1. Introduction

On the hot summer day of 31 August 2019, the Methodist pastor Lee Dong-hwan (*Yi Tonghwan*)[1] entered the stage of the *Inch'ŏn Queer Culture Festival* to hold a blessing prayer for the LGBT[2] people participating in the event. It was the second time the festival took place in the large port city west of South Korea's capital Seoul. The year before, around 1000 Christian anti-LGBT protesters had attempted to block the festival, driving the 300 participants into a corner for hours in the hot sun, also denying them access to water and sanitary facilities. The police forces present had been reticent to avert violent assaults emanating from some of the anti-LGBT protesters. Back then, the organizers of the queer festival had already been facing problems previous to these violent outbreaks since the authorities of the district in charge had not been willing to grant permission to use the proposed location for a queer event. The district demanded that the organizers provide 300 safety guards and 100 parking spaces – conditions that had never been set for any other event before (Yi, Yu-jin 2018, September 11). Pastor Lee Dong-hwan wanted to show solidarity and set an example against such hostilities, accompanying his blessing prayer with the following words: "The world will change when you and I join hands at the moment. I oppose the stigma, hatred, discrimination and exclusion against sexual minorities and other minorities in society" (quoted in Park, Ji-won 2021, April 29). The 2019 edition of the Inch'ŏn Queer Culture Festival took place without clashes, also because, this

1 In this study, the McCune-Reischauer Romanization system is used to render names and texts written in Korean into the Latin alphabet. In cases where other spellings are in common use, these are used as well, followed by an italicized McCune-Reischauer Romanization in brackets the first time the name appears in the text.

2 There are many ways to refer to sexual minorities, including diverse sets of acronyms. In this study, I mainly employ the acronym LGBT, which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. This does not mean that I exclude other sexual minorities like intersex or asexual people. However, the empirical data used for this study suggests that the Korean anti-LGBT movement mainly focuses on the fight against homosexual and transgender people and related political initiatives. This is also why I refrain from using the designation 'queer', which is an umbrella term carrying the risk of blurring perspectives on the specific forms of activities directed against different subcommunities within sexual minorities.

time, the police deployed 2300 officers and installed safety fences to guard the pro-LGBT crowd from the anti-LGBT protesters (Son, Hyŏn-gyu 2019, August 31).

For Pastor Lee, however, the festival was not without consequences. His denomination, the *Korean Methodist Church*, initiated a trial against him and found him guilty of violating a church regulation that had been introduced in 2015, according to which church members are not allowed to approve of, or sympathize with homosexuality.[3] On 15 October 2021, a church tribunal decided to suspend Lee Dong-hwan for two years from his position as a pastor. The trial received much public and media attention, also because it took place amid ongoing political and societal debates over a comprehensive anti-discrimination law, which, if passed, would provide protection also to LGBT people, but which had been met with fierce and continuous opposition from conservative Protestant groups since it was first proposed in 2007. Pastor Lee appealed against the indictment by his denomination and additionally filed a lawsuit against the Korean Methodist Church in February 2023, receiving support in this endeavor from several progressive churches, civil society, and political groups (Park, Ji-won 2021, April 29; Ch'oe, Sŭng-hyŏn 2023, February 2).

This episode showcases the complex interplay among the Korean[4] anti-LGBT movement, the pro-LGBT camps within and outside different churches, and politics in general. Different kinds of what I want to call *opposing desires* come to the fore here. The most obvious form of opposing desires exists between actors with contrasting views as to how to treat LGBT people in politics, society, and, particularly, in Christian churches. Protestant anti-LGBT forces oppose the claims, demands, and visibility of pro-LGBT groups through protesting against queer culture festivals – the Korean version of gay pride events –, which have taken place in Seoul in small scale from the early 2000s onwards, and which, by and by, grew and also spread to other Korean cities. Anti-LGBT groups have also targeted concrete pro-LGBT legislation and political actors supporting such bills. Additionally, Protestant churches have turned to attacking LGBT-friendly individuals and groups *within* their denominations in recent years, as in the case of Pastor Lee Dong-hwan.

There is, however, also another type of 'opposing desires': what anti-LGBT forces have been attempting to do in Korea (and elsewhere, for that matter) amounts to opposing the very *desires* of LGBT people. In the narrow sense, these anti-emancipatory actors fight against non-heteronormative sexual orientations, which are often referred to as 'desires' in social sciences, and especially in gender and queer studies. In the broad sense, the desires problematized and negatively politicized by anti-LGBT forces also include LGBT people's yearning for equality, emancipation, and non-discrimination, a longing to freely express their sexual identities in families, at their jobs, in churches, and in society at large.

