Power Struggles in Korean Cyberspace and

Korean Cyber Asylum Seekers

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Declaration by Candidate

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and effort and that it has not been submitted anywhere for any award. Where other sources of information have been used, they have been acknowledged.

Signature..

Date...

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Abstract

This thesis examines the potential power of internet users to use the internet in the conduct of their everyday lives by discussing the impact of state and non-state actors on cyberspace. The debate about 'who controls the internet?' has avoided the question of the power of internet users, which is needed to understand the character of cyberspace. Theoretical debates identify the overwhelmingly territorial nature of cyber governance through nationally developed and enforced legislation, which is in direct opposition to the power of transnational ICTs. This thesis contributes to this theoretical debate through the use of the concepts of alternative and radical media, which are usually categorised as anti-establishment resistance strategies. I use Michel de Certeau's notion of the heterological practice of everyday life to develop a perspective on the power of the powerless on the internet. I also adopt Franklin's theoretical stance on the relations between state, non-state, and social actors, which is influenced by de Certeau's ideas about the plurality of space.

In order to illustrate this argument, I discuss the Korean 'cyber asylum seeker' phenomenon, which arose when Korean internet users migrated from local web portals to global corporations, such as Google and YouTube, who had refused to comply with the restrictions that the Korean government policies imposed on the local internet. This development allowed Korea cyber asylum seekers to become power holders, thus expanding the reach of Korean cyberspace. The Korean cyber asylum phenomenon was a result of both the Korean government's cyber intervention following the 2008 Candlelight protest and Korean web portals' compliance. I therefore understand the Korean cyber asylum seeker phenomenon from the perspective of a tripartite inter-relationship between the Korean government, the web portals, and internet users. This tripartite approach sheds new light on current debates about the questions: 'Who controls the internet', 'Why is it controlled?' and 'How is it controlled?' by adding the question, 'What other groups have had an impact on power formations in cyberspace?'

My field research points to the significance of internet user mobility for a more complete understanding of the effect of the Korean government and the web portals on the expansion of Korean cyberspace. The research project is based on an analysis of the Korean government's internet policy, business reports of Korean web portals, and interviews with officials from government bodies, the Korean internet industry, activists, citizens and online community members, as well as online community observation.

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List of Acronyms

AJF: Agora Justice Forum

BBS: Bulletin Board System

COO: Chief Operating Officer

FTC: Fair Trade Commission

ICANN: Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

ICTs: Information Communication Technologies

KCC: Korean Communications Commission

KCSC: Korea Communications Standards Commission

KISO: Korean Internet Self-Governance Organization

LBS: Location Based Service

MB: President Myung-Bak Lee

MBC: Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation

MNB: Ministry of National Defense

NEC: National Elections Commission

NIDA: National Internet Development Agency of Korea

PV: Page per View

RNS: Real Name System

RSS: Really Simple Syndication

SNS: Social Networking Service

TFT: Task Force Team

UCC: User-Created Content

UGC: User-Generated Content

UV: Unique Visitors / Unique per View

WiBro: Wireless Broadband Internet

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Note:

Currency units, Korean won and UK pounds, are used alternatively and dependent on context. The currency conversion is made based on the exchange rate of 1,900 won per pound sterling.

Part I: Surveying the Issues

Introduction. The Tripartite Approach to State and Non-State Actors and its Users: Moving Beyond the Cyber Control Discourse

The purpose of this dissertation is to address issues relating to internet users' online practices in the context of cyber control, and to develop a theoretical framework appropriate for this. Although the significance of online and offline blending within our society has been widely discussed, the question still remains how we understand its impact on our daily lives. The significance of cyber control in our daily lives has not been discussed in an adequate fashion so far. The dissertation is an account of the impact of cyber control on daily online practices by examining ordinary internet users' own rhetoric as opposed to that of the representatives of the powerful, such as governmental legislation as well as the meta-data produced by profit-motivated web service providers.

Theoretical debates begin by identifying the overwhelmingly territorial governance of cyberspace through nationally developed and enforced legislation, which is in direct opposition to the power of transnational ICTs, as Salhi (2009) and Goldsmith and Wu (2006) argue. This thesis argues that the discourse relating to cyber control deploys state and non-state actors as key players in cyberspace and internet users' activities are depicted as a powerless presence given the battle between the two. This dissertation, then, contributes to this theoretical dialogue by utilising the concepts of practice media theories, which shed light on ordinary media users' activities. By adapting this theoretical framework, this research project endeavours to situate the internet users' activities in the constellation of cyber control discourses not as the powerless, but as the potential power holder.

To underpin this theoretical argument, I use Michel de Certeau's notion of the practice of everyday life to develop a perspective concerned with the power of the powerless when speaking about the internet. I argue that de Certeau's notions of space/place, power and the plurality of the cultural realm are pertinent to the range of issues associated by cyber control. In connection with this I also adopt Marianne Franklin's theoretical stance (2008, 2009, 2010) on the relationships between state, non-state, and social actors, which is influenced by de Certeau's ideas on the plurality of space. Of particular relevance here is Franklin's insight that social actors (including

user groups) shape internet forums and that these need to be considered in wider debates on the state-centric analysis and non-state ownership of the internet.

As a test case this research project explores the extent to which the 2008 Candlelight Protest (henceforth Candlelight 2008) and its aftermath can be understood using this theoretical formulation. The point of departure for the case study is my understanding of the 2008 Candlelight Protest and its aftermath, which challenged the Lee administration's Free Trade Agreement with the US Government relating to the importation of possibly diseased beef. The protest's momentum lasted a sustained period of time due to the participants' online activism and information sharing online, which in turn influenced the organisation of events on the ground.

Candlelight 2008 was far beyond most Koreans' perceptions of the internet's potential to mobilise people. Koreans suddenly became aware that online virtuality was heavily interwoven with reality. Such significant online activism seemed to open up the possibility that the internet could generate a new platform for public communication, namely a form of digital democracy. However, the influence of online voices on the economic and political landscape shifted from this optimistic view of cyberspace's potential to one of despair, because internet users felt the full impact of the Lee administration's cyber intervention during and after the protest. The Lee administration arrested some of those internet users who uploaded online postings against the government and deleted these, accusing them of disseminating false information in the process. These measures were possible because Korean internet service providers had to follow the state's request to delete such postings and hand over their users' personal information by law. This cyber control resulted in Korean internet users' cyber migration to global web service providers as they felt that they no longer wanted to be controlled and placed under surveillance by the Lee government and its Korean web portal proxies, which is how they interpreted the government's cyber interventions. This project attempts to shed light on the Korean internet users' online traversals in order to reflect on how exactly they perceived this cyber control and its significance. A significant contribution of this thesis will be to place this case study in an appropriate theoretical context.

Since the advent of the internet in Korean society, ordinary Koreans, including myself, believed in the politico-economic ideology that the faster an internet service

we had, the better a society we could build. In our understanding, the slogan, 'the better society', did not only entail economic development, but also connoted a better democracy. However, these myths promoted by government IT policy and profit-motivated IT entrepreneurs turned out to be wrong, and the events of 2008 are a specific example of this. The factor that mattered most was how Korean internet users dwelled in and traversed cyberspace.

2. Statement of Interest and the Research Question

This thesis seeks to re-formulate the discourses relating to the cyber control. Johan Eriksson et al. stated that internet control can be understood as divided into three categories, which are to control '(1) access to the internet, (2) functionality of the internet, and (3) activity on the internet' (2009:206), and this research project comes under the third heading. However, current cyber control discourse relating to the third category tends to focus on exploring alternative and radical media, which are usually categorised by anti-establishment resistance strategies, as Atton (2002) notes. As a consequence, internet users' everyday practices have not been sufficiently discussed and this research endeavours to rectify this by adapting de Certeau's notions on the space, power and culture as well as Marianne Franklin's concept of 'cyberscape'.

The relevance of de Certeau's practice theories lies in the fact that he emphasises the impossibility of the power to control space due to the unexpected and irregular practices performed by ordinary people. In the same vein, this research project takes up de Certeau's critical approach to the dichotomisation between 'scriptural economy' of the power holder and the 'orality' of ordinary people. For example, the main thrust of his ideas as such not only gives us a clue as to how the logics of cyberspace are partly designed by the state's and non-state actors' performance in cyberspace. This includes, for example, laws on the internet as implemented by the state as well as issues relating to intellectual property, which are the main revenue sources for internet service providers. His practice theory also offers us an opportunity to understand how valuable it is to appreciate internet user activities in this morphology, because their tactical re-appropriation of cyberspace for their own practices comprises cyber culture. Thus, I argue that de Certeau's invitation to a

plurality of temporalities and subjectivities in our daily lives has led me to a better understanding of how internet users traverse (act) beyond the limits of time, location, and politics.

De Certeau's idea is not only pertinent for an understanding of cyber control discourses, but also validates the necessity of situating internet users within this constellation, because the discourse of either government intervention or global corporate intervention in cyberspace must be assessed in conjunction with the activities of internet users. These two seemingly different stories are not two sides of the same coin but a Mobius strip with the two dynamics affecting each other. In this context, I have adapted Marianne Franklin's concept of 'cyberscape' (2010). The premise of her argument is that if cyberspace began to be embedded in our society and forms a new nexus, the perception of people of this place will become different. Her theoretical position is that online is no longer a virtual space which gives the users a moment to reflect on their daily lives offline. Therefore, we need to look at the perceptions of different groups about the internet in our society (2009:226). She suggests that we need to consider the effect of cyberspace as separate from that of other mediascapes such as television so that we can understand how different groups have different perceptions on new technologies, and struggle with each other as a consequence, thus comprising cyber culture. My use of the term cyberspace refers to people's spatio-temporal experience online, which has resulted in the emergence and increasing significance of cyberspace in society

This theoretical framework allows us to link seemingly different internet narratives by approaching them from different angles. I argue that a more cohesive view can be achieved by treating cyberspace as a new political place for the power holder, as a daily space for ordinary people, and as a source of profit for web service providers. This dissertation will address this particular set of theoretical issues through the following research questions:

1. What is the dominant power logic in ICTs?
2. What do we mean by online and offline interwovenness?
3. How relevant are de Certeau's notions on space/place, power and culture to the understanding of the cyber control discourses?
4. How useful is the concept of 'Cyberscape' to understand the struggle between

the state and non-state actors?

5. What is the significance of situating the internet users into the current cyber control discourses?

Based on these theoretical underpinnings, this research project examines the changing perceptions of the Korean government, the Korean web portals and internet users' of the internet in Korean society since 2008 in order to test the usefulness of this theoretical framework.

The 2008 Candlelight Protest[1]

The chart on the next page summarises the key events related to the Candlelight demonstration in 2008 in chronological order.

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[1] A detailed exploration of the 2008 Candlelight Protest will be carried out in Chapter 2.
[2] The population of South Korea is approximately 48,000,000. A famous internet news website 'Oh my news' had 1,500,000 visitors on May 31, to view the real time news. It was on this day that the police used water cannons on the demonstrators (see H.K. Kim, et al, July 2008).
[3] For a detailed discussion of this, see Kan, June 2012, and Rapoza, April 2012.

[4] Castells' network society was adapted by Korean scholars, for example, Kyung-Jae Song (2008).

Summary of Candlelight 2008	
April	Korea-US negotiations reach an agreement on US beef imports.
	Terrestrial T.V. station MBC broadcasts a current affairs programme on US beef imports and mad cow disease.
May	First Candlelight demonstration held in Seoul with around ten thousand participants, mostly teenagers.
	Around 1,700 civil society organisations hold meetings on countermeasures against the government.
	The Commissioner General of Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency announces in a press conference his intention to ferret out the leaders of the demonstration.
	The government postponed publication of the official gazette with regard to the importation of US beef.
	The president makes a formal apology through a public announcement with regard to the issue of US beef.
	After 17th day of the Candlelight demonstration participants continue their rally through the night.
	The police arrest 37 demonstration participants.
	The government publishes the official gazette.
June	The police start using water canon on the demonstration participants.
	The civil society organisations hold an assembly for 72 hours.
	- The Candlelight demonstration marches to the presidential residence, the Blue House. - The police used erect barricades between the participants and the Blue House. - Approximately seven hundred thousand participants take part in the demonstration.
	The president made a special announcement and apologised for his decision of the import of the US beef.
	The results of US-Korean re-negotiations on the issue of beef imports announced.
	The importation of US beef reported in the official gazette.
	The organization of Catholic priests hold special masses in favour of the demonstrations.
July	Protestant and Buddhist clerics hold special masses.
	- Candlelight demonstrations continue to be held. - Approximately 500,000 participants including four religious groups and opposition parties take part.
	-The 100th day anniversary of the Candlelight demonstration is held.

(adapted from Song K.J., 2008)

As seen in the table above Candlelight 2008 displayed a dramatic narrative, beginning with public outrage, moving to government repression and the unexpected explosion of the demonstration and on to the renegotiation of the Korean government with the US. This thesis will explain how the discourses relating to the 2008 Candlelight were formed at a national level. Moreover, the story of Candlelight 2008 could not be explained fully without evaluating the protesters' online activism.

The third Candlelight protest happened in 2008, which was the most significant expression of popular discontent against government policies in South Korea after the re-introduction of democratic government in 1987. Throughout the summer of 2008 huge anti-government demonstrations broke out across South Korea. These congregated around City Hall in Seoul, and other open spaces. The demonstrations were started by people who were against the new Korea-US Free Trade Agreement that allowed the importation of US beef without any health inspections by Korean customs. The agreement extended to the import of US beef from cattle over 30 months old, which raised public concern about the possibility of health risks including mad cow disease, especially following broadcasts from a television station, MBC, on the issue. The public were frustrated by both the government's lack of attention to public health and its lack of political power to protect the Korean public from suspect US imports. However, the government's reaction was to ignore the initial discontent and to maintain the validity of their position through public announcements in the media. As a consequence, the demonstration spread quickly with participants drawn from different age groups and genders (D.H. Song, 2011).

Teenage students in Seoul led the first Candlelight protest on May 2nd. They spontaneously responded to the news relating to the dangers of US beef imports, because they were afraid of eating such beef in their school meals (C.K. Kim et al., 2010). The protests had by then spread across the nation, because the government kept ignoring them, merely making several public announcements to support their decision.

For the government, Candlelight 2008 was merely an antigovernment demonstration and they presumed that there was a dominant anti-Lee group leading the protesters and controlling them in a revolt against the state. However, the majority of the protesters were initially non-political. They went out on the street with their friends

and children. They anticipated that the protest would be peaceful, and the candlelight symbolised that this was a festive-like demonstration for the participants. However, the peaceful mood soon became aggressive, because of the Lee administration's definition of the protest. The Commissioner General of the Seoul Metropolitan Policy Agency announced his intention to ferret out the leaders of the protest in a press conference on May 13th. However the protest's accumulated voices proved too strong for the government to easily repress. As a consequence the Lee administration postponed publication of the official gazette with regard to the import of US beef on May 15th. President Lee also made a special announcement and apologised for his decision on the import of US meat on May 19th. However, the demonstration participants continued their rally through to the evening of May 24th, because the government had not withdrawn their plan to import US beef, asserting instead that the breakup of the FTA agreement would result in US economic reprisals and an associated negative impact on the Korean economy. The participants not only expressed their frustration with the importations, but they also voiced dissatisfaction with other political issues, such as the government's education and economic policies (K.J. Song, 2008)

When the President's apology failed to quell the discontent, the police continued to arrest demonstrators, and the government started to put legal pressure on television and the press to refrain from covering the demonstrations. The police arrested 37 demonstration participants on May 25th and pushed their political decision. The Lee administration publicised the official gazette on May 29th and heightened repressive measures by using water cannon against protest participants (ibid.).

This governmental oppression was highlighted by Amnesty International who set forth their view in their publication 'Policing the Candlelight Protests in South Korea'. In this document they reported that:

> Riot police officials used unnecessary or excessive force, arrested people arbitrarily and ill-treated persons under their care, in violation of both South Korean law and international law and standards (Amnesty International 2010).

Most civil groups were against the Lee administration's suppression of the protests, including the Buddhist-held special masses against the government's activities on June 4th. Civil organisations also held assemblies for 72 hours on June 5th. Around

1,700 civil organisations held meetings on countermeasures against the Lee administration on May 6th. On June 5th the Candlelight protest was composed of approximately 500,000 participants including four religious groups as well as the opposition parties. However, the Lee administration negated the importance of such public voices (K.J. Song, 2008).

There were a few moments when protests became very volatile. On June 10th, the Candlelight protest marched to the Blue House where the President resided. Police used containers to erect a barricade between the participants and the Blue House. The import of the US beef was reported in the official gazette on June 26th after the 100 day anniversary of the Candlelight protest, and was the last day of protest was held on June 15th. After 100 days of outcries and protests, Candlelight 2008 ceased without succeeding to change the Lee administration's political stance, because the protest participants believed the administration's promise that they would make every endeavour to re-negotiate the beef import issue with the US, which did not succeed (ibid.). The demonstrations were unsuccessful at an international level and Koreans are still eating US beef today, although mad cow disease was detected in 2012. Their main significance was that the unexpected explosion of popular discontent did eventually affect government policy, and brought about some limited concessions to public opinion, as seen in the renegotiation of the Korea-US Free Trade Agreement (ibid.).

The rally that started on May 2, 2008 and it reached its peak on August 15, 2008. Participants in Seoul numbered around 700,000 and more than one million participants took part in the demonstration in over 80 cities. The crowd was double that of previous candle demonstrations in 2004, (which totalled 200,000 people). In 2008 1,500 participants were detained and 30 were arrested and 2,500 people were wounded during the demonstrations.[2]

Candlelight 2008 demonstrated dramatic fluctuations in public outrage, government repression, the unexpected emergence of the protest and the renegotiation of the FTA agreement between the Korean government and the US as a consequence. One of the major characteristics of the 2008 protest was that it was composed largely of

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[2] The population of South Korea is approximately 48,000,000. A famous internet news website 'Oh my news' had 1,500,000 visitors on May 31, to view the real time news. It was on this day that the police used water cannons on the demonstrators (see H.K. Kim, et al, July 2008).

spontaneous individuals, such as students, office workers and housewives, rather than the dominant civil society groups (C.K. Kim et al., 2010 and S. Chae et al., 2010). In this context, it was appreciated as an experiment of direct democracy which could surpass the limits of representative democracy. However, the most striking feature of Candlelight 2008 was the interweaving of online and offline culture.

It was a digital phenomenon in the sense that its online dimension was the principal location where the idea of the protest was first suggested and developed. For example, an open-access online forum 'Agora' on Daum.net took a central role in leading the protest's momentum, because internet users discussed issues including its planning on the forum. The result of that discussion was shared with other small internet communities such as Soul Dresser, 82 Cook.com, as well as other social organisations on the ground. Regarding other dynamics, such as UCC websites like Afreeca.com streamed the demonstration online in real time and this was hyperlinked by small internet communities and forums that boosted its online discussion (K.W. Song, 2008). This particular characteristic of the protest is the key to understanding the aftermath of the protest, which is the main focus of this research project.

Candlelight 2008 was also the first mass demonstration in which internet-mediated organisation played a key role, which provoked the imposition of a series of repressive internet regulations by the Korean government. They arrested famous, anti-government netizens and accused them of disseminating false information. Some scholars engaged in the discourse of internet regulation (Goldsmith and Wu 2006; Hague and Loader 1999) view cyberspace as a battlefield between the public and the government. Similarly, studies relating to the aftermath of the 2008 Candlelight protests focus on internet governance, but in doing so they neglect one highly significant aspect of the Korean-language internet.

3. The Three Dimensions of the Korean Internet: Web Portals, the State and its Users

The unprecedented ability of ordinary citizens to organise themselves against the Korean government through online communication during Candlelight 2008 led to the government planning new policies designed to gain control of cyberspace. This phenomenon resulted in certain discourses which are concerned with substantive issues relating to Korean cyberspace, namely, the digital phenomenon, decentralised networks, online activism and freedom of speech vis-à-vis cyber governance. The limitations of these discourses are their exclusive focus on contrasts between state control and user activism, and cyber security, and freedom of expression. Furthermore, I argue that scholarly debates have paid scant attention to the Korean web portals that are used by some 85% of Korean internet users and which played such a central role during the 2008 Candlelight Protest. I suggest that such a web portal-centric internet culture facilitated the efficacy of the Lee government's cyber control policies. Therefore, I assert that Korean cyberspace must be examined from the perspective of a tripartite relationship (with associated tensions), between the government, Korean web portals and Korean internet users. To illustrate this, I introduce cases where Korean internet users abandoned Korean-based portals for US or globally-based service providers in a mass movement known as the 'Korean cyber asylum seeking movement'.

Firstly, the project re-evaluates the impact of Candlelight 2008. I explore the public's cyber activism and the way changing government perceptions led to intervention both in cyberspace and on the ground. Secondly, I examine how the Lee government tried to control Korean cyberspace through the implementation of new policies after the 2008 Candlelight protests through an analysis of changes in the government's internet policies post-2008. This is to evaluate whether and how the Korean government is using new policies as a means to control Korean cyberspace. Thirdly, this dissertation investigates the changing strategies of Korean web portals in the light of the socio-political protests of 2008. Fourthly, the evasive tactics of Korean internet users in cyberspace will be scrutinised within the context of their everyday online practices during Candlelight 2008 and after.

This investigation focuses on online communities whose activism is related to the cyber asylum seeking phenomenon, which moved from a Korean-based portal to a US/global one since Candlelight 2008. It sheds light on how internet users' distrust of the power holders also fomented conflict between online community members. Lastly, the significance of individual Korean internet users' migration to global web service providers, a process which I term Underground Asylum Seekers, is emphasised. The extent to which internet users reflect their daily lives in their online activities, and the effect this has on the power holders in Korean cyberspace, is of central importance here.

Three different vignettes from the Korean internet illustrate the changing landscape of cyberspace after Candlelight 2008, as narrated by the three most significant players.

Snap Shot 1

President Lee stated in June 2008 that:

> If integrity is not guaranteed, the power of the internet is only a poison … we have to watch for the dissemination of incorrect information, because it causes infodemics that stir up social anxieties (Yonhapnews, 2008).

The Ministry of Strategy and France announced in Nov. 2008 that:

> The government is making every endeavour to overcome the economic difficulties by establishing new policies. However, if the cyber controversialist makes a strong comment against this, the public fails to believe in government policies (Dong-Ho Um, 2008).

Snap Shot 2

> People established a consensus that they were merely actively communicating in cyberspace. Then, the government with its power started to intervene online. People suddenly realised that this was also a reality and they thought they needed to come up with something quickly … I do not feel secure about using Korean email services (Interview, 8 Sept. 2010).

Snap Shot 3

One spokesman in the Korean internet industry stated in 2011 that:

> Last year [2009], Gmail was no.1 in the Korean market in terms of time duration. What this signifies is that people, who use email, actively moved (away) from our company to Gmail. After the email account of the writer of the TV programme *P.D. Note* was scrutinised by the government, our email service usage rate dropped significantly. It is worrying … If people leave, because the quality of our service is bad, then we should be able to attract them back again by upgrading our service. If not, something is wrong (Interview, 3 Sept. 2010).

Another spokesman in the Korean Internet industry stated that:

> The Korea Internet Self-governance Organisation acts to protect users. If the Korean web portal did not have power, postings would be deleted. We had a reason to resist to the government (Interview, 6 Sept. 2010).

The 'snapshots' quoted above reflect the anxieties suffered by the Lee administration, Korean web portals, and internet users during these years due to the emergence of cyberspace as a significant element in Korean culture and politics. They also illustrate the three major players and their different views of the Korean internet. The first snapshot is President Lee's public announcement which reflected governmental opinion that the internet was a space for the activities of anti-government parties. These views resonated within governmental circles and were used as the rationale for implementing new measures on the internet, thus giving police and prosecutors far-ranging authority over the internet that led the internet users' impression that the Lee administration abused their powers. This is one element of the story I have researched.

The second snapshot draws on statements of ordinary internet users whom I interviewed. Their views represent how Korean internet users were anxious about the government's cyber intervention and about the attitude of Korean internet companies. When their fears reached boiling point, they abandoned Korean-based portals for US

or globally-based service providers in a mass movement known as the 'Korean Cyber Asylum Seekers Project', and this forms the second part of the story discussed here.

The third snapshot illustrates the moment when the tacit arrangement between the Korean government and the Korean internet service providers, dictated by principles such as "I will follow your rule; let me do my business," broke down. This mutually beneficial agreement collapsed because state-centric internet governance gave Korean internet users motivation to move some of their internet platforms – including email and video-streaming services – from Korean-based service providers to globally-based ones. Korean web portals experienced a consequential profit loss and became champions of freedom of speech to ostensibly protect their customers, the third object of this research project.

Two things are important to note. The three groups were not explicitly aware that the internet was borderless in 2008. This was due to its basis in the Korean language, with very little English language content posted on other locations apart from that on Korean websites. These websites had adopted the closed system under which data produced and gathered on one website was not shared with other websites. The information on one site was normally circulated within the website. This is the key to understanding how the Korean web portals dominated Korean cyberspace. Korean internet users had to access Korean web portals in order to locate Korean-language content. In other words, most of Korean cyber culture was formed around Korean domain-based websites. Their experience of online culture was usually framed by these conditions. Consequently, global web service providers were not significantly influential economically until Korean internet users were pressurised by the state and started to leave Korean online territories, an online activity commonly called 'cyber asylum seeking'. This phenomenon is essential to understanding how the migration of Korean internet users to global web service providers opened up a new landscape in Korean cyberspace and exposed the logic of the power holders in Korean society. It is important to consider the practices of internet users on an equal basis with the state's cyber-intervention discourse, as well as the strategic management of corporations attempting to profit from cyberspace.

4. Questions for the Cases

With reference to my selection of the case of Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath, my interest developed due to the consequences of the protest, which followed the public outrage caused by the issue of beef imports, protests that were vociferously expressed in Korean cyberspace and which physically erupted on the ground as well. This has shaped my argument that the virtual world of Korean cyberspace is interwoven with Korean society, and Candlelight 2008 has demonstrated this explicitly. However, the internet's impact on Korean society was not only demonstrated by the unprecedented power of ordinary citizens to organise themselves in cyberspace during the demonstrations, but it was also evident when the government planned new policies designed to establish control of cyberspace. For example, the Lee government's measures regarding the use of the internet during and after Candlelight 2008, such as the real name system and the cyber defamation law, were heavily criticised. The seriousness of the issue was emphasised when Reporters without Borders published their *Internet Enemies*, a text which defined the status of Korea's freedom of speech as 'under surveillance' in 2009, 2010 and 2011 (Reporters Without Borders 2011).

Academic popular discourse in Korea relating to Candlelight 2008 and the issue of cyberspace seems to focus either on the power of the public to mobilise against what was perceived as hypocritical politics, or on the Korean government's interventions in cyberspace during and after the 2008 protest. As a consequence, there is a tendency to view Korean cyberspace as a battlefield between the public and the government. However, this tendency in Korean cyberspace seems to omit an important aspect, which is that the average Korean internet user has to be Korean web portal-centric. Nearly all content in Korean cyberspace is in the Korean language, and very little English language-based content or postings are created. Perhaps, for this reason, the great majority of Korean internet users use Korean language web portals such as Daum.net and Naver.com. The 'Big 3' web portals, Daum, Naver and Nate had taken 90% market share as well as 90% of Korean cyberspace users' total duration time by 2008. Therefore, it can inferred that these portals dominate the Korean internet market, and are a characteristic feature of Korean cyberspace. More than 80% of Korean internet users use Korean web portals such as Naver or Daum as gateways to

access the internet (Y.J. Kim 2008). Critical discourse has so far failed to consider this particular characteristic of Korean internet culture despite the fact that it became an issue following Candlelight 2008. Once the government realised the political significance of cyberspace and attempted to regulate it, these web portals, along with regular internet users, became a central object of the government's attempts to gain control of the online sphere

For this reason, the aftermath of Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath provide an important example for the study of internet governance in terms of assessing the political motivations to attempt to control the internet, the changing attitudes of the internet service providers in reaction to state cyber policies, and shedding light on the user activism, which are not governed by these power logics.

In this context, this dissertation examines why the Korean state reacted to the protest by trying to intervene in cyberspace through the implementation of new policies. However, the reactions of both web portals and ordinary internet users are also significant, as it moves the debate beyond the issue of who controls cyberspace. Indeed, Korean internet users reacted to the top-down strategies of the government by migrating *en masse* from Korean web portals to global internet platforms such as Google and YouTube, which had a reverse impact on the political and web economic circle. This discussion will address this particular case study through the following research questions:

1. How did the Korean government react to the 2008 Candlelight protests?
2. How did Korean web portals react to the government's actions?
3. How did Korean internet users respond to these two institutions' actions?
4. How could we understand the three players' struggles with each other?
5. How did Korean cyberspace change?

5. Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 reviews the literature to offer an analytical framework for understanding current internet discourses relating to cyber control, moving beyond these discourses by examining the potential power of internet users. Situating the internet users' activities in the cyber control discourse offers the opportunity to move beyond discourses that view cyberspace as something to be controlled and marketed. In this context, I discuss Michel de Certeau's conception of place, power and culture vis-à-vis revolution, all of which are still pertinent and widen our critical understanding of cyberspace in general. For example, de Certeau's plurality of temporalities and subjectivities in our daily lives has helped me to understand how internet users traverse (or act) beyond the limits of time, location, and politics. Seemingly different stories, such as the powerful as opposed to the powerless are not two sides of a coin but a Mobius strip within which the two dynamics affect each other. De Certeau's distinction between the power holder, who can inscribe what they want on the one hand, and ordinary people who cannot be instructed by the history of writing on the other, is an essential key to this research project. I also deploy Marianne Franklin's exploration of de Certeau's concept, as her theoretical framework substantiates the power of the internet user group in current internet governance discourses, which focus on rivalries between state and non-state actors, or between state and radical activist groups. I adopt her suggestion by inserting social actor and user group constellations into the wider debate on the state-centric analysis and ownership of the internet. This chapter also explains my rationale for illustrating Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath to illustrate my approach to this plurality of frameworks by focusing on the tensions between the Korean government, web portals, and Korean internet users that arose from 2008 onwards.

Furthermore, I will discuss the issues that arose during the research process. I took part in two online communities that were created during and after Candlelight 2008, and conducted interviews with members of these communities during the summer of 2010. The difficulties that I faced with the online participatory observation research will be compared and contrasted with those discussed in the methodological literature related to this type of observation. The specific issues that arose will be identified; for example, when permission to take part in an online community as a researcher was

unwelcome, due to political sensitivity. Furthermore, I will discuss occasions when online participation on sample sites were threatened when an online community faced closure due to a dramatic decline in the number of visitors after pressure from the Korean government. I also encountered difficulties contacting interviewees from governmental bodies and the Korean web portal industry. Even when it was possible to meet such people, their statements were official and disguised to protect their institutions (see Appendix I for detailed information on the interviewees).

Chapter 2 introduces Korean scholarly discourses on Candlelight 2008. The unprecedented ability of ordinary citizens to organise themselves against the Korean government through online communication during the 2008 Candlelight led the government to plan new policies designed to intervene in cyberspace. This phenomenon resulted in discourses, which can be situated within a number of substantive issues relating to Korean cyberspace, namely, the digital phenomenon, decentralised networks, online activism and freedom of speech vis-à-vis cyber governance. The limitations of these discourses are identified as the exclusive focus on contrasts between state control and users' activism.

While chapter 2 addressed Candlelight 2008 through Korean scholars who interpreted this event from various perspectives, the case study chapters each discuss a specific point of view. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 examine and analyse the role of each actor in Korean cyberspace and highlight the tensions among the Korean government, web portals, and Korean internet users, which heightened after the 2008 demonstrations. Each chapter devotes attention to one key player in order to narrate the story of the Korean internet since 2008. Their responses to each other are not discussed in chronological order, and the narrative instead follows how the key players responded to each other during each of the major events. This structure has been adopted to place the relationships of state and non-state actors, and users, on an equal level as well as to avoid a simplistic top-down presentation of the three actors in terms of: their political and juridical power; the profit-motivated commercial power, or a digitally equipped bottom-up power. This structure avoids repeating an account of the same events in each chapter if told chronologically. In this context, other players are downplayed in order to highlight each key actor. In this vein, Chapter 3 focuses entirely on the Lee administration's attempts to control the internet, Chapter 4 on the actions of Korean web portals, and Chapter 5 on Korean internet users.

Chapter 3 presents an analysis of the key initiatives through which the Lee government attempted to introduce a number of measures designed to tighten control of cyberspace following Candlelight 2008. These included the extension of the 'real name system', the compulsory monitoring of websites by the web portals and the cyber contempt law. The 'real name system' is the law under which users were required to log in order to make postings. The login is a system in which websites hold their personal information, for example the resident registration number, home address and phone number. This was to be extended to all websites whereas it had previously applied only to large websites with more than 100,000 visitors a day. This compulsory monitoring is an example of the Lee government's insistence that web portals were required to monitor all the associated websites and communities they hosted twenty-four hours a day. The reasons for these measures rested on the Korean Communications Commission's (KCC) insistence that web portals should be held responsible for all content posted on their sites. A new cyber contempt law aimed to prevent defamation and the circulation of false information in cyberspace. Such initiatives and other government policy announcements, despite lacking legislative power, had a huge effect in muzzling protests on the Korean internet.

My reading of the Lee government's announcements, policy documents and interviews with government officials, confirms that the government justified its measures as necessary in light of the strength of the anti-government hostility voiced online. In relation to this, I argue that subsidiary governmental bodies, such as the KCC and the Ministry of Justice, followed President Lee's policy line to the letter. I detail a series of cases in which the government arrested famous netizens after receiving the personal information of users from the web portals. In contrast, I also investigate how the regime's continued plans to gain control of Korean cyberspace faced difficulties due to the refusal of global Web service providers to comply with its restrictions in 2009.

The key player of Chapter 4 are the Korean web portals. This chapter discusses how they have complied with government policies in order to secure profits and avoid repercussions. The web portals had little power to resist the Lee government and so followed their requests to delete anti-government postings and even handed over

personal information about their users. In contemporary Korean society, even in the context of the new and potentially freer communications environment promised by the internet, the political elite, and the president in particular, continue to overwhelm certain institutions within their own society. However, my findings indicate that Korean internet users' flight to global web services in order to get around such obvious cyber control prompted stakeholders in the Korean internet industry to define themselves as victims of Candlelight 2008's aftermath. This led to the formation of the Korean Internet Self-Governance Organization (KISO) in March 2009. I argue that the formation of an internet self-regulatory body resulted from the Korean internet service providers' desire to secure their customer base. This is supported by a case in which KISO came to blows with the Korean Communications Standard Commissions (KCSC) over postings related to the sinking of a South Korean navy ship on 26 March 2010. KISO rejected the KCSC's request to delete postings uploaded by Korean internet users relating to the incident. Chapter 5 provides examples of the way the 'underground Korean cyber asylum seekers' phenomenon affected the expanding constellation of Korean cyberspace.

Chapter 5 focuses on Korean internet users' ability to determine the effect of the Korean government's policies (and the attitude of Korean web portals) on communication between internet users. This discussion indicates that the consequences of the actions of the state and the web portals not only exhibit the tension between online freedom of speech and internet security, but also led to popular distrust of Korean cyberspace power holders. This chapter also discusses instances of how this wariness fostered distrust between online community members. This was an important factor in the failure of the 'Korean Cyber Asylum Seekers' Project', under which users teamed up and planned to abandon Korean-based portals for US or globally-based service providers. My main argument here is that the issue of distrust between internet users should not be considered as merely a negative aspect of Korean internet culture. Rather, this situation is testament to how online anonymity leads to anxieties and shapes the formation of cyber culture, particularly when cyberspace is under political pressure. Furthermore, the Cyber Asylum Seekers' Project underlines the importance of the user group to cyber control discourse, because the user group's mobilisation produced another constellation in

Korean cyberspace, while state and non-state actors were locked in a power struggle over Korean cyberspace. Therefore, I argue that distrust of both the power of Korean web portals, and of other online members, seemed to result from the governments' ineffective intervention and the domestic web portals' compromised independence.

I also discuss Korean internet users whose migration to global web service providers was motivated by reasons other than the political concerns of the Korean asylum seekers' movement. I argue that the logic and use of the term 'cyber asylum seekers' implies a political rationale, so it cannot encompass other Korean internet users who used the web without any political intention at that time. Therefore, I suggest a new term 'underground cyber asylum seekers', which, I assert, is a phenomenon rather than a unified movement. I support my argument by explaining how political institutions, including Korean web portals, were influenced by the effect of 'underground cyber asylum seekers', with a consequential change in power relationships.

Chapter 6 synthesises the empirical chapters in order to present how I model the tripartite relationship between the Korean government, the Web portals and the Korean Internet users. I argue that the political struggle over issues of cyber security and freedom of expression during and after Candlelight 2008 has been understood through a set of narrow discourses controlled by power-holders in Korea. Instead, I highlight the significance of the fact that both the government and the web portal sectors adapted their systems in response to the changing ways in which ordinary Korean Internet users came to view them. It is essential to understand that the power of the Internet users in the Korean context, and this forms the main finding of this research project. Despite the announcement of new internet regulations, the Korean government was not able to control cyberspace, largely due to the ability of global portals to refuse or circumvent domestic internet regulations.   This effectively empowered Korean internet users to migrate their email accounts and other internet activities away from Korean-based web portals and to utilise global internet resources.   The consequent fall in Korean web portal profits forced the domestic industry to undertake collaborative action to self-regulate in an attempt to protect their

commercial concerns and to secure the interests and privacy of their users. This analysis illustrates the power of ordinary Korean internet users in their attempts to effect changes in other internet stakeholders through their use of global cyberspace outside of national-level state domination. The availability of resources beyond the scope of the Korean-language internet offered clear choices to Korean internet users, which they exploited as a tactic to subvert the power of the government and the web portals.

This supports my wider conclusion that the mobility of Korean internet users as a power holding group has expanded the Korean cyberspace constellation, particularly through the changing geography of Korean internet culture with the advent of SNS and Mobile Internet. I argue that while recent developments derive from the particular characteristics of Korean internet culture, there are other examples in other international locations that can illuminate internet users' ability to act beyond the constraints of 'national cyberspace,' and that this can move us beyond debates about who controls cyberspace in terms of the state vs. corporation issue. For example, while the Chinese government battles with Google and Facebook with the 'Great Firewall of China' and while the state is represented as a malevolent dark blot on the Facebook map, Chinese internet culture has flourished without the global corporate marketing tactic of championing "the connected world" and freedom of speech. Instead, Chinese internet culture is hosted on Renren, which is a Chinese version of Facebook, and Sina Weibo, the Chinese version of Twitter. The particular characteristics of Chinese Internet culture and politics result in Renren and Sina's domination of Chinese social networking.

The moral economy between the state and the Chinese internet company, encapsulated by the sentiment that 'I will follow your rules and show me the money,' broke down after the Chinese government had to censor Renren and Sina Weibo because the state detected voices that they do not want to hear, for example, comments on Mongolian protests, and scandals relating to a former top Communist Party official, Bo Xilai.[3] The Great Firewall of China is becoming destabilised,

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[3] For a detailed discussion of this, see Kan, June 2012, and Rapoza, April 2012.

because it has failed to control online voices fully and the Chinese web service provider's stock value has fallen despite their compliance. Some new online locations where internet users congregate underline the problems with state-driven cyber control, as well as that of internet service providers. In this way we can understand how everydayness can have an effect on power, and illustrates the power struggle in cyberspace, an issue which resonates throughout this research project. Once we understand this saga, we will be able to move beyond cyber control discourses by differentiating between who controls the internet and who fundamentally changes internet culture and politics.

Chapter 1. Theorising Cyber Control Discourses: the Emergence of Cyberspace

Introduction

This chapter explores how internet theories can be re-formulated to understand current cyber control discourses and internet users' online activities. The discourses on cyber control usually point to the state and non-state actors as the key players and the internet users' activities are depicted as a pawn in the battle between the two. Thus internet users' online practices seem to disappear from the main focus. In contrast, other arguments focus more on the power of internet users against the power holders. Internet discourses proposed by Korean scholars in the aftermath of Candlelight 2008 are a good example of this debate. Internet discourses on state cyber control and the role of non-state actors were relatively under-discussed during the protest, but gained more scholarly attention after the protest had ceased when the Korean government began its cyber interventions. Candlelight 2008 opened up new theoretical spaces in Korean academia, which challenged a number of conceptual and analytical frameworks, referring particularly to the online-offline nexus. For example, Candlelight 2008 explicitly illustrated that online voices could be heard offline and that they had a great impact on society. Furthermore, the movement online was decentralised in the sense that members of small online communities actively participated in discussions relating to the protest. However, this bottom-up digital activism resulted in the Lee administration's attempts at cyber intervention.

Korean scholars' discourses on Candlelight 2008 tended to emphasise the power of internet users, which had a great impact on political circles. This reflects several theories of key western thinkers, e.g. Pierre Levi's notion of collective intelligence, Manuel Castells' network society, [4] and Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt's

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[4] Castells' network society was adapted by Korean scholars, for example, Kyung-Jae Song (2008). Castells defines *network logic* adopted by 'new information technology' as a key 'feature that constitutes the heart of the information technology paradigm' (Castells, 1996:70). He also argues that due to the flexibility of this new network logic and 'the new pattern of sociability based on individualism' is a key to understanding the structure and role of the internet in our society (Castells, 2001:130). In this sense, the Candlelight protest can be seen as the collision between mode of production and mode of development. See. K. J. Song (2008).

multitude.[5] These ideas were commonly used by Korean scholars as a theoretical background for their interpretation of the 2008 event. Although they are useful analytical tools for an understanding of the logic of Korean internet users' activities, I argue that their usefulness is limited when focusing on the aftermath of the protest. Soon after the protests ceased, the Lee government started to implement measures to intervene in the internet as well as to arrest internet users who were acting radically against the regime, which resulted in a shift of dominant scholarly engagement from the power of the people to freedom of speech in connection with state-controlled cyber governance. The issue of cyber control is particularly relevant for scholars in the fields of political science, legal and technical studies, such as Goldsmith and Wu (2006), McChesney (1997) and Shali (2009). From their perspective, the state is the key player that asserts its power by designing the internet infrastructure as well as filtering content.

This shift in the debate created a gap between scholarly discourses relating to the demonstration and those focusing on its aftermath. To fill this gap, we need an interdisciplinary point of view. I suggest that we should not view internet users' activism as radical. Rather, we need to focus on the daily embeddedness of internet and online users' practices in cyberspace and in society, as their activism against the Lee government was based on their daily uses of cyberspace. Their voices had expressed daily trivia before, but now changed to express social discontent. For example, Korean internet users did not participate in the online community as political activism from the onset. Rather, most Korean internet users became accidental activists, although they did not set out to become activists during and after the protest. In contrast, power holders such as the Lee government tended to view this activism as protest only. As a consequence, cyberspace became the place where

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[5] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri point to the 'irreversible globalization of economic and cultural exchanges' in every nation-state as a consequence of the emergence of 'a new form of sovereignty'. They define their concept Empire as 'the political subject that effectively regulates these global exchanges, the sovereign power that governs the world', to put it simply, 'a new form of global order' (Hart et al., 2005:xi-xii). In contrast, they define multitude as a 'constituent count power' against Empire (Hart et al., 2000:43). They argue that 'the multitude called Empire into being' (Hart et al., 2000:43) because the formation of Empire starts from the multitude's desire to go beyond 'divisions of national, colonial, and imperialist rule' that is 'towards the internationalization and globalization of relationships'. (Hart et al., 2000:42-43). Some Korean scholars, for example Jung-Whan Cho (2008), see Korean internet users' activism during Candlelight 2008 as the advent of the multitude in Korean society.

the state attempted to inscribe its power, while the Korean web portals were situated in the battle between the powerful and the powerless due to the 'portal centric' nature of Korean internet culture. Internet users operated in cyberspace and their accumulated virtual experiences led them to use the internet effectively (naturally) to express their anger during the protests, in the same way as they express their feelings about daily trivia. Korean websites such as online forums and communities were the space where their stories were embedded, although these were originally designed by profit-motivated web portals and often used for data-mining. The central position of web portals is the reason why internet users agonised over leaving Korean domain websites.

