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THE MYTH OF ORIGIN IN CONTEXT
THROUGH THE LENS OF DECONSTRUCTION, DIALOGISM, AND HYBRIDITY

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Abstract: The present study aims to deconstruct the myth of origin, a quest after essential identity, in the context of Japan's colonization of Korea (1910-1945). First, I will contextualize the myth of origin as a particular historical construction of Japanese colonization, which stems from Romantic nationalism in the second half of the 19th century. Then, I will critique the structuralism, monologism, and colonialism standing behind the myth of origin through the lens of deconstruction, dialogism, and hybridity: (1) Jacques Derrida's deconstruction and *différance* will show the self-implosion of the totalizing, centering vision of structuralism; (2) Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogism will analyze colonial discourse as a double-voiced discourse constituting both dominant discourse and counter-dominant discourse; (3) Homi Bhabha will demonstrate that colonial identity is ambivalent and hybrid through partial mimicry.

Key Words: myth of origin, essential identity, colonial identity, colonial discourse, Japanese colonization of Korea, European Romanticism, Romantic nationalism, deconstruction, *différance*, dialogism, ambivalence, mimicry, hybridity, Jacques Derrida, Mikhail Bakhtin, Homi Bhabha.

Introduction

A dominant myth or ideology of my society concerns the matter of its origin, a quest after essential identity under the influence of European Romanticism during the Japanese colonization of Korea (1910-1945). Ever since then, many Koreans have struggled with their own identity in the sense that they have experienced the disconnection between the pre-modern and modern world, while being forced to deny the first and at the same time to adopt the second by the Japanese colonizer.[1] The reason is that Japanese colonization had its own propaganda, a so-called modernization on the Korean peninsula. After the end of Japanese colonization, there arose the question of how the Koreans should identify themselves, since their traditional identity was fragmented. As a consequence, the issue of origin in the post-colonial era plays a central role in providing a key to expressing Korean identity.

In order to answer a question as to what/who we, the colonized, are in the context of the Japanese colonization, this paper aims to problematize and deconstruct the myth of origin, in essentialist terms, which stems from the binarism of the Western philosophical tradition through a threefold lens of deconstruction, dialogism, and hybridity. The paper claims that colonial identity is an ambivalent and hybrid identity.

For the deconstruction of the myth of origin grounded on essential identity, I will critique the structuralism, monologism, and colonialism behind it. First, I will employ Jacques Derrida's notion of deconstruction to oppose the totalizing, centering vision of structuralism. Next, the concept of dialogism of Mikhail Bakhtin will show that colonial discourse is not monological, but dialogical, in that it constitutes both dominant discourse and counter-dominant discourse. Finally, the cultural theory of hybridity as Homi Bhabha envisions it, will suggest that colonial identity is ambivalent and hybrid such that it blurs the boundary between colonizer and colonized, therefore undermining colonial power and discourse.

My Social Location in the Dominant Myth of Origin

To explore colonial identity in context, I shall start with my social location with special reference to my own denomination, a Korean indigenous denomination called Korea Evangelical Holiness Church.[2] Given that it has little, if any, connection with any other denominations of Western traditions of Christianity, it is hard for the members of an indigenous denomination to have a stable and fixed identity.

For example, my denomination has trouble in establishing its own name. Not until it was named *Cho Sun* Christian OMS (Oriental Missionary Society) Holiness Church in 1921, had it remained anonymous for fourteen years since its foundation in 1907. In 1945, the year of Korea's

independence, my denomination was named formally Korea Evangelical Holiness Church.

It is striking that a name had never been offered to my denomination for many years, although in reality, it worked as a denomination-like organization. The missionaries did not make any efforts whatsoever to name my denomination, while at the same time calling upon Korean natives to replicate their mission. [3] No doubt, there were hidden the colonial power relations between American missionaries and Korean natives.

As a colonial product, my denomination has long since been entangled with the myth of origin in pursuit of essential identity. The problem of origin, the invention of a name notwithstanding, was left unsolved to my denomination. Aware of its ambiguous identity, my denomination has endeavored to discover its origin in terms of theology and history. On the one hand, some theologians within the denomination maintain that in terms of theology, its origin is to be found in the Wesleyan traditions, considering that those American missionaries were the Methodists under the influence of the Holiness Movement, a modern Methodist movement in America. On the other hand, others claim that in terms of history, my denomination is to be construed as a 'purely' Korean one, independent of any denominations of the Western churches.[4] The reason for this is that there was little involvement of the missionaries with the historical development of the denomination, apart from the first contact. In spite of all this, the denomination has thus far attempted in vain to search for its origin in light of both theology and history since it cannot admit nor deny the presence of the missionaries.

