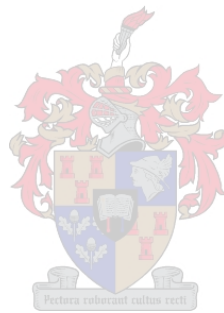# A theological-ethical critique of Korean entertainment television in the light of Alasdair MacIntyre's ethics

## by Hoseok Kim

Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Theology (Systematic Theology) at Stellenbosch University.

Supervisor: Prof. Dion Forster

April 2019

# **Declaration**

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# Abstract

The mass media is exerting an enormous influence on Korean society today, especially television media. The latter does not only mirror Korean norms, but also determines and reinforces current ethical trends. Amongst others, survival audition programs have gained much popularity in recent years This study argues that the neoliberal values embedded in these programs are impacting on the moral formation of viewers, and thereby facilitating the ethical deficiency of Korean society. To understand this phenomenon further, this study examined the specific values of Korean television entertainment, and took cognizance of why and how these programs should be critiqued.

This analysis was done from three different perspectives: A socio-historical perspective, a media theoretical perspective, and an ethical-theological perspective. The former tracked the origin of neoliberalism in Korean society and how it has evolved over time. Neoliberalism in Korea started with the influence of the economic policies of Western countries, but there were already traces of neoliberalism before that, i.e. during the Korean War and monocracy.

Through the theories of representative media scholars, namely, Walter Benjamin, Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan, and Günther Anders, it was found that media is no longer just a tool to deliver content, but also exercises a profound and powerful influence on the moral trends of society.

Finally, this study critiqued neoliberalized Korean television entertainment from an ethical-theological perspective. Alasdair MacIntyre's ethics formed the basis for this critical reflection, and his virtue ethics, which emphasizes community, was proposed as an alternative. MacIntyre's ethics was introduced as an ethical foundation to critique Korean television entertainment in conjunction with the theological viewpoints of John Milbank, Stanley Hauerwas, and Graham Ward.

# Opsomming

Die massamedia oefen vandag 'n geweldige invloed op die Koreaanse samelewing, veral televisie-media. Laasgenoemde weerspieël nie net Koreaanse norme nie, maar bepaal ook en versterk huidige etiese tendense. Oorlewings-oudisieprogramme het onder andere in die afgelope jare baie gewild geword. Hierdie studie beweer dat die neoliberale waardes wat in hierdie programme ingesluit is, 'n impak op die morele vorming van kykers het, en sodoende die etiese tekort van die Koreaanse samelewing vergemaklik. Om hierdie verskynsel verder te verstaan, het hierdie studie die spesifieke waardes van Koreaanse televisievermaak ondersoek, en kennis geneem van waarom en hoe hierdie programme gekritiseer moet word.

Hierdie analise is gedoen uit drie verskillende perspektiewe: 'n sosio-historiese perspektief, 'n media-teoretiese perspektief en 'n etiese-teologiese perspektief. Die voormalige het die oorsprong van neoliberalisme in die Koreaanse samelewing opgespoor en hoe dit met verloop van tyd ontwikkel het. Neoliberalisme in Korea het begin met die invloed van die ekonomiese beleid van Westerse lande, maar daar was voorheen spore van neoliberalisme, dws tydens die Koreaanse Oorlog en monokrasie.

Deur die teorieë van verteenwoordigende media-geleerdes, naamlik Walter Benjamin, Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan en Günther Anders, is bevind dat die media nie net net 'n instrument is om inhoud te lewer nie, maar ook 'n diepgaande en kragtige invloed op die morele tendense van die samelewing.

Ten slotte het hierdie studie die neoliberaliseerde Koreaanse televisievermaak vanuit 'n eties-teologiese perspektief gekritiseer. Alasdair MacIntyre se etiek het die basis gevorm vir hierdie kritiese refleksie, en sy deugde-etiek, wat die gemeenskap beklemtoon, is as alternatief voorgestel. MacIntyre se etiek is bekend gestel as 'n etiese grondslag om Koreaanse televisievermaak te kritiseer in samehang met die teologiese standpunte van John Milbank, Stanley Hauerwas en Graham Ward.

# Acknowledgement

I am deeply grateful to Trinity God and my supporters. This thesis could not have been finished without help from them. It is my great pleasure to acknowledge them who have given me help and encouragement.

Firstly, I appreciate Trinity God for guiding the footsteps of all my life and providing all the help and wisdom. God has called me and made me a minister of the church. I pray that my study will be used correctly for the church of God, and I also pray that I will be a courageous and wise minister for the church of God.

Secondly, I also appreciate my dear family. My mother, Mrs. Ryu, prays everyday for me and helps me spiritually and financially. Without her love, I would never have achieved anything. I also thank my parents-in-law. They have been caring to my family for a long time, and continue to provide generous financial support. Without their help, I would never have had the courage to study abroad. And I also thank my beloved children, Jian and Gangyu. They have endured the strange foreign life that they did not want, and they always give me courage and motivation. More than anyone, I owe a lot of love to my wife Seunghee Kim. I thank her for walking along this path bravely with me as the pastor's wife.

Thirdly, I also wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to the following churches for their prayers and great encouragement: The Chambich Church and Rev. Kim Yoon-ha, who retained my church membership during my long leave of absence, and upon my return, invited me to be a minister of the church. This was a great honor. I also wish to thank the Dong-in Church and The Yanggu Central for their ongoing encouragement and support, even though I was not one of their main members. I will always remember your love.

Lastly, I would like to send my deep appreciation to my supervisor Prof. Dion Forster for his patience and the continuous support of my MTh study. Through him, I was able to learn a balanced perspective on Christian ethics and gained proper help for media research. Above all, I was able to get a great deal of encouragement every time I had a conversation with him because he always had a kind attitude to me who is a foreign student not fluent in language.

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# INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

# TO THE STUDY

## 1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM

### 1.1.1 Background & Rationale

Marshall McLuhan (1994) popularized the use of the term "media" after using it in his book *Understanding Media*. It is, however, a difficult concept to define because 'media' itself does not refer to a genre of art that actually contains content. Instead, it refers to tools that mediate the world and human beings. Because the definition is so broad, it is often defined and understood differently. All the tools we use, whether they are tangible or intangible, can be called media. If we define the media as a mediator between human beings and the world, the definition of media must include everything that humans have used to relate to the world, such as stones, soil, metals, and so on.

However, when contemporary people see the term media they no longer recall physical tools such as stones or metals, but rather writing, print, photographs, movies, television, and the Internet. This is probably because contemporary people define media as being related to the storage, transmission, and processing of information by electronic means. Thus, the notion of media is no longer used in the private realm, but in relation to groups and public life. In other words, the meaning of the term media is almost similar to that of mass media. The term "mass media" is a combination of the word "mass" and the word "media," and refers to a means of communication that reaches a very large number of people (Stevenson, 2010).

Originally, the media existed as a tool to connect the world with humans, but the role of the media today seems to surpass this understanding. The media has largely changed the way we experience the world today. For instance, owing to the

media, the concept of 'there' is rapidly disappearing. Previously, it took time to experience another place that was physically distant. This has now changed, and the places that were once 'there,' have now become 'here' and 'now'. However, paradoxically, the media is offering contemporary people far greater opportunities than people in the past could ever have experienced, yet at the same time, they are encountering unexpected constraints. We are able to experience the wider world through the media, but at the same time, we were not able to experience what the media does not allow. This is especially significant for young people, as the world portrayed in the media is the only world they know, or at least a dominant frame of reference (cf. Höhne, 2017, pp. 121–142). However, for many older people, technology has been advancing and developing throughout their lifetime, and therefore does not reflect the world in which they were raised. But for the younger generation, the media is an environment that cannot be ignored (Cloete, 2012). Gerbner (1989), who advocates the cultivation theory, demonstrated empirically that people construct social reality through television. If Gerbner's theory is correct, it means that repeated visual messages from the media could infiltrate the minds of young children and adolescents, creating distorted and misleading images about the world. Gerbner's cultivation theory has been persuasive in studies by contemporary sociologists, for example, research that reveals that movies have a direct impact on suicide (Stack, Kral & Borowski, 2014).

Mass media inevitably reflects the values of society, and with the acceleration of the global economy since the 1990s, neoliberal norms have become global standards that guarantee economic efficiency. Indeed, a large number of third-world developing countries that have experienced severe currency crises are forced to switch to a neoliberal economic system (Yoon, 2013). Neoliberalism is an ideology that strongly promotes private property rights, and emphasizes governmental rules and market functions. This assumes the function and role of the market as the best value, and considers the state's intervention in the market function autonomously operated by the so-called "invisible hand,[1]" as a necessary evil. This neoliberal

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[1] The 'invisible hand' is a term utilized by Adam Smith to depict the unintended social advantages of individual self-interested actions. He argues that the market economy can do well because not all individuals are loving or kind, which means that the market economy will flourish because of

ideology has strengthened the belief that as the market develops, a trickle-down effect naturally arises and the lives of most economic agents will be enhanced (Haymes, De Haymes & Miller, 2015).

A recent neoliberal nation list includes Korea (Pirie, 2007), but Korea is not a country that has developed as a typical neoliberal model. Rather, it opposes neoliberal values, in that it has achieved considerable economic performance with a strong state-led economic policy (Yoon, 2013). After liberation from Japanese imperialism in 1945, followed by the Korean War in 1950, the Korean economy fell into a state of disrepair, and it became one of the poorest countries in the world. Park Chung-hee's regime, acquired in the 1960 military coup, began to revive the Korean economy over a short period of time by presenting a powerful centralized national model in the process of restoring the absent political legitimacy. With two economic development plans that began in the early 1960s, South Korea achieved rapid economic growth, which the foreign media called a 'miracle on the Han River' (Bridges, 2008). In the process, the Korean government adopted the strategy of monopolizing the protection of a specific company because Korean society expects a 'trickle-down effect'[2]. In other words, it is assumed that the abnormal growth of a few companies will increase the total amount of the national economy and these *chaebols*[3] will again be responsible for the lives of many members of the nation. In addition, socio-cultural values, including democracy and Korean traditional culture, which emphasizes community, has been replaced by instrumental values for the

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their selfishness. This argument has so far become the fundamental principle of market liberalism(Mankiw, 2018; Smith and Cannan, 2003).

[2]Trickle-down economics is a theory that the benefits of the wealthy will trickle down to everyone else. These benefits are usually tax cuts on businesses, high-income earners, capital gains, and dividends(Amadeo, 2017).In fact, the term "trickle-down" was first used by the comedian Will Rogers, and is often used today to criticize economic policies that favour the wealthy or privileged, while being framed as good for the average citizen(Greider, 1982).

[3]A *chaebol* is a word derived from South Korea that refers to a large family-owned business conglomerate (Stevenson, 2010). They are typically global multinationals and own numerous international enterprises controlled by a chairman with power over all the operations. The term is similar to that of the English word "conglomerate".

reconstruction of society and the nation's development, and has become the scapegoat of the monopoly national capitalist development model (Ryoo and Park, 2012).

However, rapid economic growth had a number of negative consequences. The *chaebols* have become extremely large and powerful, and as a result, the local and domestic economy have declined to a record low, and continued foreign currency borrowing and octopus investments have led to further unprecedented monopolies (Moon and Chung, 2014). These problems accumulated and were revealed in the late 1990s; this economic crisis was known as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout. Only a year after joining the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Develop (OECD)[4] in 1996, Korea was hit by a state of bankruptcy, which clearly shows how much the Korean economy was lacking in comparison to its colourful appearance and numerical achievements (Ryoo and Park, 2012).

These crises forced Korea to rapidly transform into a neoliberal economic system, which in turn affected the overall atmosphere of Korean society. A noteworthy point here is that the libertarian desire for the autonomy of the oppressed individual in the previous authoritarian regime was associated with the neoliberal order and ideology in which the market overwhelmed every sphere of society, including the state. This means that neoliberalism in Korea has infiltrated all of society, including citizens' consciousness, family, and education, going way beyond simple economic changes (Park, 2009).

In this neoliberal ideology, the economic logic of the market becomes the top virtue that dominates the society, and it requires obedience to, and compliance with, a set of rules and norms for fair competition. It is also a system based on the belief that individuals should be responsible for themselves, even in areas where public intervention such as safety and welfare are necessary, despite the existence of individual freedom of choice. Therefore, the core elements of neoliberalism are individual freedom, autonomy, and accountability for individual choice. It is not an

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[4] This is the acronym for Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. OECD is an international economic organization. As of January 2018, OECD has 35 member states, including advanced nations and emerging countries ("Members and partners - OECD," 2017).

exaggeration to say that it is a 'one-man enterprise' from a different viewpoint. Now, the people should be reborn as 'competitive' citizens, not a guarantee of the fundamental rights under the protection of the state. This implies that citizens must constantly develop self-direction and realize their own ability in life, and that people must embody the human image that the market wants, rather than pioneering oneself.

Korean television entertainment shows portray this neoliberal aspect of Korean society. The more citizens are influenced by these shows, the more this aspect is exacerbated and reproduced. In 2007, a mobile phone salesman named Paul Potts, the winner of the audition program *Britain's Got Talent*, became a worldwide celebrity. In 2010, Gak Heo, who was a fan repairman, became the winner of *Super Star K (Season 2)* and got nicknamed the 'Korean Paul Potts'. The dramatic success of Gak Heo, who was classified as being born with 'a clay spoon'[5], brought about a resurgence of interest in audition programs in contemporary Korean culture. Since then, there have been numerous audition reality programs in Korea with similar formats, with audition reality programs being the most popular genre. Audition-style reality shows guaranteed box-office success in Korea, such as *The Great Birth, K-pop Star, Immortal Songs, Produce 101,* and so on. These programs share a similar format, in which a large number of participants compete against each other and those who receive the popular vote survive to the next round. The final survivor gets a huge prize and honour. In this study, the relationship between the appeal of survival audition programs and the effects of neoliberalism in Korean society is analysed from a theological ethical perspective.

In his writings, Alasdair MacIntyre seeks to overcome the loss of ethics in contemporary society due to the adoption of liberal values such as these. This is evident in his book *After Virtue* (MacIntyre, 1981) written almost 30 years ago, and in

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[5] The expression 'clay spoon' comes from the English phrase "born with a silver spoon in one's mouth". Since the expression has been brought to Korea, it is used to criticize and satirize the reality that their own classes are determined by the economic power of one's parents. Those who are usually born in wealthy families are called "gold spoon" and those who are born in poverty are called "clay spoon". ("금수저,은수저,흙수저를 영어로 하면? 'Gold spoon', 'silver spoon', 'clay spoon' in English?" (translation is mine), 2016)

his more recent works*, Ethics In The Conflicts Of Modernity* (MacIntyre, 2016). He explains why the Enlightenment project had to fail, and argues that emotivism arose as a response. Emotivism, according to MacIntyre, means that every ethical statement or judgment is merely a representation of an individual's preference. In other words, when someone says an action or thing is good, it does not take into account the original purpose (also known as the *"telos"*) of the actor or the object, but only considers the above functions, which are merely an expression of the subject's preferences. If the original purpose of human existence is forgotten, emotivism inevitably prevails in ethical judgments, since the authority that surpasses personal preferences must disappear. For that reason, MacIntyre argues that in order to address the lack of ethics in modern society, one must pursue the original purpose of human beings. In order to do so, he presents virtue ethics, which emphasizes the importance of human virtues. Even though MacIntyre is not a Christian ethicist, his virtue ethics makes a significant contribution to the development of Christian ethics. Kallenberg (Murphy, Kallenberg & Nation, 1997, p.80) says:

> Alasdair MacIntyre does not come to the roundtable as a Christian ethicist. Nevertheless, his contribution is fruitful because he makes sense out of a cacophony of contemporary Christian voices which together challenge the inadequacies of the contemporary received explanation of ethics.

Therefore, if Korean TV shows contain neoliberal values and a lack of ethical consciousness, MacIntyre's ethical views can make a significant contribution to the present situation.

## 1.1.2 Statement of the Problem

Korean television entertainment shows propagate neoliberal ideals in Korean society and contribute to the weakening of ethics as a result of emotivism.

## 1.1.3 Research Questions

The main research question guiding this study is: "What theological insights will emerge from a critical evaluation of Korean television entertainment from the perspective of Alasdair MacIntyre's ethical theories?"

The main research question gives rise to the following sub-questions:

(1) What ethical trends evident in contemporary Korean entertainment television are challenging the ethical principles and values of Korean society?

(2) What is the nature of the ethics espoused in Korean television entertainment?

(3) How should Korean television entertainment shows be critiqued in the contemporary context? In addition, which ethical theory/theories would be most appropriate to perform such a critique?

## 1.1.4 Contribution and Relevance

Cloete (2015) rightly states that this generation is a digital generation. For the young people of today, the world expressed in the media is the only world they know, and it becomes their primary frame of reference (Cloete, 2012). It is an inseparable part of their daily lives. While older generations may be less dependent on the media and modern technology, for the younger generation the media is of central importance. The young people of this generation are "networked" to each other through different forms of devices and share their favourite information in real time.

The mass media was influential long before the digital age. But the current digital age, however, with its expansion of information and communication technology, brings new synergy. Al Rowgani, Twitter's Chief Operating Officer, stresses that SNS[6], in conjunction with television, offers a new interactive viewing experience for audiences (Cho and Choi, 2014). Even in the early 2000s, television programs were only presented to people sitting in front of the television at the time

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[6] SNS stands for social networking services. It is an online platform that creates and strengthens social relationships, such as free communication, information sharing, and networking amongst users (Obar and Wildman, 2015).

the program was being aired; nowadays, programs that have already been broadcast are uploaded to many sites, re-edited, and shared via SNS. As young people replay their favourite parts, the influence of the mass media is much more than just superficial, as captured by their ratings. Due to 'social viewing,' young people acquire much more than just information through the media, in that they also develop a framework and value system, which they use to view the world.

According to Mueller (2006a, p. 27):

> …[T]he media and the youth are dependent on each other. The media need the youth market for economic survival and the youth need the media for guidance and nurture in a society where other societal institutions such as the family and the school do not shape the youth culture as powerfully as they once did.

For this reason, it can be said that the worldview and ethics disseminated through the media have a significant influence on the formation of ethical consciousness amongst adolescents. For this reason, William Romanowski (2007) and Clive Marsh and Gaye Ortiz (1998) sought to analyse the ethics and theology contained in films. This was a pioneering achievement at that time because they analysed film in great depth, which is one of the most influential media productions of popular culture, in terms of theological and ethical standards. Although there is currently much discussion about the relationship between theology and popular culture since they conducted their research, to date no single monograph has surpassed this seminal contribution made more than ten years ago by Romanowski and Marsh, whose work remains one of the best studies in popular culture in the light of Christian theology.

However, the characteristics of Hollywood movies in the West and Korean television shows are very different. First, the characteristics of each genre are different. A movie has a long running time and each movie is independent, but because a television episode is shorter, it is consumed more readily. Given that the structure of each episode is similar but that the content differs per episode, it is important to look at the overall structural framework of the characters and the stories,

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rather than just focusing on each story individually. Second, there is a difference in context. The media closely reflects the characteristics of the society. Because the context of the U.S. in the 20th century is different from the context of Korea in the 21st century, the values expressed by the media are also different. Third, differences in attitudes are found between viewers who receive these implicit messages via movies or television. In recent times, 'reality television shows' have flooded the Korean market audiences do not believe that the hero's speech given in a movie represents the actor's real thoughts. But in Korean reality television shows this is not the case, and viewers are quite convinced that what the people are saying actually reflects their real thoughts and values, even if their words and actions are scripted. This explains why the influence of television entertainment celebrities is far greater than when they act in a film that reflects neoliberal values. This study has so far highlighted the necessity of focusing specifically on the ethics and values of Korean television shows for analysis, rather than merely reflecting on the existing ethical and theological criticisms of Hollywood movies.

As mentioned above, considering the current context of society, it is insufficient to emphasize norms only through deontological ethics in order to critique the content of television shows. Therefore, I would like to explore the possibility of critiquing Korean television shows based on MacIntyre's virtue ethics. The narrative and community emphasis MacIntyre has shown in *After Virtue* (MacIntyre, 1981) provides significant insight for setting ethical standards for television shows based on Korean society. Having stated the above, I argue that there is contemporary relevance for the current research study that seeks to facilitate an engagement between the Korean media context with the virtue ethics of MacIntyre.

# 1.2 RESEARCH OUTLINE

## 1.2.1 Research Methodology and goals

The researcher makes use of a literature review to collate and critically discuss key information related to the research topic and identified problem. In view of its importance, the literature review is structured as follows:

The thesis is divided into three main stages. In the first stage, the researcher looks at the relationship between the phenomenon of Korean television entertainment in the 21st century and ethical trends in Korean society in chapter 2. To obtain a more in-depth understanding, two issues require further clarification, namely: the phenomenon of Korean TV entertainment and the ethical impact thereof on Korean society. In order to uncover the phenomenon of Korean television entertainment, studies from Korean sociologists within the last three years will be reflected on.

The second stage identifies the reasons for this ethical tendency in Korean television in chapter 3. In the first step, the researcher traces the characteristics of Korean society in the 21st century in section 3.2. During this process, the researcher examines how neoliberal values in Korean society have been strengthened. In the second step, the researcher summarizes the theories of representative philosophers of media philosophy, such as Walter Benjamin, Harold Innis, McLuhan, and Günther Anders in section 3.3.

In the final stage, the researcher reflects on MacIntyre's research in chapter 4. The researcher inquires whether neoliberalism as depicted in Korean society is unique to the Korean context in the 21st century, or if it also forms part of a much larger context. In this process, questions are devised to form a better understanding of ethics in Korean entertainment television. Here, the researcher introduces Alasdair MacIntyre's seminal work on virtue ethics, as found in his book *After Virtue* (1981), and his more recent book, *Ethics in the conflicts of modernity* (2016)*.* In addition to the above, the researcher also reflects on subsequent studies on the same subject.

## 1.2.2 CHAPTER OUTLINE

### Chapter 1: Introduction & background to the study

This chapter serves as an introduction to the study. It introduces the main theme to be discussed, and states the methodology, background and rationale, as well as research questions. It also provides the structure of the thesis, and indicates the intended contribution this study seeks to make.

**Chapter 2: Television entertainment and the ethical trends in Korean society**

This chapter describes the phenomenon that is appearing in modern Korean television entertainment, and identifies a number of ethical trends. It also examines how the traditional ethical tendency in Korean society has changed in recent times. Of particular interest is the genre of 'audition reality programs,' this is discussed further as well as the impact on viewers. For this purpose, the Korean traditional ethical tendency is compared with ethical tendencies in the contemporary era. Furthermore, some media theories are examined in order to shed light on the role of modern media in terms of these changes.