My use of the term cyberspace refers to ordinary people's spatio-temporal experience online, which resulted in the emergence and increasing significance of cyberspace in society. I argue that a more cohesive view can be achieved by treating cyberspace as a new place for the power holders, as a daily space for ordinary people, and as a source of profit for web service providers. Therefore, my theoretical perspective is not about the modelling of cyber governance or global companies from the perspective of political science, legal, technical and institutional theories. The project also does not adopt an alternative media approach because, as Nick Couldry and James Curran argue, the main analytical focus of the alternative media approach to the internet lies in the potential of networks 'to challenge mass media power' 'to communicate the message of their protest networks across both geographical and media boundaries' (Couldry and Curran, 2003:18-19). In contrast, my model focuses on ordinary internet users who were accidently labelled activist.

The main focus of this chapter is to examine the usefulness of Michel de Certeau's concepts for internet studies and the analysis of Candlelight 2008. It leads us to question the extent to which online territories are interrelated with offline territories in terms of culture and the local-global nexus. Prominent thinkers, such as Michel Foucault, still influence the discourse on cyberspace and cyber-governance. In contrast, Michel de Certeau, a thinker of the same generation as Michel Foucault is comparatively less well-known, although his insights have made in-roads into studies on cyberspace by theorists such as Henry Jenkins (2006) and Franklin (2007a, 2007b, 2009 and 2010).

De Certeau's distinction between the power holder, who can inscribe what they want on the one hand, and ordinary people who cannot be instructed by the history of writing on the other, is the first key idea I discuss here. The colonisation of the body of the other as well as the containment of the voice by the power holder is not as successful now as was previously the case, because the traversality of ordinary people via ICTs (Information Communication Technologies) has changed the culture of movement.

Neither de Certeau nor Foucault explored electronic communications or conceptualised cyberspace deeply (as they did for other subject matters) due to the fact that the internet era was still in its infancy in the 1980s and was not yet embedded in our society. Rather, both de Certeau and Foucualt were historians and experts on the history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, focusing on power formation and its mechanisms in the case of Foucault and on the slippage of voices, not controlled by power in the case of de Certeau. The significance of their theories lies in their approach to power and space, as they both argue that the power mechanism exercises control over the episteme at a given time. As their analytical models are based on an era when there was no internet, the applicability of their theory to cyberspace should be carefully examined. Their theories are still relevant to the analysis of the events in Korean during and after Candlelight 2008. I argue that the panoptical mechanism, in a Foucauldian sense, was used by the Korean government to silence Korean cyberspace, but that this does not necessarily lead to control over internet users. Rather the government's cyber intervention resulted in Korean internet users traversing to global web service providers, whose significance can be understood from the perspective of de Certeau, as the power of the powerless through their traversality of place.

Panoptics as the representation of absoluteness was one of the logistics of power used to dominate others. In particular, Foucault's analytical framework can unveil the power mechanism that subjugates the body through the discipline logic and submerges non-dominant hegemony as an abnormality. Willem Frijhoff argues that Foucault concentrates 'on the semiotics of the power exerted by the disciplining agencies' and 'its reception changes the effectiveness of the power arrangements themselves' (1999:97). He also states that:

What about those practices which have not been organised into, for instance, a structure of social discipline? Or which have not succeeded in securing for themselves a cultural offspring? Are they simply the rebuke of history? Or do they constitute a cultural reserve from which peculiar configurations of social strategy can emerge using the special organisations of space and speech which Foucault rightly analyses? (Ibid.)

The limitation of Foucault is covered by de Certeau by highlighting the plurality of culture. De Certeau is not in favour of the absoluteness of the panoptical mechanism but suggests looking at the cultural and the political from the bottom up. In doing so, he argues that we are able to detect different logics, which are not controlled by the dominant power and are performed by ordinary people. De Certeau asserts that this comprises culture in the plural. To criticise Foucault's panoptical surveillance as a symbol of the absolute, he invented the terms, 'orality' and 'traversality'. Orality is a tactic of the powerless, which does not have the will to dominate space. This traverses spaces with a fixity and offers various situations that the power logic does not consider. For de Certeau traversality means:

[The] valorization of sound, the key to paranomases, alliterations, rhymes, and other phonic games, seeds an oral transgression through the semantic organization of the discourse, a transgression which displaces or cuts the articulated meanings and which renders the signifier autonomous in relation to the signified (De Certeau in Higmore, 2002:71).

Traversality connotes the bottom-up articulation of the social order, which has the potential to unveil the hypocrisy of its authority. For example, the legitimacy of the law faces particular challenges when written law is applicable to a new phenomenon derived from a new social place, for example incidents rooted in the internet. The factor that matters the most in this concept is that this is performed everyday by ordinary people. Ordinary people traverse the space of panopticism, perceive it from their own perspectives without any particular intention [to subvert it radically], but create their own discourse by questioning the changing relations between them and place where the rules are designated by the power.

Tim Jordan (1999) argues that Foucault's theory 'directs attention to power' and offers us valuable tools to examine power 'in the form of domination and subjection in societies' (Jordan, 1999:18). He stresses the imagination, like Foucault's attention

to the mechanism of subjugating the body, to assert the validity of Foucault in the internet era. He states that:

> The imagination is the medium in which cyberpower of the individual and of society exist and because these two powers feed each other through individuals' demands for better tools which leads to greater elaborations of technology and so feeds the power of a technopower elite (2001).

With the appropriation of this Foucauldian idea of power, he asserts that embodiment online constructs the power relationship. He argues that: 'The power is constituted in tactics that insinuate every day life and that creates art of world strategy, but for which there is no oral guiding will, either individual or organisational' (1999:18).

He construes the nature of power in cyberspace as 'three intertwined levels'. The first is the individual level in the sense that cyberspace is 'the playground of the individual' where 'cyberpower appears as a possession an individual can use', for example privacy and censorship. The second level is social place, for example online communities, where 'cyberpower appears as a technopower in which greater freedom of action is offered to those who can control forms of cyberspatial and Internet technology'. The third level is virtual technology that can be controlled and manipulated by the power elite, for example, designing or changing the architecture of the web (2001).

Foucault's concepts of power, governmentality and panopticon in particular, serve the understanding of the theoretical discourse related to the question 'who controls the internet?', because this discourse pays close attention to the power struggles identified in cyberspace at a national level. While the Foucauldian idea of power deals with governance, namely surveillance, a Certeaunian approach to cyberspace offers a practice theory, which raises the question of the power of agency, namely the practices of the ordinary people. De Certeau's concepts were developed based on the modern era when the logic of the power holders was based on gaze and writing.

Like Jenkins argued that 'multiple ways of accessing media content, and toward ever more complex relations between top-down corporate media and bottom-up participatory culture' (2006:243), the significance of de Certeau in the discourse of the internet is that the bottom-up views offers the plural nature of the relationship between the powerful and the powerless. This pluralistic view challenges the

discourse on cyber power. I focus in particular on Marianne Franklin's development of de Certeau's idea, as her theoretical framework substantiates the power of internet user groups in current internet governance discourses, which focus on rivalries between state and non-state actors and/or the state and radical activist groups. I take up her suggestion to insert social actor and user group constellations into the wider debates on the state-centric analysis and ownership of the internet.

In this section, I use de Certeau's conceptual framework on ordinary people's traversal tactics as the power to break panopticism to develop my concept of the Underground Cyber Asylum Seeker phenomenon. Underground Cyber Asylum Seeker refers to an individual Korean internet user migrated from local web portals to global corporations, such as Google and YouTube, which refused to comply with the restrictions that the Korean government policies placed on the local internet. Political institutions, including the Korean web portals, were influenced by the effect of underground cyber asylum seekers, resulting in a transformation of power relations. Thus, ordinary Koreans' cyber traversality breaks Korean cyber control mechanisms in de Certeau's sense, which will be elaborated later in Chapters 5 and 6. Using this conceptual framework, I will examine the relevance of these conceptual frameworks for the understanding of Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath through literature relating to the internet.

For a better understanding of my analytical approach to the theoretical formulation, I will deploy the key issues relating to Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath briefly in this chapter to guide the reader to follow the problems that I have identified related to the theoretical issues and its application as well as to clarify the procedure of validating and developing my theoretical framework. In this way, the reader will understand the reason why I analyse Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath through three actors – the Lee government, the Korean web portals and Korean internet users – by examining the dynamics of each of these groups' engagement with cyberspace.

1. The Emergence of Cyberspace

It seems appropriate to discuss Mark Poster's argument that the advent of the 'electronic mediated system of communication' in the current period leads our society to 'the second media age'. In contrast to the first media age ('the era of written exchange') 'when signs had a representational role through which the subject confirmed his/her rational and individual responsibility (cited in Webster, 1995:182), Poster argues that it is 'the mode of information' which constructs 'the specific pattern of subject' in the second Media Age (Poster, 1995:11). He argues that

> This familiar modern subject is displaced by the mode of information in favour of one that is multiplied, disseminated and decentred, continuously interpellated as an unstable identity. At this level of culture, this instability poses both dangers and challenges which become part of a political movement (1995:57).

In my understanding, the mode of information can be understood to overpower the dominant social system in the first media age. That is, the logic of the first media age, within which the relation between the signifier and the signified drew one totalitarian interpretation, has been broken, because the signifier can draw multiple interpretations. In the same vein, Poster's premise to interpret the recent period starts from announcing a rupture with the past. This premise starts with his critique of Adorno's notion of homogeneity of vision due to 'its inability to theorize the new condition of social space'. He defines the characteristics of electronic culture as the factor of 'an unstable identity 'of 'the individual'.[6] Poster argues that

> The concept of a second media age does serve as a binary to a first media age; it puts the first age into a new perspective, minimizes it perhaps, and certainly historicizes by rendering it relative or even subordinate to a second age (1995:21-2).

Poster emphasises the rupture between the present and past logic of operation of society that resulted from the advent of a new mode of information. In Poster's sense, the online activisms identified during Candlelight 2008 can be understood as a rupture, as the 'individual's unstable identity' was explicitly expressed online. Furthermore, Candlelight 2008 can be interpreted as a social movement based on the

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[6] This 'unstable identity' is a very important issue relating to Korean internet users' move to global web service providers, which will be dealt with in Chapter 5.

hypothesis that as a consequence the public obtained multiple identities with the acquisition of 'electronic mediated system of communication', the internet and other digital devices.

However, his theory seems to be overly deterministic, because the Korean government's modernistic state controls as the representative symbol of the first media age are still dominant in Korea. In other words, his term 'rupture' between the first media age and the second media age could not identified in the case of Candlelight 2008. In this context, Poster's notion falls under technological determinism as Calhoun argues that 'Poster's tripartite history – oralism, writing, electronic exchange – is deeply technological determinist and subject to the familiar objection that it is historically cavalier' (cited in Webster, 1995:188).

We should not emphasise that the digital nature of Candlelight 2008 would be quite different if there were no digital devices. It is more useful to consider the *social embeddedness* of these technologies in Korean society simultaneously with the intentions with which Korean people used the internet and mobile devices. In a similar vein, the function of media (the internet and mobile devices) should not be overestimated as a means of enhancing communication in Korean society. The reason is that this perspective may propel us into the error of technological determinism. As Williams puts it: 'In no way is this a history of communications systems creating a new society or new social conditions' (Williams, 1974:19).

Williams criticises both the view of technological development as self-generating and the view of technology as 'a by-product of a social process'. This is the reason why he disagrees with Marshall McLuhan whose main idea is euphemistically known as 'Media is a message'. McLuhan (1964) argues that the study of a medium for delivering information should be considered as more important than the information itself as the medium is the actual key to developing and changing the world. Williams criticizes this notion as 'an isolating theory of the media' (Williams 1974:126-7). He states that –

> If the medium – whether print or television – is the cause, all other causes, all that men ordinarily see as history, are at once reduced to effect… The initial formulation –'the medium is the message' – was a simple formalism. The subsequent formulation- the medium is the massage' – is a direct and functioning ideology (1974:127).

Williams warns that we should not use deterministic approaches as they do not consider technology in conjunction with the socio-political and economical context. Williams argues that we need a different way of interpreting and evaluating technology and communications. He poses the questions: 'Who says what how to whom with what effect? (For) what this question has excluded is intention-who says what, how, to whom with what effect and for what purpose?' (1974:120).

Thus, the 'intention' and 'purpose' of the use of technology as a means for users to plan tactics should be considered before discussing the effect of that technology. Williams analysis, particularly his stance on 'the effect of television', can be extended to cover the discourse on the effect of the internet, as it gives an insight into how we need to view the development of ICTs and their uses. That is, in Williams' sense, we should stress the users in terms of how they used ICTs as one aspect of culture rather than on the medium in terms of how it had an effect on the users. This is further explained by Franklin:

> All technologies- no matter how seemingly 'inevitable' or 'revolutionary' – can be analysed as historical and socio-cultural relationship; as the purvey of human agency, the site of intense struggle, even if these are not always immediately apparent (2004:43).[7]

If we consider technological development in Korea such as WiBro and real-time broadcasting on the internet as a factor in the success of Candlelight 2008, this suggests that the protests would have been different and that representation of the voices of ordinary people would not have occurred. That is, it appears that our perception of the development of internet technologies then becomes technological determinism. This also explains the reason why we need to follow ordinary people's voices online rather than the role of the internet. Once we focus on the role of the internet during and after Candlelight 2008 in terms of facilitating voices against the power holders, we may not be able to capture a plurality of voices or the stories of Korean internet users in detail. Their voices were not merely described as anger. There was conflict among the members online while they acted against the power holders, as well as fear and distrust about anonymity. We need to focus on the

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[7] In this context, Franklin's (2004) view of 'open-public cyber space' – which non-western internet users use for their own purposes as they are excluded from Western-centred ICTs – cannot be explained from the perspective of technological determinism.

intention and purpose of Koreans who used new media technology as a means to oppose the government. It is they, the ordinary people, who decided to use the internet to voice their complaints through internet forums and communities as a means to make their own voice heard during the demonstration.

As illustrated earlier, the space of online communities dealing with topics such as cosmetics and baseball was transformed during the 2008 event. For Koreans, internet use during Candlelight 2008 should not be merely understood as an instrumental dimension but as a way of broadening the possibility of digital devices as a means of social communication. It should be understood as the advent of a new social space that combines online with offline more concretely. In this context, we should question why Candlelight 2008 brought out web-based mobilization as well as the significance of the event for Korean society more generally.

Appadurai argues that 'electronic mediation (post-electronic)' and 'mass migration' trigger 'the quotidian mental work of ordinary people in many societies' (Appadurai, 1996:3-5). As a consequence, the natural work of the imagination among ordinary people breaks down the confirmation of locality ('a structure of feeling, a property of social life, and an ideology of situated community') and Appadurai views this as resulting from the disjuncture in the era of globalization (Appadurai, 1996:188-190). That is, he alerts us to the extent to which people negate the confirmation of locality, not only within the context of practice in reality, but also within the context of the practice in their imagination. Appadurai also points out the significance of the fragmentation of the nation and its inhabitants caused by the lack of collaboration between economy, culture and politics to understand globalization and transnational culture. He extends Benedict Anderson's notion of an 'imagined community', when he proposes five terms, Ethnoscape, Mediascape, Technoscape, Financescape and Ideoscape with which a person in the disjuncture of global flows can be considered and examined (Appadurai, 1996:33-7). It seems appropriate to give a brief description of each term for further discussion. Firstly, Ethnoscape refers to the 'landscape of a person who constitutes the shifting world in which we live'. One example could be tourists and immigrants. Secondly, Technoscape refers to fast flow (movement) of 'global configuration' and 'fluidity of technology' in terms of 'both mechanical and informational' perspectives. Thirdly, Financescape refers to 'the disposition of global capital' and its rapid exchanges (changes) within the currency

markets and stock market. Fourthly, Mediascape refers to electronic capabilities to produce and distribute information through such media as newspapers and television stations. Finally, Ideoscape refers to 'the ideology of the states and the counter ideologies of movement' to gain 'the state of power' such as welfare and freedom (Appadurai, 1996:33-7). Appadurai explores this 'disjuncture' through a focus on evaluating changing aspects in reality, namely five '-scapes'. He states that:

> The work of the imagination is neither emancipatory nor entirely disciplined but its spaces of contestation in which individuals and groups seek to annex the global into own practice of the modern. The imagination is a staging ground for action and not only for escape (1996:4-5).

Culture relating to the social embeddedness is formed depending on how the five-scapes are penetrated by the nation. By applying his premises to Candlelight 2008, I suggests that 'the work of imagination' derived from the embeddedness of cyberspace in reality, does not only enhance the negation of state in a transnational sense but also arouses social upheaval. However, this model, and mediascape in particular, does not fully illustrate the reason why the Candlelight 2008 participants heavily relied on the internet rather than other media. In this context, M.I. Franklin (2010) argues that Appadurai's theory needs to be updated and modified so that we evaluate the extent to which cyberspace affects the ordinary people and their daily life. In this vein, she suggests that we need to consider the effect of cyberscape separated from that of other mediascapes such as television. She argues that we need updated analytical tools to examine issues derived from virtual place, e.g. 'corporate actors' increasing power and influence' and state governmentality enforcement in connection with users' daily interactions online. For this, she suggests 'a sixth-scape: cyberspaces' to add to Appradurai's conceptual framework, Mediascapes and Technoscapes in particular. (Franklin, 2010:77-8). She states that:

> I would posit that cyberscapes entail more than a digitized amalgam of these two dimensions. They concern more than technological systems and artifacts, static images, or incumbent "viewers." Rather, they are particular to the sorts of "imagined worlds" now constituted by, experienced as, and circulated through cyberspatial prac- tices; practices that are viewed—consumed as well as co-created by their protagonist- participants.(2010:78-9).

Franklin's term cyberscape urges us to re-think our concept of cyberspace. Her theoretical position is that online is no longer a virtual space which gives the users a

moment to reflect on their daily lives offline. Rather, online is an actual space in terms of producing and reproducing political, social and cultural issues. Miyase Christensen et al also argue that

> The extension and reconfiguration of pre-existing means of territorialization, be cultural, economy, or geopolitical, as well as deportation for new types of social territories to take shape, enabled by online connectivity and sociability (2011:5).

Morley argues that the discussion on cyberspace should focus on 'material practices and settings of everyday life' rather than dichotomization of online vs. offline. For this, he suggests conceptualising the distinction between online and offline as 'the virtual' and 'the actual' based on materiality-based approach. He states that:

> Once the matter is framed that way, we are better able to recognize the distinction between the immaterial and material worlds, without exclusively reserving the status of the real to the latter, and out attention can then profitability shift to understanding these different realms as different modality of the real (2001:275).

Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath should be understood within the context of these theoretical considerations. Korean cyberspace, which was deemed to be an economic and cultural place, generated the political power during Candlelight 2008. In other words, the political materiality of the Korean cyberspace became actualized during Candlelight 2008 and this resulted in the reconfiguration of cyberscape phases in a political manner, which was driven by the state power.

2. Embedding Cyberspace in Korea

Even if the internet is no longer a new medium, we should question to what extent the internet is embedded in society and from what perspective. For example, the legacy of Candlelight 2008 is that this event explicitly situated the internet landscape in Korean society. In M.I. Franklin's sense that 'in an internet-embedded age, a number of digital dilemmas are merging', the aftermath of Candlelight 2008 can be understood as the dilemmas of the Korean government, the Korean web portals and the internet users after they realized that the internet-embeddedness in Korean society.

The case of the 'cyber asylum seeker' shows Korea as 'a space of contestation', in terms of both reality and cyberspace has been driven globally by the ordinary person who 'annexed the global into their own practice of the modern' by moving their virtual territory to global internet cyberspace, via Google, to act against the regime, not to escape from it.

Korean cyberspace was updated during Candlelight 2008 as online activism was interwoven with reality on the ground. Koreans perceived this as a new experience, although the cultural flows online were already part of their consciousness. Korean scholars believed that various mode of social communication through online and offline interwovenness enabled ordinary people to attempt to change the power holders' views and this led to political changes. In this context, they paid particular attention to resistance from the bottom up in connection with online activism during the protest. However, the aftermath of Candlelight 2008 told a different story, because state intervention began to have a great impact on the ecology of Korean cyberspace. From the Korean government's perspective, the way people acted against the state's central authority was uncontrollable during the protest. They thought that the inability to control the crowd resulted from ordinary people's activism in organizing the protest and facilitating the circulation of information. It seemed that from the Lee administration's perspective, the state needed to be able to control people's activities in order to maintain its authority (addressed in more detail in Chapter 3). As a consequence, cyber control became the dominant discourse in Korean society soon after the protest ceased.

We need explain this dramatic shift in cyber discourses from debates focusing on online activism to a focus on state intervention. I will adopt Michel de Certeau's conceptions of place, power and culture vis-à-vis revolution, all of which are still pertinent for an examination of 2008 Candlelight and its aftermath and a critical understanding of cyberspace in general. This theoretical framework allows us to link seemingly different internet narratives by approaching them from different angles.

De Certeau's invitation to a plurality of temporalities and subjectivities in our daily lives has led me to a better understanding how internet users traverse (act) beyond the limits of time, location, and politics. The interpretation of Candlelight 2008 should not be approached and understood from the perspective of the victory of collective

intelligence by means of the internet, i.e. de-centralized activism and bottom-up power against the state. The study should also not be understood as the defeat of ordinary people even though little has changed in a political sense and their voices in cyberspace have been contained through state suppression. Rather, the study focuses on illustrating the way in which the ordinary people narrate and express their feelings, their cries, both on the street and in cyberspace. By doing so, the research unveils a tense relationship between politics, media institutions and the public. The effect of internet users' traversality online during the protest is explored by including the entirety of relationships between institutions, political dynamics, web portal industries and ordinary people from a critical standpoint, rather than by viewing the demonstration from the perspective of either government versus the public or on-line versus off-line.

3. De Certeau and Digital Phenomena

Before using de Certeau's notions in the analysis of Korean cyber culture during and after Candlelight 2008, we need to consider to what extent and how his notions are applicable to this research project. Most of all, we need to check if ICTs are in fact substitutes for the optical mechanism. As stated earlier, Frijhoff (1999) and Threadgold (2010) rightly state that de Certeau's concepts were developed based on the modern era when the logic of the operation of power holders was based on gaze and writing. Panoptics and Scriptural Economy as power holder strategies were based on their dominance of visible representation in western society. The representation of absoluteness was one of the strategies power holders used to dominate others. However, the controlling efforts of the power holders are less successful now than they used to be, as traversality via ICTs changes the position of ordinary people.

The activities in cyberspace during Candlelight 2008 may be interpreted from the perspective of Collective Intelligence in Pierre Levy's term. Levy argues that a new dimension of communication (for example, cyberspace) opens up the possibility to share information and 'form (reform) intelligent communities' rapidly as a consequence. According to Levy, these activities of intelligent communities take place in all dynamics from 'the institutional framework of businesses' to 'an

international cyberspace' (1995:5).   In particular, he emphasizes 'the real-time coordination of intelligence' within these spaces. He states that:

> Events, decisions, actions, and individuals would be situated along dynamic maps of shared context and continuously transform the virtual universe in which they assume meaning. In this sense cyberspace would become the shifting space of interaction among knowledge and knowers in deterritorialised intelligent communities (1997:14-15).

Levy defines the subject of these activities as Collective Intelligence[8] which is 'a form of universally distributed intelligence, constantly enhanced, coordinated in real time, and resulting in the effective mobilization of skills' (Levy, 1997:13). He also states that 'the greater the number of collective intellects with which an individual is involved, the more opportunities he/she has to diversify his knowledge and desire' (1997:99).

This connects the internet users' shared anxiety about the US beef import with spontaneous acts and protests against the Lee administration. One of the key factors in the emergence of Korean cyberspace was the information flows which were not being controlled by media institutions such as the press and TV. The internet users who occupied Korean cyberspace for different purposes, for example sharing information about fashion, food and baseball, connected to each other to share information about Candlelight 2008, which they could not get from other places. In this context, they become a collective intelligence and 'transformed the virtual' territories to a political space. Moreover, their virtual activities became actualized when the protesters online co-ordinated with each other offline in real time.   In this sense, Levi's conceptualization of internet users[9] as collective intelligence is useful for an understanding of the protesters' online activism.

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[8] Levy's concept of 'Collective Intelligence' was commonly used to understand the online users activism during Candlelight 2008.

[9] The concept of collective intelligence echoes Kahn and Kellner' study on political online activism. They cite the successful activism of political bloggers against Speaker of the House Trent Lott who made 'racist remarks' and 'the dishonest reporting of New York Times' as they tried to bury this case. Lott's removal and the 'disgraceful' resignations of the Times' executive and managing editors were due to the exposure of this event by political bloggers. Kahn and Kellner exemplify 'real-time alternative coverage' provided by bloggers with the means of wireless devices during The World Summit for Sustainable Development, the World Social Forum and the G8 forums. They argue that 'new media development in techno-

Similarly, Curran points out that those viewing the internet as a free communication space, take the theoretical position that 'the internet is less subject to state censorship than press and media, and is susceptible to host a free, unconstrained global discourse between citizen.' He cites Nancy Fraser's emphasis on the 'denationalization of communication infrastructure and the rise of decentered Internet network, which underlies 'a new basis popular power capable of holding to account transnational, economic and political power' (Nancy Fraser in Curran et al., 2012:8). However, Curran also points out the weakness of this view of the internet:

> The internet is presented as a stepping-stone in the building of a new progressive social order. The central weakness of theory is that it assessed the impact of the internet not on the basis of evidence but on the basis of inference from Internet technology (ibid.).

Mosco argues that the promise of the media to increase the power of its user (consumer) is just a myth and the internet is no exception. However, he suggests that we should not conclude that the media fabricate the truth. Instead, we need to take into consideration the myth of the media (which can include ICTs as well) as long as it influences the collective mentality of our society. The same can be applied to the internet (Mosco, 2004:22-31). That is, we also need to illustrate the changing logistics of ordinary people in the era of ICTs, because we are traversing cyberspace unexpectedly.

In de Certeau's sense, there is indissolubility between places within space. However, we can now speak of place beyond space where panopticism cannot inscribe its scriptural economy as fully as before the global era. With reference to the role of the internet during Candlelight 2008, I argue that we need to focus our analytical positioning more on the spatial transformation (virtual becomes actual) and the subjects' responses to this, because cyberspace emerged explicitly as a unique landscape during Candlelight 2008 in Korean society, which points to the bridge between Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath, instead of considering it as a moment of rupture.

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culture' 'promote a revolution of everyday life' by shedding light on the 'politics on everyday life' and rearranging culture (politics) as a consequence. However, they warn of the danger (possibility) of 'disseminating capitalist society, individualism and competition' and this needs to be clarified and theorized (Kahn et al, 2004:92-3).

4. Powers and the Scriptural Economy

De Certeau pays attention to the ways in which panoptical surveillance systems form a gaze of power to subjectify individuals systematically. Certeau's concept of power is inseparable from Foucault's panoptic mechanism. Foucault defines panopticism as:

> the general principle of a new "political anatomy" whose object and end are not the relations of sovereignty but the relations of discipline… The disciplines are the ensemble of minute technical inventions that made it possible to increase the useful size of multiplicities by decreasing the inconveniences of the power which, in order to make them useful, must control them (Foucault, 1995)

Foucauldian panopticism can be understood as the logic that inscribes the discipline mechanism (or the fear of being other in the community) on the body so that the power mechanism maximizes its efficiency by using less power. Foucault defines this technique that reaches the threshold of discipline when the relation of one to the other becomes favourable as

> the techniques that make it possible to adjust the multiplicity of men and the multiplication of the apparatuses of production (and this means not only "production" in the strict sense, but also the production of knowledge and skills in the school, the production of health in the hospitals, the production of destructive force in the army (ibid).

However, according de Certeau this gaze mechanism resulted in the development of panoptical surveillance systems for the power holders to maintain their position. As Threadgold rightly points out Certeau criticises the veracity of Foucault's idea of panopticism as 'constitution' by 'the privileged development(al)' trend (zeitgeist) (1997:25-30) through which discipline had to solve a number of problems for which the old economy of power was not sufficiently equipped (Foucault, 1995). That is, panopticism was chosen as the most appropriate strategy among others for the control of society during the transition of history. He also argues that we need to take into consideration the existence of 'many other procedures besides panoptical ones' that may have been the foundation of 'an alternative development' (Certeau, 1997c:188)

[10], which will have a great impact on the social norms when the logic of society changes. We need to be careful to interpret 'an alternative development' as counter-power, because alterity in this context does not refer to a revolutionary movement to subvert the power. Rather, this is an alternativity that panoptical procedures do not consider as their importance does not explicitly appear until an event happens. For example, the issues relating to the unexpected power that Google and Youtube had in Korea between 2008 and 2010 as the champion of freedom of speech due to their non-compliance with the Lee administration's request to hand over their users personal information can be understood in this context, which will be elaborated in Chapters 3,4 and 5.

It is also important to examine whether ICTs are substitutes for the optical mechanism. I argue that power holders such as the state still stick to optical traditions to control the internet. In the case of the Korean government, they only tried to control Korean websites after Candlelight 2008 where many users gathered, without considering the features of the internet and its borderless flux.

Certeau is in favour of the heterogeneity of culture without which his ideas on power are identical to that of Foucault. In contrast, Foucault does not accept that there is a plurality and their perception of territory is homogeneous. This is the point where notions of Certeau are explicitly different from other theorists in that he opens the possibility of plurality. Foucault (1991, 2001, 2002) focuses on the system of power (the polymorphous techniques of power) in terms of finding various ways in which it penetrates the subject and disciplines him/her. The subject (the ordinary person) for Foucault is one who can be disciplined and if not he/she becomes isolated from society. Certeau points out Foucault's notion as the outcome of an artificial condition and criticises this: 'The epistemological and social move of isolating excluded people from normal social intercourse in order to create the space that makes possible a rational order' (1984:46).

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[10] My understanding of Certeau's criticism of Foucault relating to power was indebted to Terry Threadgold's interpretation of 'De Certeau reading Foucault rewriting' (1997:25-30).

In this point of view, de Certeau defines their notions as 'Cut-Out and Turn-Over: a recipe for theory' (1984:62).[11] That is, Certeau criticises and defines the theory of Foucault as 'Scriptural Economy' that either negates or ignores the existence of ordinary people's logic of operation, which is not interrupted by the power of society.[12] De Certeau also sheds light on the ways in which the individual moves beyond these systematic regulations and surveillances to free themselves within their everyday life. While the state authority is controlling the everydayness online and the web, the individual internet user goes beyond these power relations. This is an alternative development that the cyber-panopticon cannot encompass, which changes cyber culture. However, it does not mean that de Certeau ignored the significance of power.

De Certeau uses the term Scriptural Economy to conceptualise the logistics of power, illustrating how writing as a mechanism constructs power. For him, Scriptural Economy is a technology that does not only control the representation of a society but also the body (1984:144). In particular, de Certeau shows how this dilutes a pure body and he states that:

> The installation of the scriptural apparatus of modern "discipline," colonizes and mystifies this voice by defining it as to be "determined by a system (whether social, familial, or other) and codified by a way of receiving it" (1984:131-2).

According to de Certeau, Scriptural Economy is not only a logic that sustains the monopoly of reorientation, but also the mechanism that affects the body (1984:135). He defines this as 'scriptural economy': the authority of writing history means that the dominant hegemony will be embedded in it and he argues that this is not avoidable (Ahearne, 1995:85).

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[11] De Certeau also criticises Bourdieu in this context. The power of holding territory, for Bourdieu (1989, 1991), starts from Méconnaissance (derived from *Reconnaissance Sans Connaissance*) of the subject makes his/her desire to change their disposition to fit 'Champ' which represents 'Symbolic Capital'. The logic of living for ordinary people and their various activisms are negated in Bourdieu's discourse and he argues that the dominant discourse is led by the power holder. Bourdieu's notion of Power tends to focus on the subject in terms of how they are absorbed into the social system that the power holder sets up. De Certeau criticises Bourdieu's notion of ideology as pejorative as 'there are totalizing and homogenous production, result observational distance' (de Certeau, 1984:53).

[12] Ahearne argues that de Certeau traces how 'different elements of different systems' are 'variously appropriated', 'recombined' and 'reinterpreted' (Ahearne, 1995:29-31).

I argue that the mechanism of scriptural economy is still used by the power holders. For example, the Korean government implemented oppressive measures after Candlelight 2008 to subjugate cyberspace at a national level. The aim was to justify their jurisdiction in terms of deleting postings against the government were erased and arresting netizens. However, de Certeau asserts that this cannot control the individual fully, because their voice cannot be controlled fully. This is key to an understanding of why the state' cyber control cannot silence voices online. The distrust between members of the online communities, which were identified after the Lee administration's cyber intervention as well as evidenced in the Korean web portals' submissiveness, illustrates this and will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

5. The Power of Powerless

De Certeau argues that orality has not been extinguished fully by the scriptural system. He argues that: 'Orality insinuates itself, like one of the threads of which it is composed, into the network-an endless tapestry of a scriptural economy' (1984:132). He argues that orality remains as traces in the colonized (or disciplined) body and the colonized body cannot be a machine that obeys discipline as a consequence. We should not understand the relationship between the state and the web industry as the power holder and the powerless. Rather, they are both power holders with different purposes, market dominance for the web industry and authoritative control for the state.

De Certeau's point is to present the existence of voices (orality), which is diluted or changed but still exists. Thus, the aim of my research is to find voices that were submerged and diluted by the power holders, even if these voices did not always agree. Certeau's unique way of finding and interpreting voices as parameters of society at the implicit as well as explicit level can be understood when we look at his analysis of May 1968.[13] As Higmore argues that de Certeau's exploration of May

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[13] The May 1968 protests which started in France were the largest resistance movement and strikes against the social absurdities of the President Charles de Gaulle government. The revolutionary events of May 1968 were started by students and spread widely to trade unionists, workers in France and even other countries. Even though their revolutions had failed, these protests fundamentally affected their societies (Starr, 1995).

1968 focuses on highlighting 'a different mode of social communication' rather than 'political gains and losses, or social progressiveness, or regressiveness' of the protesters' (Higmore, 2002:78). For Certeau, May 1968, unveiled the hypocritical social representation on the surface:

> The events of May and June 1968 now recall for us the need for a control exercised not only on the functioning, but also on the inner coherence, of a system of representation… a language was summoned, its representativeness was challenged, and it was opposed to the "capture of speech" (1997b:26-27).

It seems appropriate to introduce de Certeau's notion of 'belief' to understand this case. De Certeau points out that the paradigm shifts and the institution that governs the power of writing dethrones its absoluteness as a consequence. De Certeau argues that belief is 'not the object of believing but the subject's investment in a proposition' and points out 'the devaluation of beliefs' in the subject as history goes on (Certeau, 1984:178-80).

What de Certeau points out is that the ordinary people start to be aware of that the elite's absoluteness is a pejorative ideology and the places of elite authority (institutions such as church, broadcasting and the political regime) weaken, although the elites are not aware of it. He also states that as a consequence of 'the devaluation of beliefs', 'the demobilisation of workers is growing faster than the surveillance network'. As a consequence, belief is 'detached from it' (de Certeau, 1984:179-80). We can understand the upheavals of May 1968 as the slippage (or the leak) of 'distortion of a rationalization of society and the system of values' (de Certeau, 1997a:5) and symptoms of the change derived from the desire of ordinary people to 'have a different mode of social communication (Higmore, 2002:76-8). However, the loss of place is soon overtaken by another power institution.[14] He points out that the 'liberated speech [during May 1968] was recaptured by the social system' (De Certeau, 1997:30).

In de Certeau's sense, Candlelight 2008 was the moment when the capture of voices was exposed. This started from the moment when belief in the state was devalued due to the Lee administration's negligence of public health relating to US beef imports. This devaluation of belief became metabolised by Korean web portals,

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[14] De Certeau discerns this as the conceptual term 'Re-employment'.

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which resulted in cyber-asylum seeking. It is my contention that it was not only the power institutions that were devalued, but that the space where Korean internet users dwelled became polluted and the voices of the internet users were co-opted as they lost their language to express themselves. The aftermath of the 2008 event was the moment when 'liberated speech was recaptured by the social system', namely new measures on the internet, which unified the voices online as malicious ones (this issue will be discussed more fully in Chapter 3).

De Certeau makes a similar interpretation in his archaeological exploration of *The Possession at Loudun*.[15] He analyses the demonic possession of the Ursulines nuns in the late 1680s in France as they faced incompatibility between 'the language of faith' they must have kept as a nun and the instability, doubts and intolerance that resulted in the ideological shift from theological reason to reason of state (2000:99). De Certeau argues that it unveils 'the imbalance of a culture' during the transition of ideological paradigm from theological hegemony to that of state and demonic possession. Therefore, this demonic possession must be understood as a symptom of slippage. The reason for the Ursulines' belief that they were captured by demonic possession was that 'All they can do is attribute all this reality to the Devil, recognize him in the infernal shadow spreading out onto their Inner landscape and dividing it' (2000:99).

During the ideological shift from theological to state reason, the power mechanism that inscribed voices onto the bodies (nuns) at an implicit level did not perform well enough to control them. As a consequence, the bodies of the nuns cried 'between the tool and the flesh', which explicitly showed that the voice cannot be contained or colonized perfectly. This analytical tool is useful to understand how the internet users' voices were diluted by the irrational power intervention online, which resulted in distrust between members.

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[15] De Certeau scrutinises the history relating to Ursulines demonic possession happened around late 1680s. Many Ursulines nuns in Loudun province, France, claimed that they were possessed by Demon and sent Fathers to conduct exorcisms, but had failed to clear nuns' demonic possession. On the basis of this unbelievable but factual event, de Certeau declares his foundational premise that 'history is never sure' (2000:2) and asserts that an event, even if it is a mystical, could unveil hidden lies of zeitgeist.

I argue that this is the point where we need to examine the tripartite relationship between the Korean government, the Korean web portals and internet users to understand the landscape of Korean cyberspace after Candlelight 2008. Korean internet users relied on the Korean web portals due to the language issue. Furthermore, the web portal-centric Korean internet culture, which developed without state intervention, allowed web portals to inscribe their own scriptural economy, namely you can enjoy freedom of speech as long as you stay within our website as a source of data-mining and data-generating. Information was filtered through the closed mechanism of the Korean web portals. Hargittai points out that not all contents in cyberspace are exposed to internet users. Due to the fact that the users' exposure to the contents depend on their choice of the channel (i.e. web portals), she argues that it is important to distinguish 'availability' of the contents ('material exists online') with 'accessibility' of the contents (being within reach) on the web. She states 'that attention scarcity leads individual creators of content to rely on online gatekeepers to channel their cultural products toward consumers of contents' (2000:2). She also argues that 'the most popular navigational sites are the most prominent gatekeepers'. She categorizes the characteristics of web portals into two, one 'featured a search engine to find sites (e.g. Excite, Lycos)' or 'offered a list of category directories' that are selected by the search sites (e.g.Yahoo) (2000:5).

The Korean web portals' aim to have a market power in cyberspace relates to their aim to gain profit through its customers' personal taste and privacy. In fact, this is re-employment of scriptural writing in De Certeau' sense that cyberspace is dominated by the Korean web portal as they already built the concept-city of cyberspace. However, this concept-city started to be shaken by another power, the Lee administration's cyber control. This power struggle between two institutions resulted in phenomena. One was rampant distrust in the online communities and the other was the cyber asylum seeker phenomenon. The first case relating to the distrust among the online community members can be understood by comparison with the possession at Loudun. After all, distrust may be an outcry by ordinary people that unveils 'the imbalance of a culture' during the transition of the ideological paradigm from market hegemony to that of state governance. The anxiety about power formed a strong authority in the Korean online community and also brought about conflicts between new and old members (discussed more fully in Chapter 6).

Mathieu O'Neil sets out 'how authority takes into account the central value on the internet*?'* to substantiate the limit of Foucauldian conceptualisation of 'an instrument of elite domination' in the internet era (2009:2). His hypothesis is that 'analysing authority necessitates an interrogation of the notions of expertise and leadership; ultimately, it raises the question of the nature of domination' (2009:13), but we need a new analytical framework to understand online authority with a problematic issue he identified in the discourse of domination in cyberspace. He states that:

> The primary aim of domination is to be misrecognised, and what better misrecognition could there be than the widespread notion that the internet is a non-hierarchical space? And yet: the persistence of some forms of domination should not prevent us from recognising instances where authority really is self-directed (2009:4).

He argues that the network approach to cyberspace is useful to decide 'which actors are central or strategically placed', but it is limited in its understanding of the relationship between members of an online community. He argues that 'this can only be understood by examining the relationship between an organisational structure and the role a person occupies within it' (O'Neil, 2009:174). Having warned that 'groups need leaders' not 'illegitimate forms of authority, such as cliques' (2009:174), he lists the conflicts that are commonly identified in online communities. The major conflicts can be categorized into three areas: '*task conflict* (having to do with work content), *affective conflict* (deriving from emotional relationships) and *process conflict* (concerning the approach to the task)' (2009:182). He argues that:

> It has been observed, for example, that when co-workers are friends there is more likelihood that affective conflict will occur. The distance separating members of distributed teams leads to more task and process conflicts because of 'different perspectives, inconsistent norms, incongruent temporal rhythms, reduced familiarity and demographic heterogeneity'.

The cyber asylum seekers' project resonates with O'Neil's 'online tribes' that[16] 'represent an attempt to escape the clutches of the market and of corporate bureaucracy' (O'Neil, 2009:187). One missing point here is how autonomy is implicitly and unconsciously destabilised due to the anxieties of ordinary people. My research on cyber asylum seekers aims to address this gap by substantiating how the

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[16] One of the strengths of this conceptual framework is that it sheds light on the open-ended online tribes to articulate with the social events in various ways.

power mechanism permeated into online communities and were reflected in the online community.

6. Strategy versus Tactics

De Certeau conceptualises strategies and tactics to explain the heterogeneous nature of the logistics of dominance and that of everydayness. His rationale for suggesting two concepts for the understanding of society is that it is impossible to totalize society into one 'single, dominant type of procedure'. De Certeau's notion of Strategies and Tactics can be understood as mechanisms under which Scriptural Economy and Orality are performed simultaneously in our society. According to him, the difference between the power holder, who can manipulate 'scriptural economy', and ordinary people who trace 'orality' is their different attitude towards the territory where they live. The chart below shows the distinction between space as a tactic and place as a strategy from De Certeau's perspective**.**

Place:	Space:
-Instantaneous configuration of positions. -Ruled by the law of the 'proper'. -No possibility of two things being in the same location. -Constituted by a system of signs.	-A practised place. -The space produced by the practice of a - particular place.

