



Liminality as a mechanism for changing the sacred and profane of autogenous modernity

Liminality as Mechanism of Sacred-Secular Transformation

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Research h

Problem raising and Background research purpose and
Exploring the differences between Eastern and Western concepts of modernity and the possibility of integration. Analysis of the autogenous modernity of Donghak Thought and Daesoon Thought through the concept of liminality.

Overview of Donghak and Daesoon Thought
A representative autogenous ideology of Korea, an ideological system that pursues modern change in a way different from Western modernity. A liminality characteristic that crosses the boundary between the sacred and the profane.

Need for research
Exploring the possibility of an alternative modernity model in the era of uncertainty and ambivalence in modern society. Presenting new possibilities for integration of Eastern and Western ideas through liminality.

Defining the Concept of liminality

Liminality comes from the Latin word 'Limen', meaning boundary or liminality.

As a concept, it is a term first proposed by anthropologist Arnold Van Gennep in his Research on rites of passage.

Key Feature

- Liminality and transitivity: a vague and indeterminate intermediate state between a previous state and a subsequent state.
-
- Emergence and possibility: A creative space that breaks away from the existing order and opens up new possibilities.
- Ambivalence: The two sides of crisis and opportunity, death and rebirth, chaos and order coexisting

The location of liminality



Liminality started from a simple Theory of rites of passage and expanded into a theory that explains wide-ranging changes in society, culture, history, and religion.

rites of passage and the three s

Arnold Van Gennep analyzed that rites of passage around the world have a common three-stage structure. In the second stage, the transition process, 'liminality' plays a key role.

The stages of a rite of passage

Every rite of passage involves three stages:

- ◆ Rite of separation: separation from the existing world bow
- ◆ **Rite of transition: liminality stage**
 - ◆ Rite of incorporation: acquisition and return to new identity

1 Separation

A stage of separation from existing social status, status, or location. You break away from your daily routine and your previous status and role are dissolved.



2 Transition Rite / Liminality

A "borderline" state that is neither one nor the other. It breaks away from the existing order and is placed in an ambiguous and uncertain state.

i Characteristics: Ambiguity, emergence, ambivalence, equality, anonymity, destructuring



3 Incorporation

The stage of reintegration into society by being given a new identity and status. You are reborn as a new social being different from before.

Development of liminality theory

1

Van Gennep's rite of passage theory

Arnold Van Gennep

~early 20th century

Key concepts: Discovery of liminality in rite of passage, three-stage structure of separation-transition-integration

Significance: For the first time in anthropology, 'passing', a common attribute of ritual,

2

Victor Turner's Rediscovery and Expansion Victor

Turner 1960s~80s
Key concepts: liminality and communitas, social drama theory, structure-anti-structure-structural change model

Significance: Expanding beyond ritual theory to general principles of social, cultural, and

3

Expansion into analysis of modern society and modernity

Edith Turner, Sigmund Baumann, Shmuel

Eisenstadt, etc

Key concepts: Communitas of daily life and disaster, liquid modernity, multiple modernities

1990s to present

Victor Turner's Sociodrama Theory

Social drama is a concept presented by Victor Turner by expanding Van Gennep's Concept of rites of passage to all areas of society, culture, and religion, and is considered to be similar to a 'play' set in society.

Characteristics of social drama

- Universality: Explaining changes in “universal social and cultural phenomena that occur around the world”
- Dialectical process: structure → anti-structure → cyclical change in structure
- Psychological Functioning: Helps you get through painful life transitions with ease.

4 stages of social drama

1. Breach

Violation of existing social norms or rules



2. Crisis

Spread of conflict and deepening of confrontation



3. Correction/Healing (Redressive Action)

Formal and informal mechanisms for problem solving



4. Reintegration/Schism

Social reintegration or the beginning of new divisions

Structure and anti-structure

Structure: Hierarchical, differentiated organizational form in existing society

Anti-structure: A form of communitas that emphasizes equality and solidarity. A state in which the existing order is temporarily abolished

Communitas and anti-structure concepts

communitas

It is a concept representing the special interrelationship of humans presented by Victor Turner, and is a communal experience formed in a state of liminality.