In addition to the above, the phenomenon of Korean television entertainment is investigated further, and traditional Korean values and modern values are analysed in greater depth.

**Chapter 3: Reasons for the lack of ethics in Korean television entertainment**

Chapter 3 looks at why Korean television media has adopted this ethical tendency. In doing so, the social, economic, political, and historical factors that have contributed to this shift toward neoliberalism in contemporary Korean society are explored in section 3.2. The writings of selected media philosophers on the nature of television media are also reviewed in section 3.3.

**Chapter 4: The necessity of reflecting on Korean television entertainment from an ethical-theological perspective**

This chapter investigates Korean TV media by further reflecting on the ethical deficiencies of modern society from the ethical viewpoint of Alasdair MacIntyre. This is accomplished by examining his earlier book, *After Virtue* (MacIntyre, 1981), and his more recent book, *Ethics in the conflicts of modernity* (2016), and noting his core argument. In his works he diagnoses contemporary society as having a profound ethical deficiency. To overcome this, MacIntyre presents the concept of 'virtue,' which

is not a simple one-dimensional concept, but one that is more complex. For this reason he suggests that virtue must be understood in the context of practice, narrative, and tradition. MacIntyre's ethics is then applied to the current context to critique Korean television entertainment. In doing so, the researcher integrates MacIntyre's views with the theologies of John Milbank (section 4.3.1), Stanley Hauerwas (section 4.3.2), and Graham Ward (section 4.3.3). The proposed outcome is to combine the ethics of MacIntyre with theology as the theoretical basis to critique Korean television entertainment.

**Chapter 5: Conclusion**

The final chapter concludes the study. Chapter 5 revisits the research questions and makes sure that these have been adequately addressed in the study. This is followed by a brief summary linking each chapter to the research questions and identified research problem. The main research findings are also clearly stated. Following this, the limitations of the study are indicated, along with suggestions for further research.

# 1.3 Conclusion

Chapter 1 introduced the study titled, **'A theological-ethical critique of Korean entertainment television in the light of Alasdair MacIntyre's ethics'.** In seeking to understand the current phenomenon of the lack of ethics impacting on Korean society, this chapter identified the research problem and located it within the broader field of theological ethics. One main research question was formulated, along with three sub-research questions. A literature study was chosen as a suitable methodology to engage and understand the research problem under investigation. We shall now move on to the next step in the research, which is a presentation of the complexity of neoliberal social values in Korean entertainment television. This is discussed further in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2:

# TELEVISION ENTERTAINMENT AND THE ETHICAL TREND IN KOREAN SOCIETY

## 2.1 Introduction

Lacan's (2004) famous proposition: "Man's desire is the desire of the other" expresses the impact that the media has on contemporary society. According to this statement, the more people are exposed to the values on television the more aligned they will be to those values. Therefore, in order to grasp the ethical tendency of Korean society today, it is necessary to examine what kind of media has a significant influence.

The purpose of this chapter is to determine whether television entertainment in contemporary Korean society has this tendency and if so how it affects Korean society. In this chapter the researcher will enquire which genres of TV entertainment are widely accepted in Korean society, their main features, and the ethical implications thereof.

## 2.2 Characteristics of television entertainment in Korea

### 2.2.1 Appearance of Koreanized reality audition programs

A remarkable phenomena in all fields of the Korean broadcasting industry over the last decade is the explosion of the so-called 'reality-oriented broadcasting programs,' which is increasingly receiving much public attention (Choi and Kang, 2012). The term 'reality television' is a combination of the words 'reality' and 'television'. It is a genre of television programming that is based on performers' improvisation, and not the use of scripts (Hill, 2005). However, the concept of reality television is difficult to define precisely due to its hybrid nature (Holmes and Jermyn,

2004, p. 2). The concepts of 'reality' and 'television content' are concepts that cannot be easily combined. Until a television program is broadcast, it requires a lot of preparation, such as planning, shooting, scriptwriting, editing, and so on. Therefore, 'reality television' is not a straightforward concept that merely shows 'real' scenes. Instead, as Su Holmes and Deborah Jermyn (2004, p. 2) state, when we use this term, "we should recognize that it is rather more than a matter of arguing over terminology, categories and discursive labels". Therefore, Kilborn (1994, p. 423) understands reality television as a recording of dramatized reconstructed events in the lives of individuals or groups adding to reality and entertainment value. Caldwell defines this more specifically as 'docu-real fiction'. He says reality television is a hybrid genre that goes beyond the boundaries of established facts and fiction, namely, "entertainment programs that self-consciously showcase documentary units or modes as part of their narrative and plot and or documentary looks and imaging as part of their Mise-en-Scène" (Caldwell, 2002). However, authenticity is still an important issue in reality entertainment programs, and the theme of authenticity is still key to reality television (Banet-Weiser & Portwood-Stacer, 2006, p. 265). This is because viewers expect truth and authenticity in reality television shows. Although originally the subject of a documentary, such reality is not really reality in a documentary, but a mixture of realism and spectacle (Banet-Weiser & Portwood-Stacer, 2006).

Television reality shows have been popularized all over the world, and include shows such as "Big Brother" (1999) in the Netherlands and "Survivor" (2000) in the UK (Holmes & Jermyn, 2004, p. 3). This reality program soon combined with the genre of audition. "Britain's Got Talent" (2007) and Fox TV's "American Idol" led this phenomenon, which was introduced in Korea. The audition reality program is a sub-genre that highlights entertainment by introducing a 'contest' format to reality programs. Starting with "Superstar K," which was very popular in 2009, 'reality shows' that borrowed from the audition survival format, such as "Great Birth," "I am a Singer," "Dancing with the Stars," and so on, were very successful in the box office. Due to the success of recent shows in 2017, such as "K Pop Star 6," "Show Me the Money 6," "Produce 101," and "Masked King of Singing" this phenomenon has been strengthened and the industry continues to expand. Most of these survival-type audition programs are based on dancing and singing, as well as

cooking, figure skating, modeling, corporate interviews, etc., and the survival audition format program is now having a huge influence on Korean TV entertainment.

Of course, a reality show with an audition format is not unique today. However, there is a big difference when comparing past audition programs with current audition programs. That is, if the past audition program was focused on winning a Grand Prix, the current entertainment program includes a focus on those who have dropped out, and the process itself is revealed and justified. This is similar to the logic of infinite competition under neoliberalism, in which a person who has fallen out of the competition is treated as a social loser, even though he or she has received a mechanically equal opportunity.

## 2.2.2 Reason for appearance: Combination of reality and show to maximize fun and desire

### 2.2.2.1 Fun Evolving Model (Ko, 2002)

The main motivation for viewers to watch TV programs is to have a fun experience. In this regard, Csikszentmihalyi (1992) distinguishes between 'pleasure' and 'enjoyment'.. In terms of the former, 'pleasure' is an experience that is felt when achieving homeostasis, a physiological psychological mechanism, leaving a mental entropy (i.e. useless energy). 'Pleasure' has nothing to do with the growth or maturity of an individual, and is often felt when expectations are met. For example, leisure activities such as sleep, eating, sex, and relaxation bring pleasure.

In terms of the latter, 'enjoyment' requires psychological energy at first, but appears to accumulate more energy through specific activities. This is a response that we feel when we experience more than we expect, and is the result of personal growth or maturity. For example, if we say we have fun when we are reading or talking, it means we have new knowledge or ability. Pleasure can feel without investing psychological energy, but enjoyment requires initial psychological energy for greater reach. According to this definition, the motivation to be willing to change oneself for greater fun can be said to arise not only from pleasure but also from the pursuit of enjoyment.

The question now is, which methods do viewers employ to have such a fun

experience? Thus, Ko (2002) proposed the Fun Evolving Model, which summarizes the four steps of a fun experience and how leisure activities evolve into deeper involvement.
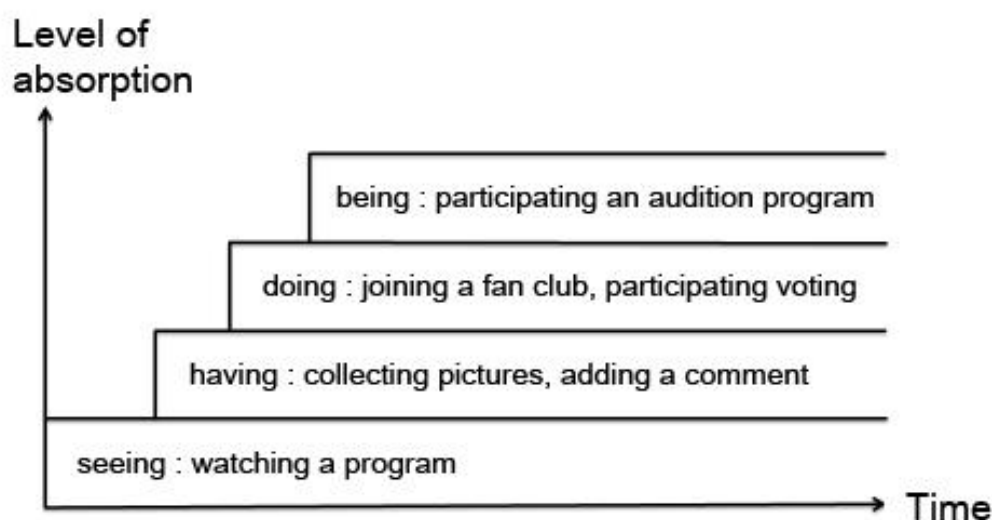


**Figure 2.1. The Fun Evolving Model**
**(Source: Ko, 2002).**

The Fun Evolving Model shows how a person is deeply involved in leisure, explaining this process as a change in four modes of behavior. The first step is 'seeing'. Viewing behavior is a common behavior pattern in all leisure activities. It is a stage to pursue pleasure by watching movies, sports, and television.

However, as time passes, the level of immersion also increases, leading to the second stage, that of 'having'. Just observing is hard to keep up the fun, so people seek memorabilia after a period of time. For example, at first, they want to buy sportswear while watching sports games, or they want autographs from sports stars. Furthermore, people try to form their own team with their own stars. They also obtain personal knowledge about the stars, and seek to identify with him/her.

The third step is 'doing'. The fun of 'having' evolves to include concrete action directly related to the activity. The viewer therefore seeks to mimic the behavior of the star. They try to follow the play of a sports star, or follow celebrity fashion, singing and dancing. It is certain that this phase of imitating is related to the phase of identification, as described above. This is followed by fandom activity, which includes acting as part of the idol, i.e. by shadowing him/her and sending

gifts. They are willing to accept the financial or psychological sacrifice in their lives in support of their idols.

While the identification process at the 'doing' stage is in fact a mental undifferentiated state that does not distinguish the self from the idol, at the 'being' stage, the person becomes the self with the subject. At this stage, becoming more proactive, i.e. by joining a fan club, the star is recognized as someone who is equal, not an idol that can no longer be reached. They are no longer subordinate to the star, but they are the ones who use the star as their object of leisure. In terms of sports, they evolve themselves as a sporting star, enjoying the sport itself.

It is not a way of being that matches the star's desires, but a way of being that wants to satisfy their own desires. If we move onto this stage, we will not have to stay in the "pleasure" phase (the element of fun mentioned above), but will progress to the completion stage of "enjoyment". However, not everyone will reach the final stage(s) in the pursuit of fun. For example, they may stagnate at the level of 'seeing' or 'having', or may stop in the middle somewhere. But if they advance to the stage of "being", the size and extent of the fun experienced by the leisure activity will greatly increase.

### 2.2.2.2 The combination of reality and show to maximize fun

Television program makers have developed a genre called 'reality audition television' to maximize the fun experience. Typical reality television usually includes ordinary people rather than celebrities, as the main characters of these shows. This is to ensure reality by incorporating ordinary people who we are likely to encounter in our everyday lives. However, this is not the case in Korea today, in that television reality shows are more pseudo-reality programs than typical reality programs. The reason is because it is a genre that mixes "reality" and "show" — two concepts that are difficult to coexist in order to stimulate audiences' inner desires.

Edgar Morin (2005) argues that the masses worship celebrities, which is why they present projection as identification. According to Morin, the stars affect every aspect of the masses because the masses themselves want to be like the stars. According to his logic, the appearance of an ordinary performer on television who is not that different from me does not appeal to narcissistic viewers. It is because the public performers cannot be 'objects of identification'. For this reason,

reality televisions shows, which are played by ordinary people, are limited in capturing and sustaining audience's desires, except for voyeurism.

So, in order to satisfy the secret desires of the viewers, it is the Koreanized reality show that has found the best fit between "reality" and "show". It seeks to arouse viewers' desires by showing the process of ordinary people becoming stars. Using the format of a "reality program," the "reality audition program" becomes the most suitable genre to commercially meet their desires. Reality programs that emphasize reality have constantly caused controversy concerning the boundary between fact and fiction. Audition reality shows pursue "reality," in that the conclusion about who will win the cast is not decided yet, but the stage in which the story is conducted does not fall within the already planned structure. Holmes (2004, p. 221) states:

> As in other reality TV texts, there was much self-reflexive and self-conscious discussion over the tensions between 'performance' and 'authenticity' – who is 'being themselves' or playing up for the camera – creating a highly self-reflexive discourse which makes it difficult to accept that audiences are likely to be 'unwitting dupes … in danger of mistaking [the programmes] for "reality".

Through a hybrid strategy with the non-real, which seems realistic rather than actual, it overcomes the risk of boredom of a 'reality show' and incorporates a narrative to make viewers feel like they are having a fun experience.

## 2.2.3 Characteristics of 'audition reality programs' in Korea

If watching audition reality programs in Korea is a leisure activity for fun, Choi (2015) shows that Korean audiences tend to pursue higher levels in the four stages of the Fun Evolving Model through the audition reality program, and that it lasts for a long time. Through this phenomenon, Korea's audition reality program has some unique characteristics. These are discussed below.

### *2.2.3.1 The pursuit of empowerment: By the cyclical position of participants*

The phenomenon that the Korean audition reality program is driven varies, but the phenomenon studied as a representative is 'fandom' (Choi, 2015, p. 4). Once the audition program is broadcast, there will be a number of fan clubs, viewers will decide which participants to support and participate in making stars. Audiences of

reality audition programs do not want to admire stars that are already made, but find it fun to choose someone to admire and make them stars. While conventional entertainment television only provided the fun of passive viewing, the recent Korean audition programs can be said to attract the 'lean forward' experience rather than just the 'lean back' experience through the fun of various activities. If we interpret this in terms of the Fun Evolving Model, the fun experienced will evolve along the stages of 'seeing' (as in conventional reality television shows) to 'having' and 'doing'.

Furthermore, the fun that evolved into the 'doing' phase evolves into the next stage, that of 'being'. The essence of Korean audition programs is to consume ordinariness and the talent of performers by incorporating ordinary people to produce reality. In other words, the audition program not only allows me to create a star, but also provides a structure for me to become a star myself. Anyone can become a participant and enter the television text. It is changing the relationship between the consumer and the provider of the show while blurring the boundaries between viewers and participants, that is, inside and outside the stage. That is, everybody becomes a 'prosumer' (producer + consumer). As a result, producers and consumers correlate intertextually affecting each other's narratives.

In this process, empowerment takes place and the imbalance of power is naturally accepted. Viewers can take over the position of a participant or referee at any time, beyond the role of a simple audience, and the power of these viewers becomes a factor in building a program narrative. Audition program performers, who were audiences of these shows, are completely isolated from society and neighbors as eye candy and fall into objects of voyeurism, still consuming ordinariness (Lee, 2011). Performers who have changed their position from the audience to the participant are blocked from the influence of society as objects of evaluation for competition Rather, his/her words and attitudes are judged by the empowered judges and viewers, and the performers are deprived of their right to lead their own narratives. In this way, the field of competition isolated from society is presented as a perfectly fair area unaffected by other factors, and the viewers are given absolute power.

The participants who have survived the process become a celebrity and regain their power. This series of processes seems to share the power of the stars

with the public and democratize them, and seems to challenge the hierarchy by distributing the power of the media. However, reality television has not fundamentally challenged the media/ordinary hierarchy, indeed, it offers a ritual reinforcement (Holmes, 2008, p. 16). This is because the value of a celebrity produced and circulated through an audition program is determined by audience reception and ratings. Therefore, their success depends on continued consumption, and whether or not they maintain their value as a product depends entirely on the audience, and is therefore a visible element of the audience's empowerment. However, the value of emerging celebrities as cultural products is unstable, and it is again the power of the media to connect consumers with cultural products. As product appeal to celebrities accumulates through diverse media, audience and fans are interested in the text they can consume. In other words, viewers are given the opportunity to become stars through the medium of reality shows, but the power that seems to be shared among viewers in all of these processes is actually placed under the greater power of the media linking viewers and stars. As a result, the power of the media is strengthened.

This structure, in which the distribution of power leads to the strengthening of a larger power, is similar to neoliberal classification. Jang argues that Korean society in the neoliberal era is characterized by a severe class of economic inequality that is called polarization (Jang, 2013). Classical Marxism divides class into three sub-groups: 1) A bourgeois class that produces goods by employing other people's labor, 2) a proletarian class that does not own the means of production but sells its own labor force, and 3) a petit bourgeoisie class that owns the means of production but produces its own labor. However, since then, the classic understanding has been modified, and a 'new middle class' has emerged that employs a company but has expertise (Wright, 2016). Jang reveals that the Korean society has recently suffered a collapse of the petit bourgeoisie class and the rise of the economic status of the new middle class, which not only secures this class character but also leads to polarization. In the neoliberal system, which has the theoretical premise of guaranteeing the freedom of the individual, the result is that the interests of the capitalist class are actively protected and consequently all individuals are entrusted with greater power. Likewise, a reality program that seems to divide the power of the media among the viewers appears to strengthen the

power of the media.

### 2.2.3.2 The pursuit of fame: By characterizing the participants

As mentioned above, audiences in audition reality programs still expect authenticity. As a result, producers intentionally insert scenes to emphasize authenticity in addition to the overall narrative flow of the program (Lee & Cho, 2010, p. 94). The authenticity is mainly produced through a method of highlighting the participants' real reaction and real emotion in auditions involving ordinary people rather than professional entertainers. For example, a story of a production process that has little relation to the entire flow, or scenes such as a dialogue between participants and crews. It also over-emphasizes participants' delightful scenes, tearful scenes, or minor troubles between them. Such scenes are used as a device to show that this event is 'in fact' happening. In other words, demystification is attempted to secure authenticity. In the audition program, dialogues and emotions of the performers are revealed as if there is no filtering, which highlight the process as much as the result of the audition program itself. The characters and personalities of the performers appearing in the processes are believed to be the characters of the real persons, not the characters in the TV, and it is an important factor determining whether the performer will be liked. As a result, viewers perceive incidentally inserted 'realistic scenes' as a more reliable source; the images shown in the scenes are believed to be the actual personality of the entertainers. In the case of "K-Pop Star" or "Produce 101," which are representative audition programs, participants who get a lot of attention from the viewers are not only those who have excellent skills, but those who have dramatically emphasized humanity and life stories in broadcasting. That is, the process itself becomes the result.

Producers maximize the emotional defeat that results in realistic scenes making them more realistic than the results of the audition. They force participants who are crying due to defeat to do an interview, or maximize emotional tension by intentionally hiding whether they have passed or failed for a period of time. For example, participants who have passed the preliminaries in the "Superstar K, Season 2" were grouped and all 24-hour-a-day activities were subject to observation, sometimes not only scenes that appeal to viewers, but also some controversial scenes are broadcast, and some of the participants are quickly

criticized by the public. Among them, the participant Geurim Kim, who was the leader of a group, tried to move to a higher-performing group for victory, or even when sharing songs with the group members, the selfish aspect was highlighted by strongly suggesting her own opinions, and she was criticized by viewers and netizens. In the program, she was characterized as a troublemaker, but since she recognized the audience's judgment, she changed her attitude to meet the needs of the viewers. In other words, the audition program has expected norms for the participant or a group, and if the participant does not adhere to these, they must be eliminated; however, the attitude is more like a character than a skill (Lee, 2011, p. 124).

It is not easy for the performer who is observed for 24 hours to always reflect a positive image. It takes training to build a good image (whether by words or actions) in any and every situation (Won & Kim, 2012, p. 324). The activities of entertainers can be classified as work, which is similar to the concept of 'emotional labor,' as suggested by Hochschild. Hochschild (2003, p. 7) defines the term 'emotional labor' as "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display (for a wage)". In other words, the participants who want to be entertainers must have the skills to manage their emotions in order to gain the liking of the viewers and, ultimately, to become competitive products. Thus, emotional labor is not optional but a necessary skill needed to survive the audition, even more so once one becomes an entertainer (Won & Kim, 2012, p. 329). In this sense, the audition programs become characterized as shows, and the individual characters (the participants) are consumed in terms of competitiveness rather than being recognized as a unique characteristic, and are used as an absolute factor in winning the competitions.

### 2.2.3.3 In pursuit of a dramatic story: The creation of a heroic narrative

One of the main factors of the popularity of reality shows is its unpredictability. Without a written script revealing the winner, the audience's participation changes the story—this is perceived as fun. Although, there are common themes portrayed in Koreanized audition shows, for instance, the narrative of the hero myth, which appears throughout the East and the West.

Consumption of goods in modern society is ultimately consumption of the

image of goods, and it is compensation for individual's desire (Lefebvre, 1991). Likewise, what the masses consume is ultimately a narrative in the media through which they express their desire and identity (Choi & Kang, 2012, p. 124). In particular, the hero image is a cultural text that satisfies the needs of the public in contemporary society. As Morin mentioned earlier, the public finds objects to be identified, and celebrities are replaced by heroes and objects of idolization. In other words, the hero is consumed through the mass media, and the majority of the public replaces the heroe with themselves through self-identification. The hero shares his/her hopes, desires, and feelings of suffering with the public, while at the same time, the public identifies with their emotions via the narrative structure which maximizes the pleasure of consumption.

In the television program, by identifying with the characters the viewer experiences the various things that the characters experience. In particular, the audience of audition reality shows participate in the programs and share their social experiences through these indirect experiences while experiencing and finding solutions to the problems that they experience in their daily lives. In our current digital era, the public identify with the persons who appear in the reality programs and feel joy and sorrow together in order to restore something that has been lost. They also desire and construct pseudo-events in order to escape reality by being exposed to the narrative strategy of identification (Boorstin, 2012).