From this we can observe that the pursuit of essential identity as exemplified in my denomination is 'literally' a myth in the sense that it is an imaginary construction, an ideology produced in the colonial era. As Louis Althusser puts it, "ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence."[5] In this vein, it must be acknowledged that the colonized cannot find out their own identity, unless they recognize their search for origin as a myth or ideology constructed under colonial rule. Paradoxically, the preliminary stage to delve into colonial identity is to demystify the myth of origin.

The Contextualization of the Myth of Origin as Imperial/Colonial Ideology

In order to unmask the myth of origin, one must recognize that the myth of origin is an ideology, by contextualizing its socio-historical setting. Above all, it is worthwhile to keep in mind that Japan had formerly undergone Western imperialism immediately before the emergence of Japanese colonialism.[6] Although the myth of origin was derived from European Romanticism, it developed within Romantic

nationalism in the second half of the nineteenth century, and was transmitted into the hands of Japanese colonizers during the era of Western imperialism. In the long run, the myth of origin, a Western product Romantic nationalism, was transplanted into the Korean peninsula via Japanese colonialism.

A search for origin in Europe, more implicitly than explicitly, betrayed a Western desire of constructing national identity as a historical byproduct of European Romanticism. Consider, for example, Max Müller, one of the first persons to show the spirit of Romantic nationalism. As one of the founders of comparative religion, Müller investigated the issue of origin in religious studies. One of Müller's aims was to bring light to the origin of religion and mythology through the lens of science, both comparative and historical.[7] Dorothy Figueria states: "Excited by the linguistic affinity between Sanskrit and other languages, Orientalist scholars fostered the comparative science of religion and mythology that developed a vision of an Aryan race as the originator of Indian and European culture."[8] Müller highly romanticized religious origin, which coincided with the contemporary interests in the origin of race and national identity in linguistics and anthropology.[9]

> "*Romantic concepts of myth*, language, and the Absolute were fundamental to the development of *German nationalism* in the latter half of the nineteenth and early years of the twentieth centuries. In the work of such figures as F. Schlegel and Max Muller, we find so clearly the Romantic theses of the degeneration of original and primitive religion and the view of history as an unfolding expression of the spirit of a people (italics mine)."[10]

Interestingly enough, a search for origin in European Romanticism concealed an ideology to establish national identity related to the polemics of racial superiority.[11]

Such a Romantic nationalism was transferred to the Korean peninsula via Japan. In the encounter with the West, the Japanese, implicitly or explicitly, adopted the claim of Romantic nationalism to a national identity disguised as the myth of origin.[12] As Kevin Doak rightly argues: "Romanticism was particularly appealing as a means of mediating the dilemma between East and West, tradition and modernity."[13] In particular, European Romanticism associated with nationalism was attractive to the Japanese. Japanese nationalism, which romanticized the ethnic Japanese people, was a strategy to protect them from the encroachments of Western imperialism.[14] As a way of resisting Western imperialism, the Japanese strived for nationalism with the conviction that they had to expand in order not to be colonized in the prevailing social Darwinist climate.[15] Ironically, Japanese colonization was an antidote to

Western imperialism by embracing its agenda. The same scenario applies to the relationship between Japanese colonization and Korean nationalism; Romantic nationalism developed among the Koreans as a strategy of resistance against Japanese rule. As a consequence, the myth of origin, on the part of the Koreans, was a byproduct of Japanese colonialism.

Up until now, we have seen the ways in which the myth of origin functioned as an ideology for the creation of national identity in European Romanticism and was transferred into the Koreans as the colonized by way of Japan. Here, it can be recognized that the myth of origin was an ideological construction related to nationalism in the contexts of Western imperialism and Japanese colonialism. Below, I shall investigate a way of deconstructing the myth of origin whose assumption is essential identity along the lines of Jacques Derrida.

Deconstruction of the Myth of Origin as *Différance*

To reexamine a form of colonial identity connected to my denomination in the context of Japan's colonization of Korea, I shall set out to deconstruct the dominant myth of origin stemming from the binarism of the Western philosophical tradition. The Western philosophy is grounded on the binary system such as male/female, presence/absence, and origin/copy. The myth of origin heavily relies on the belief that there is a fixed, essential identity with a stark dichotomy between origin and copy, prioritizing the first and at the same time disregarding the second, as seen in Plato's full-fledged theory of form and matter. That is to say, such a binary opposition in the Western metaphysics builds up a very exclusive system, while privileging one term over the other.[16] In this vein, it consists of hierarchies and orders of subordination in a variety of dualisms.[17] Most importantly, the myth of origin in colonial context puts the colonized into the prison of the binarism by making them partially replicate the colonizers. Seen in the framework of the binarism of origin and copy, the ancestors of my denomination were doomed to become a copy of the image of Western missionaries. Even if they claimed to be independent from missionaries, they had no choice but to acknowledge that they were originally influenced by them. To become emancipated from the shackle of the myth of origin based on the oppositional divide between origin and copy, we will have to call into question whether such a binary opposition as origin/copy is tenable and viable.