<div align="right">(De Certeau, 1984:117)</div>

Marc Auge also distinguishes between place and space:

> If a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place (1995:77-8)

The experiences of the people in a place change the meaning of the place. Gaston Bachelard's notion of a house is the best example to illustrate this. He states that:

The house is not experienced from day to day only, on the thread of a narrative, or in the telling of our own story. Through dreams, the various dwelling-places in our lives co-penetrate and retain the treasures of former days...Memories of the outside world will never have the same tonality as those of home and by recalling these memories, we add to our store of dream (1969:5).

Place and space do refer to the same location but the treatment of the location is different from the point of view of the elite and ordinary people. The power holder's desire to possess the territory makes it a place where they manoeuvre to represent their existence as Crang notes (2000), so that no one can dare to confront their right to possess the territory. In contrast, the location can be used against or not in accordance with the designer (controller) of the place when the ordinary people question the representation that is 'constituted by a system of signs' by using a different system of signs. Franklin interprets this distinction between place and space as: **'**the difference between the fixity of "a" place (to wit, "a" culture, "an" identity) and the fluidity of the physical and communicative spaces delimited by the multifarious practices of everyday life' (2004:165).

There are at least two logics in operation in one territory. One is the power holder's top-down logic. The power holders' desire to inscribe 'scriptural economy' derived from their need to sustain their hegemony demands them to possess the territory. The other is the ordinary people's bottom-up logic, which is normally being submerged until the power holder perceives their significance. The ordinary people's logic of operation is orality and its flexibility. Their desire to take pleasure in the moment derives from their need to speak and express themselves without any filters, which leads them to traverse. They traverse, meet others and articulate the same things but with different rhetoric. This 'logic of the operation of actions' of 'the ordinary people', De Certeau argues, is what comprises its culture (De Certeau, 1984:21). In my understanding, for the adoption of De Certeau's ideas as the main theoretical framework, we need to accept the existence of a different time and space between the two dynamics (the power holder and the ordinary people) and two different logics of operation as a consequence. These are two different ways of gazing at society and representation within it. The breakdown of the power mechanism and the power of the powerless can be understood as the void between the two operational logistics.

The strategies of the power holders to dominate space is to represent them and colonize others. Whereas De Certeau emphasizes 'Traverse' of ordinary people as a subversive tactic against the power holders, ordinary people's traversality disabled the power holders' scriptural economy by revealing other dynamics that the power holders cannot encompass. The significance of traversality as the subversive or unintentional power of ordinary people lies in its invisibility from the top-down perspective. De Certeau suggests that the invisible traversal tactic as the logistics of the ordinary people can break panopticism. He states that:

> These practitioners make use of spaces that cannot be seen; their knowledge of them is as blind as that of lovers in each other's arms. The paths that correspond in this intertwining, unrecognized poems in which each body is an element signed by many others, elude legibility. It is as though the practices organizing a bustling city were characterized by their blindness. The network of these moving, intersecting writings compose a manifold story that has neither author nor spectator, shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of space (1984:93).

This statement clearly highlights, as Mike Crang argued, to 'ontologise De Certeau's ideas, translating his concern for indeterminate practice (tactics) into resistant people and entities (the popular)' (Crang, 2000:149). As Crang also argues, de Certeau's 'concern is to regain a sense of doing and knowing without being a means' (Crang, 2000:149). Ordinary people traverse the space of panopticism, perceive it from their own perspective without any intention, but make their own discourse by questioning the changing relations between them and panopticism. This activity of ordinary people can threaten power as the weapon of tactics without their intention. It is not visible from the top, because it is too fragmented (de Certeau, 1984:101-2). De Certeau is often criticized by other scholars that a focus on the invisibility of tactics in everyday life is misleading. For example, John Frow criticises this:

> De Certeau's employment of figures such as 'the ordinary man ... walking in countless thousands on the streets' and 'the people' problematically elides any discussion of probable 'struggles and rivalries between the groups comprising ''the people'''. In addition, de Certeau's account does not recognize the possibility that there might be 'complicity in and acceptance of domination' on the part of the people (Frow in Crang:149).

However, the flaws in this assertion may result from the misunderstanding of the daily life of ordinary people. In de Certeau's sense, the power of the powerless derived from their apathy to the power game. Buchanan argues that:

> the primary problem is not, as one might expect, that the everyday is impossible to see, for that would effectively render moot de Certeau's entire project, but rather that it is impossible to represent (2000:48).

The characteristics of tactics are different from those of strategy and are defined as illogical or cannot be accepted by the power holders as a consequence. They are visible if we see from the perspective of ordinary people. This is key for the understanding of how individual internet users traverse online, which was apolitical and invisible at first, then, was perceived by the power holders as a political act that broke the power holders' logics. De Certeau in this context does not view the ideas of resistance in a revolutionary way. Rather, his strength is that they show the practices and logistics that can never be reduced to the strategies of power. He also shows how culture and society can be changed through this. For example, there was a tendency for Korean internet users to change their email accounts after the Lee administration scrutinized anti-political internet users' email accounts. However, there was a time when power holders thought that the constellation of each traverse was directed to the same place by the power holders, although it was in fact not the same place. It was already too late to control when the power holders (government or web service providers) realized the significance of the individuals' move to Gmail accounts or YouTube.

7. Theorising Cyber Control

Johan Eriksson et al. state that internet control can be understood from three categorisations, which are to control '(1) access to the internet, (2) functionality of the internet, and (3) activity on the internet' (2009:206). This research project falls under the third category. Eriksson et al. construe mechanisms of controlling the internet activity as:

> (3a) Filtering and blocking of particular parts or features of the internet such as websites, search words, or online communities; (3b) surveillance of online activity, for example, surf logs, spyware, and more comprehensive

eavesdropping of electronic communications… and finally (3c) attempts to shape and control social and political discourse through various means of information, propaganda, and entertainment (2009:207).

The Lee administration's cyber control performed during and after Candlelight 2008, was to block postings that the Korean internet users posted online against the government, which comes under (3a), to trace internet users IP addresses (3b) and to shape political discourse, namely malicious contents online which needs to be corrected [or filtered?] by the state. The Lee administration's effective cyber control would have not been possible without the Korean web portals' submissiveness (explored more fully in Chapters 3 and 4). Rucht argues that 'reaching and influencing the broad populace via the media may be the ultimate target' is a myth, because the power holder receives more benefits from ICTs (particularly the internet) than ordinary people (Rucht, 2003: 28). Goldsmith and Wu also argue that territorial government is still the most influential factor in internet development (Goldsmith et al., 2006:180). They show that China invests tens of billions to 'have the fastest and most sophisticated information network in the world' for 'totalitarian control'. As a consequence, they argue that China 'creates its own sphere of influence' (Goldsmith et al., 2006:100-1). The reasons why 'a global network is becoming a collection of nation-state networks', i.e. 'Internet Border' are as follows

1. Local differences are reflected in the provision and consumption of the internet.

2. Technological development (e.g. bandwidth distribution)

3. The enforcement of national law (2006:149-50).

Goldsmith and Wu's assertion (2006) that control over internet media by government regulation is possible applies to the current Korean government, which is attempting to regulate Korean cyberspace. Similarly, McChesney's argument that the internet is developed by government subsidies also shows that statements on the internet as a space for free markets or democracy are problematic (McChesney, 1997:182-3).

Hamoud Salhi argues that the state keeps the throne of the internet, which results from the state's 'ownership of the legitimate use of force and the authority to regulate cyberspace within its territory' (2009:211). This state-driven internet control discourse situates the internet service providers (ISP) as inferior to the state, whether

they are global corporations or local businesses. For example, Salhi adopts Goldsmith and Wu's illustration of Yahoo's submissiveness to the Chinese government relating to the filtering of anti-communist postings as an example (2009:214). Salhi also asserts that the veracity of state control is often justified with reference to national security and the state forces non-state actors to comply with this. He states that:

> Considering its framing as national security issue or ''high politics,'' forceful attempts by nation states to control undesirable effects in this domain could be expected. What we do see, however, is that governments fail to provide security by themselves so that policies are predicated on the concept of voluntarily sharing responsibility with private actors (2009:217).

In this process of subjugating the national internet political struggles are identified among the state and 'a variety of public and private actors regarding both the nature of the problem and the approaches to be taken' (ibid). He states that:

> There are continuing struggles over the question of whether ''security'' means the security of the state as a whole, or whether it only refers to the security of individual users or technical systems, and should therefore be handled by authorities other than national security bodies (2009:218).

In contrast, J. P. Singh argues against the state-centred cyber control approach. He states that:

> The question is not whether the state can or cannot control the internet. Of course, it can control the internet. If instrumental control were all that mattered, the proper names of town governors alone would alone comprise every city's history (2009:218).

Rather than the question of 'who own the power in the internet galaxy', he suggests that we should shift our approach to the 'cultural meaning of this technology for people'. He argues that 'the manipulative capacity of the state' is the most influential factor of determining 'the interactive technology', but the weakness of this approach results from it negligence of the fact that 'technology diffusion and its effects are not the purview of states alone', which would 'tell us much about the effects of the internet in the long run' (2009:219). He states that:

> The profoundest shift in internet control issues, at the cultural level, comes from the epistemes of those purportedly being controlled but nevertheless interacting and networking on the internet... If interactions change actor identities and

meaning of the issues they pursue, actor preferences cannot be taken as constant as do structural analysis where power structures determine preferences prior to any interaction (2009:220).

Singh's definition of meta-power is worth examining here. His theoretical position is based on the premise that 'the effects of networking on states, businesses, and international organizations transcend any kind of technologically deterministic logic' (2002:3). He argues that neither the instrumental power model, nor the study of 'the capability of power holders to effect particular outcomes' (2002:7) nor the structural power model, the study of 'ability to change the institutions' (2002:10) serve best to understand ICTs in connection with state and non-state actors. The effect of the information network on the state and non-state actors can be grasped by examining the shifting 'the body of knowledge'. He states that:

> Technologies not only impact existing actors and issues but, as an increasing body of knowledge notes, networked interaction itself constitutes actors and issues in global politics. If we merely focus on actor capabilities and take their identities and interests as given, as most instrumental and structural power versions do, the transformation being brought about by information networks is missed (2002:12-13).

He turns his attention to the meta-power model, which is defined as 'how networks reconfigure, constitute, or reconstitute identities, interests, and institutions' (2002: 12). In this model, Singh proposes to follow the flow of struggles about the changing views of the state and non-state actors on the internet rather than to look at the institutions' power game rhetoric about 'who holds the power of the internet'. Eriksson et al further argue that 'government', 'business' and 'NGOs' intermingle with each other in relation to cyber control and 'No single actor or even single type of actor has complete control of all dimensions of the internet, not even on a domestic level' (2009:207). Mueller points to two tendencies in the discourse about 'who controls the internet'. The first tendency can be summarized as 'no one controls the internet', because 'technology is more powerful than government, traditions, cultures.' The second tendency is for either people or corporations to gain control. However, he finds flaws in both these views (Mueller, 2002:11) and argues that:

> Control is never perfect and no one gets exactly what he wants. But it is false and misleading to say that there is no control, no social constraint. Some parties have more bargaining power than others… In short, there are winners and losers

in any institutionalization process. And there is always continuing pressure for the modification of the rules in ways that reflect the special interests of various parties (ibid).

His institutional approach to the power struggle over the formation of the internet address regime – the internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) – shows that we can neither speak of the state governing the internet fully by rooting IP addresses nor can we speak of a libertarian spirit or complete freedom from the state.

8. Internet Users and the Politics of Traversing Online

Viewing the internet as a space where complex logistics are connected and performed by various actors, Franklin suggests that de Certeau's notions are still valid for an understanding of cyberspace and internet culture. She argues that we need to consider the activity and 'liveliness' of the internet users 'more seriously' along with the dominant issue of the power holder in cyberspace. She argues that this is imperative as:

> Without incorporating these imminent 'non-state actor' into the scenario in what is an age of digital-human 'embeds, effective responses to return of the state accounts can overlook how cybernetic organisms, artificial intelligences, may well end up overriding the manual controls thereby rendering state, market, and civil society obsolete (2009:226).

The discourse of either government intervention or global corporate intervention on cyberspace must be assessed in conjunction with activities of internet users. These two seemingly different stories are not two sides of the same coin but a Mobius strip with the two dynamics affecting each other.

Franklin argues that internet technology use have become divided into two parts. One is 'the provenance and progeny of capitalist accumulation' in a way that the dynamics of internet technology and its development is controlled heavily by a few global corporations and their profit-motivated goal. The other in contrast is non-commercial activism of internet users against or opposed to commercially-governed ICT trajectories, which includes development of non-commercial (non-proprietary) software and user activism without any intention to make a profit (Franklin, 2004:19).

Franklin also uses de Certeau's dichotomy between the power holder and ordinary people by defining the power holder's strategy as a desire to possess territory and cyberspace, turning it into cyber-place where they represent their existence as absolute in this invisible territory. In this sense, Franklin argues that:

> The internet and its constitutive practices and structures need to be construed not just as-a-technology but also as-an-idea, integral to the 'scriptural economies' that reproduce the 'modern mythical practice' of the West-phalian Imaginary and its representational regimes-*machineries.* The internet, its so-called governance or control is integral to such meaning-making practices, and vice versa (2009:224).

Franklin points out that ICT trajectories, designed by both global corporations and the state, govern the time and space of the Web by having implemented various policies and strategies through which they inject their veracity.[17] She also argues that the digital divide (between the digital north and south) results in 'the liberalization-privatization drive of telecommunications and ICT-related undertakings in the 1990s' and this leads to 'uneven distribution in the costs and benefits of these societies' as a consequence (Franklin, 2004:19-28).

The term digital divide refers not only to its literal meaning, but also to the inequality between people living in a territory where they can have access to the internet without any difficulty and one where people have limited access to the internet. Franklin also uses the term to show that some people live in a nation where their state is not powerful enough or the population is not large enough to affect global development of ICTs. She states that her study is to deal with:

> R&D·trajectories laid out by strategic commercial interests looking to "tame" Internet communications under (late) capitalist modes of accumulation. This requires that everyday cyberspaces – and cyberplaces – of the Web be reconfigured and channelled along specific for-profit and "efficiency" lines (2004:216).

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[17] Franklin illustrates this by referring to various advertisement campaigns mediated by global corporations. She views advertisements as a means for reconstituting 'popular imaginaries and political economic undertaking'. She argues that the ads disguise (even mystify) the hypocrisy of 'political economic decision' as 'technological imperatives' by 'representing the deregulation, liberalization and then privatization of public utilities as a fait accompli'. Her critical argument is that advertisements, as a spearhead, heavily use metaphors such as sex and gender to attract the target audience so that they can accept technological development uncritically (Franklin, 2004:20-24).

To dominate the system, global corporations endeavour to tame users in various ways to accept their product as imperative (e.g. the new campaign and catch phrase of Microsoft Internet Explorer 8)

Your Internet journey will be 'FASTER, EASIER, SAFER' as long as you are within the system of Microsoft. The acceptance of this as an imperative in a teleological way is technological determinism as well as the victory of power strategies.

More importantly, she emphasises the logic of ordinary people who cannot or do not want to join this battle of cyberspace. Franklin states that 'corporate manoeuvrings for control' of the internet that provide 'the glitzy faces and gigabyte-sized flows of the present' is neither an imperative internet development nor its whole story. She emphasizes that we should know that this visibly 'fancy' internet narrative is derived from a western-centred perspective. Therefore, we should reveal the alienated and excluded Internet discourse as a 'counter-factual and counter-intuitive lessons for Western modes of thought'. Many internet activities that are practised daily with 'text-based and relatively low-capacity communication' but still have an effect on the users' daily lives (Franklin, 2007:273-5). Her exploration of the cyber- communities of Pacific-Islanders such as Kava Bowl and Kamehameha Roundtable Forums shows them as a place where the Pacific-Islanders' diasporas as well as indigenous inhabitants are able to construct and confirm their cultural identity. In this sense, her analysis of the Kava Bowl and Kamehameha Roundtable Forums can be understood as tracing indices and marks of how a non-'scriptural economy'(in de Certeau's sense) form another cyber-culture with a different function and logic of operation.

We can infer that the discourse of either government intervention or global corporate intervention in cyberspace must be assessed together with the discourse of the activities of internet users. This research project takes up de Certeau's notion of the dichotomization between 'scriptural economy' of the power holder and the 'orality' of ordinary people, illustrating the interactivity of online and offline in Candlelight 2008

Conclusion

This chapter examined the validity of de Certeau's practice theory, which was explained through his notions of power, place and space and their relevance for our understanding of Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath. De Certeau's critical engagement with the Foucauldian concept of the panopticon introduces the plurality of temporalities and subjectivities in our daily lives, which break the power of panopticism. His analytical tools, namely orality and traversality, were also explored. Orality refers to the voices of ordinary people, which cannot be captured fully by power holders. While orality explains the impossibility of absolute power and control, the traversality concept sets out how the legitimacy of power can be broken. Traversality refers to ordinary people's perceptions and practices of place, which leads to the emergence of alternative spatial and institutional dimensions, which are in the process of being submerged by power. The exploration of these concepts led us to an analysis of how internet users traverse (act) beyond the limits of time, location, and politics. This chapter identified the scholarly rhetoric in cyber control as based on a Foucauldian approach to the power. For example, Goldsmith and Wu argue that the state dominates in control over the internet. In contrast, Franklin's elaboration of de Certeau's idea, substantiating the power of the internet user group in relation to current internet governance discourses, which best serves our understanding of Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath. This chapter also examined the potential power of Korean internet users who traverse cyberspace and discussed the impossibility of full cyber control.

Chapter 2. Methodology: Multi-Sited Methods for Three Key Players

Introduction

With this framework in mind, this chapter also locates the methods and approaches used in this study, namely policy analysis, online community observation and interviews that were employed to explore the aftermath of Candlelight 2008. This section supports the rationale for adopting a multi-sited approach by explaining the impossibility of using one methodological approach to delineate the tripartite relationship between the Lee administration, the Korean web portals and the internet users. This section will examine the ways in which I collected data for the research project. The research deals with the Korean political and economic sectors of the internet industry as well as the users of Korean cyberspace. I adopted three methodological approaches for data collection, because these multi-methods of data collection serve best to open up a new landscape in terms of understanding the perceptions of the three actors of the aftermath of Candlelight 2008.

Each data collection method had distinct implications. Firstly, I collected documents relating to the government policies on the internet after Candlelight 2008, focusing on a series of measures announced between 2008 and 2010. This enabled me to check what legal-developmental aspects of the internet the government paid attention to in particular, for example malicious content on the web. I also collected documents relating to Korean web portal's policy announcements. For example, the official announcement posted on their web sites as well as annual reports since the Lee administration started to pressurise the web portals were selected in order to check their reactions to government policies and internet users. This selection criterion used was if there were any significant changes in their enterprises after Candlelight 2008. Furthermore, I gathered articles and media reports in order to grasp how the discourses relating to government actions after the events of 2008 were formed. The secondary data was helpful to comprehend the socio-economic context of the specific issues relating to the internet between 2008 and 2010. However, one of the issues that I encountered during the secondary research was that the documents of the government bodies and that of Korean web portals did not appear to be enough to

examine the situation behind the scenes in terms of defining the logics of the two institutions' implicit rationale for announcing measures on the internet. However this limitation was covered by the subsequent interviews, which enabled me to verify the motivations of government announcements. For example, interviews with the government officials enabled me argue the measures announced by the Lee administration were not only aimed at regulating malicious contents online but also to control the voices expressing this content online. The interviews with Korean web portal representatives enabled me to conclude that the Korean web portals' compliance resulted from the fact that they had no legal and institutional power to act against the government.

Secondly, I conducted interviews and email correspondence between 2009 and 2010. All the face-to-face interviews were carried out during my visit to Korea in the summer of 2010. The interviewees were a diverse group: I met not only officials in government departments relating to internet regulation, but also stakeholders and officials involved in Korean web portals together with media activists, Korean professors in media communications, journalists, and ordinary people.

The adoption of the interview method was helpful, because it enabled me to find examples of the government's and the Korean web portals' perspectives that I checked in policy documents. However, there were several issues regarding research ethics (See Appendix: Ethics Form). One of the main issues that I came up against were difficulties in contacting government officials and stakeholders in the Korean internet industry, because the research topic was politically sensitive and the interviewees were reluctant to accept my interview requests. These issues will be narrated case by case. Email correspondence was also conducted, due to the geographical distance between the interviewees and me. For example, an administrator of the online community lived in Canada and I was not able to meet him due to time and budget constraints.

Thirdly, I conducted online participatory observation. The online communities that I observed were ExileKorea.net and Agora Justice Forum. The main priority of the online participatory observation was to investigate 'cyber asylum seekers' who planned to change their main online platform from a Korean based web portal to a non-Korean one since Candlelight 2008. Problems arose because these online

communities were either closed or stopped their cyber asylum project by the time I gained permission from the online communities. This issue was covered by interviews with the members of the online communities, which will be discussed in more detail later.

The interviews were conducted on the basis of research questions, which are as follows:

1. How did the Korean government react to the 2008 Candlelight demonstrations?
2. How did Korean web portals react to the government's actions?
3. How did Korean internet users respond to these two institutions' actions?
(See Appendix III: Basic Interview Question)

During the interviews, I found something in common between the interviewees. The interview topic tended to focus on issues relating to the aftermath of the demonstration and I gained the impression that they all remembered the events of 2008 and the series of events after this clearly. This brought me to the hypothesis that Candlelight 2008 had a great effect on the state, non-state actors and Korean intent users.

As briefly summarised, the adaptation of these three methods has not only sharpened my understanding of the issues and phenomenon relating to Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath, but also helped me to not have a prejudice when I came to evaluate the significance of each set of data. Thus considering the consolidation of each method in terms of finding the logic operating in each institution, the way in which I examined the issues of method will unfold institution by institution (community by community) rather than method by method (i.e. the issue of interviews compared to online participatory observation).

1. Government Bodies: Review of the Government Policies on the Korean Internet

The project began with a review of Korean government policies on the internet, because I assumed that the events such as the cyber asylum seeker's project after Candlelight 2008 must have been considered as a reaction to the government's

changed views on the internet and consequent actions to intervene in cyberspace. The collection of documents relating to the changing internet regulations was not difficult to find although I was in UK, because it was the government's obligation to publish their announcement on the web. The websites that I visited to gather data are as follows:

- Korean Communications Commission:
  http://eng.kcc.go.kr/user/ehpMain.do
- Korean Communications Standards Commission:
  http://www.kocsc.or.kr/eng/Message.php
- Korean Internet Security Agency: http://www.kisa.or.kr/eng/main.jsp
- Fair Trade Commission: http://eng.ftc.go.kr/
- The National Assembly of the Republic of Korea:
  http://korea.assembly.go.kr/index.jsp

However, the document analysis was difficult because I was concerned that my views on the government plan for reforming bills on the internet could be biased by dominant views. The dominant views on the reform bills were focused on two principal tensions that were identified in the policy announcements. First, the media, particularly that on the left, criticised the rationale of the government for announcing 'Internet Information – Security Comprehensive Countermeasures' and the 'Cyber Defamation Law' that were published by the KCC in July 2008 and the Ministry of Justice respectively, because these were announced immediately following the 2008 Candlelight protest. The criticism of the left-wing media exhibited tensions between a promise of freedom of expression and the necessity to implement more regulations for the welfare of the public in cyberspace. Despite my strong sense of scepticism resulting from the timing of the government announcement, I left the rationale of the government bodies' announcement unconfirmed until after the interviews with government officials. However, my concerns were helpful in constructing an interview questionnaire and were resolved after the interviews were conducted during the summer of 2010. Through the interviews, I was able to suggest that there has been an intentional intervention in an attempt to control the Korean web portal companies as well as Korean internet users since 2008.

Interviews with Official from Korean Government Bodies related to the Internet

Based on the exploration of government policies and their implementation, I conducted interviews with officers of government bodies relating to internet regulation. The aim of the interviews (See Appendix: Interview List) was not only to enhance the policy analysis by including government officials' points of view, but also to fill the gap between the policy planning objectives and the implementation of the policies in reality. However, several problematic issues arose.

Firstly, the most difficult task was to contact the interviewees. It was not difficult to find relevant interviewees in government bodies for my research, because names and contact details of the officials were on each department's website. Based on the contact details that I acquired via websites, I tried to contact potential interviewees and requested interviews. However, my requests were met with a flat refusal. It was assumed that this resulted from the potential adverse consequences to the interviewees. Due to the fact that the proposed interviewees work for a government department, and that their statements will be quoted in this project when it is published, it might adversely affect their positions due to government pressure. Even if the anonymity of research participants and the confidentiality of the interview materials as a precautionary action were considered as of utmost importance for all participants, there would have been no reason for them to take risks and spend time on the interviews. I still managed to interview relevant interviewees in government bodies. Some of them expressed their frustrations in the gap between their own ideological views, the reaction of the government to Candlelight 2008 and their obligation to follow orders from the regime. These issues will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

2. Korean Web Portals

The Korean web portals' annual reports, announcement via their websites, interviews with the stakeholders (see Appendix I: Interview List), and other media reports were adopted for data gathering relating to the Korean web portals.[18] My approach to the

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[18] For major sources were found in URLs below.
For Daum.net: http://bbs.notice.daum.net/gaia/do/service/top/list?pageIndex=5&bbsId=00015
For Naver.com: http://www.naver.com/NOTICE
For other sources: http://www.kiso.or.kr. Please see Appendix for other resources.

secondary resources focused on their announcements as political reactions to the Lee administration and the users. However, Google Korea as a foreign-affiliated firm does not have an obligation to publicise their annual report. Rather, the profit from Google Korean becomes that from Google corporate so no detailed information relating to the profit of Google Korean could be found. Limitations in the empirical research on the web portals was evident as the secondary data was insufficient, making it difficult to define the logic of the web portals.

Interviews with the officers at the Korean Internet Industry

Based on the analysis of public statements of the Korean web portals, interviews with officers (policy makers) and stakeholders in the Korean internet industry were conducted in Korea during the summer of 2010. The aims of the interviews were to find out if respondents had noticed any alterations since Candlelight 2008 such as the changing characteristics of users of their web portals, and if there had been any intervention from the government regulatory body since then. This was also checked to establish if the Korean web portals had changed their R&D strategies as a consequence.

The recruitment of the relevant interviewees was as hard as that of government participants. It was difficult to find officials at Korean web portals who were willing to be interviewed. My interview requests were often rejected. For example, an official turned down my request to have an interview by writing an email that 'We officially do not accept an interview in any request of which the purpose is for personal research'. Some were quite clear about their frustration with the current government and its approach to the internet. Others were worried about their positions in their institutions, but gave me clues to distinguish official statements from personal opinions, when they stated, for example, that 'Well, on this question, I can officially answer' (N.B. Appendix 1: Brief Descriptions of Interviewees).

In contrast, one interviewee told me that Candlelight 2008 was just one important events that happened in Korean history. She suggested to me that I should be careful attaching any significance to the events relating to the Korean web portals, because many of them were exaggerated by the press. The interviewee stated that:

The internet has always taken the role of a liberal space. However, due to the Korean government's excessive reaction and a political dynamic, it seemed that the Internet was considered as a special space during a period of the Candle Demonstration. The internet activities of users were neither different nor explosive compared to their other Internet activities (Interview 08 July 2010).

It was at this moment that I questioned myself as to whether my stance on the event of 2008 and its aftermath was very biased. However, my anxiety was relieved when I met other interviewees. Several interviewees stated that the role of the internet was special during the events of 2008. For example, an interview with B, an ex-official at a Korean web portal company who worked for an association relating to the internet industry, made me realise that the negative perception of cyberspace was so embedded in Korean culture, which was revealed by the events of 2008. B exemplified an episode that the big press companies such as Chosun, Jong-Ang and Dong-A[19] stopped providing for Daum.net, due to the boycott campaign of Chosun, Jong-Ang and Dong-A that were in favour of the beef import and against the demonstration. B stated that

The press companies criticised the reaction of the Daum.net to the users' movement. That is, they saw us from the perspective of Old Media enterprise... From their perspective, we were the service runner and they thought we could erase any postings if we wanted to. After the 2008 Candlelight demonstration, Daum.net suffered a bit [laughs]... The misconception could have been made in the way that Daum.net encouraged the activism of its users... This misunderstanding may come from the lack of the understanding about the Internet as a medium (Interview, 13 Aug 2010).[20]

Three other officials told me similar stories, which will be discussed in chapter 5 and 6. The interviews with the officials in the internet industry were useful, because I was able to find new ways to evaluate documents on internet policy. I would not have been able to find an appropriate way of conducting secondary data analysis if I had not met them. The most important ethical point here was privacy and anonymity protection. I informed the interviewees in advance that the anonymity and confidentiality of them would be guaranteed and the informed consent was signed by

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[19] For detailed information about the boycott campaign, see Section 1 of Chapter 2 and Chapter 4.
20 As B had been working for a Korea internet industry for a long time, his explanation of the history of Korean internet policies suggested that government policies were a form of cyber control (see Appendix 1: Brief Descriptions of Interviewees).

the interviewees. However, I had the impression that they were worried about the potential adverse consequences, because most of them did double check their confidentiality and anonymity when the interview proceeded.

3. Korean Internet Users: Cyber Asylum Seekers and Underground Cyber Asylum Seekers

A brief description of online communities

* The Name of Web Site in Korean: Republic of Korea, Netizen Exile (Provisional)

* Notice to close the web site in Korea: 'Thank you very for your love toward Netizen Exile.'
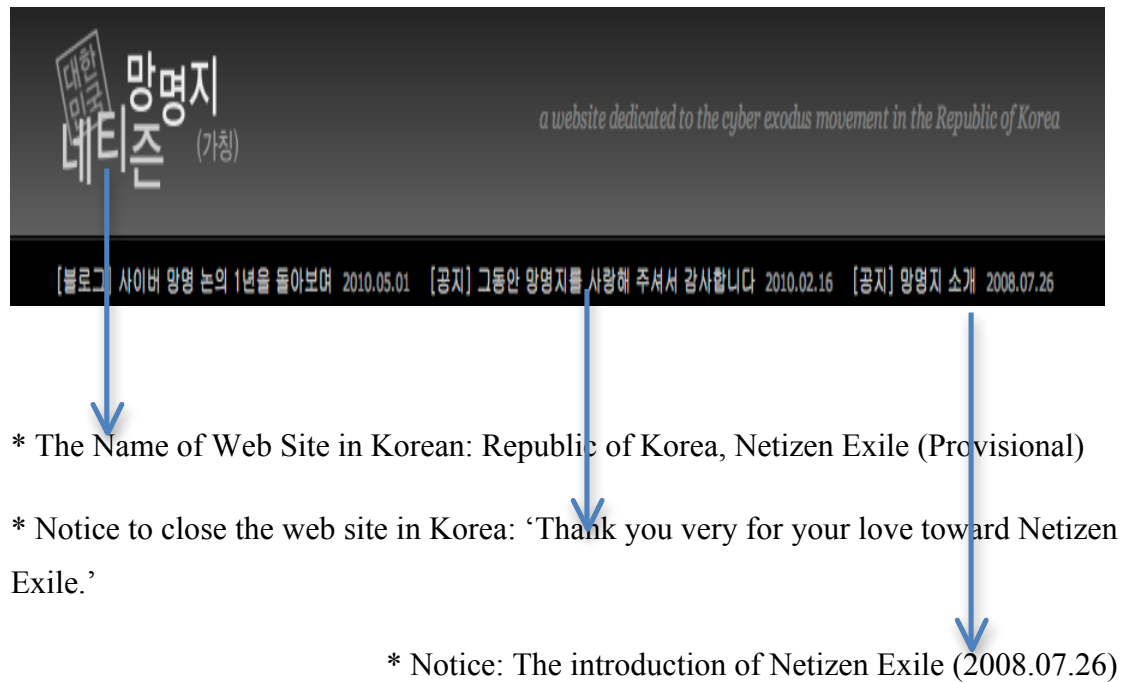
* Notice: The introduction of Netizen Exile (2008.07.26)

Figure 1.2: An Introduction to the Website ExileKorea.net

ExileKorea was set up on the 26th July 2008 and mostly archived the posts that had been blocked from being read, or had the potential to be erased from the Korean Web portals by government intervention (Online Interview, 4 May 2010). Despite the characteristic of archiving postings from the Korean web portals, the disadvantage of this is that there is no real-time discussion section. On the 16th February 2010, Exile Korea was shut down due to personal issues of the administrator. The archive that Exile Korea had filled up was transferred to a personal blog. On the 1st March 2010, a

new Exile Korea with a different administrator was opened. With a new environment, it was necessary to use the 'Tor (anonymity online) programme'[21] to access it. However, due to access difficulties, the previous administrator of Exile Korea had taken over the archive again. Postings on Exile Korea are now accessible without Tor, but it is not possible to upload new postings or make comments on the existing postings. Now, this was also closed and no data is available.

- No. of members: 5,527
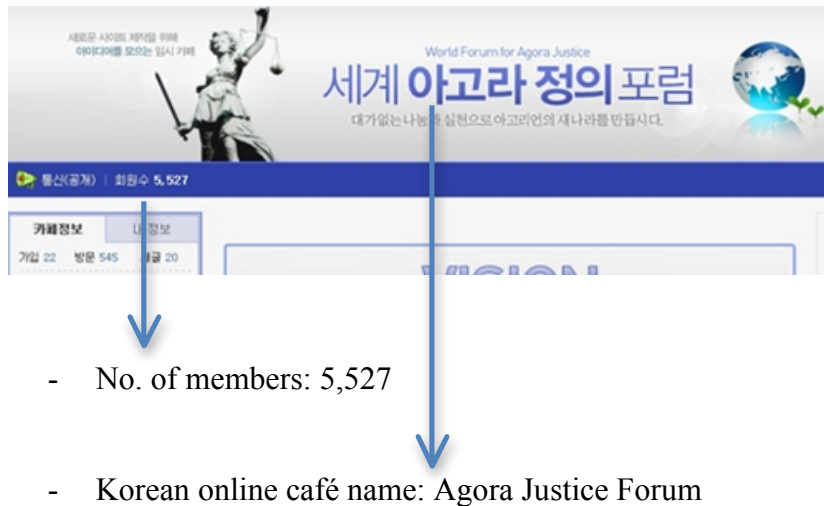
- Korean online café name: Agora Justice Forum

Figure 1.3: An introduction to the online café, World Agora Justices Forum

After Agora was proven to be regulated by Daum.net, the administrator set up the café, World Agora Justice Forum (henceforth Agora Justice Forum), on the 8th March 2009 to prepare for cyber asylum with other Korean netizens. The main characteristic of this online community is a political stance against the current administration and their distrust of the Korean web portals.

Online Interviews

The interviews with the administrators of the websites carried out via email in 2009. (See Appendix II: Online Interview with the Administrator of Exile Korea).

Cyber Asylum Seeker

As my subject matter is highly political sometimes people were afraid of criticising the Lee administration, which was not only the case when I met officials in the government bodies or internet industry. I have a similar impression from

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21 Tor is 'a free software implementation of second-generation onion routing, a system enabling its users to communicate anonymously on the Internet' (see http://www.torproject.org/).

interviewees from the Cyber Asylum Seekers' project. Their voice seemed to be contained, not because they were afraid of the Lee government, but because they were tired of their activism, which conflicted with their daily lives. It is worth stating that Atkinson points out the problematic issue of the ethnographic description of the field research. He states that: 'Whatever the sincerity with which they were told, ethnographic stories were necessarily selective. Ethnographies were the textual construction of reality' (Atkinson in Hine, 1990:44).

Similarly, I was worried about the possibility of constructing reality from a biased perspective. For example, I may have tactically picked up a passing remark of the interviewees at web portals such as 'officially speaking' as evidence that their voices are contained by the Lee government. I may have used the online community members' statements regarding their sense of the failure of their cyber asylum seekers' project as evidence to argue that the cyber asylum seekers' project turned out to be a failure as a result of its radicalism and consequential break of solidarity.

Hakken stresses the important rules that we need to bear in mind when we adopt a participant-observation method both on and offline. The two methodological rules are firstly to 'observe directly and meaningfully the practice of interests' (not just through talk) and secondly, to 'participate actively' in the field (Hakken, cited in Franklin 2004:200). However, the online communities that I tried to take part in were either closed or changed their characteristics. For example, as stated earlier, ExileKorea was closed and no longer accepted new postings and Agora Justice Forum stopped their main movement, cyber asylum seekers' project. As a consequence, active online participation was limited. For example, the administrator of Agora Justice Forum seemed reluctant to accept my proposal to do online participatory research. He responded to my request as follows:

> Hello. I am really sorry for my late response. I only recently saw your email, by chance, in my Daum.net mail account. I hardly use Daum's mail account… participants implicitly crave to secure the safety of individuals. So participants tend to be very careful. In my opinion, since it seems a politically sensitive period, I find it difficult to decide whether to allow you to do research on our Internet community cafe. I will discuss it with a few participants of our forum and will let you know the result (An email from the administrator of Agora Justice Forum, 15 April 2010).

It took me six months to get permission to do online participatory research. However, like ExileKorea.net, Agora Justice Forum had reached a plateau. They were no longer discussed cyber asylum seeking. Furthermore, it was very hard for me to follow stories of the project by tracing postings, because some postings relating to cyber asylum seekers' project were deleted. This was the case when members were in conflict among themselves with regard to rumours about spies, who were hired by the government and tried to make the project fail by criticising the project direction. Many community members left as a consequence and when they left, they deleted postings that they had uploaded.

In order to overcome these issues, I met with members of the community. For example, K is one of the staff of Agora Justice Forum and I was able to hear about the detailed background of the conflict between members. In particular, it was meaningful to hear about the distrust among the members, which had resulted from an ex-staff's use of real identity on the ground. L is a member of Agora Justice Forum and he was a journalist during the 2008 Candle Light Demonstration. L could not officially take part in the demonstration as well as express hostility towards the Lee government. J did not think that the Cyber Asylum Seekers' Project had succeeded. He strongly believed in the existence of online users who were hired by the government, and had formed opinions supportive of the government in the community.

I argue that this is an important finding that a researcher can gain only through multi-sited approach, through interviews and online participatory observation, because the authentic feelings that people had about their daily online practices represent the epistemology of Korean cyberspace between 2008 and 2010. In this context, the field research, namely the interviews and online community observation, was instrumental in finding their voices, which may be diluted by power but still contain purity. These practices were verbal regardless of their form (i.e. postings in a text form online), because there is always slippage between formality and non-formality.

This may have obscured the importance of the internet users' stories in this dissertation. For example, their discourses on Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath focused on what they saw as unveiling the hypocrisy and illegitimacy of the Lee administration's cyber intervention led me to focus on reviewing government policy

documents as well as web portals' R&D strategies. It is important to review and analyse the weaknesses of the administration's internet legislation from a critical distance, as well as to shed light on cases in which the Lee government arrested or pressured internet users both online and offline. However, it is equally important to shed light on internet users' online practices, because this tells the story of Korean cyber control from their perspective. When I combined the voices of interviewees on the ground and in online forums, I was able to picture stories about the cyber asylum project which was carried out by Agora Justice Forum.

In effect, this project adopts George E. Marcus' 'multi-sited' approach. As Marcus points out, the adoption of 'several different techniques' enables the researcher to perceive 'a complex cultural phenomenon' (1995:106), so I needed to adopt several methods. This approach does not only refer to the ways in which I collected data such as policy document analysis and interviews, but it also the ways in which I approached the subject matter. For this reason I tried to focus on the people and events rather than locale. What I mean by locale is space as a fixed entity. For example, when I approached ExileKorea and Agora Justice Forum by focusing on the activities of the members in relation to the specific theme of cyber asylum, their communities looked deserted and empty because no postings relating to this theme were uploaded.

However, when I approached the online communities in an archaeological way by following the people in the communities, their stories and conflicts online as well as offline, the place started to be revived. I managed to grasp the feelings that they put into the postings in cyberspace and understand the reasons why the interviewees saw the cyber asylum seekers' project as a failure. This epiphany also enabled me to confirm my way of interpreting nuances of government officials and web portal representatives. When I incorporated the material I have in cyberspace into interview material, the ethical concerns and issues surrounding the interpretation of data lessened.

Analysis & Reinterpretation

 Another problem was choosing how to understand the feelings of despair and distrust that the interviewees felt towards other community members, which were major factors in the failure of the cyber asylum seekers project. I concluded that the issue of

distrust between internet users should not be considered to be merely a negative aspect of Korean internet culture. Rather, the case delineates how anonymity online leads to anxieties, and impacts the formation of cyber culture, particularly when cyberspace operates under conditions of what users interpreted as abnormal repression. In other words, this distrust of online colleagues implicitly signifies that interviewees had lost their language for traversing Korean cyberspace, because the incidents that they faced such as the arrests of famous internet users and Korean web portals' hand-over of their users' personal information (see Chapter 3) were beyond their epistemological understanding at that time.

The way I understand the issue of distrust stems from the ideas of De Certeau, because his theoretical logic illuminating the various possibilities of understanding social phenomena has given me ways in which to interpret my data. As De Certeau points out: the ideal aim of research should be directed 'towards the question of operations', my next job was, as De Certeau described, to make a journey: 'a quest for lost and ghostly voices in our "scriptural societies"' (Highmore, 2002:88). I made an endeavour to find the 'logic of operation' that was ignored or omitted by the logic of power in our society.

The concept of the Underground Cyber Asylum Seekers emerged when the interviews were conducted. It came about as a result of unanswered questions after the interviews with the members of online communities and the officials in the Korean internet industry, because the significance of the cyber asylum seekers received contrasting responses in the two groups. The online activities of the Cyber Asylum Seekers Project turned out to be a failure in terms of achieving its aim (and see Chapter 5) and the sense of loss among the members of online communities was high. In contrast, the responses from the stakeholders in the Korean web portals relating to cyber asylum seekers were quite different. They thought that because of cyber asylum seekers, UVs (Unique Visitor) and PVs (Page View) fell significantly and their profit decreased as a consequence. For example, Gmail usage increased by 20%, with 1,600,000 times in June 2009 (M.S. Kim, July 2009) and the page view (PV) of YouTube placed no.1 in the Korean online video-streaming service market in April 2010 compared to the consequential PV drop of the Korean streaming service provider (Seon-Young Gwon, Mar 2010). Many interviewees thought that this resulted in the Lee administration's measures to control the internet, which was only

applicable to Korean internet service providers. As a consequence the Korean Internet industry defined themselves as victims of Candlelight 2008 (Interview, 3 Sept 2010).

In fact, what the official in the internet industry defined as cyber asylum seekers was different from my understanding. For them, cyber asylum seekers were 'netizens' who had an impact on their enterprises rather than individuals who set up an online community for cyber asylum seeking. It was the moment when I realised that it was imperative to analyse the contradiction between the views of the online communities of the cyber asylum seekers phenomenon and that of the stakeholders in the internet industry. To investigate this issue, I made my own definition of Underground Cyber Asylum Seekers fit what the stakeholders in the Internet industry meant by it. I suggest a new term 'underground cyber asylum seekers', which, I assert, is a phenomenon rather than a unified movement with an explicit strategy to seek freedom of speech.

The substance of the Underground Cyber Asylum Seekers could not be disclosed fully, because it was impossible to confine or define their characteristics. For example, there must be many members in Agora Justice Forum who changed their email account to Gmail (or another web-based email) and used YouTube as a platform. In contrast, there must be many others who were neither interested in the cyber asylum seekers project nor were in favour of the Candlelight demonstrations, but changed their email account to Gmail due its convenience and compatibility for iPhone users, or its safety for politicians who were afraid that their Korean email accounts were scrutinised by power holders. Thus, the impossibility of substantiating the Underground Cyber Asylum Seekers was that their activities were individualised for their own reason and did not aggregate political activism.