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3 Article 3, paragraph 8 of the Korean Methodist Church's 2019 version of the trial law of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* (*kyori-wa chŏngjang chaep'anbŏp*) states that church members are liable to disciplinary measures "when approving of, or sympathize with the violation of the Drug Act, gambling, and homosexuality" (Korean Methodist Church 2019).

4 When using the word 'Korea' or derivatives thereof, I generally refer to *South* Korea unless stated differently.

This study sets out to investigate in depth the opposition against these last-named desires, taking Korea as a single-case study to better understand the workings of a social movement that fights against the rights of sexual minorities, a social phenomenon that I and others have referred to as *anti-LGBT movement* (cf. e.g., Lee, Wondong 2021; Johannemann 2020; Fetner & Heath 2018; Kim, Nami 2016).[5] Korea is a worthwhile case to examine for several reasons. *First*, the Korean anti-LGBT movement has proven assiduous and durable since its first emergence in the mid-2000s, showing significant success in either preventing or abolishing numerous pro-LGBT bills on the national, regional, and local levels (Kim, Ol Teun 2021, 9–14). Especially in comparison to many western countries, where pro-LGBT legislation has, despite attempts at backlash, increasingly and predominantly prevailed in the past three decades (Kollman & Waites 2009), the successful campaigns of the Korean anti-LGBT movement require further scrutiny.

This 'success' is, *secondly*, noteworthy when considering that Korea had historically been relatively tolerant of same-sex sexuality. Historical records from the Silla (B.C. 57–A.D. 935) and Chosŏn (1392–1910) dynasties show evidence of same-sex desires and activities (Kim & Hahn 2006), and as late as in the 1940s, in rural regions, same-sex relationships among men were not uncommon, provoking neither moralization nor overt stigmatization (Pak, Kwan-su 2006).[6] However, several authors have pointed out that living one's sexual orientation freely has proven greatly precarious during post-war times in Korea, mainly owing to strong and strict heteronormative expectations within families, at the workplace, and in society at large (Johannemann 2021; Henry 2020; Cho, John [Song Pae] 2020; 2009; Bong 2009; Seo 2001). The Korean LGBT movement only emerged after democratization in the mid-1990s, but public opinion on homosexuality has still remained largely hostile since. It has to be noted, though, that a survey found that across 34 countries surveyed, Korea has shown one of highest rises in benevolent opinions on homosexuality over the past twenty years, with 44 percent of Koreans believing that it should be accepted by society in 2019 (Poushter & Kent 2019). Against this background, the role of the anti-LGBT movement in the formation of societal posi-

5 Other studies use the terms "anti-gay" (e.g., Grace 2016; Stone 2016; Dugan 2004; Herman 1997) or "heteroactivism" (Browne & Nash 2017) to describe collective action directed against sexual minorities. While the authors of these studies, in most cases, did not define these terms in an exclusive way – e.g., only speaking about male homosexual men – this study opts for the more clearly inclusive term 'anti-LGBT', highlighting the opposition against a broader spectrum of sexual minorities. Recent studies have also turned towards using the equally inclusive term "anti-queer" (cf. e.g., Siwoo 2018). The Korean actors fighting against sexual minority rights, however, mostly stick to terms like 'homosexuality', which is why I decided to consciously name the identity categories included in the acronym 'LGBT'. What is more, 'anti-queer' could be confused with an opposition against the premises of *Queer Theory*, which does indeed sometimes form part of activism, e.g., when vilifying the academic works of US-American philosopher Judith Butler. This, however, forms but a relatively small area of anti-LGBT activism in Korea.

6 One has to be cautious, however, to define these same-sex activities and desires as 'homosexuality', a term for an identity category of western origin that has only emerged from the mid-late 19th century onwards. For detailed overviews of the history of same-sex and non-cis gendered phenomena in Korea, see Pak-Ch'a Min-jŏng's (2018) study on queerness in Chosŏn and Johannemann's (2021) article on gay identity formation.

tionings towards sexual minorities, and as a counter-actor against pro-LGBT collective action should be analyzed in greater detail.

Thirdly, the fact that South Korea is a non-western and consolidated democratic state makes it an interesting case for comparison both with existing studies on anti-LGBT activism in western democracies (e.g., Fejes 2008 and Herman 1997 on the US; Strube et al.'s (2021) edited volume on several European countries) and in non-western democracies and authoritarian regimes (e.g., Kaoma 2018 on several sub-Saharan African countries; Weiss 2017 on four South East Asian countries). The historical, cultural, and geopolitical context of Korea needs to be taken into due consideration when investigating its anti-LGBT movement.