Among others, Derrida made every effort to destabilize the hierarchical binary systems, particularly the structuralism, which was widespread in his time. French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss-under the influence of Ferdinand de Saussure who had shaped the paramount tenets of structural linguistics- asserted that the category of binary opposition functioned in myth. In more detail, Lévi-Strauss insisted that

what he called *mytheme*, the smallest component part of myth, operates in binary systems (e.g., raw and cooked, male and female, nature and culture).[18] By contrast, Derrida saw the oppositional divide as illusionary and uncertain by showing that there was never any absolute center to warrant for a fixed point of origin or presence. In his paper "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," Derrida made a counterargument against the assumption of structuralism that structure is organized around a center. According to him, a center functions to organize, orient, and balance the structure by granting it a "point of presence," a "fixed origin."[19] It is ironical, however, that structure cannot influence the center since the latter does not exist in the former, but resides outside the system. That is to say, the center belongs to the system it circumscribes, but it locates itself outside of the system. Derrida pointed out:

> "Thus it has always been thought that the center, which is by definition unique, constituted that very thing within a structure which while governing the structure, escapes the structurality. This is why classical thought concerning structure could say that the center is, paradoxically, *within* the structure and *outside* it. The center is at the center of the totality, and yet, since the center does not belong to the totality (is not part of the totality), the totality *has its center elsewhere*. The center is not the center (italics in original text)."[20]

What is more, the center does not exist as a "present-being," or a "fixed locus," but as a function.[21]

When it comes to colonial identity in connection to the myth of origin, Derrida's deconstructive project, as such, ostensibly aims to undermine the Western logic of binarism, which highlights origin and at the same time disregards copy. For him, the way to destabilize binary systems is to decenter the center conceived to be a point of origin. In other words, Derrida deprives center of its role as a ground for origin by showing that center is acentric in a given structure. This being the case, it is impossible to seek for origin in any circumstances whatsoever in that there is no such a thing as center to warrant for origin. Without any absolute center, we can no longer tell which is origin and which is copy at the same time. Derrida leads us to conceive of the boundary between origin and copy as indeterminable by decentering the center as its parameter. As a corollary, Derrida's deconstruction possesses a message of liberation for the colonized on the grounds that they do not need to investigate the origin that proves indeterminable and uncertain.

To take a step further, Derrida suggests in his notion of *différance* that origin is not traceable at all in that a sign is entangled with a perpetual

chains of signs.[22] In light of *différance*, a sign cannot exhaustively bring forth its meaning in the sense that it refers to additional, different signs *ad infinitum*.[23] Hence, the complete meaning of sign is postponed due to a limitless chain of signifiers. It comes as no surprise that sign has no complete and total meaning. Likewise, a copy, in terms of *différance,* refers to another copy, that is, a copy of copies without necessarily reaching out its origin. This means that the pursuit of origin ultimately yields a constant series of copies because origin is an imaginary sign without any essence to be substantiated.

At this point, it is implied that it is a trap for the colonized to take on the Western presupposition that there is the origin to be reconstructed. The reason for this is that there certainly exists the *différance* of origin in the sense that it is should become differentiated from what is really envisioned as such and therefore, it is deferred, all the time. With the awareness of the *différance* of origin, the colonized can liberate themselves from the myth of origin by recognizing it just as a colonial ideology that they are compelled to adopt in the colonial matrix of power.

Along with such an implosion of the myth of origin in terms of deconstruction and *différance*, the colonized, nonetheless, make sure that they, in their own eyes, are themselves the 'marginalized selves' forced to replicate the 'centralized others,' the colonizers.[24] As Gayatri Spivak puts it, destructive project eventually leans towards the 'marginalized others' such as women, victims of capitalism, non-westerners and the like.[25] John Caputo also states well: "deconstruction is respect, respect for the other, a respectful, responsible affirmation of the other, a way if not to efface at least to delimit the narcissism of the self (which is, quite literally, a tautology) and to make some space to let the other be."[26] It is to be kept in mind that deconstruction, as Derrida envisions it, leads us to preserve differences, while respecting others. That is, the 'marginalized selves,' on their own part, sustain the differences, which the 'centralized others' cannot look down on. As shall be seen below, we can go into length about the differences of others as not to be neglected any more.

Dialogic Analysis of the Myth of Origin as a Colonial Discourse

When it comes to terms with the myth of origin in the colonial context, Mikhail Bakhtin casts new light on the analysis of colonial discourse with much focus on the matter of otherness. From the perspective of the colonizers alone, perhaps the most salient and recurring characteristics of colonial discourse, as exemplified in the myth of origin, is the adamant proclamation and assertion of monological, unequivocal, and absolute discourse. However, this is not true because it precludes the standpoint of the colonized people from the discourse. If we understand colonial discourse to include both the perspective of the colonizers and the perspective of the colonized, we can admit that it

should be dialogical, doubled, and relative discourse, as Bakhtin demonstrates through such concepts as dialogism, double-voicedness, and "surplus of seeing." Let us consider the ways in which the awareness of others can make a difference in understanding colonial discourse.

