10. Anti-LGBT norm brokers within the Protestant Right: social movement organizations, movement leaders, and their political endeavors

In late August 2017, Kim Yi-su, candidate for the presidency of the South Korean Constitutional Court, came under fire for his alleged pro-gay stance. The anti-LGBT group *National Alliance against Homosexuality, Same-Sex Marriage, and the Constitutional Amendment* (*tongsŏngae tongsŏnghon kaehŏn pandae kungmin yŏnhap*, short: *Tongbanyŏn*)[1] ran full-page advertisements in Korea's three most-read newspapers Chosun Daily, JoongAng Daily, and Dong-a Daily, slandering Kim as a supporter of LGBT rights. As a constitutional judge, in 2012, Kim had issued a minority opinion in a court case on the constitutionality of the criminalization of homosexual acts in the Korean army, arguing that consensual sex could not be regarded as harassment and did not constitute a threat to combat power. In an apparent attempt at instigating indignation, *Tongbanyŏn's* advertisement also featured photos from a gay dating website, showing men wearing military uniforms in explicit positions. Other emotionalizing statements were also included in this text-heavy ad, claiming that parents should worry about their enlisted sons contracting AIDS and that the danger of a general "legalization of homosexuality" was imminent should the nomination of Kim Yi-su be successful (quoted in GMW Union 2017, August 30).

The attempted creation of a moral panic (cf. Cohen 2002) in this context is hardly surprising. Chapter 7.2 has demonstrated that the anti-LGBT movement commonly tries to construct threats around LGBT issues. At least in the case of Kim Yi-su's chief judge nomination, this kind of vilification proved effective. The National Assembly voted down Kim's appointment in early September 2017. Over the years, the anti-LGBT movement has frequently posted such large ads in major Korean newspapers on many different topics. Beyond their slandering nature, another common feature is a long list of organizations supporting the advertisement's statement. In the case of the ad against the appointment of Kim Yi-su as Constitutional Court president, a detailed list of 49 groups was attached at the bottom of the page, as well the information that in total,

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1   *Tongbanyŏn* included the term 'constitutional amendment' in its name in the beginning of its activities, but later shortened its name to *National Alliance against Homosexuality and Same-Sex Marriage*.

247 groups participated in the above mentioned *Tongbanyŏn* alliance. One year later, Tongbanyŏn's number of supporting groups had risen to 314 (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2018, September 18) and by 2022, *Tongbanyŏn* published anti-LGBT press releases with the support of another large alliance, the *National Union Against the Bad Anti-Discrimination Law in the Hope of True Equality* (*chinjŏnghan p'yŏngdŭng-ŭl paramyŏ nappŭn ch'abyŏl kŭmjibŏp chejŏng-ŭl pandaehanŭn chŏn'guk yŏnhap*, short: *Chŏnp'yŏngyŏn*), which claims bringing together 505 groups (cf. e.g., Tongbanyŏn 2022, July 11).

These large numbers of participating groups beg the question of how so many collective actors could be reached for anti-LGBT purposes, who these groups actually are, and what exactly they endeavor. One may also wonder whether all these groups are in fact *active* parts of the movement. It is possible that only a part of the groups are really active social movement organizations (SMOs), while others participate in name only, without much actual involvement. Are the vast lists of supporting groups thus just a simulation of grandeur without much substance? This chapter sets out to investigate these questions, focusing on the *who* of the Korean anti-LGBT movement. The previous chapters focused on the *what* and *how* dimensions of activism: the movement's action forms, its targets, and framing strategies. Now, the actor level will be analyzed in detail, examining the background of actors, their interconnections, roles, and ambitions.

Actors of a social movement as analyzed in this chapter can broadly be categorized along two dimensions: the degree of collectivity or organization on the one hand, and the importance or centrality of actors on the other. Concerning the first dimension, one branch of social movement studies highlights the largely informal, nonhierarchical, and grassroots character of social movements (Sutherland et al. 2013; Voss & Sherman 2000). In contrast, other scholars have argued that also social movements tend to professionalize (McCarthy & Zald 1973; 1977) and, in fact, need to bureaucratize and concentrate authority in a leadership circle to be successful – what Michels has termed the 'iron law of oligarchy' (Michels 1958; cf. also Piven & Cloward 1977). The latter scholars thus argue that social movements do not only consist of individual participants who uphold only loose structures of cooperation. More often than not, professionalized social movement organizations and leadership circles emerge, playing an eminent role in the fate of a movement – the second dimension mentioned above. This study strives to contribute to this debate through investigating a conservative religious movement, going beyond the traditional scholarly focus on progressive movements.

This chapter demonstrates that the Korean anti-LGBT movement has indeed a broad organizational support base. However, the data of the protest event analysis (PEA) reveals that only a small core of SMOs and individual movement leaders are in fact very active. They fall under the category of important and central actors mentioned above. In essence, it is this rather small leadership circle who runs the movement, despite the attempts at pretending to represent a large number of interest groups and adherents – and, allegedly, the majority of Koreans (cf. chapter 7.3). A network analysis of anti-LGBT SMOs uncovers the most central actors over time. PEA provides data showing that, over the years, new anti-LGBT actors have established themselves and that previously unconnected organizations have joined the movement. This quantitative increase comes along with a differentiation of SMOs. At least when the outward appearance is concerned – there are specialized anti-LGBT groups and alliances as well as SMOs with specific the-

matic priorities such as health, 'research', and military matters. I claim that the few central anti-LGBT SMOs and, particularly, the movement leaders act as *norm brokers*, meaning that they pursue the establishment of new relations to enlarge the movement and to disseminate their normative view of the badness of anything related to LGBT topics. In Gramscian terms, the movement leadership takes the role of *organic intellectuals*, that is, as organizers and ideological multiplicators.

The fact that the Korean anti-LGBT movement is embedded in the Protestant Right does make a difference for the way movement actors constitute themselves and relate to other actors both within and outside Protestantism. I have shown in the previous chapters that while attempting to reach the general public, much of the movement's framing is directed at conservative Christian crowds. Such Christian adherents of the Protestant Right are particularly likely to be mobilized for anti-LGBT activities. As this chapter shall demonstrate, 'opposing desires' – having a Christian background, but trying to win over non-Christian publics as well – also reemerge when looking into the concrete movement actors. Anti-LGBT activists consistently claim that both church groups and civic groups – that is, non-Christian organizations – are part of the movement. The names of SMOs also increasingly tend to disguise the actual Christian background of the groups. The network analysis of anti-LGBT SMOs, however, demonstrates that the existing relations remain largely confined to connections among Christian groups. I argue that this is not necessarily a disadvantage for the movement. As I have argued before, the conservative Protestant base of the anti-LGBT movement is a benefit both on the ideological and structural levels. This is why key brokers of the movement engage in appropriating churches and whole denominations for the fight against LGBT rights. What is more, they also nurture relations with party politicians and, to some extent, have managed to inculcate them with anti-LGBT attitudes.

This chapter proceeds as follows. First, I shortly recapitulate some theoretical and methodological aspects of the analysis of SMOs, movement leadership, as well as network analysis. I then, secondly, delve into the SMOs of the anti-LGBT movement and investigate the internal networks they build, including an analysis of the diversification that has occurred since the first steps of collective anti-LGBT activism. I offer a typology of anti-LGBT groups and analyze their embeddedness in conservative Protestantism. Thirdly, the most important figures of the movement will be presented, arguing that a distinct inner circle of activists assumes the lion's share of organizing and executing anti-LGBT activities. Finally, I examine the particularly political involvedness of Protestant Right actors, with a special focus on attempts at establishing Christian political parties, their anti-LGBT political program, and on politicians from established political parties who have links to the movement and adopt anti-LGBT stances themselves. The ambivalent roles of being both political challengers and traditional allies of conservative political actors in Korea will also be treated in this section. The chapter concludes with considerations on the distinct actor-level features of conservative religious social movements.

10.1   Norm brokers, organic intellectuals, and the networks they create

A social movement is made up of actors who promote certain socio-political issues through engaging in diverse action forms and framing efforts, which generally go beyond institutionalized opportunities for political participation. These actors are, in turn, diverse and can include individual activists and less active adherents that form a collective mass, as well as organized forms of collective action. This chapter focuses on two types of movement actors: *social movement organizations* (SMOs) and *movement leaders*, arguing that these (or a portion of these) occupy crucial positions within the Korean anti-LGBT movement. McCarthy and Zald (1977, 1218f.) have defined an SMO as a "complex, or formal, organization which identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or countermovement and attempts to implement those goals." SMOs can have different shapes and origins. Preexisting organizations may either assist in the formation of a social movement, or they are appropriated by other social movement actors. In the case of institutionalized preexisting structures, such organizations serve as the *social movement bases* of collective action – not only as a cultural and social background but also, and importantly, as organizational resources (cf. Tilly & Tarrow 2015, 11). New SMOs may also be established, as well as alliances among established and newly formed actors. These developments of institutionalization and formalization are often accompanied by differentiation and professionalization in order to achieve higher effectiveness (McCarthy & Zald 1973).

Social movement organizations can of course not be created or upheld out of nothing. They are constituted by and of people, or more specifically: movement activists. It is to be expected that many if not most of the leading figures of a movement are members of SMOs. In fact, perhaps even more so than SMOs themselves, it is these leading activists that are crucial to the progress and success of a given social movement. From the perspective of social movement studies and particularly resource mobilization, leaders are defined as "strategic decision-makers who inspire and organize others to participate in social movements" (Morris & Staggenborg 2004, 171). In their leading capacity, they act as what has been termed *movement entrepreneurs*, that is, "leaders who initiate movements, organizations, and tactics" (Staggenborg 1988, 587) and who call attention to certain issues to broaden the base for recruiting people for social movements (cf. Staggenborg 2013, 1). In this respect, an eminent task of movement leaders is disseminating certain worldviews and framing them in ways to serve the movement's purposes.

In the Gramscian sense, movement leaders represent *organic intellectuals*, the organizers and "permanent persuader[s]" (Gramsci 1971, 10) of any counter-hegemonic socio-political endeavor. Organic intellectuals commonly emerge with a new socio-political force (Hoare & Sperber 2016, 34), to which they give a sense of "homogeneity and an awareness of its function, not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields" (Gramsci 2000, 301, ref. 20). It is them who, according to Gramsci, put in place an "intellectual and moral reform" (Gramsci 1995, 24–27; 1971, 132f.) through creating a new or modified worldview, using bits and pieces of existing common sense to construct a new common sense (cf. Olsaretti 2014, 375).

The contents and strategies behind the anti-LGBT movement's 'intellectual' framing efforts have been analyzed in the previous chapters. The question of who is behind all this

– and by extension, how they exactly spread their worldviews remains an open one. In line with the *Dynamics of Contention* approach (McAdam et al. 2001), I argue that we need to investigate the relations of actors in order to explain the expansion of both the movement itself and its messages. Such a relational perspective can be grasped using the concept of *brokerage*. Brokerage is "the linking of two or more currently unconnected social sites by a unit that mediates their relations with each other and/or with yet another site" (McAdam et al. 2001, 142). The actors creating such links are called brokers. "The crucial characteristics of brokers are that (*a*) they bridge a gap in social structure and (*b*) they help goods, information, opportunities, or knowledge flow across that gap" (Stovel & Shaw 2012, 141). Phillip Ayoub (2016) has expanded this concept claiming that brokerage also entails mediation between actors and ideas, with *norm brokers* serving as intermediaries. Herring's (2010) concept of epistemic brokers relates to both Ayoub's approach and Gramsci's take on intellectuals. Epistemic brokers are endowed with legitimacy through their (attributed) expert status, which they use to convey knowledge claims on contentious issues. Both brokerage and norm brokerage can be expected to be successful when there is a high degree of miscibility between actors. This can either be the case if there are already connections between actors or if they share similar ideologies (Vasi 2011, 12).

Network analysis as a methodological tool for investigating brokerage

Brokerage is a process that contributes to building networks. Vice-versa, network analysis can help to systematically detect brokers within a web of interactions. Network analysis has been widely applied in the analysis of social movements. Mario Diani even argued that "network forms of organization represent the distinctive trait of social movements" (Diani 2002, 173; cf. also Diani 1992). *Social Network Analysis* regards ties between actors as "channels for the flow of both material and non-material resources" (Caiani 2014, 368). Networks are thus "vehicles of meaning, crucial for the sharing of values, frames, and identities" (Cinalli 2006, indirectly quoted in Caiani 2014, 370), which fits in well with the norm brokerage perspective. Network analysis has the potential of answering the questions posed in this study also beyond the analysis of brokerage. It can help to "analyze how collective action is affected by the actors' embeddedness in preexisting networks" (Diani 2002, 173) and how these and further linkages provide opportunities but also constraints for the development and workings of a social movement (Caiani 2014, 368; Diani 2002, 174).

Network analysis commonly examines two main properties: nodes and edges. Nodes are the actors within a network, while edges constitute the connections among these actors. The sampling of a network, or in other words, the pinpointing of its boundaries is an intricate matter. One approach is to detect the most important movement actors first and ask them about their subjective perceptions as to whom or which groups they cooperate with and then continue with snowball sampling – the realist approach. In the nominalist approach, it is the researcher who determines the criteria of network membership and uses other data sources to identify nodes and edges (Diani 2002, 176f.). This study opts for the second approach, using PEA data on groups which jointly participated at protest events. In fact, social network analysis is often combined with protest event analysis in studies on collective action (Caiani 2014, 371). In the PEA dataset, I have identified up

to five SMOs per protest event, as mentioned in the underlying Kukmin Daily reports.[2] Whenever there were more than five groups mentioned, I listed those groups mentioned first, supposing that these are the most important ones. If, however, the article referred to SMOs that have been inductively identified as important anti-LGBT groups during the previous coding process, I rather included these in the dataset, assuming that the frequency of participation is an indicator for significance.

Exchanges can of course also take place between SMOs and individual participants. The focus of the network analysis of this study is, however, on groups only, since prominent activists are in most cases members or even leaders of SMOs anyways. Political parties are also left out of the sample. This is because it is often individual politicians that participate in anti-LGBT protest events, as shall be demonstrated later in this chapter. It is not advisable to coopt whole political parties for individual politicians' actions and attitudes.[3]

I claim that groups partaking in one protest event can be expected to have relations with each other. For the purpose of mapping the network of the anti-LGBT movement, I therefore record a link between each of the groups participating in the same protest event.[4] While we cannot be sure about the exact nature of the respective relations, there is no doubt that these groups – or rather, their representatives – cooperated in the context of this event. Perhaps, these groups co-organized the event, or one of the groups invited the others. The latter case would be a *directed* relation, for the initiative originates from one actor (e.g., group *a* inviting group *b*; $a \to b$). The PEA dataset does not provide such data for all protest events, which is why the social network analysis as implemented in this study will assume that relations between actors are *symmetrical*, that is, without nodes dominant in themselves. Actors can be dominant also in this model, however, rather in terms of the number of links a specific group has. This relational property indicates the strength or value of the ties. In our case, the strength of a relation is assumed to be higher when two groups jointly participate in several protest events. The overall number of ties of actors points towards their *centrality*, that is, "the extent to which

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2   According to Diani (2002, 182), newspaper reports as a source for network analysis have the benefit of allowing comparisons of network constellations over time, but one needs to be cautious since journalists tend to mention only the best-known groups, thus creating a bias. Diani therefore recommends using triangulation, i.e., combining information from as many different sources as possible. In my qualitative research interviews with anti-LGBT activists, I included an item asking about their most important cooperation partners. The interviewees were, however, rather reluctant to provide this information, which is why using PEA data seems to be a robust alternative.

3   It is, arguably, equally problematic to suppose that other individual participants (without distinct political allegiances) can represent the entirety of their SMOs or, in the case of church leaders, whole congregations and denominations. I nevertheless proceeded in this way since there is a difference between the internal workings of a movement on the hand and traditional politics on the other. The actors of the latter arena occupy distinct and potentially powerful political positions. Movement activists, in contrast, often lack access to such positions, which leads them to try to win over politicians for their purposes. These explicitly *political* aspects of anti-LGBT collective action will be treated in-depth in chapter 10.5.

4   If there is, for example, a protest event with four participating groups, groups *a*, *b*, *c*, and *d*, the edges between these groups would be registered as follows: $a-b$; $a-c$; $a-d$; $b-c$; $b-d$; and $c-d$. I assume that all possible links between these groups actually materialize.

they are located at core positions in a web of exchanges" (Diani 2002, 186). Investigating the network position of a group in this way allows us to interpret its role within the movement and estimate its influence.

Another measure serving this analytical purpose is betweenness. "The concept of *betweenness*, which measures the extent to which a node is located in an intermediate position on the paths connecting other actors, may be regarded as an indicator of social brokerage" (Diani 2002, 188). Network analysis is thus a helpful tool when investigating brokerage. Actors with high betweenness scores function as brokers and gatekeepers, and as such, represent "important communication channels through which information, goods, and other resources can be transmitted and exchanged" (Caiani 2014, 385; cf. also Wasserman & Faust 1994). Brokers occupy crucial positions in a network since they connect different sectors of movements. In this sense, Diani, referring to Melucci (1996), notes that "[s]ocial movements are highly differentiated phenomena, whose cohesion and unity cannot be taken for granted, and are constantly redefined and renegotiated" (Diani 2002, 187). Social network analysis has the potential to also carve out competitive or conflictual relations, as well as subgroups within a movement (Diani 2002, 180; Caiani 2014, 387–390). Two related measures look at the whole network and its levels of cohesion and collaboration. *Average distance* "refers to the distance, on average, of the shortest way to connect any two actors in the network. The smaller the average distance, the more cohesive a network" (Caiani 2014, 382). *Average degree* shows each actor's average number of contacts, assuming that the higher the number of average linkages, the more likely groups are to cooperate (Caiani 2014, 382).

The following subchapter sets out to map the networks of the Korean anti-LGBT movement, taking into consideration dynamics and changes – but also continuities – over time. The concepts, mechanisms, and measures presented above will help to better understand the patterns of interaction, the logic of alliance building, and the overall identity of this particular movement (cf. Diani 2002, 175).

The networks of anti-LGBT actors and their embeddedness in the Protestant Right

The following analysis focuses on three main actor-related aspects of the working of the Korean anti-LGBT movement. I provide (1) a typology of the most active SMOs with the goal of then (2) mapping the actor networks during three main periods: the initial phase of the movement (2000–2012), the growth and dynamization period (2013–2015), and the consolidated phase of high-level activity (2016–2020). Underlying all this is (3) an examination of the importance of respective SMOs, which is measured through quantifying the frequencies of participation in (and/or organization of) protest events, the number of connections individual SMOs have other organization, and the centrality of individual SMOs in this network. The typology of actors shall be the first part of this detailed actor-level analysis.

10.2 Typology of the most active anti-LGBT actors

Table 10 offers a categorized overview of 34 SMOs that have most frequently participated in protest events from January 2000 until April 2020. The table discerns types as well as subtypes of SMOs, covering the organizations that have prominently appeared in anti-LGBT protest events during this period. The SMOs' names given in the table are either the official English renderings commonly used by the groups themselves or my own translations. The year of the first appearance of an organization at an anti-LGBT protest is also provided.

Among the SMOs most actively showing presence at anti-LGBT protest events are two church associations, the *Christian Council of Korean* (CCK) and the *Communion of Churches in Korea* (CCIK), with respectively 53 and 43 participations out of the total of 513 protest events. Other SMOs also exhibit outstanding zeal, having joined more than 30 times. These include the explicitly anti-LGBT groups *Coalition for Moral Sexuality* (42 times) and Holy Life (35 times) and the anti-LGBT alliances *Tongbanyŏn* (46 times), the *Task Force on the Problem of Homosexuality* (37 times), and the *Korean Churches' Countermeasures Committee against Homosexuality* (34 times). Two further very assiduous groups are the *People's Solidarity for a Healthy Society* (34 times) and the *Esther Prayer Movement* (33 times) – to name only the most ambitious anti-LGBT SMOs for a start.[5]

Table 10: Typology of most active anti-LGBT actors[a]

Types and subtypes		Name of social movement organization (SMO)	Year of first appearance at protest events	Number of participations in protest events[b]
Explicit anti-LGBT focus	General	Coalition for Moral Sexuality	2010	42
	'Ex-gay'	Holy Life	2010	35
		Ex-Gay Human Rights Forum	2015	11
	Alliances and task forces	National Alliance against Homosexuality and Same-Sex Marriage (*Tongbanyŏn*)	2017	46
		Task Force on the Problem of Homosexuality	2013	37
		Korean Churches' Countermeasures Committee against Homosexuality	2015	34
		National Alliance of Professors against Homosexuality, Same-Sex Marriage, and the Constitutional Amendment	2017	15

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5   Table 10 and this section in general only focus on the most active anti-LGBT social movement organizations. An extensive list of all 296 groups has been produced in the course of the protest event analysis, yet it is left out here for the sake of brevity.

Types and subtypes		Name of social movement organization (SMO)	Year of first appearance at protest events	Number of participations in protest events[b]
Religious	Overarching Protestant/evangelical associations	Christian Council of Korea (CCK)	2003	53
		The Communion of Churches in Korea (CCIK)	2013	43
		Council of Presbyterian Churches in Korea (*Hanjangch'ong*)	2011	22
		The United Christian Churches of Korea (UCCK)	2016	10
	Protestant denominations	The Presbyterian Church in Korea *Hapdong*	2013	20
		The Presbyterian Church of Korea *T'onghap* (PCK)	2001	10
		The Korean Presbyterian Church *Hapsin*	2016	9
	Protestant-based SMOs	Esther Prayer Movement	2010	33
		Network of the Chosen	2011	28
		Holy City Movement	2013	17
		Future Pastoral Forum	2011	14
		Christian Social Responsibility	2011	9
	Regional	Taegu Christian Federation	2014	10
	Non-Protestant religions	Patriotic Catholics for Korea	2014	17
		National Buddhist Council for the Security of Korea	2014	13
Thematic foci	'Health'[c]	People's Solidarity for a Healthy Society	2013	34
		Korean Association of Family and Health (KAFAH)	2016	7
	Family	Parents' Alliance for Building the Next Generation	2014	27
	Military	Just Military Human Right Institute	2016	15
	'Education'	School Parent's Union for Health and Family	2015	11
	Internet	Movement for the Establishment of a Bright Internet World	2011	10
	'Research'[c]	Research Center for Freedom and Human Rights	2017	10
		Christian Think Tank	2014	9
Media		Korean Association of Church Communication (KACC)	2011	12

Types and subtypes	Name of social movement organization (SMO)	Year of first appearance at protest events	Number of partici-pations in protest events[b]
Politics	Korea Christian Public Policy Council	2013	9
	National Prayer Breakfast	2007	8
	Parliamentary Mission Alliance	2007	8

[a] Out of a total of 513 protest events, SMOs were mentioned in 484 cases. [b] SMOs with appearances ≥ 7 were included in this table. The total number of SMOs appearing in the PEA dataset is 296. Overview of further frequencies: SMOs appearing once: 161 groups; twice: 44 groups; three times: 21; four times: 8; five times: 14; six times: 5; seven times: 5. [c] The categories 'health', 'education', and 'research' are put in quotation marks due to the biased ways these action areas are used by anti-LGBT actors.