Key

Features

- ✓ Equality: An equal relationship in which all existing social status, class, and identity disappear.
- ✓ Solidarity: Building a strong sense of community and belonging
- ✓ Spontaneity: Forming immediate and direct relationships rather than structured patterns.

"Case of the Nthembu Tribe: During the coming-of-age ceremony, children experience communitas, forming a strong sense of solidarity and cooperation to survive in a situation where they are thrown alone into an unfamiliar environment."

semi-structure

It is a concept that contrasts with the existing social structure and order, and is a state of temporarily escaping or reversing the structured framework of society.

Key

Features

- ✓ Anonymity: ritual participants wear the same clothes and are represented as non-owners, which weakens their personal identity.
- ✓ Role reversal: Social status and authority are reversed, with the weaker party temporarily assuming authority.
- ✓ Suspension of social structures: a temporary suspension of existing social norms and orders.

Relationship diagram: structure → anti-structure → new structure

** In Turner's sociodrama theory, it acts as a key mechanism of crisis and change.*

"Communitas and liminality, which form a semi-structure, are closely related yet distinct. Liminality is about modes and conditions of existence, and

liquid modernity and multiple modernities

Sigmund Bauman's Theory of liquid modernity

(liquid modernity)

Modernity is interpreted as a state of extreme fluid change due to permanent liminality.

- ♦ Failure to establish alternative values after overcoming feudal values
- ♦ An indeterminate and constantly changing state, like a liquid
- ♦ Emphasizing ambiguity, a characteristic of modernity, explaining the despondency and uncertainty of modern people

Shmuel Eisenstadt's multiple modernities

(multiple modernities, multiple modernities)

Presenting consilient modernity through redefinition of the concepts of sacred and profane

- ♦ Rejecting a single Western model of modernity
- ♦ Recognition of multiple modernities emerging in diverse cultural contexts
- ♦ Emphasis on liminality in boundary shifting in performance
- ♦ Presenting the possibility of modernization while maintaining cultural identity

Connection to liminality

Interpretation beyond dialectics

Explaining the problems and uncertainties of modern society that Hegel's dialectic did not



Ambivalence and ambiguity

the result of throwing away the child while throwing away the water with which the



Analysis of post-modernity

Explanation of the coexistence of instability and creativity in modern society where

How liminality is applied

Western liminality

How it extends from individual rationality to society



- Incorporation of individuals into society through rites of passage,
 - progress through dialectical development (anti-anti-synthesis),
- liquid modernity (Bauman): a state of permanent liminality

Liminality in the East (Korea)

How universal principles are internalized in individuals



- Cyclic thinking system of Yin-Yang and Five Phases
- Donghak's Sicheonju (侍天主) - Bringing heaven within me Powol (包越) in

Daesoon Thought - Containing and transcending
Characteristics of autogenous modernity

Among the three kingdoms of East Asia, Korea's Donghak and Daesoon Thoughts realized liminal modernity through a autogenous view of the three worlds (Heaven, Earth and Man), and showed the characteristic of integrating existing

Comparison of Eastern and Western

East, West		
way of thinking	correlative thought, Yin-Yang theory, dialectical thinking, dichotomy	
emergence of modernity	Self-sustaining development amidst imperialist domination and crisis	Medieval crisis (Mongol invasion, plague) and exchanges with other civilizations
Direction of development	the universe (heaven) to the individual	Expanding from the individual to the universe
liminality analysis	hwa (包越), Gail Baebeop (加一倍law), hwa (化)	rites of passage, social drama, communitas
Korean characteristics	Characteristics of incorporation - integration and transcendence of heterogeneous elements	

“Both the West and the East realize modernity by building liminality through views of Heaven, Earth and Man, but the form of liminality of modernity is different between the West, which expands from the self to the universe, and the East, which expands from the universe to the self.”

autogenous modernity and Donghak/Daesoon Thought

Donghak Thought and Liminality

● **Si, Heavenly Lord, Thought**

The Concept of serving heaven implies the characteristic of liminality that crosses the boundary between the divine and the secular within humans.