What I mean by impossibility is that their motivation to transgress the Korean cyberspace cannot be confined to one category. Therefore, the only methods that I could verify were the statistics and interviews with Korean web portal staff. When each individual underground cyber asylum seeker became massive so that the quantitative index indicated the changes in Korean cyberspace, the significance of Underground Cyber Asylum Seekers appeared retrospectively.

Again, a multi-sited approach was useful in supporting my argument by explaining how political institutions, including Korean web portals, were influenced by underground cyber asylum seekers, leading to the reformation of power relationships. The following chapters present my findings based on the data gathering methods that I have explained above.

Conclusion

The chapter delineated the practical nature of my theoretical framework in terms of the research design which developed in its engagement of multi-sited methods that encompass policy analysis, interviews and online participation observation. I explained how these multi-sited methods enabled me to capture the tripartite relationship between the state, non-state actors and internet users in the Korean context. Furthermore, I discussed problematic issues that arose during the research process. For example, the difficulties that I faced in the online participatory observation research due to political sensitivity, was compared and contrasted for different actors. Specific issues that arose were identified; for example, when permission to take part in an online community as a researcher was unwelcome due to political sensitivity. I also discussed occasions when online participation on certain sites was threatened when an online community faced closure due to a dramatic decline in the number of visitors after pressure from the Korean government. I also encountered difficulties contacting interviewees from governmental bodies and the Korean web portal industry. Even when it was possible to meet such people, their statements were official and disguised in order to protect their institutions. The strength of the multi-sited method was demonstrated here because these problems were resolved by my traversing of various online/offline social fields. In particular, the way I solved the limits of online observation (by meeting the online community members in person) explicitly proved the interwovenness between the virtual and the actual as well as the usefulness for online community researchers to meet their community members face-to-face.

Part II: The 2008 Candlelight Demonstration and its Aftermath

Chapter 3: Reconstructing Candlelight 2008: Contexts and Literature

Introduction

This chapter addresses the scholarly debates on Candlelight 2008. Focusing on Korean scholars' interpretation of the events of 2008, this chapter locates the significance of the protest from the perspective of its digital-oriented and decentralised bottom-up resistance to the power holders in Korea. The importance of the chapter is to outline how Korean scholars have formed their discourses relating to Candlelight 2008, which has tended to focus on identifying internet users' power compared to state authority. This is an important element, as this research project has also identified the transformation of internet discourses from this optimistic view of Korean cyberspace's criticism of the government's cyber intervention. Chapter 1 adapted the theories of philosophers such as Michel de Certeau, and situated them in the context of understanding the dramatic shift of the dominant discourse on the internet. With this framework in mind, this chapter presents a brief history of the Korean internet, the political situation and previous Candlelight protests for a better understanding of Candlelight 2008.

1. The Social Formation & Reformation of the Korean Internet in 2008

Candlelight 2008 fundamentally challenged the existing power holders to the point where internet and cyberspace had to be readdressed by the state both during and after the protest. This event exemplifies web-based digital democracy and has altered the impact of the Candlelight protest on Korean society. While power from below has had an influence both online and offline, the most significant moment for the state came when they recognised the internet as a political space in an explicit way and they had intervene and reconstruct Korean cyberspace to react to changing conditions. The mechanism of this transformation involved altering cyberspace and the cyber city by controlling both the web service providers and their users. This cyber intervention was justified through their desire to purify voices online and establish what they considered as a cyber-secure state. The ease and effectiveness of the Lee

administration's implementation of the cyber control as a response to the Candlelight 2008 internet cultural phenomena stemmed from a gap in the legislation dealing with cyber culture. Previous efforts in Korea had focused solely on the development of the network and infrastructure whilst neglecting the cultural effect of the internet on society. As a consequence, it was widely perceived that internet laws were not developed to be applied to social and cultural phenomena rooted in cyberspace. The Lee administration's cyber intervention, whose motivation was to respond to online contents generated by the internet users who took part in 2008 Candlelight online and offline, therefore represented an attempt to make inroads into Korean cyberspace.

In the past cases have arisen whereby administrations were aware of the impact of online culture on society on the ground, and had implemented legislation dealing with the internet. The 'real name system' was one of them. The political impact of the internet on society was first noticed by the Roh regime (2003-2008), the predecessor of the current Lee administration. He is famously known as the world's first internet-elected president in the sense that he was able to be elected as an individual, despite a lack of support in his political party. Indeed, the public conducted an online campaign and actively supported him during the election period (Watts, Feb 2003). While the influence of the internet on Korean political culture started to draw attention to itself, an important development occurred. This was known as the 'Dog Poop Girl' incident and took place in 2005. It was rooted in cyberspace and was something of a culture shock for Korean society.

In June 2005, a girl boarded the Metro with her pet dog, when the animal lost control of its bowels and defecated on the floor. The girl became perplexed and cleaned her pet dog, but not her dogs' waste. She then got off the Metro. A passenger in the same cabin had photographed the incident and subsequently uploaded a photograph onto the internet with a detailed explanation. This posting spread quickly and became known as the 'dog poop girl' incident (H.K. Ahn, June 2005). Following this, Korean internet users became vehemently angry with this girl because they felt that she had failed to exercise simple common decency. This outcry led to scrutiny of the girl's personal information. She was traced online and various details were revealed, including her face and offline personal details. As a result of this online 'team-up', internet users were able to find her name and also her online mini-blog which they littered with angry comments and abusive words. However, while Koreans criticised

the Dog Poop Girl, another opinion arose which lamented these online reactions. The feeling was that such online scrutiny was similar to a witch hunt and had made the girl's social life difficult, meaning that these online acts had to be stopped (Hauben, July 2005). This incident also raised the issue of cyber defamation and personality profanity, and the Roh administration enjoyed support when establishing laws to deal with such online issues. As stated by many interviewees, the 'Dog Poop Girl' incident raised questions relating to the 'real name system' for the first time in Korea.

As a result of this, despite opposition from social groups and internet users, the limited 'real name system' under the Electronic Communication Network Law was applied to websites who received more than 200,000 visitors per day (Jinbonet, 2008). However, it is important to note that the Korean websites had already saved the personal information of their users including their telephone numbers, addresses and resident registration numbers. The postings which caused problems in the 'Dog Poop Girl' case were uploaded to a website which had already adopted the real name system. Furthermore, the real name system resulted in the dog poop girl personal information leak.

Anonymous expression was not the cause of this issue. Rather, information leaking online had become a central issue for the Korean government. The political stance on cyberspace is that state intervention is necessary to deal with the issues resulting from the interwoven nature of online and offline life. With this in mind the Electronic Communication Network law has been revised every year and the law on the Internet is now being enforced. However, the Electronic Communication Network Law has not been developed to cover the wider range of problems relating to the internet because the Korean state has paid more attention to issues associated with infrastructural development through projects such as IT 839 strategy. The aim of the latter was to promote the growth of the IT sector with a view to earning $20,000 per capital (Ministry of Information and Communication, 2004).

Research has revealed that ever since the emergence of the internet (in 1998), Korean governments have viewed it as a business rather than a medium for social and political communication. This has been effectively explained by one of my interviewees involved with Korean web portals. The interviewee stated that:

Polices for the internet business were concentrated in manufacturing businesses such as network build up. During the Roh regime [2003-2008], the policy was also concerned with infrastructural issues. Network and the hardware business were supported in cooperation with telecommunication companies and manufacturers such as Samsung (Interview, 13th Aug 2010).

It was not only the current regime which approached the internet from an industrial perspective: the previous two regimes also adopted similar strategies. This was confirmed by officials at KCC:

The fast development of the internet enabled Korea to have the best infrastructure and hardware, and it become a strong IT power as a consequence … However, there were no thoughts about the development of content, i.e. how it could be used. The discussion culture in cyberspace had not yet been established (Interview, 22nd July 2010).

Indeed, the virtue of economic development via IT infrastructure, as promoted by the state, ignored the issue of an adequate policy framework to deal with the issue of the web and internet. The efficacy of the legislation on the internet was unbalanced as the state power had not conceived of cyberspace as a place to be drawn under legislative and legal authority until the Roh administration.

As a consequence, it was Korean web portals which designed the Korean cyber city project with less involvement from the state. In the place, the Korean internet users maintained their everydayness in an exchange of their time to stay, which is transferred to data, for example Unique View & Page per View for the web portals to calculate their profit.

A Brief Overview of the Korean Internet Industry

Korean internet portals gradually expanded their platform to generate profits by providing various services. As a consequence, Korean portals have become multi-functional in the sense that they play the role of a mediator (news provider, emailing service), information collector (search engine tool) and distributor (commercial facilitator) simultaneously.

When Korean web portals set up their systems in the beginning, they lacked substantial Korean content as most of it was composed in English. Thus, each web portal needed to create its own content and maximise its users uploading posts. As a consequence, they became 'closed systems' in the sense that they did not share

content with each other, because the content forms the capital regardless of whether this was created by the web portal or by its user. As a result, Korean web portals tend to become the final destination of users rather than those portals that guide and direct users to an appropriate website as they expect. Rather than guiding them to other websites with a link system (out-bounding) as a result of their queries, the web portals try to make users stay on their site by displaying their content in their own communities, blogs and Q&As (Lee H.Y. et al, 2008:12-13).

According to the National Internet Development Agency of Korea (2007), the development of Korean web-portals has seen four stages. The first stage was the period from 1995-1999 when directory-based search services were first launched. During this stage web-portals started to provide news services. Moreover, Daum.net opened a 'community' service called 'Cafe', which became a sensation (2007 Korean Internet White Paper, cited in Kim Y.J., 2008, 30). The second stage (between 2000 and 2001) saw several portals taken off the market or they were merged when the dot.com bubble boom burst. To overcome this, Korean web portals adopted keyword advertising and offered paid services such as games and education (ibid). The third state was between 2002 and 2004 when the web-portal users dramatically increased due to the fast internet infrastructure. This is the moment when the web portals Daum.net, Naver.com and Nate.com, started to dominate the internet industry (ibid). The fourth stage began in 2005 and the search engine market as a specific service offered web-portals has expanded since then. This is a key turning point in the development of the Korean internet and the moment where this research project begins. The competition among web portals in the Korean market has accelerated and since then several portals have merged.

Jae-Hong Lee's (2006) study on 'Determinants and satisfaction of portal sites in Internet home pages' argues that factors that influence internet users' choice of a website, such as their home page, are based on 'convenience, information provided, entertainments, and interaction'. Young-Joo Kim offered a different perspective on the services provided by internet portals, such as emailing, communities and forums which increase the brand loyalty of a web portal so that these services restrict the mobility of the internet users (Y.J. Kim, 2008:24).

As a consequence, if a website is created outside a web portal, the cost to make the site searchable on a Korean web portal is high. According to the research company Korean Click, 'the page per view (PV) on Naver.com during 2007 was 5,200,004,000'. The Research Referral PV which directs the requests of the user to outside Naver.com was only 1,200,004,000'. That means, according to Kang and Ryu that the cases of Naver.com playing the role of a gatekeeper for users in order to guide them outside its boundaries (site) accounted for 'only 23.4% of the total traffic'. This also resulted from the fact that 'more than 90% of the Korean web portals revenues come from search advertisements'. That is, once the internet users stay on one Korean web portal longer, the more they are exposed to more ads, and thus the Korean web portal's revenue increases (Kang B.J. *et al.*, 2008, p. 108).

In contrast, in the same period Google Korea guided 62.9% of its users outside of its own site (70.5 million Research Referrals out of 100.4 million PVs). The rates for Daum.net and Yahoo Korea were 28.2% and 31.4% respectively (ibid.).[22] Global web services, for example Google and Korean web portals, have different characteristics in terms of generating profits. One spokesman in the Korean web industry stated that:

> Google conducts web crawling, ranking websites and generating relevant lists for its users ... In contrast, when Korean web portals started to launch their businesses, there were few websites written in Korean. That is, there was no Korean content. There was content such as blogs and online cafes services that users had created with tools offered by the web portals. Another content category is one that web portals created on their own not by the users in the database. It is fair that Google cannot use the contents in the second case (Interview, 8 July, 2010).

It can be inferred that the Korean web portal centric culture resulted from the lack of the Korean-language contents at the beginning of dot.co.kr era and the Korean-language contents become the cultural capital of the Korean internet. This characteristic of Korean web portals is important in understanding changes in Korean

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[22] The search advertisement is accounted for in two ways: CPC (Cost Per Click) which charges by clicking, and CPM (Cost Per Millennium), which charges by exposure of advertisement.. (ibid.) CPC is a system whereby an advertiser pays for the person who has clicked on his or her advertisement. The advertiser can control the advertisement fee and it is possible to reduce the advertisement fee according their advertising management priorities. CPM is a flat rate system that has tended to be used for banner advertisements. An advertiser has to pay a flat rate per month according to the contract. Therefore it prevents the increasing of the advertisement fee by superabundant competition. However, it is not possible to reduce the advertisement fee as is the case with CPC (see Couvering, 2004:11-13).

cyberspace after Candlelight 2008. As stated earlier, Korean internet users used to rely on local web portals in terms of their internet use. For example, the online communities that played a significant role (such as Agora) during the 2008 protests were also serviced by Korean web portals. Therefore the majority of voices in Korean cyberspace were rooted in Korean portals, but participants began to worry that these voices could easily and quickly be contained if power holders intentionally interfered with the control of Korean portals. In fact, this is what the Korean internet users felt that they tried to do during and after 2008 Candlelight.

Problematic issues associated with this include that Koreans' portal-centric internet use is rather vulnerable as Korean web portal owners are law-abiding profit-motivated entrepreneurs, rather than public support groups. They have to respect Korean regulations on the internet as set out in Korean laws, even if the government politicises the internet and intervenes in cyberspace oppressively, what they have called state-driven cyber intervention. This submissiveness results in the vulnerability to mentioned above, as in the case of Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath. For example, when the Lee administration exceeded its jurisdiction by interpreting internet regulations for their own ends, the power of the Korean web portal as an institution was shown to be weaker that of the government. The web portals could not act like Google, which defines itself as a public support group through its manifesto, and which refused to follow the Korean regime's cyber control, which I return to this later in Chapters 2 and 6. This difference is one of the factors that have changed the landscape of Korean cyberspace, and consequently there have been alterations in the cultural, political, and economic realms.

Given all of this, this dissertation pays attention to individual Korean internet users' cyber migration from a local web to a global one, as well discussing key controversies within 'ordinary' communities online. I have called these users underground Korean cyber asylum seekers. This cyber asylum-seeking phenomenon is, I argue, important in understanding the geography of Korean cyberspace after 2008 Candlelight. This phenomenon motivated Korean web portal service providers to collaborate with each other, because the migration of Korean internet users had such a dramatic impact on their profits. For example, the Korean web service providers banded together to launch the Korean Internet Self-Governance Organisation (KISO) in March 2009, announcing that in order to prevent abuses of power, web portals would not accept

any requests by authorities to block locations on the web. I view this as the first time that the Korean web portals directly contradicted the state's power.

In conclusion, this research project analyses how this can be understood from a global perspective. The case of Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath is useful in understanding the current situation regarding the public demonstrations against both the Mubarak regime in 2011, and the Iranian government's repressive response to protests after the presidential election in 2009. The rationale for these comparisons is that these governments' strategies were also intended to silence the voices of public dissent by trying to control the media.

This research project argues that the Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath should be understood from the perspective of a tripartite relationship between the government, Korean web portals, and Korean Internet users. However, the aim of this dissertation is not merely to criticise both Korean government intervention and the commercialism of the Korean web portals. Rather, it looks at the dynamics between these three, by examining conflicts during and after the events of 2008.

2. Background: The Candlelight Protests

Since 1948 when the Republic of Korea was established, the establishment of democracy has faced difficulties with the political turmoil under the rule of military dictatorship which lasted until the Sixth Republic in 1987. Authoritarian rule under the military regimes was eventually broken and the Korea adopted direct presidential elections in 1987, which resulted from the victory of the Korean public's country-wide pro-democracy protests. However, South Korean democracy continued to be criticized since the 1987 transition to democracy. Chaibong Hahm insists that South Korean democracy has not been well established and has also become diluted as 'an imperial presidency, oligarchic parties, divisive regionalism, political corruption and the people's low trust in politic' Has continued to wield influence over the process (2008:130). As he continues:

> Authoritarianism was deeply ingrained in Korean political culture, as reflected both in the imperial nature of the presidency and in the political parties, which were lorded over by party bosses and more akin to personal entourages than to public institutions [and] rampant corruption emerged from a political system

and a public long accustomed to political expediency based on personalism and cronyism rather than agreed-upon procedures and the rule of law (ibid.).

Even if the military regime ended in 1992 and the Korean pubic welcomed democracy, they suffered from the rule of the inefficient of the Kim Young-Sam administration. For example, President Kim's second son exerted illegitimate power on the administration from behind the curtain as well as embezzling a large amount of public money. Kim Young-Sam administration's economic policy is now considered to be a failure due to Korea's eventual reliance on the IMF (International Monetary Fund). The Kim Dae Jung administration which followed seemed to offer a more democratic system, but are criticised for doing so, because comfortable relations between the political and economic world continued. The Roh Moo-Hyun administration began in 2003. The significance of this regime was that this was the first time when voices online started to have an effect on political circles. It was widely accepted in Korean that the victory of Roh Moo-Hyun in the presidential election was despite the lack of support from his own political party, and that it resulted from the public's online political activism and support of his election campaign.

Like previous administrations, the Roh government was not free from some corruption. Overall, the Roh government offered the possibility of democratic development as well as stable economic growth. After a decade of the progressive governments of Kim Dae Jung (1998-2003) and Roh Moo Hyun (2003-2008), Lee Myung-Bak, the conservative candidate of the Grand National Party, was elected president by an overwhelming margin in 2007. Chaibong Hahm (2008:128) indicates that 'the five-million-vote margin was by far the largest in the five presidential elections since Korea's transition to democracy in 1987.' The conservative party made a triumphal re-entry into Korean political history. Chaibong Hahm (2008: 138) also emphasizes that 'the 2007 presidential election brought about recognizably liberal democratic changes to the political discourse in South Korea. Grand narratives such as 'nationalism,' 'ideology,' 'unification,' and 'democratization' ceased to dominate campaign discourse.' Instead, economic issues rose to the forefront in Korean society as the progressive Roh Moo Hyun's economic policies had failed. The Lee administration succeeded in matching the public's expectations on economic development during political campaigning. However, the public's expectations on economic growth haven't been satisfied and political turmoil has deepened since the

Lee administration took office. Furthermore, there have also been accusation of corruption in the case of the Lee administration, which will be discussed further in this thesis.

Explanation of the main political groupings

Korean Presidents since 1980

President	Term	Party
Chun Doo Hwan	1980 - 1988	Democratic Justice Party (DJP)
Roh Tae Woo	1988 - 1993	DJP/Democratic Liberal Party (DLP)
Kim Young Sam	1993 - 1998	DLP
Kim Dae Jung	1998 - 2003	New National Party/ Millenium Democratic Party (MDP)
Roh Moo Hyun	2003 - 2008	MDP/Uri
Lee Myung Bak	2008 - Present	Grand National Party (GNP)

(Chaibong Haham, 2008, p. 131)

Korea's democratisation has had a great impact on the formation of its political parties. Under the military regime, the political party system of checks and balances acting alongside the presidency did not function and was merely the President's backup system. Jung Byung-Ki (2009) argues that this political party system started to function from 1988 when there was a growing tendency towards democratization in Korean society. However, as Kyung-Hee Ko states (2007), Korean party politics have not been functioning in its roles as a conciliatory influence on Korean society, which resulted in the delay of the party politic development in Korea.

Furthermore, as illustrated above, the presidency-driven political system has demonstrated monopolistic political decision-making and the current administration is

the same.[23] The current ruling party is Grand National Party (GNP) and President Lee is the member of GNP. This resulted in the Lee administration's negligence of gauging the public opinion, because the GNP tends to act regardless of legitimacy or legal support. The oppressive reactions to Candlelight 2008 and cyber control should be understood in this context.

Previous Candlelight Protests

Candlelight protest as a form of socio-political action has a long history. The first example was a memorial ceremony for two middle school girls who were killed by a U.S military vehicle in June 2002. On 13 June 2002, two girls walking along the side of the road in Yangju, Kyungkido, were killed by a U.S military vehicle, which was driven by two American soldiers. On 20 and 22 November 2002, the two soldiers driving the military vehicle were found not guilty. A documentary about the trial was broadcast on Korean television and this fuelled citizens' anger against the U.S military, leading to anti-American feeling and thousands of citizens carrying candlelights outside Seoul City Hall. It started in November 2002 in order to establish the liability for the girls' deaths. People gathered peacefully at the outdoor rally after sunset without breaking the law and relevant regulations. Although it had caused diplomatic conflict between South Korean and America for a short period of time, the protest had been supported by citizens as a peaceful non-violent vigil, and became an established mainstream form of protest (W. Kim, 2005).

The second candlelight protest was held in March 2004 when former South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun was on the verge of being impeached, and a protest was held across the nation to demonstrate against the president's impeachment. As a result, the Hannara-dang party, which had presided over the president's impeachment, was defeated in the 17th National Assembly election (Hankyoreh, April 2004).

The main story of this research, Candlelight 2008 starts from here.

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[23] In the middle of the Roh administration period, the ruling party was GNP whose political stance was against the Roh administration. Then, GNP sought to destabilise the Roh administration. As a consequence, Roh adminstration's affirmative aspects, for example the economy stabilization, were diluted by the power holders who were against the Roh regime such as the conservative press companies and GNP.

The Dynamic of Candlelight 2008

After the summit meeting between Korean President Myung-Bak Lee and US President George W. Bush on 17 April 2008, US beef that had previously been on the list of prohibited imports from 2000 was allowed access to Korean markets. However, no major media channels reported this development until twelve days later, on 29 April, when a TV programme, *PD Note*, alerted the public to the possible dangers of US beef cattle over 30 months old. This resulted in an eruption of public outrage (Song H.J. et al, 2008, 18-19). While the agreement between Korea and the US was reached on 17 April, it subsequently became an important public issue 12 days after, when the programme was broadcast.[24] However, it was cyberspace that motivated the candlelight protest against the international policy decision making of the government.

This section will discuss the Candlelight 2008 by exploring how Korean scholars engaged with the 2008 event, and the academics who are quoted in this section have examined the 2008 protests from various perspectives. Among these are Lee Ho-Young (2008), who has stated that Candlelight 2008 can be understood from three perspectives as a digital phenomenon, decentralisation as a consequence of the advent of the network society, and public resistance to cultural political mode of production driven by the elite. These classifications are useful in exploring the themes of scholarly discourse relating to Candlelight 2008 as well as helping to understand the aftermath of this event. [25]

It is a core theme of this chapter to understand the Lee administration's cyber intervention and the internet users' feelings of despair. This section introduces Korean literature related to the 2008 Candlelight for non-Korean readers to understand the 2008 Candlelight as well as to engage the event theoretically. In this vein, the purpose

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24 Therefore it could be inferred that media, especially TV, had a shaping effect on public opinion. Since then, the media company MBC who broadcast the programme became a target of the government's fury. As a consequence, the broadcasting company continues to be repressed by the government in various ways, which will be explained later in more detail.
[25] His theoretical position uses the premise that the internet users' activism lessened the power of the elite's policy making and cultural formation, and thus represents how Korean scholars have viewed the internet in connection with the events of 2008. In this context, Lee Ho-Yong's categorizations have been extremely influential for framing Korean literature relating to Candlelight 2008, which was helpful to set up the categories shaping the wider discussion relating to the role of internet discourse.

of this chapter is not only to inform the readers of Korean scholars' engagement with the 2008 event as the foundational backup to understand this research project, but also to introduce how the Korean scholarly debates on the internet were formed in 2008 to the non-western readers.

3. A Digital Phenomenon

Idea relating to the power of digital media and its influence on the demonstration were the most notable phenomenon of the 2008 Candlelight because these were not prominent issue in related to the previous civil movement. The premises of scholarly debate relating to the concept of digital phenomenon situated within the context which voices from the bottom up through the cyberspace had never such a huge impact on Korean culture and politics.[26]

The significance of digital phenomenon as a thematic concern relating to the 2008 Candlelight resulted from the protesters' reliance on information from the internet instead of T.V. News. As some interviewees stated, the reason for this was that the public were aware of the fact that T.V. news was not allowed to publish this incident as much detail as they would have wished due to time restrictions and government intervention (Interview, 8 Sept. 2010). For example, the Lee government had exerted its power over broadcasting companies, such as MBC, a terrestrial broadcasting company, which had broadcast on the seriousness of US beef imports for the first time. The Lee government sued the programme to put pressure on MBC, which delivered implication to stop reporting on any news relating to the issue of US beef import (SeoulNewspaper, Aug 2008). As a consequence, the protesters tended to get information about the 2008 Candlelight through online forums and communities, such as Daum Agora or Korean UGC (User Generated Contents) on real-time interaction websites, such as afreeca.com.

The catalyst for much of the ensuing public outrage seems to have been an online open-community called Agora, (http://agora.media.daum.net/). Agora is hosted on

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[26] It may be argued that the digital phenomenon in this context could have been anticipated from the presidential election 2002 onwards as many argue that the Roh electoral victory resulted in their supporters' activism online.

the Web portal Daum.net, which is the second most popular in the South Korean portal market. One of the Korean Web portals' key functions is to provide space for internet communities, in which Korean internet users with common interests can upload and discuss postings, on topics ranging from daily trivia to political issues. Agora is one such community. Agora's role in initiating the demonstrations of 2008 is fairly well established. The online daily, Media Today, cites Agora as the original source of all internet debate concerning the import of US beef and concerns over mad cow disease. The discussion relating to the Mad Cow *diseases in the online open-community in triggered off the protest organisation and participation online as well as offline (*D.H. Song, 2011, City Journal, Direct Use).

According to the research conducted by online daily, Media Today, the source and topic related to the import of US beef and Mad Cow disease was thought to have originated in Agora at first, online discussion room in Naver.com ranked third and online board in DCinside.com ranked fourth. During Candlelight 2008, the traffic of Agora had dramatically increased 29% in May (cited in H.J Song. et al, 2008:18-19). Hyun-Joo Song analyses that traffic on Agora peaked at the height of each stage of the offline demonstrations, for example, on May 2nd when the demonstrations first started, and also when they escalated dramatically, following the government's neglect of public opinion and the announcement that US beef was to be imported, in the official gazette on the 31st of May 2008 (ibid.).

Indeed according to Korean Click, a Korean research centre dealing with the internet business sector, page views per day on the Agora website, (agora.media.daum.net), 'increased by 160.5 %, from 119.58 million in May 2008 to 317.29 million in May 2008' (MoneyToday, 2008). This was the period during which the issues of the US beef imports started to catch increasing public attention in South Korea. The reason for this dramatic increase in page views on Agora, thought to be the easy access it provided the public to participate in online discussion of the US beef import issue and the 2008 Candlelight Protest, which corresponded with Arab Spring in terms of the protester's uses of Facebook and Twitter.

Kyung Jae Song states that activities of discussion sections in Agora during the 2008 Candle Demonstration exerted its power as a collective network in the sense that post is disseminated within which information is selected and distributed by users.

Furthermore, the possibility of information networking such as RSS (Really Simple Syndication) and the Track-back system provided the strength of Agora (K.J. Song 2008:175). The reason for this is that this allowed internet users to catch up the story of the event whenever they wanted. Moreover, the protesters had traversed the Korean cyberspace and had adopted various types of internet media, for example, BBS (Bulletin Board System) and UGC (User Generated Contents) as their tactics to be against the Lee government during Candlelight 2008. As *Kyung Jae Song (2008) notes,* this allowed discussions in Agora to be shared with other small internet communities, such as Soul Dresser, and 82 Cook.com, as well as with other social organizations on the ground. Further internet mediated dynamics saw user-generated content websites, such as Afreeca.com, broadcast live footage of the demonstrations on the web, which was then hyperlinked to by small internet communities and forums, which boosted online discussion across Korean cyberspace.

Online Communities

Another scholarly understanding of the online activism during the 2008 Candlelight was based on their understanding of the information flow online. While Agora had become the key place where the offline and online are interactive in terms of sharing social issues, the Korean internet users traversed online. In this context, there are many other web sites where the opinions in online communities had impacted on the protest demonstration. A journalist, Song Kyung-Wha, illustrates the circulation and interaction between online communities, forums, UCC Web sites and organisations on the ground in a diagram as below.
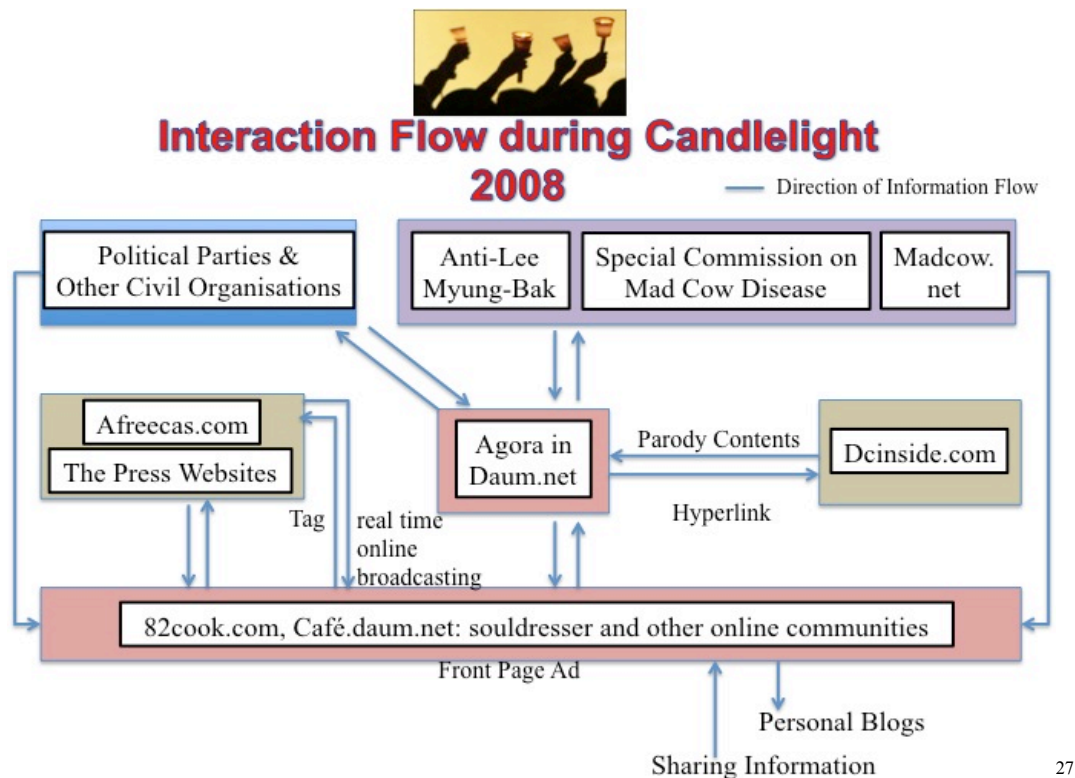
Figure 1.3: Interaction Flow during Candlelight 2008   (Song K.W., 2008)

As seen on the above flow chart, the protest participants suggested and expanded the idea relating to the protest in various online territories. Many people who had participated in online discussion, for example Agora in Daum.net and other online communities, discussed the protest and voluntarily made plans for the next day. Then, their agreement online had reflected on the protest on the ground. Kyung Jae Song also defines these interactions between online and offline as the emergence of **'the collective intelligence'** in the sense that 'they had the coordinating power of producing and distributing information that lead the demonstration' (Song, K.J, 2008:77).

Such informational relationships among the networks were considered to be the notable landscape of the Korean cyberspace. While Agora in Daum.net played the central role as an open access cyberspace, there were other types of online community, particularly member-driven communities with a long history. This is important to explore this dynamic's contribution to the 2008 Candlelight protest. The members of these small online communities shared the discussion, which was carried

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[27] The diagram is drawn based on my interpretation of Kyung-Wha Song's Candlelight flow chart (Song K.W., Aug 2008).

out in Agora, was shared with other small internet communities such as Soul Dresser, 82 Cook.com, as well as other social organisations on the ground. On the other dynamics, UGC website such as Afreeca.com broadcasted the demonstration on the web and this was hyperlinked by small internet communities, forums and that boosted online discussion. In the same vein, as Do-Hyun Han (2010), Ho-Young Lee (2008) and Kyung Jae Song (2008) also argue, ordinary Korean citizens became active participants by transforming online communities and forums, previously utilised for daily trivia, into places where internet users gained and shared information relating to the protest, including the organisation of meetings on the ground.

There were two different kinds of cyber community sites which had developed during the period of the 2008 Candlelight protest. First, users had newly developed a community site for issues of the candlelight protest. Second, existing online communities which had developed for other purposes had been changed to discuss issues of the Candlelight 2008. Many Korean scholars identified that one of the most significant characteristics of the 2008 candlelight protest was the second case, the changes of the existing community sites which had created to share information or personal issues. It meant that non-political online communities had started participating in social issues.

After Candlelight 2008 began, there were many web-sites launched to run the political activism against the Lee administration. The new but most influential online community was MiChinCow.Com (http://www.michincow.com/). This online community was set up to inform the public of the mad cow disease as well as conduct political activism, for example the protest participation. However, the Korean government blocked this online community and its administration was arrested (Chosun Daily, Nov 2008).

At the time when the demonstration reached its zenith, Korean internet users started a boycott campaign against major newspaper publishers such as Chosun, Dong-A, Jung-Ang that had given a false report on the demonstration in favour of the government. Moreover, they also began a boycott campaign against sales companies that had put their advertisements in the three national newspapers. As a result of this, the sales companies stopped putting their advertisements in the newspapers and the government (court) gave the guilty verdict to the internet users who had participated

in the campaign, by tracking the internet users IP address. In turn, many internet users started to move their internet activity (activism) from Korean web portals to a foreign one such as Google.com and kept the boycott campaign going as the government had no right to access the foreign web portals to trace the users' IP address (Goo B.G., July 2008).

The Transformation of Online Communities

These characteristics of communities were transformed and the online community members took part in the protest both in online and offline. With reference to the cases relating to online communities, Suk-Jang Cho points out that other online community sites such as 'Weird or Truth (Korean title is Yeup-Ki or Jin-Sil)',[28] '82cook.com' (Cooking Communities) had played similar functions as the spaces where information about the protest disseminated and opinions were concentrated (S.J. Cho.,2009:131). The notable phenomenon was that these communities used to deal with daily life trivia such as cooking, digital cameras and cosmetics until the Candlelight 2008 occurred. A famous example is the activity of online fashion community, Soul Dresser (http://cafe.daum.net/souldresser), in daum.net. When the 2008 Candlelight protest became more political, the community members spontaneously started to reflect the protest within their community. The consensus was against the import of US beef and they had decided to express their opinions on the ground. As a means of achieving this, the community members decided to raise funds within their community, which they used to place a front-page ad in the newspaper, Hankoreh Daily on 17 May and Kyung-yang Daily on 19 May to express their outrage and be against the government policy (S.J. Cho, 2009 P. 200). Likewise, there were several internet communities that raised funds and published advertisements against the Lee government.

Another case is that of expatriate online communities such as UK Love, which synthesised the transnational characteristics of Korean diasporas to share their sense of being as Korean as well as a sense of becoming activists against the regime. This

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28 This site normally deals with photos of celebrities. In particular, this website is famous for uploading the pictures of celebrities at an early age when they did not do any cosmetic (plastic) surgery.

is also illustrated by the collaboration of UK Love members with the online forum 'Korean HouseWives in the US', which is an online community for Korean women in the US, to publish an ad in the Han-Kyo-Rea Daily against the US beef import.

In contrast to these types of protests, which originated from cyber community bulletin boards, another type of protest that had a great impact on Candlelight 2008 was communication via video sharing discussed in the next section.

The Case of UGC (User Generated Contents): Afreeca.com

One particular characteristic during Candlelight 2008 was that people started to capture the protest with their digital camcorders and broadcast the event in real-time with lap-tops equipped with a fast Korean mobile broadband service called WiBro. UCC Website Afreeca.com simply offered the platform of a real-time personal broadcasting service and facilitates activism. According to Soon-Ki Kim, '17,222 video contents related to the 2008 Candlelight were uploaded and 7,750,000 people accessed Afreeca.com to watch them between May 25 2008 and 10 Jun 2008, when the demonstration was at its highest'[29] (cited in Lee Chang-Ho et al., 2008b:130-3).

Some Korean scholars paid more attention to the logic of participation. Based on the protesters' online activism as such, it was widely discussed how the protesters' voices in the Korean cyberspace had subverted the authority in terms of the Lee government's rationalisation of US beef import, which comes under the theme of Decentralisation vs. Centralisation.

4. Decentralisation

In the interview, Jae-Kyung Song, a professor in Korea, stated that:

> In Korea, users have a positive perception of the effects and roles of the Internet. Approximately, 70% of the internet users in Korea have a high degree of reliability in the Internet information... This attitude has been caused by a particular political situation of Korea. Korean citizens had been under the influence of the authoritarian government in which information was controlled

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29 When Afreeca.com had gained in popularity, because of broadcasting the Candlelight demonstrations, the police had arrested the president of the website on another pretence.

and restricted by the government for many years. Thus, when information flows freely appeared online, citizens tended to believe information in it. Due to this particular situation, a candlelight protest was spread out tremendously in a short time with information including the danger of mad cow disease (Interview, 9 Aug 2010).

For example, it was internet users who used various tactics overturn the official statements announced by the government. According to MyungSup Go, they scrutinized the statements and obtained information to check its veracity through knowledge sharing and getting scientific information through the Internet. He states that 'some disseminated the danger of US beef cattle from 30 years old, while others spread the significance of sovereignty and others collected a series of government statements, summarised them comparing other information on the web uploaded by other internet users' (cited in S.B., Kim 2008:144).

Therefore, as Sang Bae Kim (2008) argued, the protest participants in the 2008 Candlelight should be understood differently from those in the industrial era (1960-970) and in the democratisation era (1980) of Korea. This decentralised online activism resonated with activities on the ground. Sang Bae Kim points out that there was no dominant guidance or leader group during Candlelight 2008, which was the most notable difference compared to the previous protests in Korea. Rather, the leader, for example political parties and civil activist groups, had to follow the ordinary demonstration participants. (S.B. Kim, 2008:53-154) This anecdotal illustration proves, he argues, that 'neither the Lee government nor the opposition parties were able to gain trust from the protest participants'. He insists further that this substantiates his premise that the Candlelight 2008 protesters as well as the contemporary Korean public are no longer the subjects who were controlled by political parties that pursue 'macroscopic justice as in pure liberalism or anti-autocrat'. (S.B. Kim, 2008:122)

In a similar vein, Yong-Chul Kim looks at the way solidarities formed, for example the participation by various groups without a particular leading group. In his analysis, the characteristics of such decentralised networks characteristics resulted from the protest participants' scepticism about oppositional parties and other civil activist groups. This in turn, he argues, has shown the possibility of 'harmonisation between representative democracy and participatory democracy' in Korean society. However,

he is not optimistic about the outcome of such participatory democracy, because this type of protest is most likely to fail, because a segmented, polycentric, network does not have a explicit leader group to negotiate with government (Y.C. Kim, 2008:127).

While Yong-Chul Kim and Sang Bae Kim centralise their engagement with the 2008 Candlelight protest in terms of the decentralised protest networks vis-a-vis the power of the political group in the protest, a socialist Ho-Ki Kim stresses how the decentralised network logic resulted in the diversification of the protest themes. Ho-Ki Kim's premise is that the progress of the protest itself has enlightened the public. He substantiates this by illustrating that new needs and new themes such as policies for education and reclamation projects (national development projects), which had been taking place all over the country, had appeared while the protest continued. Therefore, he argues that the 2008 Candlelight cannot be confined to the US beef import. Rather, the significance of the protest must be that this has caused the public's awareness of the importance of the politics, which in turn, highlighted their awareness of the current regime's politically debatable issues (H.K. Kim et al, 10/07/08:9). We can infer that although the motivation of Candlelight 2008 started from the issue of US beef imports, the protest's continuation resulted in various voices emerging in the protest, which had presented various type of discontentment towards the Lee government.

In contrast to the emergence of the various voices, which results from the interwovenness between online and offline in everydayness, there are also antithetic discourses. For example, Hyun-Joo Song criticised biased information flow in Agroa and argues that the interactivity through articles (postings) and comments on Agora should be understood as a way through which 'dominant voice are to overwhelm cyberspace Agora', rather than 'various opinions being freely expressed'. Her argument is based on analysing posts on Agora uploaded during Candlelight 2008. Having analysed the words that were commonly used by the users, she asserts that the dominant emotional response to the government policies on the import of US beef in online forum, predominant reaction on Agora was 'rage', then, next 'mental breakdown' and 'worry' followed respectively (H.J. Song et. al., 2008:12). She points out that as time went by, the ratio of the articles against the government policies, in relation to the articles against the demonstration, was getting higher. Furthermore, the ratio of the users who were in favour of the protest to those who

were against the government's political decision had been increasing as the period went on.

She argues that internet users who were against the dominant opinions (either in favour of the government policies or against the demonstration) had become insignificant in terms of making their voices heard due to the 'overwhelming outrage' by the online community. In this context, she concludes that these findings could be understood as showing that the participants in Agora were aware of the dominant trend of Agora during the Candle Demonstration. (Song H.J. et. al, 2008:55-59) In other words, Song H.J.'s thinks that the discourse driven by the Agora users during Candlelight 2008 protest are politically biased.

Another characteristic of the Candlelight 2008, which can come under this categorisation, was participation of people who were considered to be minorities in Korean society. The 2008 candlelight protest had been expanded to the politically isolated groups, such as teenage students, housewives and women. It presented that a networked individual was more important than political groups or organizations in political participation. For example, Suhong Chae and Soojin Kim (2010) argue that women participants' active engagement with the protest both online and offline, the Baby Stroller Brigades in particular, was a result of their awareness of 'the various social and political problems surrounding them', which led to their 'subjectivity formation.' In the same vein, the activities of Teenage students had been organized through online communities. They were opened to take action against import of U.S beef that might bring mad cow disease. Chul-Kyoo Kim et al. (2010) points out that youth participation in the protest through online activities and offline participation led to their 'political awakening'.[30]

5. Public Resistance to Top-Down Power

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[30] IRIE online journal article, Direct Quote. See Song, D.H. (2012) 'Unintended Cyber Activism through Online Daily Practice in Korea, in 'New ICTs and Social Media: Revolution, Counter-Revolution and Social Change' special issue of *International Review of Information Ethics*, 18(forthcoming).

Another analytical view of Candlelight 2008 was from the perspective of public resistance to top-down power. Ji-Won Whang asserts that Candlelight 2008 caused a paradigmatic shift in the zeitgeist that has sustained Korean society and politics in the past. His premises is that international negotiation, for example trading and politics at international level, was 'considered to be the elite's responsibility' in terms of making the political decision and there were no occasions where the Korean public opinion was significantly reflected in the international politics and agreements. However, contrasted to this, the public's frustration against the Lee government and their wish to make their voices had in international politics, Whang argued, resulted from the 21 century digital era which enables the public to voice their opinion on political decision making. He also asserts that such public power mediated by the digital media indicates 'a conflict with the governmental power which still operates within a 20 century'. He further concludes that the conflict identified during Candlelight 2008 has substantiated that Korean politics operates the context of 'authoritarian political determinism' and has fallen behind the current zeitgeist. (Cited in Lee H.Y.et al, 2008:153-4).