Only a small number of these most active SMOs got active against LGBT rights in the early 2000s. The Presbyterian *T'onghap* denomination first participated in a protest event in 2001, followed by the CCK which joined for the first time in 2003.[6] The *National Prayer Breakfast* and *Parliamentary Mission Alliance*, two organizations with links to the political arena, appeared at protest events in the course of the contentious episode on the first attempt at introducing a comprehensive anti-discrimination law in 2007. A large number of groups entered the stage of collective anti-LGBT activism in 2010 and 2011 respectively. During this time, the anti-discrimination law was proposed for the second time in the National Assembly, and there were controversies on the Military Criminal Code and the Seoul Student Human Rights Ordinance. Both preexisting organizations such as the *Council of Presbyterian Churches in Korea* (*Hanjangch'ong*) and the *Korean Association of Church Communication* (KACC), as well as relatively new actors such as the *Esther Prayer Movement* and the *Coalition for Moral Sexuality* joined at that time. As I will demonstrate, these latter two organizations in particular centrally shaped the formative years of the Korean anti-LGBT movement. Judging from the rising number protest events and actors continuously involved in collective action against LGBT rights by this time, one definitely can speak of a social movement. The increase and dynamization of actors participating in this fight continued especially from 2013 onwards when the number of protest events started rising significantly to reach peaks in 2015–2017. It is in this period that further SMOs, which would prove highly industrious, appeared for the first time. Among these are, for example, the church association CCIK, the Presbyterian *Hapdong* denomination, the newly established *People's Solidarity for a Healthy Society* and the *Parents' Alliance*

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6   The data on the years of first participation in anti-LGBT protest events need to be analyzed with caution, since the PEA dataset relies on Kukmin Daily reports. There may be a journalistic bias in the sense that Kukmin Daily did not report on all anti-LGBT protest events, especially in the early years of anti-LGBT activism where attention (from both the media and would-be anti-LGBT actors) had not been that great (cf. chapter 5). I nevertheless argue that the available PEA data can give a good overview of newly emerging and newly joining anti-LGBT SMOs.

for Building the Next Generation, as well as the *Holy City Movement*, an evangelization initiative following a model of "spiritual warfare evangelism" (Han 2015, 135).[7]

I have discerned five main types of anti-LGBT organizations: (1) groups or alliances with an explicit anti-LGBT focus, (2) SMOs with a clear religious focus, (3) groups superficially exhibiting secular thematic foci while in fact having a religious connection or foundation as well, (4) media actors, and (5) actors with a political orientation in the strict sense. In the following, I will shortly give an overview of the SMOs that are part of the first three categories, focusing in each case on one or two examples in greater detail. Media actors will be treated in chapter 11 and a thorough analysis of political actors ensues in section 10.5 of this chapter.

SMOs with an explicit anti-LGBT focus

The first category includes SMOs that centrally focus on LGBT issues, which can be discerned from the organizations' names and actions. Actors in this category can be divided into three subtypes: single groups that generally concentrate on anti-LGBT activities, so-called 'ex-gay' groups, and alliances of anti-LGBT SMOs that have either been created on a long-term basis or – more commonly – emerge on an ad-hoc basis in reaction to a specific contentious LGBT issue. I have already analyzed the particularities of Korean ex-gay groups in chapter 8.1, which is why they shall not be treated again at this point.

The most active single SMO with a general focus on LGBT issues is the *Coalition for Moral Sexuality* (CFMS), led by the former Busan University physics professor Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng. While being present at many protest events and appearing in numerous news reports on anti-LGBT activities, the actual structure of CFMS remains obscure. The SMO features a website which, however, does not contain much content, including only one text, on the purpose of the organization, articles of the association, and a link to a site where you can become a member and/or donate. According to this online presence, CFMS became a corporation in November 2021,[8] but the organization has existed since at least 2010 when it first appeared at an anti-LGBT protest event. The website enumerates some concrete cooperations of CFMS, showing its diverse links into the conservative and Protestant circles. The anti-LGBT SMOs works together with other groups such as the *Young Koreans' Alliance 'Stand up Straight'* (*chŏn'guk ch'ŏngnyŏn yŏnhap 'paro sŏda'*), the *Korean Conservative School* (*han'guk posujuŭi hakkyo*), and *Heavenly Wedding* (*hebŭnli weding*), an organization preparing young people for matrimony. Interestingly,

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7   'Strategic level spiritual warfare' is an evangelization model proposed by C. Peter Wagner (1986), through which he aimed to contribute to the evangelical church growth movement. This missionary model has been criticized for its inaccurate rendering of biblical contents, for its nationalist and political bias, and its overall approach, which relies heavily on othering and creating fears of issues such as demons and witchcraft (Van der Meer 2008).

8   While there is no information on this anti-LGBT SMO's process of obtaining legal recognition, one should note that pro-LGBT groups have faced difficulties in gaining such a status in the past. For example, the *Beyond the Rainbow Foundation* (*piondwi mujigae chaedan*), a foundation raising funds to support the LGBT movement, underwent three years of legal battles to officially register as a charity until the Korean Supreme Court ruled the rejection by governmental agencies illegal in August 2017 (Human Rights Watch 2017, August 4).

the CFMS website does not explicitly mention that the organization has a Christian foundation and that it predominantly fights against homosexuality. Article 3 of the SMO's regulations just vaguely states the following as goals:

> The goal of this association is to contribute to the creation of a society without sexual harassment and sexual violence through improving the right sense of sex culture, and in order for such a right sex culture to take roots, to conduct research and back this up with related knowledge and information so that sound and healthy individuals, and a sound and healthy society can be formed. (CFMS 2022a)

When looking into the PEA data, however, it turns out that the prevention of sexual violence was not part of the activities at protest events in which the CFMS participated. Rather, the emphasis lays on sex culture, as Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng outlines in a slightly more extensive text on the group's purposes: "As obscene culture spreads around the world and the right sex culture collapses, this culture causes damages such as family destruction, youth derailment, and increased suicide rates" (Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng, in CFMS 2022b). Raising such an unspecific threat fits into the narratives discerned in chapter 7.5, where I have analyzed that anti-LGBT activists frame their activism as a fight against unwelcome and allegedly un-Korean foreign influences. Kil continues writing: "Fortunately, there are still a few pious people in Korean society from all walks of life, so I think we can prevent sexual collapse if we work together." According to Kil, it is these special people that can safeguard Korea and guarantee a sublime position to their home country. "Korea is striving to become a civic group that takes the lead in becoming a morally advanced country" (Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng, in CFMS 2022b).

The example of the *Coalition for Moral Sexuality* reveals several aspects that have already been discerned in previous parts of this study and that will, as this chapter shall demonstrate, continue surfacing in the analysis of anti-LGBT SMOs. The online presence of CFMS creates rather diffuse threats while at the same time claiming scientificity. Moreover, the SMO keeps its ideological and religious background somewhat vague, which could be seen as a strategic move to increase one's compatibility with as many parts of the general public as possible. The website also, however, puts forward framing elements that may speak to politically and religiously conservative Christians, fueling nationalist attitudes that become merged with Christian self-adulation.

From an organizational perspective, CFMS remains a rather opaque group. As is the case with many anti-LGBT SMOs, concrete information on membership and the financial situation are hard to get by. When I asked representatives of anti-LGBT SMOs for precise numbers of members during my qualitative research interviews they would answer evasively or just state vaguely that they have a broad number of supporters. While CFMS along with some other anti-LGBT SMOs feature official group regulations and organizational charts, the substance of all this remains dubious. The CFMS's organigram, for instance, depicts manifold functions but fails to name actual persons occupying these positions. In the case of CFMS, the person that is associated with the group in most cases is Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng – one if not the central figure of the overall anti-LGBT movement in Korea. It seems that it is not so much the SMO, its inner workings and outward semblance that count, but rather the very fact that an organization exists – alongside many others

which, in unison, create the outside image of abundance and plurality. While this study cannot make conclusive inferences on the actual organizational nature and substance of anti-LGBT SMOs, it is fair to claim that the individuals behind these organizations like Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng play important roles for the movement as will be elaborated in chapter 10.4.

As outlined at the beginning of this chapter, this outward multiplicity manifests itself particularly in the alliances that are formed as part of the Korean anti-LGBT movement. Judging from the alliances' names and actions, they also have a special focus on LGBT issues – as distinguished from (mostly pre-existing) SMOs that deal with this topic only as a part of their overall actions or groups that pretend to have another thematic focus while actually predominantly fighting against LGBT rights, as I shall expound after the now following closer look at anti-LGBT alliances.

By far the most active alliance within the anti-LGBT movement is the already mentioned *Tongbanyŏn* with 46 protest participations since 2017 and self-proclaimed 250 to just above 300 member organizations. Like Tongbanyŏn, the largest part of anti-LGBT alliances is made up of organizations, that is, actors that (claim to) represent collectives in a formalized way. There are also, however, alliances consisting of individuals such as the *National Alliance of Professors against Homosexuality, Same-Sex Marriage, and the Constitutional Amendment*, which has taken part in anti-LGBT events on 15 occasions since 2017, the comparatively inactive *Teachers' Alliance against Homosexuality* with only one participation in 2018, and the *Sinch'on Youth Solidarity against Homosexuality*, which got active two times against the *Seoul Queer Culture Festival* (SQCF) in 2014. The majority of alliances emerged on an ad-hoc basis, in reaction to pro-LGBT events or pro-LGBT law proposals. The SQCF in particular has caused the establishment of alliances such as the *Solidarity Movement to Stop the Homosexual Queer Frenzy Festival* (2015 only), the *Citizens' Alliance against the Usage of Seoul Plaza by the Homosexuality Festival* (2016 only), and the *Preparatory Committee for the Citizens' Convention against the Seoul Plaza Homosexuality Queer Festival*, which convened 7 times ahead of the SQCF in 2016–2019 and consisted of prominent figures of the anti-LGBT movement. These coordinative efforts are noteworthy in themselves, showcasing the significance granted to the fight against this form of queer visibility (cf. also chapter 5.3). The very names of the alliances are telling. They engage in debasing and othering when using terms such as 'frenzy', they attempt to especially problematize the usage of Seoul Plaza, a central and symbolic square in the capital city, and they highlight the fact that they fight against homosexuality when peculiarly prepending this term to the perhaps not so well-known concept of 'queer' (referring to a "homosexuality queer festival"). Further alliances emerged on a short-term basis around concerted campaigns against specific topics like the media representation of transsexuality in 2012, the inclusion of homosexuality in school textbooks in 2013, gay men in the army in 2016, and a large collective effort to reform the *National Human Rights Commission of Korea Law* in a way to scrap its anti-discrimination provision for non-heterosexual people in 2016.[9]

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9   The corresponding alliances are the following: *National Alliance against KBS which Instigates Transgender and Transsexuals, Task Force on the Problem of Promoting Homosexuality in School Textbooks, National Alliance against the Legalization of Homosexuality in the Military,* and the *1 Million People Signa-*

Alongside the diversification regarding the topics treated by collective actors with an anti-LGBT focus, two further trends exist: local alliance-building beyond Seoul and the creation of specialized subgroups within existing larger organizations. Local initiatives include the *Busan Citizen Alliance against Homosexuality*, the *Ansan City Homosexuality Countermeasure Citizens' Alliance*, and the *Alliance of South Kyŏngsang Province Citizens against the Bad Student Human Rights Ordinance*, which all appeared just once or twice at protest events. The *Homosexuality Countermeasure Task Force of the Taegu Christian Federation* is both a local actor and a subgroup of an overarching Protestant association. Other Christian institutions also created such subdivisions. The *CCK Task Force on the Problem of Homosexuality*[10] was active on 5 occasions in the years 2010 and 2011, while the *Task Force to Stop Homosexuality of the Presbyterian Hapshin Denomination* only appeared once in 2017.

All these alliances and subgroups bespeak the dynamism of the Protestant Right. If need be, there is the capability to mobilize many groups in a comparatively short period of time. Anti-LGBT issues seem to have diffused extensively and gained greater awareness with local actors as well. At the same time, most of these initiatives appear to have a low durability. Short-term and ad-hoc organizational structures make sense in campaigns revolving around a specific policy. Yet in other cases, alliance building seems to have quickly lost its appeal considering the very low numbers of participations in protest events. In the case of such alliances, one can again question the substance of these cooperative efforts, also in terms of the often-claimed high numbers of participating groups. After all, putting one's organization's name on a list is a low-cost but potentially effective action form, since it creates the outward image of a large and well-organized support base. The *International Countermeasure Committee for Homosexuality Problems* extends this image even into the transnational arena, claiming that many actors worldwide are active in this field. When investigating the background of this SMO in detail, however, it turns out that it is rather inactive as well (appearing only twice in the PEA data, in 2018 & 2019), that it does not provide information on its concrete international connections, and that it is, judging from the contents treated and persons present at events, a subsidiary of the Korean 'ex-gay' movement.

Tongbanyŏn, the *National Alliance against Homosexuality and Same-Sex Marriage*, in contrast, has been consistently active since its establishment. The website of this alliance testifies bustling activities, claiming support from 22 Protestant denominations and a total of 298 groups (as of May 2023). There is an FAQ section, a list enumerating concrete activities, photos, and reports from events. Press releases and advertisements can be found, as well as plenty materials that can be used for manifold anti-LGBT purposes. *Tongbanyŏn* has an office located in Seoul's Sŏch'o district as well as a special fund for financing anti-LGBT activities – evidence of its relatively high degree of professionalization. The internet presence even provides a breakdown of how the financial resources of a *Guarding Ethics and Truth for Freedom Fund* (*chayu chilli suho kigŭm*) were used, claiming a total amount of 149.4 million Korean Won (≈ 108.000 EUR / 115.000 USD). Despite its

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ture Movement for the Reform of the National Human Rights Commission Law which Promotes Homosexuality.

10   This subgroup also appears with a slightly extended name: *CCK Task Force on the Problem of Homosexuality and the NHRCK*.

flawed transparency, lacking clear sources and timeframes, this financial breakdown is noteworthy as a rare example showing how available funds are (claimed to be) actually used. In the case of *Tongbanyŏn*, money is mainly spent on lawsuits, communication, and research.[11] Various eminent activists of the anti-LGBT movement participate at events organized by this alliance. It is, however, one prominent figure who is mentioned most often in relation to *Tongbanyŏn*: again, Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng.[12] Interestingly, the *Coalition for Moral Sexuality*, where Kil also occupies a leading position, has a very similar website design and logo. This linkage shows that Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng plays an important role, occupying different functions within the anti-LGBT movement, as do other central figures. Chapter 10.4 will elaborate on this insight.

SMOs with an explicit religious background: the unifying potential of anti-LGBT activism

The main activity of the SMOs just presented is the fight against homosexuality and related topics. Besides this explicit anti-LGBT focus, these organizations all also feature an implicit Christian background. The case of CFMS reveals that some SMOs are reticent to openly declare such an embeddedness in conservative Protestantism. Another important portion of the Korean anti-LGBT movement, however, does not conceal this aspect of their identity – quite to the contrary. Religion is at the core of these organizations, many of which have existed long before anti-LGBT activism has begun in Korea. These religious actors include whole Protestant or evangelical denominations, associations in which these denominations cooperate, Christian-based NGOs, local church branches, and non-Protestant religious actors from Buddhism and Catholicism.

Of the 296 SMOs discerned through protest event analysis in the period 2000–2020, 152 (52.7%) have, judging from their names, an apparent religious focus. This does not mean that others do not have a similarly religious orientation, but it is hard to tell just from their labels. The vast majority of these 152 clearly religious SMOs have a Protestant background. There are only a few Buddhist and Catholic groups in the anti-LGBT movement like the quite active *Patriotic Catholics for Korea* (17 protest participations since 2014) and the *National Buddhist Council for the Security of Korea* (13 participations). The mere cooperation of Protestant actors with Catholic and Buddhist ones is surprising, since Protestants have, historically and recently, fostered highly conflictive relations with other religions in South Korea (cf. Kim, Sŏng-ho 2014; O, Kang-nam 2008; Kim, Chongsuh

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11   The alliance states that this fund was started on 7 December 2018. Without providing any time-frame, they claim having collected in total 149.422.434 KRW through membership fees and donations. Of this amount, roughly 44.8 million KRW have been used for "educational advertisements", 40.8 million KRW for supporting lawsuits of "victims", 28.8 million KRW for supporting laws, 21.3 million KRW for supporting "research on the legalization of homosexuality and countermeasures against this", 10 million KRW for supporting a lawsuit for abolishing an unspecified student human rights ordinance, and 3.8 million KRW for office work and administration (Tongbanyŏn, n.d.).

12   The PEA dataset evinces this fact as well as a rough google search. When entering the search terms 'Tongbanyŏn' and 'representative' (*taep'yo*, a term commonly used in news reports for leading activists from a specific group) or 'chairman' (*hoejang*), Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng is by far the person that comes up most.

2007; No, Ch'i-jun 1998). These conflicts come to the fore even in the context of anti-LGBT protest events. The PEA data shows that in 2014, in the course of Pope Francis' visit to Korea, the *Movement to Inform about the Character of the Catholic Church* was established – a group which combined anti-Catholic attitudes with anti-LGBT stances (cf. Yu, Yong-dae 2014, August 31). Buddhism has also come under fire from anti-LGBT activists. In 2015, for example, former Seoul mayor Park Won-soon was accused of pro-Buddhist and pro-LGBT attitudes when the city government allowed Seoul Queer Culture Festival to take place. At a protest event, the CCIK leader held up a poster reading "Homosexuality mayor [sic!] and Buddhist mayor OUT" (cited in Yu & Paek 2015, May 26).

Despite these partially conflictive relations, the fight against LGBT rights seems to unify these actors irrespective of their religious – and also: denominational – differences. The Protestant churches in Korea are themselves notoriously split and antagonistic to each other. Korean Presbyterianism alone counts more than 100 denominations. There have been efforts to overcome dissent and join forces, especially in order to exert greater influence in socio-political matters. The *Christian Council of Korea* (CCK) was founded with this purpose in the late 1980s (Cho, Kyuhoon 2014), but split up in 2012 owing to internal conflicts, creating another interdenominational association, the *Communion of Churches in Korea* (CCIK). These internal rifts notwithstanding, CCK and CCIK have continued to cooperate in the fight against LGBT rights, as have the leading circles of different Korean denominations, for instance, in collaborative bodies such as the *Council of Presbyterian Churches in Korea* (*Hanjangch'ong*, 22 protest participations since 2011) and the *Council of Christian Church Leaders in Korea* (2 participations, in 2016 & 2017). In short, LGBT issues have the potential of conciliating and unifying traditionally adversarial religious actors.

Conservative doctrines and fundamentalist interpretations of Biblical texts may create common ground on the Christian side of religious presence in Korea – even in cases where other doctrinal conflicts continue to play a role in internal disputes. For non-Christian actors, that is, Buddhist and Confucian groups within the anti-LGBT movement, however, this explanation for cooperation is not convincing.[13] I argue that it is, rather than similar religious orientations, the matching political and ideological attitudes that bring together actors from diverse religious backgrounds. As for the *Patriotic Catholics for Korea*, for example, Schattle and Lee (2019, 213) convincingly demonstrate that this SMO has a clear inclination to the political right, promoting anti-communism, neo-liberalism, and partially also extreme right-wing ideology.[14] This group is not formally affiliated with the Catholic Church in Korea, making it a special-interest group within its religious community. The same seems to be true for the *National Buddhist Council for the Security of Korea* (Nabuco), a group established in 2006 by former high-

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13   Further non-Christian religious actors in the PEA dataset beyond the already mentioned ones include the *Busan Buddhist Association* (2 appearances at protest events in 2017 and 2019) and the *National Confucian Alliance* (in total 3 participations, in 2016 and 2017).

14   Schattle and Lee (2019) studied two groups within Korean Catholicism featuring diverging political orientations. The *Catholic Priests' Association for Justice* (CPAJ), *ch'ŏnjugyo chŏngŭi kuhyŏn chŏn'guk sajedan*) represents, in a way, a counter program to the actions and ideology of the *Patriotic Catholics for Korea*. CPAJ promotes liberal democracy, human rights, and social welfare. They occupied a critical position against the Park Geun-hye presidency – in stark contrast to the *Patriotic Catholics for Korea* who fiercely defended Park also and especially after her ouster in 2017.

ranking army members in opposition to the Roh Moo-hyun government, championing anti-North Korea and pro-US American stances (Nabuco 2006, October 30). This ideological congruence appears to enable cooperation despite the hostilities geared towards Buddhism and Catholic Church by parts of the Protestant Right.

As chapter 9 has shown, opposition against homosexuality and related topics have become pervasive elements of common sense within large parts of conservative Protestantism in Korea. As the interreligious cooperation on the actor level reveals, this modified *senso comune* does not only appeal to theologically conservative individuals and groups in the religious realm, but also – and importantly so – in the arena of sociopolitical convictions. The social mechanism of identity shift is observable in this context, too. When a religious (or any type of) organization joins the anti-LGBT movement and remains active over a longer period of time, one can assume that at some point, this new SMO has been convinced of the need to fight against LGBT rights, and as a consequence, implements this newly adopted identity through its actions. However, entering collective action around a certain topic does not happen out of nothing. Groups and individuals have to be motivated to join the ranks. I argue that these processes function through the mechanisms of brokerage and appropriation. The way brokerage exactly works shall be treated in the following subchapter on the movement's networks. Suffice it to say for now that central actors emerge who successfully convince others to join and thus appropriate them for the movement's purposes.

Taking the example of denominations and interdenominational associations of Korean Protestantism, we can broadly differentiate between two types of activation for anti-LGBT purposes. On the one hand, there are some actors that joined anti-LGBT collective action at an early stage. Among these vanguard actors are, most prominently, the CCK and the *Presbyterian Church of Korea T'onghap* (PCK). The CCK was first involved in an anti-LGBT protest event in 2003 and has remained an active part of the movement ever since. The PCK, in contrast, displays a single participation as early as 2001, but after that, only resurfaces in 2014. In the 2000s and early 2010s, before the split-off of the CCIK, the CCK represented the majority of theologically conservative Protestant and evangelical denominations in Korea.[15] One can therefore assume that the anti-LGBT actions of CCK were met with approval from the denominational leaderships. The CCK, along with some other early acting SMOs like the *Esther Prayer Movement* and the *Coalition for Moral Sexuality*, thus occupied a crucial function in the formation of the Korean anti-LGBT movement. They acted as trailblazers, as agenda setters and early disseminators of frames directed against equal rights for LGBT people in Korea. They set the stage for what would become a growing, dynamic, and indeed successful anti-emancipatory movement embedded in the Protestant Right.