In the first place, colonial discourse is itself not monological, but dialogic in the light of dialogism. Bakhtin points out that any discourse in the relation between self and other is dialogical on the grounds that it is dialogue that functions to mediate between the two different poles.[27] Bakhtin goes on to say that the self is open to the unfinalizability of the other to the extent that it does not have any absolute meanings in itself; rather, the self depends upon the other for its being. In the colonial context, it can be said that the colonizers rely for their identity on the colonized and vice-versa. While Kyung-Won Lee upholds that colonial discourse is a monolithic, unidirectional, monologue flowing from the colonizer to the colonized, I, however, claim that it is a mutual, bi-directional dialogue between colonizer and colonized. [28] Thus, colonial discourse, within the framework of dialogism, is construed as (inter)relational to the others, whether they are the colonizers or the colonized.

Drawing on this dialogic perspective, one can go further by analyzing the identity construction of the colonizing and colonized subjects. Colonial discourse operates on the colonial mechanism to centralize the power of the colonizer and marginalize the power of the colonized. It is also worth noting that in a dialogic perspective, the self is constructing itself while constructing the other, and while at the same time the self is constructing the other, it constructs itself.[29] To put it another way, the construction of self and the construction of other are mutually influencing each other, while simultaneously being mutually influenced. Within this dialogic framework of self and other, the colonizers centralize themselves and marginalize the colonized as others simultaneously; thus, the colonizers maintain the centralized selves and the marginalized others. Influenced by this phenomenon, the colonized marginalize themselves and centralize the colonizers as others simultaneously; therefore, they sustain the marginalized selves and the centralized others. As a consequence, colonial discourse and power engender colonial subjects in what follows: the centralized subject as the colonizer vis-à-vis the marginalized subject as the colonized.

Second of all, colonial discourse is double-voiced rather than unequivocal in Bakhtins' terms. As for him, dialogism betrays "double-voicedness," namely, "double-wordedness" within a discourse in that it perceives the voices reciprocally engaged in a dialogue, simultaneously addressing and being addressed.[30] Bakhtin defines double-voiced discourse as the collision between the author's discourse and the discourse of another in the utterance, even in the individual word. [31] Any concrete discourse, it can be said, consists of both dominant discourse and its

counter discourse within itself.[32] Of course, "double-voiced discourse" can apply to power relations in the colonial milieu.[33] Particularly, even the same colonial discourse may be translated as both colonial and anti-colonial.[34] Thus, Bakhtin's dialogism suggests that colonial discourse is double-voiced rather than unambiguous.

With this in mind, one can enter the myth of origin as a double-voiced, colonial discourse. The myth of origin serves as a dominant discourse in the colonial context and simultaneously, generates its countering discourse as an imaginary construction. As mentioned above, Derrida' deconstructive project can function as a counter discourse against the myth of origin by adding that there is no such a thing as origin *per se*, partly due to the indeterminable boundary between origin and copy, partly due to the *différance* of origin as differentiation from and deferral of what it means. Taken together, the myth of origin as a colonial discourse turns out a double-voiced discourse in that it dominates a colonial society and at once, confronts its opposing discourse as implied by Derrida's deconstructive strategy.

Last but not least, "surplus of seeing," in Bakhtin's phrase, provides good reason to argue that (colonial) discourse indeed gives rise to 'relative' truths, not 'absolute' truth. Let us for a moment suppose that two individuals face each other; neither of them can see the world behind one's own back; it is only the other that can see one cannot see.[35] Bakhtin terms "surplus of seeing" the aspect that one cannot see, while the other can. Both individuals finally recognize that the other has a "surplus of seeing."[36] It can also be hinted that each individual is a center to see the other, the result being that there exist no single center, but multiple centers with diverse perspectives. Therefore, any discourse has a limited perspective, which is also relative to the other perspectives. Likewise, colonial discourse is subject to relative truths rather than absolute truth. Also, it is important to remember that all colonial subjects, regardless of whether they are the colonizers or the colonized, are all centers in terms of "seeing."

In this connection, the colonized can find fault with the myth of origin invented by the colonizer in terms of "surplus of seeing." As mentioned earlier, the myth of origin is a discourse dominating the colonizer as well as the colonized. The myth of origin, for colonizer, as a center of "seeing," may as well remain as a dominant discourse, which they misrecognize as true. On the contrary, the colonized, as another center of "seeing," can now unmask it as an illusory construction created by the colonizer, along with Derrida. Remarkably, it is striking that finding the illusory myth of origin, in the long run, becomes a "surplus of seeing" that the colonizer cannot see but the colonized can see. Thus, the "surplus of seeing" of the colonized as a center of "seeing" eventually undermines the "surplus of seeing" of the colonizer as another center of "seeing."