While the 2008 Candlelight was discussed as an example that illustrates the paradigmatic shift in Korean society, the young generation's passionate participation in the protest was widely discussed, because the 2008 Candlelight was started by the youth and led by the youth. It is important to note that the main catchphrase of the youth at the first Candlelight protest (2nd May) was not impeachment, but it was just that they did not want to eat US beef for their school meals. Rather, as Chang-Ho Lee points, the motivation for teenage group to have participated in the demonstration was resulted from their anxieties about having the imported beef for their school meal at least and frustration about the irrational education system at macro level at most. However, as the protest went on, they started to express opposition to the government's political decision. Therefore, Chang-Ho Lee et al. asserts that the 2008 Candle motivated the youth, who were not previously interested in politics, to become engaged with the issue of beef imports and other polices (Lee C.H.et al., 2008a:475).

Chang-Ho Lee and Jung Eun-Chul's research (2008a) on the youth participation in the Candlelight protest illustrates how young protest participants reflect their Internet use to comment on the practice of daily life. Their research found that the youth received information related to the 2008 Candlelight online from its origins to the

meeting assemblies. By the same token, Ho-Ki Kim (cited in Lee C.H. et al., 2008b) defines the characteristics of Korean youth internet culture at the macro level as reciprocal communications through which they construct their self-identity and social consciousness. The characteristics of Korean youth internet culture are:

1. Individualistic but attach great importance to (online) community

2. Usage of mobile and Internet to express themselves

3. Thriving on a strong sense of self

4. Social criticism inherited from their parents who have lived through the military regime pre-1990 (ibid.)

This indicates that the internet is not a new media for the Korean youth. This could be the reason why the youth responded to the import of the US beef spontaneously in reality, in contrast to the other generations, as their voice in cyberspace is transferred to the reality smoothly.

Another important aspect of the 2008 Candlelight protest is an assumption that the political groups had not understood the characteristics of the demonstration. Rather, the regime considered the protest as an anti-political contention organised by a leftist movement. This resonates with the theme of public resistance lies in the cyber activism that had unveiled the Lee government's views on and reactions to the 2008 Candlelight. Jun-Han Lee criticises the Lee government's improper judgement on the 2008 Candlelight. He illustrated cases where the President Lee gave orders to the police to find out which organisation had set up the demonstration and who had provided the demonstration participants with the candles. He particularly stresses the case where the Conservative party including the President Lee and the conservative press insisted that the majority of the protesters were anti-government group despite the fact that the most of the demonstration participants were the ordinary people, who took part in the demonstration voluntarily (Lee J. H., 2009: 270-272). Thus, these anecdotal episodes connotes, he argue, that Lee government's outdated ideological framework is also well substantiated by Jang Su Chae's article on 'The Conservative Counter-Discourse'.

Jang Su Chae argued that the traditional counter discourses that led Korean government 'repeatedly used on past occasions' during Candlelight 2008 as illustrated

above in the case of the President Lee. However, he also stresses that the more advanced counter-discourses were partially utilised as a discursive device for evading the more expanded civic participation in the environment of the new society. For example, the government announced the impossibility of an outbreak of mad cow disease from the import of US beef by quoting scientists and other professionals. Furthermore, when the protest became a social phenomenon, President Lee emphasised the illegality of the demonstration on the ground, to support the veracity of the police's usage of force. Therefore, Jang Su Chae argues that the current regime have used 'constitutionalism, and professionalism' as a more advanced counter-discourse' during Candlelight 2008 (Chae J.S., 2009:132-136). He further asserts that politics justify when political decision making and conflict are not compromised through political procedure but transferred to a judicial institution. Then, the current Korean government used the rule of law to repress the resistance of the public (2009:141).

This section introduced the literatures relating to the Candlelight 2008. The unprecedented ability of ordinary citizens to organise themselves against the Korean government through online communication resulted in discourses, which can be situated within a number of substantive issues relating to Korean cyberspace, namely, the digital phenomenon, decentralized networks, online activism and the freedom of speech vis-à-vis cyber governance. As summarised, the main thread of discourse relating to Candlelight 2008 centres on the internet users' activism. The strength of this earlier research is that it advances our understanding of the relationship between the internet users and cyberspace in the Korean socio-political context. For example, the discourses relating to Candlelight 2008 unveiled how the internet users maintained their online daily activities before the protest and illustrated how this online everydayness can be transformed into a political power which the power holder cannot ignore. That is, such the bottom-up resistance logic acting against the elite-driven cultural political modes of production was the main Korean scholars' theoretical engagement, and the role of the internet was explored to see if the online medium was the major factor or the catalyst for such a new and revolutionary development.

However, the weakness of this research could be the point where the background of the views of the internet and the users' activism stated above was fixed to the 2008 event. In other words, this research pays particular attention to the internet users' activism in connection with the anti-government protests. Such a causal approach (i.e. the internet users' political activism resulted in the victory of the protests) may hinder the understanding that our relationship with the medium is always articulated within our changing views of society. This is the reason why we should be careful about solely optimistic views of the internet, particularly the myth that the internet emancipates the citizen from authoritarian regimes. Instead, we should assess how the changing relationship between this dynamic and how the internet is situated in this context. This is the reason why the significance of Candlelight 2008 should be examined in connection with its aftermath at a linear historical level rather than exploring the event as a unique moment of rupture. The veracity of this theoretical positioning is evidenced by when Koreans changed their views of the internet from a previous optimism during the protest, to the pessimistic after the Lee administration started to control the cyberspace soon after the protest ceased, which will be narrated in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Conclusion

The chapter detailed the considerable debate on the significance of Candlelight 2008 in Korean academia. As Ho-Young Lee (2008), Kyung Jae Song (2008) and other scholars identified, the internet users' online activism, namely the digital phenomenon, were the main characteristics of the protest in the sense that the momentum of the protest could be maintained by the ordinary people who traversed online, and who shared the information and linked the online communities as one network. Other scholars stress the decentralised mechanism of the protest. For example, as Yong-Chul Kim (2008) and other critics highlight, there were no dominant political activist groups to lead this movement for both online and offline activisms of the protests. This view of Candlelight 2008 is developed further when one compares the 2008 event with previous protests in Korean history. For example, Sang-Bae Kim (2008) points out that the absence of any dominant group guiding the 2008 demonstrations was the main difference from previous pro-democracy protests

during the 1980s, which were lead by political parties. In the same vein, the major difference of 2008 was that the participants revolted against the government on policy issues relating to the daily matters such as things food and education, rather than macroscopic justice such as better democracy. The most useful scholarly argument was that Candlelight 2008 made the public realize the importance of politics. Ho-Ki Kim argues that the main significance of the demonstrations lays in the progressive expansion of public political awareness as the demonstrations continued, as a consequence of which the public became aware of certain negative aspects of the current regime (Kim, H.K. et al. 2008:9).

These scholarly engagements with Candlelight 2008 shed light on the significance of the internet in the Korean society in the sense that virtual activities can generate material actuality in the society at a cultural and political level. Agreeing with this, I posit that we need to examine the 2008 event in a historically linear fashion; therefore we should assess it in connection with its aftermath.

Chapter 4. The Aftermath of the Candlelight 2008 Protests: the Government and Cyberspace.

Introduction

The key player of this chapter is the state. This chapter focuses on how the Lee administration politicised the internet as a reaction to Candlelight 2008. The chapter is organised in four stages: the first looks at the new internet policy announcements by the governmental bodies, outlining how the Lee government attempted to introduce measures designed to tighten control of cyberspace following Candlelight 2008. These included the extension of the real name system, the compulsory monitoring of websites by web portals and the cyber defamation law. The real name system is the law under which users are required to use a login to make postings, which in turn means that websites hold their personal information, for example their resident registration number, home address and telephone phone number. This was to be extended to all websites, whereas it had previously only applied to large websites with more than 100,000 visitors a day. The compulsory monitoring of websites by the web portals is the Lee government's plan that web portals monitored all their websites and the communities they hosted twenty-four hours a day. The reasons for these measures rested on the Korean Communications Commission's (KCC) insistence that web portals should be held responsible for all content posted on their sites. A new cyber contempt law aimed to prevent defamation and the circulation of false information in cyberspace. One finding was that many Korean internet users perceived such initiatives as well as other government policy announcements, despite lacking legislative power, as oppressive cyber control. My reading of the Lee government's announcements, policy documents, and the analysis of my interviews with government officials, all confirm that the government legitimated measures to strengthen their control power over the internet.

The second stage discusses occasions when the Lee administration exerted the power of prosecution as well as that of the police in order to control online voices. This will be substantiated by empirical cases where they arrested famous anti-government netizens and accused them of disseminating false information in 2009. My main

finding is that in contemporary South Korean society, even in the context of the new and potentially freer communications environment promised by the internet, the agencies of the state continue to intervene in the system. I also argue that subsidiary governmental bodies, such as the KCC and the Ministry of Justice, followed President Lee's policy line to the letter.

The third stage is to evaluate the limitations of domestic internet regulation stated above, as well as other government tactics to intervene in Korean cyber space, whose limitations were identified when global corporations, such as Google and YouTube, refused to comply with the restrictions that the South Korean government policies had placed on the local internet. My main finding is that the Lee administration's state-driven internet intervention had become problematic, because they did not fully understand the particular characteristics of the internet and its borderless flux as briefly illustrated before.

The last stage briefly discusses how other two players, the Korean web portals and internet users, reacted to the Lee administration's cyber intervention, which will be discussed more fully in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively. This shows how Korean portals viewed the importance of complying with the government as a way to secure their profits and avoid repercussions. When the Lee administration began to intervene in Korean cyberspace, the feeling of triumph that internet users had in the aftermath of Candlelight 2008 soon changed from hope to despair.

The following diagram maps out the chain of events in which the government, web portals and Korean internet users reacted to each other's activities following the 2008 Candle Light demonstrations.

TIMELINE		
2008	17 Jun	The President's 'Infodemics' speech posted on the Internet
	1 Jul	Daum.net deletes 58 postings at the request of KCSC
	22 Jul	KCC publishes Internet Information Security Comprehensive Countermeasures
		The Ministry of Justice announces the planned implementation of the Cyber Defamation Law
	18 Aug	Sales revenues of Daum.net & Naver.com reported to have decreased
2008 to 2009	29 Dec to 7 Jan	The Prosecution requests Daum.net to reveal the personal information of Agora user ID: Minerva
		Daum.net complies, leading to the arrested Minerva
2009	19 Apr	YouTube and Google refuse to comply with the Real Name System.
	20 Apr	Minerva found not guilty and released from prison
	3 Sep	The web portal industry launches the Korean Internet Self-Governance Organization (KISO)
	22 Oct	KISO publishes guideline to clarify which governmental institutions can request the deletion of web postings
2010	26 Mar	KCSC requestes the deletion of postings related to the sinking of a South Korean navy ship
		KISO rejects this request

[31]

Chapter 3.1: Interaction Flow after Candlelight 2008

1. Government Policy and Korean Cyberspace post- Candlelight 2008

Snapshot:

> During the 2008 Candlelight protest, President Lee defines the internet at the OECD ministerial meeting in 17/06/08. He stated that 'If integrity is not guaranteed, the power of the Internet is only a poison'. In his address inaugurating the National Assembly in 11/07/08, he also stated that 'we have to watch out for the dissemination of incorrect information, because it causes infodemics that stir up social anxieties' (Yonhapnews, June 2008)

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[31] This table was made by Zinaida Feldman, an editor of New Media for (D.H. Song, 2011), reproduced with thanks.

As illustrated above, President Lee seemed to consider the Korean internet as a platform for the dissemination of malicious and incorrect information. There is a contradiction between the statement he made in the National Assembly and his public apology regarding Candlelight 2008 issued on 19 June 2008. He stated that 'he had seen the candlelights, heard the demonstrators' protests and regretted not having been able to consider public sentiments and public health issues' (The Korean Industry Daily, May 2008). However, his emphasis on the adversarial aspect of the internet denied the real role of Korean cyberspace to the 2008 protests. His apology about US beef imports, derived from the public outcry, lost its veracity. His contradictory statements had been received by the public suggest that from the beginning of the Lee regime it had no real understanding of Korean cyberspace. An official at Korea Communications Commission stated that

> The VIP [referring to the President] did not know about the internet, well he doesn't have any political philosophy on this … He did not know the power of the internet, so there was no preparation for communicating with the public via the internet at the beginning of the Lee administration … That is, the 2008 Candlelight demonstrations was the result of miscommunication ... he did not know how to handle the issue of the Internet politically (Interview, 22 July 2010).

It could be assumed that the power holders (i.e. the government) were paranoid during the 2008 Candle Light Demonstration, because the leader of the power holding group in Korean did not understand the Korean cyberspace fully. This is the key to infer that the series of polices that were announced after 2008 Candlelight, followed from the anxieties of the political groups. It is important to note that the President's mindset is the most influential factor in the establishment of the regulations in Korea. One journalist states that:

> Once the President suggested one direction, it would be very difficult for officials under his to show another direction, for example explaining the importance of information technology. The governmental bodies act in accordance to the President's area of interests. Therefore, once the President

has showed antipathy to IT, it would have been impossible to suggest new IT policies (Interview, 9 July 2010).

The extent of the political control of the media in South Korea was established in an essay by Myung-Jin Park, Chang-Nam Kim and Byung-Woo Sohn (2000). At that time democracy was relatively new in South Korea and the situation might have been expected to have changed for the better since then. However, it would be debatable based on my analysis of policy documents and interviews with government officials to what extent the government has sought to control the domestic internet (and media) industry since Candlelight 2008. For example, an official at KCC stated that: 'There was no time for them to listen to public opinion, because it was an important moment when they had to show positive results to a V.I.P [refers to President Lee]' (Interview, 22 July 2010), implying that power holders in the hierarchy have shaped the government's reaction to certain social phenomena. It can be assumed that in contemporary South Korean society, even in the context of the new and potentially freer communications environment promised by the internet, the agencies of power continue to overwhelm the system.[32]

When the 2008 protests happened it was the moment when the political power holders became aware of the significance of the internet in the daily politics. This developing awareness resulted in their conviction that Korean cyberspace was a place to be controlled.

The Lee Administration's Tactics to Politicise the Internet

The Lee regime had two main strategies to intervene in Korean cyberspace after the Candlelight 2008 demonstrations died down. Firstly, they attempted to police the voices of individual internet users. Some press and civil society groups criticised the arrests of famous internet users who posted articles against the Lee government, which fomented fear according to the internet users. Secondly, it was assumed that government bodies forced the internet portals to police internet content and activities

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[32] Indeed, there are indications that the Lee government's response to activism in Korean cyberspace post-Candlelight 2008 can be compared to the authoritarian military regimes of the 1980's reactions to public demonstrations. This can also be compared with the Mubarak's regime's reactions to public demonstrations in Egypt in 2011, and to the Iranian government's response to the public demonstrations against the presidential election in 2009.

on their behalf. Tactics such as the government bodies' sudden tax audit of web portals and their declaration of Naver.com as a monopolistic internet company in 2008 were also widely perceived as attempts to tame the internet companies. Furthermore, several measures that the Lee administration implemented after Candlelight 2008 can be understood as part of their tactics to intervene in the internet.

Soon after President Lee emphasised the negative aspects of the internet, the KCC, Korea's telecommunications and broadcasting regulator, echoed Lee's new position. The Commission announced 'Internet Information Security Comprehensive Countermeasures,' the main thrust of which can be summarised in four parts, namely: a 'safe and wholesome' user environment; 'personal information protection and the of risk management;' 'the blocking of the Internet as a harmful environment;' and 'the construction of a framework for information security' (KCC: 2008).

For a 'safe and wholesome' user environment, the government planned to increase the national budget for information security, invest in online infrastructure, adopt the CSO (Chief Signal Officer) system, and maintain the right to request deleting spyware. For 'personal information protection and the strengthening of risk management', KCC decided to minimise personal information collection, and activate an alternative means to establish resident registration numbers for Internet use, and construct a system to detect personal information leaking. For 'the blocking of the Internet as harmful environment', KCC planned to establish laws to strengthen the web portals' social responsibility and to expand the category of what was considered illegal spam advertisements, inspecting illegal information management and blocking the illegal overseas website URL. For 'the construction of a framework for information security', KCC intended to conduct information security campaigns, supply hacking defence skilled expertise, and to strengthen the interrelationship between governmental agencies. The third area concerning the 'blocking of the Internet as harmful environment' was the most contentious, because the KCC planned to reform existing legislation and introduce new laws to enforce new responsibilities on web portals and internet users through three key measures (Ibid.).

The Compulsory Monitoring System

The portals were also required to police internet content in order to avoid the 'circulation of illegal information.' The KCC also argued that freedom of expression should be limited by the rights of parties injured as a result of possibly libellous postings or by defamation on the internet. Therefore, as an interim measure while appropriate legislation was being prepared, web portals were put under pressure to delete any postings that could be regarded as defamatory. The KCC argued that the compulsory interim measure ensuring that web portals delete defamatory postings was necessary as there had been no regulation on this issue previous to this (Hyun-Ju Im, 2008).

KCC further argued for the necessity of provisions to impose penalties for breaking these content-policing duties as part of the planned reform of the Telecom Networks and Information Law. According to the Network Provision no. 44 section 2 in 2008, any victim of defamation through internet postings must inform the web portals, and the service providers (the web portals) must carry out a blinding (i.e. blocking) of the postings (Korean Ministry of Government Legislation, Feb 2008). However, the main argument by the chairperson of commission was that the KCC would impose compulsory obligations on the information telecommunication service providers, e.g. web portals, to accept the applicant's request and to implement the blocking in accordance with his or her request. A penalty would be imposed on the web portals if they breached this requirement (KCC Aug 2008). The KCC's stance was that the right of the injured party overrode the freedom of expression. It was widely interpreted in the sense that the commission argued that an additional provision to impose penalties for non-compliance was the most efficient way to reduce the threat of defamation and stated that reformed telecom networks and information legislation must contain a new provision to impose penal sanctions regarding this issue. On Aug. 2008 it was proposed that 'a penalty, 3,000,000 won would be imposed on any web portal company if they neglected to delete postings that invaded individual privacy'. (cited in Y.J. Choi, 2008). As a result, the paradigm of the internet regulation changed to a state-driven one by changing the Network and Information law. It was widely perceived that the announcement about the compulsory measures implied that the government would use the web portals to investigate internet users. For the web portal, it was often argued that it was a de facto government order.

The Ministry of Justice announces the Cyber Contempt Law

The Ministry of Justice took similar measures to those of the KCC, which were announced at a cabinet meeting on the same day that the KCC countermeasures were published. It was announced that the Minister of Justice at the cabinet meeting announced that 'the cyber defamation and the circulation of false information must no longer be ignored'. The Ministry of Justice planned to implement a new 'Cyber Contempt Law', which aimed to prevent defamation and the circulation of false information in cyberspace (W.G. Huh, 2011).

The problem of the Cyber Contempt Law was that it allowed the third party, either the government or web portals, to pursue an uploader of a web posting on behalf of a supposedly injured party, and this third party (i.e. the web portals), was allowed to monitor postings and delete them (or to report it to KSCS) on behalf of the possible injured party, regardless of the reaction of that party. Furthermore, the legal validity of Ministry of Justice's announcement on the proposed cyber defamation law had not been supported by relevant legal commentators (K.O. Choi, 2009).

Guk Cho, a professor in Law at Seoul University, argued that the Criminal Law Act No. 311 covered the act of contempt (defamation). He also stated that

> the act of defamation could be concluded only when the relevant detailed facts were narrated. The law of contempt could only be brought into play when abusive language was used without factual description. (cited in Young-In Jung, Aug. 2008)

Therefore, he stated, the cyber contempt law would be oxymoronic. For example, if a person criticised the President without giving specific details, the cyber contempt law could be implied, but these are normal public activities. Thus, this conflicts with the right of freedom of expression. Therefore, the issue of the unconstitutionality of the cyber contempt provision had been raised from the beginning of its enactment (ibid.).

Overall, these government measures were testament to the tensions between the freedom of expression online and the necessity of regulating cyberspace to protect public interests. However, the timing of the government's countermeasures, which followed directly after the demonstrations died down, suggested that political motivations lay behind their protestations of protecting public welfare. Indeed, the government's proposed internet reforms were felt to be primarily aimed at threatening ordinary netizens and oppressing their freedom of expression[33]. As noted above, criticism of the Lee government in Korean cyberspace played a remarkable role throughout Candlelight 2008. The government's internet reform measures were often interpreted by internet users as intended to control and limit the efficacy of their ability to make their voices heard against the Lee administration.

The Real Name System and the Limited Verification of Identity

Snapshot:

> Interviewee at a governmental body: 'the real name system is not a form of pre-censorship. It is a sort of a warning at an early stage, as we find it difficult to deal with it after the fact. Users feel more responsible for their comments on the Internet since they have to use their real name'.
>
> Researcher: 'Is this your personal opinion of it?'
>
> Interviewee at a governmental body: 'No' [laughs] (Interview, 12 July 2010).

The first measure ensured that portals could be punished if they failed to delete postings when requested to by concerned parties. Secondly, the 'real name system,'[34] under which users were required to login under their real names in order to make postings, was extended to all websites, whereas it had previously applied only to large websites with more than 100,000 visitors a day. Finally, web portals were required to monitor all websites and the communities they hosted twenty-four hours a day (KCC, 2008).

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[33] See Inews Special Report Team, 2008.
[34] The Original Term is 'The Limited Verification of Identity'. However, this is commonly referred to as 'Real Name System,' which I will use in this research.

It is important to note that the real name system had already been applied to websites where the rate of visitors a day was over 200,000 on average for news sites and 300,000 for the web portals. The KCC planned to expand the number of websites to which this law could be applicable, and the commission held a public hearing on Aug. 8, 2008 to outline the 'revised bill of telecom networks and information law to raise the effectiveness of real name system' (ibid.).

KCC's willingness to pursue legal revisions at their will rather than waiting until a social consensus reached was illustrated by the anecdotal case of the hearing session relating to the procedure of billing the extension of real name system. During the session, the commission argued that the rate of online posting of malicious content had been reduced after the real name system had been applied; therefore it needed to be applied to more web sites. To support its claims, KCC presented data, which was the number of websites that had already been come under the remit of the real name system, and the data indicated that 'malicious postings had been reduced'. For example, data collected from the websites showed that 'despite an increase in reply postings from 10,924 to 13,472, the postings demonstrating a possible breach of the internet online privacy law had dropped from 15.8% to 13.9% (a 2.1% decrease)'. However, KCC's result was criticised, because 'the data was first gathered in May 2007' (pre-Candlelight 2008), while some 'major internet service providers such as Daum.net and Dcinside.com did not operate the real name system' (J.W. Kim: 2008). This criticism is rooted in the fact that 'the data did not support KCC's statements, because the 137 websites, initially operating the limited real name system, would be expanded to 268 sites, but the report did not reflect on this issue'. The working group stated that 'having seen the result of the system operation [referring to the data that KCC had presented at the public hearing session], the disturbance of freedom of expression will not be significant' (ibid.).

It was also reported that Kyoung Ja Lee, a committee member, stated during the session that 'the effectiveness of the system in terms of reducing the malicious postings is merely 2%, which means that tighter regulation is not the answer'. She also stated that 'the real name system is rare in the world. It is not a global standard. Rather, it would be more efficient to set up a long term plan to build-up a civil ethic in co-operation with the Ministry of Education'. ByungKi Lee, a committee member at KCC, argued that 'Has KCC sorted out the issues of

freedom of expression?' He also stated that 'there must a place where expression together with anonymity must be secure'. (both cited in J.W. Kim 2008b).

Despite criticism, the commission had decided to extend the application of the system to web press whose daily visits were over 200,000, web portals whose daily numbers were over 100,000 and those websites whose visitors were over 100,000 by Jan. 2009, all of which was to be achieved by reforming the telecom network and information law (K.C.C., 2008). After all, the commission had not resolved the tensions between the freedom of expression and the prevention of online defamation. It was implicitly perceived that KCC had a tendency to ignore unwelcome voices and attempted to continue their top-down strategy. This is supported by an official in the Korean internet industry,

> It is the duty of the government by law to listen to the opinions of the Internet service providers. Therefore, the governmental bodies must open a dialogue. However, the government is not obliged to reflect this, because our opinions are only one of several voices among the stakeholders (Interview, 13th Aug 2010).

The procedural logic can be understood as the government bodies' wish to respond to the President's political drive. A government official stated that:

> The preconception of the policy maker is that if the law is established and the regulation begins to be implemented, the outcome is spontaneous ... By the same token, I think that the Ministry of Justice (and other government bodies) announced that stronger regulations were going to be implemented in advance, because this would work more effectively (Interview, 22 July 2010).

That is, the way the Lee government's perceptions of the characteristics of cyberspace, together with the government-centred policy making system, resulted in a retrogressive Korean cyberspace. Through the analysis of documents that were published between July 01 2008 and Dec. 31 2008, along with interviews conducted with officers at government institutions, this research project has found that the government justified the reform of legislation dealing with the internet by emphasising the adversarial effect of the internet during the Candlelight protests, which included defamatory and malicious online postings. In the several announcements given by officials at government institutions, including the KCC and the Ministry of Justice, the government officially informed the public of the necessity of building a healthy cyberspace, and they argued that this 'purification of

cyberspace' could be achieved by government intervention. It is important to note that Internet Information-Security Comprehensive Countermeasures as well as other measures were only plans and had not yet been agreed at this time. For example, the web portals' compulsory monitoring system was under pressure. The KCC's original plan was that a penalty would be imposed on the web portals if they did not conduct the obligatory monitoring. The reason for the cancellation of the plan was, according to KCC, that it had been revoked given the financial demands on small and medium sized web portal businesses that had suffered due to their inability to fund, staff and build the relevant monitoring systems (ibid.). The commission had not checked the practicality of the compulsory monitoring system before they announced its inception. This kind of ineffectiveness continued to weigh on Korean cyberspace.

2. Government Strategies and the Public 'Voice'

Government's state-driven cyber intervention continued in 2009. While the governmental bodies tried to pass legislation to match the proposed measures that they announced, the Lee administration used a range of measures on the internet. One example of the government's implementation of tighter cyber control occurred in January 2009. An Agora user, who logged in under the ID 'Minerva' was arrested on the grounds that he had disseminated allegedly libellous information and had breached the Basic Telecommunications Act. 'Minerva' had posted an article on December 20 2008 in which he claimed that the government had posted an emergency order which banned seven major financial agencies from buying dollars in order to control the exchange rate (Minerva, 29 Dec 2008). The prosecution considered this to be libellous information, and claimed that that $2 billion had been lost a result of 'Minerva's posting. The Electronic Telecommunication Foundational Law that the prosecution applied to 'Minerva' states that 'a criminal communication of false information, via electronic telecommunication devices with the intention of harming the public good (welfare) can incur a sentence less than 5 years imprisonment, or a fine less than 550,000,000 Won'(SBSNews, Jan 2009).

An official at KCC stated that:

With reference to 'Minerva', the government were not indifferent to finding out the reason why he appealed to the public so much. Instead, the government officials acted spontaneously with the assumption that he had lied on the Internet, so arrested him and muzzled him. That is the reason why people think that the government oppresses the freedom of expression without consideration (Interview, July 22 2010).

The logic behind the government's rationale for arresting 'Minerva' becomes clearer when the interview quoted above is considered carefully. There are two important things to note. Firstly, it can be debated whether the Lee administration was exposed to ridicule, because 'Minerva' was arrested on the charge that his one posting had resulted in a $2 billion loss to the Korean economy (Khannews, Jan 2009). Secondly, the law that the Lee administration used to arrest Minerva was a criminal communication of false information, via an electronic telecommunication device. This was criticised by civil rights groups, as this legislation had not used for twenty-five years.

It was not only 'Minerva' who was arrested by the government. For example, there are many cases in which Candlelight 2008 protestors were legally prosecuted by the government, or the Lee administration placed internet users who posted anti-government postings under surveillance. The issues relating to 'Minerva' will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, because this is central to an understanding of the cyber asylum seekers' project.

The Lee Administration's Tactical Dilemma and the Control of the Internet

While the announcement of oppressive measures worked to muzzle Korean internet users temporarily, the limitations of domestic internet regulation were revealed when global corporations, such as Google and YouTube, refused to comply with the restrictions that the South Korean government had placed on the local internet.
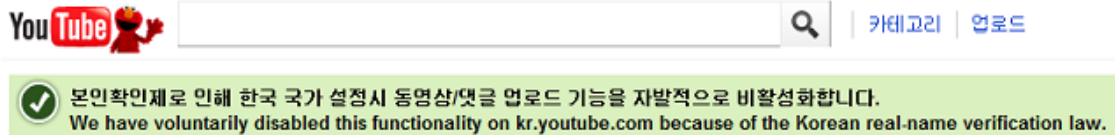
Figure 3.1: The initial page of YouTube Korea (kr.youtube.com).

When the default is set up as Korea, a notice appears that 'We have voluntarily disabled this functionality on kr.youtube.com because of the Korean real-name verification law' denoting that the uploading of images and replies are restricted.

Having worried about negative sentiment toward the Lee government, KCC on April 10 2009 published 'explanatory information' with regard to YouTube's denial of carrying out the real name system. The commission announced that:

> The measures on personal certification on the web (the real name system), which Google and YouTube has neglected to follow and perform, was started by the previous government on July 27 2007. This is not a new measure that the current government has initiated. Therefore, the misunderstanding with regard to this must be corrected (K.C.C, 2009).

It is important to note that this was the same period when Google followed the Chinese government's rules and censorship, which is contradicts its stance in Korea (BBC, 24 Feb. 2010). In addition, KCC stressed that the government had not blocked the uploading of moving images and postings on YouTube. Rather, Google had refused to accept the real name system and limited their services voluntarily (K.C.C, 2009).

Despite the dilemma in terms of the applicability of national law, the limited real name system that was implemented in July 2007 imposed a compulsory procedure in which users had to reveal their real identity when they wanted to write articles on the notice board of a website whose visitors were more than 300,000 per day. The reformed real name system expanded the range of websites by applying the new provision to any website where visitors amounted to more than 100,000 per day. The case of YouTube, together with the arrest of 'Minerva', became a turning point in Korean Cyberspace.

As the Lee administration faced opposition from both major global web service providers, its attempt to control internet users' voices with police and prosecutor powers, was eroded when 'Minerva' was freed after four months imprisonment on the April 20 2009. The judge found him not guilty. It was reported that the court ruled that 'Minerva had not had the intention either to publish false information or to cause harm to the public good' (H.C. Park, 2009). The judge stated that –

> The postings of Mr Park (Minerva) with regard to the stoppage of the foreign currency business by the government was proven to be false. However, it is hard to believe that the defendant was aware that his postings contained false information. Even if his postings were false, it is not true that the defendant had the intention of harming the public good considering the currency market at that time. Therefore, this case lacks the evidence to accuse the defendant of a criminal act and therefore he was found not guilty (ibid.).

Later, 'Minerva' submitted a constitutional appeal to assert that Electronic Communication Fundamental Law Article 47, Clause 1, which was used to arrest him, was unconstitutional. On December 28 2010 the Constitutional Court ruled that the law, which had been criticized for infringing on freedom of expression, was indeed unconstitutional (S.S. Park, 2011).

This verdict was widely interpreted as indirect criticism of the Lee government's attempts to regulate and censor the Korean internet on the part of the judiciary (Ohmynews, Dec 2010). The government's project to 'purify Korean cyberspace' went against the constitution and this attempt to extend their jurisdiction was perceived as an abuse of power. Therefore, 'purification' instead became a devalued attempt to intervene in Korean cyberspace. However, this was not the only legal setback the government was to face.

Measures pending in Parliament

From mid-2009 the debate on the regulation of Korean cyberspace entered into a new phase. Despite announcing its intention to pass its 'Internet Information Security Comprehensive Countermeasures' into law back in mid-2008, the government has not been successful to date. Most of the relevant legislation is still pending and has been

held up in the National Assembly. Indeed, no progress has been made on the compulsory monitoring of web sites or the Cyber Defamation Law, and only the Real Name System extension and a revision of the Press Mediation Law to cover online news services have been formally implemented to date.

Four major issues in media law enactment were expected to be passed and approved by the National Assembly, which were respectively: legislative bills of Broadcasting, the Press, IPTV and the Cyber Defamation Law enactment in telecom networks and information law. The government had been in favour of press companies setting up and managing broadcasting companies and this had ignited heated debate in political and social circles. As a consequence, the press and broadcasting reform bill were given particular attention, whereas the debate on the Information and Telecom Network bill disappeared as a serious discussion topic, which resonate with Des Freedman's' concept of 'media silence' (2010) in the sense that hotly debated internet policies suddenly had become silenced as other media policies stated above had overwhelmed politician and the public's attention. The problematic issue was that the Information and Telecom Network bill included the Cyber Defamation Law, Compulsory Monitoring System which also contained no detailed information on how the law would be applied. Furthermore, prosecutions could be conducted by third parties (i.e. governmental institutions) without any permission from the injured party.

The handling of Cyber Defamation Law in parliament, which had been discussed in conjunction with Media Law, has been postponed, with the interested parties in web portal industries much relieved. On July 23 2009, a spokesman of the Korean web portals stated in an interview with the press that

> The issues related to cyber defamation have not been discussed, and even ignored in the parliament as reform bills related to the broadcasting and the press became the dominant topic of discussion….The cyber defamation law enactment could have been passed by stealth in parliament, it is a moment of relief' (cited in H.S. Jung, 2009).

The majority of internet reform bills that the Lee administration planned to implement did not pass through parliament (Interview, 12 July 2010). As a consequence, they had only un-stabilised Korean internet users, as well as the web portals. It was found

out that in reality the internet reform bills were only compulsory to Korean web portal enterprises and those Korean internet users who used Korean web portals.

It is important to note that there were already laws in place to deal with issues regarding the protection of privacy, defamation and the violation of other individual's rights, and which were also applicable in cyberspace. Even though laws existed to deal with these matters, they wanted to establish new provisions that would only be applied to the internet and that imposed additional punishments. Thus, a premise can be made that the cyberspace had not been actualised in the new political context and the Lee administration needed to intervene in cyberspace. As these new proposed legislative standards were stronger than that of the existing laws, they occasionally breached basic human rights. The administration's attempts to restrict Korean cyberspace as well as to tame Korean web portals backfired, resulting in a loss of legitimacy, due to issues of unconstitutionality or caused other problems such as the leaking of personal information by hackers, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

While issues relating to the "Internet Information Security Comprehensive Countermeasures" were submerged, an ostensibly independent media body, the Korean Communications Standards Commission (KCSC), was established as a government body by a legal circle. The KCSC was criticised by the public and other media activist groups for having instructed the web portals to delete postings that were thought to be antigovernment and anti-business. The significance of this judgment was that the law negated the KCSC's position. Previously, the KCSC had defined itself as a private independent body distinct from the government. It also argued that requests to web portals to delete postings had merely been advisory; therefore, this case did not meet the requirements for administrative litigation **(ibid).**

3. The Lee Administration Loses its Legitimacy

One of the most well known issues associated with the KCSC was their acceptance of the Korean Cement Industrial Association's request to delete priest Choi's four postings that were uploaded on Daum.net in April 2009. The postings concerned 'the

Korean cement factories use of industrial waste to make cement, which contained carcinogens'. KCSC had accepted the request and advised Daum.net to delete the postings and it agreed. Priest Choi sent a formal objection to KCSC, but it was not accepted and he began legal proceedings (Jinbonet, Sept. 2009).

On Feb. 02 2010, the Seoul Administrative Court ruled in favour of the plaintiff, priest Choi. The press reported that the reason for this, according to the court's verdict, was that 'the nine members of KCSC committee were appointed by the President, and three committee members among them the chairman, are guaranteed their status by dint of their being government officials. Furthermore, the web portals, which were advised to delete the postings, were obliged to report the result of their actions to the KCSC, therefore the committee's order to delete the postings was an administrative measure that became a legal instruction' (cited in H.C. Park, 2009). According to Implementation Law Article 25, KCSC must give the uploader a chance to make a statement before imposing any sanction. This case was criticised as 'Choi had lost his right to bring an intermediate appeal as the committee had conducted itself incorrectly' (ibid).

KCSC had been using enforcement ordinance Article 44 Clause 7, that is 'the prohibition of circulating unlawful information', to justify 60 cases where postings were meant to be deleted, and a gap in constitutional provision was being exploited by the power holder, KCSC (ibid).[35] As a consequence, they could not escape criticism and the South Korean public came to regard the institution with considerable distrust, which may signal serious problems for them in the future. An official at a governmental body in 2012 suggested that the committee would be abolished soon, probably when the administration changes in 2012 (Interview, Feb 2012).   This was not the only legal setback the government was to face.

While the KCSC, a governmental regulatory body, faced difficulties, the Lee administration also faced opposition from the courts due to its attempts to control cyberspace, which, as previously discussed, was highlighted when 'Minerva' was freed after four months of imprisonment. Ten months after his release, in December

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[35] After the verdict was decided, KCSC had to request a sanction, but the Supreme Court ruled in favour of the priest Choi again.

2010 the constitutional court concluded that the Telecommunication Basic Act under which Minerva had been arrested, was unconstitutional (OhmyNews, 12 2010).

My reading of this is that the Lee administration tried to intervene in Korean cyberspace by reinforcing existing laws and by overusing laws that have never been historically intended to police cyberspace, all in order to justify their administrative role relating to the internet after the Candlelight demonstrations had died down. The Korean internet users thought that Korean cyberspace began to be repressed during the Lee administration, when the government began to implement regulations and policies to control Korean cyberspace citing the need to 'purify it'. The characteristic feature of regulations is to control, and Korean power holders have used legislation to attempt to restrict any disruption by the public. However, a problem arose when the Lee administration used regulations for this purpose too explicitly and unsystematically, and without legal consent. This has resulted in public belief that the current Korean regime has used polices to suppress the majorities' protest, particularly in relation to the internet, and this is the reason why the people think the previous regime imposed fewer regulations on the internet, even if both regimes have essentially acted in the same manner.

The Lee administration's ineffectiveness in its attempts to control domestic cyberspace was exhibited again when they tried to control voices SNS (Social Networking System) during the local elections. It was widely perceived that as the local elections neared, the Lee administration including the ruling party tried to restrict internet freedom of expression in by suppressing the use of SNS such as Twitter. From 2010 SNS has been the subject of regulation. The National Election Commission announced on February 12 2010 that Twitter would be the subject of control during the local election period due to the possibility that people would violate the election law (The National Election Commission, 2010). The CEMC stated that

> By the Election Law's Article 108, the specific method, date and range of error in the poll must be specified in advance in order to conduct a survey of public opinion (Ibid.).

If a tweet contains offensive comments that contravene the election law, the CEMC requests the user to delete the tweet and informs them that they can be fined or sentenced to two years imprisonment. If the uploader of the tweet does not follow

this warning, the CEMC can prosecute them (Y.H. Lim, 2010). The press also reported cases where Korean Twitter users deleted their tweets after they received warnings from the CEMC and the discussion relating to this was held on March 28 2010. The main issue of the session was that if Twitter, which is based on an American server, could be regulated. The official at the committee stated that 'only simple expressions of Tweeters' opinions on the election would be permitted, but not for tweets whose purpose was to help elect a candidate'. In the session, a participant, 'user id @yedopr raised the question if there was any way to punish users if they breached this regulation'. An official of CEMC stated that 'Twitter is an overseas service; we cannot request personal information of the user unless he/she commits a crime. We cannot delete the tweet, therefore, we cannot punish him/her' (cited in J.W. Lee, 2010).

This case illustrates that 2010 was the year when the state did not have a standard rule to control voices in SNS if it was an overseas-based service, because national internet regulation was predominantly based on tracing personal records on websites, but overseas web service providers did not hold any personal records and were unable to submit these to the government. In fact, the Lee government's attempts to intervene in Korean cyberspace faced difficulties due to the rapidly changing environment of the internet. A government official stated that 'the government has only a short term vision when they make a policy. We did not think about smartphones when we set up policies during 2008-2009' (Interview, 22 July 2010).

Conclusion

Chapter 3 analysed the Lee government's key initiatives through which it attempted to introduce a number of measures designed to tighten control of cyberspace following Candlelight 2008. These included the real name system, the compulsory monitoring of websites by the web portals and the cyber defamation law. Such initiatives and other government policy announcements, despite lacking legislative power, were perceived by internet users as cyber control, which had the effect of silencing protests posted on some Korean websites. My reading of the Lee government's announcements, policy documents and interviews with government officials is that the government justified its measures as necessary in light of the

strength of anti-government hostility voiced on the internet. The unprecedented ability of ordinary citizens to organise themselves through online communication during and after Candlelight 2008 led the government to plan new policies designed to gain control of cyberspace. They arrested famous, anti-government netizens and accused them of disseminating false information. Korean web portals followed the government's request to delete anti-government postings from their websites and even handed over personal information about their users.

The Lee administration's dominant cyber intervention shifted its political stance after accepting problems in their measures dealing with the internet. My reading of this suggests that operational mismanagement and anxieties about the new social nexus, i.e. cyberspace, resulted in the Lee administration's prompt reactions to Candlelight 2008, which was not balanced with pre-existing human rights. Another problem concerning the Lee administration's cyber governance was underestimation of the power and influence that Korean cyberspace now enjoyed.

The Lee government employed two main strategies to intervene in Korean cyberspace; firstly regulations forcing internet portals to police content and activities of their users on the government's behalf was widely seen as an attempt to silence the voices of individual internet users. In the case of 'Minerva' who posted critical articles about the Lee administration's economy policy, the first strategy was achieved through his arrest, which had the effect of instilling a sense of fear into the average netizen. The second strategy to direct the internet portals through regulation was achieved when the portals chose to comply with the government's requests in order to maintain their position in Korean cyberspace. In doing so they revealed not only their powerless status in Korean society as institutions that had once claimed to champion free speech, but more significantly they helped underline the power of hierarchical relationships in South Korean society that often superseded constitutional protections.

However, this chapter argues that the government intervention was driven by a belief that cyberspace posed a challenge and that the government needed to contain the multiplicity of voices on the Korean internet. To do that, the regime emphasised the antagonistic aspects of the internet to their proposed legislation. Furthermore,

government subsidiaries such as KCC, the Ministry of Justice, etc., exercised powers in the process.

Overall, the Lee government's internet measures, although they still lacked legislative power, were successful in making Korean internet users perceive a threat along with Korean web portal enterprises for almost two years from July 2008 until May 2010. Most significantly, however, the government and the web portals' activities over this period were not approved of by the majority of Korean internet users. Despite announcing its intention to pass its 'Internet Information Security Comprehensive Countermeasures' into law in mid-2008, it has not been successful to date. Most of the relevant legislation is still pending and has been held up in the National Assembly. Indeed, no progress has been made on the compulsory monitoring of websites or the Cyber Defamation Law, and only the Real Name System extension and a revision of the Press Mediation Law to cover online news services have been formally implemented.