Other parts of the Protestant Right, however, only joined the movement at later stages. I argue that this second group became involved in anti-LGBT activism not so

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15   In contrast to the CCK, the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCK), the oldest Protestant church association in Korea founded in 1924, is considered rather progressive these days. Besides relatively liberal denominations such as the Anglican Church of Korea and the Presbyterian *Kijang* denomination, however, NCCK also includes conservative churches such as the Presbyterian *T'onghap* denomination and the evangelical *Assemblies of God of Korea* as of December 2022 (NCCK n.d.).

much out of pre-existing intrinsic volition to deal with the issue in the first place, but rather through the influence of already existing anti-LGBT actors. The early actors paved the way for subsequent ones, preparing and propagating a certain way of thinking, which, by and by, gained acceptance and soon prevailed within the Protestant Right. Organizations like the CCK played an important role in attracting more groups into the movement. While the CCK had already occupied a powerful position and could thus make use of its connections into the Protestant Right, the movement as a whole was, arguably, not in such a position – at least in its early stages. A common social movement strategy in such circumstances is attempting to win over potent actors for one's goals. Such an *appropriation* can be expected to be most successful with actors to whom links already exist and who hold similar ideological views (Vasi 2011). In the case of the Korean anti-LGBT movement, this process is best observable in the way denominational leaders and general assemblies of Protestant churches increasingly joined the ranks, contributing to the maturing process of anti-LGBT collective action (cf. the network analysis in the next section).

Table 11 summarizes all Protestant and evangelical denominations as well as subgroups that have participated in protest events according to the PEA data. The increasing involvedness of denominations is reflected in their leaders and representatives participating in protest events, especially after 2010, but also in the way these Protestant churches formally positioned themselves against homosexuality and related subjects. Such official declarations made by general assemblies have become commonplace since 2015. The Presbyterian *T'onghap* general assembly, for example, expressed its rejection of homosexuality on three occasions in 2015, 2017, and 2019. The 2017 declaration of *T'onghap* included an explicit prohibition for homosexuals and supporters of homosexuals to enter the denomination's theological universities, and announced disciplinary measures for professors should they express pro-LGBT opinions. The general assembly opposed the anti-discrimination law and demanded that the criminalization of gay soldiers in the Military Criminal Code remain unchanged (Yi & Ch'oe 2017, September 20). In 2017, the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church *Hapsin* decided to expel pastors and elders in case they support or promote homosexuality. Grounds for this punishment were also stipulated. Among them are the baptism of an unrepenting homosexual, officiating a same-sex marriage, engaging in homosexual acts, and preaching positively about homosexuality. The chairman of the *Committee on the Prevention of Homosexuality of Hapsin*, Pastor Sim Hun-jin, chose strong words for justifying such grave disciplinary measures: "If we do not deal with the issue of homosexuality quickly, all Korean churches will die" (quoted in Yi, Hyŏn-u 2017, September 20). A year later, the general assembly of the *Presbyterian Church in Korean Paeksŏk & Daesin* put into action such a punitive measure by declaring the pro-LGBT pastor Lim Borah (*Yim Po-ra*) heretical (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2018, September 12; cf. also chapter 12 for the case of Pastor Lim Borah).

Table 11: Protestant and evangelical denominations active in the anti-LGBT movement

Denominations and subgroups	Members (*in million*)	Year of first participation	Number of participations	Official anti-LGBT declarations and statements (*selection*)
Presbyterian Church of Korea *T'onghap* - **Presbyterian Church of Korea *T'onghap* Emergency Task Force** - **Theological Educational Department of the General Assembly of Presbyterian *T'onghap* Denomination** - ***T'onghap* Cheju Branch**	2.3 (as of 2021)	2001 2016 2016 2018	10 1 1 1	General assembly declarations in 2015, 2017 (e.g., prohibiting homosexuals from entering seminaries), 2019
Lutheran Church in Korea - **International Lutheran Council**	0.002 (2019)	2009 2009	1 2	
Presbyterian Church in Korea *Paeksŏk*	1.5 (2021)	2010	6	General assembly declaration in 2015; Joint statement with *Hapdong* in 2015
Presbyterian Church in Korea *Hapdong* - ***Hapdong* Theological Seminary** - **Gwangju South Chŏlla Province Council of *Hapdong*** - **North Chŏlla Province Council of *Hapdong***	2.3 (2021)	2013 2010 2014 2014	20 1 1 1	General assembly declarations in 2018, 2019; Joint statement with *Paeksŏk* in 2015
***Kosin* Presbyterian Church in Korea**	0.38 (2022)	2015	6	General assembly declarations in 2019
Korean Methodist Church - **Homosexuality Task Force of the Korean Methodist Church**	1.2 (2022)	2015 2017	5 1	General assembly declaration in 2015

Denominations and subgroups	Members (in million)	Year of first participation	Number of participations	Official anti-LGBT declarations and statements (selection)
Korea Baptist Convention - **Taejŏn Baptist Theological College** - **Future Forum of the Korean Baptist Church**	0.52 (2020)	2015 2001 2018	5 2 1	Discussion at general assembly on whether to issue an official anti-LGBT declaration in 2016
Presbyterian Church in Korea *Daesin*	0.06 (2018)	2016	7	
Korean Presbyterian Church *Hapsin* - **Committee on the Prevention of Homosexuality of *Hapsin***	0.13 (2021)	2016 2017	9 2	General assembly declaration in 2012 (punishing support for homosexuality)
Korea Evangelical Holiness Church Association	0.4 (2020)	2017	1	2017 declaration
Presbyterian Church in Korean *Paeksŏk & Daesin* (merger of *Paeksŏk* and *Daesin* denominations)	n/a	2018	1	Declaring pro-LGBT pastor Lim Borah heretical in 2018
Presbyterian Church of Korea *Hapdong Hansŏng*	n/a	2019	1	

Note: Data on membership stems from the denominations' websites; the remaining information was taken from the PEA database, thus covering the years 2000–2020 (April). The spelling of the denomination's names (e.g., *T'onghap*) follows the McCune-Reischauer romanization system. The romanized spellings used by denominations themselves may differ.

These examples demonstrate that anti-LGBT positions have made their way into the institutional fabric of Protestant churches in Korea. Previously immanent anti-LGBT attitudes based on conservative Bible interpretations have been translated into concrete rules of Protestant denominations. Contravening these regulations results in sanctions for church members. The newly formalized denominational anti-LGBT rules do not only have potential consequences for individuals, though. They also serve to strengthen the power basis of the anti-LGBT movement as a whole. Besides the actual exercise of punitive power, denominational anti-LGBT declarations and regulations also have symbolic importance for the movement, for they lend credence and legitimacy to anti-LGBT attitudes and actions. This concrete endorsement by high-ranking religious bodies raises these issues to another level of importance within religious communities. For example, the fact that anti-LGBT SMOs like *Tongbanyŏn* claim denominational support on their website is evidence of the symbolic value of church backing. Of course, easier access to

material support can also be a side-effect, as well as a greater willingness of church members to take action.

Within Korean Protestantism, however, it is not only denominations and interdenominational organizations that become drawn into the anti-LGBT movement. Other lower-level religious-based groups have also joined the fight. Among these are regional church branches such as the *Taegu Christian Federation* (10 protest participations since 2014) and groups with diverse thematic foci. This latter category includes groups like the proselytizing *Holy City Movement* and its local branches and two organizations led by Pastor Kim Kyu-ho, which claim having no denominational affiliations: the group *Christian Social Responsibility* was established in the course of the emergence of the New Right, claiming as goals to save both Korean churches and Korea as a whole from crises (Christian Social Responsibility 2004, November 22) and the *Network of the Chosen*, a group founded in 2010 by centrist pastors to instill pride in people and thus advance churches and the nation (Cho, Chun-yŏng 2010, November 2).

Another organization, which started off with a different focus but soon jumped on the anti-LGBT bandwagon is the *Esther Prayer Movement*. The latter group was established in 2007 with the initial goals of creating a holy country, achieving unification and the salvation of North Korea, and conducting missionary work with North Korean refugees as well as Muslims in Islamic countries and Jews in Israel. According to its website, the group also engages in incessant prayers to overcome sins like prostitution, abortion, and homosexuality. Esther Prayer Movement claims to be particularly active in the domains of media and culture to reach its goals, but it also strives to create a 'Jesus Army' (Esther Prayer Movement, n.d.). The progressive newspaper Hankyoreh accused Esther Prayer Movement of spreading fake news and thus fueling hatred against refugees and homosexuals (Pak, Chun-yong 2018, September 27). In fact, the organization can be called radical, considering what it writes about its activities on its website: a subgroup prays every Thursday "to break Islam, which spreads quickly in Korea and all over the world, and for the salvation and recovery of 1.7 billion Muslims" (ibid.). Esther Prayer Movement may be more radical than the self-proclaimed 'centrist' Network of the Chosen. What they definitely agree on, however, is the rejection of homosexuality. Therefore, also on the level of subgroups of Korean Protestantism, hostility against LGBTs becomes a common denominator despite possible dissent in other areas. Yet, these SMOs are not all alike in the way they approach LGBT issues. To a certain extent, we can observe a 'division of labor' and specialization among these groups. While the Esther Prayer Movement has a broader focus, also and particularly in terms of anti-LGBT topics treated, the Network of the Chosen is mostly concerned with 'ex-gay' activities. The next section will shortly present further anti-LGBT SMOs which cultivate specialized thematic foci.

Anti-LGBT social movement organizations with thematic foci: anti-LGBT hostility in disguise

The anti-LGBT SMOs just presented have a clearly religious basis. Other organizations, as I am going to reveal, also feature a Protestant background – at least when considering the members and their religious actions during protest events such as praying or referring to the Bible and God. However, the type of SMOs that I present now does not have religion

as a significant characteristic. One could go as far as to claim that these groups wish to hide their religious background by foregrounding other aspects. Chapter 8.3 established that religious framing strategies go hand in hand with secular ones in order to convince as many people as possible to adopt an anti-LGBT orientation. I argue that the SMOs to be introduced in the following have similar goals and, in fact, are important actors for the implementation of the 'secular' framing approach promoted by the anti-LGBT movement.

Among the SMOs with the highest number of participations in protest events, six thematic foci could be discerned (cf. Table 10). These foci mirror, unsurprisingly, many of the frames prominently used by anti-LGBT actors: family, health, military, research, education, and the Internet. In the cases of the *Parents' Alliance for Building the Next Generation* and the *School Parent's Union for Health and Family*, for example, the representation of the specific interests, that is, of (school) parents, families, children, and young people lies at the heart of the activities – at least when judging from the names of the organizations. For the remaining SMOs in this category, such a distinct special interest representation is not evident. Rather, they promote specific issues such as keeping the Internet free from allegedly harmful contents (*Movement for the Establishment of a Bright Internet World*), keeping homosexuality out of the Korean army (*Just Military Human Right Institute [sic!]*), cultivating health (*People's Solidarity for a Healthy Society* and *Korean Association of Family and Health*), and promoting research (*Research Center for Freedom and Human Rights* and *Christian Think Tank*). Thematic overlaps exist between these groups, but the main focus is evident in each case. I will not delve into the organizational structures and concrete framing activities of each of these groups, since I extensively treat these aspects elsewhere in this study.[16] Rather, I would like to briefly elaborate on one of the most active anti-LGBT SMOs, the already mentioned *People's Solidarity for a Healthy Society* (PSHS).

Judging from the group's name, one would expect activities in the areas of healthcare and health-related policies. In fact, however, the group was founded in April 2013 in reaction to the LGBT-related provisions of the anti-discrimination law which was under discussion during that period (PSHS 2014, August 4). This means that right from the time of its establishment, PSHS featured an explicit focus on homosexuality. This is also reflected in the official regulations of PSHS. Article 2 of these regulations stipulates four purposes:

(1) Prevention of the spread of distorted sexual ethics such as homosexuality and bisexuality and establishment of sound sexual ethics. (2) Helping sexual minorities to improve their sexual awareness. (3) The protection of freedom of conscience and freedom of religion for the mental and spiritual health of the people [*kungmindŭl*]. (4) Stopping legislation that destroys sound sexual ethics and infringes on the freedom of conscience and the freedom of religion. (PSHS, n.d.)

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16   The way the Korean anti-LGBT movement deals with the topics of family, health, and military is covered in chapter 7.2, and research is part of chapter 8.3. Education and the role of the Internet and social media will be treated in chapter 11. For the topic of research, refer also to Baek Jo-yeon's (2018) Master's thesis on the 'scientific' anti-LGBT discourse created by the Protestant-based *Korean Sexology Research Association*.

It is noteworthy that PSHS does refer to health in its regulations when indirectly claiming in clause (3) that an infringement of the freedoms of conscience and religion could lead to mental and spiritual health problems. The sexual orientation and gender identity of LGBT people are also regarded as health issues. In article 14, PSHS elaborates on the organization's projected activities in the area of "helping sexual minorities to improve their sexual awareness" (see clause 2 above), writing that "the organization's door is always open to sexual minorities who want receive help to improve their sexual awareness and we fully support them until they recover their physical, mental, and spiritual health" (PSHS, n.d.). The terms 'improvement' and 'recovery' are euphemistic paraphrases for 'conversion therapy' or similar potentially harmful attempts to change people's sexual orientation and gender identity. As the network analysis will demonstrate, PSHS indeed fosters rather close relations with 'ex-gay' groups.

Interestingly, PSHS claims in article 4 that is has "no political intention whatsoever". The group maintains that "protecting and promoting the physical, mental, and spiritual health of Korean society is the only purpose of its existence" and even promises that "if it deviates from this principle, it will be dissolved immediately" (PSHS, n.d.). The SMO contradicts itself when claiming to be unpolitical, while at the same time specifying that it is going to intervene against pro-LGBT and related policy proposals. The chairman of PSHS, Han Hyo-gwan, ran as a candidate for the minor *Christian Liberal Unification Party* in the general elections in 2020 – further casting doubt on the assertion of being unpolitical.[17] Be that as it may, PSHS has soon developed into one of the most active anti-LGBT SMOs. The group has participated in 34 protest events since 2013. They operate a website and a blog, on which they often provide translated information on foreign affairs related to LGBT issues, and which already counted 1 million visitors one year after its establishment (PSHS 2014, August 4). PSHS featured a column in the online newspaper *Christian Daily*, and they are present on Facebook and run a channel on the Korean chatting app *KakaoTalk* (comparable to the *Telegram* app). The group's chairman frequently serves as a presenter and speaker at anti-LGBT events.[18]

It is smart of the *People's Solidarity for a Healthy Society* to use 'health' as its central earmark. This topic can be expected to appeal to a large public since everybody is interested in not falling ill. Of course, PSHS applies a rather broad interpretation of 'health', and a rather normative one at that. While they promote the view that homosexuality is a health problem, others, like the pro-LGBT movement, would argue that it is rather the practices of groups like PSHS that constitute a health hazard for LGBT people. Equally cunning is the usage of terms like 'people' and 'solidarity' in the group's name. In Korean, the word

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17   The details of the political involvement of anti-LGBT activists will be treated later in this chapter in section 10.5.

18   The exact structure, finances, and membership numbers of PSHS remain rather vague, though. The regulations only specify that the association has one chairperson and 10 advisors, and that there should be a "media response team" consisting of approximately 10 people (art. 10). The organization is headquartered in the city of Ch'unch'ŏn in Kangwŏn Province and branches of PSHS are claimed to be located in about 20 other cities and regions in South Korea, as well as in about 10 foreign countries (art. 9). Everyone who agrees with the purposes of PSHS can join (art. 5), but members are not required to pay membership fees. "[…] the necessary finances are covered solely by voluntary donations from members" (art. 12) (PSHS, n.d.).

for 'people', *kungmin*, carries the connotation of all people living in a country or nation, thus suggesting that the group represents a great many people and acts for the good of the nation. Additionally, the term 'solidarity' implies that these are collective efforts. Invoking solidarity is a call for compassion and support for those who are alleged to be endangered by LGBT rights and those who fight against them. A reframing akin to the term 'health' in the name of PSHS is done by other anti-LGBT SMOs as well. The name of the *Just Military Human Right Institute*, for instance, suggests that it is this group which promotes 'just' (read: correct, actual, real) human rights in the Korean army – as against established actors who follow the general concept of human rights, which is presented as potentially harmful due to the inclusion of LGBT rights. Chapter 8.1 offers a detailed analysis of the counterframing strategy used by anti-LGBT actors in the area of human rights.

The first impression of PSHS and other SMOs suggests that they specialize on general issues that are of concern to many people and that they act in the best interest of these people, granting these groups a secular and neutral outward appearance. A closer look, however, reveals a close alignment with conservative Protestantism and conservative socio-political attitudes. PSHS, for example, often reports about occurrences relevant to church interests in its blog and centrally fights against an alleged threat against religious freedom – which the group relates to the more broadly relatable concept of freedom of conscience. What is more, PSHS has close contacts to explicitly religious actors as the now following network analysis will demonstrate. As I have shown, the thematic focus of SMOs turns out to be vague, if not wholly empty, or merely interest-driven in many cases. For example, Baek (2018) showed for the *Korean Sexology Research Association* that they intend to create an image of objectivity and scientificity, but in fact, the group's efforts turn out to be unscientific in essence, and oriented towards the protection of special interests. After all, it becomes apparent that most SMOs that I have classified as having a thematic, non-religious focus are firmly embedded in conservative Protestantism. They pursue a certain socio-religio-political agenda, of which a central aspect consists of anti-LGBT politics, as in the case of the People's Solidarity for a Healthy Society. In fact, this latter SMO concentrates on anti-LGBT politics to an extent that one could also categorize it as a group with an explicit anti-LGBT focus like CFMS and *Tongbanyŏn*.

10.3 Analyzing the networks of Korean anti-LGBT SMOs: a crucial core within a growing multitude of actors

The previous subchapter presented a typology of organizational actors within the Korean anti-LGBT movement, including slightly more detailed descriptions of selected SMOs. I will now complement his typology by investigating the links among the roughly 300 SMOs that have joined anti-LGBT protest events from the year 2000 until April 2020. This network analysis will consist of three parts, which reflect the development of the movement as described in chapter 5. These three phases include (1) the emerging anti-LGBT network 2000–2012, (2) the years of dynamization 2013–2015, and (3) the consolidated actor network 2016–2020. The first and third parts cover the whole time period, the second focuses on each year separately in order to better understand the relational

dynamics during the growth period of the anti-LGBT movement. While the networks do show significant changes over time, a core of actors with high scores of centrality and degree (number of linkages) can be discerned. I argue that these latter SMOs serve as brokers, that is, actors who disseminate anti-LGBT values and who create new relations and thus amplify the movement both in terms of size and plurality of actor types. As a reminder: the ties this specific network analysis looks at hail from the PEA dataset, assuming that joint participation at, and/or organization of a protest event constitutes, or is indicative of a closer relation between the respective SMOs. A final remark on the concrete rendering of the networks before delving into the analysis. I decided to not depict the networks using the same design every time, but rather use different sizes of font, edges, and nodes, as well as colorings for the purpose of clarity and according to analytical needs. Proceeding in this way also reflects the fact that the layout of networks will vary even if using the exact same datasets. This is because the algorithms that configure the network layout all include a certain degree of randomness.[19] As a rule of thumb, one can say that the thicker and shorter the edges, the more interaction exists between the nodes. The bigger the nodes (and in some designs: the bigger the font), the more linkages this node has. Colorings (e.g., the shades of nodes and edges) are used to highlight different aspects in each design.

The network of anti-LGBT SMOs 2000–2012: a mixture of established actors and newly emerging anti-LGBT forces

The years 2000–2012 mark the initial phase and emergence of the Korean anti-LGBT movement. During this period, the overall number of protest events was still relatively low and activity was mainly centered around specific contentious occurrences. These include, for example, the removal of the classification of homosexuality as "harmful and obscene" in the *Youth Protection Act* in 2003, the first legislative attempts at introducing an anti-discrimination law in 2007 and 2010, the contention about the *Military Criminal Code* in 2010–2011 and the *Seoul Student Human Rights Ordinance* in 2011–2012.

The relations within the emerging anti-LGBT movement for the accumulated years 2000–2012 are shown in Figure 6. The network includes 36 actors (nodes) with a total of 161 connections (edges). Among the networks during the different time periods, this one depicts the highest density with an average distance of 1.99. This is also reflected in the visual appearance of the network in Figure 6. The actors are located in or around a single center where they lie relatively close to each other. Less important actors, that is, those with only a few connections, are situated farther away from the center. Yet, the overall structure of the network is quite compact, suggesting that the core cooperates relatively closely with most actors who are part of the web.

The two most important actors with the highest number of connections are the CCK and the *Esther Prayer Movement*. These two also feature the highest value of betweenness centrality, followed by the *Coalition for Moral Sexuality* (CFMS) and the *Christian Social*

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19   For all network renderings, I used the Yifan Hu algorithm provided by the network analysis software Gephi. I only slightly adjusted the positions of nodes in order to avoid overlaps and guarantee legibility.

Responsibility.[20] This means that these SMOs connect the greatest number of other actors through the shortest paths with each other. In other words, these actors can be assumed to function as brokers of the early anti-LGBT movement, which is also reflected by their central positions in this particular network. Of course, other SMOs also link actors around them, but not to the extent as the four groups mentioned.

Figure 6: Network of anti-LGBT actors 2000–2012
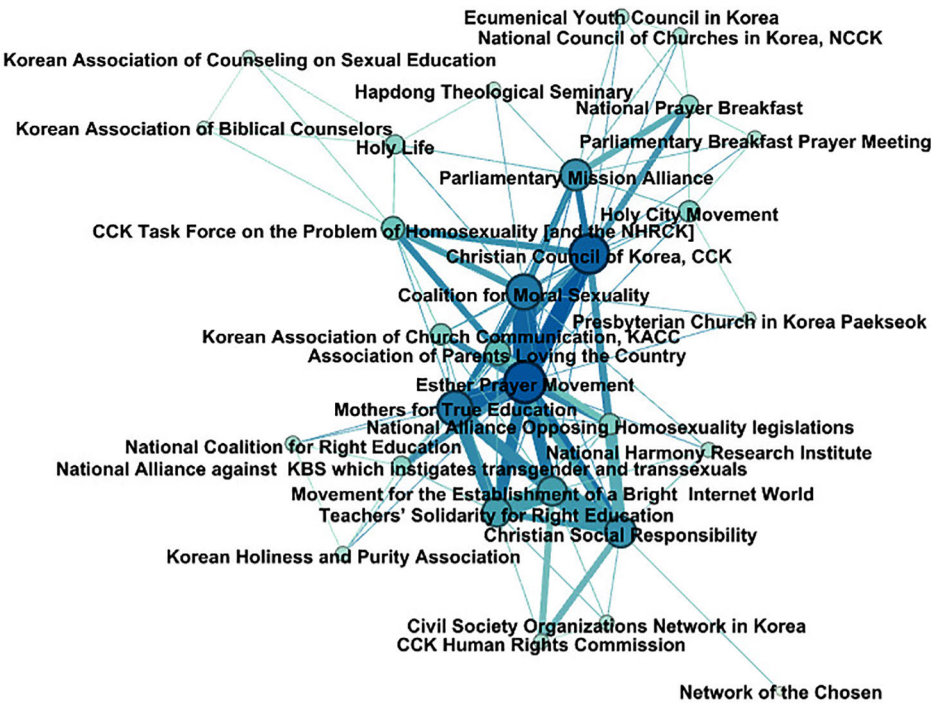
The most active and most central actors during the initial phase of the anti-LGBT movement thus include both established, pre-existing actors of conservative Korean Protestantism with a broader thematic focus like the CCK, as well as newly formed organizations which predominantly concentrate on anti-LGBT activities like CFMS and the Esther Prayer Movement. As the previous section demonstrated, these SMOs

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20   An exact overview of the values for betweenness centrality per SMO and network is left out here for the sake of brevity. Unfortunately, the network analysis software Gephi does only provide the non-standardized values for betweenness centrality. This means that the values are not given as a value within a set range (0–1). The calculations show that the highest values of betweenness centrality range between 71.4 for the network 2000–2012 and 2880.4 for the years 2016–2020 (see Table 12). The values differ this strongly due to the different numbers of nodes and edges in the respective networks. An inter-network comparison of these values would not make sense. They can only be meaningfully interpreted in relation to the values of betweenness centrality of SMOs within the same network.

entered the fight against LGBT rights at different points in time. Esther Prayer Movement and CFMS, for example, only started getting active in 2010 according to PEA data, but apparently soon developed momentum as important brokers within the emerging movement.