All things considered, colonial discourse, from the standpoint of Bakhtin, eventually becomes subversive to the colonial system in a way that its social hierarchies are turned upside down since the suppressed voices overturn the authoritative voices. In Bakhtin's terms, colonial discourse is changed into a site that yields the carnival of chaos.[37] The reason for this is that the voices of the colonized as a center of "seeing" are no longer submissive to the voices of the colonizers as another center of "seeing," but rather resistant to them. It is to be born in mind that colonial discourse is a double-voiced discourse, wherein there comes into being the clash between the dominant discourse of the colonizer and the counter discourse of the colonized. Sensitized to their centeredness, the colonized can start to become the 'reborn' selves, which centralize the "marginalized selves" and marginalize the "centralized others" as the colonizer at once; the colonized are, in the end, transformed into the 'reborn' centralized selves vis-à-vis the recalcitrant colonizers still claiming to be the centralized selves. Consequently, colonial discourse brings in the chaotic state leading to the competition between the colonizers and the colonized. As can be seen below, we shall take into consideration colonial identity alongside Homi Bahbha.

Colonial Identity: Ambivalence, Mimicry, and Hybridity

In line with the aforementioned observations, I shall revisit the matter of colonial identity connected to my denomination in colonial Korea, as Bhabha suggests. The first point to be recognized is that colonial identity is ambivalent, as the colonizer's presence is ambivalent in interaction with the colonized in that it seems original and authoritative but is represented as repetitive and different.[38] As is the case with my denomination, the presence of Western missionaries in the colonial context was quite ambivalent to its forefathers. Above all, the missionaries did not clearly identify their own denomination because their only concern was to evangelize the colonized Koreans without any self-identification. It is important to note that there operated the colonial power relations between missionaries and natives.

A second point to be kept in mind is that Bhabha imputes colonial ambivalence to mimicry. Colonial strategy is to compel the colonized to partly mimic the image of the colonizer in an incomplete form: "almost the same, but not quite."[39] As Lee puts it, "Mimicry here is a partial assimilation of the colonized into the colonizer, which in turn exerts an ambivalent influence on the identity of the latter."[40] Through mimicry, colonizer's presence, on the part of the colonized, becomes neither identical nor different.[41] This means that the colonized is partially identical with, and at once, partially different from the colonizer. Accordingly, mimicry is a double rupture between origin and copy.

As such, mimicry is an attempt to at once stabilize and destabilize colonial authority. For one thing, mimicry stabilizes colonial authority in that the colonized is altered from the intractable, inestimable other into the compliant, measurable other. For another, the colonized, by means of mimicry, a partial repetition of colonial presence, destabilizes colonial authority, thus decentering its centrality. The result is that the colonizer is inescapably anxious with the grotesque image as mirrored by the colonized.[42]

For example, the Japanese colonizer, in reality, deemed the mimicry of the mission of my denomination as threatening to colonial authority. On the 29th of December in 1943, a time near the end of the Japanese colonization, a historical event occurred during which around 300 people of my denomination were arrested on the grounds that they spoke about Jesus's second coming, an eschatological hope which was seen as 'politically' challenging to colonial domination. In the long run, the Japanese colonial government disbanded my denomination. Most importantly, Western missionaries, in contrast, had ever taken a very 'apolitical' stance from the purview of the power holders during the Japanese colonization. From this it follows that the mimicry of my denomination must have been a partial repetition of missionaries, a type of colonial presence, in the sense that it delivered a 'political' message that they did not teach them.

A third point to be remembered is that colonial ambivalence culminates in hybridity, which negates purity in essentialist terms.[43] In the words of Edward Said: "No one today is purely one thing......Imperial consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale.[44] Hybridity, as Bhabha envisions it, is the "Third Space" without any primordial union or fixity.[45] This is to say that hybridity generates "a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation."[46] The Third Space is the in-between space to cross boundaries in a way that the colonized as a center goes beyond the periphery.[47] What is more, hybridity as the Third Space is a space of native resistance against colonial dominance in a way that the colonized enters the dominant discourse:

> "Hybridity is the reevaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. It unsettles the minetic or narcisstic demands of colonial power but reimplicates identification in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power."[48]

Thus, hybridity is a space of resistance that blurs the colonizer/colonized dichotomy.

By and large, my denomination in the colonial context showed an ambivalent and hybrid identity rather than essential identity. From the beginning, it was far from being pure or original; rather, it was just ambivalent and hybrid. By partially mimicking Western missionaries, the founders of my denomination gained ambivalent identity. At the same time, they could resist against colonial domination in such a liminal, interstitial space between religion and politics by mimicry. This also suggests that my denomination was a hybridity between dominant and counter-dominant culture.