The audience experiences surrogate satisfaction by identifying with various heroes in the heroic narrative structure. For instance, in the reality program genre, such as audition reality shows, the process of the competition and challenge for survival for the general public gives the performers a sense of accomplishment in terms of broadcasting appearance and public attention. It is an important component of the narrative structure of the audition reality show that the surrogate satisfaction and the story of the hero are reflected in the process of ordinary people experiencing extraordinary daily life.

According to a study on the prototype of a hero myth that appears throughout the East and the West, hero myths undergo a number of modifications, but are based on the same story (Campbell, 2004). The basic structure of a hero's life begins with an abnormal birth, suffering and wandering during childhood, followed by a period of miraculous restoration of power while meeting an assistant,

and eventually returning to daily life. This is the core of the heroic narrative, such experiences are not found in everyday life and are only possible in a non-routine world; such an experience can be a chance to change everyday life once again.

Thus, the narrative of the hero follows a typical three act structure, and more specifically, proceeds through 12 stages. In the first act, the hero, who was in the everyday world, goes on an adventure, meets a spiritual teacher, and passes through the first challenge. The second act meets successive tests, creating helper and enemies, overcoming trials and rewards. In the third act, a figure of the hero who returns to the original world by winning a prize appears (Vogler, 2007, p. 13).

Choi and Kang (2012, p. 127) reveal that Korean reality shows follow this typical heroic narrative. The life stories of participants selected by audiences or producers are embedded in such a heroic narrative, producing a dramatic effect. Choi and Kang describe Baek Chung Kang who is the winner of "Great Birth," and Huh Gak, who is the winner of "Superstar K, season 2," as representative examples, and they also reveal that the basic heroic narrative is superimposed. Baek Chung Kang, who is a Korean–Chinese[7], had been singing in nightclubs since childhood,

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7 'Korean-Chinese (Chosun-jok)' is one of the ethnic minorities of China, which refers to Chinese people of Korean descent. In the 19th century, Korea was called 'Chosun', and foreign powers that emerged since the middle of the 19th century occupied various interests of Chosun and controlled the destiny of the nation. Especially, Japan colonized Korea by claiming the domination of Chosun with Russia, and winning the war against Russia in 1905. As a result, a large number of Koreans searched for a place to live in Chinese territory, and due to the plundering and abduction of the land by the Japanese, the migration of Koreans to China was further promoted. After the end of World War II, the ideological confrontation between South Korea and North Korea made it difficult for overseas Koreans under socialist system such as China and Soviet Union to return home. The Korean Chinese is settled as one of the ethnic groups in China, and is a minority with a history of about 100 years, unlike other ethnic minorities. They are not assimilated into Han Chinese society, the dominant nation of China, but have maintained their national homogeneity and identity as Koreans. In other words, they are legal Chinese but they exist as Korean Diaspora (Son et al., 1994).

Because they have Korean culture and Korean language, many are being reintroduced into Korean society. Currently, there are about 182,000 Korean-Chinese in Korea. They were expected to be recognized as a member of Korean society and to be integrated into the mainstream culture more easily than other foreigners because they could speak Korean. Furthermore, they were expected to play an important role in Korea-China exchange because they could speak both Chinese and

and dreamed of being a singer. Then he meets Tae-won Kim, who becomes his mentor, and overcomes his personal disadvantages and humble origin. After finishing his training he becomes the final champion and returns as a hero. Huh Gak also did not graduate from high school; he was a ventilator repairman, and was not noticed in the early days of broadcasting due to his small height and ordinary appearance. However, he also gets a sense of calling to become a 'superstar' by overcoming the reality that he is just a non-regular worker. He is defeated by his rivals and is in danger of being eliminated, but he is saved through repêchage and eventually becomes a hero through the show. These programs foster the hero syndrome through the story of a hero, an episode with antagonists, and the assistance of helpers, all of which include a prototype of the heroic narrative called 'The hero's journey'. Such a heroic narrative structure leads the public's interest by engaging with the psychology of the public who wants to escape the difficulties of reality. In particular, the hero narrative with the private stories of the individuals becomes mythized and the real person turns into the object of fiction. Ordinary people become heroes. The viewers observe this process and are exhilarated, as they believe that this process of ordinary people becoming heroes is fair. Throughout the process, the public silently agrees that the winner is worthy of the reward and the system in which all compensation is concentrated on the winner is fair.

## 2.3 Ethical tendencies in Korean reality audition programs

So far we have looked at the main features of Korean TV entertainment. In light of the above, we can agree that the appeal of the audition reality program is related to characteristics of the deepening era of neoliberalism. In Korea, the cultural

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Korean. However, they seem to be discriminated as minorities and not accepted as the same members in Korean society. Furthermore, how they are perceived in Korean society is getting worse. Stereotyping of Korean-Chinese by Koreans is reflected in many films, where they are often portrayed as criminals, poor, and underdogs, sometimes depicted as social evil (Song, 2017).

characteristics of the reality program and the neoliberal system reinforce each other (M.Y. Kim, 2012). In the process, viewers watch these programs and some values are excluded while other values are emphasized. In this chapter, we will look at what values are emphasized between two opposing values, highlighting the fact that neoliberal and relativistic values influence the reality audition program. However, this chapter does not argue that the value of one side is more important, but only aims at presenting the current situation.

### 2.3.1 Quantitative judgment of art versus aesthetic judgment

In the audition program, performances are scored on the spot as soon as the participants are done. After the performance, the artists stand side by side and wait for feedback from the judges. The Korean audition program follows a negative filtering method that selects a loser rather than a winner. For this purpose, each artist is evaluated and compared with a score expressed in exact numbers. Of course we can aesthetically judge a good performance and a bad performance, but how can we score each performance accurately? In this regard, Fiske and Hartley state (2003, p. 103):

> So when the television screen gives a sign of three judges, each showing a numbered card indicating his evaluation of a dance out of 5, this simple and instantly decodable sign is part of a complex cultural process. For television provides ample evidence that our culture feels a need to rank people in order, either by physical or mental activity, or by appearance; the way of evaluating the competitors and of finding the winner is usually in numerical terms – the score. In this, television is doing no more than reflecting the competitive, hierarchical structure of our culture and the extent to which we use quantitative codes to evaluate, assess and describe our social activities.

In this regard, competition in most audition programs is to compare scores against opponents within a group that the producer has intended. Between the great performances, due to the continuous evaluation of the scores, viewers will eventually see the program with a focus on these assessments (M.Y. Kim, 2012, p. 24). The viewers are continuously indoctrinated with the idea that evaluation is the single most important criterion in each of the performances. Each part of the performance is evaluated according to a comparison of scores, and the results are linked to the survival and elimination of participants, as well as success and failure. Due to this constitutional characteristic, the 'evaluation', which was the format for

the initial progress of the program, becomes the content itself over the "performance," which was the main content. In other words, the most crucial moments in these programs are not the singing and dancing, but moments when performances are assessed, scores are given, and participants are mourned (or joyful). Then, naturally "recognizable forms of authority through which decisions are ratified" (Couldry, 2011) become important.

When evaluating the performances, the judges are divided into two groups: an audience group and an expert group. Even though the proportion of the two evaluations may vary from program to program, implementing both types of judgment ensure procedural fairness. Firstly, the expert group consists mainly of those who have already succeeded in the industry. The judges in the audition program are normally singers who have been at the top of their list for more than 20 years, or are presidents of large agencies. In other words, they previously survived the competition and are familiar with what has gone on before, and are thus still exerting an influence in the industry. As a result, their scores are easily justified. Even if they evaluate the participants in their own way, their words are accepted as truth. They can save or eliminate the participants according to their own preferences. Even if viewers do not agree with the assessment, no one can ignore their words because they have already been given authority. In this kind of hierarchy, experienced artists who act as judges are themselves assigned a much higher position. Because they have appeared on national TV as a judge, the image of a successful artist is reinforced.

The second group of judges comprises the audience who participates in voting via the Internet or telephone. By actively participating, the viewers have fun—illustrating the 'doing' phase, as explained above. At the same time, the audience feels that it is fair to evaluate the artistic qualities of the participants through the scores given by other audiences. Thus, their evaluation substantially reflects the consumer power of audiences. Just as the art world sees the public as a consumer, so too is this taking place in TV production, where the consumer power of audiences becomes real in the survival audition program. Just as the fate of the gladiator was determined by the emperor's thumb at the Coliseum in Rome, audiences determine the fate of participants with a thumb click on their mobile phone. So it is time for audiences to feel pleasure that they are in a position to

evaluate themselves, not when they are watching a great show, or when they feel empathized in their stories (Hwang, 2010)

Through this process, audiences internalize the values and norms inherent in these evaluations, not just the pleasure of "a power interactive experience." First of all, the evaluation of the participants' artistic achievement is essentially an aesthetic judgment, but the format of the program replaces it with quantitative judgment. The two groups of judges—the expert group and the audience group—judge art according to different standards. The group of experts will mainly see the artistic perfection of the stage, while the group of non-experts will inevitably evaluate the sensual satisfaction of the art itself. Adorno distinguishes between music as 'serious music' and 'light music' (Adorno, 1999, p. 13). In terms of the latter, light music is music that makes the public compliant with society, prevents it from raising the question of justification about society, and prevents them from being recognized as being manipulated. According to him, light music plays an ideological function and refers to the fetishized music under the control of the cultural industry. The kind of music that is produced, supported, and disseminated by capitalist power lacks individuality and is all very similar. Thus, people's music preferences are determined by external factors (Adorno, 1978, p. 271). From this point of view, the type of music that receives a higher score in the audition program is more likely to be 'light music,' according to Adorno's classification. Because the audition programs have a structure in which the performances that many audiences enjoy sensually receive a high score, it means adaptable music rather than rebelling against the existing system.

In this process, the public internalizes the value of artists' creativity, which can be quantified and ranked, and an artist who has exhibited good art based on the criterion must be acclaimed, whereas an artist who does not meet the criterion deserves reproach. To believe that good art and bad art are determined by judgment based on individual preferences has resulted in the strengthening of the phenomenon called "emotivism" by MacIntyre (this will be explained later), and believing that judgment can be quantified is in line with the "utilitarian" idea.

## 2.3.2 The goal of life: External versus internal rewards

In the survival audition program, there are tremendous rewards for recalling a rags to riches story. These are divided into physical material rewards and symbolic rewards. Material rewards include money and a cash refundable item, such as a car, diamond, etc., while symbolic rewards include celebrity status and honor. The loser disappears and returns to the masses to be punished for entering anonymously, and the winner remains visible. Participants who survive and become popular soon earn a lot of money, and those that receive many prizes get a career boost. In other words, material rewards and symbolic rewards cannot be easily distinguished because they are interlinked. These rewards are again divided into external goods and internal goods (M.Y. Kim, 2012, p. 33). External goods are things people like about money, honor and power; they are not necessarily obtained by doing something. For example, in order to make money, there are many other ways to win, even if you do not win the audition.

Internal goods, on the other hand, are values that are only achieved by doing something; they are goods or values related to an activity. For example, the fun of playing soccer is an internal good that cannot be obtained by other activities. To be proficient in and excel in this activity, and to be acknowledged and praised by colleagues who share their performance standards, illustrates this value. External values and internal values are generally separated.

When doing something, the distinction between internal goods and external goods is related to the ethical dimension of the agent doing the work (M.Y. Kim, 2012, p. 34). The main motive for the members of society when doing something is not just an individual matter, but also a matter of ethics that concerns the group and society. There is a big difference being motivated by meaning, to have fun, or for work itself, or to achieve some other goal. For instance, when most people pursue money, which is an overwhelming external good, the society becomes an oppressive market society. Bourdieu (2015, p. 83) explains that people who are esteemed by their colleagues, that is, those who are rich in internal goods tend to resist society, whereas those who are engaged in commercial literary activities tend to cooperate with the system. Furthermore, as they are acclaimed and follow the orders of the masses, they themselves become Trojan horses and adopt the laws of heteronomy (the laws of commerce and economy) into society.

As mentioned earlier, the audition program is similar to the heroic narrative. In a

typical heroic narrative, the hero must be rewarded with something worthy for walking through the life. From this point of view, it is a tremendous honor for those who are deemed heroes in the Korean audition program to be given the prize at the end of their journey. External rewards become the ultimate value finally given to a successful life of a hero. In other words, one of the main features of the Korean audition program is that neoliberal ideology is combined with the heroic narrative.

### 2.3.3 Neighbors: Competitors versus friends

The format of each audition program varies, but the goal is basically to survive and make it to the final level without falling. The program justifies the competition by showing participants the daily routine before joining the audition. Some participants are poor, but have undertaken the journey to fulfill their dreams. Another teenager wandered without dreams, but is inspired through this audition program. These scenes show that the goals of the program match the goals of the participants. Furthermore, this program naturally highlights the fact that any participant who is part of the relentlessly competitive system through the mechanism of elimination can demonstrate the process of fulfilling his or her dreams so that everyone can do so. As a result, the process of competing to achieve the difficult life and dream of the ordinary person is presented to viewers as a reality in itself. Competitiveness will continue through the elimination mechanism and will test various abilities such as the ability to perform a number of tasks as well as the patience, sociality, and singing skills of participants. In this process, the participants take this value and try to form the self in order to participate in the mission and develop their abilities in order to become the person the program desires. Initially, all the participants will cooperate and help each other in the intermediate process, but as they progress in the program, they will need to compete against each other in order to fulfill their dreams.

Of course, the participants who are at the same stage of the process collaborate with one another, and there is also a great sense of camaraderie. They support each other's dreams and, sometimes, even if they fall out, they sincerely hope to pass a person who is more qualified than him-/herself. However, the overall picture of the audition program describes the type of society where friends are bound to become competitors someday, because it is reasonable for a winner to be

a monopoly. In society, individuals must eventually survive alone.

This social image is consistent with the liberal values that MacIntyre critiqued. MacIntyre's ethics will be discussed in detail later on, but for now, it is important to mention that each individual MacIntyre pursued must have meaning in the community and each member must be a co-worker who pursues the common good pursued by the community. Each individual's life goal is connected to that of the next person. Of course, even if it is a genuine community, there must be competition between the individual members, but the society described in the audition programs is different in that competition is the driving force behind each society. In such a society, our neighbors are not colleagues or friends but potential competitors. It is neoliberalism and an individualistic social phenomenon that is emphasized as if society's goals are achieved through such a competition.

## 2.3.4 Fame as a purpose, instead of as an incidental result

As MacIntyre says, moral claims of the present society are incommensurable to each other, and empirical wisdom from tradition has lost authority (MacIntyre, 1981, pp. 9–10). In this society, the stable value system and available norms of behavior have disappeared, and the pressure to live well without them makes comparison and recognition struggles unprecedented (M.Y. Kim, 2012, p. 113). The age of ubiquitous comparisons has come and the limitations of comparisons have been broken because of the full visibility provided by tele-proximity (Bauman, 2000). In such a situation, celebrities exposed in front of everyone to confirm "I am doing well" are convenient and excellent textbooks (M.Y. Kim, 2012, p. 113). Celebrities are not just ordinary people and other idols, but mentors, role models, and sometimes teachers. They are at the center of meaning generation and distribution. Everyday conversations that start with: "Have you seen so-and-so on TV yesterday?" is increasingly more common. We talk about everyone we know. Famous celebrities become powerful symbols because of this influence (Holmes & Redmond, 2006, p. 6).

But, how do celebrities obtain popularity or fame? It is often a natural outcome of a great feat or accomplishment. However, fame is one of many external goods, but it is not purposefully an internal good (MacIntyre, 1981, p. 176). In ancient Western societies, outstanding achievements were widely praised and

popularized (Taylor, 1989, pp. 22–23). Reputation, as a virtue, comes with excellence. Excellence is judged on the basis of established and authoritative performance standards when a number of practices, which are important for maintaining and developing the community, are carried out collectively and cooperatively over time. It is presupposed that the meaningful activities and accomplishments that are carried out in the unit of the practice community or the culture and arts center contribute to the promotion of human good. Such excellence provides 'deserved fame'.

However, the contemporary pursuit of fame is different from the pursuit of virtue. First, the context of public and community has disappeared. It is not pursued as a group member but pursued individually. This "fame without a great achievement" is born and becomes possible because of mass media. It is a television reality program that makes it possible for a person who was an ordinary person to become a celebrity overnight. So, it is more and more common for ordinary people to become celebrities. As such, they enter the bottom of the hierarchy, are consumed provocatively, and soon forgotten. In other words, the celebrity that does not have excellence or star content can only be maintained by continuous exposure, or else they are soon forgotten (M.Y. Kim, 2012, p. 115)

If not for the sake of excellence, but for the purpose of popularity itself, there will also be people who do not mind playing the villains. There are teenagers who broadcast their misconduct in real-time, and even if they are blamed, buzz marketing is increasing to attract attention. To see such popularity as a praiseworthy accomplishment makes contemporary fame different from fame as a classic virtue. The audition program where ordinary people become celebrities has enough potential to make popularity itself a goal to pursue. Therefore, personality and virtue are not the purpose but the proverbial purpose, and the virtue of the individual becomes the means to obtain it. Therefore, personality and virtue are not the goal to pursue anymore, but popularity itself becomes the purpose, and individual virtue degraded the means to obtain it.

## 2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher reviewed the characteristics of entertainment

television in Korean society and the social characteristics it reflects (or leads to). One of the widely accepted genres in contemporary Korean society is the reality program, which we observed is combined with the form of audition for maximizing entertainment and fun.

Koreanized audition reality television has some salient features. These include: the power the media has over the participants is increasing; it does not pursue pure reality but that each participant is overcharging the narrative to pursue characterization like that of a movie character, and a heroic narrative transformed around the winner is used. These characteristics have some prominent ethical characteristics. First, as art works are not accepted as such, but rather as objects of quantitative evaluation, art as a product that sells well in the market infuses the value of good art. Second, it strengthens materialistic values by emphasizing external rewards as the purpose of life. Third, it rationalizes neoliberal socialism, which emphasizes industrialization, which maximizes individual competitiveness by describing neighbors in the community as competitors who might win some day. Finally, we have seen that the virtue of individuals is weakened by the purpose of visibility itself, rather than the reputation that comes from excellence.

In conclusion, these features of television audition programs can lead to ethical relativization and enhance neoliberal values such as materialism. In the next chapter we will look at why these features have occurred and how they can be overcome.

CHAPTER 3:

# REASONS FOR THE LACK OF ETHICS IN KOREAN TELEVISION ENTERTAINMENT

## 3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the example of the Reality Audition Program was used to demonstrate that Korean television entertainment is actively expanding and reproducing neoliberal values. It was established that this, in turn, is destroying certain traditional ethical values. The chapter therefore focused on the superficial phenomenon of contemporary Korean society. However, in order to obtain a deeper understanding of this phenomenon, it is necessary to look at the reasons why this is occurring. This will be the focus of the current chapter, which will examine why television entertainment in Korea is adopting this trend. Due to the multifaceted nature of this problem, the researcher will use the following three approaches to study this phenomenon: the socio-historical perspective, the media theoretical perspective, and the ethical-theological perspective.

From the socio-historical perspective, the researcher will see how the ideology of neoliberalism emerged in Western society, and how it merged with the unique modern and contemporary history of Korea. Korea has a unique historical background that other countries do not have, and the researcher will look at how these historical facts have caused the Korean society to rapidly abandon its existing values.

From the media theoretical perspective, we will examine *why* and *how* media and society's ideology relate to the theories of representative media theorists. Here, the researcher will briefly review the theories of key scholars who have influenced television media and apply these to Korean television media.

Finally, the two previous courses will reveal why Korean television entertainment has today's ethical trends, this will ask for a proper ethical-theological perspective to properly interpret and critique the phenomenon. Although ethical-theological perspectives will be addressed in the next chapter, this section will

present important links to move on to that stage.

# 3.2 Korean television entertainment: A socio-historical perspective

### 3.2.1 Neoliberalism as an ideology

Numerous scholars have sought to define the term 'neoliberalism'. In sum, we can say that it is an ideology and a realistic characteristic of a capitalist economic system. One such scholar, David Harvey (2005, p. 2), defines neoliberalism as:

> …in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade.

In neoliberalism, "The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices" (Harvey, 2005, p. 5). In other words, neoliberalism is primarily an idea that defines the relationship between the market and the state.

Of course, no matter the era, there are always markets in a society. However, the form or degree may vary. Whether under neoliberalism or not, markets do not always exist independently, but are embedded in and interact with various customs and institutions of society. Therefore, theoretically, the concepts of market, society, and country will be analyzed separately for the sake of convenience, but in reality, market, country, and society, or else individual life and ethics are all inseparable concepts. In this sense, neoliberalism is understood to have social ideological tendencies, in many cases, beyond economic policy aspects. Neoliberalism regards freedom and liberty as a priority, as the word itself shows. Although this 'freedom and liberty' is understood to mean universal value, the liberty in neoliberalism in the real world takes precedence over the free market, free trade, free ownership, and furthermore, freedom of the individual is guaranteed only by the freedom of the market and trade. In other words, the neoliberal state claims to emphasize freedom

as a universal value, but what the state does in practice, as its basic mission, is to stimulate the conditions of capital accumulation that can make profit on the side of capital.

So basically, Harvey understands neoliberalism as a project to restore the power of the capitalist class, though it does not directly contribute to the process of capitalist production or capital accumulation. Harvey (2007:28-29) says,

> …we can examine the history of neoliberalism either as a utopian project providing a theoretical template for the reorganization of international capitalism or as a political scheme aimed at reestablishing the conditions for capital accumulation and the restoration of class power.

This definition is consistent with the following assertion by Saad-Filho and Johnston (2005:1):

> Neoliberalism is part of a hegemonic project concentrating power and wealth in elite groups around the world, benefiting especially the financial interests within each country, and US capital internationally.

This gives rise to the question: "How is neoliberalism as an economic policy understood and how does it function as an ideology?" There is a clear discontinuity between these two points. It is therefore necessary to pursue a deeper understanding of neoliberalism through the origins and history of neoliberalism. To this we now turn.

## 3.2.2 The origin and development of neoliberalism in the West

### 3.2.2.1 Formation of the theoretical basis of neoliberalism

Since the 1980s neoliberalism has become a dominant ideology. Before that, Keynesianism dominated for decades after the Second World War. The dominant

theory of employment determination was Keynesianism (Saad-Filho & Johnston, 2005, p. 20). In the 1970s and 1980s, a radical transformation took place, and Keynesianism was replaced by neoliberalism (Duménil and Lévy, 2005). Keynesian economics is an economic theory based on the idea of British economist John Maynard Keynes, who believed that the cause of the economic downturn was due to a lack of 'effective demand,' and suggested as a solution that the government actively intervene to directly create demand.