Finally, in Korean society, a comparatively large share of the population, around 27–29 percent, belong to Christian churches[7] – actors that have been discerned as important socio-political forces in almost all existing studies on anti-LGBT activism. Historically, Protestant churches in particular have fostered close relations with right-wing governments and occupied privileged positions in the state, especially after the liberation from Japanese colonial rule under South Korea's first president Syngman Rhee (*Yi Sŭng-man*), but also during the following authoritarian regimes and after democratization (cf. e.g., Clark 2008; Park, Chung-shin 2007). This begs the question whether these political connections and power positions also get played out in the context of anti-LGBT collective action.

Based on these insights, I endeavor a richly detailed and context-sensitive analysis of the Korean case by tackling a rather large main research question: *Why and how does the South Korean anti-LGBT movement attempt to render LGBT topics contentious in politics and society?* I opt for such a wide perspective because, I argue, the existing literature has not yet found wholly convincing answers to this basic question. Previous studies on the Korean anti-LGBT movement have overemphasized an alleged instrumentalization of the issue and they have neglected, to some extent, the agency of the actors involved while at the same time overlooking parts of these actors' structural embeddedness. This latter aspect, I claim, manifests itself in an underestimation of the role religion plays in the contention around LGBT topics. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the existing literature lacks a thorough and adequate empirical basis.

Building upon R.W. Connell's concept of the crisis tendencies of the gender order and thus taking a critical feminist perspective (cf. e.g., Connell 2005), Nami Kim (2016, 26), for example, claims that conservative Protestant groups in Korea fight against LGBT rights to counteract a perceived weakening of 'hegemonic masculinity', which they wish to reestablish. Taking a materialistic lens, Nami Kim argues that, in the process of recreating dominant masculinity, these groups follow South Korea's pathway as a "subempire"

7 According to estimates from the Pew Research Center for the year 2010, the largest part of South Koreans, 46%, had not religious affiliation. 18% were members of Protestant and evangelical churches, 11% belonged to the Catholic church, and 23% identified as Buddhist (Connor 2014, August 12). According to more recent data from the *Korean Statistical Information Service*'s (KOSIS) 2015 'General Population Survey' (*inguch'ongchosa*), the number of Christians stood at 27.6% (19.7% Protestant, 7.9% Catholic, 15.5% Buddhist, 56.1% non-religious).

of the United States, which had supported the former's "hypermasculine developmentalism" in the period of authoritarian rule and rapid industrialization since the 1960s (Kim 2016, 1; 2). While the alliance with the US certainly has played an important role for Korean politics at least since the Korean War, this line of argument puts the *Protestant Right* – Kim's term for politically and religiously conservative actors in Korea; a term that will be used in this study as well[8] – into the passive position of a norm-taker and thus strips them of a great deal of agency. This claim, as well as the assertion of an instrumentalizing usage of anti-LGBT politics, is little convincing because Kim fails to provide sufficient evidence to sustain her assumptions. In fact, my study has not found evidence directly supporting Kim's argument on hegemonic masculinity.

Two further recent studies also argue that conservative Protestantism employs anti-LGBT issues in an instrumentalizing fashion. One scholarly avenue trying to account for the emergence of anti-LGBT activism in South Korea argues that while Christian doctrines and beliefs may play an important role in the fight against homosexuality, the decisive reason is to be found in the crisis of Korean Protestantism. By focusing on the opposition against LGBT issues, Siwoo's argument goes, church leaders and professionalized anti-LGBT groups try to deflect attention away from declining church memberships and scandals, such as embezzlement and sexual harassment (Siwoo 2018, 36–46). In Han Ch'aeyun's view, conservative Protestant church leaders use anti-gay rhetoric to create an "external enemy", a manufactured threat that may help increase their political leverage and at the same time decrease the divisions among notoriously fragmented denominations (Han 2017, 180–181).