As a consequence, we come to the conclusion that colonial identity is ambivalent, and more precisely, hybrid, split between colonizer and colonized. Moreover, the ambivalence and hybridity of colonial identity become grounds for defiance against colonial power and authority through the mimicry of the colonized. From this it follows that the colonized have creative agency in colonial discourse.

Concluding Remarks

Until now, I have attempted to deconstruct the dominant myth or ideology of origin, a quest after essential identity, in the context of national Romanticism as well as Japan's colonization of Korea. From the historical survey I draw a conclusion that the myth of origin is a particular historical construction of Japanese colonization, which stems from Romantic nationalism in the second half of the 19th century: a search for origin in essentialistic terms is a colonial desire of constructing national identity in Western imperial expansionism. Furthermore, I undertake to deconstruct the myth of origin, which derives from the binarism of the Western philosophical tradition. Now the time has come to raise a question of what/who we, the colonized ones, are within the colonial context.

What are we, the colonized ones? This is the inquiry given to us by the colonizer during the Japanese colonization. The "what" question has a wrong premise that there is the essential, unchanging identity with a clear-cut dichotomy between 'them' and 'us.'[49] Yet, Derrida's deconstruction suggests that there exists no absolute center to demarcate between them and us. Rather, there are, for Bakhtin, multiple, relative centers in relation to the other. In particular, Bhabha suggests that colonial identity is ambivalent and hybrid. From these I draw a conclusion that no identity is ever fixed, static, and essential.

Now, let us change the question from "what" to "who." Who are we, the colonized ones? The "who" question envisions the colonized as ambivalent and hybrid self, as hinted by Bhabha.[50] This colonial identity invites us to live as creative agents, who undermine colonial power and discourse.

Notes:

[1] On the ever-recurring quest of the lost world, see Sandu Frunză, "Elie Wiesel and Nostalgia for a Lost Paradise," *Transylvanian Review* vol. XVIII, No. 2 (2009): 101-105. According to Frunză, memory plays a central role in healing melancholy and despair by connecting the past to the present and moreover, turning it towards the future.

[2] On this, see *The History Compilation Committee of the Korea Evangelical Holiness Church* ed., *A History of the Korea Evangelical Holiness Church* trans. Chun-Hoi Heo et al. (Seoul: Living Waters, 1998)

[3] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 28-30. According to Anne McClintock, naming has the power to put things and beings in order along with the authority of rendering them visible in the world. On the contrary, non-naming, however, has the authority of making them invisible.

[4] On this, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983); Anthony Marx, *Faith in Nation: Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) In nationalism, the distinction between 'them' and 'us' is starkly drawn and the purebred as an in-group are included, while the non-purebred as an out-group are excluded. In light of nationalism, some church historians understand my denomination to have emerged as part of Korean nationalism during the Japanese colonization, while simultaneously removing anything foreign and impure from itself.

[5] Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays* (London: New Left Books, 1971), 153.

[6] I would like to distinguish between colonialism and imperialism in spite of their commonality that both concern a desire of conquest of other people. Colonialism refers to the structured deployment of the policy and/or practice of acquiring political and domination and control over indigenous peoples' lands and goods through 'geographical violence.' By contrast, imperialism can be defined as a structured power's drive of instituting and extending its conquest. In brief, the basic difference between colonialism and imperialism may be that the former cannot operate apart from any colonies, but the latter can. On this, see Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London: Routledge, 2005); Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001)

[7] Jon R. Stone, *The Essential Max Müller: on Language, Mythology, and Religion* (New York : Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 3.

[8] Dorothy Matilda Figueira, *Aryans, Jews, Brahmins : Theorizing Authority through Myths of Identity*, Suny Series, the Margins of Literature (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 47.

[9] Stone, 10-11. Müller's pursuit of origin was closely connected to an evolutionary perspective on history in his times. Although Müller may not have admitted that he was a Hegelian, not to mention a Darwinian, his thoughts retain Hegelian and Darwinian elements. That is to say, Müller stresses, with an evolutionary idea in mind, the "divine logos" that is operative in the infinite and finite. It is evident that Müller's pursuit of the origin of religion and mythology reflects a Hegelian and Darwinian Romantic evolutionary understanding of history.

[10] Dorothy Matilda Figueira, "Romanticism," in *Studying Hinduism : Key Concepts and Methods*, ed. Sushil Mittal and Gene R. Thursby (London ; New York: Routledge, 2008), 337.

[11] Joan Leopold, *Contributions to Comparative Indo-European, African and Chines Linguistics*, Prix Volney Essay Series (Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999), 30.It is important to note that the ethnocentrism of European Romanticism focused on national identity often went hand in hand with European colonialism. Obviously, European colonialism-as a set of ideas that legitimize its system- stressed the ethnocentric idea that the colonizers were superior to the colonized in terms of race and ethnicity. Furthermore, racism cooperative with pseudoscience resulted in a type of social Darwinism of justifying Europeans' conquest of indigenous populations based on the racial superiority of white people over them.