● **Life Thought and Correlative Reason**

Kim Ji-ha's research: The life-centered ideas found in Donghak Thought are a generative way of thinking different from Western dialectics and are a characteristic of autogenous modernity.

● **Gaebyeok Thought**

A liminal transitional idea at the border between the existing order and the new order, serving as a change mechanism for modernity.

Daesoon Thought and Liminality

● **Haewon-Sangsaeng (解冤相生)**

It is a Concept of resolving resentment and coexistence, and according to Youngran Lee's research, liminality is a characteristic that creates a third

Characteristics of autogenous modernity

Unlike Western modernity, Donghak Thought and Daesoon Thought constitute a Korean model of liminality through the balance of correlative thought and subjectivity.

- Realignment of the sacred and the profane: An integrated approach without separating religious sacredness and everyday secularity
- Gai-il-double method and grafting: Implementation of liminality through a progressive change method that adds new elements to the existing base.
- Immanent Transcendence: Creating a third space that goes beyond confrontation, like the 'aesthetics of white shade' presented in Kim Ik-du's research.

Differences from Western modernity

Western modernity	Personal →
Donghak/Daesoon	Expand into space
change method	Universe →
	Internalized as an
	Oppositional dialectics vs.
	Correlational Liminality

Modern Applications of Liminality

Areas of application of liminality in modern society



Daily life and cultural area

- Breaking down boundaries in festivals, performing arts, and popular culture
- Liminality characteristics and modern interpretation of romantic love
- Changes in the boundaries and meanings of work (labor) and leisure



socio-political sphere

- Liminality of civil resistance movements such as the Gwangju Democratization Movement
- Moving the boundaries between identity and reality in digital space
- Formation of communitas and emergence of new order in a period of social change

The modern Meaning of liminality

Role in Disaster and Crisis Situations

Edith Turner emphasized that communitas serves as an important coping mechanism in disaster situations. Even in the COVID-19 pandemic situation, when social media or institutional responses alone were difficult to resolve, the formation of voluntary communities along with religious responses contributed to overcoming the crisis.

“Crisis situations become an opportunity for the formation of emergent communities through aspects of liminality.”

Connection with post-modernity

Liminality is an alternative theory that explains the ambivalence and uncertainty of modern society that dialectics cannot explain. Especially in the liquid modernity situation characterized by 'permanent liminality', the autogenous liminality approach of Donghak Thought and Daesoon Thought can be presented as an alternative modernity model.

modern
significance

Liminality has expanded beyond a simple Theory of rites of passage into a theoretical framework for understanding the principles of new emergence in the complex change and chaos of modern society.

Conclusion and Implications

Research Conclusion

Liminality has value as an integrative conceptual framework that connects modernity and post-modernity.

- ✓ **Expansion of interpretation of modernity**
Liminality goes beyond the Limits of dialectics and effectively explains the indeterminacy and ambivalence of modernity.
- ✓ **Rediscovery of autogenous modernity**
Donghak Thought and Daesoon Thought are important examples that demonstrate a autogenous modernity that takes a different path from Western modernity.
- ✓ **The universality of liminality**
Liminality through changes in the boundary between the sacred and the profane acts as a mechanism for social change common to the East and the West.

Research implication

“Liminality becomes a conceptual tool that opens up new emergence and possibilities in times of uncertainty.”

💡 Theoretical implications

- ◆ Providing a new theoretical framework for
- ◆ comparing Eastern and Western modernity.
- ◆ Value as an alternative way of thinking beyond dialectics. Possibility of academic

🌱 Practical implications

- ◆ reevaluation of Korean new religious ideas.
- ◆ Insight into overcoming uncertainty and crisis
- ◆ in modern society Possibility of solving social
- ◆ problems through communitarian solidarity A plan for harmonious integration of cultural identity and universal values