All three studies deserve praise for considering contextual and historical variables alike, and for attempting to grasp the overall workings of the Protestant Right in its fight against LGBT rights in Korea. To some extent, however, the authors underrate two obvious, yet important factors, which I argue are central in driving anti-LGBT endeavors: namely religion and politics. Rather than treating religion and politics separately or considering the respectively other aspect as an exogeneous factor only, scholars of religious and conservative movements alike have repeatedly called for an integration of these two fields so as to benefit from each other's theoretical and methodological tools (Snow & Beyerlein 2019; Blee & Creesap 2010, 280; Kniss & Burns 2004, 711). This study thus seeks to reconcile these two research areas following Snow and Beyerlein's (2019, 577) recommendation to investigate the "dynamic intersection of religion and politics and its relevance to social movements".

Religion will be analyzed as a resource for anti-LGBT activism in three main respects: (1) as a mobilization resource, relying on the institutional ties and the sense of belonging of church members; (2) as a symbolic resource, in the sense that Christian doctrines

8 Other terms in common use for such actors include "Religious Right" (Fetner 2008) and "Christian Right" (e.g., Heo 2021 and Cho, Kyuhoon 2014 on Korea; Buss & Herman 2003 on the international ties of the Christian Right; Johnson 2018; Miceli 2005; and Herman 1997 on the US). These terms make sense in the respective contexts, since the authors analyze a broader range of actors including Protestants and Catholics, and also religious actors from non-Christian faiths. In the Korean case, however, the overwhelming majority of actors active in the anti-LGBT movement have a Protestant background (cf. chapter 10), which is why the term 'Protestant Right' best suits the purposes of this study.

and literal interpretations of paragraphs in the Bible on the alleged sinfulness of homosexual sex and a strictly binary gender order may act as central arguments against granting certain rights to non-heterosexual, transgender, and intersex persons;[9] (3) and, relatedly, religion serves as a source of collective identity, which builds upon certain exegetic and doctrinal stipulations and aids the mobilization of personal and material resources. When it comes to politics, this study claims that the anti-LGBT movement does act out of a sincere (religiously imbued) concern about LGBT issues – going beyond the assumption of a merely instrumentalizing usage. However, parts of the anti-LGBT movement – and by extension, parts of the Protestant Right, in which anti-LGBT activism is largely embedded – also fight against LGBT rights for ulterior purposes, such as serving their self-interest and (re)attaining socio-political power.[10] Taking a theoretical approach that builds on the political thinking of Antonio Gramsci, I argue that the Korean anti-LGBT movement strives for hegemony, pursuing a strategy of gaining the upper hand in the field of ideology, ideas, norms, and beliefs, in order to then also acquire dominance in the political realm. Generating anti-LGBT attitudes in politics and in the general public is treated as a goal in itself, but it also serves as a welcome means to the overall end of garnering political power. Religious aspects – that have also been pointed out by Gramsci – as well as a conservative, yet dynamic outlook on socio-political processes, which play crucial roles in these endeavors, are also reflected in the conceptualization of this study.

9 Several biblical passages are commonly cited when arguing against homosexual, trans, and intersex people, e.g., in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible, Genesis 5:2 ("Male and female he created them", English Standard Version), Genesis 18 & 19 ('Sodom and Gomorrah'), Leviticus 18:22 ("You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination."), and in the New Testament, Romans 1:26–27, 1 Corinthians 6:9–11, 1 Timothy 1:8–11. Taking a historical-critical perspective, however, modern theology offers differing interpretations as well, arguing, for example, that the Bible does not refer to homosexuality as it is commonly understood today, but rather condemns sexual violence and a lack of hospitality, as in the account about Sodom and Gomorrah. Some exegetes also see hints at homoeroticism in certain biblical passages, e.g., in the accounts about David and Jonathan (1 Samuel 18:1–5) or Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 1:16–17). For further details, refer to the *Queer Bible Commentary*, which offers interpretations from a queer perspective, rebutting an anti-LGBT exegesis of the Bible (West & Shore-Goss 2020).

10 The political endeavors of the Korean Protestant Right correspond in a broad sense to the perspectives that Max Weber and Niccolò Machiavelli (2006; cf. also Nederman 2019) have on politics, in that politics centrally involves the will to acquire and maintain power. In Weber's (2002, 311) words: politics is the "striving for a share of power or for influence on the distribution of power, either among states or among groups within a state." The scheming and recklessness that inform part of a 'Machiavellian' type of power politics may be difficult to transfer to the analysis of social movements. However, by building upon a Gramscian approach, this study will show that strategic thinking and practice on the level of ideology does play an important role in the (also power-related) activities of the Korean anti-LGBT movement.