Chapter 5: Korean Web Portals and the State[36]

Introduction

This chapter documents the Korean internet after Candlelight 2008 from the perspective of the Korean web portals. The focus is on investigating the way in which the web portals reacted to the government's cyber intervention as well as to the internet users' migration to platforms free from national control. This chapter argues that the web portals had in fact little legal power to resist the Lee administration and followed government requests to delete postings critical of the government postings and even handed over personal information about their users, which they were required to do by law. The Korean web portals faced three difficulties; firstly pressure from the government; followed by conflicts with other media enterprises; and finally, stagnation in the web industry together with their customers' migration elsewhere.

The first section of this chapter lays out how Korean web portals felt tormented by the Lee administration, which resulted from their inadvertent role in Candlelight 2008. For example, the press reported that Daum.net faced an unexpected tax audit in 2008 despite the fact that the audit was not expected until Aug. 2009. It was fined £2,180,965, '3.4% of company's total capital' (Betanews, 20 Aug. 2008). A governmental body, the Fair Trade Commission, published the internet Portal Competitiveness report and stated that 'the internet portal market in Korea can be characterised as Naver.com's monopoly', which had a negative effect on the company brand value (FTC, 2008). This discussion also highlights the fact that web portals handed over their users' information to a third party, including, for example, 337,755 cases concerning legal activities aimed at restricting internet communications, such as confiscation searches, wiretapping, and the handover of email materials by companies including Naver and Daum (Ibid.). My reading of these examples is that the political institution's approach to the web portals was based on their wider distrust of Korean cyberspace.

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[36] An abridged version of this chapter was published as Dong-Hyun Song, 2011.

The second section illustrates how Korean internet users abandoned Korean-based portals for US or globally-located service providers in a mass movement known as the 'Korean Cyber Asylum Seekers', which in turn had an effect on Korean web portals' commercial enterprises. As a result of this, the Korean portal industry's formerly exclusive control of the market was weakened as their market share fragmented. According to KoreanClick, unique visitors to Daum.net and Naver.com dropped from 22,920,000 to 22,190,000, and from 26,590,000 to 25,630,000, respectively. In contrast, Google's UV (Unique Visitor) and PV (Page View) figures in the Korean domestic market "increased from 5,360,000 to 6,410,000 (UV)" and "from 190,800,000 to 280,000,000 (PV) respectively", which represented an approximately '60% increase' in one year (Seoul Newspaper cited in D.H Song, 2011:64). This movement of Korean internet users away from Korean web portals to global web services prompted stakeholders in the Korean internet industry to define themselves as victims of the Candlelight 2008 protests (ibid.).

The third section of this chapter explores the fact that, as Korean internet users changed their behaviour power holders in Korean web portals took note and changed their attitudes toward the ordinary public. In a significant move, the web portal industry launched the Korean Internet Self-Governance Organization (KISO) in 2009 in an attempt to redefine the relationship between the government and Korean internet enterprises (D.H. Song, 2011). KISO published its own guidelines for the regulation of web portal activities, thus signalling the industry's ability to self-regulate. (KISO, Oct. 2009) The self-governance organisation soon came to blows with the Korean Communications Standards Commission (KCSC).

This prompted a second blow to the Lee government's attempts to control Korean cyberspace, which developed over online postings related to the sinking of a South Korean naval vessel on 26 March 2010. KISO rejected the KCSC's request to delete postings uploaded by Korean internet users relating to the incident. (D.H. Song, 2011) Nothing like this had ever happened before. However, my reading of this case is that it signalled the Korean web portals' tactical attempt to regain their customers' trust by championing their freedom of speech.

1. Korean Web Portals and the Lee Government

While the government's actions ushered in a newly regulated Korean cyberspace, they also resulted in a considerable loss of popularity for the government and a loss of faith in Korean web portals. The government tactic to intervene in the Korean web portals was to their plan relating to the internet laws, which were perceived as oppressive measures. Among them, the Cyber Defamation Law and the Compulsory Monitoring System became hotly debated issues. These two measures were directly related to interim codes that the Korean web portals had voluntarily conducted before Candlelight 2008. The Interim measure refers to:

> In accordance with The Telecom Networks and Information Act No. 44 section 2, information and communication service providers are able to block postings temporarily as an interim measure, if the service provider finds a possibility of dispute between the interested parties or cannot make a decision (Korean Ministry of Government Legislation: Feb. 2008).

The Korean web portals had conducted the same interim measures on request by deleting defamatory postings, or to block the postings. The period of the interim measure that the web portals had a right to perform this function was limited to 30 days. This self-regulation as conducted by the Korean portals was questioned by the Lee administration after Candlelight 2008. On July 2008 after the Candlelight 2008 protests had died down on the ground, the Grand National Party (the ruling party) held 'A Forum for a Healthy Internet Culture', which was organised by policy makers and the Yoido Institute. At the forum, a Network official at KCC, stated that:

> The web portal company can delete or perform an interim measure as requested by an injured party harmed by the postings. However, there is no article or statute in law to punish the web portals if they decline these requests. Therefore, a new article in law in accordance to this issue must be made (Youido Institute, 24 July 2008).

The ruling party's announcement resonated with the Minister of Justice who also pointed out the importance of establishing a Cyber Contempt Law when he asserted the web portal would be punished 'if a person requested deletion of the postings and the portal left the postings in place' (KCC, 2008). That is, compulsory interim measures were planned to support the Cyber Contempt Law. For example, internet activists and the press alarmed that if these bills had passed through parliament and

had been implemented on the internet, the web portal would have to delete anti-political postings when the government cited the proposed Cyber Contempt Law to request that postings be blocked (K.O. Choi, 2009). That is, such worrisome could be understood based on their perception that the power holders could have used this proposed legislation to turn the political situation around when they were criticized by ordinary people who used the internet to make their voices heard against their power.

The research conducted for this dissertation also found that the Korean web portals followed the Lee administration's request deleting postings in their web-sites, because they had no legal power to be against such governmental authorities and the cases relating to these were perceived by the people that the Korean web portals followed the Lee administration's requests in order to secure their profit and to avoid antagonising the government. In fact, they neither had power to challenge the government bodies' requests nor to make their institutional voices heard in the political circle. This can be understood from the statement of an interviewee from the Korean internet industry that 'the Telecom Networks and Information Act is a fundamental law, so we have submitted requests to weaken the regulations, but these have never been reflected in any reform of the regulation' (Interview, 13 Aug 2010).

Korean web portals followed the government's request to delete anti-government postings from their websites and even handed over personal information about their users. A representative of the web portal industry stated that, in relation to the monitoring service, that the web portals always agreed to requests to delete postings (ibid.). When the governmental bodies announced their plan for reforming bills related to the internet, Korean portals had little choice but to get in line with the Lee government's intentions in order to avoid being disadvantaged. Rather, they seemed to understand the political intention that lay behind the new proposed internet legislation. An official from the web portal industry stated that:

> Well, it seems that having been through Candlelight 2008, [the President] tends to think that false information is being diffused via the internet which links with the anti-government movement. Furthermore, there are many people in political circles, both in the ruling party and in the government, who believe that false information had infiltrated the Korean internet (Interview, 3 Sep. 2010).

This statement shows that the Lee administration and the Korean web portals view the internet from different perspectives. For the Lee administration, the internet is a political space and for the portals, it is a commercial arena. This resulted in a conflict between the state and the internet service providers. The Lee administration's internet-related measures resulted in the web portals' compliance with government regulations.

This statement also shows that the power of the web portal industry started to be eroded by government driven policy making. This is the key to understanding the effect of the draft reform bills on the Korean internet industry. The portals gradually realised that the government policies would impact negatively on their business as a result of its misconception of cyberspace. As a response, the web portals began to strengthen their organisation to become more responsive to changing government policies.[37] For example, the press reported that 'NHN (naver.com) added 5 more officials to its policy research team to deal with high ranking officials increasing that number to 20 members, similar to that of a global corporation' and similarly, 'Daum communication (Daum.net) recruited policy-related experts from the press industry to strengthen their political and public strategies' (Internet News Team, 24 Dec 2008). The question remains whether the Korean web portal industry should have had certain powers as an institution and if it should have exerted such influence in structuring Korean Internet culture. However, their corporate strategy in response to the Lee government's political stance on the Internet was insufficient to protect their business operations from strong political intervention.

Pressure from the Lee Administration

There were many cases where the prosecution seized documents at Daum Communications and NHS citing allegations of intellectual property law infringements. There were also surprising audits between 2008 and 2009. As mentioned already, in one famous case, Daum.net faced an unexpected tax audit in 2008 despite the fact that the audit was not expected until Aug 2009. Daum.net was

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37. KCC announced that it would impose penalties for any literal occasion when the law was breached (see Goo B.G., 2008).

fined around '£2,180,965, which was 3.4% of the total capital of Daum.net' (Betanews, 20 Aug 2008). An official at Daum.net stated with a wry smile, 'Well, we thought that the tax audit was carried out every five years and we were aware that it was not legitimised by law' (Interview, 13 Aug 2010).

Throughout several interviews with executives at internet-related institutions, I got the impression that although the prosecutor's investigation was supported by the constitution, the web service providers considered such administrative behaviour as acts of repression. Thus, it can be inferred that the web service providers seemed to think that such governmental intervention was an irritable reaction to the internet, but also a display of its power under the law. The Korean web portals' awareness that the Lee administration has a biased view of the internet was well illustrated when I conducted an interview with an official at the Korean internet industry was conducted.

> In 2009 there were 10 policy priorities announced by KCC of which only one section was related to the internet. There was a belief in the need to protect against the spread of infodemics on the Internet. Simply speaking, only one section was related to the Internet and that was concerned with the uploading of false information which showed how much the ruling party and the Blue House [Korean official residence of the president] were worried about this (Interview, 3 Sept 2010).

The imbalance between the political institution's intervention on the internet, which resulted from their distrust of cyberspace, and the corporate institution's profit motivated mechanism was well illustrated on February 2 2009 when the Fair Trade Commission (FTC), a governmental body, published 'the Internet Portal Competitiveness Report'. The report stated that 'the internet portal market in Korea can be characterised as a monopoly exercised by Naver.com beneath which Daum.net and SK communications compete with each other'. The FTC launched an investigation into changes in sales revenues and the market share of the major web portals over a four year period. They concluded that 'entry and liquidation in the web portal market was easy at the internet's developmental stage when web portals emerged, but it is now difficult for latecomers to enter the market' (F.T.C. 2008). The rationale for their statement was based on the fact that while the size of the web portal market was estimated at around 1.5 trillion won (in 2007), it was dominated by the Big 3, Naver.com, Daum.net and SK Communications (ibid.).

According to the verdict of the FTC, Naver.com's monopoly had been strengthened. The commission stated that

> the Big 3 had taken 90% of the market share as well as 90% total duration time of the users on the web…in this environment, sales practices are anticompetitive, because they capitalise on the company's dominant market position' (ibid.).

The TFC's stance was that the three portals, Daum.net, Naver.com and SK communications were monopoly and other minor web portal companies had to find hard to maintain or expand their business. Such interruptions in service were also well illustrated in market reports. For example, Rankey.com, which specialises in the analysis of websites, reached a similar conclusion to that of the FTC in the sense that "internet users' average website visit and page per view (PV) in 2008 had decreased compared to the previous year". In contrast, "the average time of the stay per person had increased, which proved that users tended to focus on their favourite websites in order to locate information rather than using a variety of websites" (cited in Inews 24, 2008).

Politically motivated intervention against the internet and the contradiction between state and non-state actors need to be approached critically. It is important to question why the monopolistic market environment of the Korean web industry started to be seen as problematic by governmental bodies from 2008 onwards. An interviewee at a web portal company understood this as a politically motivated attempt to undermine them. The interviewee stated that:

> The Fair Trade Commission accusation that Naver acted as a monopoly was political. Firstly, the Fair Trade Commission's accusation relating to Naver's market dominance, which was the fundamental issue, turned out to be false, because they had calculated Naver's sales including that of Daum.net and SK Communications. In fact, we took 70% of market share at that time (Interview, 8 July 2010).

A legal judgement was given in favour of Naver in 2009 after a year of proceedings when the court concluded the verdict that 'NHN did not act as the dominant market operator' (YTN News, 8 Oct 2009). However, this could be interpreted as the Lee administration's intention to exert power over the web portals.

The Pressure from Other Media Sectors

While the Korean Web portals dealt with state-driven political intervention, they also had to deal with the press industry and regulatory bodies. For example, the Korean Communications Standards Commission (KCSC) decided on July 1 2008, and without legal backing, to delete 58 out of 80 postings which related to a boycott of products by advertisers in the Cho-Sun, Jung-Ang and Dong-A daily papers. The reason for this deletion was legitimated by the KCSC by its statement that "the postings would have constituted an act of trespass or even an aggravated illegal act" (Daum Notice, 2008).

It was also reported that the Cho-Sun, Jung-Ang and Dong-A daily papers announced that they had decided not to provide Daum.net with news services from July 5. The news media reported that "While they did not provide any rationale for this decision, it was widely known that it resulted from their dissatisfaction about Daum.net's political reaction to the boycott call" which was launched on an online community hosted by Daum.net. (ZDNet Korea, 1 July 2008). It was also widely anticipated that 'the three news organisations' political declaration was a threat to Daum.net, because it would lose the service provided by the largest news suppliers' and this would directly impact on their PV (Page per View) and directly lead to a loss in profitability (ibid.). This reading is supported by an interview I conducted with an internet industry official. The interviewee used the boycott campaigns to illustrate the situation that the web portals were faced with at that time. The interviewee stated that certain internet users were active on Agora and other online cafés on Daum.net during Candlelight 2008 and this increased their traffic at the time:

> Big press companies such as Chosun stopped providing news. The press companies criticised the reaction of Daum.net to users' activism, because they saw us from the perspective of old media enterprise. From their perspective, we [the internet service providers] were the owners, so they thought that we could erase any postings if we wanted to. After the 2008 Candlelight demonstrations, Daum.net suffered a bit [laughs] (Interview, 13 Aug 2010).

Based on this interview it can be surmised that multi-layered pressure was placed on the web portal companies. Furthermore, the case above demonstrates the power game between government-friendly offline press institutions and the online media platforms. However, the key point here is that these cases reveal the power

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institutions' misunderstanding of the internet and their lack of ability to distinguish between the web and the internet service providers' role, and their users' adoption of the cyberspace as a public platform. The power holders in Korean society failed to appreciate the role of the web portal companies. One interviewee in the Korean web industry stated that:

> Regarding the issue of privacy protection, defamation and violation of other's rights in cyberspace, there were laws or jurisdictions to deal with these issues before. Even though the law existed to deal with these matters, they wanted to set up a new law that would only be applied to the Internet and that inflicted additional punishments. As this new legislative standard was stronger than that of the existing laws, it sometimes breached basic human rights … the business enterprises merely followed along with this, but the laws were normally applied to the public via our service platform. That is, if a person's basic human right is infringed while he/she uses our service, they blame us (Interview, 13 Aug. 2010).

Korean web portals found themselves in the unfortunate position of being made responsible for the Lee administration's problems. Based on interviews with them, adopting a political or non-political position was not their choice, as they had no political interest outside of their commercial priorities. However, the submissive tendencies in their pursuit of non-political goals were, in themselves, a political act. This is illustrated by a case where Daum.net changed the architecture of Agora system.[38] On July 2008, Daum announced that they would change the architecture of Agora. Daum had decided to reinforce the management system for users as malicious postings have been spread on Agora. In the announcement, they stated that:

Notice

1. Partly reveal IP address of every posting on Agora.

In order to increase the responsibility of the Internet users, an IP address of a writer will be opened with every posting and reply on Agora (ex: 123,456,***,789).

2. Reinforce monitoring: restriction of spam/ repeated postings.

If the accumulated number of postings of a user is more than a certain number of postings in the current 24 hours, the user will be monitored in

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[38] As stated earlier, Agora provides the spaces for user's online communications, such as spaces for an analysis of social issues and a fund-raising campaign to encourage people. Agora played a central role during Candlelight 2008 and this became the subject to be controlled by the state after the protest.

the real time and if his or her postings are contrary to the management
principles, the first action will be the restriction of writing on the bulletin
board and the second action will be the prohibition of using his or her ID.
After then, the list of the sanctions on the users will be connected with
their profile page in order to increase the reliability of Agora forums.
(Daum Notice, 2 July 2008)

Daum was widely criticised when they announced that they would expose Agora
users' IP addresses and personal IDs during Candlelight 2008. Daum insisted that
"the purpose of this was to heighten individual's responsibility when writing and
commenting online". (cited in Hankyung Daily, 4 July 2008). However, it caused
profound disquiet when it was revealed that users' privacy would be heavily eroded

Such cyberspace reformation initiated the users' strong opposition, because they were
concerned that this change could distort public opinion. While Daum's plan to
balance the voices through the mechanical maneuvering in 2008, Daum's
architectural changes continued in 2009. The press reported that Daum decided to
eliminate the 'Agora' section in the News section with the rationale of reinforcing the
specialty and reliability of the News section from April 2009. It was at this time that
the web service information trend started to shift from quality to quality and accuracy.
However, this trend shift was perceived in a diluted way due to the political situation
in the aftermath of Candlelight 2008. The press reported that the position of Agora in
the News section made it more accessible for Daum.net users to look at the postings
in Agora in brief while they looked at news articles on the main page. It was stated
that by placing Agora distanced from the News section and that discontinuing the
brief look through service, 'led the users to click the Agora icon to go to the Agora
service to explore the updated contents'. As a consequence, users felt that it was
Daum Communication's tactic to keep politically sensitive users away from their
usual place (J.W. Kim, April 2009a). One interviewee at the web portal industry
stated that:

> The decision to eliminate 'Agora' on the News Section on the main page was to
> follow the Press law.[39] The issue of the Press law revision was being discussed
> at that time. During the consultation, the provision that new contents should not
> be confused with the user created contents was added. Therefore, we had to

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[39] According to Press Law Clause 10 (3), Matters to be observed by Internet News Service Provider:
An Internet news service provider must make a clear division between a news article and user created
contents (UCC) in order not to make confusion between them. (Press Law).

take this into consideration and had to set up our clear standpoint. (Interview, 3 Sept. 2010).

That is, Daum intended to separate articles, which were provided by the press companies from user generated contents (UGC) in the 'Agora', which played more important role during Candlelight 2008 than the contents from the press, because of the revised press law. However, it is still moot point whether it was necessary to disable the brief look of the Agora posting. As a result, Agora users had to proceed to several web pages of Daum to access 'Agora'.

Regardless of the rationale of this front page design restructuring, users of Agora were against Daum's decision, because the felt that the power holder suppress Daum to change the architecture of the website. For example, it was reported that users insisted that the "decision was not reasonable and did not consider users' convenience". (J.H. Kwon, February 2009). In particular, it was also reported that as the decision was made after Minerva had arrested, "users raised doubts if there were any political pressures on it in order to decrease the number of users of Agora and then finally to close it" (ibid.). I argue that these case illustrate the anxieties of the internet users about how their voices were captured as they perceived this as a tacit agreement between the Lee administration and the Korean web portals, which was implicitly formed in the sense that "I will follow your rule, let us do our business!".

The Korean Web Portal and Users' Personal Information

Since Candlelight 2008, freedom of speech and the protection of personal information have been challenged repeatedly. This has arisen due to the Lee administration's apparent violation of citizens' rights to personal privacy and the safeguarding personal information, and the government have used this in order to regulate Korean cyberspace. Korean web portals have not escaped an associated level of criticism as well.

Minerva posted an article on 20 December 2008 in which he claimed that the government had issued an emergency order which banned seven major financial agencies from buying dollars in order to control the exchange rate (Minerva, Dec 2009). The prosecution considered this to be a libellous comment, and claimed that two billion dollars had been lost as a result of Minerva's posting (SBSNews, Jan

2009). Beyond consideration of the question about how a single posting by an ordinary internet user could influence the decisions of eminent bankers and damage the economy, the substantial issue was how the prosecution could have arrested Minerva so easily.

It was revealed that Daum.net, the web portal that hosted the site on which the article was posted, handed over Minerva's personal information to the prosecution (Ohmynews, Jan 2009). However, there was much debate about whether due legal procedure had been followed or whether Daum had been pressured into leaking the information. The left-wing media stated that this provides a clear indication of the extent to which 'web portals had lost the ability to resist government control of their activities" and "an obvious erosion of corporate ethics' (Khan News, 2009). Business ethics for them had come to mean compliance with the government's requests, but it was not only the Minerva case that illustrated the web portals' questionable behaviour.

In March 2009, the prosecutor arrested a producer of a television programme, *P.D. note*, who broadcasted a news item on the danger of diseased U.S beef, and alleging that the programme had distorted the truth. In April 2009, all the staff of *P.D. note* was arrested.   The prosecutor scrutinised the email account of the writer and publicised its contents as evidence that they had intentionally distorted the danger of US beef (J.C. Chung, 2012). Two problematic issues had arisen. Firstly, Daum.net, where the writer had her email account, had handed over her personal information to the prosecutor. Secondly, her lack of cyber privacy was publicly demonstrated by the power in the land. It is a moot point whether the public felt a genuine sense of fear. One thing that was certain was that, as an interviewee stated, internet users did 'not feel secure when using the service' any longer (Interview, 8 Sept. 2010) and these two very public cases were only the tip of iceberg.

This was supported by Park Young-Sun, the Democratic Party member working on the Legislation and Judiciary Committee. After her analysis of the KCC data relating to the scrutiny of internet users' email accounts she reported that:

> 3,306 Naver and Daum email accounts have been seized and searched during
> the first half of the year … If other companies were included, the number would

be increased … The problem is that most email accounts were seized and searched without any notice granted to the owners (in Ohmynews, Oct 2009).

This case clearly illustrate how the Lee administration's combined action with the web portals denigrated Korean society's human rights as well as freedom of speech between 2008 and 2010. Apart from the pressure that government pressure exerted, the web portal industry faced serious difficulties in maintaining profitability after Candlelight 2008. Likewise, a few tangible issues related to the conflict between the web portals, the political apparatus and other media institutions had occurred.

2. The Korean Web Portals Facing a Difficult Phase: The Loss of Their Users

Korean Web portals faced another problem relating to their business growth. On September 2008 KCC published a report entitled 'Research on the real state of internet use', showing that the total numbers of users had increased by 0.01%. The number of page per view of the web portals had stagnated as a consequence (KCC & NIDA 2008). This decrease in the use of Korean web portals had started in the second quarter of 2008.

For example, the press reported that Daum.net and Naver.com's search engine sales revenues showed a marked stagnation in the second quarter of 2008. The press reported that Naver.com's revenues in the second quarter of 2007 amounted to 151.7 billion won and Daum.net's totalled 304 hundred million which was only a 1.9% and 1.6% increase respectively. It was analysed that 'the stagnation of web portal search business resulted from the economic recession', because 'advertisers cut down their advertising budget' (D.W. Park, 2008).

This slowdown in sales growth was understood as signalling that the growth potential of the portal business had reached its upper limit, and it became clear that the Korean web portal market had matured (ibid.). However, the slump in the web portal market, while seeming to be a purely economic problem, can also be interpreted from a different angle. It is important to note that Korean web portals had been warned to expand their business sectors in 2008 in order to overcome this slump, but through their actions in 2008 that had inadvertently handed some of their business over to global web service providers.

The Korean Web Portals' Losses

It seems at first that the slow growth of the web portal business was only an economic problem. This was the key period for the Korean web portals to secure their business sectors as well as to find a new business sector. However, their business was interrupted by the global web services such as Gmail and YouTube.
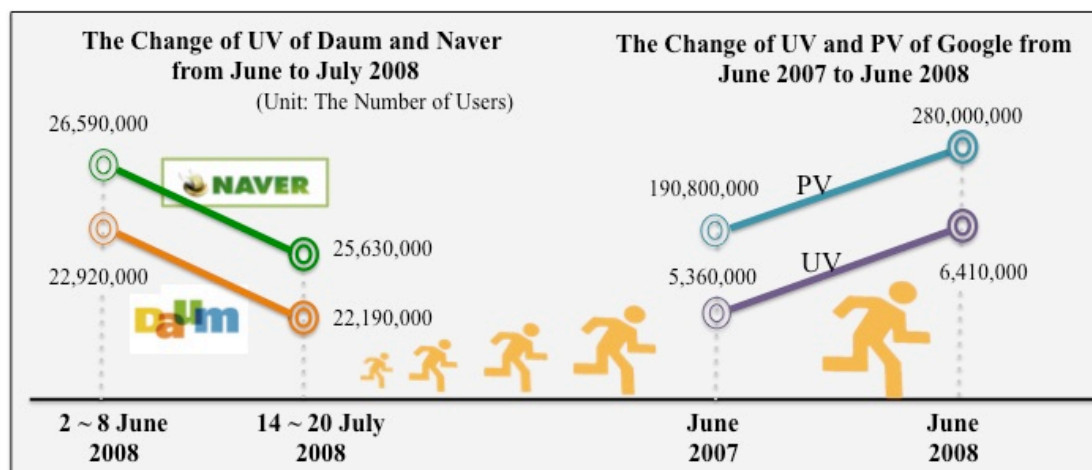
Figure 4.1: The Change of UV of Daum, Naver and Google (Seoul Newspaper, 2008).

After Candlelight 2008, the web portal's drop in UV and PV was readily identifiable. The press and media analysts concluded that numbers resulted from the "KCSC's request to delete postings and the portals' compliance with the committee's decision relating to the boycott campaign against advertisers in the Cho-Sun, Jung-Ang and Dong-A newspapers" (B.K. Goo, July 2008; B.S. Choi, April 2009). This issue will be discussed more fully in Chapter 6. Such a hypothesis was widely accepted, because there were statistical figures to support the veracity of this, and 'Korean click' published more data relating to this. "Gmail's average weekly PV amounted to 1,300,000 in April". After the incident of the scrutiny of the script writer of the T.V. programme *P.D. Note,* "it increased by 20% by June, to 1,600,000" (cited in Sisapress, July 2009).

It was also found that the Korean government also requested Google Korea's individuals' personal information, but it failed to acquire this information. The press reported an official at Google to state that:

> The Korean government requested personal information approximately ten times last year. The governmental bodies still request us to hand in the IDs of our customers, because they think we record the resident registration numbers of our customers. We open our members' email information only if a case meets the remit of international law and US law at the same time. The case must be defined as criminal by anyone's standard. If the case does not fulfil these requirements, we do not open our customers' information (cited in ITnews, June 2009).

Such a patently different management system between the Korean web portal industry and Gmail unveiled the characteristics of the Lee administration's internet governance, while also underlining its clear limitations. This seemed to have a direct impact on domestic emailing services. For example, Daum Communications published their yearbook, 'Sustainable Growth Report' in 2010.

In the report, it was found that customer dissatisfaction for Daum.net's email service increased between 2009 and 2010. 'Very Unsatisfied' ratings rose from 8.7 to 14%, 'Dissatisfaction' grew from 5.2 % to 8% (Daum Report, 2010). Korean web portals had to find other revenue sources and business sectors to increase their profit, and video streaming service became one of them. However, global service platforms such as YouTube started to make inroads into the Korean market, which resulted in Korean internet users' anxiety about the 'real name system' as discussed in Chapter 3.
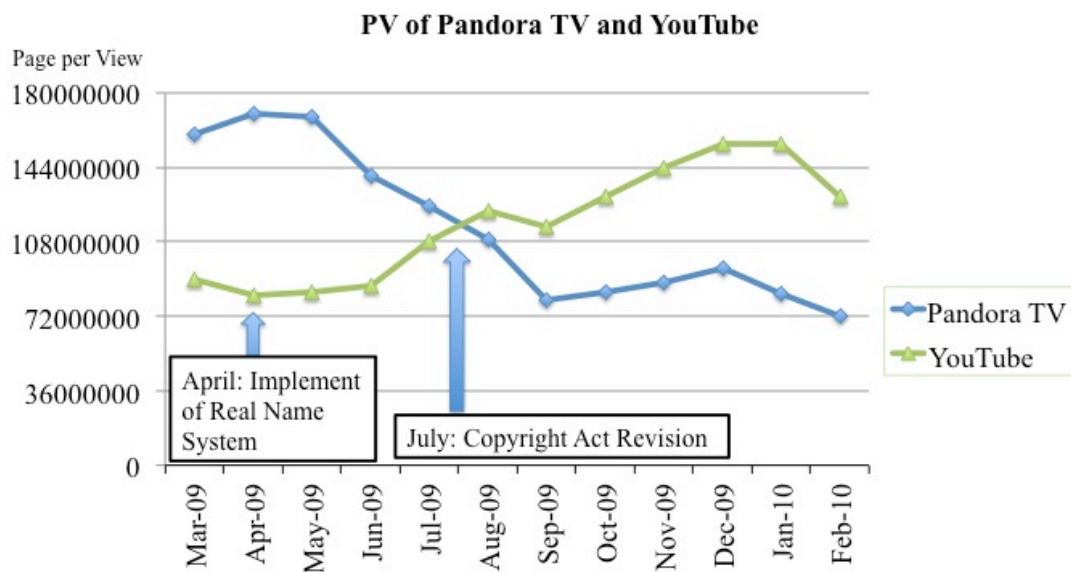
Figure 4.2: PV of Pandora TV and YouTube [Rankey Data Lab, 2010]

For example, the PV of Pandora TV, which was ranked as the No.1 video streaming service provider, amounted to "30,860,000 in the first week of April 2010". This was a significant drop compared to its 'PV in the first week of April 2009, which was 50,100,000' (Herald Korea, Mar 2010).[40] Similarly, SK Communications announced that UCC and video services would be closed from 20 Feb. 2010 due to the significant drop in the numbers of users and the issue of intellectual property.[41] SK Communications stated that 'the company had closed the Nate Video Streaming Service in order to focus on valuable services among various one-person media … the copyright issue caused by the scrap function was also a potential risk' (cited in I.G. Lim, Feb. 2010).[42] The Naver Video service was also closed in April 2010. An Interviewee at the web portal stated that:

> [For Closure of the video-streaming service] We merely made a business judgment … Video service did cost a lot of money, but there were already well developed services available in the market, for example YouTube, Pandora and Afreeca. Thus, Naver did not necessarily develop this service to continue its business in this sector (Interview, 8 July 2010).

The interviewee stated that it was a strategic business decision to close the service without considering those individuals who had been using the service, and uploading their memories and experiences on the site. It can be assumed that Naver could not find a secure revenue source for the Naver video service, particularly when compared to their levels of investment, and the video steaming service market was so competitive that it was difficult for them to make inroads into the sector as a relative latecomer. Furthermore, the decision to close the service, according to the interviewee, did not breach their brand building as an internet search-centred web portal, but it did breach business ethics in terms of taking care of their customer's space where their memories should be remained.

It was believed that the significant drop in PV and the service closures were as a result of cyber asylum. For example, the movement of Korean internet users away

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[40] This article also stressed that the drop in other Korean video streaming service providers' conditions were even worse than that of Pandora TV. For example, they reported that another Korean video streaming service 'Mncast's PV during the same week dropped 75% compared with the same period in 2009' (ibid.).

[41] These services had been running for five years

[42] SK announced that they would provide a service for the user to backup their uploaded videos and images (Nate Notice 268, Sep 2010).

from Korean web portals to global web services prompted stakeholders in the Korean internet industry to define themselves as victims of the 2008 Candle Light Demonstrations (D.H. Song, 2011). An official at Daum.net states that:

> We are also a victim of Cyber Asylum Seeking. Last year, Gmail was No.1 [in the Korean market] in terms of time duration. What this signifies is that people, who use email, actively moved [away] from our company to Gmail. After the email account of the writer of the TV programme *P.D. Note* was scrutinized by the government, our email service usage rate dropped significantly. It is worrying … If people leave, because the quality of our service is bad, then we should be able to attract them back again by upgrading our service. If not, something is wrong (Interview, 3 Sept. 2010).

This Korean internet service providers' view on the cyber asylum seekers was based on their anxieties of their loss of their business territories. Another hotly debated issue in relation to this Korean web portal's competition with the global service provider was related to data sharing, when Google searched through the Korean web portals with their robot and this information appeared on Google as a query results.

The Korean internet web service providers' anxieties about the global web service providers were illustrated when Naver.com showed a hostile reaction to the global service provider's domestic market entrance. For example, Jun-Ho Lee, the COO, who was in charge of Naver's search engine stated on 25 March 2009 that "Google Korea seemed to be enjoyed a free ride on Naver's service provision without expending any effort" (Y.S. Choi, June 2012). One stakeholder in the web industry stated that:

> Google has different characteristics from the Korean web portals. Google does not generate its own content. Google does not own its content. Instead it is an instrument for conducting web searches. Google conducts web crawling, ranking websites and generating relevant lists for its users ... In contrast, when Korean web portals started to launch their businesses, there were few websites written in Korean. In fact, there was no Korean content. There was content such as blogs and online cafes services that users had created with tools offered by the web portals. Another content category is one that web portals created on their own, not by the users contributing to the database. It is fair that Google cannot use the content in the second case (Interview, 8 Aug. 2010).

From the Korean web service providers' perspectives as quoted above, Google was conducting unfair trading practices as Google was harvesting their database. The

statements above also displayed the anxiety of domestic web portal enterprises when faced with competition from global internet service enterprises, as well as testifying to their desire to maintain a relative dominant position within a closed system. It is critical to point out that it is Internet users who did the significant data mining and data gathering in order for them to make a profit.

Another issue that caused the closure of web portals' video streaming service was that of copyright online. This was a highly debated topic between 2008 and 2010, because under the revised copyright law, implemented from 25 June 2009, the online service operator, i.e. the web portal, should have filtered content that was unauthorized for use under copyright law (The National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, Copyright, 22 April 2009). Furthermore, Korean web portals also promoted this.

> Under the revised Copyright Law Articles 133-2 and 133-3, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism would shut down blogs and bulletin boards if users breached this law three times...Under this law it was also illegal for a blogger to post a Korean pop song as the background music on his/her blog (Daum Report, 20012).

The problematic issue here was related to the effectiveness of the law, because the law focused too much on the copyright protection and did not consider everyday uses of the online contents. The most famous example was the blocking of a home video on Naver.com that featured a girl who was 5 years old and singing a Korea pop song titled 'I am Crazy' (Dam-Bi Son) for 50 seconds. This posting was blocked because using the original lyrics underneath the clip was unauthorized by the copyright holder. (KCC, Nov 2009, p. 90). It is important to note that it was time when the Youtube users in the world uploaded the pop songs with lyrics. Tussles over copyright issues such as these were often depicted as another negative feature of the Korean internet, and the press continuously analysed that such issues became one of the reasons why Korean internet users' migrated to YouTube, which was unconcerned by cases and examples such as these (Sisapress, July 2009).

It is my contention that the open strategies of Korean web portals from 2009 were not for the benefit of internet users but were actually intended to support their commercial interests. This was proved when the major web portal companies announced that they would close their video and UCC services arguing that the changed internet

environment had resulted in three major structural changes: firstly, the significant drop in users; secondly, the lack of an adequate revenue model; and, lastly, issues relating to the breach of intellectual property law. However, users were frustrated as data that they had uploaded as *aide memoires* to their lives would disappear at once.

The global internet services, such as Google and Yahoo, have settled into the Korean market, particularly after the emergence of the mobile internet market. Google took the second place in the favourite research platform among Androids mobile users in Korea. According to KoreanClick, "divided by share of time used, the top 3 video streaming websites are DaumTVpot, YouTube and PandoraTV, which share 66 percent in total" and "Youtube takes 25 percent, the highest single share" (KoreanClick, Nov. 2011).

3. Korean Web Portals become the Champions of Freedom of Speech

As Korean internet users changed their behaviour, the portal power holders took note and changed their attitudes toward the public. This is well illustrated by the Korean web portals' annual review and financial report:

> Daum has been considering developing a policy related to users' rights so that users are able to use the internet more conveniently. As the internet has no frontier, the effectiveness of domestic law related to the internet services provided by foreign companies has been embroiled in controversy. It is indicated that the direction of domestic internet regulations that prevent the adverse occurrences on the internet of episodes like slandering and libel are far from the global standard. In particular, the regulations have caused infringements of users rights. As a consequence, some domestic users have been trying cyber asylum in order to avoid the regulations. Thus, the overseas internet is preventing infringement of users' rights by spontaneous self-regulation of civic groups and the internet users rather than repressive government regulations (Daum Report, 2009, 20).

It can be assumed that internet users' leaving the web portals resulted in a significant blow to the Lee government's attempts to intervene in Korean cyberspace. In a significant move, the web portal industry launched the Korean Internet Self-Governance Organization (KISO), which was established in March 2009 in an

attempt to develop the relationship between the government and Korean internet business enterprises. KISO's objectives, according to them, included:

1) Establishing and developing codes of conduct and guidelines

2) Managing policy decisions including online postings at the request of

    member companies

3) Cooperating with international organizations related to internet self-governance

4) Carrying out other additional activities related to organizational objectives. (KISO, Oct. 2009)

KISO also published its own guidelines for the regulation of web portal activities, signalling the industry's willingness to self-regulate. They announced that the web "portals would not accept any request by the authorities" such as a law court, National Election Commission, the Constitutional Court, central state institutions and that of affiliated organization as the governmental bodies "to block adverse web comments" in order to prevent abuses of political and legal power (ibid.). KISO also stated that

> local government bodies and state institutions could not be defined as subjects that had access to the basic rights guaranteed under the temporary measures relating to defamation, therefore they could not appeal to its provisions (ibid.).

The person concerned stated that 'this policy announcement has just reaffirmed the definition of the local governmental bodies and the state institutions defined by the constitutions', and he also stated that 'we are expecting to deal with the policies on the postings in conjunction with the interim act more systematically' (ibid.). The self-governance organization soon came to blows with the KCSC over postings related to the Chenamham incident, the sinking of a South Korean naval vessel on March 26, 2010 (D.H. Song, 2011).

The Cheonan ship sinking mystery

The Cheonan, a South Korean navy corvette was exploded and 'sank near a disputed sea border with North Korea' on 26 March 2010 when the vessel conducted a patrol mission in cooperation with the United States and other national military teams. 46

soldiers, most of them in their 20s, were killed by this incident. (The New York Times, May 2010) The cause of the sinking was not obvious. A South Korean investigation team consisting of Korean Military Intelligence and experts from the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Sweden confirmed that the Cheonan vessel had been sunk by a torpedo fired from a North Korean submarine. The MND (Ministry of National Defence) announced that:

> The result of the verification process produced from the Scientific and objective approach to the Cheonan vessel incident in cooperation with foreign and domestic experts. Having analyzed variations of parts from the seabed and the shape of the hull, Cheonan vessel's sinking was caused by the explosion of the torpedo underwater shock wave and bubble effects occurred the vessels cutting. The weapon system was identified as 259kg torpedo, which was made by North Korea. We came to a conclusion that the torpedo was projected by a North Korean mini-sub, which is the only way we can explain the Cheonan vessel incident. (Ministry of National Defense, 20 May 2010).

The GNP, the ruling party, also announced that the Cheonan ship was sank, because it was secretly attacked by North Korean forces. However, the progressive party raised doubts about MND's (Ministry of National Defense) report into the incident, because the evidence as well as the data that they opened to the public were not convincing enough. The progressive party also pointed out that the government's report relating to the explosion was significantly different from the typical signs of a torpedo attack. Furthemore, North Korea had denied that they were involved in the Cheonan ship incident. As a consequence, only 32% of the public trusted the government's report regarding the Cheonan ship case, while 35% of the people haven't trusted it (H.H. Jou, July 2008).[43]

In the meantime, people who did not believe the government's investigation report about the Cheonan ship incident, which blamed the North Korea, posted their comments on the internet. For instance typical comments included 'The Cheonan ship was sunk by the US Navy's submarine', 'Lee government fabricated the investigation report on the Cheonan ship incident. In particular, it is definitely fiddled that there was a written word, "No. 1," on the North Korean torpedo' (Inews, July 2010). Their comments were quickly spread on the internet.

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[43] However, the conservative party countered by arguing that anyone who raised doubts about their version of the incident was a pro-North Korean leftist.

The government designated as rumour-mongering those online postings who offered opinions counter to the officially stated line. They also sent the web portals an official letter requesting them to delete the postings. The police then requested the deletion of these supposedly illegal postings, citing the Telecommunications Basic Act. (Kyunghyang Daily, Oct 2010) However, the companies did not follow these political and legal instructions on this occasion. Therefore, the KCSC officially suggested that the companies eliminate the postings. According to Clause 7, Article 44 of the Network Law, illegal and harmful content must be deleted if the KCSC requests it. The committee based their request on the assertion that the Chenamham incident had the possibility of fomenting public anxiety. (KCSC, June 2010)

While it was customary that web-based businesses would follow the KCSC's suggestions, nevertheless, the companies did not merely follow KCSC's request. Instead, they asked KISO an advice how to react to this matter. KISO rejected KCSC's request to delete those postings uploaded by Korean internet, stating that there was no evidence that these comments were causing social turmoil.

According to their decision statement, KISO stated that:

> In respect to the Constitutional Court's decision, postings [that KCSC requested to delete] have not contained false information that will harm the formation of public opinion and cause social chaos'. Therefore, we shall decide that the case[s] is not applicable [to delete] (KISO 2010).

Nothing like that had ever happened before. An spokesperson at the Korean web portals stated that the Chenamham incident had the second biggest impact on the Korean cyberspace after the arrest of 'Minerva' (Interview, 6 Sept. 2010).

A stakeholder in the web industry stated that:

> Different judgments on the postings relating to the Cheonan sinking illustrated the difference between the state and the web portals' view of cyberspace. It is a question of whether one sees online information merely as potentially infodemic and malicious, or if one accepts the possibility of disinformation that can be corrected by the users (Interview, 3 Sept. 2010).

Another official at the web portal industry stated that:

> The government wants to deal with this matter through the law, because the application of the law is flexible depending on the government's interpretation.

KISO acts to protect users. If the Korean web portals did not have power, the postings would be deleted. We had a reason to resist the government (Interview, 6 Sept. 2010).

One of KISO's staff members indicated that the organisation had made a different decision to KCSC. Chang Hee Kim, the policy director at KISO, stated that:

Although some problematic postings on the internet need to be censored, the manner of censorship shouldn't generate outrage. This decision meets our obligation to fulfill the legal requirement at least when the governmental bodies including the police request the internet service companies to delete internet postings (S.M. Kim, 2010).

It was known to be the first case of the KCSC failing to have postings eliminated that it had highlighted. He also mentioned that KISO has expected to build a system of cooperation between public regulation and commercial self-regulation, in order to foster public trust in the running of Korean cyberspace. Thus, it was necessary to establish a process whereby objections could be lodged against official requests to eliminate certain comments or postings (Interview, 13 Aug 2010). However, it is hard to view this as representing the Korean web portals' sincere sympathy for Korean internet users' freedom of speech. The portals had not conceived of this as forming a part of their civic obligations until they began to lose customers. Furthermore, KISO's fight with the KCSC can be seen as part of their tactics to clean up their submissive brand image. I found that KISO's rejection of KCSC's request to delete postings online occurred after KCSC and KISO had established a cooperative regulatory system unofficially, which was also about to be announced officially. An official at KCSC stated that:

We [at KCSC] decided to seek self-regulation and were working on detailing the issues to prepare for this ... What we were going to do was let the business stakeholders deal with cases relating to defamation first. Then, we would mediate the dispute if the case was too complicated for the business stakeholder to deal with ... KISO knew about this and we were about to announce this ... It was surprising to see KISO's behaviour [regarding the South Korean naval sinking and the resulting public commentary]. (Interview, 6 Aug. 2010)

An official at KCSC also stated that:

KISO stood against KCSC and refused the request to delete the postings. However, there was a hidden truth, which was not exposed by the media. Web portals enquired with KISO about deleting the postings relating to the Cheonan

naval sinking, which contained certain rumours. KISO stood at the side and officially announced that the web portals would not delete the postings as KCSC requested. However, some portals had deleted the postings by themselves. This was not reported to the public. As a consequence, public opinion was shaped by the sense that the relationship between KISO and KCSC was a conflictual one, a battle between commercial self-regulation and state-centric regulations (ibid).