A plethora of other actors are also part of the network. Among them is *Holy Life*, an 'ex-gay' organization, which occupies are relatively marginal position in this network, but will become more central in later years. Other SMOs such as the *Holy City Movement* and the *Network of the Chosen*, which would develop into central actors of the movement but only played minor roles until 2012, are also already present. Furthermore, there are subdivisions of overarching actors of the Protestant Right such as the *CCK Task Force on the Problem of Homosexuality* and the *CCK Human Rights Commission*. Other specialized anti-LGBT organizations are part of the early web of interactions as well: the *National Alliance Opposing Homosexuality Legislations* and the *National Alliance against KSB Which Instigates Transgender and Transsexuals* (KBS is a major Korean TV station). However, these early explicitly anti-LGBT SMOs were only short-lived, campaign-driven phenomena. Topic-oriented SMOs in the area of family and education are also part of early activism: the *Mothers for True Education*, the *Teachers' Solidarity for Right Education*, and the *Association of Parents Loving the Country* all depict relatively high numbers of edges. Of note are the political actors in the network. The *Parliamentary Mission Alliance*, the *National Prayer Breakfast*, and the *Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast Meeting* in the top right corner are most closely linked to the CCK, suggesting that at least in the period until 2012, the CCK had the best contacts with the political sphere.

Anti-LGBT networking in 2013, 2014, and 2015: stretched, dense, and dicephalic networks

Activism against LGBT rights only reached low levels of activity and participation in the whole period of 2000–2012. This changed from 2013 onwards when more and more actors joined the movement, thereby also extending the anti-LGBT network. The year 2013 alone records more nodes than the whole period before (38 vs. 36), and these numbers climb up quickly in the years to follow (47 in 2014, 74 in 2015). The years 2013–2015 are characterized by significant quantitative and qualitative changes within the anti-LGBT movement. In order to fully grasp the extent and features of this change also in terms of altering network structures, I analyze these years separately and not in an accumulated fashion as in the previous and following sections. As outlined in chapter 5.3, the dynamization of the movement is mainly attributable to some prominent phenomena in this phase like the third attempt at introducing a comprehensive anti-LGBT law and the opposition against the *World Council of Churches*' assembly in Busan in 2013, as well as the controversy around the *Seoul Human Rights Charter* in 2014 and the massive protests against the Seoul Queer Culture Festival in 2014 and in the following year.

Figure 7: Network of anti-LGBT actors 2013
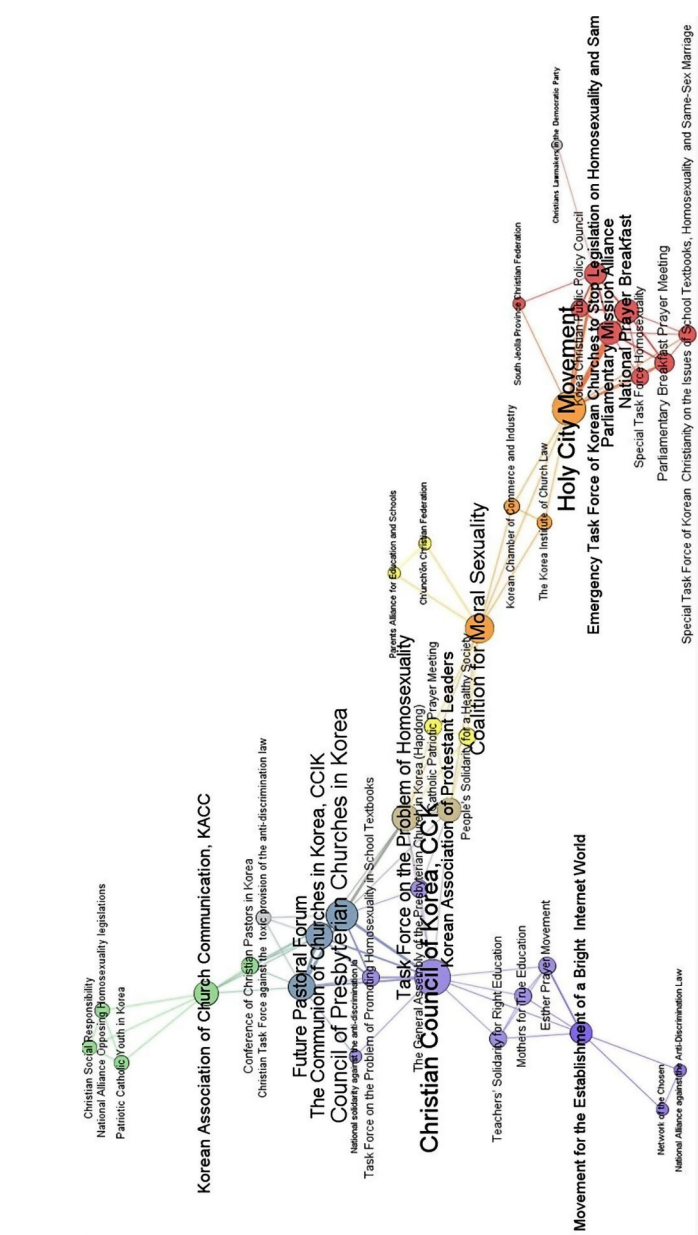
The configuration of the internal movement connections of the year 2013 is given in Figure 7. In this design, the size of the font and nodes increase according to the number of connections of an actor. The coloring is made in a way to highlight the different clusters of the network. The network of the year 2013 appears far less compact than the one of the previous period. The web is stretched out, which is reflected in the relatively high average distance (3.24). This means that altogether, there are, on average, fewer connections and

less intense exchanges per node than in the previous time period. The network shows two main clusters, one around the CCK and the other surrounding the Holy City Movement. These two SMOs also have the greatest number of links to other actors. By and large, however, they do not stand out much in terms of degree, that is, concerning their number of connections.

An aspect that does catch attention, though, is that there are several SMOs that function as sole connectors between different clusters of the movement. The *Coalition for Moral Sexuality*, located right in the middle of the two main clusters, is of particular interest. While CFMS features a lower degree than CCK or the Holy City Movement, it records by far the highest value of betweenness centrality. This means that CFMS operated as an important broker in 2013 and that this group is likely to have played a crucial role in broadening the movement in terms of alliance building, but also concerning the flow of information and diffusion of frames. Figure 7 captures well this special position of CFMS, without which there would be no connection between the two main clusters at all. This network thus also demonstrates that the Korean anti-LGBT movement of 2013 was still in the making. This year does not provide a clear-cut core of most important actors. 2013 was indeed the starting point for the massive increase of collective action against LGBT rights. But the concrete network formation of this year reveals that coordination was still lacking or ongoing. For example, it is surprising that CFMS and CCK, two major anti-LGBT actors, did not jointly participate in protest events. They are only linked through paths that count at least two intermediaries.

One could of course question the significance of this network, which just covers a limited number of actors in a relatively short period of time. I argue, however, that this network does have analytical value as a snapshot of a movement in the making. The two rather dense main clusters support this assumption. There are some remarkable aspects within these clusters to be mentioned. First, it is noteworthy that the 'political' actors like the *National Prayer Breakfast* and the *Parliamentary Mission Alliance* rally around the *Holy City Movement*, while the religious actors from the Protestant Right like the *Communion of Churches in Korea* (CCIK), the *Council of Presbyterian Churches in Korea*, and the Future Pastoral Forum gather around CCK. Second, CCIK, a split-off of CCK, appears for the first time in 2013. The two interdenominational church associations are normally only united in mutual disdain. But the fight against LGBT rights seems to enable them to overcome their conflict. They jointly took part in protest events and would also continue to do so in the following years. Third, some SMOs which would turn out to be very important anti-LGBT actors occupy rather insignificant positions or only count relatively few connections like the Esther Prayer Movement and PSHS. The 'ex-gay' group *Holy Life* is entirely absent. Forth, besides the CFMS, there are further brokers in the 2013 network. The CCK, the KACC, and the Holy City Movement all have relatively high values of betweenness centrality, and this is also visible in the network since they all function as single connectors to subclusters. The CCK, for example, creates a link to the *Esther Prayer Movement* and two education-focus groups, which, in turn, are connected to another broker, the *Movement for the Establishment of a Bright Internet World*, integrating two more otherwise unconnected groups.

The network of the following year, 2014, is denser than that of 2013, displaying an average distance of 2.4 (2013: 3.24). Figure 8 depicts a core web of more than twenty anti-

LGBT organizations which are situated quite close to each other. Additionally, there are some minor clusters with a more marginal position. While one cannot discern one clear center of the network, the *Coalition for Moral Sexuality* is the SMO with both the most connections and the highest value of betweenness centrality. This is easily observable in Figure 8, where 19 edges connect CFMS with other groups. Some other SMOs with an explicit anti-LGBT focus also emerge as central actors in the network of the year 2014 such as the *Esther Prayer Movement*, *Holy Life*, PSHS, and the *Taskforce on the Problem of Homosexuality*. Strangely enough, CCK, CCIK and other important actors of the Protestant Right are absent in this year. This could hint at a progressing professionalization of the movement. To some extent, established Protestant associations may have relied on, or assigned specialized SMOs with the lion's share of activism against LGBT rights. As the following networks will reveal, however, powerful actors within the Protestant Right remain active in the movement. Looking at the general configuration of the network in 2014, one sees many well-connected actors. Yet, it is noteworthy that there are not so many valued edges, that is, *multiple* contacts between actors, as displayed by some slightly thicker links in Figure 8. This means that while several anti-LGBT groups cooperate with many different partners in protest events, these relationships have not yet solidified. The consolidation of the movement does progress over time, however, as the next two networks will demonstrate.
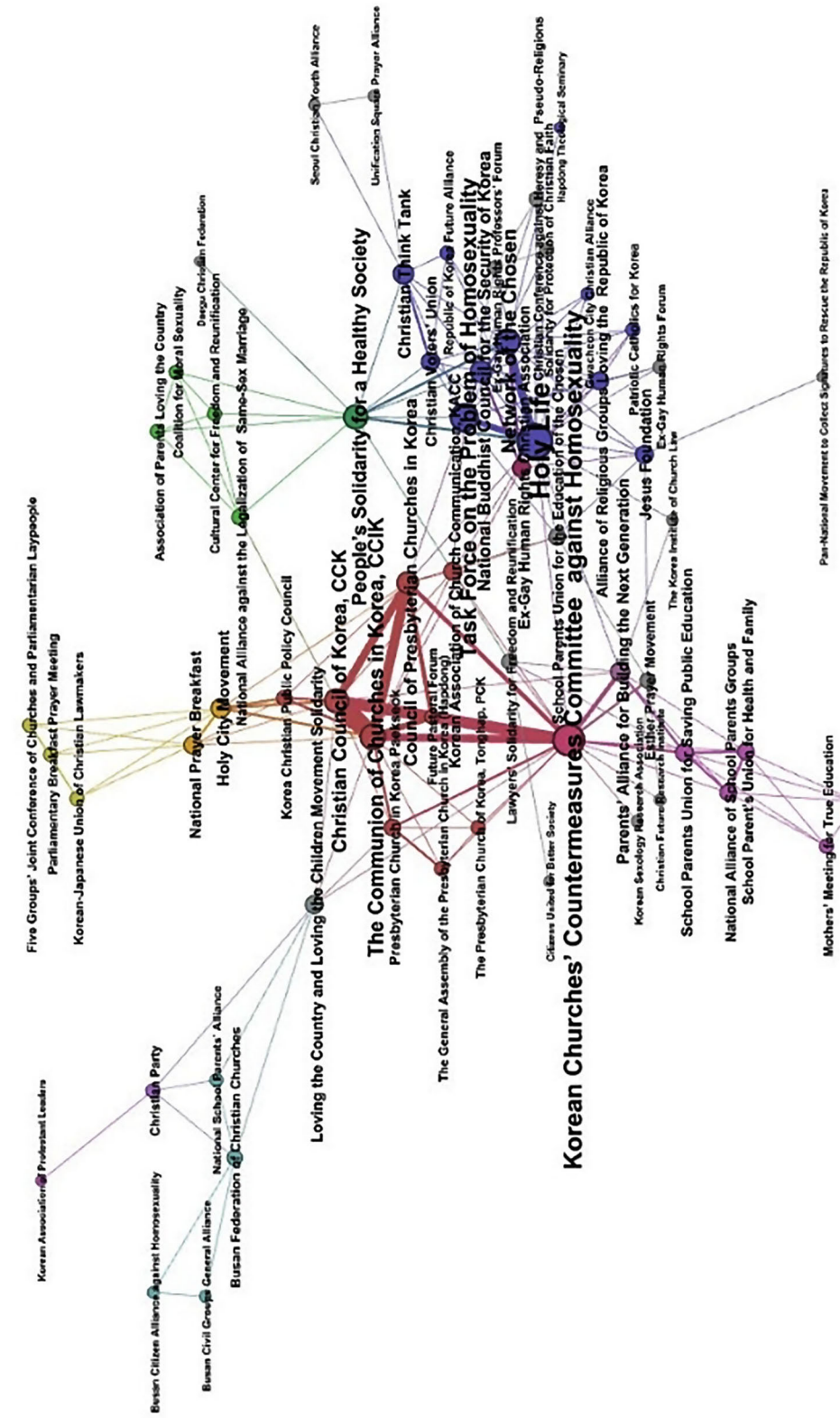
Figure 8: Network of anti-LGBT actors 2014
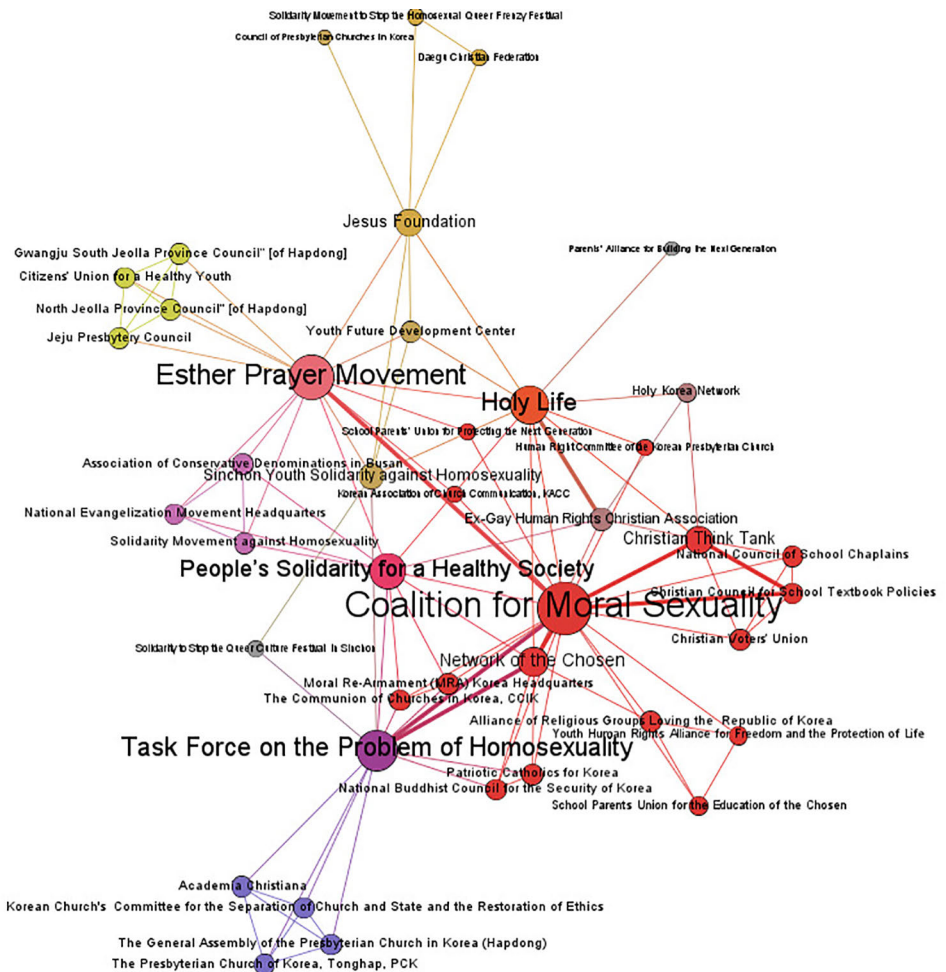
The anti-LGBT network of the year 2015 sees significant growth (cf. Figure 9). There are now 74 nodes and 255 edges in total. The average distance increases again a bit in comparison to the previous year (2.9), which may be due to outliers and an interesting phenomenon: the network displays a dicephalic (two-headed) structure. There are two main clusters, one around *Holy Life* and the other around church associations like CCK, CCIK, the *Council of Presbyterian Churches in Korea*, and the *Korean Churches' Countermeasure Committee against Homosexuality*. The latter SMO and Holy Life show by far the highest numbers in betweenness centrality and degree, making them the most important brokers of the year 2015. They connected the greatest number of other actors with each other, as is also apparent by valued edges originating from them. While there are some connections between these two main clusters, the lion's share of protest events is held *within* the respective clusters. This reflects a certain rift that runs through the Korean anti-LGBT movement. 'Ex-gay' groups and allies around *Holy Life* on the one side accuse the mainstream anti-LGBT movement of exploiting the issue politically, while established Protes-

tant actors criticize the other side for holding separate events and thus weakening the fight against LGBT rights (cf. chapter 8.1). As the final network for the years 2016–2020 shall demonstrate, however, both sides continue to cooperate in this period of peaking activities.

The network of 2015 has some further notable properties. First, the *Esther Prayer Movement*, which had been an important actor in the early years of the movement, is relatively inactive in terms of networking activities in 2015 and cannot be clearly associated with one or the other side. The same is true for CFMS. It seems that these groups either have experienced a low tide of activism, at least concerning joint activities with other SMOs. Or other SMOs have simply become more important than these early actors. Second, concrete Protestant denominations like the Presbyterian churches *T'onghap*, *Hapdong*, and *Paeksŏk* increasingly take part of the anti-LGBT network – unsurprisingly, in close connection to the cluster of church associations. Churches appear to grant greater importance to the issue now. Third, also non-Protestant religious actors increase their connective activities. The *Patriotic Catholics for Korea* and the *National Buddhist Council for the Security of Korea* had already appeared the year before. The latter SMO in particular, however, is now located at a more central position in the right-hand side cluster. Finally, the 2015 network displays several subclusters with special-focus groups. In the lower part of Figure 9, there is a subcluster of SMOs that focusses on educational topics. On the top, we can see a subcluster including groups pertaining to the political, more concretely: the parliamentarian arena. On the top left-hand side, finally, there is a smaller subcluster with groups based in the city of Busan. This means that groups with similar regional or thematic backgrounds tend to cooperate with each other. As the final network for the remaining time period will show, such patterns also stabilize when looking at more central anti-LGBT actors.

Figure 9: Network of anti-LGBT actors 2015

The network of anti-LGBT social movement organizations 2016–2020: consolidation of the core and clustering of actor types

Figure 10: Network of anti-LGBT actors January 2016–April 2020 (detail)
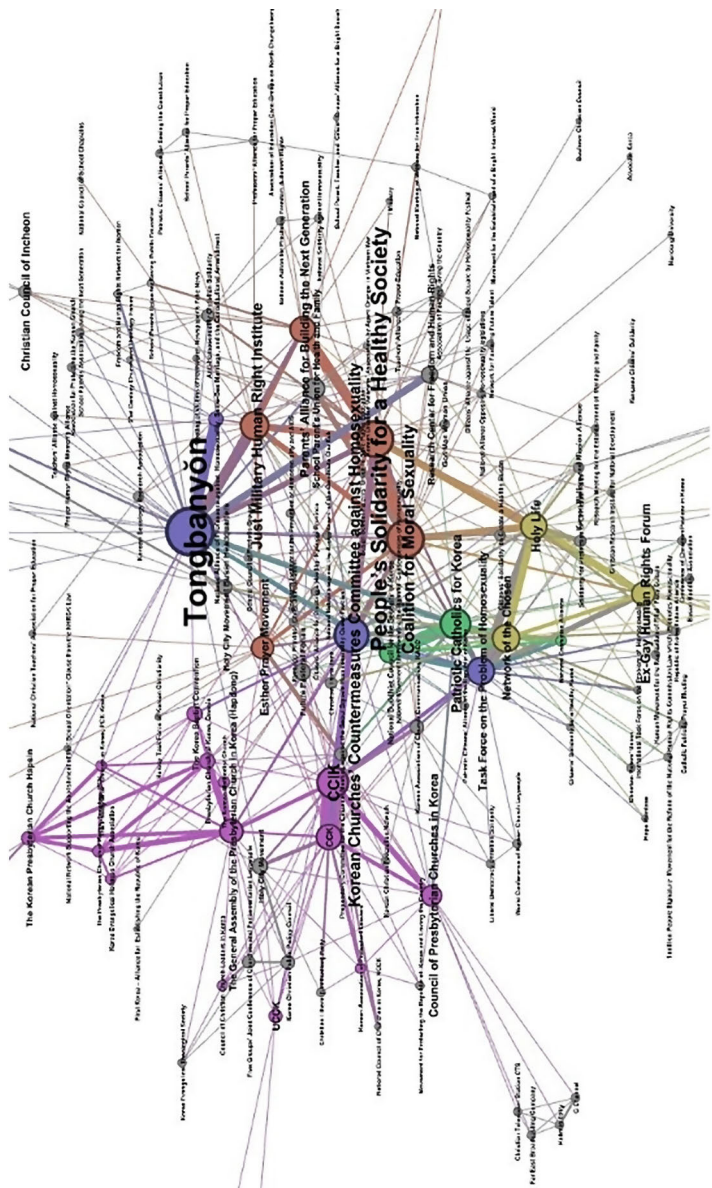
The final network covers the period January 2016 until the end of April 2020, the time when the general elections for the National Assembly were held in South Korea. The network includes 165 nodes and 722 edges, making it the largest web of interactions analyzed

in this study. This increase is of course due to the longer observation period (4 years and 4 months), but it can also be attributed, crucially, to the overall higher level of activity during this time (in total 415 anti-LGBT protest events, cf. chapter 5.2). In Figure 10, colors are assigned according to the type of the most important actors: core organizations of Protestant churches appear in purple, non-Protestant religious groups in green, anti-LBGT alliances or task forces are blue, explicitly anti-LGBT SMOs red, and yellow is the color of 'ex-gay' groups in this network. The coloring aims at allowing a quick overview of the position of crucial actors in the web as a whole, but also in relation to each other. The larger the nodes and the font, the more connections a group has. The thicker an edge, the more actively the respective two groups cooperate in protest events.