1.1 Conceptual demarcations and theoretical refinements: introducing 'dynamic continuity'

This study situates itself within social movement studies. It therefore analyzes the Korean anti-LGBT movement as a social movement, using methodological, conceptual, and analytical models commonly employed in this field of scholarship. While often classifying anti-LGBT activism as a movement, the studies mentioned above have, for the most part – and surprisingly so – disregarded the established tools offered by social movement studies. Before detailing the research design of the in-depth case study that I intend to conduct, it is necessary to take a closer look at existing conceptual approaches, and to answer the question as to what exactly the Korean anti-LGBT movement is a case of.

Social movements have been defined in many ways. This study shall utilize Mario Diani's (1992, 13) definition, which discerns three main aspects to be met in order to be considered a social movement: "A social movement is a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity."[11] The question thus poses itself who exactly these networks are made up of, what the contention is actually about, and what kind of collective identity the activities build upon. Historians, political scientists, and sociologists have studied numerous social movements, starting from 'old' collective action like the workers' movement, and investigating 'new' social movements, which have emerged from the 1960s onwards, promoting postmaterial and cultural values, as well as human and civil rights (della Porta & Diani 2006, vii). Besides this predominantly progressive and left-wing activism, however, there is also what some scholars have referred to as "bad civil society", that is, actors who call into question liberal values and democratic principles, promoting exclusion and hatred based on, among others, racist, nationalistic, and anti-feminist ideologies (Chambers & Kopstein 2001). Such subsets of social movements have been classified using diverse labels such as 'conservative', 'rightist', 'extreme' or 'radical' or 'populist right-wing' – or other combinations of these terms (Blee & Creasap 2010; Gross et al. 2011, cf. also Mudde 2017). Religious movements can also fall into this category, such as the 'new religious right' in the United States (Kniss & Burns 2004, 699f.). This "terminological quagmire" (Mudde 2017, 1) poses problems, as the definitions of most of these terms are already individually highly contested among scholars. The term conservatism, for example, remains rather vague. It is considered by some a disposition which highly estimates the status quo (Oakeshott 1962; Beckstein 2015) and, relatedly, advocates the preservation of vested privileges (McVeigh 2009, 32). Others regard conservatism as a political program promoting certain political positions like free market capitalism or a certain moral order (Femia 2015; Gross et al. 2011, 328f; Blee & Creasap 2010, 270). Others yet again claim that conservatism is devoid of political ideals and any real contents that would qualify it as a full-fledged ideology, breaking its definition down to the motto "conservative is who calls themselves conservative" (Müller 2006,

11 Other definitions use different wordings, but nevertheless point to similar characteristics shared by social movements, like, in Sidney Tarrow's version: "collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities" (Tarrow, 2011: 9, original italicized).

359). The same conceptual vagueness is present in the scholarly efforts to grasp right-wing populism and right-wing extremism or radicalism (and their terminological variants).[12]

This study does not intend to further complicate such definitional debates. It seems neither necessary nor wise to rigidly label the Korean anti-LGBT movement as one of the ideal types mentioned above. Rather, I take cues from each of these fields to find productive intersections and thus enhance and refine the analysis of anti-LGBT collective action. For example, when detecting violent or anti-democratic behavior, this seems to clearly point towards radical or extremist tendencies. Or when activists claim that they represent an alleged 'silent majority', populist strategies come to the fore (cf. Minkenberg 2011, 506). I shall therefore use the adjectives 'right-wing' or 'conservative' as generic terms to denote the whole spectrum presented.

That being said, this study does indeed wish to contribute to the academic debate on conservatism. I challenge perspectives that view conservatives merely as proponents of preserving a certain status quo and glorifying the past. In fact, conservative-minded political actors need, and indeed in most cases do display openness for (at least a certain amount of) change. This insight is, of course, nothing new. The very beginnings of conservative political thought have produced such views. In his *Reflections on the French Revolution*, Edmund Burke famously noted that "a state without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation" (Burke 1993 [1790], 21). The main argument that I want to make in this study builds upon this insight. I argue that the Korean anti-LGBT is not fixated on a certain status quo or glorification of the past, nor do its actions represent irrational or reactionary bigotry – claims that have already been refuted with regard to the US anti-gay movement in the 1990s (Herman 1997). While it may be true to some extent that "[r]ightist movements tend to be known for what they are against, not for what they support" (Blee & Creasap 2010, 271), I argue that conservative movements in general, and the Korean anti-LGBT movement in particular, do have future-oriented political agendas that should not be underestimated. The Korean movement – and the Protestant Right at large – are very much interested in change, albeit a kind of change that reflects their worldviews and serves their interests. They strive for the decision-making power