Thus, Keynesianism became even more convincing as President Roosevelt's New Deal policy overcame the Great Depression that began in the United States. The Great Depression, which began in October 1929 with a sharp decline in stock prices in New York, resulted in paralyzing economic activity in most capitalist countries. Keynes then argued that if the government actively invested in public works and increased its effective demand, it could solve the Great Depression. President Roosevelt of the United States, who accepted the theory, overcame the Great Depression through the New Deal. The New Deal and Keynesian theory contradicted the liberal position of minimizing government intervention to activate the market economy. Because of the success of the New Deal policy, the Keynesian school of thought became a dominant economic paradigm until the Second World War (Palley, 2005, p. 20). Even after the Second World War, the situation of war had to be taken for granted by the state. Under the special circumstances of the War, the United States was experiencing economic growth and boom, and the position of the United States, as the world's police, was not shaken. However, due to the oil crisis that occurred in the 1970s, the stable world economy was thrown into chaos. Libya, Iraq, Iran, Egypt, Syria and Tunisia, the Arab countries of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), reduced their oil exports and raised oil prices at the same time. Stagflation, which is difficult to explain in traditional economics, occurred. In general, the higher the unemployment rate, the lower the price, so Keynesianists thought that if the state intervenes and reduces the unemployment rate, the price could rise, but the economy could be revitalized. However, as oil prices have increased, so have the cost of products, the rate of unemployment, and inflation. This caused the Keynesian school to face a crisis and the Chicago school, which could be called the origin of neoliberalism, attracted attention once again. Neoliberalism is basically a theory that contrasts with

Keynesianism, the basis of which began with the political philosophy of Friedrich von Hayek in the 1940s. He and his colleagues founded an organization called the Mont Pelerin Society in 1947, where he began promoting his neoliberal ideas. And later, Hayek's theory was embodied in the encounter with the Chicago school, centered on Chicago Friedman (Harvey, 2005, p. 22).

In contrast to Keynesianism, neoliberalism favors a liberal market economy and argues that taxes on capital must be reduced to drive continued investment. It also opposes offering benefits to minorities and certain vulnerable groups because it causes distortions and inefficiencies in the economic system. Internationally, it is aimed at opening the market to the full, and regards tariff elimination as the ideal. As a result, capital continues to converge on one side, but they, neoliberalists, expect to have a trickle down effect of raising economic pie and enjoying all the benefits (Sloman, 2006, p. 323).

### 3.2.2.2 The application of neoliberal economic theory and globalization

In 1979, when Thatcher was elected as the British prime minister, the advanced capitalist countries, including Britain and the United States, suffered from stagflation. Stagflation is the situation that occurs when unemployment and inflation come together (are at high levels) and economic growth is very low. To illustrate this concept even further, for example, there was a strike by council rubbish collectors at that time, and piles of garbage piled up on the city streets. The electoral slogan of Thatcher's Tory Party was 'Labor is not working,' which pointed to the failure of Keynesianism (Cahill & Konings, 2017, p. 36). After being elected, the Thatcher government radically changed the British economy. Between 1984 and 1987, major government-owned companies including British Telecom, British Gas, British Airways, Enterprise Oil, the British Airports Authority, and the National Bus Company were sold to private companies, and others were also partly privatized (Wolfe, 1991, p. 248). Thatcher justified this radical privatization on the basis of the inefficiency of public ownership. She was an admirer of neoliberalism enough to write in her letter to Hayek that his 'ideas would be put into practice by my [Thatcher's] government' (Cahill & Konings, 2017, p. 37). In addition, Thatcher instituted policies based on neoliberal theories, such as regulating the activities of a labor union, lowering taxes,

and realizing small governments; these policies were called 'Thatcherism'.

One year after she became Prime Minister of Great Britain, Ronald Reagan was elected president of the United States. Like Thatcher, he was close to fundamental neoliberalists, such as Milton Friedman of the Chicago School. The group served as Reagan's advisors, and Reagan cut funding for low-income families and took action against organized labor. The government adopted an uncompromising strategy towards the union, firing 13,000 workers, and imprisoning its leading activists. The neoliberal policy of President Reagan at this time is called Reaganomics. Although both Britain and the United States, as well as other countries in this period, tended to transition to a neoliberal economy, the policies of these two governments were representative of the phenomenon that, in many documents, the Thatcherism and the Reaganomics were treated as models of neoliberalism.

The neoliberal transformation of the United States and Britain and its subsequent success soon affected the global economic policy. The policies of the two nations facing the North Atlantic quickly became the international standard for economic policy through the Washington Consensus. The Washington Consensus is an arrangement of economic policy recommendations for developing countries, particularly Latin America, that became well known in the 1980s (Hurt, 2018). The Washington consensus comprises ten policy recommendations, including privatization of state enterprises, deregulation, and trade liberalization.

With the onset of a debt crisis in the developing world during the early 1980s, the major Western forces, specifically the United States, chose that both the World Bank and the IMF should assume a critical part in the administration of that obligation and in the worldwide advancement strategy all the more extensively. When developing countries had to borrow money from the World Bank or the IMF, they could spread this policy by attaching the contents of the Washington Consensus to the terms of the loan. In this regard, Palley (2005, p. 25) notes,

> Within industrialised countries, the economic conversation has been dominated by policies associated with the 'US model'. These include deregulation of financial markets, privatisation, weakening of institutions of

> social protection, weakening of labour unions and labour market protections, shrinking of government, cutting of top tax rates, opening up of international goods and capital markets, and abandonment of full employment under the guise of the natural rate. International economic policy has been dominated by the 'Washington consensus', which advocates privatisation, free trade, export-led growth, financial capital mobility, deregulated labour markets, and policies of macroeconomic austerity.

In other words, neoliberal economic policies were imposed through the financial crisis of developed countries, such as Argentina in South America and South Korea in far east Asia, and the financial support of the IMF, based on this, the neoliberalism of the United States and Britain could spread all over the world.

## 3.2.3 Origin and development of neoliberalism in Korea

### 3.2.3.1 Neoliberalism: Beyond economic policy

So far, the researcher has examined how neoliberalism has spread as an economic policy. As can be seen from the agreement of the Washington Consensus, neoliberalism is an economic policy that maximizes market autonomy. But it is not enough to understand the essence of neoliberalism that is prevailing in the world today. Rather, many scholars argue for neoliberalism as an ideology that transcends economic policy and determines the way of life of contemporary people. Michel Foucault is a representative figure. In other words, when we are talking about the neoliberalization of Korea, the contents will be different depending on whether the definition of neoliberalism is viewed as merely an economic policy or an ideology that affects the entire society. Firstly, the researcher will introduce Michelle Foucault's understanding of neoliberalism and try to track the neoliberalization of Korean society in the light of Foucault's understanding of neoliberalism. The philosopher Michel Foucault understands that 'neoliberalism' is not just an economic policy but rather a phenomenon that entrepreneurship and the pursuit of efficiency spread throughout society (Foucault, 2008, p. 225). Foucault rejects a common way of understanding that sees neoliberalism as a series of economic policies that support global capital flows and free markets, including deregulation and privatization

policies. Instead, neoliberalism, for Foucault, is that "it generalizes the economic form of the market or generalizes the enterprise form within the social body, producing an economization of the entire social field" (Brown, 2015, p. 61).

Therefore, Foucault understands neoliberalism as a new phenomenon, not just a repetition of liberalism before Keynesianism. According to Foucault, the core value of the traditional liberalism that had existed before was an exchange based on equality, and in neoliberalism it became a competition. In competition, not equality, but inequality is the premise and the norm. Liberalism must stand on the basis of democracy. The premise that democracy can work is the equality of each individual. The guarantee of equality in liberal democracy is a promise of social contract. However, Foucault points out that if the political rationality of neoliberalism is fully realized and market principles extend to all spheres, inequality becomes justified and normative. In other words, the neoliberalism that has grown under democracy functions as an ideology that shakes the foundations of democracy. This situation causes deeper problems. Brown summarizes Foucault's explanation as follows.

> Commensurate with neoliberal reason's replacement of exchange by competition and equality by inequality, human capital replaces labor in neoliberal reason. When competition becomes the market's root principle, all market actors are rendered as capitals, rather than as producers, sellers, workers, clients or consumers. As capitals, every subject is rendered as entrepreneurial, no matter how small, impoverished, or without resources, and every aspect of human existence is produced as an entrepreneurial one. "The individual's life itself — with his relationships to private property … with his family, household, insurance, and retirement — must make him into a sort of permanent and multiple enterprise (Brown, 2015, p. 65).

That is, under a neoliberal society where competition has replaced the exchange, the individual exists as an entrepreneur who manages himself/herself. Explaining this concept, Foucault uses the concept of 'homo economicus[8]'. Homo economicus

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8 'Korean-Chinese (Chosun-jok)' is one of the ethnic minorities of China, which refers to Chinese people of Korean descent. In the 19th century, Korea was called 'Chosun', and foreign powers that emerged since the middle of the 19th century occupied various interests of Chosun and controlled the destiny of the nation. Especially, Japan colonized Korea by claiming the domination

under classical liberalism was a human being who fulfilled the desire through the exchange, but the neoliberal homo economicus, distinguished from him, becomes an entrepreneur who manages himself/herself. Each individual acts as an entrepreneur, and the whole sphere of society becomes enterprising. In the past, things that were thought to belong to the social sphere rather than the economic sphere, such as education, health, and welfare, are all incorporated under the economic sphere, and all societies are driven by the entrepreneurial spirit (Foucault, 2008, pp. 215–237). Therefore, when we use the term neoliberalism, it should not be treated as an ideology in a narrow sense, even if it comes from economic policy. Rather, it should be regarded as values, lifestyles and cultures throughout society that are derived from it.

### 3.2.3.2 The emergence of Korean neoliberal society: Industrialization in the 1960s and 1970s

In general, neoliberalism in Korea has been understood only as a phenomenon since the 1990s. This is because the economic policies of the previous governments were

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of Chosun with Russia, and winning the war against Russia in 1905. As a result, a large number of Koreans searched for a place to live in Chinese territory, and due to the plundering and abduction of the land by the Japanese, the migration of Koreans to China was further promoted. After the end of World War II, the ideological confrontation between South Korea and North Korea made it difficult for overseas Koreans under socialist system such as China and Soviet Union to return home. The Korean Chinese is settled as one of the ethnic groups in China, and is a minority with a history of about 100 years, unlike other ethnic minorities. They are not assimilated into Han Chinese society, the dominant nation of China, but have maintained their national homogeneity and identity as Koreans. In other words, they are legal Chinese but they exist as Korean Diaspora (Son et al., 1994).

Because they have Korean culture and Korean language, many are being reintroduced into Korean society. Currently, there are about 182,000 Korean-Chinese in Korea. They were expected to be recognized as a member of Korean society and to be integrated into the mainstream culture more easily than other foreigners because they could speak Korean. Furthermore, they were expected to play an important role in Korea-China exchange because they could speak both Chinese and Korean. However, they seem to be discriminated as minorities and not accepted as the same members in Korean society. Furthermore, how they are perceived in Korean society is getting worse. Stereotyping of Korean-Chinese by Koreans is reflected in many films, where they are often portrayed as criminals, poor, and underdogs, sometimes depicted as social evil (Song, 2017).

understood to be contrary to neoliberal policies that minimize government intervention, because they adopted a policy that actively intervenes in the market economy. On the other hand, the Kim Young-Sam[9] government, which was launched in the early 1990s, promoted globalization. In 1997, after a severe foreign exchange crisis and Korea received an IMF bailout fund, the neoliberal economic policy was introduced into the Korean society according to the Washington Consensus. For that reason, the emergence of neoliberalism in Korea is usually understood in the 1990s. However, as mentioned above, this was due to a narrow understanding of neoliberalism. If we only understand neoliberalism as one of the economic policies that maximized market autonomy, then the Korean government in the 1960s and 1970s was opposed to neoliberalism. But if neoliberalism is understood as a social expansion of entrepreneurship and economic efficiency, as Foucault's position, the 1960s and 70s should be seen as the period of neoliberalism in Korea. According to

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9 'Korean-Chinese (Chosun-jok)' is one of the ethnic minorities of China, which refers to Chinese people of Korean descent. In the 19th century, Korea was called 'Chosun', and foreign powers that emerged since the middle of the 19th century occupied various interests of Chosun and controlled the destiny of the nation. Especially, Japan colonized Korea by claiming the domination of Chosun with Russia, and winning the war against Russia in 1905. As a result, a large number of Koreans searched for a place to live in Chinese territory, and due to the plundering and abduction of the land by the Japanese, the migration of Koreans to China was further promoted. After the end of World War II, the ideological confrontation between South Korea and North Korea made it difficult for overseas Koreans under socialist system such as China and Soviet Union to return home. The Korean Chinese is settled as one of the ethnic groups in China, and is a minority with a history of about 100 years, unlike other ethnic minorities. They are not assimilated into Han Chinese society, the dominant nation of China, but have maintained their national homogeneity and identity as Koreans. In other words, they are legal Chinese but they exist as Korean Diaspora (Son et al., 1994).

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Foucault's analysis of neoliberalism, it was argued in the 1960s that neoliberal homo economics was already emerging in Korea (Hwang, 2013; Lee, 2016).

Korea was liberated from Japan's colonial rule in 1945, but only five years later experienced the Korean War. On May 16, 1961, Park Chung-Hee took over the military regime, and after 18 years of dictatorship, he was assassinated in 1979. In other words, when Park Chung-hee's coup took place in 1961, it was not even 10 years after the end of the Korean War, and it was a chaotic period when the first president of Korea, Lee Seung-man, retired after only a year. Since Korea liberated itself from Japan's colonial rule, the United States continued to provide economic aid, emphasizing the urgent need for long-term economic development strategies in Korea (Lee, 1995, p. 22). Park Chung-hee, who took power in such a situation, pursued active economic development policies to make up for his lack of political legitimacy. In 1962, one year after President Park Chung-hee took office as president, he launched a strong government-led economic plan called 'the five-year economic development plan,' which lasted seven times until 1992. Since then, Korea has achieved rapid economic growth. During the period from 1963 to 1985, Korea's annual average economic growth rate reached 8.3%, and the per capita income per capita, which was $ 101.6 in 1963, reached $ 2032 in 1985 and now exceeds $ 30,000 in 2018 (Kuk, 2011, p. 130). It cannot be denied that Park Chung-hee's government-led industrialization was the starting point for this rapid economic growth.

Park Chung-hee's government justified its own coup by economic growth by letting the people who suffered from poverty shout the slogan "Let's live well". Park visited the rural areas and appealed to the farmers themselves to improve their rural environment. Park has inspired the desire of economic growth as 'eating enough and living well'. And the government preached that the path of economic growth was due to our own efforts. At this time, the subject of economic growth was not the individual but the nation and the people referred to as 'we', with an emphasis on the nation in particular (Lee, 2017, p. 50).

The magazine 'Supreme Council Review', published in March 1963, contains the article 'The way we can live well', which states that modernization is necessary for us to live well. It says that the difference between living well and not living well depends on the existence of Western modernization. The western part of the world is

plowing and sowing seeds with a machine like an automobile, but we (Korean people) are sowing seeds and gathering seeds. The text insisted that, the reality that we want to live well while playing home games is due to our ignorance of not learning Western modernity properly. The content also included that we must find our great strengths and talents hidden in us, develop them, and work hard to live well. It emphasizes individual ability self-development (Headquarters of National Movement for Reconstruction of Korea, 1963, pp. 143–145). The context is somewhat different in that it is self-development as a member of society, not based on individualism like neoliberalism, but it is similar to the neoliberal values in that it implies that those who cannot achieve self-development are worthless (Lee, 2017, p. 51).

Individuals with the goal of developing themselves on the premise of national economic development began to become neoliberal homo economicus, as Foucault said. In the 1970s, large corporations, namely chaebols, emerged under the protection of the state. The state concentrated much of their public resources on developing and maintaining them because the government wanted all—the whole of society—to reap the benefits. The economic policies of the Park Chung-Hee government were driven by nationalism, and individuals had to face discrimination, inequality, and irrationality. However, because the economic growth strategy of the Park Chung-Hee government was an export-led industrialization strategy that is competitive in price in the world market, securing the competitiveness of enterprises was a very important task for the government. The fact that the state helps to secure the competitiveness of large corporations means two things. First, it implies that the public resources secured by individual sacrifice are concentrated in a small number of chaebols. Second, corporate organizations have to be internally ability-oriented competitive structures because they need to secure efficiency. It means that the individuals who sacrificed for the state are not protected by the state but are driven into more serious competition. In fact, in 1967, the average salary of college graduates was more than three times the average salary of elementary school graduates, but, four years later, in 1976, this figure increased more than four times. In this way, as the polarization of education has deepened in Korean society, competition for college admissions has become more intense. In the 1970s

newspapers, 'Grade-9 diseases' and 'Grade-12 diseases[10]' were introduced as a new type of mental illness. In fact, it was not enough to overcome pressure to increase the number of teenagers suffering from neurosis and schizophrenia (Lee, 2017, p. 55).

At the same time, the leaders of large corporations became social heroes. Their autobiographies, TV interviews, etc., were publicized to a wide variety of people, and they became role models in Korean society. Their values, conduct and norms have become the central principle of society. Of course, success stories of entrepreneurs are a kind of manipulated memory, and mistakes, misconduct and contradictions in the corporate management process are deliberately concealed, but their success stories became a tool to further spread the neoliberal homo economics in Korean society. Of course, at this time, it could not be said that the rule of "all those who work hard and have the ability to succeed" was prevalent throughout

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10 'Korean-Chinese (Chosun-jok)' is one of the ethnic minorities of China, which refers to Chinese people of Korean descent. In the 19th century, Korea was called 'Chosun', and foreign powers that emerged since the middle of the 19th century occupied various interests of Chosun and controlled the destiny of the nation. Especially, Japan colonized Korea by claiming the domination of Chosun with Russia, and winning the war against Russia in 1905. As a result, a large number of Koreans searched for a place to live in Chinese territory, and due to the plundering and abduction of the land by the Japanese, the migration of Koreans to China was further promoted. After the end of World War II, the ideological confrontation between South Korea and North Korea made it difficult for overseas Koreans under socialist system such as China and Soviet Union to return home. The Korean Chinese is settled as one of the ethnic groups in China, and is a minority with a history of about 100 years, unlike other ethnic minorities. They are not assimilated into Han Chinese society, the dominant nation of China, but have maintained their national homogeneity and identity as Koreans. In other words, they are legal Chinese but they exist as Korean Diaspora (Son et al., 1994).

Because they have Korean culture and Korean language, many are being reintroduced into Korean society. Currently, there are about 182,000 Korean-Chinese in Korea. They were expected to be recognized as a member of Korean society and to be integrated into the mainstream culture more easily than other foreigners because they could speak Korean. Furthermore, they were expected to play an important role in Korea-China exchange because they could speak both Chinese and Korean. However, they seem to be discriminated as minorities and not accepted as the same members in Korean society. Furthermore, how they are perceived in Korean society is getting worse. Stereotyping of Korean-Chinese by Koreans is reflected in many films, where they are often portrayed as criminals, poor, and underdogs, sometimes depicted as social evil (Song, 2017).

society. Still, networking and one's background has been a more important path to success. While emphasizing the efficiency of the workforce, it has become common practice to set aside a top management position for his son. However, at this time, the proposition that "competent people succeed, incapable ones are culled," became standardized (Lee, 2017, p. 60).

### 3.2.3.3 The symbol of Korean neoliberalism, chaebol

In the 1970s, large Korean corporations grew rapidly due to national support. They were called 'chaebols', and were a unique phenomenon exclusive to Korea. As already mentioned, Korean neoliberalism cannot be separated from the chaebol existence. If the decisive factor that constitutes the characteristics of a political economy formed in a certain country is the characteristics of a corporation, the characteristics of the political economy in Korea are bound to be closely related to the characteristics of a large group called chaebol. The chaebols, known as Samsung, Hyundai, LG and SK, are groups of companies with diverse affiliates. The types of businesses are diversified from automobile, electronics, construction, food and logistics to distribution. Furthermore, it is characteristic that the founder's family owns most of the assets and ownership is transferred to the next generation. The existence of the chaebols is an economic organization that represents the bright side and the dark side of the Korean economy, at the same time, they are also political and social agents whose influence is too great to limit its presence to the economic realm. Jang (2014) believes that the chaebols grew up with unusual benefits in the agreement of the Korean society, but they spread the negative aspects of the neoliberal society. He said that while the neoliberal economic structure of Korea has some common problems in other countries' capitalist economies, there are more prominent problems in Korea specifically due to the chaebol that Korea possesses and 'the economy of irresponsibility' (Jang, 2014, p. 92).

Since the 1960s, chaebols have formed an organization called the Federation of Korean Economists, and have begun to work together in negotiations with the government. By supporting political funds, they reduced the number of entrepreneurs arrested for corruption and cooperated as a partner for national economic development, thus laying the foundation for the entry of new industries

such as heavy and chemical industries. At this time, the chaebol took a position to conform to the government's demands as an economic development sub-partner to national industrial policy objectives. Chaebols have learnt how to survive and grow under government power (Jang, 2014, p. 96). In the 1970s, the size of a company rapidly expanded due to huge loans from nationalized banks. The debt-to-equity ratio of domestic companies began to exceed 200 % since this was due to the active intervention of the state to raise some companies. In the industrialization of 'high-debt and high-investment,' which was adhered to during the high-growth period of the domestic economy, the state took the risk of this investment. Since then, the domestic chaebols took the risk of investment failure for the country and are irresponsibly devoted to debt-dependent investment. The irresponsible expansion of these chaebols resulted in structural problems that led to the 1997 financial crisis in Korea. The chaebol-centered Korean economy is not a neoliberal model in the economic sense, but has an abnormal growth-oriented social atmosphere in that it has active intervention and support from the state.