[12] On the influence of German romanticism on Japanese ethnic nationalism, see Kevin M. Doak, "Ethnic Nationalism and Romanticism in Early Twentieth-Century Japan," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 22, (1996): 77-103.

[13] Doak, 102.

[14] Doak, "National Identity and Nationalism," in *A Companion to Japanese History* ed. William M. Tsutsui (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2000), 528-544.

[15] Doak, 534.

[16] To make matters worse, this exclusive structure of binary system becomes repressive, while prioritizing one element of the system and simultaneously marginalizing the other. Taylor notes convincingly: "The guiding insight of deconstruction is that every structure-be it literary, psychology, social, economic, political or religious-that organizes our experience is constituted and maintained through acts of exclusion."Mark C. Taylor, "What Derrida Really Meant," The University of Chicago Press,
http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/derrida/taylorderrida.html.

[17] Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy,* trans. Alan Bass, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 195.

[18] Cari Olson, *Theory and Method in the Study of Religion: A Selection of Critical Readings* (Belmont: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2003), 243. Lévi-Strauss develops his ideas into social structure beyond mythical structure: "mythology reflects the social structure and the social relations." Claude Lévi-Strauss, "Structural Anthropology" in Cari Olson ed. *Theory and Method in the Study of Religion: A Selection of Critical Readings* (Belmont: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2003), 326.

[19] Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans., Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1978), 278.

[20] Derrida, 279.

[21] Derrida, 280. Derrida went on to deconstruct the structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss. Derrida investigated the way in which Lévi-Strauss handled the opposition between nature and culture and his mythology. Derrida questioned and erased the dichotomy of nature and culture as proposed by Lévi-Strauss. Moreover, Derrida denied the "unity of the myth." Noteworthy is the remark of Lévi-Strauss: "The focus or the source of the myth are always shadows and virtualities which are elusive, unactualizable, and nonexistent in the first place. Everything begins with structure, configuration, or relationship. The discourse on the acentric structure that myth itself is, cannot itself have an absolute subject or an absolute center (286)."

[22] On the matter of *différance,* see Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, 1-27; Geoffrey Bennington, *Jacques Derrida*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 70-84. With reference to his concept of deconstruction, it is worth noting Derrida's notion of *différance*. Derrida coined a French neologism that has the same enunciation as *différence*. The French term *différer* borders on deferring and differing alike. From this it follows that the distinction between *différance* and *différence* is completely inaudible, with the result that the priority of speech over writing in the Western philosophical tradition is reversed.

[23] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans., Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1976), 7. It is noted that *différance* is not to be fully elaborated. Rather, *différance* destroys the notion of sign and its whole logic. Suppose that one looks up a particular word in a dictionary. One would have to find the words related to that word in an incessant way. This is to say that a sign is to be expounded in its relation to the other signs.

[24] In the eyes of the colonizers, the colonized are just the marginalized others forced to mimic them. By contrast, the colonized, in their own eyes, are the 'otherized,' or 'marginalized selves' forced to replicate the 'centralized others.' I believe the first statement still retains the Western perspective, while the second the non-Western. Contrary to the Western perspective, which tends to otherize the experiences of colonized people, I claim that we should employ the phrases such as 'marginalized selves' and 'centralized others' in order to sustain the agency of the colonized.

[25] François Cusset, *French Theory: how Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, & Co. Transformed the Intellectual Life of the United States*, trans., Jeff Fort, (Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 125. While the phrase 'marginalized others' may not maintain the agency of the colonized, I deliberately leave that phrase as used by Spivak in order to distinguish between 'marginalized others' and 'marginalized selves.'

[26]John D. Caputo, *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 44.

[27] On this, see Michael Holoquist, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 17-21. Now, it is to be noted at the outset that, philosophically speaking, Bakhtin's dialogism is grounded on Kant's argument that there is an unidentifiable chasm between mind and world, adding that dialogue serves to mediate between such an unbridgeable split. Michael Holoquist notes: "The non-identity of mind and world is the conceptual rock on which dialogism is founded and the source of all the other levels of non-concurring identity which Bakhtin saw shaping the world and our place in it (18)." It is worth noting that the relation between self and other is an asymmetric dualism, but not a binary opposition. Here, Bakhtin imputed this heterogeneity between self and other to "exotopy," or "outsidedness" that separates the mind from the world in a fundamental way. The self knows the other through a dialogue between the two, while sensing the unbridgeable boundary between them.