12 Right-wing extremism and right-wing radicalism are often used as synonyms, as both feature an ultra-nationalist ideology and hostility towards liberal democratic systems. But apart from these core 'principles', different movements or political parties of this kind take different shapes. They, for example, use different ethnic, cultural, and religious categories as grounds for exclusion and inequality (Minkenberg 2011, 509). As for right-wing populism or populism in general, Cas Mudde (2004, 543) argues that there is a Manichean core in all kinds of populism, defining it as "*an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite', and which argues that politics should be an expression of the* volonté générale *(general will) of the people*" (original italicized). For Jan-Werner Müller (2022, 230), populism is a type of politics that centrally includes a claim to sole representation, asserting that one speaks for, and acts in the interest of the majority, if not for the whole people (cf. also Sturm 2011, 506). There have been, however, many more attempts to define (right-wing) populism, which cannot be discussed here. For the most part, studies on these rightist phenomena concentrate on political parties rather than social movements. For detailed accounts with various foci, see, e.g., the edited volumes by Mudde (2017b) and Möller (2022, in German).

over what socio-political change looks like and how it takes effect. I assert that in order to reach this goal the movement employs a strategy that builds upon *existing* ideas, ideological elements, structures, and networks. Michael Oakeshott (1962, 170) proposed that the "appearance of continuity" plays an important role for people with a conservative disposition. As I will show in this study, the semblance of continuity is also a strategic element for convincing people of certain claims, and mobilizing them in the context of socio-political struggles.

I name this strategic combination of existing and new elements *dynamic continuity*. This new perspective is intended to contribute to conservatism studies in general, and provide a theoretical and conceptual refinement for examining conservative movements in particular. Dynamic continuity as proposed and analyzed in this study is mainly situated on the temporal, relational, and claims-making levels of collective action. Building on a thorough analysis of a broad empirical basis, I have found three main ways in which dynamic continuity gets enacted:

1) *temporal-congruent combination:* relating one's arguments and frames to ideologically compatible elements and parts of 'common sense' that have been influential in the past and still promise to prove powerful in the present and future;
2) *relational-congruent adoption and adaptation:* adopting action repertoires, strategies, and frames from ideologically analogous actors at home and abroad;
3) *relational-incongruent adoption and adaptation:* making use of strategic elements and action repertoires originally used or developed by oppositional forces.

The first type of dynamic continuity is straightforward: combining old ('continuous') with new ('dynamic') elements. In the second type, the continuous part consists of the adoption of elements from ideologically congruent actors, while the dynamic aspect concerns the adaptation according to one's needs. This means that, for example, frames from abroad are not adopted uncritically, but that they are adjusted in order to fit the domestic context. As for the third type, the adaptation of elements from opposing actors brings in dynamism, while keeping the essence of the adopted item represents the continuous facet.

Scholars have often described social movements as innovative elements in the political arena (cf. e.g., della Porta & Diani 2006, 31). These observations have mostly been confined to the analysis of progressive movements, however. I argue that conservative movements also fall into the category of innovators, breaking new ground for conservative or rightist politics. Yet, the concrete ways in which innovation comes about differ between different kinds of social movements. With regard to my object of investigation, dynamic continuity serves as a reasonable tool to turn to for conservative actors, since it allows them to draw on established and reliably resonating elements that have already proven convincing in the past with their own constituencies and the larger public. At the same time, dynamism enters the stage, allowing for creativity, renewal, and for demonstrations that they are up-to-date and forward-looking.

Besides the many advantages dynamic continuity provides, it also comprises difficulties. The three action types presented above help to manage diverging areas, be it in terms of legacies, or in regard to relations with friendly and oppositional actors. Bringing

together these elements may prove successful in convincing the public of one's agenda, in defending one's vested interests, and in preventing and abolishing pro-LGBT legislation, or preserving and newly codifying anti-LGBT sentiments. However, there is also the danger that by employing dynamic continuity, certain predicaments may emerge. This is then a third manifestation of *opposing desires*: combining 'old' and 'new' elements, and using ideologically compatible as well as adversarial strategies may create contradictions and discrepancies that are hard to communicate and justify in front of one's supporters. Taking the example of human rights framings, anti-LGBT actors actively deny LGBT people human rights, even calling them 'fake human rights', while at the same time offensively claiming human rights for *themselves*, asserting that *their* rights are being violated by pro-LGBT policies, which for them represent attacks on their freedoms of expression and religion. This study strives to shed light on this proposed complexity of conservative movement strategies.