### 3.2.3.4 The spread of the neoliberal lifestyle, IMF financial crisis

As we have seen, neoliberalism potentially began with Park Chung-Hee's era, and was strengthened by the presence of chaebols in Korea. Meanwhile, the 1997 financial crisis was a crucial starting point for Korea to move to the stage of full neoliberalism and deep neoliberalization (Yoon, 2009, p. 50). The rapid economic growth over a period of about 35 years, from the early 1960s to the 1990s, was rated as successful, and serves as a good example of Third World economic growth (Kuk, 2011, p. 130). However, the 1997 financial crisis hurt Korea's economic policy, which played a significant role in the country. The ineffectiveness of the country's economic intervention and the moral hazard of the chaebol, as well as the excessive expansion and reckless management were regarded as the main causes of the economic crisis. Finally, on December 3, 1997, Korea, which was on the verge of national bankruptcy, signed a memorandum of understanding to receive funding from the IMF. Due to the chain bankruptcy of the chaebols,[11] foreign reserves plummeted, the government

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11 'Korean-Chinese (Chosun-jok)' is one of the ethnic minorities of China, which refers to Chinese

asked the IMF for a $ 2 billion emergency loan, and refrained from national bankruptcy by receiving a total of $ 19.5 billion in bailout money. Just 15 days later, on December 18, 1997, a presidential election was held in which the ruling party was defeated by the opposition party, and the regime was replaced. In 1998, 1.27 million lost their jobs, and the total number of unemployed was 1.5 million, almost three times that in a year.

This crisis suddenly changed the appearance of Korean society. Previously, Koreans held the notion of lifetime employment in the workplace until retirement. So, when recruiting new people, companies have long-term planning and education. However, in the crisis of national bankruptcy, enterprises have made a lot of cuts due to tight fiscal and efficiency pursuits, and employment types have begun to expand temporary workers instead of permanent workers. Laborers who were forced to work as temporary workers suffered from low wages and job insecurity (Moon, 2007, p.

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people of Korean descent. In the 19th century, Korea was called 'Chosun', and foreign powers that emerged since the middle of the 19th century occupied various interests of Chosun and controlled the destiny of the nation. Especially, Japan colonized Korea by claiming the domination of Chosun with Russia, and winning the war against Russia in 1905. As a result, a large number of Koreans searched for a place to live in Chinese territory, and due to the plundering and abduction of the land by the Japanese, the migration of Koreans to China was further promoted. After the end of World War II, the ideological confrontation between South Korea and North Korea made it difficult for overseas Koreans under socialist system such as China and Soviet Union to return home. The Korean Chinese is settled as one of the ethnic groups in China, and is a minority with a history of about 100 years, unlike other ethnic minorities. They are not assimilated into Han Chinese society, the dominant nation of China, but have maintained their national homogeneity and identity as Koreans. In other words, they are legal Chinese but they exist as Korean Diaspora (Son et al., 1994).

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89). In addition, the incomes of the low-income earners among urban residents are further reduced, and the gap between the rich and poor has deepened. The proportion of the middle class decreased, and the proportion of the low-income class has increased.

Just as the Korean economy stalled in the early 1960s and the people were forced to self-develop under Park Chung-Hee's government, in the late 1990s, due to the financial crisis in Korea, the common people were driven to the point where they could not survive unless they became entrepreneurs who managed himself/herself, as Foucault said. It played a crucial role in shaping the neoliberal homo economicus that Foucault described. The Korean people were forced to adopt the neoliberal ethos due to two economic crises, and neoliberalism was completely transplanted into the Korean economy and society as a whole.

## 3.2.4 Incarnated neoliberalism in Korea

Throughout the process, neoliberalism has been completely incarnated in Korean society since the 2000s (Kim, 2009). The goal of self-management and survival is given to every individual, and in this process, he or she must be a stronger one to beat the weak. Neoliberalism as a system idealizes the neoliberal human being, neoliberal homo economicus, and individuals living in it are internalizing neoliberal morals. The market logic of 'winner takes all' breaks down the foundation of the democratic existence of social and public life, as the basic values that cannot be commercialized are subordinated to the logic of profit, even the area of public character such as education, and the area of the private domain such as religion or love are submitted to competition and market logic, and are devastated (Kim, 2009, p. 175). Sebastian Kim, a public theologian, presented six categories of public theology, as follows: market, state, civil society, religious communities, academies, and media (Kim, 2011, p. 12). These six categories influence each other, form the public sphere, and form a social character. We have seen the effects of neoliberalism on the state, the market, and the civil society so far, and will move on to the realm of media, our main concern in this study. In order to obtain a deeper understanding it will be necessary to briefly examine the areas of Korean academics and religion.

### 3.2.4.1 Universities: Incarnated neoliberalism in Korean education

In January 2001, when neoliberalism was deeply embedded in Korean society, the 'Ministry of Education' was renamed the 'Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development' (Ministry of Education, n.d.). In 2013, the name was reverted back to the 'Ministry of Education,' but this symbolically shows that the publicity of education is transforming itself into the efficient management of human resources. There is also the view that educating the human person, which should itself be a goal, is changing to the function of cultivating people as a resource for the system (Ryoo and Park, 2012).

For almost 30 years, between 1980 and the early 2010s, when Korean society underwent major economic and social development, Korean universities also experienced significant transformation—both inside and out. Until the 1970s, university education for Koreans was only for the elite. At the beginning of Park Chung-Hee's government, university quotas were under strict control. However, in the midst of Park Chung-Hee's term, Korea experienced rapid economic growth and the demand for college graduates in the Korean economy increased significantly. Economic groups pressurized the government to expand the university quota, and so the government conformed to their demands. The number of college graduates was less than the industry demanded, companies had a serious labor shortage, and the wages of college graduates rose dramatically—these factors contributed to an increase in the number of universities in Korea.

According to Martin Trow (1973, p. 6), when a college graduate exceeds 15 percent of the age group, the university becomes a popular non-elite institution rather than an elite educational institution. Together with these changes, Korean universities were popularized, increasing the number of college students, becoming one of the key reasons for the social movement in the era of the democratization movement in the 1980s. Due to the growing student population, there was an increased sense of confidence that they could change the world if they moved into action (Kang, 2013, p. 68). This gave rise to student protests; students protested against various social issues and student university councils across the country expressed their solidarity with the student protesters. The university at that time was

the cradle of intellectuals in action.

However, the "Educational Reform Agenda 5.31" issued by the government on May 31, 1995, brought about dramatic reform. The plan introduced the principles of autonomy and competition in the school administration system for the excellence of education, and it became easy to establish a university by releasing the authority of the establishment of the university. In other words, it can be said that the market principle was introduced into education. Many scholars argue that the intent of the reform was to have universities under the control of neoliberalism. In particular, the neoliberalization of the university has accelerated since the student movement calmed down somewhat since the 1980s (Kang, 2013, p. 74). If students in the 1980s were the subject of social transformation that emphasized the nation and the people, students in the 1990s would turn into neoliberal subjects. According to the reform plan, education was set as a 'service product,' a professor became a supplier of education products, and students became consumers. Because of the increasing number of universities, the university entrance rate of high school students exceeded 80 %, making the university a place for public education and lowering the level of college education to match the low intellectual levels of students. At the same time, the increase in the number of universities and lower fertility rates in Korea has led to a sense of crisis that uncompetitive universities will be closed due to a lack of students (Hong, 2006, p. 53). For that reason, universities have started to use high employment rates, the most attractive factor for students, as a means of publicity to attract students. In the past, if the role of the university was to 'transfer intellectual assets accumulated by mankind,' foster a 'critical intelligence community,' 'pursuit historical truth,' and 'search for an alternative social model,' then its role is shifting to 'the dealer of practical knowledge,' a 'product production base,' a 'factory that produces competitive labor products,' and a 'degree mill' (Hong, 2006, p. 54). This phenomenon of the retrogression of intellectuals is not only found in Korea, but also in Western countries. It is typical that Régis Debray (2000) declared 'The end of intellectual'. In other words, under neoliberal university policy, professors are forced to produce application knowledge that can increase economic profits rather than universal truths and pure knowledge inquiry; Slaughter and Rhoades (2010) named this phenomenon 'academic capitalism'. Korean universities became academic capitalism in the 1990s. It is not for the pursuit of learning that students go to college,

but to upgrade themselves to become better products.

Giroux (2015) describes this phenomenon as follows:

> Central to this neoliberal view of higher education in the United States and United Kingdom is a market-driven paradigm that seeks to eliminate tenure, turn the humanities into a job preparation service, and transform most faculty(sic) into an army of temporary subaltern labor. For instance, in the United States out of 1.5 million faculty members, 1 million are "adjuncts who are earning, on average, $20,000 a year gross, with no benefits or healthcare, no unemployment insurance when they are out of work." The indentured service status of such faculty is put on full display as some colleges have resorted to using "temporary service agencies to do their formal hiring." … In the United States and increasingly in Canada, many of the problems in higher education can be linked to diminished funding, the domination of universities by market mechanisms, the rise of for-profit colleges, the intrusion of the national security state, and the diminished role of faculty in governing the university, all of which both contradict the culture and democratic value of higher education and makes a mockery of the very meaning and mission of the university as a democratic public sphere.

University education as a means to upgrade the self has created a phenomenon called 'Hakbeol' which is unique to Korean society. Graduating from a prestigious university in a Korean society where more than 80 % of high school graduates go on to college has a unique competitive edge that determines their income and social status for the rest of their lives. Hakbeol is a unique concept in Korea, and it is also defined as 'a degree-caste system' (Garrison et al., 2017, p. 106). In Korea, students who have graduated from the top three to ten universities usually use the phrase "Hakbeol is good," which is the first factor in assessing individual competitiveness in Korean society. Korean universities are thoroughly ranked, and students apply to schools at levels that match their placement test scores. At the same time, all graduates receive a permanent nametag that cannot be changed. In Korea, alumni of the prestigious universities enter the social mainstream and various business fields such as politics, business, law, academia, and journalism, and so on. Those from the same university form groups according to their academic backgrounds, and they are exclusive to people from other universities (Park, 2004, p. 24). Furthermore, in reality, there is prejudice shown toward university graduates in everyday life—in

that, graduates from notorious universities are viewed favorably, and those from less well-known universities are discriminated against. The most powerful competitor, hakbeol, is usually determined by the placement test at the time of high school graduation. This is the reason for the astronomical cost of private education, as well as why efforts to win the competition are invested in high school students, and why many students who fail the placement test often commit suicide (due to the frustration of the process).

Hakbeolism describes the present state of the Korean university where the neoliberal figure that manages through constant competition, elitism, and authoritarianism are merged. In this situation, the university is not a space for pursuing truth and the dignity of humanity, but a battlefield that makes human beings a means to an end.

### 3.2.4.2 Churches: Incarnated neoliberalism in Korean religion

Korean religions, especially Christianity, were also affected by this neoliberal influence. This phenomenon can be divided into two main categories. First, it is the neoliberalism of individual Christians. Second, it is the neoliberalism of the church.

First, the neoliberalization of individuals is the transformation of Christians into self-managed selves. In this regard, Lee (2010) points out that since the early 2000s, there has been an increasing desire amongst Korean Christians in this neoliberal context for self-development, replacing the gospel. For example, Christian bestsellers are credited with Christian self-development books such as *The purpose-driven Life*, *Your best life now*, *Daniel studying method*, and *Jesus, CEO*. The content of these books are in line with the self-management emphasized in neoliberalism. Even if the neoliberal ideology is not explicitly expressed, it aims to improve its capabilities and abilities to become a person who wants to succeed in an infinite competitive society. Developing and managing the self starts with knowing oneself. The 'self' should always be analyzed and controlled, and knowing 'who I am' is connected to success. The common message in these bestselling books is that believers must adopt the mind-set that they have already achieved—whether it is material achievement, health, employment, or a promotion. In line with this message, we can find the desire for success as an entrepreneurial human being (Lee, 2010, p.

131).

The second is the neoliberalization of the church. The Church of Korea has achieved rapid quantitative growth, paired with the rushing economic growth of the industrial age. In particular, the Korean church grew rapidly in the 1970s and 1980s; the theology of church growth of the United States, which applied the principles of capitalism in pursuit of profiting the church, was directly imported into the Korean church and flourished (Park and Park, 2015, p. 53). In this period, the church relied more on capitalistic market principles, instead of theological considerations, to grow quantitatively. However, since the Korean financial crisis in 1997, Korean society has been seriously affected by the economic crisis, and Korean churches have started to go downhill. At this time, Korean society has suffered serious polarization due to the unequal distribution of wealth, and at the same time serious polarization has begun to occur in Korean churches. Korea has five of the ten largest Protestant churches in the world, and the largest church has more than 800,000 members (Park, 2012). However, most Korean churches are financially dependent small churches. The polarization of these members inevitably leads to a polarization of finances, and consequently, financial difficulties cause approximately 3,000 churches to close each year (M.-B. Kim, 2012, p. 55).

The larger churches are getting bigger and bigger by means of corporate management. The corporatization of these mega churches resembles *chaebols* in Korea in two ways: branch church system and church hereditariness. Several large churches in Korea have learned the principles of corporate management and have established church branding according to the pastor's popularity. Dozens of branch churches were built in other areas. The Yoido Full Gospel Church, which has the largest number of members, has 23 branches, and several other churches also have branch churches. This branch church system differs from the ordinary church union. First, all the local churches are run by one representative pastor, and the ministers dispatched to each church are in charge of administrative work. In this respect, the large church with the local church is similar in style to Korean *chaebols*. These branded churches are equipped with great facilities and infrastructure from the start of the vast funding of the church, and the polarizations become more and more intense as members of small churches move to the branch churches. Therefore, the branch church system can be said to be a typical form of religious commercialism

applied to the church growth movement under the neoliberal economic system.

The pastors of these large churches are causing social problems by either inheriting the position (as a son or son-in-law) or transferring their authority to others at the time of retirement. We can also say that it is a *chaebolized* figure of large churches. In large churches, there are frequent attempts to pass on the property rights of the churches, as well as the position of the pastor, to their sons. These types of behavior have caused the church and mission agencies to be regarded as private property, accomplished by their own ability. In addition, their similarities to the *chaebols* have resulted in the decline of the church's social credibility (M.-B. Kim, 2012, p. 61). The commercialization that is taking place in the *chaebolized* Korean church is clear evidence that neoliberal market principles have permeated the church.

So far, we have look at how Korea became a neoliberal society from a historical perspective. The ultimate goal is to obtain insight regarding the ethical tendency of Korean television entertainment programs, and to understand the relationship between media and society. In the next chapter, we will look at the theories of media theorists and see how they relate to Korean society.

# 3.3 Korean media and television entertainment: a theoretical perspective

So far we have established that Korean society has become a neoliberal society. In addition to that, it has been confirmed that Korean television entertainment is fostering this phenomenon. It is important to understand the relationship between society and media in order to better understand this phenomenon. However, the scope of the word 'media' is too vast, and the philosophers and discussions that deal with the media are also diverse. They cannot all be covered within the limited scope of this single chapter, so for that reason, a few selected representative theories of important scholars will be chosen to explore the properties of television media the researcher is interested in.

## 3.3.1 Reproduced works of art, and the decline of the aura: Walter

## Benjamin

The first philosopher to understand television as mass media is Walter Benjamin. Today, mass media is the result of a combination of technology and art, but just a hundred years ago, art and technology were different fields. However, Walter Benjamin is the philosopher who dealt with the phenomenon that arises when the field of technology and the field of art meet. Technology has made it possible to replicate works of art, and as a result, the public has become able to own art.

### 3.3.1.1 The aura as an objective characteristic of an object (Benjamin et al., 2008)

Until the 19th century, artistic images were paintings and plays. The works of paintings and plays are the original, the unique existence that can only be seen in the here and now. So great works of art had an oppressive authority. Benjamin calls the 'aura' the sacred atmosphere of the artwork as the only object. Traditional artworks became objects of religious worship because ordinary people were too far away to approach the original artworks. Benjamin understands that the basis of authority for these works of art is in their physical attributes rather than content. In other words, it is in the originality, the authenticity, and the uniqueness of the work rather the artistic genius of the work itself.

Because of the aura, great works of art had religious functions right from the beginning. For pre-nineteenth century people, the religious value of a piece of artwork was due to its scarcity, for this reason, traditional artworks were mostly located in places that were hidden from view, rather than being displayed in public places where anyone could see them.

> Artistic production begins with figures in the service of magic. What is important for these figures is that they are present, not that they are seen. The elk depicted by Stone Age man on the walls of his cave is an instrument of magic, and is exhibited to others only coincidentally; what matters is that the spirits see it. Cult value as such even tends to keep the artwork out of sight certain statues of gods are accessible only to the priest in the cella; certain images of the Madonna remain covered nearly all year round; certain sculptures on medieval cathedrals are not visible to the viewer at ground level (Benjamin et al., 2008, p. 25)

### 3.3.1.2 The emergence of new forms of media

In the 20th century, the development of technology brought about a change in the form of media. The new forms of art in this age are photography and film. The greatest feature of photography and film is that it can be replicated a countless number of times, which makes the concept of 'the original' meaningless—that which is unique is replaced by multiple copies. This was not only a phenomenon of works of art but also a feature of this period. Capitalist production is reproduction itself. This is because it takes a lot of stereotypes in a single prototype.

Therefore, the authority of a unique object has disappeared. The aura that the artwork displayed in the beginning has vanished, and the existing religious function has been lost. Instead, artworks are no longer objects of worship but enjoyment. Instead of losing its religious function, artworks are available to all and have a political function.

### 3.3.1.3 Photography and film: Art for the masses

In the past, people could only experience artworks in 'the here and now,' but nowadays they can experience it 'whenever and anywhere' through copies.

Previously, people had awe-inspiring experiences, for example, standing in front of an original painting like the Mona Lisa, but today this has been replaced by the urge to take photographs. It is a desire to strip off the original aura and replicate the original. This phenomenon causes the aura of the original to be lost. Photography destroys the aura of the painting and film destroys the aura of the play.

Benjamin sees this aspect as positive rather than negative. Now art is widely available to the public, and the media has become the mass media. When art lovers appreciate original works of art, they are absorbed in the art, but the masses view the artworks as a means of entertainment. Rather, Benjamin believed that the public could critique the works of art.

Paradoxically, however, the artworks delivered to the masses through the mass media do not have the existing aura of uniqueness—the impact is different

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from the many replicas. Benjamin hoped that the art form, such as photography and film, would be used only in a democratic way because it was stripped of its aura, but instead, fascists used film to overturn their political aura on their leaders. Replicable works of art remove the aura of the work itself, but it can be seen that the work has a larger aura in the objects it represents. Today, television programs have replicated images for all to see, so there is no aura of authenticity and the uniqueness of the original is lost, but reality is reinforced by repeatedly showing the same content in many forms of media.

## 3.3.2 The format overwhelms the contents of the media: Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan

If Walter Benjamin dealt with changes in the format of the media, especially the development of technology, Harold Innis and Marshall McLaren are pioneers in media, content and society. The term 'media' refers to a medium that connects objects. In other words, the notion of original media is not about content but about format. However, as we have seen, the format affects the contents as the development of media, such as photography and film, have shown. Now the media not only delivers a predefined message, but also chooses which message should be delivered, as is implied in the well known assertion that "The medium is the message" (McLuhan and Fiore, 1967)..

### 3.3.2.1 Time-biased media and space-biased media (Innis, 2008)

In an interesting study, Harold Innis linked the history of civilization with the media. Each media has a unique bias that comes from the physical properties of the material. One is 'time-biased media' that uses durable materials such as stone and soil for a long time, the other is 'space-biased media' which is easy to spread because of its light weight but weak durability like paper (Innis, 2008, p. xix).

Egypt is an example of an empire that relied on time-biased media, which included their written pictographs on walls and obelisks. Information that was usually written on time-biased media, such as stone, were mainly religious truths, and

societies that were dependent on such media were traditional and conservative. On the other hand, information written on media that can be spread widely like paper but are not stored for a long time is mainly temporal, routine, and secular. Societies that rely on space-biased media have a secular, democratic, and military government. In these societies, administration and law are more important than religious truths.

### 3.3.2.2 Media and empires (Innis, 1986)

According to Innis, the long-standing existence of a civilization requires the balance of time and space dimensions without bias (Innis, 1986, p. x). The bias that comes from the media on which a civilization depends heavily must be intensified. If the balance is restored by compensating the one bias with the other, the civilization will be able to continue, but if it fails, the civilization will fall because of the bias.

Innis exemplified the rise and fall of several empires, among which the task of the Egyptian empire was to overcome the finitude of time. They made unchanging pyramids and sphinxes, and they even embalmed the corpses of the king to prevent corruption. They recorded the most important things on stone. Therefore, Egyptian civilization naturally had a time bias. However, as the time bias was strengthened, there was a weakness in expanding the empire spatially. Because the information carved on the stone could not be easily transported to other areas, it could not influence to maintain a broad empire. So the Egyptian civilization was able to balance both biases and to grow into a big empire by inventing papyrus.

The physical nature of media tends to determine the nature of its content. Because papyrus is space biased, it can spread far, but because durability is low, everyday information was recorded rather than perpetual truths. As papyrus became a major media in Egypt, Egyptian society became more open than conservative. Innis likens this conservative tendency to the centripetal force, and the progressive tendency to the centrifugal force. In the end, Egypt was destroyed by the centrifugal force created by the papyrus, because it was not balanced by the centripetal force. Thus, the nature of society is determined by the medium most used in the society. For Innis, the emergence of new media is a transformation of society (Innis, 1986, p. ix).

### 3.3.2.3 The medium is the message

The famous phrase "The medium is the message" is a typical sentence that comes to mind when McLuhan's name is heard. This sentence is a short compression of Innis' claim that "the media itself is more socially important than what it contains". In modern and pre-modern thought, the media is just a tool. This idea is called 'instrumentalism,' which is consistent with our everyday experience. If a person wrote a brief note on a piece of paper, the content of the note will be important, not the piece of paper. For McLuhan, however, media is not just a tool. As with Innis, and as we have seen earlier, the media itself has an effect on content.

McLuhan differs from Innis in that while Innis saw that the physical characteristics of the medium determine the content of the information and affects the social structure, McLuhan found that the media changed the composition of the senses within us. The subtitle of McLuhan's book *Understanding Media* is 'The extensions of Man,' because McLuhan sees the media as part of the human body. In other words, the radio is an extension of the ears, the television is an extension of the eyes, the automobile is the extension of the legs, the crane is the extension of the arms, and the computer is the extension of the brain (McLuhan, 1994; McLuhan and Fiore, 1967).

Additionally, along with Innis, McLuhan argues that biases exist in all media, not in relation to social institutions, but in relation to human senses. According to McLuhan, the emergence of new media changes the arrangement between the five senses of humans. For example, if the text has a visual bias, the radio would be a medium with auditory bias. In his book *The Gutenberg galaxy* (1962), McLuhan critically states that human civilization has become dependent on the visual sense only since the development of printing. McLuhan saw that the five senses of the individual should be balanced, as Innis said, as mentioned above, that a balance must be made between time bias and space bias to maintain the civilization. In this sense, the visual biased modern civilization has limited human creativity. human beings who had freedom of thought and expression by using the five senses generously, gradually began to express themselves in texts; the distribution of a wide range of documents unified various ways of thinking and worldviews. For example, African people lost their original creativity by imitating European people (McLuhan,

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1962, p. 33). Since the suppression of the other senses by sight is the history of the last 500 years, McLuhan expects new hope in radio and television. Electronic media, like the radio and television, overturns the sight-centered Gutenberg order and restores the sense ratio. That is, his aim is a human being with a comprehensive sense. "When sense ratios change, men change" (McLuhan, 1962, p. 265).