The rendering of the network in Figure 10 could not be covered in its totality owing to the high number of actors connected to it. These technical limitations of the Gephi software notwithstanding, the most central SMOs of the movement's consolidation phase immediately catch the eye. The *National Alliance against Homosexuality, Same-Sex Marriage, and Constitutional Amendment* (*Tongbanyŏn*) displays the greatest number of edges (43) and by far the highest value in betweenness centrality (cf. Table 12). *Tongbanyŏn* has thus developed into the primary broker of the anti-LGBT movement until 2020. This particular alliance is, however, not the only relevant player in the field. Several other actors emerge as consistently important anti-LGBT groups as well. Two further significant joint projects are located at the center of the tightly knit network of 2016–2020. While the *Taskforce on the Problem of Homosexuality* fosters close relations with groups belonging to the 'ex-gay' spectrum, the *Korean Churches' Countermeasures Committee against Homosexuality* occupies a middle position among different segments of the movement. The latter joint-effort organization is linked to both Protestant actors in the narrow sense, and to single SMOs whose bulk of activism is concerned with the fight against LGBT rights like CFMS, PSHS, and *Esther Prayer Movement*. This makes sense when taking into consideration that the chairman of Esther Prayer Movement, Yi Yong-hŭi, is also a major representative of this committee. A newly emerging associational project in this period is the *National Alliance of Professors against Homosexuality, Same-Sex Marriage, and the Constitutional Amendment*, which fosters close relations to *Tongbanyŏn*.

Table 12: Most important SMOs 2016–2020: network measures

Network January 2016 – April 2020	Overall measures: Average degree: 6.0	Nodes: 165; edges: 722 Average distance: 3.0	
Social movement organization		Degree	Between-ness centrality
National Alliance against Homosexuality and Same-Sex Marriage (*Tongbanyŏn*)		43	2880.4
Coalition for Moral Sexuality (CFMS)		33	1212.3
People's Solidarity for a Healthy Society (PSHS)		32	1802.4
Korean Churches' Countermeasures Committee ag. Homosexuality		30	1097.7

Network January 2016 – April 2020	Overall measures: Average degree: 6.0	Nodes: 165; edges: 722 Average distance: 3.0	
Social movement organization		Degree	Between-ness centrality
The Communion of Churches in Korea (CCIK)		27	1031.7
Patriotic Catholics for Korea		26	778.0
Just Military Human Right Institute		24	975.2
Network of the Chosen		23	578.4
Task Force on the Problem of Homosexuality		23	550.1
Holy Life		22	699.8
Christian Council of Korea (CCK)		21	325.2
Parents' Alliance for Building the Next Generation		21	701.6
Ex-Gay Human Rights Forum		19	755.2
The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Hapdong)		19	364.1
Esther Prayer Movement		18	603.3
Council of Presbyterian Churches in Korea		16	637.3
School Parent's Union for Health and Family		16	351.9
Busan Federation of Christian Churches		11	760.5
The United Christian Churches of Korea (UCCK)		9	437.9
Christian Council of Inch'ŏn		8	607.5

Notes: The exact time periods covered is 1 January 2016 until 30 April 2020. The SMOs are ordered by degree. The bottom three SMOs were included in the table due to their relatively high values of betweenness centrality despite lower values in degree.

The rest of the SMOs are all located in relative vicinity of groups that belong to the same category as themselves. In the case of organizations that feature a special anti-LGBT focus as outlined before, CFMS, PSHS and the *Just Military Human Right Institute* foster particularly close relations. This means that they frequently cooperate in protest events. *Esther Prayer Movement*, while also being situated at the core of the overall network, can be found a bit farther away from these groups. This latter group also shows less connections than the other explicitly anti-LGBT groups – confirming the trend of a declining importance of Esther Prayer Movement, at least within the structures of the anti-LGBT movement. CFMS and PSHS, in contrast, both exhibit high values in betweenness centrality and connections, coming in second and third places concerning activity levels and brokerage, right after *Tongbanyŏn*. In fact, the edge between these two SMOs is among the strongest in this network. Only CCIK and CCK cooperate more often.

CCIK, CCK and other prominent Protestant organizations like numerous denominations and their joint bodies can all be found on the left-hand side of the 2016–2020 network. Like in previous periods, the two interdenominational church associations CCIK and CCK continue to work together closely despite their animosities. However, it becomes evident that the newer CCIK has outpaced CCK by now, showing higher centrality measures throughout. Yet another church coalition comes to the fore during this pe-

riod: the *United Christian Churches of Korea* (UCCK), which was founded in 2017.[21] However, in comparison to the other two major church associations, UCCK only plays a minor role in the anti-LGBT network. It is noteworthy that major Protestant denominations like the Presbyterian churches *Hapdong*, *Hapsin*, *Taesin*, *T'onghap*, and *Kosin*, as well as the *Korean Methodist Church*, the *Korea Baptist Convention*, and the *Korea Evangelical Holiness Church Association* are clustered close to each other and not so much in vicinity to the church associations just mentioned. This means that denominations tend to cooperate mostly among themselves. Only the Presbyterian *Hapdong* denomination has slightly stronger ties with CCK and especially CCIK. In general, these latter two interdenominational church associations seem to be closer to the movement's core in terms of more diverse and stronger relations with central actors. The strictly denominational Protestant organization apart from the more politically oriented CCIK and CCK, the *Council of Presbyterian Churches in Korea*, only comes in sixteenth place in the list of the most connective SMOs in terms of degree (cf. Table 12). Overall, however, the network data confirms that denominational organizations of Protestantism get increasingly and directly involved in the struggles against LGBT rights. The joint participations of Protestant denominations at protest events also further support the assumption that the opposition against LGBT issues has the potential of overcoming rifts internal to Korean Protestantism.

Actors from other religious backgrounds have proven to be consistently central to the anti-LGBT movement as well. The *Patriotic Catholics for Korea* and the *National Buddhist Council for the Security of Korea* both occupy central positions in the network, with dense relations with several other segments of the movement. Interestingly, the edge between these two actors is particularly strong. They thus often participate side by side in anti-LGBT events, begging the question why this is the case. One could assume, as already outlined before, that these two SMOs have been close partners from the outset, mainly due to their rightist or far-right political positions similar to those of the Protestant Right. Their increased cooperation among each other and with diverse anti-LGBT actors may also hint at the realization that broader religious representation may be conducive to winning over larger publics in order to achieve movement goals. As already mentioned, the compatibility of Buddhist and Catholic actors with conservative Protestant ones is surprising. This is because in other occasions, the Protestant Right shows overt hostility towards the Catholic church and Buddhism at large (cf. chapter 5.3, footnote 16). As is the case among actors from different conservative Protestant branches, theological and religious conflicts appear to be obliterated by a common goal and a matching socio-political ideology. Apart from these two overtly anti-LGBT Buddhist and Catholic groups, official representatives from Korean Buddhism and Catholicism remain rather silent on LGBT-related topics (cf. Interviews 4, 10, 19, & 30). This reluctance to get involved is noteworthy, at least for Catholicism, since Vatican and Catholic officials in several countries

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21   The UCCK was established in an effort to reunite Protestant denominations, claiming that it brings together 90% of Korean Protestants (Kim, Kwang-su 2020). The other two conservative church associations, CCK and CCIK, however, continue to exist, and conflicts among these organizations, among denominations, and churches are ongoing (Yi, Jungyeon 2022). In this process, however, the CCK has lost most of its members churches, and, as a consequence, much of its influence due to internal strife and various scandals, as recent research shows (Shin, Jaeshik 2022, 148).

have been central actors in the fight against LGBT rights worldwide (Brinkschröder 2017; Kováts 2017).[22]

The final central cluster is made up of SMOs with an 'ex-gay' focus. The most important groups in this category are *Holy Life*, the *Ex-Gay Human Rights Forum*, and the *Network of the Chosen*. I assign the latter organization to the 'ex-gay' spectrum, since it most frequently cooperates with groups of this kind and explicitly promotes 'ex-gay' views. In general, these three groups cooperate most intensively with each other, but they also feature strong connections to other central actors of the anti-LGBT movement like CFMS, PSHS, and the *Taskforce on the Problem of Homosexuality*. While the relative rift between 'ex-gay' groups and mainstream anti-LGBT groups observed in 2015 does not continue to be relevant in the consolidation period after that, the 'ex-gay' segment of the movement remains special. The three 'ex-gay' groups in particular hold on to their 'ex-gay' focus and foster relations with groups that would otherwise not be so well-connected to the anti-LGBT network. The *Ex-Gay Human Rights Forum* in particular is active in brokerage, featuring a relatively high value of betweenness centrality.

Brokerage towards subclusters of the consolidated network 2016–2020 is also done by other actors. The *Council of Presbyterian Churches in Korea*, for example, held events with media actors such as *Kukmin Daily*, *C Channel*, and the *Far East Broadcasting Company*. These media outlets would otherwise remain unconnected with the rest of the network. Other potential brokers include local Protestant organizations like the *Busan Federation of Christian Churches* and the *Christian Council of Inch'ŏn*. These groups feature relatively high betweenness values despite comparatively low numbers of linkages (cf. Table 12). They predominantly serve as connectors between local groups and the rest of the anti-LGBT network.

In summary, the 2016–2020 anti-LGBT network confirms trends that had already become apparent in previous years. There have always been a relatively small number of actors occupying central positions. Some SMOs, which display high levels of betweenness centrality and can thus be expected to act as important brokers for the movement, have continuously played crucial roles for networking (e.g., CCK) while others' relative importance decreased over time (e.g. *Esther Prayer Movement*). New SMOs emerged and developed into major connective actors (CFMS, PSHS, and *Tongbanyŏn*). There is a tendency of some segments of the movement to collaborate more closely with actors belonging to the same category as themselves, like denominations and 'ex-gay' groups. To a certain extent, the networks of the anti-LGBT movement thus reveal factionalism. On a more positive note, one could speak of a specialization within these networks. Denominational actors, for instance, may cooperate with each other more frequently to reach a specific conservatively oriented, Protestant public – different from SMOs like PSHS and Tongbanyŏn, which, as I have shown, direct their activism towards a larger, also non-Christian public. Some level of factionalism notwithstanding, the networks in general

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22   One further non-Protestant religious actor appearing in the 2016–2020 network is the *National Confucian Alliance*. It only participated in a total of 3 protest events in 2016 and 2017, making it rather irrelevant for the overall movement. Also in South Korean society at large, Confucianism as an organized religion has lost most of its historical influence. Only very few Koreans identify (Neo-)Confucianism as their religious affiliation (cf. Baker 2011).

make obvious that originally adversarial organizations within the Protestant Right unify in face of a common enemy. Such a unifying potential crosses religious borders and has as its foundation a shared leaning to the political right.

When comparing the different networks over the years,[23] the average degree does not vary greatly. It starts off with an average of 6 edges in 2000–2012, reaching a low in 2015 with 4.51, to then attain 6 linkages again in 2016–2020. In every case, there is a relatively small number of actors featuring many connections while the vast majority of SMOs only rarely participates in joint actions. This is also true for the final, consolidated network, even at a time of high activities and increased overall participation. The quantitative approach of network analysis thus confirms the fact that the Korean anti-LGBT movement has developed a broad basis, but is mostly held together by only a few central actors. This section focused on the leading anti-LGBT social movement organizations, more or less treating them as black boxes. SMOs are, of course, made up of people who implement the actions of their respective organization. The following section shall elaborate on these people, with a special focus on the leaders of the anti-LGBT movement.

10.4 The leaders of the anti-LGBT movement: norm brokerage in diverse capacities

The PEA dataset provides information not only on the SMOs active in the Korean anti-LGBT movement, but also on individuals prominently taking action at protest events. The database also includes information on individual party politicians partaking in anti-LGBT events. These political actors, however, will be treated in detail in the following section. I shall now give an overview of the most important activists – or in other words, the leaders of the movement. This section focuses on the types of leaders in terms of their different backgrounds and roles, and the multiple belongings that these leading figures have.

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23 This study does not provide a cumulative network for the whole period 2000–2020 for several reasons. As I have shown, a detailed analysis of certain time periods and single years allows to investigate changes over time and to discern special occurrences and constellations in the respective networks. The added value of an all-encompassing network is also questionable, since it would most probably just confirm the most important brokering actors that we already know. A too broadly defined network may even be misleading, since one would not be able to differentiate between newly emerging actors, actors getting more important over time, and SMOs that, on the other hand, decline in importance.

Table 13: Anti-LGBT activists' frequency of protest participation[a]

Activist's name	Occupation / positions in anti-LGBT social movement organizations[b]	Year of first appearance	Number of participations
Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng	Professor (physics) at Busan National University, head of operation of *Tongbanyŏn*, executive chairman of *Coalition for Moral Sexuality*	2007	61
Yi Yong-hŭi	Professor (economics) at Gachon University, head of *Esther Prayer Movement*, representative of *Korean Churches' Counter-measures Committee against Homosexuality*	2010	41
Kim Chi-yŏn	Pharmacist, head of *Parents' Alliance for Building the Next Generation* and *Korean Association of Family and Health (KAFAH)*	2015	29
Lee Jonah (Yi Yo-na)	Pastor, Calvary Chapel, head of *Holy Life, Ex-Gay Human Rights Forum*, other ex-gay groups	2010	28
So Kang-sŏk	Head pastor at *Sae Eden Presbyterian Church* (a mega church), 105th president, Presbyterian *Hapdong* denomination, UCCK chairman	2013	26
Cho Yŏng-gil	Lawyer, I&S (law firm)	2015	22
Kim Kyu-ho	Pastor (Presbyterian *Hapdong* denomination), leading positions in *Network of the Chosen, Task Force on the Problem of Homosexuality, Ex-Gay Human Rights Forum, Christian Social Responsibility, Council of Christian Civil Society Groups in Korea, Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights*, etc.	2011	17
Ko Yŏng-il	Lawyer at Harvest Law (law firm), former party leader of the minor *Christian Liberty Party*, now deputy party leader of the succeeding *Liberty Unification Party*	2015	16
Yŏm An-sŏp	Medical doctor, director of the Sudong Yonsei Convalescence Hospital, Youtuber for anti-LGBT contents (channel: *Rainbow Returns*)	2014	13
Yi T'ae-hŭi	Lawyer, from the United States	2015	12
Han Hyo-gwan	Head of *People's Solidarity for a Healthy Society*	2015	10
Kim Yŏng-gil	Head of *Just Military Human Rights Institute*	2016	9
Chŏn Yong-t'ae	Lawyer at Logos Law LLC (law firm), Chairman of the *World Holy City Movement*	2007	7
Min Sŏng-gil	Honorary Professor (psychiatry) at Yonsei Univ.	2015	7
Kim Kye-ch'un	Catholic Priest, Military Ordinariate of Korea, representative of *Tongbanyŏn*, leading pastor of *Catholic Patriotic Prayer Meeting*	2015	6

Activist's name	Occupation / positions in anti-LGBT social movement organizations[b]	Year of first appearance	Number of participations
Yi Su-jin	Head, *School Parent's Union for Health and Family*	2016	6
Pak Chin-gwŏn	*I Ministry* (ex-gay group)	2016	6
Yi Chŏng-hun	Professor (law) at Ulsan University	2017	6
Paek Sang-hyŏn	Journalist, Kukmin Daily	2016	5

Note: anti-LGBT activists were mentioned on 267 occasions in the articles on protest events (out of a total of 513). Further frequencies of activist appearances: Once: 55 people; twice: 8 people; three times: 4 people; four times: 2 people. [a] Information retrieved from PEA dataset and SMO websites; period covered: Jan. 2000–April 2020. [b] Including not only current positions, but also important former ones.

Table 13 displays the activists who appeared most frequently at anti-LGBT protest events, for example, in the capacity of organizer, host, moderator, speaker, or 'expert' lecturer. The table includes activists with protest participations greater or equal to 5. In total, 88 activists have been discerned. Their names were mentioned in Kukmin Daily reports on anti-LGBT protest events. Among these, only 10 feature more than 10 protest participations. The vast majority is rather inactive. 55 people only appeared once at a protest event. The analysis will now focus on those activists who have been most active.

When looking at Table 13 and considering the results just presented, it is noteworthy that the most active activists belong and correspond to the most important anti-LGBT SMOs. Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng (61 protest event participations) occupies leading positions in the *Tongbanyŏn* alliance and in the *Coalition for Moral Sexuality*. Yi Yong-hŭi (41 participations) is the head of *Esther Prayer Movement* and a central representative of the *Korean Churches' Counter-measures Committee against Homosexuality*. Both feature a longstanding 'career' in anti-LGBT activism, first appearing in 2007 and 2010 respectively, according to PEA data. Another important early activist is Lee Jonah (29 appearances since 2010), whose SMOs *Holy Life* and *Ex-Gay Human Rights Forum* have equally turned out to be central brokering actors, as shown in the social network analysis. One can thus assume that the people behind these SMOs are in fact brokers themselves. There are certainly also other people, members or activists belonging to the respective SMOs, who engage in relational work, for example, by assisting in the dissemination of anti-LGBT contents. But essentially, it is these leading figures who go out into the public and use their growing standing to broaden the organizational basis and mobilize bystanders for the movement. This is not only true for the three men just mentioned but also for most of the other activists, namely those that occupy leading positions in anti-LGBT SMOs.

Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng, Yi Yong-hŭi, and Lee Jonah are prime examples of movement entrepreneurs. They emerge as leaders of the movement precisely because they build new movement structures. Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng, for instance, a physics professor at Busan National University, had initially been committed to a group called *Scientists' Assembly Opposing Embryonic Cloning* to then become one of the first prominent anti-LGBT activists in

the course of the contentions around the Anti-Discrimination Law in 2007. He founded CFMS, the first explicit anti-LGBT organization, and serves as head of operation of *Tongbanyŏn*, the most important actor in the field as of 2020. Yi Yong-hŭi, a university professor, too, pursued a similar path into the anti-LGBT movement. As already mentioned before, he founded Esther Prayer Movement with the main intention of doing North Korea-related evangelization activities. But soon, when the Anti-Discrimination Law and, particularly, homosexuality became hot topics, the group widened its focus to also include anti-LGBT actions. Yi, just like Kil, became a frequent speaker at anti-LGBT protest events, and centrally assisted in establishing and consolidating yet another anti-LGBT alliance, one with a more obviously religious focus than Tongbanyŏn. The fact alone that two *alliances* became two of the most important anti-LGBT organizations makes the leaders of these influential brokers. As I have elaborated already at the beginning of this chapter, however, the substance of these alliances needs to be questioned. In most cases, it is only the leaders, Kil and Yi, who represent these (allegedly) collective actors at anti-LGBT events.

In general, the list of the most active anti-LGBT campaigners in Table 13 reveals that many activists have multiple belongings. Lee Jonah, for example, is the head of Holy Life and many other 'ex-gay' subsidiaries, which he also leads, like the *Ex-Gay Human Rights Forum* (cf. chapter 8.1). Kim Kyu-ho, a pastor of the Presbyterian Hapdong denomination, also features high positions in various organizations. His accumulation of offices includes leading positions in anti-LGBT SMOs such as the *Network of the Chosen*, the *Task Force on the Problem of Homosexuality*, and the *Ex-Gay Human Rights Forum*, but he is also actively engaged in other groups without such a clear focus like *Christian Social Responsibility*, the *Council of Christian Civil Society Groups in Korea*, and the *Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights*. Kim Kyu-ho may be an extreme example, but the concentration of leading positions in the hands of just a few people turns out to be a common trait of the Korean anti-LGBT movement.

Kim Kyu-ho joined the movement at a relatively early stage, in 2011. The majority of activists listed in Table 13, however, made their public appearances as anti-LGBT activists, at a later point in time, most of them in 2015 or after that. Despite this comparatively late activation, many of these 'latecomers' show all the more zeal in their fight against LGBT rights. Kim Chi-yŏn, for example, one of the few women active in the movement's leading circle, joined the ranks in 2015 and soon developed into one of the most assiduous campaigners of the movement. She boasts the third largest number of protest participations. Kim Chi-yŏn is a pharmacist and head of two anti-LGBT organizations, the *Parents' Alliance for Building the Next Generation* and the *Korean Association of Family and Health* (KAFAH). As a representative of the latter group in particular, Kim carries out 'educational' events on AIDS, which, however, largely provide inaccurate information on this disease, with the prime purpose of creating fear of homosexuality (cf. chapter 7.2). Kim Chi-yŏn is especially well known for her anti-LGBT lectures, of which she claimed to have given already more than 2000 as of 2018 (Chang, Myŏng-sŏng 2018, December 18). While she stands out as a lecturer – even being called the "Andrea Williams of Korea" (Williams being a globally active UK-based anti-LGBT activist; Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2016, August 19) – other leading figures of the movement also frequently deliver speeches on various occasions.

The leaders of the movement thus do not only act as brokers in the sense of creating new or stronger connections[24] among organizations for the fight against LGBT rights. They also, importantly, link their relational efforts with the dissemination of certain values and worldviews. Most of the actors that propagate the frames analyzed in chapters 7 and 8 can therefore be found in Table 13 above. They are norm brokers who, for example, achieved the gradual appropriation of Protestant denominations for the socio-political (i.e., not only the religiously based) fight against LGBT rights described above. I argue that such an appropriation worked well *within* the Protestant Right due to the relatively high level of miscibility (cf. Vasi 2011). The movement leadership and church leaders alike have conservative outlooks on religion and politics, which facilitates 'knowledge' flows and the entrenchment of such knowledge with previously unconnected actors. The conservative and pious demeanor sported by the leaders of the anti-LGBT movement has certainly aided in this endeavor, as well as their 'expert' status, which is frequently emphasized at anti-LGBT events.