1.2 Analytical framework and research design

For the rigorous investigation of these conservative yet innovative endeavors of the Korean anti-LGBT movement and its socio-political activities in general, I have built an analytical framework combining Gramscian concepts and established approaches from social movement studies, mainly the *dynamics of contention* (DOC) research agenda promoted by Douglas McAdam, Charles Tilly, and Sidney Tarrow (2001). The latter approach is an offspring of social movement studies, yet it considers a broader range of actors than only social movements in what McAdam et al. call *contentious politics*. Contentious politics involve newly emerging collective actors (the 'challengers') who enter into conflict with established political actors (the 'members'), as well as individuals who are not (yet) part of these two political groups (the 'subjects'), but who the challengers wish to mobilize for their purposes (McAdam et al. 2001, 10). Analyzing this actor constellation is especially worthwhile for the Korean case. As already mentioned above, the Protestant Right has been fostering close ties with conservative governments, but conflictive ones with liberal or progressive administrations. This results in a certain blurring of the categories of 'member' and 'challenger' when trying to classify the anti-LGBT movement.

In general, the DOC approach puts greater emphasis on agency, while at the same time highlighting the structural and cultural backgrounds in which agency takes place (McAdam & Tarrow 2011, 4). In an attempt to combine these areas, DOC centrally relies on *social mechanisms* to analyze the workings of actors engaged in contentious politics. McAdam et al. (2001, 24) define mechanisms as "a delimited class of events that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations". There are three overarching classes of such mechanisms: relational, environmental, and cognitive mechanisms (McAdam et al. 2001, 25f.). This study aims to discern in detail the mechanisms present in and around the activities of the Korean anti-LGBT movement.

For the sake of a systematic analysis, the analytical framework utilizes concepts and themes proposed by Antonio Gramsci, laying bare the mechanisms at work in each of these focus areas. These include (1) *religion*, an area of Gramscian writing and thinking

that has been largely neglected by existing studies (Forlenza 2019; Fulton 1987), but which offers valuable insights on how to conceptualize religious actors as explicitly political actors; it therefore serves as an analytical variable underlying basically all parts of this investigation; (2) the *conservative historical bloc*, delving into the historical legacies and present status of powerful socio-political actors – regarding both the Korean circumstances and transnational relations; (3) the role of movement leaders as *organic intellectuals* in the efforts to change the 'common sense' of the greater public; (4) the relevance of the areas of *education* and (5) the relevance of *media* and *cultural production*. These analytical areas are not exclusive, but have many overlaps with one another. These categories shall serve as analytical orientations, and also as focus topics of some of the analytical (sub-)chapters.

The research design of this study comprises an *exploratory sequential mixed-method research design* for data collection and data analysis (cf. Ayoub et al. 2014; Creswell & Clark 2011). As a first step, this approach included exploratory methods applied during field trips in August 2018 and March–August 2019. Among the methods employed were semi-structured qualitative interviews with relevant actors, (participant) observations of anti-LGBT events, and a small survey of anti-LGBT protesters. The main data basis of this study, however, is a *protest event analysis* (PEA), which I conducted after fieldwork. PEA serves to systematically gather detailed information – commonly from newspaper articles – on several aspects relevant to the thorough case study of a social movement, for example, on the action forms and places of protests, the collective and individual actors involved, the number of participants, the targets, and the arguments or frames utilized (Hutter 2014; Koopmans & Statham 1999). Through this broad range of items, PEA allows to answer diverse sets of research questions, which is conducive to a case study, in which, overall, manifold sub-topics are tackled. In order to investigate such sub-topics, PEA data is also used for further analytical methods, namely frame analysis and network analysis. This study is, in fact, the first one to apply PEA to the study of an anti-LGBT movement in a narrow sense, hoping to provide "a solid ground in an area that is still often marked by more or less informed speculation" (Koopmans & Rucht 2002, 251). Building upon this broad triangulation of research methods, this study wishes to answer the main research question as to how and why the anti-LGBT movement renders LGBT issues contentious, encompassing diverse sub-topics and taking cues from existing research in the analytical process.[13]

13 Beyond the already mentioned research contributions, this study also benefitted immensely from previous studies, both on the Korean case and anti-LGBT activism elsewhere, as well as from both specialized studies (e.g., on particular aspects of an anti-LGBT movement), as well as from broadly conceived investigations (e.g., comparing anti-LGBT activism in several countries). I refrain from providing a detailed literature review in the introduction of this study, since critical appraisals of relevant existing research will accompany this study 'on the go', appearing in the theoretical and analytical chapters whenever applicable.