### 3.3.2.4 Television: The media that enables public participation and a global village

If Innis distinguishes media as 'heavy media' and 'light media,' McLuhan distinguishes media as 'hot media' and 'cool media' (McLuhan, 1994, p. 22). It is distinguished by the degree of definition the media has. High-definition means that the density of the included information is high. That is, if a photograph is visually hot media, a cartoon is cool media. If a radio is aurally hot media, then a telephone with relatively poor quality is cool media. McLuhan connects cool media and hot media with participation. Definition and participation are inversely proportional (McLuhan, 1994, p. 23). Because high-definition media means that the completion of the media is high, little effort is required on the part of the audience to determine the meaning. Conversely, low-definition media requires the active involvement of audiences in reading its meaning. Interestingly, McLuhan categorized film as hot media and television as cool media. Today's television has higher definition than film, but probably because of the low level of television at that time. However, the prediction that television viewers will show a high level of participation explains the current situation more accurately. McLuhan positively regarded television as cool media that caused mass audience participation. He sees television as a place where the voice of the public will be expressed. In other words, he sees viewers of television as a new subject of politics. Furthermore, through electronic media, he expected the world to shrink to a large village (McLuhan, 1962, p. 31). This is the origin of the word 'global village'. McLuhan notes (Carpenter and McLuhan, 1966, p. xi):

> Postliterate man's electronic media contract the world to a village or tribe where everything happens to everyone at the same time: everyone knows about, and therefore participates in, everything that is happening the minute

in happens. Television gives this quality of simultaneity to events in the global village. This simultaneous sharing of experiences as in a village or tribe creates a village or tribal outlook, and puts a premium on togetherness.

Television was a new technology at the time, but today's Internet is the digital version of the global village that McLuhan talked about. Whether it is television or the Internet, McLuhan hoped to get back to the sense ratios that all humans have lost and to interact with everyone. Compared to the views of other scholars, McLuhan portrays the emergence of the new media as utopia with a very positive outlook. Of course we need to consider the opinion of other scholars to identify whether this new media is leading humanity to utopia or dystopia. Nonetheless, the insight that McLuhan anticipates concerning the real-time communication between all humans through the media, and the format of the media determining the content, is a key point for the current study.

## 3.3.3 The reversal of real and virtual: Günther Anders

If we divide the media into optimists and pessimists, we can say that Benjamin and McLuhan are optimistic scholars. They saw that the development of new media technologies would stimulate public participation in society because information is delivered more quickly and more widely to the public. These scholars have in common that the public is expected to strengthen their role as they have easy access to information. But all of this is only true if the information communicated through the media is factual. However, Günther Anders is a representative pessimist, especially regarding the negative side of television. One of the things we need to look at is the concept of phantom and matrix. This will be done next.

### *3.3.3.1 Phantom-dominated television, the world became a matrix*

The biggest feature of television media is that it blurs the boundaries between real and virtual. For example, if we watch the Russian World Cup soccer game in the room, is the football game on the monitor actually present? Of course, the soccer game is taking place somewhere in the world, but it is not happening in my room

right now. In that sense, the soccer game in the video is an event that is not existent and is not inexistent. Anders defines the third layer of existence, which is neither real nor virtual, as 'phantom'. In other words, phantom is just a video but a video that pretends to be a real event.

Television, thus, creates the world of phantom. It creates a new reality that does and does not exist at the same time. Although the images appearing on the TV are copies of something real, the image on the television plays the same role as the original because the time difference between the original and the copy disappears. Phantom is accepted as reality.

For copies, consistency with the original is indispensable in order to be accepted as true. However, if the copy is accepted as the original, its truthfulness cannot be questioned. Nevertheless, since the image that appears on the television is a video selected and edited by someone, his or her interpretation is forced onto the viewer. Because viewers accept the interpretation of others as fact, they regard it as their own interpretation. More importantly, this dependency goes unnoticed.

When people repeatedly accept the phantom reality through television, a reversed relationship between the virtual world and the real world is formed. Anders argues that the whole world becomes a matrix, a space of virtual reality, as it becomes ambiguous to determine what is virtual and what is reality, and eventually its importance is reversed (Anders, 1961, p. 111). Ultimately, the original tries to emulate the copy, so finally the real world becomes a simple matrix that reproduces itself (Anders, 1961, p. 111). That is why Anders sees that television viewers will not have a personality in the true sense.

### 3.3.3.2 The dystopian world, and the masses

As we have seen, Walter Benjamin and Marshall McLuhan anticipated a more democratic and active public with the emergence of new media (especially television), but Anders anticipates the opposite. Not only does television create the world of phantom, but it also creates new humans, and Anders calls them *Massen-Eremiten,* which means 'mass eremites' (Anders, 1961, p. 102). Through television, the public becomes secular eremites who are scattered rather than democratic

groups, consuming their own world in the prison of their own homes. While Walter Benjamin (Benjamin et al., 2008, p. 37) says that:

> Our bars and city streets, our offices and furnished rooms, our railroad stations and our factories seemed to close relentlessly around us. Then came film and exploded this prison-world with the dynamite of the split second, so that now we can set off calmly on journeys of adventure among its far-flung debris.

Anders summarizes his paper as follows (Anders, 1961, pp. 111–112):

> 1. When the world comes to us, instead of our going to it, we are no longer "in the world", but only its consumers, as in the Land of Cockaigne.
> 2. When the world comes to us only as an image, it is half-present and half-absent, in other words, it is like a phantom.
> 3. When we have access to it at any time we want (we do not of course call the shots, but we can connect to it or disconnect from it), we are possessors of a God-like power.
> 4. When the world speaks to us without our being able to speak to it, we are deprived of speech, and hence condemned to be unfree.
> 5. When the world is clearly perceptible to us, but no more than that, i.e., not subject to our action, then we are transformed into eavesdroppers and voyeurs.
> 6. When an event that occurs at a particular place is broadcast, and when it can be made to appear at any other place as a "broadcast", it becomes a movable, indeed, almost ubiquitous object, and has forfeited its spatial location, its *principium individuationis*.
> 7. When the event is no longer attached to a specific location and can be reproduced virtually any number of times, it acquires the characteristics of an assembly-line product; and when we pay for having it delivered to our homes, it is a commodity.
> 8. When the actual event is socially important only in its reproduced form, i.e., as a spectacle, the difference between being and appearance, between reality and image of reality, is abolished.
> 9. When the event in its reproduced form is socially more important than the original event, this original must be shaped with a view to being reproduced; in other words, the event becomes merely a master matrix, or a mold for casting its own reproductions.
> 10. When the dominant experience of the world thrives on such assembly-line products, the concept "the world" is abolished insofar as it denotes that in which we live. The real world is forfeited; the broadcasts, in other words, further an "idealistic" orientation.

If Benjamin saw the potential of liberation in films and television, Anders sees the possibility of perfect oppression and control. Of course, in today's democratic society, explicit manipulation may be impossible, but Anders sees another mass of totalitarian dangers in today's mass media. Anders warns that (1961, p. 170):

> If, as it has been described, the world is supplied to the mass-man in the form of a totality of models, instead of the world a totality of representations is introduced; but it is only "his" because it has been branded on him. "That my representation should be for you the world", says the will of those who produce matrices. That is the kind of thing Hitler used to say.

The fact that Anders warns, "We may not be able to perceive it, even if we live in a world created by someone other than our own," confirms the premise that Korean television creates ethical tendencies in Korean society.

## 3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher examined the core theories of television. Walter Benjamin points out that the aura of original works of art has fallen due to copies. As the aura of the original disappeared, he expected that the masses who could not have access to the original would become a new political subject. This positive expectation for the media also extends to Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan. They argued that the format of the media itself determines the content. New media have overtaken the various biases that existed in the past media, they suggested a utopian worldview where the media connects the whole world to a global village and all people communicate in a balanced sense. But Günther Anders looks at the same television media from a negative perspective. He expects the copy to overwhelm the original like Walter Benjamin, but forecasts the resulting world to be negative.

As the unreal thing is pretending to be real, it is expected that the world will become a huge matrix as the phantom becomes real. Most of all, because of the unidirectional nature of television, the public is expected to become a passive entity that is unilaterally injected with ideas, rather than becoming an active political participant.

Such a scenario, as indicated by Günther Anders, helps explain the phenomenon of the lack of ethics due to television entertainment. The media not only conveys the content that is created in society but also has the right to decide what message to convey in society. The questions that arise then are: "What are the characteristics of the ethics that the media today convey?" And, "What kind of ethics should we consider important in order to overcome these?" We will look for answers to these questions in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4:

# THE NECESSITY OF ETHICAL-THEOLOGICAL CRITICISM OF KOREAN TELEVISION ENTERTAINMENT

## 4.1 Introduction

This study has focused on the reinforcement of neoliberal values through television media. It has already been stated that the reasons are complex, and should be approached from three main vantage points, namely: The socio-historical and media-theoretical perspectives (chapter 3) and an ethical-theological perspective (chapter 4). The current chapter will therefore include the latter, and analyse the identified phenomenon from an ethical-theological perspective.

The structure of this chapter is as follows: The researcher will reflect on Alasdair MacIntyre's ethics, because his critique of modern society is consistent with that of this study. Thereafter, the researcher will analyse Korean television entertainment by applying the theological insights of a number of prominent Protestant theologians, whose views are closely aligned with those of MacIntyre, such as John Milbank and Stanley Howard.

## 4.2 Ethics of Alasdair MacIntyre

### 4.2.1 The current moral crisis and emotivism

The well-known Christian writer, C.S. Lewis(2001), identified a serious problem in his book "*The Abolition of Man*". Reflecting on an elementary textbook called *The Green Book*, which aids in the formation of young children's values, he found the phenomenon of ethical judgments merely regarded as individual preferences, and warns about the seriousness of this.

Titius comment as follows: 'When the man said This is sublime, he appeared to be making a remark about the waterfall ⋯Actually ⋯ he was not making a remark about the waterfall, but a remark about his own feelings. What he was saying was really I have feelings associated in my mind with the word "Sublime", or shortly, I have sublime feelings.' ⋯ The schoolboy who reads this passage in The Green Book will believe two propositions: firstly, that all sentences containing a predicate of value are statements about the emotional state of the speaker, and secondly, that all such statements are unimportant. ⋯ The Chest-Magnanimity-Sentiment—these are the indispensable liaison officers between cerebral man and visceral man. It may even be said that it is by this middle element that man is man: for by his intellect he is mere spirit and by his appetite mere animal. The operation of The Green Book and its kind is to produce what may be called Men without Chests. (Lewis, 2001, pp. 2–25)

In this book, published in 1943, Lewis further warns that this phenomenon can destroy society.

Decades later, the same problem is systematically analysed by MacIntyre. If Lewis were concerned about such a gloomy future, MacIntyre would find that the problem had already occurred. MacIntyre says modern morality is in a state of serious disorder, or chaos. Moreover, he perceives modern society as pessimistic, saying that we even lack the sense to recognize such chaos.

As a representative phenomenon, the nature of modern society is such that most ethical debates never end. We can never reach a consensus on ongoing issues. The problem is not that agreement isn't achieved, but that we simply can't reach an agreement. A possible explanation for this is the decontextualization of language, which no longer carries ethical weight. Even if we use the same words, we have lost the common denominator of the same understanding of the language. Ethics for each person is logical and plausible in his or her own thought structures, but on the most important or major premises consensus cannot be reached. Thus, MacIntyre says that there is no rational way of securing moral agreement in our culture (MacIntyre, 2007). All ethical claims pursuit the human good, but an agreement on what is good is impossible to achieve, since different people have different understandings of the concept. By implication, disagreement and conceptual differences of the human good are inevitable. MacIntyre calls this

phenomenon 'the conceptual incommensurability' (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 8). Consequently, in modern liberal society, the meaning of life, as well as the common values and preconceptions that formed and maintained the bonds between the members of that community collapsed. The pursuit of human good was removed from the public domain and privatized, and turned into a kind of profit struggle, explained by MacIntyre as "nothing but a collection of strangers, each pursuing his or her own interests under minimal constraints" (MacIntyre, 2007, pp. 250–251). Therefore, in liberal societies, the rights of individuals are favoured above the good of the community (MacIntyre, 2016, pp. 1–69).

In modern society, 'conceptual incommensurability,' which is the biggest problem in ethical discussions, causes a moral crisis because those who have lost the ethical common denominator regard all ethical judgments as expressions of preference. MacIntyre calls this phenomenon 'emotivism'. (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 11) defines emotivism as follows:

> …the doctrine that all evaluative judgments and more specifically all moral judgments are nothing but expressions of preference, expressions of attitude of feeling, insofar as they are moral or evaluative in character.

In other words, when we say something is right or wrong, the hidden meaning is an expression of approval or disapproval.

According to MacIntyre, the representative of emotivism is Charles L. Stevenson. He presents three basic models of emotivism, as follows (Stevenson, 1962, p. 21).

(1) "This is wrong," means I disapprove of this; do so as well.

(2) "He ought to do this," means I disapprove of his leaving this undone; do so as well.

(3) "This is good," means I approve of this; do so as well.

Stevenson explains that each model is divided into a declarative statement, such as: 'This is wrong' and an imperative statement such as 'Do so as well'. A declarative statement is a description of the attitude of the speaker, and an imperative statement is a call for a change in the attitude of the hearer. Stevenson argues that the declarative statement contains an imperative statement. If so, 'this is wrong' and 'I disapprove of this' have the same meaning, which does not distinguish between personal preference and valuation. For MacIntyre, this is a serious error of emotivism (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 13). This is consistent with what C.S Lewis points out, as mentioned earlier. Emotivism has made ethical judgments an expression of emotion, so that no ethical truth or moral knowledge exists in them. In other words, emotivism only concerns people's preferences, and in an ethical discussion, it is an attempt by two parties to change the other party to have the same preference. As a result, all (ethical) truth and knowledge are lost.

In his most recent book, *Ethics in the conflicts of modernity* (MacIntyre, 2016), MacIntyre developed emotivism from expressivism, which is a more philosophically elaborate form. For MacIntyre, the essence of the two are the same in that it renders ethical judgment helpless, but the greatest danger is that it obscures the concept of good (MacIntyre, 2016, p. 17).

## 4.2.2 The failure of the Enlightenment Project

The lack of ethics in modern society—a society composed of Enlightenment liberal values—can be explained by emotivism. MacIntyre explains how and why this culture emerged, as "The failure of the Enlightenment project." According to MacIntyre, the Enlightenment attempted to reasonably justify morality, called the Enlightenment project, and because it failed, emotivism was clearly established (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 39). MacIntyre presents Kierkegaard, Kant, Diderot, and Hume, to mention a few, as examples. According to MacIntyre, all of them failed to reasonably justify morality. Each of them took their own form, but all failed for the same reason. The reason being, according to MacIntyre, contemporary ethical theories do not possess the concept of the purpose of human beings. According to MacIntyre, the Enlightenment thinkers replaced the tradition of Aristotle's virtue

ethics with rationalism. In this process, the concept of *'telos,'* which occupied the most important position in Aristotle's system, has been lost. Aristotle's ethical scheme is regulated by three elements (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 53). The content of this so-called 'teleological scheme' includes: (1) untutored human nature, (2) person as he/she could have realized his/her *telos*, and (3) moral precepts which enable him/her to pass from one state to the other. In other words, Aristotle's ethics was to derive (3), as a means to be elevated from (1) to (2) under the premise that (1) and (2) exist. If all humans have a common purpose, it is possible to have an ethical discussion to determine what action is right to achieve that goal. For example, we can determine which parts need to be repaired in order for the clock to fulfil the purpose of providing precise timing.

However, the impossibility of the Enlightenment project can be expressed by the words "no 'ought' from 'is' view" (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 54). The sentence "This is a clock" contains the meaning of "This must be accurate in time." The Enlightenment, by refusing to derive norms from being, breaks the link between existence and norms. Thus, in the teleological scheme discussed above, (2) disappears and only (1) human nature, and (3) moral precepts remain. Therefore, the Enlightenment is subject to the impossible task of deriving (3) from the content of (1). In other words, all ethics based on the Enlightenment must justify the moral rule that lost its purpose, which is an impossible task in terms of the simultaneous removal and granting of meaning.

## 4.2.3 MacIntyre's virtue ethics

As we have seen, it is not only modern morality that lacks a foundation, but today's ethical language is also only understood as an expression of self-will and preference. For this reason, we need a paradigm shift, and MacIntyre's suggestion is that we turn to Aristotle's teleological ethics. Humans have *telos* to pursue, and virtues are what we have to do to achieve it. However, according to MacIntyre, we must acknowledge that it is almost impossible to grasp the reality of morality by the language of morality that we have. For him, the most important task of today's ethics is to overcome our preconceptions as much as possible by exploring the history of ethics. So MacIntyre

performs the task of exploring the historical process of the virtue concept. For MacIntyre, the key idea is virtue, but in order to understand virtue, it must be understood in relation to practices, narrative and tradition.

### 4.2.3.1 Virtue and practice

MacIntyre explains virtue through practice. The real *telos* of humans is only realized through virtue, and practice is the place where virtue works. To explain further, practices are human activities, these are not activities of isolated individuals but socially established and cooperative activities (Murphy et al., 1997, p. 21). However, these practices contain internal good. Internal good can be contrasted with external good, and encompasses values that can only be gained through related practices. One example is the mental ability to learn when playing chess. On the other hand, if a child receives a candy from his father for learning to play chess, it is an external good because it is an externally combined reward for the practice of chess. Thus, internal good is a value that cannot be obtained without engaging in practice.

These practices require relationships with people who participate in it, rather than activities that individuals do alone. For example, throwing a soccer ball is not a practice, but football is a practice. Building bricks is not a practice, but architecture is a practice. Although the boundaries between MacIntyre's examples of practice and non-practice are ambiguous, his main focus is not a piecemeal or isolated activity, or an activity that only involves things in relation to one another. Thus, "Every practice requires a certain kind of relationship between those who participate in it (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 191)." All practice presupposes the relationship with others and pursues the intrinsic good that the practice itself contains. So entering into some practice means recognizing the standards of excellence that the practice has and recognizing its authority to subordinate my own attitudes, choices, preferences, and tastes to the standards (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 190)

Therefore, it is no coincidence that the word *arete*, translated as 'virtue,' was a concept closer to excellence than to moral goodness. The concept of virtue as excellence to win games, battles, wars, sports, and more, is similar to the ability of humans to win in the game of life. It differs from the term "virtuous person," which

refers to a kind and generous person. Virtue or excellence can bring victory, but victory itself is not a purpose but an excellence, an internal good that can be achieved through practice. Therefore, friendly competition with a rival is a practice because it promotes excellence (whether win or lose). Therefore, MacIntyre summarizes the relationship between virtue and practice, as follows:

> A virtue is an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the Jack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 191).

However, if virtue is related to excellence, the following questions arise: "Is a good torturer good?" Or, "Is the virtuous Nazi possible?" And moreover, "Does MacIntyre not fall into the relativism that he seeks to criticize?" Conscious of this criticism, MacIntyre states:

> I have suggested so far that unless there is a *telos* which transcends the limited goods of practices by constituting the good of a whole human life, the good of a human life conceived as a unity, it will both be the case that a certain subversive arbitrariness will invade the moral life and that we shall be unable to specify the context of certain virtues adequately (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 203).

Therefore, the next step, the relationship between narrative and virtue, is required.

### 4.2.3.2 Virtue and narrative unity of human life

One person practices many and various things, and in order to accurately understand their actions, one needs to look at the life of that person as a whole. It

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becomes possible by considering human actions as a unified narrative. However, such attempts have been severely criticized in contemporary society. Nowadays, people are accustomed to thinking about human life in dichotomies, such as childhood/old age, public life/private life, and so on. It is therefore foreign to perceive individual acts as part of the whole. Nevertheless, according to MacIntyre, human behaviour must be understood as a whole. Human behaviour cannot be grasped except for its intention, and its intention cannot be grasped apart from the environment in which the individual lives. For example, how we interpret a person digging a hole in the ground will depend on various factors, including the person's occupation, intention, mood, society, cultural norms, and customs. Therefore, narrative history is necessary to understand human behaviour. In addition to understanding humans, we need to know the context to gain intelligibility. Likewise, human life becomes a story and is part of a larger story called a grand narrative. The story of one person overlaps with the stories of others, becoming a small part of a larger narrative of that society. MacIntyre defines a human being as a storytelling animal. Humans tell a story, especially through their lives. Therefore, when a person makes a decision, he/she must be accountable for that decision and we need to provide truthful answers about the decision. In addition, the question that an individual needs to ask him/-herself first when making a decision is not "What am I to do?" but "Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?" (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 216).

Following this, the goal of the individual is to unify the story. In any given situation, in order to do the good required to fulfil their story, human beings must pursue *telos*, which is made possible by virtue. Life is made up of very complex situations, to which there are not always simple solutions. In such situations, there are many options to choose from. The person therefore needs to know his/her own story well in order to make a wise decision. For this reason, virtue cannot be separated from intelligence (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 154).

From a virtue and narrative point of view, a good life, for MacIntyre, is firstly, to know his story and to perform his role well, and secondly, to know his *telos* in a situation that requires determination. The third is to live a life in such a way that one's whole life can be explained to another as a story. However, if the concept of good is different for each person, then such an evaluation is not possible. We should be able

to share ideas about what is good. To do so, there must be a common stage where the pursuit of virtue takes place. MacIntyre (2007, p. 155) says, "The application of that measure in a community whose shared aim is the realization of the human good presupposes of course a wide range of agreement in that community on goods and virtues, and it this agreement which makes possible the kind of bond between citizens which, on Aristotle's view, constitutes a polis." Without such consensus, MacIntyre cannot offer details of goodness. Therefore, the next thing we need to understand is the relationship between virtue and tradition.

### 4.2.3.3 Virtue and tradition

As we have seen, in MacIntyre's system, 'self' is not defined as an entity separate from his/her community, but by the role he/she plays in society. In other words, an individual is like an actor who plays a role on the stage. His/her virtues are confirmed by how excellently he/she narrates his/her story in the grand narrative on the stage of tradition. In his book *After virtue*, MacIntyre explains that the content of excellence, which were regarded as virtues at different times, are different, and he says that the virtue expected of the self is a new constitution according to the role that the social and historical situation demands. That is why MacIntyre believes that tradition is the starting point of morality that constitutes human identity (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 220).