Scientifically speaking, Einstein is the most helpful in grasping Bakhtin's dialogism. Put simply, Bakhtinian dialogism is comparable to Einstein's theory of relativity. Holoquist states: "Dialogism argues that all meaning is relative in the sense that it comes about only as a result of the relation between two bodies occupying *simultaneous* but *different* space, where bodies may be thought of as ranging from the immediacy of our physical bodies, to political bodies and to

bodies of ideas in general (ideologies) (italics in original) (21)." Here, what matters is the position of the observer. Ironically, "the non-centeredness of the bodies themselves requires the center constituted by an observer (21)." Two bodies, simultaneous but different, contributes to Bakhtin's dialogical aspect of the self and other.

On definition of exotopy, Barbara Green, *Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Scholarship* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 33.

[28] Kyung-Won Lee, "Is the Glass Half-empty or Half-Full? Rethinking the Problems of Postcolonial Revisionism," *Cultural Critique* 36 (1997): 103; Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and "The Mystic East"* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 206; Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980). Lee raises a serious question of whether or not Bakhtin's dialogism is relevant to the colonial discourse between dominant and dominated. Likewise, Richard King charges Bakhtin for not engaging with the differential relations of power. Striking is the remark of Michel Foucault: "The history which bears and determines us has the form of war rather than that of language: relations of power, not relations of meaning (114)."

[29] On the dialogical construction of self and other, what can be called authoring, see Sung Uk Lim, "Jonah's Transformation and Transformation of Jonah from the Bakhtinian Perspective of Authoring and Reauthoring," *Journal for the Study of Old Testament* 33 (2008): 247-248.

[30] Green, 35.

[31] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* trans., Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 184.

[32] Lee, 96.

[33] In this vein, the notion of "double-voicedness" can be developed into that of polyphony, which literally means a multitude of voices. For Bakhtin, there is no single center, but multiple centers with multifarious voices living in a Copernican rather than Ptolemaic universe: "But no living word relates to its object in a *singular* way: between the word and its object, between the word and the speaking subject, there exists an elastic environment of other, alien words about the same object, the same theme, and this is an environment that it is often difficult to penetrate. It is precisely in the process of living in interaction with this specific environment that the word may be individualized and given stylistic shape." Cf. Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin* trans., Caryl Emerson and Michael Holoquist ed., Michael Holoquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 276.

[34] On this, see James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), ix-xiii.

At this point, James Scott's concepts of the "public transcript" and the "hidden transcript" of both the dominant and the weak can advance the notion of the double-voiced discourse in terms of power differences. For Scott, the public transcript and the hidden transcript are each divided into two categories: the public transcript of the dominant; the public transcript of the weak; the hidden transcript of the dominant; the hidden transcript of the weak.

[35] Lim, 248.

[36] The things I see but you cannot and the things you see but I cannot comprise "surplus of seeing." This means that each individual must integrate one's own

"surplus of seeing" with the other's "surplus of seeing," in order to construct an image of the whole.

[37] Nancy Glanzener, "Dialogic Subversion: Bakhtin, the Novel and Getrude Stein," in Ken Hirschkop and David Shepherd ed., *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), 109-129. Bakhtin in his work *Rabelais and His World* betrayed his awareness of power relations in his theory of "carnivalesque," which means a literary mode of subverting and the dominant style through carnival laughter and disorder. With special respect to identity, carnivalesque, as Bakhtin envisions it, has insightful overtones, since it supplies a way of subverting essentializing and abstract identity in a dominant culture. In the same way as deconstruction, carnivalesque attempts to unstabilize essentialized identity abstracted from binary oppositions, which occlude differing identities.

[38] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 153. Certainly, Bhabha advances the notion of ambivalence by appropriating Derrida's notion of *différance* as deferral and differentiation.

[39] Bhabha, 128.

[40] Lee, 92.

[41] Lee, 126.

[42] Lee, 92. On the potential harm of colonial mimicry to the colonized, see Tat-siong Benny Liew, "Tyranny, Boundary, and Might," in R. S. Sugirtharajah ed., *The Postcolonial Biblical Reader* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 206-223. Noticeably, colonial mimicry is menacing to the colonizer and simultaneously, is harmful to the colonized by internalizing colonial ideology unto them.

[43] In connection to mimicry, I construe hybridity as creative. My claim is that the mimicry of the indigenous is a creative act, which mingles native traditions with foreign traditions. I understand hybridity to be dynamic enough to yield a new culture, which is neither indigenous nor foreign. Therefore, I claim that the colonized are creative agent in history. See Serge Grunzinski, *The Mestizo Mind: The Intellectual Dynamics of Colonization and Globalization* (New York: Routledge, 2002)

[44] Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1933), 336.

[45] Bhabha, 55.

[46] Homi K. Bhabha, *Nation and Narration* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1990).

[47] Namsoon Kang, "Who/What Is Asian?" in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire* eds. Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004), 115.

[48] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 159-160.

[49] Kang, 116-117.

[50] Kang, 116-117.

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