Typology of anti-LGBT movement leaders: 'experts', organizers, and charismatic religious figures

Both aspects just mentioned, expertise and religious reaffirmation, play important roles for the characteristics of activists and leaders of the Korean anti-LGBT movement. These characteristics are part of a typology of actor roles which I propose here and which builds upon the backgrounds, positions, and concrete actions of the people listed in Table 13. The point of departure for this typology is a mixture of Wilson's (1973) and Killian's (1964) suggestions of three types of movement leaders. I adopt these models and refine them by taking into account Gramscian thinking and the special kind of collective action this study analyzes, that is, a both politically and religiously conservative social movement. The categories are as follows.

- *Charismatic leaders* are akin to the original Christian meaning of the term 'charisma'. This type includes religious leaders and individual pastors who gain their authority and legitimacy from their outstanding position within a Christian context. They commonly use religious arguments and frames and can be expected to be influential especially with religious crowds.
- *Intellectual or ideological leaders*. This type is similar to Gramsci's concept of 'organic intellectuals'. These actors present themselves, or are presented as experts endowed with educational capital or experiential personal knowledge (cf. Vasi's [2011] 'epistemic brokers'). Their expertise makes them relatable to non-Christian publics. This

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24   While it would be helpful for the analysis to also present a network of the activists who jointly participated at anti-LGBT protest events – analogous to the networks of SMOs – the data basis is not sufficient for such an endeavor. For many protest events, only one activists is prominently mentioned. This hinders the generation and meaningful interpretation of an interpersonal network. However, since many of the movement leaders are tightly connected to one or more SMOs anyways, this lack of data does not pose a large problem for the analysis.

category also encompasses figures who are leading in the movement's outward-facing communication of frames. Gramscian 'organic journalists', who centrally contribute to movement success, are a subcategory of this leadership type.

- *Pragmatic leaders* assume the administrative-organizational tasks of a movement. They thus also fall under the Gramscian concept of 'organic intellectuals', however, as organizers rather than as "permanent persuader[s]" (Gramsci 1971, 10).

These categories are ideal types of movement leaders. In fact, the empirical data shows that these types are not exclusive. Movement leaders display many overlaps, adopting different roles all at once, or foregrounding one role depending on the circumstantial needs.

To give an example, the charismatic leadership type definitely includes So Kang-sŏk, the head pastor of the *Sae Eden Presbyterian Church*, a mega church located in the metropolitan area just outside Seoul. He has occupied further eminent positions, for example, as a former president of the Presbyterian *Hapdong* denomination and as a UCCK chairman – making him an illustrious figure within the Protestant Right. When appearing at anti-LGBT protest events, he usually includes theological or church-related aspects into his speeches. Apart from this 'pastoral' work in the narrow sense, however, So Kang-sŏk also provides intellectual reflections related to anti-LGBT issues, mainly as a frequent columnist in the daily newspaper Kukmin Daily (cf. also chapter 11). Other leading figures of the movement also assume charismatic roles like the Protestant pastors Lee Jonah and Kim Kyu-ho, as well as Kim Kye-ch'un, who represents the Catholic branch of the movement's leadership circle. These church officials bestow anti-LGBT activism with credibility and expertise from a religious point of view. The particularly religious charisma is not exclusive to the clergy, though. Lay people among the movement leaders also commonly utilize religious elements such as prayers during their appearances at protest events.

Hence, the leadership roles are not so distinct. But the categories do have analytical value, for they highlight the different functions that leading figures fulfill for the movement, even if there are cases of accumulated roles. The second leader type is emblematic for this 'multifunctionality'. This category comprises persons whose actual or alleged expert status makes them valuable for the anti-LGBT movement. There are, for instance, several people with a background in medicine or related fields, such as the pharmacist Kim Chi-yŏn, the medical doctor Yŏm An-sŏp, and the emeritus psychiatry professor Min Sŏng-gil. Legal expertise is covered by activists such as Cho Yŏng-gil, Ko Yŏng-il, and Yi T'ae-hŭi. The latter also has a US-American background, which equips him with trustworthiness on international matters, for example, when relating that an allegedly negative development abroad should be avoided in Korea (cf. also chapter 7.5). I mention all these specific 'expert' traits because the movement itself ostentatiously stresses these points, designating them as hallmarks for the asserted authenticity and objectivity of the struggles against LGBT rights. The purported expert status of many speakers at protest events seems to aim at legitimating the frames and narratives brought forward. Professors and alumni of prestigious universities are often introduced by accentuating exactly these special traits to underpin their educational capital. For example, moderators of events commonly point out that Cho Yŏng-gil studied law at the renowned Seoul Na-

tional University, that Yŏm An-sŏp studied at Yonsei and Korea Universities and achieved a doctorate in medicine, and that Kim Chi-yŏn has a pharmacy degree from Ewha Womans University. The alleged scientific facts they relate create the impression of being well-founded precisely due to their academic background. This way, these 'experts' gain legitimacy also beyond their religious rootedness – becoming potentially appealing to non-religious crowds as well.

Academic prestige is not the only factor raising the credibility of movement narratives. Personal experiences can also serve to win over people for one's purposes, in that they have the potential to touch people emotionally. *Holy Life's* Lee Jonah is one example of such a strategy. He and further 'ex-gay' activists usually tell their personal stories of having allegedly 'overcome' their homosexuality through faith. Other important mouthpieces of the anti-LGBT movement are actors like Paek Sang-hyŏn, a Kukmin Daily journalist who has published hundreds of articles covering anti-LGBT topics. In fact, Paek Sang-hyŏn, along with his journalistic colleague Yu Yŏng-dae, have created the largest number of articles quoted in this study. These 'educational' and media activities of the movement will be addressed in greater detail in chapter 11.

Finally, pragmatic leaders also play an important role for the movement, while also occupying overlapping positions in the leadership circle. Organizing and administering one's own organization, but also connecting oneself to other potential partners is crucial for the sustainability of a movement. When considering the latter aspect, brokerage comes to mind. As the previous section has demonstrated, SMOs like *Tongbanyŏn*, CFMS, and PSHS occupy central and, thus, highly connective positions in the anti-LGBT network. The respective heads of these groups can, consequently, be expected to also act as important individual brokers. Chapter 6.3 has shown that a relatively frequent action form of the anti-LGBT movement consists of strategic and preparatory meetings (6.3%). Such background work is crucial for strategic planning and collective decision-making. Many of the people appearing in Table 13 have participated in such meetings on multiple occasions. As this example shows, organizational and executive tasks can also be geared towards creating publicity. Part of pragmatic leadership is thus also the concrete organization and implementation of protest events. One phenomenon that struck me during my six-months field research in Korea in 2019 was that most protest events that I attended as an observer were moderated by the same two people: Han Hyo-gwan, the head of PSHS, and Yi Su-jin, chairwoman of the *School Parent's Union for Health and Family*.

In conclusion, the data on the leading figures of the anti-LGBT movement reveal that they rarely get active in one capacity only. Most, if not all of them, serve as pragmatic *and* ideological leaders, and some also have a clear religious charisma on top – although one could argue that other, not so obviously religious actors also regularly jump on this 'religious bandwagon' whenever it serves their purpose. Gramsci's original concept of organic intellectuals, which integrates the aspects of organizing and persuasion as important leadership tasks (Gramsci 1971, 10), thus fits well with the characteristics of Korean anti-LGBT movement leaders. Overlapping leadership roles can benefit a movement, since they allow for the flexibility necessary in different circumstances. Movement leaders act as catalysts whose different traits enable them to filter out or foreground belongings, characteristics, and related contents in a way that helps them to reach their goals.

However, the movement leadership also has to deal with potentially contradictory or even irreconcilable aspects of leadership identities. Religious charisma on the one hand, and allegedly objective, non-religious expertise on the other hand may cause problems depending on the public addressed. As I have suggested in chapter 9, the success of the movement's framing efforts *outside* religiously and politically conservative circles is rather meagre. This chapter has confirmed this point, showing that the movement predominantly consists of religiously rooted people and organizations. When taking Vasi's (2011) argument on miscibility seriously, the lack of success can be attributed to the low level of miscibility with non-religious parts of society – despite efforts to speak to exactly these portions of the public. Ultimately, one can assume that the partial success of the anti-LGBT movement will not be sustainable since they have, so far, failed to convince larger parts of Koreans of their perspectives. In Gramscian terms, the Korean anti-LGBT movement and with it, its leadership, may be losing their 'war of position'.

Be that as it may, the movement did manage to enter one important principally non-religious arena, which is South Korean politics in the narrow sense. The now following section investigates in detail politically active movement figures as well as, vice-versa, established politicians active in the movement.

10.5 The political connections and endeavors of the anti-LGBT movement

This subchapter sets out to investigate two aspects of 'the political' in the workings of the Korean anti-LGBT movement. First, the concrete involvement of politicians in the movement, focusing on the attributes of politicians participating in anti-LGBT protest events and on the way they approach the issue of LGBT rights. Second, the political endeavors of anti-LGBT activists and SMOs themselves, inspecting their anti-LGBT efforts within minor conservative Christian parties and attempts at influencing election campaigns in a way that decries (alleged or actual) pro-LGBT positionings held by individual politicians and political parties.

Since the mid to late 1990s, the topic of homosexuality in general and gay and lesbian rights in particular slowly gained public attention and, by extension, entered the political arena in Korea (Bong 2009). The debate even reached the highest echelons of the political system. During the presidential election campaign in 1997, the daily newspaper Hankyoreh conducted a joint interview with four major candidates for the presidency on 28 November. One of the questions asked also concerned homosexuality: "Have you seen books, movies or theater plays on the thoughts and lives of homosexual people? How do you think about their movement?" (quoted in Yi, Ch'ong-sin 2017, April 26). The answers given by the presidential candidates back then, while not being fully supportive and rather reticent, turned out to be surprisingly positive.

> Lee Hoi-chang: I have never seen any. There is a consensus that the privacy of homosexuals should be recognized and human rights should be guaranteed. However, considering the reality that homosexuality is not generally seen as normal, I do not think that we can readily accept them becoming a social movement.
> Kim Dae-Jung: I have not had the particular opportunity to learn more about the

subject yet. I do not approve of homosexuality, but I do not think that homosexuality should be considered heretical in that it is based on affection for humans just like heterosexuality. The activities of homosexuals need to be approached as part of human rights guarantees.

Lee In-je: Homosexuality is a very delicate issue. It is good to resist society and claim one's own sexual identity, but one has yet to conclude what form human life will take based on the principles of nature. However, it is important to have a warm look at homosexuals as sacred persons, as shown in the film 'Philadelphia'.

Kwon Young-ghil: I watched the movie 'Philadelphia'. I think that Korean society has sufficient social conditions to accept the homosexual movement, and the authorities should keep up with this social trend. (Quoted in Yi, Ch'ong-sin 2017, April 26)

All candidates mentioned something positive about homosexuality – irrespective of their political alignments. Both the conservative candidate Lee Hoi-chang (*Yi Hoe-ch'ang*) and the progressive Kim Dae-jung (*Kim Tae-jung*), for example, highlighted the importance of human rights protection, despite also showing some reservation. Lee In-je (*Yi In-je*) emphasized the need to show a welcoming attitude and to approach homosexuals as "sacred persons". He came to this conclusion also through watching the movie 'Philadelphia', which deals with the unfair treatment of HIV/AIDS patients in the 1980s and 1990s' United States. The left-leaning candidate Kwon Young-ghil (*Kwŏn Yŏng-gil*) went farthest in his answer to the interview question, indirectly demanding positive political changes for homosexual people.

In the South Korea of 1997, it seems, homosexuality has not yet been an overly politicized topic. This is why politicians were able to speak about the topic with relative ease. Twenty years later, however, this had changed. During the presidential race after the impeachment of Park Geun-hye in 2017, homosexuality became a contentious topic, which was brought into the political discussion not by a journalist, but by one of the presidential candidates himself. In a televised debate, the candidate of the conservative *Liberty Korea Party*, Hong Joon-pyo (*Hong Chun-p'yo*), directly addressed Moon Jae-in, the candidate of the progressive *Democratic Party of Korea*, asking whether he opposed homosexuality or not, to which Moon answered: "I oppose". This verbal exchange created a public stir, considering the fact that Moon Jae-in had started his career as a human rights lawyer and had supported a comprehensive anti-discrimination law including provisions for LGBT protection in the past. LGBT rights groups were very much disappointed and angered by Moon's conservative turn, and activists tried to directly confront him, and appeal to the presidential candidate Moon, but to no avail (Han 2021, 247–249).

The negative positioning of would-be president Moon towards LGBT rights and the resulting activation of the pro-LGBT movement are noteworthy phenomena in themselves. What I wish to highlight in the context of this study, however, is that homosexuality has developed into a delicate political topic by 2017. Hong Joon-pyo intentionally and strategically tackled his electoral contender with several LGBT-related issues, in a way to suggest that Moon may be in favor of LGBT rights. Moon Jae-in, meanwhile, finds himself cornered into reinforcing his opposition against gay men in the military and against same-sex marriage, yet claiming that he is against discrimination (Yi Sŭng-jun 2017, April 26). In other words, homosexuality has become politicized, meaning that the

topic is not only political in relation to LGBT-related policy proposals and concerning increasing pro-LGBT activism and countermobilization. Homosexuality has also become political in the narrow sense. In Korea, the topic is being used to actively influence other parts of the political process like electoral campaigns as the present example shows. In the now following section, I shall demonstrate how politicians are affected by such 'smear campaigns', but also, how politicians – like Hong Joon-pyo – themselves use anti-LGBT impulses for their own political benefit.

Politicians in the movement: the importance of religious and political affiliations

The PEA dataset reveals that 48 politicians have participated once or repeatedly in overall 60 anti-LGBT events (out of a total of 513, 11.7%) from 2000 until 2020. The vast majority of these politicians joined such events after 2012 (44 of 48, 91.7%).[25] Table 14 gives an overview of these politicians' political and religious affiliations, as well as of their concrete attitudes on LGBT rights. Slightly more than half of the politicians who participated in anti-LGBT events are members of the main conservative *Saenuri Party* and its predecessor *Grand National Party* (*Hannaradang*) and successor *Liberty Korea Party* (*Chayu han'guktang*). The main liberal party, the *Democratic Party of Korea* (*Tŏburŏ minjudang*), counts 14 politicians who attended such events. The remaining politicians either belong to minor parties (7 participants) or are unaffiliated (2 politicians). One has to note that not all politicians who took part in anti-LGBT events necessarily advocate anti-LGBT stances. 31 politicians (64.6%) show clear attitudes against equal rights for LGBT people, while the rest features ambivalent or pro-LGBT positionings (4.2% respectively), or stay neutral on the issue (27%). We can explain this relatively high number of politicians without clear anti-LGBT stance when considering that the PEA also counted meetings with politicians as protest events, provided that the gathering was used to express anti-LGBT content – regardless of whether the statements were made by politicians or representatives of the movement in the strict sense. On many occasions, politicians have been invited as mere interlocutors, perhaps also with the intention of (further, or at all) convincing them of the alleged need to fight against LGBT rights.

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25   A detailed list of all these 48 politicians has been produced for this study, indicating their political and religious affiliations, their attitude towards LGBT rights, the frequencies of their protest event attendances, and the year they first appeared at such an event. For the sake of brevity, however, it is left out here. Table 14 is a cross-tabled summary of said list.

Table 14: Politicians at anti-LGBT events: affiliations, attitudes, and attendances

Party affilia-tion	Religious affiliation				Attitude on LGBT issues				Total[a]
	Protestant/ evangelical	Catho-lic	Bud-dhist	n/a	Anti-LGBT	Pro-LGBT	Ambi-va-lent	n/a	(N) (%)
Saenuri/ Liberty Korea Party[b]	16	2	2	5	22	1	1	1	**25** **52.1**
Democratic Party	6	4	-	4	4	1	1	8	**14** **29.2**
Yeollin Uri Party	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	**1** **2.1**
Unified Pro-gressive Party	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	**1** **2.1**
People Party	1	-	-	2	3	-	-	-	**3** **6.3**
Bareun (Mirae) Party	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	**2** **4.2**
Unaffiliated	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	**2** **4.2**
Total (N)	**25**	**8**	**2**	**13**	**31**	**2**	**2**	**13**	**48**
Total (%)	**52.1**	**16.7**	**4.2**	**27**	**64.6**	**4.2**	**4.2**	**27**	**100.0**

Attendances: Once: 35 politicians; twice: 7; three times: 4; four times: 1; nine times: 1. **Notes:** [a] The total of this column is counted for the categories 'religious affiliation' and 'attitude on LGBT issues' separately. [b] Saenuri Party (2012–2017) and Liberty Korea Party (2017–2020) are classified as one party since they are the consecutive successors of the Grand National Party (1997–2012). The party's current name is People Power Party.

The distribution of politicians having anti-LGBT attitudes differs depending on the party affiliation. 22 of the 25 representatives of the main conservative party (88%) assume a negative stance on LGBT issues, while only 4 out of 14 (28.6%) politicians from the *Democratic Party* do so. The numbers for the remaining parties are too small to draw reliable conclusions, although it is noteworthy that all three politicians from the *People Party* (*Kungmin-ŭi tang*) oppose LGBT rights. The politicians with anti-LGBT opinions generally express their rejection of LGBT rights at events, in most cases in the form of short welcome addresses. This is especially the case when the protest events take place in the premises of the National Assembly, where members of parliament need to serve as hosts so that civil society organizations can use these rooms.

In the research interviews conducted for this study, anti-LGBT activists stated that they did not favor one political party over the other, but that they worked mostly together with conservative politicians since they were more responsive (Interviews 7, 16, 17). Indeed, except for the progressive and distinctly pro-LGBT *Justice Party* (*Chŏngŭi-dang*), politicians of all main parties have been present at anti-LGBT events, however,

with starkly differing levels of overall activity. Anti-LGBT politicians from the conservative *Saenuri* or *Liberty Korea Party* represent by far the largest portion. This means that there is an especially intense link between the movement and this political party. It is questionable, though, whether this relationship is a sustainable one. When taking into consideration the number of participations at anti-LGBT events by politician, it turns out that the vast majority of them only appeared once (35 politicians, 72.9%) or twice (7, 14.6%). There are just a few politicians who are more active in the movement. Four politicians participated three times. However, among these, there are the former Seoul mayor Park Won-soon and Moon Jae-in from the Democratic Party, who both display ambivalent positionings towards LGBT rights, but can hardly be considered part of the anti-LGBT movement. In fact, the movement frequently denounces these two politicians for their allegedly positive stance on LGBT rights.

Yi Hye-hun is the exception among the politicians taking part in anti-LGBT events. She participated nine times, outperforming the second-most active politician, Yun Sang-hyŏn from the Saenuri Party (4 participations), by a long way. When Yi Hye-hun first joined an anti-LGBT event in 2013, she was also a member of the *Saenuri Party*. She was one of the earliest politicians actively supporting the movement, being particularly active in 2016, the year of the 20th national legislative elections in Korea. In December 2017, Yi Hye-hun left *Saenuri Party*, defecting with 28 other lawmakers in the aftermath of the impeachment of President Park Geun-Hye to form the *Bareun Party* (*Parŭn chŏngdang*). She was elected a short-term leader of the latter party before it merged with the main conservative party again, forming in early 2020 the *People Power Party* (*Kungminŭi him*). As a member of parliament, Yi prominently supported the struggles against various LGBT-related issues. For example, she participated in prayer meetings against the Seoul Queer Culture Festival, against homosexuality in general, and against Islam (Kukmin Daily 2016, June 12; Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2016, May 15). She also criticized fellow party member Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his support of LGBT rights (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2016, June 2).[26] At an event against the inclusion of homosexuality as a topic in schoolbooks in 2013, Yi Hye-hun explains why she fights against LGBT rights. "We must fight against any force that shakes and obstructs heaven." She adds: "As a Christian politician, I will, together with the churches, take the lead in firmly protecting heaven" (quoted in Yu, Yŏng-dae 2013, October 4).

The politician Yi Hye-hun thus displays a distinctly 'Christian' agenda in her activities against LGBT rights. Table 14 reveals that she is not the only one. 35 politicians (72.1%) belong to a religion, including 25 members of diverse Protestant and evangelical denominations, eight Catholics, and two Buddhists. These numbers roughly correspond to the numbers of religiously affiliated members of parliament in general, which is, in general, higher than the share of Christians or Buddhists in the general public.[27] However, a re-

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26   Ban Ki-moon is one of the few Korean politicians with a clearly supportive stance towards LGBT rights and, in fact, the only one in his political party, as shown in Table 14.

27   A JoongAng Daily article of 2008, for example, reported that 82% of the members of the National Assembly belonged to a religion (40.1% Protestant, 26.8% Catholic, 15.7% Buddhist, 0.3% Won-Buddhist, 17.4% non-religious), which is much higher than the shares in the general public at that time (22.8% Buddhist, 18.3% Protestant, 10.9% Catholic, 0.3% Won-Buddhist, 46.5% non-religious) (The JoongAng 2008, September 6). Protestant and Catholic MPs in particular have been

ligious affiliation does not necessarily mean that these politicians also have clear anti-LGBT attitudes. For instance, only three of the eight Catholic politicians have a clear anti-LGBT orientation. The share within the Protestant politicians is significantly higher: 19 out of 25 Protestant politicians (76%) actively support anti-LGBT endeavors. A particular bias of Protestant lawmakers comes to the fore here. Their support for anti-LGBT efforts is, however, not so surprising after all. As I have shown previously in this chapter, the central actors behind the Korean anti-LGBT movement are predominantly Protestant. It is therefore most likely that they seek support from Protestant politicians as well. As just presented, the PEA data shows that these connections actually exist.

Religiously unaffiliated politicians also advocate anti-LGBT positions (8 out of 13), so that one can assume that anti-LGBT activism has made its mark on politicians beyond the traditional Protestant link as well. While this may be true, one also needs to take into account the political affiliation of this latter group. It turns out that seven of the eight non-religious politicians belong to parties in the conservative political spectrum. In summary, being a member of a Protestant church and belonging to a conservative political party is correlated with the participation of politicians at anti-LGBT protest events and the support of anti-LGBT politics.

The majority of the 48 politicians discerned in the PEA are lawmakers at the National Assembly. Such a political position can be regarded as relatively prestigious, in that anti-LGBT activists may expect benefits from a potential active endorsement by members of parliament. The movement anticipates and in fact demands that these politicians prevent pro-LGBT bills from being passed. Movement representatives, however, also place importance on having contact with even higher-ranking politicians. Eleven politicians who attended meetings with anti-LGBT actors occupied eminent governing or representative positions. Among them were the already mentioned President Moon Jae-in, Seoul mayor Park Won-soon, and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. Despite the fact that these and other politicians display neutral, ambivalent, or even positive opinions concerning LGBT rights, meetings with such senior political actors can prove valuable for anti-LGBT activists. They can make their points, ask for a reaction from the respective decision maker, and reckon on increased media attention. Some high-level politicians, however, clearly profess their opposition against LGBT rights. These include, for example, the former National Assembly President Chŏng Ŭi-hwa (*Saenuri Party*), the independent former justice minister Kim Sŭng-gyu, and the former prime minister Hwang Kyo-an. The latter has been reluctant to actively endorse anti-LGBT positions while still in office when he met CCK and CCIK representatives in 2015 (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2015, July 22), but did so after he had left the government, arguing as the new leader of *Liberty Korea Party* that the clause on sexual orientation in the projected anti-discrimination law was "toxic" (quoted in Kukmin Daily 2017, October 28). Having politicians as supporters benefits the movement, and vice-versa, politicians potentially profit from the endorsement by anti-LGBT activists or the Protestant Right at large. As I will demonstrate in the now

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overrepresented in the South Korean national parliament. This tendency continued in the following years, with the share of Protestant representatives occupying 37% in the term 2012–2016, 34% in 2016–2020, and rising to 41% again since 2020 (Song, Kyŏng-ho 2020, June 24).

following section, anti-LGBT groups indeed intervene in electoral campaigns. However, they mostly do so to vilify candidates who are viewed as supporters of LGBT rights.