When KISO announced their refusal to follow KCSC's decision, Dong-Jin Sung, the head of KISO, stated that 'Minerva's case would have been different [i.e. that he would not have been arrested] if KISO had been established at that time,' and this became a well-known truism (cited in PD Journal, July 2010).

Kim Borami, a lawyer, argues that 'the Korean web portals did not accept the KCSC's request as they did before and brought this up for discussion as they worried about complaints from their users'. She explained further that "if the Korean web portals had accepted the KCSC's request and deleted the postings, they would not only have faced a difficult from a business perspective" (i.e. users leaving their web-sites), but it would also have been a problematic situation from 'a constitutional and legal perspective' (B. Kim, July 2010). The web portals' refusal to comply with KCSC's request to delete the postings relating to the South Korean navy ship sinking represented a successful manoeuvre on their part.

While the Lee administration exercised legislation to control the portals, this was limited in its effectiveness by the impossibility of forcing the global web service providers to follow the state's lead. As a consequence, Korean internet users left those sectors of Korean cyberspace where the state's attempted cyber control exerted the most influence, such as email communications and video streaming services. After their data miners left, it was too late for the Korean web portals to re-establish some of those business sectors where they used to dominate. The launch of KISO was a result of the Korean web portals' strategy to secure their profits in the struggle between the state, the Korean web portals and internet users.

The political power holders were also aware of the dilemma that the web industry faced. According to a report published by the National Assembly Research Service (NARS) on 15 April 2009, it was expected that 'the strengthening of internet policies would cause Korean internet users to migrate from Korean web service providers to their global counterparts, in other words forming a pattern of cyber asylum, which would have an obvious negative impact on domestic web service providers'. (National Assembly Research Service, 15 April 2009) It was reported that if the reform bills relating to the Real Name System, the Confidential Communication Law, and the Telecom Networks and Information legislation are implemented, cyber asylum would be accelerated. The NARS report also asserted that:

> Cyber asylum will have a negative impact on the Korean web portal industry. The reason for this is that the Korean web portals make a profit with search engines and emailing services and declining users resulted in cyber asylum will cause the profit loss as a consequence (Ibid.).

In April 2010, KCC announced that it would launch a taskforce team (TFT) to review Internet regulation as part of a reform of media regulation in which stakeholders in the Web industry, government parties, and scholars would get involved together. (KCC April 2010) and this presented a substantial change in the view of the government on the internet. The Lee administration's main priority was rapid economic growth and the IT sector could have been considered to be one of the driving forces of the governments' economic development project. They eventually realized that cyber control would considerably erode IT development. The government faced a choice, not only in terms of the tensions between national governance and the principle of the global market, but also in terms of the conflict between the political desire to neuter Korean cyberspace and their intent to promote the economy via the IT industry. This dilemma seemed to enable the Lee government and the Korean web portals to reconcile. Furthermore, the rather closed nature of the Korean portal industry started to change as the portals began to share data. This will be discussed fully in the next chapter.

Cyber Asylum Seekers

The government's actions as well as the Korean web portals' inefficiency in responding to the government and their users' compliance were not without reaction from internet users, and the 'Cyber Asylum Seeker's Project' can be seen in this context. The Cyber Asylum Seeker's Project refers to a popular movement in the Korean internet in which users who had established online communities, or 'cafés', on Korean web portals established new communities on websites hosted on U.S. registered domains, in order to escape Korean government surveillance. The following chapter will discuss this in more detail.

Conclusion

Chapter 4 analysed how the Korean web portals' entrepreneurship has changed by the aftermath of Candlelight 2008, and argues that the Korean web portals' entrepreneurship was affected by the Lee administration's state-driven cyber intervention. Interviewees from the web industry expressed either explicitly or implicitly the belief that the Lee administration put pressure on the web portals. The chapter also examined cases where the Korean web portals complied with the state-driven cyber intervention in order to maintain their businesses. To illustrate this, the cases where web portals had to merely delete the users' posting due to KCSC and other governmental bodies' requests were discussed. It also further evaluated episodes where the portals handed over the personal information of their users to the prosecutors and the police. My argument is that the Korean web portals believed that they were being victimised by state-driven internet regulation because that regulation was not equally applied to global web service providers.

I then looked at how the portals' powerlessness against the state resulted in profit losses due to their users' leaving, which have become known as cyber asylum seeking. As Korean internet users changed their behaviour, the power holders at Korean web portals lost several businesses sectors to global web service providers such as Google and YouTube. It is important to note that Korean web portals took note of this and changed their attitudes toward the public. In this context, I highlighted the case where the web portal industry launched KISO in 2009 in an

attempt to redefine the relationship between the government and Korean internet enterprises. KISO published its own guidelines for the regulation of web portal activities, thus signalling the industry's ability to self-regulate. As outlined here, this self-governance organization soon came to blows with the KCSC over postings related to the sinking of a South Korean naval vessel on 26 March 2010. KISO officially rejected the KCSC's request to delete postings uploaded by Korean internet users relating to the incident. This chapter argues that we should not understand KISO and other web portals' other strategies to protect their users from the state as the Korean web portals' championing of freedom of speech, but rather it provides evidence of their commercial self-interest overriding their previously very compliant relationship to the state.

Chapter 6. Underground Cyber Asylum Seekers and Global Internet Services 2010[44]

Introduction

This chapter explores internet users' various responses to the Lee administration's cyber intervention as well as the Korean web portals' attitude to these new internet policies. While the announcement of internet measures had a negative impact on Korean internet users temporarily, the limitations of domestic internet regulation emerged when global corporations, such as Google and YouTube, refused to comply with the measures that the Lee government policies had placed on the local internet. As a consequence of government pressure on cyberspace and the limitations of these efforts, local internet users started to leave Korean-based portals for US or globally-based service providers in a mass movement known as 'Cyber Asylum Seeking'.

Firstly, the chapter assesses the case of Minerva, a famous internet user who was arrested because he posted articles against government economic policies. The incidents relating to Minerva are particularly significant, as they illustrate the effect of the Lee administration's cyber policies as well as indicating an acceleration of fear diluting Korean cyberspace. The chapter then discusses the cyber asylum seekers project and the impact of these individuals on the power holders, namely underground cyber asylum seekers.

Secondly, the chapter discusses the cyber asylum seekers' project. This project refers to one of the most important online popular movements. This saw the emergence of user-established online communities (or 'cafés') on Korean web portals that encouraged groups to migrate to websites hosted on US registered domains in order to be free from government surveillance. The chapter assesses two websites that pursued the cyber asylum seeking project online, NetizenExile.net and Agora Justice Forum. The section sheds light on the roles internet users played in the community to set up their plans for cyber asylum seeking.

Thirdly, the chapter deals with the failure of the cyber asylums seekers project. The main aim of the project, cyber asylum seeking, turned out to be a failure due to

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[44] An abridged version of this chapter was published online, see Dong-Hyun Song (2011).

various reasons. Among them, distrust among the members and the loss of project momentum were key factors. This section illustrates how this distrust of government officials also fostered fearfulness among online community members. The online communities that pursued cyber asylum seeking received public attention after users felt that the Lee administration's implementation of internet measures and cyber policing were oppressive. As a consequence, a significant number of new members joined the project. However, I noticed in the postings on an online forum that new members questioned the project's direction and began criticising the old members' dominance over the community. This conflict between old and new members accelerated the distrust among the participants, which originated from their fear that government officials had joined the community under the anonymity system to stir up the project. This was an important factor in the failure of the Cyber Asylum Seekers project.

This chapter focuses in particular on the argument that migration to global web service providers was motivated by reasons other than the political concerns of the cyber asylum seekers' movement. I argue that the logic and use of the term cyber asylum seekers in Korean society implies a political rationale, so it cannot encompass other cyber users who traversed without any political intention at the time. My findings indicate that the flight to global web services prompted stakeholders in the Korean internet industry to define themselves as victims of Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath. This led to the formation of the Korean Internet Self-Governance Organization (KISO) in March 2009. This self-regulatory body resulted from the Korean internet service providers' desire to secure their customer base, which is supported by a case in which KISO came to blows with the Korean Communications Standard Commissions (KCSC) over postings related to the sinking of a South Korean navy ship on 26 March 2010. KISO rejected the KCSC's request to delete postings relating to the incident. Therefore, I argue that this is another example of how underground cyber asylum seekers led to the expansion of the constellation of Korean cyberspace.

For a theoretical engagement with these cases, the section highlights that cyber asylum seeking projects resulted from the displacing effect of the Lee administration's cyber interventions. As examined in the Chapter 3, the Lee administration' interventionist strategy resulted in the silencing of some sectors of

Korean cyberspace. However, in de Certeau's sense (1984), power holders cannot fully capture voices online and voices slipped in Korean cyberspace. In de Certeau's sense (2000), voices that felt repression cannot be silenced fully and they go off the track of everyday practices. Radical activism, the cyber asylums seekers' project, can be understood in this context, which will be discussed again at a theoretical level in Chapter 6.

My main argument here is that the issue of distrust between internet users should not be considered a negative aspect of Korean internet culture. Rather, it shows how online anonymity can create anxieties and impacts on the formation of cyber culture particularly when cyber dwellers felt that they were subjected to abnormal levels of state of repression. This case also illustrates how captured voices lost their plurality so that they became unified and fixed in place so that they could not accept other voices. I argue that internet users' distrust of both the power of Korean web portals and of other online members resulted from the government's ineffective intervention and the domestic web portals' dependence on existing political institutions.

I suggest that we should understand cyber asylum seekers not as one unified entity, but that we consider their impact on the formation of power relations in cyberspace, which was never their intention. I argue that it is only possible to determine how underground cyber asylum seekers had a great impact on shaping the expansion of Korean cyberspace by looking at how the Lee administration and the web portals changed their views of the users. Overall, the concept of underground cyber asylum seekers affirms the importance of the user group in the cyber control discourse, because the group's mobilisation, namely their traversality in de Certeau's sense, produced another constellation within Korean cyberspace at the same time that state and non-state actors were locked in a power struggle. Landscaping other space dynamics, for example the space of global web service providers in the Korean market through Korean users' traversality, is a very important dimension of the changing causal nexus of the relationship between the state, the web portal and the users, which was ultimately driven by users.

1. Anxieties of Korean Internet Users after the 2008 Event

As briefly discussed in Chapter 3, many internet users perceived the Lee administration's cyber control together with the web portals' compliance as a negative impact. The internet users' anxiety about the pressure from power holders can be found on larger forums as well as on small blogs. For example, one internet user posted an article about an incident that postings uploaded on Agora were deleted.

> 2008.05.02. 23:35
>
> 22 May 2008. My name has been deleted after signing for impeachment on the board. It is funny and ridiculous. What the hell are they doing? I wish someone could kill them (ID: Dogdung: 2008)

Furthermore, there was an internet user arguing him/herself as a whistle blower who let internet users know that Daum.net censored the postings, which were subsequently deleted by Daum.net but then posted on other websites by users who had copied the posting.

> Title: I am reposting as the writing of one of Daum's staff has been deleted.
>
> Dear all at the Daum Agora Forum,
>
> Although I am a daily paid part-time member of staff at Daum, as one of Koreans, I confess conscientiously to all of you. Daum has been controlling any postings related to the impeachment of President Lee Myung-Bak. I hope you are not deceived by Daum's trickery. It is regrettable that people are not able to criticize the current political situations as they want (ID: Shinto, April 2008)

Although the truth of this posting cannot be verified, it received 8,848 hits. This could be an illustration of the users' fear that the government's cyber control had trickled into small online communities. For example, we can also find references on Clien.net, an online community site that deals with general information and IT information. The manager of Clien.net announced that Clien had decided to close their section related to political issues on 28 June 2009. The administrator stated that:

(Notice)

We are closing the bulletin board of the current state of affairs temporarily.

I am a manager.

We are closing the bulletin board of current state of affairs due to the current social unrest. We apologize for any inconvenience caused. Once the current state of affairs becomes stable, we will open it again (Clien.net Admin, June 2009).

The cyber asylum seekers project can be understood as a response to these notices, as users started to leave Korean web portals because they felt pressure from the state as well as the web portals. One such site was ExileKorea, which was created during the Candlelight protest to archive postings from Agora after the users thought that the host, Daum.net, began to censor Agora postings under pressure from the government.

2. The Cyber Asylum Seeking Project

When the protest reached its zenith, internet users started a boycott campaign against major newspaper publishers such as Chosun, Dong-A, Jung-Ang, which they accused of giving false reports in favour of the government. They also began a boycotting campaign against sales companies that put their advertisements in the three national newspapers. As a result of this campaign, it was reported that sales companies stopped putting their advertisements in the newspapers and the government (court) gave the guilty verdict to internet users who had participated in the campaign by tracking users' IP addresses. In turn, it was also reported that many internet users started to move their activity (activism) from Korean web portals to foreign ones such as Google.com and kept the boycott campaign going as the government could not access foreign web portals to trace users' IP address (B.G Goo, July 2008). Based on information from one source ExileKorea.net was one these websites.

One administrator of this site, whose ID is Jonathan, stated in an interview that the motivation to open up ExileKorea was to avoid government repression of Korean cyberspace, particularly that of open-access online forums, such as Agora. He states that

There was a consensus among the internet users in May that censorship on Agora got tighter. To put it correctly, it was 24/05/08 when the police conducted a fierce control on the demonstration participants. Along with arrests of the public, the police gave us the impression that they considered Agora as a criminal organization. They asked the arrested if they were members of Agora at first (Online Interview, 4 May 2010).

He added that when important postings on Agora began to be deleted he wanted to preserve them, so that the flow of the online discourse could still be available to be read by users. He stated that he opened up the cyber asylum seeking web sites not because of the US beef import case but out of frustration with the forceful suppression of a peaceful demonstration (Online Interview, 4 May 2010). His concern about the deletion of postings is also borne out by other users who posted to Exile Korea complaining that their posts on Agora had been deleted without permission. Several other postings on ExileKorea feature users' complaints of injustice when their posts on Agora left them susceptible to the accusation that they had breached the defamation law.

Through observation of postings related to the Cyber Asylum Project, the researcher was able to map other online communities related to this project as well as an open online forum in greater detail. The websites that were set up as part of the cyber asylum seeking project are as follows:[45]

1) Agorian (Agorian.kr)

Agorian.kr was opened on 24 May 2008. At the beginning, its address was anti2mb.kr. It was the first alternative site to Agora. In June 2008, it was tremendously popular among users, so much so that it could even build an additional server by user subscription. However, at the beginning of August, its board had been blocked (blinded) without notice. Thus, many users were disappointed and left. The advantages of Agorian.kr were simple and easy accessibility due to its domestic server and no registration system. However, paradoxically, it was vulnerable to outside pressure due to its domestic server system set up by an individual. It could not, moreover, preserve the anonymity of users.

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[45] This summary of the cyber asylum project is based on Jonathan's postings (Jonathan, June 2008).

2) Googleagora (groups.google.com/group/googleagora)

Googleagora was a simple discussion forum opened on 5 June 2008 using one of Google's services, Google groups. As it used a Google server, it was relatively free from outside pressure and preserved user privacy. However, its user interface was not properly designed as a major discussion forum for domestic users.

3) Globalcandles (Globalcandles.org)

Globalcandles was established on 19 June 2008, and based on the Seattle candlelight protest. The main purpose of this site was to provide an online space for groups of candlelight protestors in each country and also to provide Korean news related to the candlelight protest to all countries of the world in their own languages. They had noticed the significance of the media, so users of this space actively translated Korean candlelight news into other languages until July 2008. As overseas Koreans ran it with an overseas server, it seemed to be operating autonomously without pressure from the South Korean government. However, it was inadequate to run it with just a few overseas Korean groups.

4) Dauver (Dauver.com)

This is a web-site that a famous Agora user 'Moo Myung Hak Sang' created on a US-based server. A particular characteristic of Dauver.com was the use of linked search engine tools such as Daum.net, Naver.com and Google.com so that users could get the best search results. Moreover, Dauver offered a discussion forum similar to Agora. However, this was deserted soon.

5. Exilekorea (Exilekorea.net)

Exilekorea opened on 26 July 2008 using an overseas server. The main purpose was to preserve articles and information rather than to support real-time discussion. Among them were a few websites that the researcher applied to for participant-observation, such as Agorian and Google Agora, but never received a response. I was eventually able to find the reasons through the postings of Jonathan because they nearly stopped their online activism due to pressure from the government and personal issues. Furthermore, I was able to get informed about online forums that used to run the Cyber Asylum Project such as

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http://cafe.daum.net/pro-secutor, but their project turned out to be failure. The majority of online communities that Jonathan described in relation to online activism against the regime either closed or became less active due to government repression as well as a lack of member participation.

Apart from collective anti-political online movements against the Lee administration and Korean web portals in 2008, it is also important to note that individual user activities were affected by the Lee administration's measures, as some internet user activities that were unrelated to political activism were later redefined by the Lee administration under the rubric of political activism.

The first case relates to the migration of some individual internet users from Korean web portals to global ones such as Google after they felt government pressure in Korean cyberspace. This is illustrated by a Google report claiming a 60 percent increase in their UV and PV in 2008, whereas participation in Korean web portals dropped significantly. It can be assumed that this was a response to the Lee administration's pressure on Korean cyberspace (SeoulNewspaper, 2008).

The second case relates to internet users who did not take part in political activism, either online or offline, for a variety of reasons, including their social status offline or their lack of interest. This can be explained by the fact that online users in the economy section of the Daum Agora bulletin boards did not actively take part in the 2008 Candlelight Protest, unlike members of other online committees.

As one interviewee stated, participants in this section were reluctant to participate politically, either online or offline, which showed that their economic interests overcame their political interests in their daily lives in 2008. As a consequence, the interviewee also stated many cases where participants in the economy section turned down suggestions from members of other sections to become more politically active (Interview 8 Sep 2010). It is important to note that there were a few famous users in this section, i.e. whose postings were influential and well received by other members. The user Minerva was one of them. One of the incidents in which he was involved is illustrative of the state of Korean cyberspace between 2008 and 2009.

As discussed briefly in Chapter 3, incidents relating to 'Minerva' are important to explore more fully, because they had a great impact on the state, the web portals and

internet users. Issues relating to 'Minerva' in particular were important for the launch of one cyber asylum seekers project, Agora Justice Forum, which was the biggest project although it failed to meet the project aim of cyber asylum seeking. Agora Justice Forum was large compared to other cyber asylum seekers projects as summarised above because there were many participants, original members in particular, who believed that this online forum was set up by 'Minerva'. It is important to note that many people believed that the arrested 'Minerva', Mr. Park, was the real Minerva and the real Minerva had not yet been arrested. Real Meter, a professional polling agency, produced public surveys relating to the arrested Minerva on 22 Jan 2009. According to this survey, 40.6% of respondents believed that the arrested Minerva was not the real Minerva (KhanNews, Jan 2009).

Minerva became famous on the Daum Agora boards when he correctly predicted that Lehman Brothers would go bankrupt (Minerva, 10 September 2008). It was a time when the government tried to buy this company through the Korea Development Bank, a state bank, to turn it into a global megabank (Ohmynews, Oct 2012). His fame rose significantly when the subprime mortgage crisis occurred in the US and began to affect the Korean economy. The Korean economy relied heavily on US trade and falling exchange rates became a great concern for Korean exports because the lower dollar value resulted in a lower profit margin for many businesses. While the Korean government's management of the Korean economy relative to the world economy turned out to be false, 'Minerva's prediction for the Korean and world economies turned out to be true. (SBS Documentary, Jan 2009) This led to his criticisms of the Korean government's activities in the economy, which were widely accepted by Korean Internet uses (Minerva July 2008, Aug 2008 and Oct 2008). His influence both online and offline can be explained by cases where major newspapers – as well as TV news – reported on Minerva's fan base and tried to unveil his offline identity (Shin-Dong-A, Feb. 2009 and M.K. News, 2008).

On July 15, Minerva uploaded a posting predicting that the US subprime mortgage crisis would have a major impact on Korea (Minerva, 15 July 2008), and on August 25 he criticised the Lee administration's support for the Korea Development Bank's plan to merge with Lehman Brothers (Minerva, 25 Aug 2008). His criticisms were based on the argument that the Korea Development Bank would bear Lehman Brothers' nonperforming assets of US$ 500 billion. His assertion turned out to be

true on September 15. Because of the accuracy of his economic analysis, his postings relating to currency movements and his advice regarding fund redemption, 'Minerva' became a highly influential voice both online and offline.

Minerva's economic analysis discredited the Lee administrations economic policies. Having realised the significance of Minerva, the Lee administration began to respond to Minerva's postings officially. For example, during an official announcement in October 2008, the Ministry of Strategy and Finance said of Minerva,

> The government is making every endeavor to overcome the economic difficulties by making policies. However, if the cyber controversialist (Minerva) makes a strong comment against this, the public disbelieves government policies (cited in Dong-Hu Um: 2008).

The Lee administration also expressed its stance on Minerva: 'We will open our ear to hear appropriate criticism, but we need to explain that our stance is a response to the postings and criticism that is based on inappropriate data or criticism without reasoning' (cited in HanKooilbo, Oct 2008). These statements can be understood as government efforts to negate voices online by defining Minerva's argument as fallacious, accusing 'Minerva' of using inaccurate information. It is important to note that the Lee administration also asserted previously that false information had affected Korean cyberspace in the first place. Its response to Minerva follows the same rationale.

That the government treated Minerva as a threat is evident from the Korean intelligence community's efforts to scrutinise his personal information. A daily paper reported that the government's scrutiny of Minerva's offline identity on November 13 found that 'Minerva is a quinquagenarian ex-stock market dealer and had been living abroad' (M.K. News, Nov 2008), which later turned out not to be true. This implied that government bodies had kept an eye on him. As a consequence, 'Minerva' felt pressure and announced that on November 13 he would give up posting. He expressed his feelings in this posting:

> I will erase Korea from my mind.

> I have realized again how hypocritical it is to live in a country that uses patriotism as a foundation.

> I am no longer Korean, in the sense of having community spirit.

The state ordered me to silence, so I will be silent.

If it is illegal to predict the economy in Korean society, then I will shut my mouth (Minerva, 13 Oct 2008)

This posting recorded over 160,000 viewers and more than 3,000 replies deploring his treatment. However, a few days later, 'Minerva' started to upload postings again. In these, he asserted that Koreans would have to claim IMF support again. Then, it was unveiled on November 25 that the Financial Supervisory Service had scrutinised Minerva's activities online. Minerva was arrested on January 7, 2009, accused of disseminating libellous information and of violating the Telecommunications Basic Act (Jong-O Jung, Jan 2009).

Koreans paid attention to Agora's role in gathering and disseminating information relating to the 2008 Candlelight protest. The free-talk section in Agora played a central role in organising the protest online and disseminating related information during Candlelight 2008, while the economic section increased in importance after the protest ceased, which resulted in 'Minerva's fandom.

While the incident of Minerva's arrest increased the Lee administration's control of cyber space by suppressing freedom of expression as stated in Chapter 3, another story relating to Minerva disoriented Korea online and offline. After Minerva's fandom reached its peak, people were eager to know his identity online. There were two significant moments that accelerated this bewilderment. One was an incident relating to the press report about Minerva's real identity offline before he was arrested and the other was another press report saying that the arrested Minerva was not the real Minerva. While these reports spread fast, a famous Agora user, whose ID is readme, posted an article on Agora as a response. He argued that he knew who Minerva was and referred to Minerva as K. He posted an article about this:

'Minerva K who I Know'

However, one day, someone gave me a call at midnight and asked me if I knew someone named K. Why?

It was a closely guarded secret … K was Minerva of Agora.

If Minerva's status is exposed by the Lee government, it means that political, social and economic ideology which has been insisted by Lee Myung-Bak,

Kang Man Su and the grand national party, which is their subordinate, is collapsed. Why?

K belongs to 0.1% of the highest social class which leads the reason of existence of Lee government. Thus, K, who represents the top class of Korea, has written under the pen name of Minerva in order to prove that policies which privilege high class people for the purpose of reviving the economy is fraud. Thus, K identified that the grand national party, Hannara-Dang, which is based on this fake ideology has been doing iniquity to the nation (Readme, 21 Oct 2008).

This posting about Minerva K, who was known as the real Minerva, did not only support the veracity of press articles that reported Minerva's offline identity but also had a great impact on Agora users.

Another Minerva theory made Korean society paranoid, which happened after Minerva, Mr. Park, was arrested. The monthly paper Shin-Dong-A published an article in February 2010 about Minerva. According to the article, Minerva was not a person, but referred to seven members who shared one ID, Minerva. Shin-Dong-A reported that they interviewed one of them and it was reported that these seven members were high up in Korean financial circles (Shin-Dong-A, Feb. 2009). These two different Minervas, Minerva K and 7 Minerva, confirmed public belief that the arrested Minerva was not the real Minerva. It was commonly stated that he would not be able to make such accurate postings online if he had not been an expert in the field.

The Cyber Asylum Seeking Project and Distrust

The anxieties of Korean internet users reached its zenith when Minerva and other famous internet users were arrested. The mood at the time was also characterised by an official of a Korean web portal company, who stated that 'The biggest impact on the internet came when Minerva had been arrested. At that time, the mood was as though all related netizens would be arrested' (Interview, 13 September 2010). Indeed, as the interviewee illustrated, other famous Agora users, for example 'Boredom Window', were also arrested by the police (VOP News, September 2008). After the arrest of famous internet users, Korean netizens started to become paranoid. One internet user expressed her own anxieties:

Before Minerva was arrested, people had never felt any physical pressure (from the government online) … People made a consensus that they were (just) actively communicating in cyberspace. Then, government power started to intervene online. People suddenly realized that this was (also) a reality and they thought they needed to come up with something quickly (Interview, 08 Sept 2010).

Minerva's arrest as well as that of other famous internet users clearly did not only demonstrate that personal freedom of expression was being repressed, but also illustrated the impact that anxiety and fear of reprisals had on users. They began to imagine that their activities in Korean cyberspace could impact on their real lives. This became even clearer when masters, famous netizens who uploaded quality postings in Agora, were strained to breaking point. Many masters left Agora with postings that they would come back once the situation had become less tense (Mediatoday, Jan 2009). Many interviewees even stated that everybody on the Agora discussion forum held their breath and, consequently, not as many postings were produced as before. This can be interpreted to indicate that many users ended up leaving their favourite online 'spaces', resulting in their online voices being silenced and contained.

In de Certeau's sense, the Lee administration's approach to the internet certainly appeared like a scriptural economy, which inscribed, in the view of the users, white terror onto Korean internet cyberspace by starting a witch hunt when arresting Minerva. Minerva was similar to other Korean internet users and had merely criticised the Lee government's economic policies on Agora. Internet users faced a reality beyond what they imagined possible in the sense that even mere criticism of the government online was not acceptable. As a consequence, online users' voices were captured by the fear of being under surveillance and the risk of being arrested. They lost their own language to express their voices without anxiety, and could not find a new language to understand and express this situation in their space. Rather, they only expressed the situation using their old language by comparing the current situation with the previous administration when they felt that there had been no explicit government cyber intervention. The users' pursuit of freedom of expression online after Candlelight 2008 was informed by their understanding of the space through their old language. The residue of memories of their voices, which

contrasted to their contained voices, led to the internet users traversing cyberspace and the cyber asylum seekers project.

Ordinary internet users subsequently attempted to avoid making any postings in cyberspace because they had seen someone arrested by the police. When their anxieties reached peak heights the Agora Justice Forum, an online community on Daum.net, was created in order to share ideas about leaving their favourite online place.[46] The users' dream to go beyond national cyberspace began to take shape when one famous netizen, 'Naneoneona', who was thought to be the real 'Minerva' at one time, uploaded a politically radical idea. He argued that ordinary people should have bought Daum Communication's stocks, which were listed on the Korea Stock Exchange, so that they could get away from government control as well as the hierocracy of the web portal. Naneoneona wrote and posted 'Let's buy and read Daum's DB (How much is Daum?)'. He argued in this posting that

> Once you achieve 7% of Daum shares, you would have the authority to access the database of Daum. Moreover, if you could achieve 19% of Daum shares which was more then 18% shares of the owner of Daum, named Lee Jae Woog, you even could have a chance to buy the company (Naneoneona 7 March 2009).

The idea behind this radical posting was that internet users were eager to post without any intervention. Naneoneona insisted that if Daum.net remained a bystander, or even supported the government's actions, they should buy Daum.net so that it could be a citizen's company. His analysis of Daum.net and his proposal to buy shares and stocks were sensational, and maintained a strong momentum for the cyber asylum seekers project. While the discussion on 'buying Daum with a stock calculation' was being developed, one Agora user suggested leaving Agora. He insisted in his article "how about exodus?" on 7 March that it would be better to use a foreign website, rather than obtaining Daum Communication shares. Through discussions on the Cyber Asylum Project, they concluded that it was imperative to construct the website by using an overseas server. Then, ID 'Live with modesty' had read Naneoneona's postings, opened a cyber café and invited Naneoneona to join. This was the launch of the Agora Justice Forum.

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[46] Several online cafes were created in order to carry out the Cyber Asylum Project. Agora Justice Forum is the online café that lasted longest.

The Agora Justice Forum (AJF) was launched on 8 May.[47] According to postings relating to the project, the objective was to launch a website based on an overseas server and to pursue freedom of speech. As already indicated above, Naneoneona had a great impact on the formation of AJF in terms of gathering members and leading the project. For example, he sent out invitation postings to famous Agora members such as user id Readme, Andante (who was one of the first to suggest President Lee's impeachment in 2008) and many others. These famous Agora users joined AJF in response to his invitation. Jonathan, the administrator of Exilekorea.net, was one of them and began to conduct a joint project with AJF.

Jonathan was part of the first generation of cyber asylum seeking when he began archiving postings on Agora, which were often deleted by Daum.net at the government's request. Jonathan had joined AJF due to the limitations of ExileKorea, particularly its lack of discussion activities on the web, and his desire to discuss issues relating to Korean cyber control. AJF members, who mostly lived in Korea, needed a helper who had a consensus among the Forum membership, and was able to set up a website without any intervention and pressure from the Korea government and the web portals. AJF members welcomed the fact that Jonathan lived in Canada because they thought Jonathan was free from government influence. His participation gave members a sense of security. As a consequence, Jonathan was commissioned to develop AJF's cyber asylum seeking project as the main technical developer of the new website, which also resulted from his previous experience of constructing a cyber asylum site.

In terms of project strategies, their collaboration was based on the fact that AJF was modelled on Daum.net and that Exilekorea.net was hosted by an overseas server. The AJF members as well as staff considered their online community as a flag stop before they constructed an appropriate website because they thought a place on Daum.net enabled them to disseminate information on the project to as many Korean netizens as possible. Exilekorea.net was considered to be a backup place for an emergency, for example in the case of sudden attacks from the government, and a secure place in which to discuss sensitive issues.

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[47] The story about AJF is based on online community observation and interviews with members of AJF. Due to issues of anonymity, the direct use of postings and referencing have been minimised.

One of the distinctive characteristic of the cyber asylum project is that its combination of transnational culture together with the internet's time-space compression enabled participants to collaborate with each other. Furthermore, it shows that participants had gathered information on existing online communities such as Agora and Exilekorea.net to inform the project. However, the AJF's cyber asylum seeking project turned out to be a failure due to internal conflicts and loss of momentum.

Three major issues caused internal friction within the forum. One type of conflict was related to confusion about the project's aim to create a new website. Community members argued about whether it would be best to set up a website like a Korean web portal or to start from a small online discussion forum based on a foreign server. The second type of conflict arose between newcomers and old members. The former criticised the directing group and Nauuna in particular. He had had a strong effect on the establishment of the online forum from the beginning and they rebuked older members for their belief in him. The third area of conflict emerged when it was revealed that several members had used two different nicknames and acted like two different characters online. Furthermore, there were cases where members' online identities were quite different from their offline ones. The biggest shock was when Naneoneona, one of administrators of the forum, who pretended to be a septuagenarian online, was revealed to be in his late twenties offline. One interviewee stated in relation to this incident that

> He did not say directly, he tended to act like Minerva (online). Many people followed him. At the beginning, people got an impression from his writing style that he was an old man. He did not realise that his use of two IDs would cause problems. (However,) it is a more serious issue that he deceived us by not revealing to us his age. (Interview September 2010)

These conflicts resulted in high levels of mistrust between members and the subsequent failure of the cyber asylum seekers project, which will be discussed in more detail later.

One of the accusations was that key members lacked professionalism. This was partly due to the fact that the person in charge of funding and legal issues announced that they were giving up and the person who was supposed to be in charge of developing the site withdrew from the project. Another problematic issue stemmed

from different objectives among its members, and this lack of professionalism can be also illustrated as a conflict between ideals and reality. For example one of the project leaders, Jonathan, preferred to start from a small website and add other services later. Readme, an old member of Agora, had the opposite view and wanted to set up a big portal. As he was a member of the privileged class, both online and offline, he thought that the project must be large enough to get attention and any half measure would be a failure. He then corresponded with Makefile (a famous Agora user and programmer) in support of this view. Jonathan planned to run a website from a small online forum based on a US server. However, Readme thought that this needed to be evaluated. As a result, Readme requested code files from Jonathan and consulted about this with Makefile. Makefile then argued that the codes created by Jonathan for the project were not professional enough to create a web portal outside of the Korean domain. As a consequence, the project driven by Jonathan was suspended. One AJF member stated that

> A user in a strong position manifested that they would never compromise with reality although it seems impossible to develop the ideal site. On the other hand, more moderate users indicated that we needed to give up some of our ideas and compromise with some regulations under the MB government in order to keep running our site safely. (Interview, 8 Sept 2010)

These conflicting goals accelerated the lack of professionalism in how the project was conducted. This deficiency also became evident during interviews with key members. One key forum member stated that

> When Naneoneona and other masters manifested their plan to buy stocks in Daum.net, we thought that there would be a professional team to deal with this. So we thought that the project would succeed if we supported them. However, it turned out that the team was not ready. They were only amateurs and there were no professionals among the administrators (Interview, 8 Sept 2010).

My interpretation of what happened is that this conflict resulted from discrepancies within the cyber asylum seeking project. One group sought a radical platform to contest 'established power blocs with a view to wider social emancipation' (Curran, 2003:7). For them, the platform should have been as big as a Korean web portal from the very beginning. The other group sought to establish alternative media that challenged the 'central concentration of' media platforms.

It is important to note that the way the project operated caused great concern due to its secret management. Key members took a significant amount of time to set up the right direction for the project but this happened secretly. Key technical members took extreme care of security resulting from the paranoia following the arrest of Minerva and other famous internet users. They thought that there was a strong possibility that either the government or the web portals were spying on them, for example lurking without any contribution, to destroy their project. The AJF members' anxieties were reflected in the presence of Al-Bap,[48] which refers to online users who are hired by a political party, usually the government, to post articles in favour of their political agenda and to take charge of countering postings that criticise their employer.

The presence of Al-Bap in the community showed how anxieties about oppression had a significantly negative impact on the community. AJF members thought that government bodies sent Al-Baps into cyberspace to camouflage their lack of political legitimacy. Anxieties about Al-Bap were described by an Agora user interviewed by a journalist:

> Al-Bap posted articles systematically and the ruling party in cooperation with Daum.net also uploaded postings on Agora. The quality in the space is deteriorating. There was a consensus that we'd rather go to another cyberspace. That was the motivation for launching the Agora Justice Forum (cited in Yong-In Jung, Mar 2011).

As the interviewee stated, the feeling of oppression that the Agora users felt within the community worsened. Anxieties among key members accelerated when many new users joined in April due to newspaper reports about the forum (W.S. Jung, April 2009). This resulted in a major incident on 14 April when an administrator expelled a member without the other administrators' consent because the member had criticised AJF and was subsequently suspected of being an Al-Bap.

In line with the on-going dispute about Al-Bap, the secret operation of the cyber asylum project resulted in discontent among non-key users as they had to wait for four months without any detailed information about the cyber asylum seeking project. The increasing dissatisfaction and anxieties among members about the level

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[48] Al-Bap is a combination of the first two letter of Arbeit(Al) and the last word of JotBap, the Korean word for 'fuck'.

of progress resulted in an announcement 1 June that the project would switch from being secret to open from then on.

Once the Agora Justice Forum became widely known as an example of the cyber asylum seekers project and as the press reported on this online community, solidarity among members started collapsing. Due to the particular characteristics of this community, which resisted what they perceived as government suppression, they started be terrified about moles. Members believed that their online community had become a target of government attempts to destroy them, and that there must have been a mole among its members, who tried to disturb the project with harassing tactics. This was clearly shown during an interview with a member of Agora Justice Forum, who stated that

> I think that the reason why Korean cyberspace became depressed is that the officials, who hide their identity in cyberspace, work out quite well. They enter the online communities and dilute public voices differently (Interview, 8 Sept 2010)

By and large, the postings that they thought to be the work of enemies were ones that argued against other members' detailed suggestions for setting up a cyber asylum website, or posts against the ideas proposed by key members, Naneoneona in particular. Members' compulsive anxieties, which were derived from real-life incidents (e.g. Agora users including Minerva being arrested), led them to conclude that the original members had created a hierarchy. For example, when members uploaded a posting that contained a critical comment about Nanuuna's point of view or his radicalism, the uploader was also suspected of being a mole.

It is important to recall that Naneoneona was one of the leaders of the cyber asylum seeking project from the very beginning. He wrote radical postings and these were welcomed by other users. It was more likely to be fandom at the beginning, because there were many members who thought of him as the real Minerva. One forum member stated that

> In fact, I joined the Agora Justice Forum, because the rumour was that Minerva had created it. I thought that the arrested Minerva was not the real one. Then, there were postings uploaded in Agora which had the same rhetoric and sense that Minerva created before. Then, these were erased and reappeared again.

People thought that there was a real Minerva and he was using other nicknames instead of Minerva (Interview, 8 Sept 2010).

It was not surprising that the netizens mistook him for the real Minerva and it was also true that Naneoneona had misrepresented himself as Minerva. The fact is that Naneoneona had posted at least three times using the nickname 'Minerva' on 13 January with the same rhetoric and sense as the real Minerva. He explained the reason in the economic section of Agora:

> Why I erased the postings? I cannot figure out how much you are all missing Minerva, but you deified, worshipped and mystified him. You guys went mad … I did not want to get involved in the controversy over authenticity (whether I am Minerva) … So I changed my nickname, although I was tempted to be Minerva's simulacrum … There are children who still believe that I am Minerva (Naneoneona, January 2009).

With the advantage of being a member who had participated in this online community from the early stages, Naneoneona started to gain fame and respect from other members of the online community. Furthermore, his persona on this online forum was that of a wise man in his seventies. It is important to understand that respect for the old is the most valuable aspect in Korean culture and this also applies to Korean cyber culture. There were many cases where he wrote postings that gave other members this impression.

> The arrested Minerva's tone is like that of an old man, I am really in my seventies, I have lived long enough … I tried to write postings using honourable expressions at the beginning. However, I have not used such expressions for ten years … (ibid.).

From the postings and interviews with AJF members, I had the impression that members respected him. In conjunction with such fandom, there were a few days in the early period when new subscribers numbered more than 1,000 a day.

However, Naneoneona's fandom created a momentum leading to the AJF project's failure when his offline identity was unveiled; Naneoneona was in fact a male university student in his twenties. On 1 September Naneoneona, writing on Agora forum on Daum café posted that "I would like to apologise to every member of AJF". His identity, which was constructed in the online community, was radically different from that in real life. This was the moment when mutual distrust and

feelings of hatred of other peaked. The effects on AJF did not end after Naneoneona withdrew his membership from the café because other members continued to use abusive language towards him.

> As soon as I wrote and posted three writings, they were controversial. (because the reader started to consider him Minerva) So I removed them but the situation was getting worse and worse and users were spreading my writings all over the sites and they became a big issue. I thought I could be arrested. (cited in Young-In Jung, 8 Mar 2011)

Again, it is imperative to understand Korean respect for the old both online and offline. The incidents relating to Naneoneona may have been similar to the Minerva incident when the real identity of Minerva was revealed as an unemployed fat man who had graduate from college two years previously. Some members did not believe the truth. For example, a famous Agora user as well as a spiritual leader, and some other members thought at first that Naneoneona's revelation of his real identity was Minerva's strategy to hide himself to escape the government and the web portals. After all, people were disappointed about Naneoneona's identity and frustrated with him for not telling the truth at the beginning of the cyber asylum project. As a consequence, the community members scattered, because Naneoneona had played a central role and because of the belief among AJF members that their utopian dream was wounded after Naneoneona was found to be a young man.

Another major factor in the project's failure was Jonathan's exit from the project due to a dispute about money, which resulted in a severe misunderstanding. A number of members tested money transactions via PayPal and they sent money to Jonathan in order to check if the managerial cost of their new website could be supported in this way by members in Korea. As he led the project, and because he lived in Canada, Jonathan received money from a few members to test PayPal, which was thought to be a way to supply funds for overseas server usage in the future. However, this created a misunderstanding because the test was not conducted officially but led by only a few members. After this incident, Jonathan stopped being involved in the project and no one seemed to have the capacity to carry it on. As a consequence, the cyber asylum seeker project has been pending ever since. According to Jonathan, the dispute in the Agora Justice Forum regarding the project started when several cliques formed and they created decisive group voices.

It seems that the formation of sub-groups in this community resulted from these anxieties and the anonymity of cyberspace. Conflicts and mistrust exhibited in the online community resulted from the fear of surveillance and the condition of anonymity, which by and large permeated Korean cyberspace. The cyber asylum seeking project led by Agora Justice Forum raised various doubts which led to serous conflicts. The Naneoneona incident, together with the money transaction issue, put the project on hold. At the same time, Minerva was found 'not guilty', but the political situation did not worsen as AJF members expected.

As the cyber asylum seeker project ended with failure, a member of Agora Justice Forum stated that

> Minerva was released and the situations did not get worse as we had thought …
> There was no preparation, no expertise among the members as administrators
> … We also have a job on the ground, and it would take too long to complete
> one task in the community (Interview 8 Sep 2010).

For this reason attempts by the AJF's cyber asylum project to establish thriving new platforms hosted on overseas servers did not succeed. Around 5,000 forum members were fed up with the chaotic situation and scattered as they lost motivation due to internal conflicts and they thought that Korean cyberspace was not as threatening as they had initially thought.

In summary, the Agora Justice Forum was launched in conjunction with the cyber asylum seeking project. My analysis of postings and interviews on this topic suggests that attempts to create a new web portal failed due to the changing characteristics of user activities, which became overly political and hierarchical and consequently moved further away from everyday life concerns. However, despite the closure or decline of communities following its failure, the project itself did produce some positive effects. It alerted Korean internet users to the possibilities of using other, non-Korean cyberspaces, and increased their awareness of the scope of government surveillance in Korean cyberspace, and of the complicity of web portals.

