

II • Indigenous Modernity and Liminality 2 Liminality and Revitalization

Liminality and Revitalization

Research Background and Aim

- The point of contact between liminality (border-ness) theory and Eastern and Western thought
- The meaning of Donghak and Daesoon Thought within the discourse of modernity
- The background of the interdisciplinary application of liminality theory and the aims of this study

An Overview of Liminality Theory

- The definition of Liminality: a liminal state
 - ◆ Derived from the Latin “Limen” (threshold)
 - ◆ A middle ground between the existing structure and a new structure
- Traits: ambiguity, indeterminacy, and manifold possibility
 - ◆ Likened to death, the womb, darkness, androgyny, and the like
- Emergence: the appearance of unexpected new forms
 - ◆ “Powol” (包越): including yet surpassing the state before change
- Its value as a mechanism of social and cultural change

Van Gennep's Rite-of-Passage Theory

- Arnold van Gennep (1873-1957): founder of rite-of-passage theory

1 Rite of separation (Separation): the stage of separation from a previous state/status

2 Transition/Liminal (Transition/Liminal): a liminal state, a transitional stage

3 Rite of integration (Integration): the stage of reintegration into a new identity or status

- Limen: meaning threshold, a boundary space where new possibilities open
- Rites of passage are a universal human phenomenon, found in every society

4 Liminality and Revitalization: the Indigenous Modernity of Donghak and Daesoon Thought

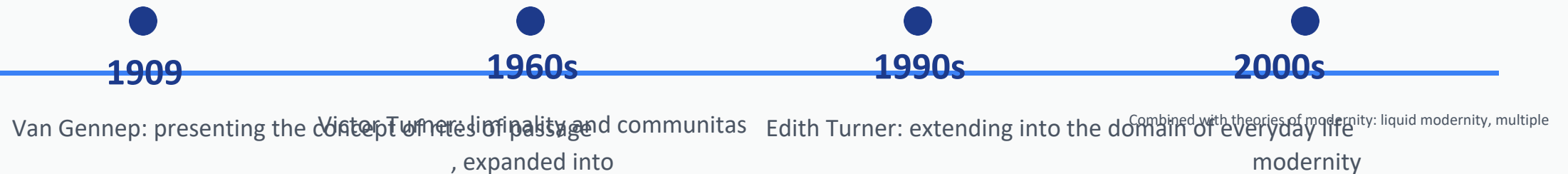
Victor Turner's Liminality and Communitas

- The expansion of the concept of liminality: the creative process of social change and crisis-overcoming
 - ◆ Expanded from rites of passage into a tool for analyzing change across society as a whole
- Communitas: a communal quality beyond structured social relations
 - ◆ Characterized by anonymity, equality, and the paradoxical power of the weak
- Anti-structure: the temporary dissolution and reconstruction of the existing order
 - ◆ The overturning of social roles and status, and the creation of new possibilities
- Social Drama: the dialectical process of breach–crisis–redress/healing–reintegration/schism

5 Liminality and Revitalization: the Indigenous Modernity of Donghak and Daesoon Thought

The Development of Liminality Theory

- The scholarly evolution running from Van Gennep → Victor Turner → Edith Turner
- The theory expanded from religious ritual to social change, performance studies, and disaster response; Bau-
- man's “liquid modernity” and its connection with Eisenstadt's “multiple modernities” theory



Modernity and Liminality

- Both Bauman's "liquid modernity" and Eisenstadt's "multiple modernities" theory are related to the concept of liminality
 - ◆ It draws attention as a tool for analyzing problems of modern society that Hegel's dialectic could not address

Liquidity: it connotes the ambivalence (ambiguity) of modernity and links to the positive meaning of liminality

- The significance of liminality in the discourse of modernity
 - ◆ Indeterminacy and emergent change through the rearrangement of sacred and secular; a perpetual
 - ◆ liminality reflecting the traits of a modern society placed in such a state
- Providing an alternative interpretation of the crisis of modernity
 - ◆ Interpreting the confusion of post-modernity as "throwing out the baby with the bathwater"

Donghak Thought and Liminality

- Donghak Thought's correlative thought and the overcoming of crisis
 - ♦ The yin-yang worldview and the border-ness of liminality
- Crisis in the age of imperialism and a rite-of-passage transformation
 - ♦ The gestation of an indigenous modernity in response to external shocks

“Donghak Thought arose as a rite of passage for overcoming crisis, amid the crisis of ethnic cleansing under imperialism's domination of Asia.”

- The philosophy of life and of mutual life-giving (Sangsaeng), and the emergence of liminality

Daesoon Thought and Revitalization

- How Daesoon Thought inherits and develops the realization of Donghak's ideal world
 - Linking Donghak's innovativeness with Daesoon Thought's religious practice
- Communitas and its cultivational character
 - Communal cultivation and the practice of change in daily life
- The reconstruction and revitalization of tradition
 - A creative approach that reinterprets tradition in situations of crisis
- The point of contact with revitalization theory
 - The use of tradition and future-oriented change to overcome crisis

The Features of Indigenous Modernity

- An East Asian and Korean modernity distinct from Western modernity

Western modernity | Indigenous modernity

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Dialectical opposition and overcoming | • Correlative thought and integration |
| • A dichotomous structure and rupture with tradition | • The revitalization and continuity of tradition |

- The integration of liminality, revitalization, and correlative thought
 - The combination of internal change (liminality) and external adaptation (revitalization) in overcoming crisis
 - The creation of new value through the shifting of the boundary of Sacred (聖) and Secular (俗)
- The recapitulation of ontogeny and phylogeny, and the mutability of the body
 - The experience and memory of the “body” accumulated in the process of change
 - The doubling method (加一倍法) and the principle of “transformation (化)”: adding one step upon the existing base

Theoretical Implications and Significance

- Elucidating the two thoughts through liminality and revitalization theory
 - ◆ Donghak and Daesoon Thought: change in crisis and the reconstruction of tradition
- A balanced view of universality and particularity
 - ◆ The creative integration of Western modernity theory and East Asian thought
- Connection with contemporary Korean society
 - ◆ Practical implications for social change, communality, and overcoming social crisis

Conclusion and Future Tasks

- Summary: the integrated interpretation offered by liminality and revitalization theory
 - Donghak and Daesoon Thought are models of indigenous modernity through the liminality process of crisis and transition
- The limits of this study and future research tasks
 - A need for analysis of liminality on the practical side and cases of contemporary application
- The possibility of social and academic expansion
 - Providing a theoretical framework for realizing communal communitas amid the crises of modern society