Anti-LGBT actors campaigning for and against politicians and political parties

In an interview with the US newspaper *San Francisco Examiner* on 12 October 2014, Seoul mayor Park Won-soon expressed his hope that South Korea would become the first country in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage. He said that activists needed to convince the general public in the first place and then politicians would follow suit.[28] The ensuing fierce reactions from anti-LGBT activists are hardly surprising. They reproached Park of disregarding the alleged majority opinion of Koreans, and framed the introduction of same-sex marriage as a threat to the social and creation orders. Mayor Park soon succumbed to the backlash, relativizing his statements made during his trip to the United States. Already in the interview, however, Park pointed to a phenomenon that impedes policy making in the area of LGBT rights. "Protestant influence in Korea is very strong, so it is not easy for politicians" (quoted in Yu, Yŏng-dae 2014, October 16).

Park here expresses a concern that affects many politicians, especially if they hold beliefs and opinions different from those of the Protestant Right. Also in the area of LGBT politics, politicians face strong opposition when they are perceived to be in favor of law proposals benefitting queer people. A common approach in this respect is to inquire the stance on LGBT rights of individual politicians and threaten to start campaigns against all those who support pro-LGBT bills. In 2010, for instance, the anti-LGBT groups *Coalition for Moral Sexuality* and *Esther Prayer Movement* sent questionnaires to all members of parliament asking whether they supported the proposed anti-discrimination law (Yu, Yŏng-dae 2010, November 9). Prior to the election to the National Assembly in 2016, the *Korea Christian Public Policy Council* drafted a similar policy questionnaire, which they forwarded to more than 1,400 candidates. The primary goal was to track down those politicians with positive views on homosexuality and Islam (Yu, Yŏng-dae 2016, February 16).

Ahead of the elections, several SMOs launched campaigns against individual pro-LGBT politicians. The *Task Force on the Problem of Homosexuality*, for example, discerned 19 candidates who defended and promoted pro-LGBT laws or legislative amendments. The majority of the politicians detected ran for center-left parties (*Democratic Party*: 10, *Justice Party*: 3, *People's United Party*: 2) (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2016, April 3). One politician from the Democratic Party of Korea in particular, P'yo Ch'ang-wŏn, faced a great amount of opposition during his electioneering. Less than a week ahead of the 2016 election, 74 organizations demanded that P'yo withdraw his candidacy, denouncing his support for the rights of homosexuals and his alleged plan to legalize porn in South Korea (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2016, April 10). *Kukmin Daily* also joined the alarmist chorus of criticism, vilifying

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28   Mayor Park's view that the general public has to be convinced first before pro-LGBT policies can be passed is in fact a rejection and delegation of political responsibility. It is also a strategy allowing politicians to not actually get active in favor of human rights, but rather frame LGBT-related legislative change as future endeavors, what Ju Hui Judy Han (2021) has termed "the politics of postponement". Two of my interviewees (1 & 3) have also stated that arguing for the need of a social consensus is a common strategy used by politicians to turn down the socio-political concerns of LGBT people and activists.

candidates under the headline "Five enemies who advocate and instigate homosexuality". In face of such denunciations, these politicians verbally withdrew their support for LGBT rights to some extent. One of the attacked candidates, the Democrat Chin Sŏn-mi, for instance, had promoted the decriminalization of homosexuality in the Korean army, but then argued that it was a misunderstanding and that she never defended homosexuality. The naming and blaming of these politicians are not only based upon their actual or alleged endorsement of LGBT rights. P'yo Ch'ang-wŏn also comes under fire for his critical stance against Christianity in general (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2016, April 6).

Similar vilification strategies have been used ahead of other elections as well by anti-LGBT actors, who go to great lengths to get their message through. The *Tongbanyŏn* alliance created an index of pro and anti-LGBT politicians ahead of the local elections in 2018, coming up with a point system evaluating politicians according to diverse categories. In this evaluation, Seoul mayor Park Won-soon, who was up for reelection, gained by far the highest score, making him the epitome of a pro-LGBT politician for *Tongbanyŏn*. This assessment of Park is paradoxical when taking into consideration that he repeatedly succumbed to pressures from anti-LGBT forces, eventually dropping pro-LGBT stances and legislative processes, such as in the case of the *Seoul Human Rights Charter* in 2014. The index also identified politicians promoting staunch anti-LGBT orientations, to whom the SMO interestingly assigns negative scores. The politician who "opposes homosexuality the most" was Kim Sŏk-ki, a candidate for the post of Superintendent of Education in the city of Ulsan (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2018, May 30).

This index produced by *Tongbanyŏn* shows that anti-LGBT actors do not only wish to create negative media attention for politicians perceived to be in favor of LGBT rights. The other way around, the movement also actively supports those politicians who share their negative views on homosexuality. So when *Tongbanyŏn* conducted another survey prior to the national elections in 2020, the results that 100% of the respondents from the far-right *Our Republican Party* (*Urigonghwadang*) and 86% of the major conservative *United Future Party* opposed the anti-discrimination law represented an indirect recommendation for the upcoming elections. The one-hundred percent support for the passing of this bill from *Justice Party* and *Minjung Party* (*Minjungdang*) candidates, on the other hand, renders them unelectable according to *Tongbanyŏn*,[29] as the appeal of the alliance's chairman Kil Wŏn-p'yŏng directed at voters reveals: "I hope that voters will make the right choice in the 21st National Assembly election on the 15th so that the citizens' freedom of thought and expression to protect sound sexual ethics does not wither" (quoted in Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2020, April 15).

A more direct endorsement of candidates also exists. During the 2016 parliamentary election race, Kukmin Daily supported candidates who actively blocked the anti-discrimination law and advocated for the revision of the National Human Rights Commission

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29   The reliability of this survey is questionable, though. *Tongbanyŏn* only received answers from 58 out of 384 candidates who had originally been approached. What is more, the survey does not indicate the exact number of respondents per political party, but only gives percentages. Showing 'facts' and figures, even if they are hardly meaningful, can still have an effect on readers and the politicians affected. Conducting surveys and producing indices creates the image of scientificity, ultimately increasing the credibility of the claims of the anti-LGBT movement (cf. chapter 8.3).

Law: "They are not yielding to pressure from homosexual groups and keep their beliefs" (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2016, April 7). The article singles out five candidates in particular, appearing with photographs and receiving accolades. Among them are Yi Hye-hun, Kim Mu-sŏng, and Chŏng Mi-gyŏng from *Saenuri Party* and Pak Yŏng-sŏn from the *Democratic Party* who all pledged they would oppose LGBT-related bills in case they were elected. The article also highlights that all ten candidates from the minor *Christian Liberal Party* firmly oppose homosexuality and Islam. The KACC secretary general Yi Pyŏng-dae, who is also quoted in this article, finds dramatic words to express his recommendation for these candidates: "The April 13 general election may be the last chance to prevent the legalization of homosexuality and homosexual marriage and the enactment of the anti-discrimination law." He adds: "Let us actively advance candidates with sound thinking to the National Assembly and adjust wrong tendencies" (quoted in Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2016, April 7). Explicitly espousing anti-LGBT positions can thus prove beneficial for politicians seeking (re)election, for they receive support from anti-LGBT actors.

The active endorsement or disapproval of politicians does not only work through releasing lists and indices. The threatening potential is often enhanced by referring to the alleged support basis that activists claim they could mobilize against a candidate. In 2017, for example, Protestant churches in South Ch'ungch'ŏn Province demanded that the local Human Rights Ordinance, which included a provision on sexual orientation, be withdrawn again. Should Governor Ahn Hee-jung (*An Hŭi-jŏng*) not abide by this demand they threatened that they would start a campaign supported by 3200 churches and 42,000 believers so that he would not get reelected (Yu, Yŏng-dae 2017, February 10). In another instance, a Protestant organization claimed even more supporters. In October 2015, the *Christian Voters' Union* (*Kidokkyo yugwŏnja undong tanch'e yŏnhaphoe*) was founded to influence politics, especially to counter pro-LGBT legislation. This newly established alliance of 33 Protestant groups claimed that they would launch a voters' movement to reach 10 million people (Yu, Yŏng-dae 2015, October 14). One can assume that it is no coincidence that this tally roughly corresponds to the number of Protestants in South Korea. Protestant activists in general, and anti-LGBT campaigners in particular, thus claim significant discretionary power over churches and church members. While it is hardly probable that the claimed mobilization potential could ever be fully exploited, references to such large supporter bases may still make a lasting impression on the politicians addressed. The assertion of representing a great many people or even an overall majority is a common framing strategy of the anti-LGBT movement (cf. chapter 7.3), which activists also apply to influence elections.

As I have shown, such pressures, along with a shared political ideology and religious affiliation, are factors that lead politicians to adopt anti-LGBT positionings. Several of my pro-LGBT interviewees have argued that politicians do so for opportunistic reasons, fearing that they would lose votes should Protestant churches turn against them (Interviews 4, 14, 26). One interviewee claimed that stating one's opposition against homosexuality was "like a new ideological verification in Korean society" (Interview 26). Another interviewee concurred with this view, analyzing that in election phases, "the question about whether you are for or against homosexuality has come to be used as an ideological litmus test" (Interview 13).

Politicians also go beyond merely adopting anti-LGBT positions. In some cases, politicians advance concrete policy proposals that are in line with the claims of the anti-LGBT movement. The most prominent example in the National Assembly so far is the amendment bill introduced in September 2017 by the conservative politician Kim T'ae-hŭm, which sought to abolish the reference to sexual orientation in the NHRCK Law – a longstanding demand of the movement. Sixteen additional *Liberal Korea Party* lawmakers also supported this proposal (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2017, September 20). In an interview with Kukmin Daily, Representative Kim makes the proposal a partisan issue: "I know I can be criticized and attacked by some liberal leftists, but this is my conviction and philosophy. In terms of the identity of the conservative right-wing party, which values the community, I also judged that this issue must not be overlooked." He asserted that the opposition against homosexuality and same-sex marriage formed part of his party's platform (quoted in Yi, Chong-sŏn 2018, January 23). So far, however, as of spring 2023, the amendment proposal has not been passed, putting the claimed party support into question. The examples of Kim T'ae-hŭm's amendment bill as well as the attacks launched by Hong Joon-pyo against Moon Jae-in show that LGBT rights have turned into a political issue that gets used by politicians to discredit the political competitor. Two interviewees expressed their views that conservative politicians often raised LGBT issues in order to actually criticize progressive governments (Interviews 13, 36) – no matter if these governments actually support LGBT rights or not.

While there is an evident accordance between the anti-LGBT movement and individual politicians from the main conservative parties in South Korea, the overall party positionings on the topic are not so clear after all. Kukmin Daily has scandalized several cases in which conservative parties displayed positive views on homosexuality. Thus, the naming and blaming does not only affect individual politicians but also political parties as a whole. In 2016, several anti-LGBT activists called out *Saenuri Party's* code of ethics for stating that the party shall not discriminate against people for any reason, including sexual orientation. The code of ethics had been introduced in 2007, and the fact of its existence seems to have baffled party officials, one of whom claimed: "I did not know that this clause was included in our party's ethics code." The matter was especially delicate since *Saenuri Party* actively promoted anti-LGBT positions in the race for the 2016 general elections, criticizing the *Democratic Party* of allegedly supporting LGBT rights. This 'faux pas' was also addressed by the main political contender. Kim Sŏng-su, a *Democratic Party* politician denounced *Saenuri* party leader Kim Mu-sŏng for his hypocritical stance that now came back to him "like a boomerang": "Kim has been eager to slander other party candidates without knowing that his remarks are directly violating his own party's ethics code" (quoted in Yu, Yŏng-dae 2016, April 12). In another case, a Kukmin Daily report deplored an unclear demeanor of the *People Party*. At an event on 26 April 2017, organized by Protestant churches ahead of the presidential election, Yi Tong-sŏp, a party representative, said that "the People Party has a firm stance on homosexuality, same-sex marriage, and the anti-discrimination law", adding that "as long as our Christian lawmakers keep guard, evil bills like the anti-discrimination law will not be passed." On the same day, however, the *People's Party's* election committee policy headquarters issued a statement expressing starkly different positions. The Kukmin Daily report highlights this internal inconsistency, quoting from the committee's statement: "Same-sex marriage needs more

serious discussion in society" and "homosexuality is not a matter of pro or contra, but a matter of personal judgment of community members" (quoted in Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2017, April 26). It becomes clear that not only pro-LGBT views get under fire from the anti-LGBT movement. Ambivalent party positions are not appreciated either.

The trustworthiness of individual politicians or of whole political organizations seems to be put into question due to such contradictory positionings, especially from the perspective of the anti-LGBT movement, as well as from the Protestant Right at large. This section has revealed that the movement pursues clear political goals which they also attempt to implement by directly interfering in the political process. It may therefore be unsurprising that Protestant leaders have also endeavored to establish their own political parties to acquire more immediate access to political influence. The now following section will focus on these political ambitions, emphasizing the role anti-LGBT attitudes and activists play in them.

Anti-LGBT politics and the political endeavors of the Protestant Right

Since the mid-2000s, parts of Korean Protestantism have attempted to enter politics by creating their own political parties.[30] Table 15 gives an overview of the oft-renamed and restructured Christian parties competing in the elections for the National Assembly. The first Protestant political offshoot, the *Korean Christian Party*, was founded in 2004 by two eminent Protestant leaders, Cho Yonggi, head pastor of the *Yŏido Full Gospel Church*, one of the largest 'mega-churches' in Korea and worldwide, and Kim Joon Gon (*Kim Chun-gon*), leader of the interdenominational evangelization organization *Korea Campus Crusade for Christ* (*Han'guk taehaksaeng sŏn'gyohoe*). Their party was mainly created in opposition to the Kim Dae-jung government's rapprochement politics towards North Korea and in reaction to perceived anti-US-American tendencies in politics and society. The voting system introduced for the 2004 general elections also benefited the establishment of new parties, since it seemed achievable to exceed the threshold of 3 percent necessary to obtain proportional seats in the parallel voting system. Cho and Kim boasted that they could become the biggest Korean party, counting on the votes of the then roughly 12 million Protestant Christians (Yi, Chin-gu 2020, 20).

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30   Right after the liberation from the Japanese colonial regime in 1945, there have also been endeavors to establish Christian political parties. However, these attempts have been unsuccessful also due to the geopolitical turmoil ahead of the Korean War. For details, see Yi, Chin-gu (2020, 18f.).

Table 15: National Assembly election results of Christian political parties in Korea

Election year	Party name (Korean name)	Proportional seats[a]		Constituency seats[a]	
		%	Votes (N)	%	Votes (N)
2004	Korean Christian Party (*Han'gukkidoktang*)	1.08	228,837	0.04	8,267
2008	Christian Party for Putting Love into Practice (*Kidoksarangsilch'ŏndang*)	2.59	443,775	0.02	3,720
	Peaceful Unification Family Party (*P'yŏnghwat'ongilkajŏngdang*)	1.06	180,857	1.94	334,715
2012	Christian Liberal Democratic Party (*Kidokchayuminjudang*)	1.2	257,190	0.01	2,241
	Korean Christian Party (*Han'gukkidoktang*)	0.25	54,332	-	-
2016	Christian Liberty Party (*Kidokchayudang*)	2.63	626,853	0.01	1,367
	Christian Party (*Kidoktang*)	0.54	129,978	-	-
2020	Christian Liberty Unification Party (*Kidokchayut'ongildang*)	1.83	513,159	0.03	7,663

Notes: [a] The voting system changed over the years. In 2016, for example, the 300 seats of the National Assembly included 253 seats allocated according to the first-past-the-post system in single member districts and 47 seats in a proportional representation (PR) system based on party lists. To win seats through PR, parties needed to win at least 3% of the total list vote.

However, the *Korean Christian Party* fell short of these expectations, scoring only about 1 percent of the votes in the proportional representation section of the election. In fact, Christian parties have failed to receive enough votes to enter parliament in all elections ever since. The discretionary power over believers as claimed by church leaders does not appear to be effective in reality. Christian voters predominantly opt for other, mostly established political parties. Several surveys have demonstrated that laypeople are, for the most part, even critical of parties that have a Christian focus. One survey conducted by the Christian online newspaper *Newsnjoy* and by the portal site *God's People* (*Katp'ip'ŭl*) showed that 86 percent were opposed to a Christian party in 2004. The '2019 Protestant Perception Survey on Major Social Issues' revealed similarly high numbers of rejection among Protestants, with 79.5 percent disapproval (Yi, Chin-gu 2020, 25). Important Protestant organizations have also voiced their criticism. The critics cite the necessary separation of religion and politics, the unfortunate fact that immoral leaders were heading the parties in question, the intensification of religious conflict, and the impression that Protestant churches were merely seeking power through founding their own political party (Yi, Chin-gu 2020, 25f.; Kim, Tae-jong 2011, September 22).

Protestant leaders gave it another try in the 2008 election nonetheless. They mainly did so to counter another religious political project, the *Peaceful Unification Family Party* founded by the *Unification Church* (also known as 'Moonies'), a new religious movement inspired by Christianity that is widely considered as dangerous for and by Protestant churches (Yi, Chin-gu 2020, 21). Despite winning more votes than in the previous election, the *Christian Party for Putting Love into Practice* was not able to gain any parliamentary seats, reaping just 2.59 percent. What is noteworthy, however, is that from 2008 onwards, the Christian parties started problematizing homosexuality. In 2008, the party manifesto included a reference to the anti-discrimination law, which was a hot topic at that time (cf. chapter 5.3). In 2012, the *Christian Liberal Democratic Party* again targeted homosexuals (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2012, April 10), besides demanding that 'pro-North Korea leftists' be persecuted and that church interests such as low interest rates be duly considered. With merely 1.2 percent of the proportional list votes, the party fared worse than four years before. Yi Chin-gu (2020, 22) argues that the reason for this was the all too obvious emphasis on the special interests of Protestant churches and not the greater good. The general election of 2012 also revealed that those Protestants eager to directly enter politics through traditional channels were not able to build a common basis anymore. Besides the *Christian Liberal Democratic Party*, the *Korean Christian Party* also competed for votes. While the two parties both advocated conservative issues, the internal rifts and animosities within Korean Protestantism thwarted a party merger. Two anti-LGBT activists interviewed for this study said that it was mainly owing to conflicts among leading pastors that Christian parties were not able to find common ground (Interviews 27; 34).

The fragmentation of the Protestant parties continued in 2016, when the *Christian Liberty Party* (CLP) received 2.63 percent of the votes, and the *Christian Party* 0.54 percent. Put together, they would have surpassed the 3 percent threshold. But again, party officials could not agree on joining forces, mainly because the program of the *Christian Party* also included demands for a better welfare state, which was irreconcilable with the CLP's liberal stance in economic matters. The parties did agree, however, on most other issues, particularly concerning anti-LGBT, anti-Islam positions, and on a strict opposition against the anti-discrimination law (Yi, Chin-gu 2020, 22f.). The CLP particularly focused on anti-LGBT topics in its 2016 election campaign. This strategy earned them broad support from conservative Protestant organizations such as CCK, CCIK, the *Council of Presbyterian Churches in Korea*, and the *Korean Association of Protestant Leaders*. At a political prayer meeting, all these actors endorsed the CLP as the only political party they would back in this election in order to "stop the anti-discrimination law which incites the spread of homosexuality and Islam" (quoted in Yi, Sa-ya 2016, February 29). The CCK and its leader Chŏn Kwang-hoon in particular intensively promoted the CLP, claiming at another prayer meeting in commemoration of the founding of the Republic of Korea that one of the party's main goals was to prevent the "legalization of homosexuality". He also claimed that the CLP was necessary to effectively block pro-LGBT and pro-Islam legislation in the National Assembly, since other politicians – even when they are Christians – could do so owing to the need to follow party lines (quoted in Kim, Chae-san 2016, April 4). Pastor Chŏn Kwan-hun has been a longstanding leading figure in the Protestant involvement in society and politics, and especially a driver of party-political endeavors of Korean

Protestantism. He is also, however, infamous for radical remarks and actions, which has generated critical evaluations from within conservative Protestantism as well.[31]

Support for the CLP came also from other sides. Three weeks ahead of the elections, the *Democratic Party* lawmaker Yi Yun-sŏk left his party to become a member of the CLP, making him the first and only parliamentary member of a Christian party in Korea, even if only for a short period of time (Yi, Yong-sang 2016, March 24). The actress Sŏ Chŏng-hŭi also actively supported CLP, as a Kukmin Daily article on her involvement as public relations advisor in the party's campaigning shows (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2016, April 11). One important reason for joining the CLP, both Yi and Sŏ asserted, was their opposition against homosexuality. Yi Yun-sŏk was put on the first place of the party list, granting him good chances to enter parliament again in case the CLP had reached more than 3 percent of the votes.