1.3 Plan of the book

Chapters 2 and 3 are part of the first main section of this study, presenting in greater detail the theoretical bases and delving further into the argument on dynamic continuity that this study strives to make. They introduce central concepts of Antonio Gramsci's political thinking, combining it with reflections on the meaning of conservatism, and embedding these two perspectives in the DOC research agenda in order to build a systematic analytical framework. Chapter 4 lays out in depth the methods of data collection and data analysis, expounding the concrete operationalizations of each research method. I shall also elaborate on certain methodological intricacies that I have encountered during the research process.

The second section of this study delves deeply into framing strategies of the Korean anti-LGBT movement. The section examines what some anti-LGBT activists have referred to as a 'cultural war', that is, fierce conflicts between groups that have different values, ideologies, and beliefs, involving struggles to influence, and gain dominance over public opinion and politics at large. Within this section, chapter 5 starts off with an analysis of the conservative Protestant newspaper *Kukmin Daily* (*kungmin ilbo*) and its LGBT-related coverage from the 1990s onwards, finding that the reporting turned clearly negative only in the mid-early 2000s, the time when instances of collective action against LGBT rights first started to emerge. The chapter further investigates the steep increase of anti-LGBT activism from 2013 on, discerning several 'critical junctures' that I argue have facilitated this rise. Chapter 6 then presents general movement properties of the anti-LGBT movement, like its action forms, targets, and places of protest.

The core of this section consists of a frame analysis covering the years 2000–2020 in chapters 7 and 8, which examine in detail the movement's multifaceted efforts to gain hegemony, as well as the instances of dynamic continuity and opposing desires that become apparent in these fights. In the course of this analysis, several social mechanisms come to the fore, including the attribution of threat, boundary formation, identity shift, bricolage, and counter-framing, to name but a few (for detailed descriptions of these mechanism, see chapter 2, and particularly, chapter 3). The anti-LGBT movement attempts to present LGBT people and LGBT rights as threats to children, families, health, the military, and the nation as a whole – creating a 'dangerous other' as against an allegedly endangered majority. The movement tries to render these sentiments part of individual and collective identities, and uses diverse means – both dynamic and continuous – to bring its messages across. The contention does not only take place domestically in Korea, but also encompasses relations with, and references to transnational actors. The section closes with a discussion on whether the anti-LGBT movement mobilizes effectively in this 'cultural war' in chapter 9.

The third section of this study concentrates on the actors of the Korean anti-LGBT movement, the networks they build, the communication forms they use, and the conflicts they enter into. Chapter 10 focuses on the concrete actors who form the Korean anti-LGBT movement, analyzing them as 'norm brokers' who build networks and try to disseminate anti-LGBT sentiments within churches and beyond. The chapter offers a typology of the most active anti-LGBT organizations and presents the anti-LGBT networks that formed over the past years. Chapter 10 also elaborates on the special role that move-

ment leaders play, and describes the connections these leaders have with established political actors, as well as their own endeavors to enter party politics.

The two following analytical chapters shed light on two areas that this study has discerned as crucial for understanding the Korean anti-LGBT movement. Chapter 11 encompasses a thorough analysis of the movement's activities in the areas of education, media, and cultural production. These communicative channels are important in the movement's struggle for hegemony. They are used to propagate anti-LGBT positions and serve to single out and depict important movement figures as charismatic, knowledgeable, and authentic – even though the 'expert' status of these actors is dubious, as is the truthfulness of the contents presented through 'old' and 'new' (social) media. Established educational and media institutions that provide favorable or objective information on LGBT themes are frequent targets of attacks by anti-LGBT activists. Chapter 12 revisits the eponymous 'opposing desires' of this study by analyzing the animosities that exist within Korean Protestantism itself. Building on the movement-countermovement approach (Meyer & Staggenborg 1996), this chapter examines several cases of rifts among 'mainstream' anti-LGBT actors, moderate church representatives, and explicitly pro-LGBT actors within Protestantism, arguing that the Protestant Right deliberately creates 'internal enemies' to invoke threats that serve to close ranks internally.

Finally, in chapter 13, I summarize my findings and discuss the benefits that I argue dynamic continuity offers for the study of conservative and right-wing movements. I ponder on the generalizability and implications of this theoretical and conceptual refinement, and I discuss the relevance of the insights gained in this study for a world where anti-emancipatory endeavors are on the rise again in many countries.