> Without those moral particularities to begin from there would never be anywhere to begin; but it is in moving forward from such particularity that the search for the good, for the universal, consists (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 221).

Nonetheless, although it is often considered characteristic of conservatives to praise tradition, MacIntyre says he is not a conservative who praises the past (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 223). Living tradition is not complete yet, but it is a continuing story. That is why MacIntyre requires us to have an "adequate sense of the traditions." It is not the ability to conform to what an existing tradition demands, but the ability to write a new page of tradition while engaging in a critical relationship. It grasps the possibilities left

by the past, as well as grasps the essence of good meaning left by tradition, and plays a significant role in overcoming limitations. In this respect, the virtuous self can exist only in the community.

Therefore, community is a key element in MacIntyre's ethics. Every individual is not an isolated entity, but a member of a community. The community referred to here is a small community with individual practices such as family, school, and at the same time, a larger unit of local community. MacIntyre explains Aristotle's virtue by pointing out why he said slaves and barbarians could not be virtuous (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 158). The reason being is because at that time they were beings that could not have a political relationship in the community. Whether such discriminatory practices were right or not is not relevant to the discussion here. The key point here is that establishing relationships within the community is very important for achieving human *telos.*

So what kind of community does MacIntyre suggest? Do the existing states represent such a community? MacIntyre asserts that these states are irrelevant here.

> Although it is the task of government to promote law-abidingness, it is on the liberal view no part of the legitimate function of government to inculcate anyone moral outlook (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 195).

> The true lesson of the Jacobin Clubs and their downfall is that you cannot hope to reinvent morality on the scale of a whole nation when the very idiom of the morality which you seek to re-invent is alien in one way to the vast mass of ordinary people and in another to the intellectual elite (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 238).

In conclusion, what MacIntyre expects as an alternative to overcome the ethical deficits of liberal society is the building of the community. The community should be a society that is smaller than the state with a tradition that has taught it virtue. He sees that there has to be a specific sphere that can be trained as a virtue between generation and generation. He emphasizes this point at the end of his book, *After*

*virtue*.

> What matters at this stage is the construction of **local forms of community** within which civility and the intellectual and moral life can be sustained through the new dark ages which are already upon us. And if the tradition of the virtues was able to survive the horrors of the last dark ages, we are not entirely without grounds for hope. This time however the barbarians are not waiting beyond the frontiers; they have already been governing us for quite some time. And it is our lack of consciousness of this that constitutes part of our predicament. We are waiting not for a Godot, but for another - doubtless very different - St. Benedict [emphasis added] (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 263).

For ethics to be revived in a fragmented society, MacIntyre says figuratively that people like Benedict[12] should appear again.

## 4.2.4 The necessity of theological engagement in MacIntyre's ethics

In seeking to understand the tradition-bearing community in MacIntyre's work on virtue ethics, a number of issues come to the fore. First of all, all human beings live in a particular context and tradition, but most of them encounter a number of traditions. Sometimes these various traditions can demand different virtues. This is especially so in our globalized era, where we often witness different traditions competing simultaneously. In addition, younger generations and older generations are located in different traditions. That is why people do not only have to think about their best role in one tradition, but they also need to choose between diverse

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[12] The mention of Benedict at the end of his book is an analogy for presenting small communities such as medieval monasteries as alternatives. Early monasticism was a spontaneous, grassroots, disorderly movement. He was a figure in western monasticism; he presided over the twelve monastic communities at Subiaco in Italy, and later moved to Monte Cassino, in the southeastern part of Rome, to build a new monastery. Benedict wrote a short book *The Rule of St. Benedict*, This book has been used for hundreds of years and is an excellent guide to the ethics of the monastic community (Lynch, 1992, pp. 29–34).

traditions. If MacIntyre's ethics fails to set standards for judging differences between traditions and communities, he will eventually face criticism that he cannot solve relativism. MacIntyre has consistently criticized the relativistic nature of emotivism as the reason for the ethical inadequacy of modern society. He also tried to overcome individual relativism by proposing the community as an alternative, but he allowed relativism between communities. In response to the criticisms of *After virtue*, MacIntyre added the following postscript to the second edition:

> If two moral traditions are able to recognize each other as advancing rival contentions on issues of importance, then necessarily they must share some common features (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 276).

MacIntyre expects that when two traditions compete with one another, as they evolve they share a number of common features. Frequently in competition, it is expected that better traditions will evolve, while bad traditions will disappear. Nevertheless, MacIntyre's explanation of shared 'common features' remains unclear. If MacIntyre's ethical system cannot account for the highest tradition, which includes each tradition, then he has to admit that the tradition of virtue ethics may be defeated in the tradition of liberalism. If he cannot present a grand narrative or a grand tradition, then he cannot adequately answer why the liberalism he so frequently criticizes is not a good tradition.

For this reason, MacIntyre's ethics must meet with theology. Christian theology is a grand narrative that includes the story of creation right up to the end of time. In their book *Introducing Christian ethics* (2010), Samuel Wells and Ben Quash report that Christian ethics includes stories about God, stories about communities called churches, and stories about ethics. The story of God contains a great story that covers the beginning and end of the community of humanity, and church communities are small local communities that have a tradition of virtue. MacIntyre says that these communities can include different traditions in different contexts, but they clearly share common features, i.e. they share the same grand narrative at the

same time. Hence, according to Wells and Ben Quash, when MacIntyre's ethics encounters Christian theology, the weakness of ethics are largely complemented and are likely to be completed.

There is, of course, the danger of equating MacIntyre's virtue ethics with Christian virtues. Vosloo (1997) welcomes the attention of virtue ethics in current academic ethics, but warns against equating Christian virtues with the virtues of MacIntyre, which are derived from Greek philosophy.

> The danger exists that a general plea for an ethics of virtue may not necessarily be synonymous with a plea for Christian virtue/ virtues. … Side by side with the fact that there should be guarded against the confusing of Christian virtue with Greek virtue, the danger also exists of linking or separating Christian virtues in an uncritical manner with or from certain liberal virtues (e.g. tolerance, freedom of speech and religion, etc.) (Vosloo, 1997, pp. 306–307).

Therefore, in this study, the aim is not simply to merge MacIntyre's ethics with theology. Rather, the intention is to explore the possibility of collaboration MacIntyre's ethics and theology. The theologians mentioned in the following section have all applied MacIntyre's ethics directly or indirectly to their theological works. The results of their analysis will be discussed below.

# 4.3 Linking MacIntyre's ethics with theology

## 4.3.1 The possibility of Jesus' Narrative as a Grand Narrative: John Milbank

Milbank sought to create the virtuous teleological community that MacIntyre attempted in *After Virtue* (MacIntyre, 2007). He therefore shares the intention to dismantle modern nihilism characterized by subjectivism and relativism (Milbank, 2006, p. 327). Furthermore, Milbank shares the same problem of consciousness and

methodology as MacIntyre. If MacIntyre follows Aristotle to revive the notion of virtue lost in contemporary ethics, Milbank would see the "violence" that appears in all the secular realms of modernity, because the theology was unnecessarily humble and lost its proper position, which he tries to overcome by following Augustine. "Milbank's fundamental premise is that all scientific social theories are themselves theologies in disguise based on an ontology of 'violence'" (Vorster, 2012). In MacIntyre's view, the lack of ethics today began with the failure of the Enlightenment project, Similarly, Milbank believes that theology began to lose its absolute position from the time of Duns Scotus (Milbank, 2006, p. 15). Scotus created a moment of distinction between reason and revelation, which caused the theology dealing with the domains of transcendence to be gradually pushed to the edge. Both Milbank and MacIntyre believe modernity is detrimental to human nature, and historically track how things have changed. As a result, MacIntyre suggested the possibility of a common feature that encompasses all traditions, while Milbank emphasized theology as a grand narrative that spans the whole. He contends that theology is the only real or primary science, and that the others sciences are secondary. This position is called 'radical orthodoxy'. In fact, Milbank (2006) begins his book *Theology and social theory* with an opening provocative sentence that reads: "Once there was no secular". He strictly distinguishes between theology and secular social theories, and defines an autonomous secular sphere as 'fiction'. Because it is a heresy that pretends to be neutral without being neutral, Milbank (2006, p. XIV) says:

> Here I need to make some more general observations. The careful reader will realize that throughout the book the attitude towards 'secular reason' is never as negative as it appears to be on the surface. For it is viewed not as what it primarily proclaims itself to be, namely the secular, but rather as disguised heterodoxy of various stripes, as a revived paganism and as a religious nihilism. In each case my attitude cannot be simply oppositional, since I regard Catholic Christianity as fulfilling the best pagan impulses, heresy as exaggeration or thinning-down of the truth, and nihilism as a parody both of the Christian view that we are created from nothing and that therefore all that is finite is indeterminate, and equally of the likewise Christian view that ordered beauty is paradoxically in-finite. It follows that there remains truth in all these distortions and even that, just as Irenaeus learned much from Valentinus, the distortions develop better certain aspects of orthodoxy which orthodoxy must then later recoup.

Therefore, according to Milbank, theology should avoid sociology and history as a fundamental standard, and rather locate the fundamental causes that can work in human history in theology itself (Milbank, 2006, p. 40).

According to Milbank, God is the genuine giver; He created everything with his grace and continues to give us gifts (Milbank, 1995, p. 125). Since all finite beings come from God without exception, all creatures are receptive to gifts by existence itself. In that sense, the only story we have to accept is the Christian story, which is the story of the creation of humanity right up until the end of time. In particular, the special event of Jesus, the supernatural Son of God, incarnated into natural human history, is the fundamental event of interpreting all other events (Milbank, 2006, p. 389).

Furthermore, Milbank presents the church as the only genuine community in which God and creatures can exchange gifts. The church is an agapeic community and a community of virtue, rather than a community of rights (Vorster, 2012). All political theories must be evaluated and revised by the church, which is characterized by non-violence, charity, peace, reconciliation, and forgiveness, to overcome violence and provide freedom (Milbank, 2006, p. 422).

Milbank's view aroused much criticism. These will not be elaborated on in this study. However, attention will be given to his radical expression of giving absolute status to theology and treating all other disciplines as heresy, which is of course a contentious topic. Of significance here is the possibility of applying a concrete grand narrative to MacIntyre's ethics. Milbank argues that because transcendence and reality are separated, all modern problems arise from the fact that the story of God is treated as unnecessary. So theology, which shows that our being is a gift from transcendence, is a grand narrative that is most needed in contemporary society. Although, it should be further investigated whether it is right to ignore all other disciplines to elevate theology. Milbank's is a welcomed attempt in that it proposes a grand narrative essential to MacIntyre's ethics as a theological narrative that can include both the natural and the supernatural.

## 4.3.2 The community of peace against Liberalism: Stanley Hauerwas

In developing his theology, Hauerwas accepts a number of MacIntyre's philosophical achievements (Hauerwas et al., 2001, p. 26) Hauerwas strongly agrees with MacIntyre's perception of the problematic reality. Furthermore, he believes that only the Christian church, as a community, can solve the problems of contemporary society, a viewed shared by MacIntyre. Hauerwas is a prolific writer who has written a great many books, all of which cannot be dealt with in this study. However, since most of his writings consistently make the same claims, the researcher will classify his theological concerns into three categories and relate them to the ethics of MacIntyre. These are discussed below.

### *4.3.2.1 Criticism of liberal modernity: The enemy of the gospel*

MacIntyre ascribes the cause of much tragedy to the failure of the Enlightenment Project. Similarly, Hauerwas attributes the loss of the uniqueness of Christianity with the victory of liberal democracy. In contemporary society, when people confess that Jesus is their Saviour, they should express it as their personal opinion, or be treated as intolerant. Hauerwas locates the cause of this phenomenon in religious warfare in Europe in the 17th century (Hauerwas and Willimon, 2004, p. 17). At the time, religious tribalism destabilized nations, and the state began to define its role as the neutral manager of power to maintain social stability. Accordingly, the nations came up with a system of political organization and philosophy based on universal reason beyond their respective religious traditions. They therefore planned and implemented education to nurture their citizens devoted to democratic states, rather than prioritizing religion. Consequently, most of the genuine topics of interest in democratic countries, such as religion, are personalized. To maintain democracy, Christianity had to be alienated (Hauerwas, 2002, p. 85). Christians changed from resident aliens to citizens. Christians became indigenous people who adapted to the

world, and instead began compromising important beliefs.

> Don't let your imaginations be seized by "public policy issues." "Public policy issues" is always conservative politics within a liberal democratic regime. … But political liberals assume that the primary political task is to secure cooperative agreement between people who share nothing in common other than the fear of death ("Stanley Hauerwas an interview with Michael Quirk," n.d.)

In this excerpt, Hauerwas and MacIntyre share the same viewpoint. MacIntyre sees the individual's view of the world in a particular tradition, while Hauerwas claims that modernity is fiction, forcing us all to be objective and universal.

In the end, Hauerwas claims that today's liberal culture is fictitious, and that Christianity is the only truth. This claim has parallels with Orthodox Christianity, but would be considered radical today and not everyone would accept it. Therefore, we need to be particularly heedful when considering Hauerwas's ethics, especially when dealing with entertainment media in the public domain.

### 4.3.2.2 The anti-consumerism of the church

As mentioned earlier, Hauerwas proposes theological ethics as a means of addressing the ethical dearth of the current generation. He sees true Christianity as the solution to the ethical problems of our society. Unfortunately though, the earthly church that exists in the twenty-first century (especially in the United States) seems to have lost most of its power.

> The problem is compounded because our church lives in a buyer's market. The customer is king. What the customer wants, the customer should get. Pastors with half a notion of the gospel who get caught up in this web of buying and selling in a self-fulfillment economy one day wake up and hate themselves for it. We will lose some of our (potentially) best pastors to an early grave of cynicism and self-hate. What a pastor needs is a means of keeping at it, a perspective that enables the pastor to understand his or her ministry as nothing less than participation in the story of God (Hauerwas and

Willimon, 2004, pp. 85–86).

Today's neoliberals are accustomed to a market structure and tend to treat churches as commodities, impacting on Christian living. They have forgotten the grace of God that saved them when they were still sinners. But a church is not a store in a huge shopping mall. Rather, the community of the church is a place of life and death. Hauerwas acknowledges Luke's first usage of the word 'church' in the book of Acts chapter 5, and says:

> Great fear. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God. It is fearful to realize that the church is more than a matter of good-hearted fellowship, that nothing less than life or death is involved here (Hauerwas and Willimon, 2004, p. 82).

Acts 5 narrates the story of Ananias and Sapphira falling into temptation of material prosperity and being judged by God. Here, Luke first used the word 'church'. Reading between the lines, Hauerwas believes that the authentic nature of the community of the church includes resistance to consumerism. In his book *Resident Aliens,'* he issues the following warning:

> Of course the "ordinary Christian" probably does not care whether their minister does or does not know Plato or Augustine, but it is my contention that anyone serving in the ministry today who lacks the resources Augustine provides risks abandoning their congregation to the omnivorous desires of the market. Who, more than Augustine, can teach us what it means to be possessed by that which we think we desire by our own free will? (Hauerwas, 2007, p. 207).

Augustine draws the connection between materialism and consumerism, pointing out that materialism constantly stimulates people's desires for goods, but that their desires can never be satisfied. Their consumer appetites are continually being

whetted, making them hunger for goods, and never being satisfied. In the neoliberal era, the perpetual consumer remains unsatisfied.

For Hauerwas, the only community that can stand up to consumerism is the Church. Hauerwas and Samuel Wells co-edited the book, *The Blackwell companion to Christian ethics*, which links each order of the Church's liturgy with ethical issues. It is a book well suited to the theological concept used by Hauerwas, "The church is a social ethic" (Hauerwas et al., 2001, p. 111). In the composition of the book itself, Hauerwas suggests that worship in the church can be a solution to social problems, claiming to form a character against the problematic character of consumerism (Hauerwas and Wells, 2011, p. 539).

In the Gospel of John, Jesus declares, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty" (John 6:35 NIV).   During the Eucharist, when the congregants break the bread, those who are trapped in the unremitting cycle of relentless desire, finally get to rest. In this way, says Hauerwas, through worship in the church community we can learn to stand against consumerism. Of course, participation in worship does not mean that we can immediately abandon the habit of living as a consumer in a consumer society. Yet, many retain their consumerist tendencies while hiding in the church. And even worse, some churches provide a space that can be hidden by such anonymous Christians. Nevertheless, Hauerwas says that we must go through a painful process in order to fight against consumerism as a true Christian.

> By "people" we mean to indicate that the challenge facing the church is political, social, ecclesial—the formation of a visible body of people who know the cost of discipleship and are willing to pay (Hauerwas and Willimon, 2004, p. 95).

In this study, the researcher argues that entertainment media in the neoliberal society, including consumerism, further strengthens such a trend, and proposes MacIntyre's virtue ethics as an alternative. For Hauerwas, the church is the best place to provide an alternative ethical framework to counter neoliberalism.

However, Hauerwas's church-centred approach to ethics is criticized as sectarian. Therefore, although his theology directly addresses the criticisms of neoliberalism, careful consideration needs to be given to how his theory can be applied to criticizing the public media in the secular realm.

### 4.3.2.3 A church as a community that cultivates virtue

In his essay, 'Character, Narrative, and Growth in the Christian Life', Hauerwas emphasized the importance of the concept of 'virtue' in Christian ethics. Since MacIntyre's first edition of *After virtue* was published in 1981, it seems that Hauerwas and MacIntyre began to pursue virtue ethics at almost the same time.

First, Hauerwas points out that Protestant ethics did not have much interest in moral development. Basically, in Protestant theology, behaviour (or morality) is understood as a secondary outcome of faith, although there may be differences among sects. But Hauerwas points out that this understanding causes Protestants to be influenced by secular moral theory.

> The Protestant condemnation of moral theology did not help, as Protestants did little more than assert that good works "flow" from faith. Concern for moral development from the Protestant perspective was thus seen as a form of works righteousness. And in the absence of any way to talk about and form the behavior of Christians, Protestants were left vulnerable to whatever moralities happened to pertain in their cultures. Thus, being Christian often simply became a way to indicate what the society generally regarded as decent (Hauerwas et al., 2001, p. 227).

In a situation where morality is treated as secondary in Protestant theology, Hauerwas argues that the church should be a community of character. In his book *A community of character,* the title alone confirms his belief. However, as to how to shape character, Hauerwas gives more specific comments than MacIntyre. MacIntyre provides deep insight into the importance of recognizing virtue and how it works, but he seems to follow Aristotle as to how individuals gain virtue. At least in

this respect, he does not criticize Aristotle's position. Like Aristotle, MacIntyre sees virtue as a kind of excellence obtained through training, and seems to acquire its character by repeating virtuous choices. In the process, the concept of narrative and tradition were introduced to further organize the ethics of Aristotle, but it is an extension of Aristotle's ethics.

> The word *arete*, which later comes to be translated as 'virtue', is in the Homeric poems used for excellence of any kind; a fast runner displays the *arete* of his feet and a son excels his father in every kind of *arête* - as athlete, as soldier and in mind (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 122).

However, Hauerwas questions this Aristotelian formula, as follows:

> Note that this seems clearly to be circular. I cannot be virtuous except as I act as a virtuous man would act, but the only way I can become a virtuous man is by acting virtuously. Aristotle seems to have thought that there was something about the very exercise of practical reason itself that, if rightly used, made us virtuous. Yet, even if there is some truth to that, it cannot be sufficient. (Hauerwas et al., 2001, p. 238)

> The question is not whether such habits are necessary, but what kind would encourage the development of truthful character. Aristotle, and Aquinas, however, too easily assumed that "character" would result if we rightly embodied all the virtues (Hauerwas et al., 2001, p. 241).

Aristotle and Aquinas, and MacIntyre, who inherited their ethics, share the conclusion that persons must behave as virtuous humans in order to become virtuous humans. Hauerwas does not entirely criticize this view, but he states that this is not enough; it comes from a difference in understanding of human existence. The Aristotelian circulatory structure is not problematic if we regard human beings as functioning properly in the moral sense, existing in conscience or reason. However, if the existence of human beings does not have the moral sense working correctly, human beings need resources from the outside to become moral beings. MacIntyre

also acknowledges that human reason is not enough to achieve *telos*.

> …that power of reason was destroyed by the fall of man. 'Si Adam integer stetisset', on Calvin's view, reason might have played the pan that Aristotle assigned to it. But now reason is powerless to correct our passions (MacIntyre, 2007, pp. 53–54).

But MacIntyre, for example, in Benedict, is only hoping for an alternative community to overcome the contradictions of modernity in the narrative of human history. Of course, it is difficult to expect all concrete solutions from MacIntyre who has already made great achievements.

However, Hauerwas asserts that a church can only be a community of virtue with a Jesus narrative. Whether or not we agree with his opinion, he offers a more concrete alternative than MacIntyre. Hauerwas says the self is a gift and we need a story that helps us accept it as a gift (Hauerwas et al., 2001, p. 249). It may mean that the story that describes our being should not be reproduced within us, but from the outside. This is similar to Milbank's opinion.

> What we require is not no story, but a true story. Such a story is one that provides a pilgrimage with appropriate exercises and disciplines of self-examination. Christians believe Scripture offers such a story. There we find many accounts of a struggle of God with his creation. The story of God does not offer a resolution of life's difficulties, but it offers us something better than adventure and struggle, for we are possessors of the happy news that God has called people together to live faithfully to the reality that he is the Lord of this world. All men have been promised that through the struggle of this people to live faithful to that promise God will reclaim the world for his Kingdom. By learning their part in this story, Christians claim to have a narrative that can provide the basis for a self appropriate to the unresolved, and often tragic, conflicts of this existence (Hauerwas et al., 2001, p. 251).

According to Hauerwas, we can be provided with the true story that can direct our

lives according to the Bible; and the community that accepts the story is the church. Of course, existing local churches do not share the same opinion on all issues. But Hauerwas says that the church is not a concept that is confined to a particular denomination or a particular age, but rather a broad community that includes both the past and the future. In other words, he is talking about universal/catholic ecclesiology.

> The acceptance of the limits of the current church as normative by theologians is an act of irresponsibility. The church that is the subject of theological reflection can never be limited to the present moment, but rather it reaches not only back into history but also forward into the future, for both directions provide an indication of what we ought to be. "Social ethics" is not what the church does after it has got its theological convictions straight and its own house in order. But our theological convictions and corresponding community are a social ethic as they provide the necessary context for us to understand the world in which we live (Hauerwas, 1980, p. 75).

