential. Obviously, familism can be used in a positive way to strengthen the community. However, “selfish” familism has the consequence of destroying the community by only thinking about one's own family. Moreover, this negative characteristic of familism is a cultural phenomenon that has been formed over a long period of time rather than a short period. In Bella's terms, it can be said that it is like “habits of the heart” (Song 2008, 83). However, this phenomenon is not just repeated like a habit, but is expanded and reproduced in other places. In this respect, it is more appropriate to regard it as habitus.

Since Korean protestant churches are the field where the Confucian habitus operates, the Confucian value of familism can be used not only to explain family values but also to justify HPS. As such, familism is used as a symbolic capital, and serves to rationalize and justify the HPS of the Korean church.

3. Confucian Habitus and Hereditary Pastoral Succession

As mentioned earlier, in the 21st century the problems of HPS are growing rapidly in large churches. The hereditary handover of ministries from father to son in large churches is not new. As early as 1973 there was already such an example in Dorim Church (Jackson 2017). Yet, father-son succession of ministries began accelerating in the 1990s. As of 2017, HPS was carried out in 143 churches and among them, 113 churches are located in Seoul and the metropolitan area such as Gyeonggi Province (Anti-Hereditary Pastoral Succession n.d.). Although Rev. Kim Sam-hwan, who was the senior pastor of Myung Sung Church and handed over his pulpit places to his son, said, “This is not like bequeathing a business but passing on a burden of sacrifice and pain,” people accuse him of giving his position to his son because he thought of the Myung Sung Church as his own asset and/or a huge enterprise he made (The Japan Times n.d.).

In the field of Korean economy, hereditary succession is not an unfamiliar phenomenon. The economic system of the *chaebols*, the family-controlled conglomerates, are dominant in the Korean economy. The founder's family inherits and run the companies, and descendants such as grandchildren continue to run it. In doing so, they use the accumulated capital to expand their business into more diverse fields. In this regard, the issue of HPS of Korean megachurches is sufficient to remind Koreans of the feature of Korean conglomerates. It is no exaggeration to say that the two resemble each other in that respect. Korea's megachurches are expanding their fields by establishing hospitals, schools, evangelical television channels, and so on. In other words, in Bourdieuan terms, large Korean churches are expanding their fields by using various capitals. Myung Sung church, for instance, has already become like a huge corporation. It has a large main building with 100,000 members. The church also runs schools, two hospitals, an evangelical television channel, and a medical center scattered throughout the country.

As mentioned earlier, Confucianism teaches that the *qi*(*gi* 氣) of a deceased father was transmitted to the son, so *jesa* led by the son, especially the eldest son, was considered the

most proper ritual. In addition, there is still a tendency to prefer *jesa* led by the eldest son even today. For this reason, Confucian influence in Korean Protestant churches can also be observed in the issue of HPS. Obviously, the cause of HPS cannot be attributed solely to Confucian characteristics. Also, not all Korean Christians approve of the hereditary handover of ministries from father to son. However, since Korean Christians cannot also be free from the influence of Confucian habitus, there is room for them to think less negatively about the hereditary succession.

From a Bourdieuan perspective, a father-son relationship based on Confucian teachings can play a role as symbolic capital. Thus, father-son succession of ministries can be recognized as legitimate in Korean protestant churches inculcated in Korean Confucian habitus. Kim Ae-hee, director of the organization against hereditary pastoral succession, answered the reason why hereditary pastoral succession happens so frequently in Korean Protestant churches as follows:

There are lots of deeply rooted Confucian sentiments in the [Korean] churchThere [is] a very strong hierarchical order and many churches are dominated by their pastor. In some cases, blood relatives are seen as legitimate heirs of the spiritual authority of the pastor. (Jackson 2017).

Obviously, the HPS in Korean (large) churches cannot be attributed entirely to Confucian influences. However, Korean Christians inculcated in Confucian habitus are likely to misrecognize faithful rituals (*jesa*) through pure blood as legitimate. It is also hard to deny that the father-son relationship based on Confucian teachings is distributed as symbolic capital and perceived as symbolic power in the field of Korean protestant churches, where Koreans' Confucian habitus functions. In this way, from a Bourdieuan perspective, one can delineate the phenomenon of HPS in Korean Protestant churches.

VI. Conclusion

Habitus is “embodied history, internalised as second nature and so forgotten to history – it is an active presence of the whole of which it is the product” (Bourdieu 1990b, 56).

Due to the long process of Confucianization, Confucian traditions have been accepted to Koreans as common sense and still influence social ethics. In other words, Confucian values are accepted by Koreans as their second nature. Such characteristics are no exception to Korean Protestants. Korean Protestants, social agents inculcated in Confucian habitus, utilize Confucian values consciously or unconsciously to interpret and accept the major issue of their churches such as HPS. This is because Confucian traditions and values are accepted as symbolic capital in the field of the Korean church.

Naturally, one cannot assert that the HPS of Korean (large) churches is entirely due to the influence of Confucianism. However, Korean Christians affected by Confucian habitus are highly likely to misrecognize HPS as legitimate in the field of Confucian Protestant churches. In other words, Confucian teachings as symbolic capital can be accepted as symbolic power in Korean Protestant churches. As a result, church members who are accustomed to the father-son relationship based on Confucian teachings might

misrecognize HPS as legitimate.

Based on these characteristics of Korean Protestant churches, this article has dealt with the sensitive issue of the churches in the 21st century not from the theological and political perspectives, but from a sociological perspective. In doing so, this article has attempted to reveal that in the field of Korean Protestant churches where the Confucian habitus functions, Confucian values are replaced with symbolic powers to legitimize and reinforce the claims of their members.

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