Anti-LGBT activists active in Christian political parties

Other candidates on the CLP's party list are also noteworthy, since their nomination reveals the close link between this far-right Christian party and the Korean anti-LGBT movement. Yi Chin-gu (2022, 18) accordingly argues that, in Korea, "the recent far-right movement and conservative Protestantism are connected through Christian parties". Several eminent anti-LGBT activists have been active in the CLP, appearing prominently during the 2016 election campaign and occupying several positions on the party list for proportional representation seats. Two activists attained quite promising positions. Kim Chi-yŏn was placed in third place on the party list. She is praised in a Kukmin Daily report on the CLP candidates as an expert from the *Korean Churches' Countermeasures Committee against Homosexuality* who has already delivered "more than 500 lectures telling the truth about homosexuality" (Paek, Sang-hyŏn 2016, March 27). The lawyer Ko Yŏng-il, a similarly active anti-LGBT activist, was assigned the fourth place on the party list. After the loss in the 2016 election, he would become the party leader of CLP. Yi T'ae-hŭi, another lawyer and anti-LGBT activist, obtained place 9. This intense political involvement of central movement figures in 2016 coincides with the steep increase and

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31   Pastor Chŏn Kwang-hun heads the Presbyterian *Sarang Cheil Church* in Seoul, which counts about 4,000 members. He was a founding member of the *Christian Liberal Democratic Party*, which ran in the 2012 general election and claimed support from other church leaders, among them Pastor Cho Yonggi, who, however distanced himself from the party and from Chŏn (Kim, Tae-jong 2011, September 22). In recent years, Chŏn intensified his political activism, mostly directed against the Moon Jae-in government, which he and his followers denounce as communist and pro-North Korean. His large anti-government rallies drew criticism when they violated protective measures against the Covid-19 pandemic in August 2020, causing a surge of infections (Choe, Sang-Hun 2020, August 20). Chŏn is also infamous for his radical rhetoric, leading the New York Times to call him the "Populist Pastor Leading a Conservative Revival in South Korea" (Choe, Sang-Hun 2019, November 8). For example, he once demanded that families with less than five children should be punished, besides slandering remarks against Islam and homosexuals. In 2019, he was elected head of the *Christian Council of Korea* (CCK), but only three years later, he was declared heretical and was expelled from the CCK (Cho, Hyŏn 2022, December 7). He remains party leader of the *Liberty Unification Party* (*Chayut'ongildang*), a successor party of the *Christian Liberty Party* as of February 2023 (Liberty Unification Party 2023a).

high level of anti-LGBT activities in general during this time (cf. chapter 5.3). At a prayer meeting held to support the CLP, Ko Yŏng-il gave a special lecture especially on the topic of homosexuality, emphasizing the Biblical foundation of the party's opposition against homosexuality, as well as the alleged negative impact on Korean society and on the churches should further pro-LGBT bills be passed:

> If the homosexual and the anti-discrimination laws were passed, schools would be un-able to teach that homosexuality is the reason for the spreading of AIDS, the 236 mis-sion schools in Korea would be unable to decline the entry of homosexuals, and we have to fear that blood tests for homosexuals in the army would be forbidden, lead-ing to a weakening of combat power and the spread of AIDS as well. [...] Other reli-gious groups, Islam, and homosexual associations are in favor of legalizing homosex-uality, of spreading Islam, and of passing the anti-discrimination law. This is to attack the churches. (Quoted in Kim, Chae-san 2016, April 4).

Similar expressions of anti-LGBT sentiments have permeated other candidates' election-eering as well. While CLP did not manage to enter parliament in 2016, they did fare well in the proportional representation votes, getting the support from 626,853 voters. Had the overall voter turnout been smaller, as for example in 2008, when the *Christian Party for Putting Love into Practice* reached a similar percentage with just 443,775 votes, the CLP could have made its mark in the National Assembly. If assuming that CLP candidates were mainly chosen by Protestant voters, 626,853 people represent a rather small but significant share of Protestants in Korea (about 5–6%). The strategy of fearmongering, othering, and opposing certain policies rather than proposing ones themselves has thus proven partially successful for the CLP after all (cf. Yi, Chin-gu 2020, 23).

The internal analysis of the failure to enter the parliament mainly blamed the fact that the Christian vote was split between the Christian Party and CLP. The narrow focus of CLP on fierce opposition without policy alternatives was also met with criticism.[32] At a follow-up event organized by Protestant circles after the election, a professor from Seoul Theological University, Pak Myŏng-su, commented that "laypeople do not feel the sense of crisis that pastors feel about homosexuality and Islam" (quoted in Kim, Na-rae 2016, April 14). In a Kukmin Daily column, however, Pastor So Kang-sŏk defended the chosen strategy, arguing that the CLP itself was not the goal of Korean churches, but that the prevention of the anti-discrimination law and of pro-homosexuals bills was at the core of Protestant political involvement. He continues: "if the ruling and opposition parties fail to prevent [these laws] and the Korean church continues to be challenged and in crisis, the Christian Liberty Party will have to take up the challenge again next time." So Kang-sŏk demanded that then, the Christian vote must not be split and that Korean Protestantism in general needed to seek greater unity (So, Kang-sŏk 2016, April 27).

In fact, only one Christian political party competed in the 2020 general election: the *Christian Liberty Unification Party* (CLUP). The *Christian Party* failed to enter the election race due to internal conflicts (Yi, Yong-p'il 2020, April 7). Like its direct predecessor CLP,

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32   The success of Christian political parties in other parts of the world, in fact, often relied on the fact that they strove to be catch-all parties (cf. Pelinka 2004; Gehler & Kaiser 2004).

the CLUP still had a focus on the anti-discrimination law and LGBT issues, along with a strong anti-communist and anti-government orientation. For example, the specially designed party jackets – a common trait of South Korean electioneering – unmistakably displayed the core messages of the CLUP: "Eradicate homosexuality, the anti-discrimination law, and the *Chuch'e* faction" (Yi, Yong-p'il 2020, April 7). The term '*Chuch'e* faction' (*chusap'a*) refers to a group within the South Korean student movement in the 1980s, which sympathized with the North Korean state ideology *Chuch'e*. Nowadays, the term is mainly used by conservative and far-right actors to disparage political opponents.

The strong interrelation between the anti-LGBT movement and this Christian party continued. The party list of the CLUP included several anti-LGBT actors. The former Justice Minister Kim Sŭng-gyu, who had displayed anti-LGBT positions at movement events in the past, ran for a post (2nd place), as did again Ko Yŏng-il, this time in the capacity of party leader (6th). Further candidates included Yun Chae-sŏng (10th) and Pak Ŭn-hŭi (13th), members of the anti-LGBT SMO *Parents' Alliance for Building the Next Generation*, Chi Yŏng-jun, representative of the *Korean Churches' Countermeasures Committee against Homosexuality* (12th), and Han Hyo-gwan, head of *People's Solidarity for a Healthy Society* (16th) (Yu, Yŏng-dae 2020, March 26).

Yet in 2020 again, the Christian party failed to win seats in the National Assembly. The CLUP remained below the 3-percent threshold, faring worse than four years before, receiving only 1.83 percent of the proportional representation votes. The repeated failure may be based on the scandal-ridden pre-election phase. The main sponsor of the CLUP, Pastor Chŏn Kwang-hun, was arrested in late February, among others on the charge of breaching the electoral law. During his mass rallies against President Moon Jae-in in December 2019 and January 2020, he had called upon the protesters to vote for the main opposition party. Political campaigning, however, is only allowed during a designated period of time ahead of elections in South Korea (Kang, Yunsook 2020, February 24).[33] Another controversy occurred around the nomination of Yi Ŭn-jae, a member of parliament who left the main opposition *United Future Party* shortly ahead of the election to join the CLUP as number 1 on its proportional representation party list. A *Chosun Daily* report revealed, however, that she had multiple memberships in diverse religions, having received a Protestant baptism in 1980, a catholic baptism in 2019, but also attending Buddhist worships. This was considered a breach of the Christian foundations of the CLUP, especially the first of the ten commandments ("Thou shalt have no other gods before me"), leading to the exclusion of Yi Ŭn-jae from the party list and the party (Wŏn, Sŏn-u 2020, March 26). In a press statement, the CLUP itself blamed the political polarization and the consequent focus of voters on the two major parties for its failure. The CLUP also reproached the main opposition party's satellite party *Future Korea Party*[34] and the widely

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33   Chŏn Kwang-hun was released on bail in April, to be put under detention again in September for violating the terms of bail. In the meantime, he had again organized anti-government rallies. In late December 2020, a court acquitted Chŏn of all charges (Shim, Kyu-seok 2020, December 30).

34   In 2020, a new electoral system was introduced that aimed at granting smaller parties more representation through putting into practice new allocation rules for the proportional representation (PR) seats. The 47 PR seats remained the same, but 30 of them were to be allocated through a compensatory system, while 17 seats kept the parallel voting system. The two major parties, the ruling *Democratic Party* and the main opposition party *United Future Party*, however, bypassed the com-

read newspaper *Chosun Daily* of lowering the Christian party's prospects since they had claimed that CLUP spread fake news. The main reason for the loss, the press statement argues, lies in the lack of party members. Therefore, the party leadership pledged to win 1 million members in the following years (Yu, Yŏng-dae 2020, April 17).

It is questionable whether such boastful promises can be kept. In fact, the durability of the CLUP – as of all Christian parties – has not been long. In June 2021, the party changed its name to *National Revolutionary Party* (*Kungminhyŏngmyŏngdang*), forgoing its reference to Christianity.[35] The party nominated the anti-LGBT activist Ko Yŏng-il as its presidential candidate for the election in 2022 (Yi, Tae-ung 2021, December 13), but in the end, he withdrew his candidacy. Then, in April 2022, the party renamed itself again, assuming henceforth the name *Liberty Unification Party* (*Chayut'ongildang*). What remained constant are the radical positions and demands, and Pastor Chŏn Kwang-hun who became the party leader, thus keeping a clearly 'Christian' orientation, even if the party name does not suggest this connection anymore.

In general, it is surprising that all attempts at establishing a Christian party over and over again followed similar strategies. One could, alternatively, conclude from the repeated defeats that too radical rhetoric, hostility against minorities, and narrow policy platforms may not be the key to success. This is especially the case when it is rather obvious that, actually, the interests of (some) conservative Protestant churches lie at the core of these party-political endeavors. The limited focus on Protestants as electoral base is equally noteworthy. While the anti-LGBT movement tries to also convince and win over non-believers, for example, by adding frames to their repertoire that may also appeal to publics beyond conservative Protestantism (cf. chapter 8.3), all Christian parties heavily relied on mobilizing Christians for the voting booth – and failed.

Had party officials paid closer attention to opinion polls among this target audience, they might have realized that the persistent focus on homosexuality might not be sufficient to perform better in elections. Several surveys commissioned by Protestant organizations had shown that homosexuality was an issue of only minor interest for Christians in general and Christian voters in particular. A Kukmin Daily survey from 2019 revealed that only 3 percent of Christian respondents considered homosexuality as a big threat for churches. 'Heresies' like the *Shinchŏnji* sect came in first place (37.9%), followed by the

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pensatory system by establishing satellite parties which only competed for PR seats, ultimately betraying the original purpose of the modified electoral law. For details, cf. Cho, Sundai 2020.

35   The name of the *National Revolutionary Party* may seem odd on first sight, since the term 'revolution' is mainly associated with progressive upheavals. Unfortunately, party officials did not comment on the choice of party name. The party statutes of the party do not provide clues either, especially because the statutes seem to be unchanged in comparison to the version of its predecessor party CLUP or even CLP. The statutes of the *National Revolutionary Party* state that they were stipulated on 3 March 2016. When considering one of the main assumptions of this study, however, i.e., that the Protestant Right is pursuing a broad hegemonic project, this name makes more sense. The name is evocative of the 'Conservative Revolution', a group of political actors in the German Weimar Republic who advocated nationalist, anti-democratic, and anti-liberal positions, serving as trailblazers for the rise of Nazism (cf. Mohler 1972). Recently, representatives of the *New Right* in Europe and the United States have taken recourse to the ideology of the Conservative Revolution (Strobl 2021). As chapters 7 and 8 of this study have demonstrated, it is highly probable that Protestant right-wing actors in South Korea follow similar lines of thought.

low social trust that churches have (27.4%), and the breakaway of younger people (20.6%) (Sin, Sang-mok 2019, March 6). In another survey on the perceptions and political participation of Christians ahead of the 2017 presidential election commissioned by the *Korea Christian Press Forum* (*Han'guk kidokkyo ŏllon p'orŏm*), the participants were asked what they considered the most pressing 'Christian' tasks for the next president to tackle. Only 16.4 percent of the respondents stated 'homosexuality' as the main priority. Other topics mentioned included church taxes (26.2%), the way Christianity is treated in schoolbooks (19%), heresy (15.7%), and Islam (12.4%).[36] While such 'Christian' topics do have some importance for the participants, the survey also revealed that the influence of faith is rather low in their voting decisions. 77.9 percent said that their voting behavior was not affected by influence from pastors (Pak Chae-ch'an 2017, April 25) – another piece of evidence for the lack of discretionary power of church leaders over their communities.

In summary, this subchapter has shown that anti-LGBT sentiments have made their way into Korean party politics. Political parties supported by parts of the conservative Protestant leadership in particular have focused on the fight against LGBT rights. Regarding the close personal overlaps that the CLP and the CLUP have with the anti-LGBT movement, I argue that these parties have become an integral part of the movement. Vice-versa, anti-LGBT activists have grown into crucial assets for the concrete political endeavors of the Protestant Right. One can assume that they have centrally influenced the programs of recent Christian parties to take on outspoken opposition against LGBT rights. At the same time, anti-LGBT attitudes have percolated traditional politics as well, as this chapter has demonstrated. Over the past years, I argue, the anti-LGBT movement has managed to politicize LGBT issues to an extent that politicians from established parties utilize the topic for their purposes, although they mostly do so when having a conservative, and especially, a Protestant background.

The involvement of anti-LGBT activists in (Christian) party politics also bespeaks their will to political power. Several of my neutral or pro-LGBT interviewees have claimed that the endeavors of the anti-LGBT movement were rather political than based on religious convictions (Interviews 1, 6, 9, 18, 26, 35). I argue that the aspiration for political power and for influence in and on society unifies large parts of the Protestant Right in Korea. The party statutes of the *National Revolutionary Party*, which remained unchanged since the foundation of the CLP, put it this way: "The National Revolutionary Party aims to [...] achieve national unity to fulfill Christian social and political responsibilities for the nation and people" (Liberty Unification Party 2023b). Consequently, the party indirectly asserted that advocating anti-LGBT sentiments were their downright responsibility as Christians. As seen in this chapter, however, self-interests rather than a sense of responsibility seem to be the basis of the Protestant Right's party politics. In general, the negative politicization of LGBT rights serves as one means to the end of enforcing allegedly 'common' Protestant interests and enlarging Protestant influence on politics

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36   The survey results do not indicate whether the answers were of an open type or predetermined. In the latter case, even the validity and significance of the answers given is questionable. A methodologically sounder approach would then have been to have the survey participants evaluate each answer possibility on a scale from 'not important at all' to 'very important'.

and society, besides, and in combination with promoting other topics such as anti-communism, anti-Islam and anti-migration attitudes and pro-Americanism.

As the cases of Christian political parties revealed, however, these political projects proved largely unsuccessful. Taking a Gramscian perspective on these attempts at concrete political influence, one could invoke the assumption that this move for political power may have come prematurely. Apparently, the issues promoted by right-wing Protestants did not convince many people, at least not in the sense that ferocious anti-LGBT rhetoric would lead them to voting for a Christian party. Overall, it seems that the endeavors of the anti-LGBT movement and the Protestant Right at large are mostly (and only) effective within conservative Protestant circles. In the political arena in particular, these actors are unlikely to wield much influence on non-Christian parts of voters. The lopsided concentration on a conservative Protestant electorate is certainly to blame for this. But the recurring electoral failures are also testament to the fact that the Protestant Right is far from achieving cultural hegemony. Otherwise, one could have expected Christian parties to fare way better. Yet, as already mentioned, the efforts of the anti-LGBT movement have not at all been in vain. Anti-LGBT politics of the Protestant Right increasingly make their mark on established political actors.

Pro-LGBT civil society actors, aware of these developments, try to exert indirect and direct influence in the political realm themselves. In fact, despite concerted actions and defamation campaigns against individual politicians who support LGBT rights, several pro-LGBT bills have made their way into parliaments and have been passed since the early 2000s. What is more, unlike the Protestant Right, the pro-LGBT movement does have parliamentary representation. For many years now, the progressive *Justice Party* has been an active and unswerving advocate of LGBT rights. Also owing to the electoral system, the Justice Party only occupied a few seats in the National Assembly until 2024. But the parliamentary presence of this party is proof that non-exclusionary, pro-human rights, and pro-LGBT positions do have the potential to yield electoral success – at least more so than the opposite political agenda promoted by the Protestant Right.

10.6 Conclusion: politicized and professionalized anti-LGBT networks

Using the empirical data from this study's protest event analysis and the method of network analysis in particular, this chapter set out to investigate the central actors of the Korean anti-LGBT movement, as well as their roles, and interrelations. The results reveal that while indeed many collective and individual actors are involved in the movement, only a relatively small core is in charge of the bulk of anti-LGBT activities. For the case of the Korean anti-LGBT movement, one can confidently claim that it did not take the path of informal, non-hierarchical, and grassroots structures as suggested by scholars of progressive social movements (cf. Sutherland et al. 2013; Voss & Sherman 2000, Staggenborg 1988). Rather, professionalized, specialized, and functionally differentiated leadership structures have emerged, which comes close to fulfilling Michels' "iron law of oligarchy" (Michels 1958; cf. also McCarthy & Zald 1973; 1977). This is perhaps a special trait of conservative movements, especially those that have a religious foundation. Pre-existing structures as well as the traditionally hierarchical fabric of Christian churches may

have contributed to this kind of development. However, further comparative research is needed to confidently confirm this point.

A closer look at these leading actors showed that, early on, central organizations of the politically active Korean Protestantism, that is, the *Protestant Right*, got active against LGBT rights, most prominently the CCK. Soon, however, other subgroups of Korean Protestantism such as denominations also joined the fight, partially even institutionalizing anti-LGBT positions in their denominational statutes. These latter, specifically religious actors have been drawn into the movement by SMOs that had already been advocating anti-LGBT attitudes for a longer time. Many of these organizations were newly established, mostly in the course of the intensification of activism in the period 2013–2015. They have an explicit anti-LGBT focus and they often specialize and concentrate on concrete topics like health, families, or the military – at least when judging from their names. Some alliances like *Tongbanyŏn* figure prominently among these specifically created SMOs, but when scrutinizing the actual acting people, it turns out that only a small leading circle of organizers, disseminators, and 'masterminds' executes and accompanies the lion's share of activities. They fulfill the function of norm brokers and thus centrally contribute to the enlargement and professionalization of the movement. Several of the anti-LGBT SMOs have adopted 'secularly' sounding names, with representatives using secular, that is, non-Christian arguments against LGBT rights. However, these SMOs are – besides the few rightist Catholic and Buddhist groups – firmly embedded in Korean Protestantism, an identity background that they apparently attempt to hide to appeal to larger publics.

In addition to the social movement organizations and individual movement leaders, political actors in the narrow sense have emerged as important for the development and workings of anti-LGBT politics in Korea. These actors can be divided into two groups. First, established politicians like lawmakers and government representatives join the movement by adopting anti-LGBT positions and participating in protest events. They also depend on the movement in the sense that politicians can benefit from an endorsement and active support if they declare themselves opponents of LGBT rights. On the other hand, politicians can also get under fire as soon as they are perceived to be in favor of pro-LGBT bills. On many occasions, anti-LGBT activists have obstructed election campaigns of candidates, often combining this opposition against individual politicians with fundamental criticism directed against governments led by the *Democratic Party of Korea*. The second group of political actors are Christian political parties. The fight against LGBT rights has been a longstanding core feature of these parties, which is hardly surprising since several anti-LGBT activists are active members of these parties, serving as candidates in the 2016 and 2020 general elections.

These insights demonstrate that the opposition against LGBT rights has the potential of bringing together and creating closer links between the Protestant Right and 'traditional' politics. At the same time, the network analysis shows that a similar connective effect can be observed within Protestantism itself. The struggles against LGBT rights render possible the cooperation between otherwise opposing organizations, such as CCK and CCIK in the religio-political area, but also among the manifold Protestant denominations in Korea, which are often only united in mutual disdain. At the same time, rifts within the anti-LGBT movement itself have also come to the fore through network anal-

ysis. Certain 'ex-gay' organizations close to Pastor Lee Jonah keep some distance to the mainstream anti-LGBT SMOs and rather cooperate among themselves, reproaching the mainstream leaders of the movement of acting out of a will to political power rather than 'caring' for LGBT people out of religious conviction.

This chapter has demonstrated that the Korean anti-LGBT movement has close links to both conservative parts of Protestantism and the conservative political sphere. To some extent, the movement carries on the historically grown alliance between the conservative historical bloc in South Korea and the conservative Protestant sub-bloc (cf. chapter 3.2). At the same time, however, anti-LGBT actors are part of a larger political project which, so-to-speak, aims for breathing new life into Korean conservatism in general. The (failed) attempts at establishing Christian parties at the national level are just the most obvious example. More important, I argue, are the underlying political contents that the anti-LGBT movement, and generally, the Protestant Right have been promoting, and that have actually brought dynamism to conservative politics. Of course, these contents (anti-LGBT, anti-Islam, anti-migration, anti-communist, anti-government sentiments) consist mostly of a strategy of fueling exclusion and hostility, and 'innovative' combinations the two. But when taking a non-normative perspective, the evidence clearly shows that these elements have entered broad areas of politics. Politicians have become increasingly aware of the delicate character of these topics, and some of them – mostly politicians on the conservative political spectrum – proceeded to actively address these topics, presumably also for the purpose of augmenting their own political standing and electoral success.

This increasing joint usage of anti-LGBT framings is built upon a precarious basis, though. While ideas may travel with ease, complicated personal connections can thwart these very diffusion channels. The case of Pastor Chŏn Kwang-hun, who, as I have shown, heavily relies on anti-LGBT rhetoric in his religio-political projects, is exemplary of this unstable relationship between the Protestant Right and established politics. The anti-government mass rallies he initiated in 2019 and 2020 attracted eminent political figures. Among them was Oh Se-hoon (*O Se-hun*), a politician from the major conservative party and former mayor of Seoul (2006–2011). When Oh attended one of Chŏn's rallies in October 2019, he had joined in the radical rhetoric, calling President Moon Jae-in a dictator. After he was reelected mayor of the capital city in 2021, however, he turned his back on Chŏn due to the latter's continued violations of Covid-19 social distancing and quarantine rules (Yin, Hyŏn-u 2021, August 10). By then, Chŏn had become a liability, not only for Oh Se-hoon, but also in the eyes of large parts of Korean Protestantism, by whom he was declared heretical and expelled from the CCK (Cho, Hyŏn 2022, December 7). Future research will have to further investigate the connections of the Protestant Right with other conservative and far-right political and civil society actors. Some inter-personal relations seem to exist, as well as a significant potential to mobilize Christian protesters for far-right rallies (cf. Cho & Lee 2021). This study was not able to unfold inter-organizational connections beyond the area of anti-LGBT politics, for example in relation to other minor far-right parties like the *Our Republican Party* (*Urigonghwadang*), which emerged in Korean politics after the impeachment of Park Geun-Hye, but has been equally unsuccessful in elections so far.

However, the fact that anti-LGBT politics are largely dominated by Protestant actors is a remarkable result in itself. The deep embeddedness in Protestantism definitely constitutes an asset of the anti-LGBT movement, benefitting from mobilization-related and other resources. At the same time, this one-sidedness also represents a constraint. In fact, the results of the network analysis and this study at large confirm Vasi's (2011, 16) argument on the miscibility of social movements: "Contention spreads faster when brokers connect few groups and when they connect groups that are highly miscible; yet, contention spreads furthest when brokers connect diverse groups and groups with low miscibility." Against this background, the lack of relations with actors outside the confines of conservative Protestantism may explain the limited success of the anti-LGBT movement to reach out to non-Christian publics as well, as chapter 9 has suggested.