He does not mean that all local churches in reality are ideal communities, but the church is the only community with the potential to play a proper role as a community considering the Jesus narrative it has.

The virtue ethics of Hauerwas provides a much more concrete solution than the ethics of MacIntyre. As MacIntyre acknowledges, pursuing the same goods is only possible in small communities. Since contemporary society does not have a social system to implement virtue ethics, it may be empty to continue to advocate virtue ethics in such situations. On the other hand, the church is already pursuing the same good for a long time, and also has a twofold existence—existing as a local and universal community at the same time.

However, there is no easy answer, and the solution is not readily accepted by everyone. Hauerwas's view seems to be close to "Christ against culture" or "Christ and culture in paradox" among the five types proposed by Richard Niebuhr (1956)[13].

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[13] In his book, *"Christ and culture"*, Richard Niebuhr distinguishes relations between Christianity

The positions are meaningful, but they also contain the danger of making the church an isolated island in the contemporary world. The media we are dealing with has become a public domain today. The claim that only communities with Christian faith can solve ethical problems of contemporary society can be our confession, but we need more detailed discussion on how to present it as a solution to the ethical issues of the public sphere.

### 4.3.3 A theologian between the city and the church: Graham Ward

Graham Ward is a theologian and Anglican priest, and along with John Milbank, represents the theological position called 'Radical Orthodoxy'. He occupies two roles, he is a theologian at a university and a minister of the church. In his book, he portrays himself by the image of a theologian standing at the door. In an interview he explains himself (and the role of many other theologians) as follows:

> I pose that question through an image. I positioned the theologian at the door, the east door, of the church, which is usually the door that symbolically looks over the city. The east door will be opened at Easter, for instance, and the city comes in then through that door in the medieval church. In positioning the theologian in this way, I was quite confident that I was going against some of the ideas that we have of the theologian's position, such as Jean-Luc Marion's, which often hold that the theologian is the bishop par excellence and that his or her function centers around the Eucharist and the administration of the mass. That positioning is quite important to me because it means that in many ways theologians straddle two worlds: the ecclesial world and that which situates the ecclesial world, the secular world. This last world is secular in the sense that it is distinct from the spiritual realm, though not autonomous. That positioning of the theologian is really a reflection of where I am personally ("The Academy, the Polis, and the Resurgence of

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and culture in five different ways, namely: 'Christ against culture', 'Christ of culture', 'Christ above culture', 'Christ and culture in paradox' and 'Christ the transformer of culture'. Among them, Richard Niebuhr supports the position that Christians should transform culture in faith. This distinction has provided the dominant framework for thinking about culture for a long time. However, there is also a view that the validity of this division is questioned because it is impossible to regard religion and culture as two separate entities today (Horsfield et al., 2004, p. 25).

Religion," 2008).

As a theologian who stands between the door of the church and the door of the city, his idea of interpreting the city from a theological perspective leads to his theological work. His book *Cities of God* (Ward, 2000) reminds one of Augustine's book *The City of God*, but he uses the word 'city' in the plural. It is because cities after Augustine developed further into the public sphere in which people live. So Graham Ward actively looks at secular culture, while following the Radical Orthodox position in interpreting all areas of theology. His emphasis, however, differs from that of Hauerwas in that he believes it is the duty of theology to talk to the public in the secular realm through the language of theology.

> Theologians announce 'Look, the culture you are living in is a culture that is absolutely full of religious mythology, religious symbolism!' and then have to educate people about the meaning of the symbolism; they have to narrate to them the myths and stories associated with this symbolism ("The Academy, the Polis, and the Resurgence of Religion," 2008).

What matters to Ward, who argues that the secular realm must be analysed theologically, is city and culture. He says that our desire continues to be stimulated in the city, the public realm in which we live today (Ward, 2000, p. 52). And he quotes the famous media theorist Jean Baudrillard, saying that today's city is a place operated by 'the order of simulacra' (Ward, 2000, p. 60). A 'simulacrum' refers to a made object/artefact, where a non-existent object is made as if it were real. Baudrillard, in his book *Simulacra and simulation* (Baudrillard, 1994), argues that the simulated image replaces reality, and eventually the reality disappears and a more realistic hyper reality is produced. He sees that modern society is a consumer society and that modern people consume symbols through commodities. Ward accepts this theory and sees the world in which we live as surrounded by symbols conveyed through media.

In his account of our contemporary believing, Certeau emphasises an aesthetics of absence. We are brought to believe in that which in itself is a representation of an object, not the object of belief itself. We defer the truth about the object to other experts, whom we have never met nor can substantiate. These hidden experts in whom we put our trust enable us to accept as credible that which we are told is true. The space we as believers inhabit then is a space of 'consumable fictions'. Caught up in the endless traffic and exchange of signs – from billboards, through television, in newspapers, on film – we construct from this seductive public rhetoric versions of 'reality' to which we give allegiance or in which we place our faith (Ward, 2000, p. 74).

Ward says the image of the city is similar to Disneyland, because the city itself produces a fictional image and is a place that stimulates desire. Above all, he pointed out the fact that universities in charge of education also sell images to commercialize education. He therefore argues that theology must resist modernity and virtuality. At this time, Ward says that Christian theology is called to read the signs of the times. In other words, the theologian must reflect on the phenomena that are occurring in modern cities from a theological perspective. That is why the theologian must be interdisciplinary. Not because there is hope in other disciplines, but to understand other disciplines from a theological framework. Ward explains this as follows:

"So I think that universities are in many ways up there with Starbucks and other corporations; they both want to create an image. What this generates and multiplies is virtual realities. Now, how can this be resisted? Well, it can only be resisted educationally, by coming back to core educational values, which is increasingly difficult: the idea that we are to be educating human beings to think clearly, to be aware of what they're doing, to be educated culturally, appreciating diversity, et cetera. The problem is that there is a real commodification of education at the moment. The student comes in, wanting to get this degree, this qualification for a job, and they measure their performance according to this goal through progress reviews and the like. So the instrumentalization and commodification of education is dominant, and it is more apparent than it has been before. But theology resists that" ("The Academy, the Polis, and the Resurgence of Religion," 2008).

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The above insights are significant for this study, especially the point that secular media causes ethical deficiencies. Thus, Ward's position can be seen as belonging to "Christ the transformer of culture" among the five types presented by Richard Niebuhr. Ward constantly contemplates the interpretation of the secular realm, including the media, while maintaining Christian theology at the centre. In this way, he functions as a role model worth emulating.

Ward believes that the city's culture (including mass media) causes nihilism, violence and Gnosticism, but that Christian imagination can create a hopeful image of God's kingdom. In fact, virtue ethics cannot easily provide guidelines for action for specific issues, as compared to deontological ethics. In other words, virtue ethics may be criticized for avoiding specific responsibilities because it is ethics that focuses on 'being' rather than 'acting' (Vosloo, 1997, p. 307). The significance of Ward's theology compared to MacIntyre and Hauerwas's ethics lies in his balanced approach where theology remains the primary content to interpret all other domains, while retaining the prophetic voice of the public domain. As for the necessity to theological critique the ethical tendencies of the Korean media, the image of the theologian standing between two doors—the door to the city and the door to the church—as presented by Ward, provides us with an important task.

## 4.4 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the explicit need for critical theological reflection of Korean television entertainment. As described earlier, the latter appears to be biased toward neoliberal values, which is related to the historical context of Korea. The researcher therefore analysed the current situation from the following three main perspectives: the socio-historical perspective, the media theoretical perspective, and the ethical-theological perspective. The previous chapter sought to understand the current state of Korean television entertainment through the socio-historical perspective and the media theoretical perspective. In the current chapter, the researcher attempted to analyse this phenomenon from an ethical-theological perspective. In particular, MacIntyre's ethics provided a suitable theory for this study, because his ethics

analyses and critiques the ethical crisis of neoliberalism. He identifies emotivism as the biggest problem of neoliberal values today, and points out 'the failure of the Enlightenment Project' as the main reason for this. In other words, the failure to eliminate the *telos,* faded the purpose and necessity of ethics itself, and as a result, it seems that most people have replaced ethics with feelings and preferences. MacIntyre asserts that the concept of virtue must be reintroduced into ethics as a solution to this problem, and virtue is acquired in tradition and community. That is why MacIntyre expects local communities to be bearers of virtues.

Furthermore, this study attempted to engage MacIntyre's ethics and Christian theology. The reasons for this is because the concept of a community, as presented by MacIntyre, is not specific, and that a grand narrative is needed that can include and guide each individual's story. This includes the possibility that MacIntyre's ethics might fall into relativism once again, or that it will be transformed into a deontological norm in its own right, and irrelevant to specific issues in reality.

Thus, the researcher briefly examined the theology of the above-mentioned three theologians and attempted to integrate them with the ethics of Macintyre. The theology of Milbank suggested that the story of the Bible be used as a grand narrative, and through the theology of Hauerwas, each local church belonging to the universal church could serve as a community of virtue. Finally, through the theology of Ward we see that Christian theology has a prophetic voice in public spheres (including the secular media), thereby fulfilling its sense of responsibility. The attitude of Christian theology to the secular realm can be viewed in a number of ways, including: There may be an attempt to divide the secular realm from the Christian life, or there may be an attitude that regards the distinction between the two realms as meaningless. In this study, the researcher examined the ethics of MacIntyre by engaging the viewpoints of various theologians in this work, with the aim of providing a proper critical evaluation of Korean television entertainment.

Korean television entertainment, which has a great influence on the formation of the values of the masses, should be absorbed in the broader story of the community. The story is not fixed, but at present we are reorganizing creative stories that are in tension and evolving in complexity. MacIntyre's ethics, complemented by Christian theology, has the potential to provide a rich story in Korean society.

CHAPTER 5:

# THE CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

## 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will conclude this study by revisiting the cause analysis of the ethical trends of Korean entertainment television. This will be done by reflecting on the ethical-theological contributions of Alasdair MacIntyre's ethics on the current identified problem under investigation. Furthermore, in recapitulating the research program, the researcher will assess whether each chapter has adequately answered the research questions, and determine whether the objectives of the study have been achieved. This will be followed by a discussion of the limitations of this study, suggestions for further research, and a final conclusion.

## 5.2 Revisiting the statement of the problem

Chapter 1.1.2 provided a succinct statement of the research problem to be addressed in this study. It was indicated that Korean television entertainment shows propagate neoliberal ideals in Korean society and contribute to the weakening of ethics as a result of emotivism. This pointed to the need for further study on the relationship between Korean media and Christian ethics.

## 5.3 Revisiting the research questions

Having identified the problem to be investigated, and noting the importance of the research topic, the following questions emanated from the statement of the problem:

## 5.3.1 Revisiting the primary question

The primary research question of this study is: "What theological insights will emerge from a critical evaluation of Korean television entertainment from the perspective of Alasdair MacIntyre's ethical theories?"

The primary focus of this study was Korean television entertainment. The main motivation for carrying out this study was to highlight contemporary ethical trends in the mass media and indicate why these need to be critiqued. Over the years, many theologians have attempted to analyse Hollywood movies, but as this study has shown, television entertainment in Korea in the 21st century is very different to what is produced in Hollywood. In that it is consumed more frequently, lightly, and repeatedly. Survival audition programs were most popular with viewers in the 2010s. These were promoted as reality television shows, and viewers were under the impression that everything on the screen reflected reality, without there being any directing. The film is made up of scenarios of scenes, but reality shows are perceived as showing reality—real life events. Therefore, the ethical implication of the reality show can have a more direct impact on the viewer's moral formation. For this reason, the ethics of Korean television was critically evaluated in this study.

The researcher proposed MacIntyre's ethics as a theoretical basis for the critique of Korean television. The reason for this and its consequences are specifically addressed by examining the secondary questions and their answers.

## 5.3.2 Revisiting the secondary questions

### 5.3.2.1 Revisiting the first sub-question

The first sub-question was: "What ethical trends are evidenced in contemporary Korean entertainment television that challenge ethical principles and values in Korean society?" This question was addressed in Chapter 2. The most popular television entertainment in contemporary Korea is Reality Audition Television, which takes the form of a reality show. This type of commercially structured show has strong audience appeal, and the viewers in turn land up incorporating neoliberal

ideology or assumptions. For example, the performing arts of the participants are evaluated quantitatively, and the unselected participants are mocked and ridiculed and, because they are considered to be at fault, are blamed unfairly. On the other hand, if the participant meets the required standards, he/she becomes a hero and gets external goods such as money. Externals rewards are regarded as a measure of being successful, but the process is structured as such that it eliminates significant others around, such as friends. By looking at this, the researcher argued that Korean television entertainment weakens community values and strengthens individualistic values, producing a lack of ethics.

### 5.3.2.2 Revisiting the second sub-question

The second sub-question of this study was: "What is the nature of the ethics that is espoused in Korean television entertainment?" This was the focus of Chapter 3. To answer this question, the researcher inquired into why Korean television entertainment has this neoliberal tendency, as explained above. This assessment was twofold, namely: a socio-historical approach and a media theoretical approach. It was found that neoliberalism in Korea came from neoliberalism, which originated in the West. Neoliberalism was originally an economic theory in contrast to Keynesianism. The Chicago school argues that the inefficiency of Keynesianism caused the economic downturn, which was reflected in the policies of the Thatcher government in the United Kingdom and the Reagan government in the United States. It became the standard of international economic policy through an agreement called the Washington Consensus. After experiencing a major war in the 1950s, Korea implemented a state-led economic development plan in the 1960s. During this period, Korea achieved rapid economic growth, but it forced the self-development of the people, producing a neoliberal homo economicus, as mentioned by Foucault. In 1997, Korea experienced the foreign exchange crisis. As a result, the individual became an instrument in the competitiveness of the state or enterprise. Consequently, Korean society has become a society where competition has been maximized internally. It is not only the economy that has been affected; education and religion have also been impacted by neoliberalism.

In this study, the researcher examined the theories of representative media philosophers. According to Walter Benjamin, due to technological advancement, the aura of the original artwork has disappeared, and the general public can now easily access the artwork too. He therefore predicted that the new media would make the public a new political subject. On the contrary, Günther Anders predicted that things that are not genuine would act as if they are real, and so this world will be a huge matrix where the phantom becomes real. Through it, he predicted that television would make the public passive rather than active beings. The media has the power to determine the message itself, not just the tools that deliver the content. Upon further examination, the researcher found that the neoliberal ideology in Korea today is being infused into the masses through the media. This highlighted the necessity for critical theological reflection of contemporary television media in Korea.

### 5.3.2.3 Revisiting the third sub-question

This gave rise to the third sub-question: "How should television entertainment shows be critiqued in the contemporary Korean context? In addition, which ethical theory, or theories, are best suited to critique entertainment television in the contemporary Korean context?" Alasdair MacIntyre, a philosopher, spent much of his time analysing the impact of neoliberal values on Western society, and studied the implications thereof. He ascribes the cause of the modern moral crisis to emotivism, which is the idea that all ethical expressions are merely expressions of preference. In other words, all the discussions about right and wrong are merely an attempt to persuade the other person to have the same preference as oneself. In MacIntyre's view, the cause of this phenomenon is "the failure of the Enlightenment Project." Enlightenment thinkers replaced the tradition of Aristotle's virtue ethics with rationalism. In the process, the concept of '*telos*', the purpose of human existence, has disappeared. In other words, the purpose of ethics has disappeared. MacIntyre proposes that Aristotle turned to teleological ethics to solve this phenomenon, and expected a revival of the virtue tradition. After the age of the Enlightenment, deontology flourished and the question "What should I/we do?" became the main concern of ethics. Instead, MacIntyre suggests that we should rather think about the questions: "Who am I/are we? Or who should I/we be?"

For MacIntyre, the core idea is virtue, which must be understood in relation to practices, narrative, and tradition. Practices are human activities that contain internal good. In addition, these practices presuppose interaction with others, which means the subordination of their attitudes, choices, preferences and tastes to the standards that the practice has and that others recognize. In this sense, the concept of virtue is similar to excellence.

Another important concept is narrative. One person practices various things throughout his/her life. But MacIntyre points out that each act (practice) is separate. Contemporary people are accustomed to separate roles in childhood and old age, public life and private life, but MacIntyre says that human behaviour must be grasped as a whole. We must understand the context and meaning of the action in the narrative of life rather than human action itself, and the narrative of one person becomes part of a larger narrative. Therefore, for MacIntyre, it is a good life to understand what narrative one's life belongs to and to act accordingly. The life of such a person can be a consistent narrative.

So, for MacIntyre, the self cannot exist alone, but is created in relation to others. All human identities do not originate from a vacuum, but rather from a specific background, which is called a tradition. This tradition is not a fixed role that conservatives praise, but a story that is continually being rewritten. That is why a person with a virtuous self is a person who respects the tradition to which he/she belongs, and continues to critically write a new story with an adequate sense of the tradition. In other words, regarding the ethical crisis that has arisen from the emphasis on individuality in liberal societies, Macintyre considers the recovery of the community as the key to restoring ethics.

However, to propose MacIntyre's ethics as a tool for criticizing Korean television entertainment, there are some things that need to be supplemented, and in this regard, Christian theology is most helpful. First, in MacIntyre's ethics, it is essential to have a grand narrative where individual stories can be rooted. John Milbank, a Christian theologian, firmly acknowledges the ethics of MacIntyre and argues that Christian theology can be used as a grand narrative. In his view, transcendence and reality are divided, and reason and revelation are separated. Hence, the theological story from the beginning of creation to the end of time has

been pushed to the edge. Therefore, Milbank's theological understanding of a grand narrative provides significant insight into the ethics of MacIntyre.

Secondly, MacIntyre presents the emergence of a community bearing virtue as a solution to overcome today's lack of ethics. The Christian ethicist, Stanley Hauerwas, strongly advocates that the Church is a community of peace against liberalism. Hauerwas argues that contemporary neoliberal societies do not satisfy people's desires, but only stimulates them. So basically, the community that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord is the only community that provides freedom from neoliberalism. Furthermore, the Christian church cultivates virtues, which, unlike Aristotle's view, must be provided from outside human beings. Those who have lost virtue cannot reproduce or impart virtues. For this reason, the church community, which is a bearer of the revelation of Jesus' narrative, can serve as a community bearing the virtues MacIntyre expects. The church is not a community limited to a particular age or region, but a broad community that includes both the past and the future.

When we develop MacIntyre's ethics through the theology of Milbank and Hauerwas, we must ask one question: "Is it worthwhile to critique the public media in the secular sphere by means of Christian ethics?" This question is answered by Graham Ward, a Radical Orthodox theologian, as well as Milbank. In his understanding, the theologian is located between the city and the church. The city is the public sphere where people live. He, like Hauerwas, thinks that today's public domain, the city, continues to stimulate our desires, and theology can and should counter this modernity. In other words, theologians must reflect on contemporary phenomena through a theological lens. Through Ward's work, it becomes evident why Korean television entertainment should be critiqued via Christian ethics.

## 5.4 Revisiting the contributions of this study

Chapter 1.1.4 looked at the likely outcomes and possible contributions that this study seeks to make. The main focus of this study was on the specific genre of television, especially television entertainment in Korea, rather than a film, which has already

been studied quite extensively. Chapter 2.2 shows why the reality show, a popular genre in Korea these days, has a strong influence on viewers.

Moreover, Chapter 3 explores in more detail why these features of Korean television entertainment have emerged. In particular, this study is beneficial because it shows the influence of modern and contemporary Korean history on the ethical tendencies propagated by the media and popular culture. In addition to analyzing MacIntyre's ethics as a theoretical basis for media criticism, this study attempted to improve the effectiveness of this study by combining his ethics with the theories of three theologians.

Indeed, as hoped for in chapter 1.1.4, this study has made a significant contribution to the study of theological ethics in the Korean context, a topic that has not received much attention to date.

## 5.5 The limitations of this study

There were three main limitations encountered in this study.

Firstly, this study only considers the ethics of the Western philosopher MacIntyre and Christian theology. Unlike some Western countries, Christianity in Korea is just over 100 years old, while Buddhism and Confucianism have been around for more than 1,000 years. In order for Christian theology and MacIntyre's ethics to be persuasive in the context of Oriental philosophy and Oriental religion, translation should be done accordingly. In other words, further study and detailed explanations are necessary for Christian philosophy to be accepted as persuasive in Asian countries such as Korea, compared to the West.

Secondly, this study only identified the need for and discussed the possibility of criticizing Korean television entertainment via Christian ethics, but did not actually present a model to do so. Actual criticism requires a deeper understanding of sociology, media studies, and ethics, and entails interdisciplinary research. Of course, many studies have critically evaluated Hollywood movies and the movie industry, but television and movies are different types of media with different

characteristics, and therefore require another approach.

Lastly, this study is based on MacIntyre's ethics. It has been more that 30 years since MacIntyre's book *After virtue* was written, and most of his works are based on this book. This study did not include the works of other scholars who have studied virtue ethics. For instance, the Confucian tradition in Korea is basically areteological.

## 5.6 Recommendations for further study

Based on the three limitations mentioned above, the following suggestions for further study are made:

First, the researcher encourages further studies on how to incorporate the Christian philosophical framework in the Korean public arena – a context where the Christian tradition has not yet been established or accepted as part of the local worldview.

Second, the researcher proposes the development of a suitable model to critically evaluate Korean television entertainment, or television entertainment in a similar context.

Lastly, the researcher recommends further study and engagement with the viewpoints of other scholars, such as Michael Sandel, and the inclusion of traditional virtue ethics in Korea, to produce a richer outcome.

## 5.7 Conclusion

This study has shown that television entertainment spreads neoliberal values, which results in individuals becoming atomized, who in turn perceive each other as competitors. In the process, ethical values lose their persuasiveness to atomized individuals, and everything else is instrumentalized before individual desires. The media has the power to create a new story and introduce it into the public domain, in

addition to delivering already created information. The power stimulates individuals' desires and projects a specific image of success. Each individual's life is judged as a single measure of success, and competitiveness becomes the goal of life.

Of course, we cannot ascribe the cause of global neoliberalism to the media alone. But when we begin to critique media practices in terms of Christian ethics, we will be able to understand the values we are being brainwashed to accept. Furthermore, we will be able to break free from the neoliberal values we so often take for granted, and rethink the importance of community and the value of others. In conclusion, the researcher argues that the ethics of MacIntyre in conjunction with theology should be foundational for criticising the destructive messages portrayed in Korean television entertainment, which is producing a divided and competitive society made up of atomized individuals. In doing so, we can create better communities where people have their own individual stories, which are heard in the community, and by loved ones.

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