The factors discussed above had a negative impact on the cyber asylum project, reflecting the imbalance of Korean internet culture in 2009. In particular, distrust towards their colleagues in the AFJ is a reflection of the imbalance between the desire of AJF members to make their voices heard and their anxiety about the Lee

administration's oppression of the cyberspace. In order to substantiate this, I will take another approach to distrust within the AJF in Chapter 6, focusing on anonymity, which should not just be considered as a negative aspect of Korean internet culture. This case shows how anonymity online leads to anxiety and impacts on the formation of cyber culture particularly when cyberspace is under conditions of abnormal repression.

Apart from this collective movement individual cyber migration also existed. For some internet users migration to global web service providers was motivated by reasons other than the political concerns of the Korean asylum seekers' movement. I argue that the logic and use of the term cyber asylum seekers in Korean society implies a political rationale, so it cannot encompass those users who traversed without any political intention. I call the individual internet user who moved their email account and online video streaming consumption to global web services between 2008 and 2010 'underground cyber asylum seekers'. My findings indicate that the flight of Korean internet users to global web services prompted stakeholders in the Korean internet industry to define themselves as victims of Candlelight 2008.

3. Underground Cyber Asylum Seekers

The term Cyber Asylum Seekers cannot encapsulate all the cyber migration that happened between 2008 and 2010. It is therefore important to define Cyber Asylum Seeker. Asylum is defined in Cambridge dictionary as 'Protection or safety, especially that given by a government to foreigners who have been forced to leave their own countries for political reasons' (*Cambridge Dictionaries Online*, 2011). Given this definition, the epithet 'Cyber Asylum Seeker' alludes to Korean internet users who left Korean internet servers for their own cyber safety as illustrated in the previous section. Internet users and news media frequently used the term Cyber Asylum Seekers in connection with the defection of a significant numbers of users. The use of the term seems valid, as Korean internet users can be understood as reacting to the Lee government's cyber control policies. However, the logic of term, which implies political reasons, cannot encompass Korean internet users who moved to global servers without any political intention. An important, though often overlooked, motivation for some cyber-migration from the Korean web portals was

not only the people's disenchantment with the ruling elites. Indeed, neither government pressure nor the Korean web portals' government-friendly entrepreneurship was a concern for some law abiding internet users. They also had their motivation to move to global internet service providers, which may have resulted from the global platforms' efficiency in the mobile internet era as compared to Korean society. It is important to note that the mobile internet era started from 2010, but Korean web portals were not well prepared for its arrival. As a consequence, in the beginning of 2010, Korean smartphone users tended to rely on the foreign services such as Twitter and Gmail. Thus, it would be a fallacy to conclude that the Lee government regime's crackdown on the internet and the Korean web portals' resulting submissiveness was the only factor in the rise of the Cyber Asylum Seeker. However, this issue becomes significant when this is viewed from a different angle.

I suggest that we should understand Cyber Asylum Seekers not as a unified entity. Rather, it is an effect of the events and exile is in fact not an odd thing historically in cyberspace. It is indeterminable, because internet users always traverse cyberspace at their own convenience. They settle down on a certain online community or forum, but can leave the place to find more attractive places to make their voices heard. By the same token, cyber asylum has no true historical explanation since it is never possible to know who went on shore leave for a political reason and who did not. However, it has affected the formation of power relationships in cyberspace whether informed by political motivations or not.

Chapter 5 has illustrated a few cases where individual cyber migration received attention from the political realm and the Korean web portals. I define these cases as Underground Cyber Asylum in contrast with Cyber Asylum. The Cyber Asylum Seekers' project required collective action because solidarity is the foundation of the Korean internet users' stand against the power holders. For example, the internet users who pursued the boycott campaign against the advertisers of the big press companies needed solidarity in order to pursue a strong protest.

Both ExileKorea's and AJF's cyber asylum project as well as the boycott campaign resulted from the effects of cyber intervention in Korean cyberspace. It is very important to note that this state-driven cyber intervention could not restrict Korean

cyberspace fully, but conversely it expanded the scope of Korean cyberspace to a global level. ExileKorea was intentionally set up on overseas servers and the boycott campaign participants migrated from Daum.net to Google. This type of cyber asylum seeking was therefore a form of resistance. In the case of the boycott campaign, internet users abandoned Korean websites in order to continue their resistance to the power holders and make their voices heard. Their aim was to receive an apology from the big press companies, at least, and to destroy the big press, at most. In the case of ExileKorea.net, the administrator's aim was to save the legacy of the Korean internet users' postings so that the people would always remember their outcry. The participants in these activities migrated to either global web service providers such as Google, or made .com domain websites as a form of tactical resistance. The Cyber Asylum Seekers' Project carried out by Agora Justice Forum was in this category. However, their resistance failed to match their aims and it does not mean that their activism must be devalued. Despite the closure or decline of communities following the failure of the Cyber Asylum Seekers Project to achieve its aims, the project itself did produce some positive effects. It cannot be denied that the project alerted Korean internet users to the possibilities of using other, non-Korean cyberspaces, and increased their perception of the scope of government surveillance in Korean cyberspace, and of the web portals' complicity.

In contrast, Underground Cyber Asylum Seeking was based on individualised motivations. The action of the individual led directly to traversals. However, there was a time when the power holders thought that the constellation of each traversal was directed to the same places, but this was not the case. For example, it was already too late to control cyber migration when the power holders understood the significance of the individuals' move to Gmail accounts or YouTube. Therefore, they adapted to these changes. As a result of the aftermath of Candlelight 2008 the Korean web portal industry's previously exclusive grip on the market was weakened as their market share fragmented. In fact Korean cyberspace (and cyberscape) has expanded, because of the underground cyber asylum phenomenon.

Yet, the changing patterns evident in the daily habits of internet users cannot be understood within the context of a radical revolution against the prevailing power structures. This became clearer at the time when these non-political movements were once again recognised by the power holders. For example, the web portals'

request to deregulate the laws governing Korean cyberspace must be understood in this context. The web portal managers reacted after they had realised that the revenue from the portal business was in recession, as well as when their users had started to move to other platforms such as Google. It can be assumed that the reason why the majority of the internet reform bills were not passed was to do the interrelationship between the stakeholders.

Since Candlelight 2008 a tension between freedom of speech and the protection of personal information had arisen because the current regime had violated citizens' rights to personal privacy, the safeguarding personal information, and used it as an ideological tool to regulate Korean cyberspace. They tried to transcribe the existing rules governing Korean cyberspace by reinforcing the laws and overusing written laws that have never been used historically. However, their project turned out to be a failure because they could not contain the voices raised against their pattern of governance. Therefore it is only possible to determine how Underground Cyber Asylum Seekers created repercussions within Korean cyberspace by looking at the changing tactics of the Lee administration and the Korean web portals. The next section will narrate how the state and the stakeholders altered their activities.

The Power Holders' and Stakeholders' Changing Strategies

Oxymoronically, the tension exhibited between the freedom of speech and the protection of personal privacy in cyberspace, the issue that was the starting point for government control after Candlelight 2008, had dissipated. It was the netizens who spent their time trying to erase their memory in Korean cyberspace and who in turn became victims and were arrested.

The Korean web portals' perception of the Lee administration's view of the internet as a medium to be governed had interrupted the internet's development, resulting in domestic service providers losing several market sectors to global companies (e.g. the SNS market to Twitter and the Streaming Service Market to YouTube). Furthermore, the Lee administration's rationale for expanding the real name system, which was to protect cyber security, turned out to be a failure due to a series of hacking incidents.

In 2008, 10,810,000 Aution.co.kr users had their personal information hacked in February, and more than 130,000 Daum.net users were hacked in June 2008 (Hankyung Daily, March 2010). In 2010, 20 million Shinsegae.com users had their personal information leaked by hackers. In July 2011 around 35,000,000 SK Communications (the owners of nate.com and cyworld.com) internet users' personal information was hacked (SBSNews, July 2011). This became a very serious issue because the leaked personal information could easily be found on Chinese websites, where it was being sold (Chosun Daily, Aug 2011). These hacking incidents continued to happen. In fact, the government's misunderstanding of the particular characteristics of the internet and its efforts to silence oppositional voices in Korean cyberspace seemed to have resulted in social chaos. It was certainly a misunderstanding of the government that only Korean web portals constituted cyberspace and they ignored the flux of information on the internet. It was certainly a misconception of the Lee administration that applying a state-centric regulatory framework to media sectors such as TV and the press could be applicable to internet industries, as this ignored alternative media powers such as Google, YouTube, and Twitter. In turn these corporations made inroads into parts of the Korean internet market without any difficulty. This is the foundational background for understanding the changing landscape of the Lee administration's internet regulatory framework.

The landscape of Korean cyberspace in 2010 changed to deregulation. In April 2010, KCC announced that it would launch a taskforce team (TFT) to review internet regulation as part of a reform of media regulation in which stakeholders in the web industry, government parties, and scholars would also be involved. KCC's premise is that the current regulation of the Internet may have impeded the development of the Internet industry (KCC, April 2010). The KCC's announcement was read as a move by the government toward a deregulatory mode.

Reconciliation between the Lee Administration and the Web Portals

It is important to note the nuances: in launching this taskforce team, as the group stressed the need to find an appropriate 'regulatory IT framework for the Korean internet corporations that would allow them to compete with the global web service

providers'. For example, the chairman of KCC stated, 'TFT was launched to seek alternative regulatory frameworks that should not be an obstacle for IT businesses, but instead minimize damages such as malicious postings and the misuse of Location Based Service (LBS)' (Ibid.).

Among the TFT's aims, it is important to look at the KCC's stance on the real name system. KCC announced that the real name system will be amended in order to reduce its negative impact on the IT industry. For this, the KCC stated that 'the public understanding and the maturity of self-regulation must be a prerequisite' (ibid.). My reading of this is that such deregulatory frameworks were based not on accepting internet users' voices as a significant power but on accepting the requests of economically powerful institutions, such as the Korean web portals.

However, the Lee administration's deregulatory policies were not as effective as their previous aggressive policies in their attempt to control Korean cyberspace, which resulted in another hacking incident. The latest incident happened in July 2011, when Nate.com, which placed the third in the Korean internet market, was hacked and many users' personal information was leaked and traded in other Asian internet markets. According to the Korean Internet Security Agency, it was estimated that 'Korean internet users numbered 37 million in 2010'. Based on this figure, it was reported more than 90 percent of Korean internet users have had their personal information leaked (DigitalTimes, Dec 2010).

As a consequence, it was confirmed that the real name system would be abolished soon and Korean web portals started to delete the personal information of their users in their data systems. An official at the governmental body also confirmed that it had been discussed whether the KCC and the KCSC would be abolished and that a new regulatory body would be launched in the next administration (Interview, March 2012). After all, the KCC and the KCSC, both of which were launched in 2008, are expected to last only for the duration of this government.

The cyber migration of individual Korean internet users contributed to the formation of KISO, which showed the possibilities of a self-regulation framework for the Korean internet. KISO is currently performing the remit and function of a representational institution for the web portals as a self-regulator. However, it is too early yet to assume the success of this institution. According to an official at the

institution, it is hard to find notable achievements that KISO has made, because they only deliberate on how each web portal should treat postings on their websites (Interview, 31 May 2008). We must emphasise that this represents the emergence of the first self-regulatory model in the history of the Korean internet. As a stakeholder at the Korean web portal stated, 'if the Korean web portals did not have the power to appeal to the government as we do now, the postings could be deleted more easily' (Interview, 6 Sept 2010). The crucial point for the future will be how this self-regulation question will be settled.

Conclusion

This chapter explored Agora Justice Forum, the largest cyber asylum seekers' project, which encouraged the movement of new communities to websites hosted on US registered and other international domains, in order to be free from Korean government surveillance. Based on my observation of the online community, we can conclude that this project turned out to be a failure. The factors explaining this failure were conflicts around issues such as the size of the new online community and distrust among its members in connection with the issue of Al-Bab. My interpretation is that the users' distrust of the Korean web portals and of other online members resulted from the government's intervention and the domestic portals' attitude, which seriously compromised the latter's their independence from political power.

The chapter also examined my new term 'Underground Cyber Asylum Seeker'. I hypothesised that the underground cyber asylum seeker did not refer to a united entity but can be considered an effect, because it was based on individualised choice and activity. Furthermore, I argued that it was only possible to determine how underground cyber asylum seekers impacted on the expansion of Korean cyberspace through their response to the changing tactics of the Lee administration and the web portals. This was illustrated by the Lee administration's new de-regulatory framework and the web portals' launch of a self-regulatory body, KISO, apparently to protect their users' privacy.

Despite the announcement of new internet regulations, the government was unable to control Korean cyberspace, largely due to the ability of global portals to refuse or circumvent domestic internet regulations. This effectively empowered internet users to migrate their email accounts and other internet activities away from Korean-based web portals and utilise global internet resources. The consequent fall in web portal profits led the domestic industry to take collaborative action to self-regulate in an attempt to protect themselves and to secure the interests and privacy of their users. This case study is an example of the power of ordinary internet users to effect changes in other internet stakeholders through their traversal of global cyberspace beyond national state domination. The availability of resources beyond the scope of the Korean-language internet provided concrete choices to internet users, which they exploited as a tactic to subvert the power of the government and the Korean web portals.

Part III. Discussion

Chapter 7. The Political and Cultural Climate in Korean Cyberspace

Introduction

This chapter synthesises the case study chapters based on the theoretical discussion set out in Chapter 1 in order to present my view of the causal nexus between the Korean government, the web portals and the Korean Internet users. I argue that the political struggle over issues of cyber security and freedom of expression during and after the 2008 Candlelight protest can be understood through a set of narrow discourses controlled by power holders in Korea. I highlight the significance of the fact that both the government and the web portal sectors adapted their perceptions in response to the changing ways in which ordinary Korean internet users came to view each actor.

The case study chapters examine the dynamics between the state, the Korean web portals, and internet users during and after the 2008 protest. I argue that it was not only Korean internet users who were anxious because they felt that the Lee administration's cyber intervention was oppressive and the Korean web portals submitted to the government's demands. The way the government and the web portals responded to Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath also illustrate increasing anxiety because they did not know how to react strategically to this unexpected phenomenon. In this context, each actor's anxieties reflected their changing perceptions of each other. Examples are the state's definition of cyberspace as a place contaminated by false information; the Korean web portals as a scapegoat for the dilemma of cyber governance; and the internet users' lack of confidence in the state and the web.

However, I argue that there are many problems with understanding these dynamics simply in terms of state power over non-state actors. It is problematic to approach the aftermath of Candlelight 2008 as a rivalry between top-down power and bottom-up resistance. Such an approach cannot explain the current situation in which the Korean government has not gained enough power to control Korean cyberspace, considering the existing regulatory framework and the fact that the Korean web portals still lack power against the state. In a similar stance, this approach also cannot explain the

dominance of Korean web portals in cyberspace. The causal nexus between these three actors is more complex than this and a practice-based understanding of the tripartite relationship between the three actors is needed.

I approach the struggles in Korean cyberspace between 2008 and 2010 from the perspective of the disharmonisation of the voices of each actor. This disharmonisation resulted from the different perceptions of the state, the Korean web portals and the internet users of the causes and implications of the 2008 Candlelight protest. The three key actors played out their stories based on their understanding of the internet and the other players on the internet stage. In this context, we can understand the Lee administration's interventions in cyberspace, the rationale for arresting famous netizens, as well as the web portals' willingness to comply with state policies, and internet users' distrust of each other, which permeated online communities. Central to this discussion is the power of internet users in the Korean context. This supports my wider conclusion that the mobility of Korean internet users as a power holding group has expanded the constellation of Korean cyberspace.

1. The Impact of Government Regulation on the Internet: Trust and Distrust among Internet Users

Understanding Candlelight 2008 Through Different Gazes

De Certeau states that: 'this "fable" is thus a word full of meaning, but what it says "implicitly" becomes "explicit" only through scholarly exegesis' (1984: 160).

The 2008 Candlelight exhibited the tensions between the power of civil society and that of the state. While vociferous protesters initially blamed the state, this went beyond agonising over the burden of political repression in their daily lives. These events unveiled the online everydayness of the users, which was not explicitly perceived by the power holders. The power holders found that the online communities and forums that the internet users used for their daily trivia had changed to places where internet users found and shared information, and organised meetings to participate in the protest. By the same token, the power holders began to perceive the ways in which users traversed these places, as for example in the online open

community Agora through text-picture based information sharing, and Afreeca.com through video image sharing. For the users however these information flows were nothing new.

The traversality of the internet users was a daily practice in cyberspace. For this reason we must be careful in our understanding of these digital phenomena and the decentralised networks on which Korean scholarly discourses focused in 2008. Rather, this was not a new phenomenon but something that ordinary internet users practised in their online everydayness. The factor that mattered most was how these practices were revealed by the state which faced a difficult period as a result of hostile voices on the internet. As a result previously hidden problems emerged for the state and were identified along with controversial issues that had to be settled.

The 2008 Candlelight in this context has visualised cyber-space and actualised the power of ordinary internet users in the political landscape. Voices in Korean cyberspace during Candlelight 2008 were both political and cultural. They were cultural in the sense that this event unveiled how Korean internet users traversed from small online communities to the larger open discussion forums as well as the UCC websites for their daily trivia. It was also political in the sense that this flow of internet users' voices erupted following the 2008 event with their outcry against the government reaching increasingly vocal levels. Following this, the internet users adopted their everyday use of the internet as a tactical resistance to state power. The unexpected explosion of popular discontent online did eventually affect government policy and brought about some limited concessions to public opinion during renegotiations of the Korea-US Free Trade Agreement. However, Candlelight 2008 was only political for the power holders – the Lee administration and the Korean web portals – because their authority was compromised. The digital dimension of the protest had become a controversial political issue, which resulted in the emergence of cyberspace in a political issue. As Franklin states, 'virtual realities have been reshaping the very notion of national sovereignty, authority, statecraft personhood, and community' (2010: 80), the unveiled online territory made the Lee administration re-shape their notion of the internet.

As pointed out in the introduction, the 2008 Candlelight protest began because of public hostility toward the government's decision to import US beef. Various other

issues were raised during the demonstration, such as education policy, privatisation of public enterprise, and the four river reclamation projects that were expected to disrupt the environment (I.K. Kang, May 2011). The mention of other causes of the event was suppressed and the state ended up laying the blame on other fundamental factors surrounding the event, namely the posting of false information online, which eventually became the government's focus. This sentiment is illustrated by an interview with a government official who said that 'the President tends to think that if false information is diffused via internet, it links with the anti-government movement.' Furthermore, there are many people in the political circles, both within the ruling party and the government, who believed that the Korean internet was bombarded with false information (Interview, 3 September 2010).

As a government official stated in an interview, 'the law could only be invented after the appearance of a phenomenon' (Interview, 22 July 2010), suggesting that the implementation of laws governing the internet after 2008 was based on the government's anxieties about new dimension of the internet, such as its uncontrollability, which could disrupt the Lee administration's political manoeuvres. These anxieties highlight the implications of the protests; a lack of communication from the Lee government with the public and related factors such as political mismanagement were ignored or not considered. The Lee administration's view of the internet is illustrated by their policy making. As a journalist stated,

> In order to control the internet, which performed the role of public opinion channel, the Lee administration found the weak links, which are libel, toughened penalties for replies to postings and even mobilized the police. It was an effort to summon Internet Service Provider (ISP) to expunge postings (Interview 9 July 2010).

Other examples of this approach can be found in government documents. For example, in *10 Broadcasting and Telecommunication Policy Priorities*, published by KCC in December 2008, only one section dealt with the internet and this was about Infodemics (KCC 26 December 2008). The semi-government agency KISA (Korean Internet & Security Agency) placed the spread of the negative dimensions of the internet, such as privacy invasions and malicious postings, as the number one internet issue in 2008 (KISA, 2008).

State-driven internet governance in the aftermath of 2008 Candlelight was viewed as oppressive cyber control by internet users and as unfair legislation by the internet service providers. The Lee administration's cyber policies instead aimed to cure what they viewed as a harmful cyber environment that resulted from malicious postings. However, it did not fully communicate this with the non-state actors or the internet users because its law enforcement did not consider the full ramifications of internet governance. The Lee administration's anxieties about the internet as a hotbed of anti-government activism hindered other more important issues that the state should have dealt with, for example policies to secure personal information by minimising/abolishing the real name system rather than enforcing it. It is important to note that the hacking incidents and the leaking of personal information continued to happen occasionally from 2008, as discussed in Chapter 5.

Particular events that took place before the 2008 protests also called into question the characteristics of Korean cyberspace, as illustrated by the case of the dog poop girl, which led to the implementation of a limited real name system in 2006. Despite criticisms of this policy, a minimal social consensus had emerged.[49] Although it is a moot point whether the immature Korean cyber culture is a reflection of Korean culture in general, the social consensus in 2006 was a response to a new social issue, which derived from the cultural and political impact of the internet. In response, the Roh administration modified cyberspace law to improve cyber culture from their perspective and the dog poop girl case gave the government a reason for the implementation of limited real name identification.

The power logic that led to the implementation of new internet legislation was based on the government's understanding of this cultural phenomenon, transforming it into an object to be modified. Although plurality is normally defied by power holders, they pretend to meet a consensus from the majority by using science and exercising rationality. However, in the case of Candlelight 2008 the Lee administration construed the socio-cultural protest as anti-government online activism due to their perception of people's online activities as a potential political problem. As a result the Lee government's logic of operation was to attempt to take control of cyber territory and to bring about substantial changes in Korean cyberspace. An associated

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[49] Many interviewees stated that a certain type of real name system was necessary considering 'the immature Korean cyber culture'.

problem was the Lee administration's apparent misunderstanding of the internet. Although internet laws and legislations already existed, the government attempted to create new laws which would only be applicable to domestic society, e.g. the cyber defamation law and the expansion of the real name system.

The Lee administration's perception of how cyber intervention could work was effectively based on their anxieties about their ability to deal with the digital phenomenon. Cyberspace emerged as a new space separate from economic policies such as development through the IT infrastructure. In light of the political urgency of the protests the Lee administration had to spontaneously adapt a strategy to respond to this new digital phenomenon. The government's justification for its reform bills as a necessary reaction to the strength of anti-government hostility voiced on the internet can be understood in this way. It is further illustrated by an interview with a government official who stated that high positioned officials in government bodies also did not have political concepts to deal with cyber issues. For example the government merely seemed to have arrested Minerva in response to his fandom online (Interview, 25 May 2010).

It is important to note that the 2008 Candle Demonstration occurred at a time when internet-related government bodies had just been reformed. An official at an internet-related government body stated that:

> Our organization used to deal with the Ministry of Information and Communication. This is broken down into two government bodies, the Ministry of Information and Communication and the Ministry of Public Administration and Security ... Sometimes we each deal with at the same job at the same time. The reason for this is that Information Security Policy Department in the Ministry of Information and Communication deals with Personal information in a private sector. Whereas, KCC has Department of Personal Information Security and Ethics, which also deals with the personal information. Due to the fact that the Network Act covers personal information, this departmental overlap confuses the issue. In the past, the Ministry of Information and Communication used to encompass all (Interview, 12 July 2010).

This statement illustrates that the hierarchy of power at the beginning of the Lee administration-had not yet been established. As a consequence, the top-down strategy did not operate well and was sometimes confused. The lack of coordination evident

in this strategy and the anxieties about cyberspace resulted in the Lee administration's prompt decision-making, which was based on their reaction to Candlelight 2008 and did not necessarily take into account human rights. Another problem was that the Lee administration's cyber governance was informed by their misperception of the new power relations that were already functioning in Korean cyberspace.

Korean Cyberspace after 2008 and the Transformation of Power Relations

The aftermath of Candlelight 2008 should also not be understood as a transfer of power from the Korean web portals to the Lee administration, or as transfer from Korean web portals to global web service providers. We need to be careful when defining Korean cyberspace as a place delimited by state power because the Lee administration was not all powerful in cyberspace as illustrated in Chapter 5, as the Lee administration changed its strategy from regulation enforcement to de-regulation. For example, at this stage the abolition of KCC and KCSC were being discussed widely. However, global providers like Google did also not become the most powerful actor in Korean cyberspace, as existing web portals such as Naver and Daum in particular still dominated the market.

The Lee administration's cyber strategy was derived from their perception of the position of the dominant actors in cyberspace: they focused on the Korean web portals and other websites where users gathered most often, resulting in their lack of attention to the cyber-matrix and net flux. For example, the real-name system, 24/7 monitoring service and cyber contempt law that they planned to implement were central tactics used in their attempts to control Korean cyberspace. They revitalised cyberspace by observing how users disseminated their voices through Korean websites. For the Lee government, Daum.net in particular was the place where a system of law had to be constituted and where intervention was needed, because Agora on Daum.net was where information about the protest was being produced and disseminated.

The Emergence of Cyberspace

Cyberspaces, building on de Certeau's sense of space, are constructed through double-layered relations between place and space, which is 'constituted by a system of signs' by the power holders and used by the users as a 'practice of a particular place' (1984, p.117). Two concepts are layered into one spatial and temporal cyber

geography, the power holders who want to gain profit and ordinary people who do not care about profit but want to maintain their everyday practices online. The power to rule and design Korean cyber-place before 2008 was in the hands of the Korean web portals. Indeed, an interviewee from the web industry stated that the Korean government was too focused on the development of network infrastructure and as a result could not address the development of the web and its contents as discussed in Section 2 of Chapter 2. Therefore, the design of Korean cyberspace was based on profit values and this resulted in the formation of a closed system and a web portal-centric internet culture. Users traversed cyberspace through Korean websites because the web portals neither shared the data with their rivals as in open access data sharing nor did they guide their users to the best places outside of their system. The web portals generate more profit when their users spend more time on their websites, as displaying ads represents the major source of revenue for the web portals; indeed, they wish to expose ads to users as long as possible. The web portals' entrepreneurial policies, namely the closed system, seem to have resulted in the dissolution of their own empire on the Korean internet market. Therefore, this strategy has often been criticised from the perspective of net-neutrality and monopoly.

While an oxymoronic condition of Korean cyberspace was that the web portals used their users' information for their profit and that internet users formed their own cyber culture within the online spaces, the perspectives of the power holders had shifted from a profit-driven strategy to a political value driven strategy when the Lee administration started to intervene systematically in cyberspace. This strategy silenced online space because internet users felt that their voices had not been repressed as significantly as this before. Indeed as stated by web portal officials, 'cyberspace is always noisy' (Interview, 8 July 2010), meaning that voices online are always actively engaging with everydayness offline. For web portals, the voice of the users was not their concern as long as they stayed and did not conduct illegal activities such as disseminating pornography. This mutual agreement was broken when an alternative power holder intervened and began dominating cyber-space with their logic of operation. Once the power balance had shifted to state control, these voices began to matter. For the Lee administration, cyberspace became 'place' in de Certeau's sense, ruled 'by law of the proper' (1984, p.117), and the economic and social place were not allowed in the same location.

Silenced Voices versus Diluted Voices

The containment of the internet users' voices did not only mean that they became silenced but also that other voices replaced previous rhetoric. The aftermath of the 2008 Candlelight protest is a good example of how voices in cyberspace were colonised by state power and lost their character. Incidents relating to Minerva are key to an understanding of the emergence of new political voices, as well as the community members' distrust of one another that spread in Korean cyberspace after the 2008 protest. As the Lee administration put pressure on the web portals and users, the plurality of voices became increasingly unified.

The voice changes of Agora users from economic-related rhetoric to anti-political rhetoric is an example of what de Certeau describes as 'voice slippage', which the power holders cannot fully colonise. One of Agora's users explained that the economic section was the most popular one because people's interests were based on money. Minerva's postings were usually uploaded here and his postings were not usually about politics but about the economy. Criticisms of economic policy posted in this section focused on Minerva's postings and those of many other participants, but the users' participation was not based on political activism. The economic section's characteristics changed and became political when the Lee administration defined these postings as anti-political acts. The critical discussion relating to the Korean economy in Agora's economic section was also perceived by the authorities as anti-government activism, which meant that the anti-political rhetoric became fixed and captured. The captured voices cannot traverse space and space became void. This void was filled by other languages, for example, anxieties about or frustrations with power relations.

It is important to note that many Korean internet users thought that Agora was the only online discussion forum left for them to express their ideas. As one official from the internet industry stated, only Daum.net had strategically developed a strong service platform for an online discussion forum. This cast Agora and other online cafes in Daum.net in a central role during Candlelight 2008. This was also the reason why other web portals besides Daum.net did not have an effect on Candlelight; there was a lack of discussion space and activities on these web portals. The changes in

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voice rhetoric online connote the users' anxieties about the shift to a state-centric cyber ideology.

As illustrated in Chapter 5, the arrest of Minerva was a massive shock for Korean internet users and could not be compared to previous incidents because it was directly related to their online practices. Minerva was their neighbour who lived in the same cyberspace. As one of Agora's users characterised Agora after Minerva's arrest,

> The news relating to Minerva's arrest was announced in the free talk session in Agora at around 4:40 p.m. Since then, the postings relating to Minerva started to overwhelm the section. By 8:10 p.m. there were approximately 760 postings containing the key word "Minerva" either in the title or the content. Considering only the free talk section, there were 3.6 postings per minute uploaded relating to Minerva. There were more postings uploaded even faster in the economic section where Minerva played (J.W. Lee, Jan 2009).

Then, everything became silent.

The netizens who were famous for making good postings in Agora were strained to breaking point. Many prominent participants left the site, saying that they would come back once the situation had calmed down as everyone held their breath on Agora. In conjunction with this pressure, the internet users on Agora felt that their space became contaminated because trust among the members, which was built over a long period time through their communication online, vanished due to some members leaving. It is important to note that it took a long time for famous netizens including Minerva to regain this trust. Agora, the place where they seemed to trust each other the most, became void and distrust filled the place, as a result of its users' anxieties.

It was the internet users, dwellers of this space, who explicitly faced the transformation of their space, but who were unable to voice their concerns with the language they had at their disposal. Repression, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary, refers to 'the action or process of suppressing a thought or desire in oneself so that it remains unconscious' (Oxford English Dictionary Online, 2011) and Korean cyberspace gave its users the feeling that they were not allowed to express their thoughts. As a consequence, the epistemological perspective at the time was narrowed down to the perception that the state and the web portals treated the users unfairly. The dream in Agora Justice Forum of going beyond national cyberspace,

started by Nunununa's politically radicalised idea, is an example of the implications of this idea. Such dualistic language can be understood with reference to de Certeau's understanding of 'the imbalance of a culture' and the subject's language loss. De Certeau's analysis of the demonic possession of Ursuline nuns in the late 1680s indicates that it unveils 'the imbalance of a culture' during the transition of ideological paradigm from theological hegemony to that of the state. He argues that the demonic possession of many Ursuline nuns connotes that they faced incompatibility between 'the language of faith' kept as a nun and instability, doubts, and intolerance, which resulted in the ideological shift from theological reason to reason of state. All the nuns could do was to attribute this reality to the Devil, recognising him in the infernal shadow spreading out onto their inner landscape and dividing it (de Certeau, 2000:99). That is, in the ideological shift from theological reason to state reason, the scriptural machine that inscribed voices onto the bodies of the nuns did not perform well enough to control them. As a consequence, the bodies of nuns cried 'between the tool and the flesh' and explicitly showed that reality cannot be contained or colonised perfectly.

For the internet users the aftermath of Candlelight 2008 was certainly an ideological transition from a non-state-centric cyber regulatory framework to a state-centric one, although this transition was not an actual power transformation but a symptomatic reaction of the power holders the protests. Anti-political activism derived from the distrust of cyber policies as internet users faced what they perceived as an imbalance between what they thought cyberspace should be and what they felt it was. Similarly, the Ursuline nuns' demonic possession connoted the ordinary person's language loss and dilution. Al-Bab as examined Chapter 5 also tells the history of Korean internet culture post-2008 when users began to lose faith in their space. Al-Bab refers to online users who are hired by a political party, especially the government, to post articles in favour of a specific political agenda and to counter postings that criticise their employer. Al-Bab's credibility began to unravel when it was revealed that E Clean Solidarity, a non-state actor funded by the government, hired a part-time youth to post articles supporting the Lee government (Hankyoreh Daily, April 2011). There was also a case where one internet user confessed that he was the leader of Al-Bab and produced many of the government-friendly postings online (Hankyoreh Daily, Dec 2011). As a consequence, internet users thought that the Lee government sent

Al-Bab into cyberspace to camouflage their lack of political legitimacy. The anxieties about Al-Bab were expressed by one Agora user in an interview with a journalist. The interviewee stated, "Al-Bab posted articles systematically and the ruling party in cooperation with Daum.net also uploaded postings on Agora. The quality of the space deteriorated. There was a consensus that we'd rather go to another cyberspace. That was the motivation for launching the Agora Justice Forum [AJF]" (in Y.I. Jung, March 2011). The debates about the legitimacy of Al-Bab in the online community exploded after Candlelight 2008. It must be noted that there were cases where online users who were against the main views of the AJF were accused of being Al-Bab and were often forced to leave the AJF as illustrated in Chapter 5. After all, the anxieties of the power holders metabolised as those of the internet users. These cases reflect how anonymity online became a source of tension and spoiled the formation of a new cyber culture.

My main stance here is that we must not merely criticise distrust, which was embedded in the 2008 and 2009 cyberspace debates. Rather, I argue that the struggles and negative aspects of the internet were also part of Korean cyber culture, and a result of the government's cyber intervention and the lack of political independence of the Korean web portals. The distrust among the community members and hatred of Al-Bab reflected changes in Korean cyberspace as a result of new cyber legislation and the web portals' political strategies. This illustrates the importance of the internet users' participation in the cyber control discourse, without which the effect of cyber governance driven by the state or the corporation cannot be assessed and without which we do not know how cyber culture affects the formation of cyberspace. The anxieties and negative aspects of internet culture I depicted were based on a particular set of circumstances of Korean cyberspace between 2008 and 2010. Therefore, we do not need to use the negative dimensions of the internet as a paradoxical parameter to examine cyber culture. Rather, we need to reconsider and redefine a series of phenomena related to cyberspace from different angles, for example by examining who defined the negative aspects of the internet; to what extent this assumption spread in society and how these assumptions affected voices online.

The silence of the internet users after Candlelight 2008 should not only be understood in terms of the decrease of the internet users' postings but also by the loss of diversity. This was demonstrated in cases where online forums that had different thematic

concerns either focused on political issues or when other voices in the forum negated alternative voices such as when a community member who criticised the dominant opinion were expelled. For example, AJF's conflicts between old and new members are a case in point (See Section 3 of Chapter 5). Al-Bab should not only be considered as a negative aspect of post 2008 cyberspace but also as an example of the logic that drove the Lee administration's cyber policies. It was the Lee administration's cyber governance together with the Korean web portals' compliance that ultimately resulted in the silencing and diluting of Korean cyberspace. However, it is also important to examine the process of how these voices were being silenced and diluted, and what the significance of this was with the passage of time.

To conclude, the Lee administration, the web portals, and the internet users were all captured by anxieties. Each of their anxieties resulted from different perceptions of cyberspace: the state considered its political value, the web portals emphasised its economic value, and the internet users perceived it as a politically and economically biased place. We need to be careful about cheery optimism relating to the Cyber Asylum Seeking project as a factor in the changing dynamics of the political and cultural climate. This approach sometimes ignores important implications of the internet users' outcry, which is what we must consider before adding internet users to the discussion about the control of the internet.

2. Internet Users' Traversality and the Policy Environment

An important characteristic of cyberspace is that internet users move beyond the usual state-centric as well as the web-portal centric limits of time, location, and politics. The morphology of cyberspace varies depending on the ways in which users use it because, once users write content (posts) into one cyber place, that content cannot be erased fully due to hyperlinks and cache. It is like an oral tradition that has a flexibility that written law cannot govern as discussed relating to de Certeau's stance on the power of powerless. The space where content is can be deserted or closed, but user voices can be found in other places, such as in other blogs. The Cyber Asylum Seekers' project can be understood in this context.

Both the cyber asylum seekers' project and underground cyber asylum seekers planned to leave Korean web portals. However, the difference between these two is rooted in their motivations to leave the Korean internet as well as the fact that the cyber asylum seekers' project was group work whereas the underground cyber asylum seekers were an individualised movement. In the Cyber Asylum Seekers' project internet users teamed up to find a place to avoid what they perceived as government cyber repression. They had a strategy to free themselves from government intervention online so that they could express their thoughts without fear. The launch of their websites was based on the idea that they could be a new institution acting against both the state and web portals. However, their voices were captured by the fear that they were surveilled and the issue of Al-Bab is an example of how far this spread. In the Cyber Asylum Seeker's project, for example, problems appeared with the size of the project, whether they would start off with the Korean web-portal model or with a simple and a small bulletin board online forum. This illustrates what I mean by voice capture in the sense that the tactical idea to leave Korean cyberspace in pursuit of the freedom of speech are transformed into a strategy to be the saviour of freedom of speech in the form of a political movement.

As I argued in Chapter 2, de Certeau states that the ordinary people's tactic in the place is to 'transform themselves in order to survive' (1984: p. xi). The internet users' individual cyber migration to the global web service providers was not based on a revolutionary aim to overturn the power logic but rather on their desire to maintain cyber practice without any concerns. Their tactics were not chosen by ordinary people to 'challenge the order of power', as de Certeau states, but to illustrate how they have 'disguised or transformed themselves in order to survive' within dominant society (de Certeau, 1984, p. xi). The practices and logistics of Korean internet users were therefore not captured by the strategies of the power holders.

This traversality based on the internet users' nonfixity in space is central to our understanding of how Korean cyberspace has expanded through the power of the powerless. The modality of Korean cyberspace did not change in a revolutionary way, rather, it expanded. For example, YouTube and Gmail began to appear in Korean cyberspace. As stated in Chapters 4, according to the share of time used on the main sites of video streaming services, the top 3 sites, DaumTVpot, Youtube,

PandoraTV shared 66%, with YouTube taking 25 percent, the highest share in 2011. Naver, which had approximately 8,719 portal sites users, was ranked number 1 in the portal sites preferences research of Android mobile web users in 2011. Another interesting feature was that Google was ranked number 2 (KoreanClick, Nov 2011). This transformation was possible because Korean internet users had adopted these services in their online practice. One factor that explains this cyber migration is the disbelief in place. De Certeau states that as the consequence of 'the devaluation of beliefs … the demobilisation of workers is growing faster than the surveillance network'. As a consequence, he argues that belief is 'detached from it' (de Certeau, 1984:179–80). The migration of internet users from Korean web portal-based e-mail accounts to Gmail and from Korean-based streaming services to YouTube, together with their abandonment of Agora on Daum.net, can be seen as the devaluation of beliefs of the future resulting from the detachment of the dwellers from space.

Conclusion

It is important to accept the premise that the mobilisation of the internet node constructs various (cyber) landscapes as a background to the debate on cyber governance, which is in turn a key to my understanding that the tripartite relationship between the users, the state and non-state actors was constantly refigured and redefined between 2008 and 2010. In other words, the dynamic configuration or reconfiguration of cyberspace as a response to the event form a 'cyberscape' in Franklin's sense (2010) and the meaning of underground cyber asylum seeker can be understood in this sense. As Franklin argues, cyberscapes 'are particular to the sort of 'imagined words' now constituted by, experienced as, and circulated through cyberspatial practices' (2010:79); the public through the power of the powerless experienced explicitly how online territories were interwoven with society. This was the moment when cyberscape became appropriated as separate politically from the mediascape. The Lee administration assumed that the internet as part of other media like TV could be controlled at a national level.

The Korean web portals changed their attitude compliance with state policies to the championing of their users' freedom of speech. The distrust of the Lee administration as well as the web portals, which resulted in the cyber asylum seekers' project as well

as underground cyber asylum seeking, reconstructed the environment in which the internet users operated, which in turn formed a new cyber culture.

Underground cyber asylum seeking was based on an individualised entity and individual actions resulted in traversality. There was a time when the constellation of each traversal was thought to be directed to the same place by the power holders, albeit not with the same purpose. In this context, underground cyber asylum seekers are a phenomenon rather than a unified movement. I supported my argument in the previous chapter by illustrating how political institutions, including the web portals, were influenced by the effect of underground cyber asylum seekers, with a consequential reformation of power relationships based on their profit motivated mechanism. For example, the web portals' changing logic of business resulted from their own perception of the implications of the underground cyber asylums seekers. Simply put, they noticed that the users, their customers, were leaving and that this resulted in a profit loss. The Lee administration's changing regulatory framework was implemented after their inability to control the global web service providers, unexpected hacking incidents and complaints from local corporations about neutrality.

To understand the concept of underground cyber asylum seekers within the larger context of these struggles, we should question how the move to global providers resulted in such destabilisation of the dominant power relations in Korean cyberspace. Or was it the case that Korean internet users, who integrated the global web services into their online practice, made a seamless transition so that the global web services could enter the Korean cyberspace constellation?

While the measures exerted by the Lee government's authority demonstrated its power to silence Korean cyberspace, the Korean web portals merely followed the Lee administration. It was widely perceived as a systematic relationship between the two dynamics in that political power dominated over economic power in the internet industry. This is illustrated by interviews with officials of the web portal industries who state that their 'requests to weaken the regulations' 'have not ever been reflected in any reform of the regulation'. At the heart of the relationship between the web portals and the state is a dependent relationship based on a moral economy of "I will follow your rules, and then secure our profit in the local market". This moral

economy is embedded in the Korean state-industry relationship and it was a mutual agreement between the Korean government and the web portals. However it broke down after Candlelight 2008 when, according to an official of a Korean web portal, the Lee administration believed that 'false information had infiltrated the Korean internet'.[1]

As the state put pressure on Korean cyberspace, the web portals followed state regulations, the Korean internet users agonised, and then some of them left Korean cyberspace and moved to global cyberspace. The global web service providers entered a "game of thrones" as an alternative power to the state and to the Korean web portals. New rules were then needed due to the participation of new players, but this did not happen until powerful institutions were destabilised by this alternative power. An example of this is the Korean government's inability to control Google in terms of forcing them to adopt the real-name system. This example indicates that the power of internet users can overwhelm the power of the state and devalue its absoluteness. This conflict caused the Lee administration to lose its authority in cyberspace due to a failure of regulation, which was illustrated by the hacking incident and the consequential leaking of Korean internet users' personal information. This further led to the plans to abolish KCC and KCSC.

Similarly the web portals lost some sectors of their market, namely the streaming service and SNS sectors, due to these new players on the market. The Korean web portal is an economically driven mechanism that can operate alongside the state when the state's political values do not hinder market performance. Their poor performance at making their voices heard in the regulatory framework was based on this mechanism. This argument is further supported by anecdotes from interviewees from the Korean internet industry who state that they pursued compliance with the law. However, the moral economy of the state and the web portals broke down when the state focused on approaching cyberspace only from the media platform perspective and enforced its laws on the internet. This led to the internet users' breakaway movement, the underground cyber asylum seekers, which is fundamental to our understanding of the reasons why representatives of the Korean web portal industry thought they were victims of the Lee administration's cyber intervention.

The launch of Korean Internet Self-Regulation Organization (KISO) should be understood in the context of the anxieties of the Korean web portals and why the self-regulation framework is being supported by the Korean corporations. The case where KISO rejected KCSC's request to delete postings related to the sinking of a South Korean navy ship on March 26, 2010, should therefore be understood not as a power battle between the state and the corporations but as the Korean web portals' appeal to the state.

Until Candlelight 2008 cyberspace in Korea was not considered to be an important place in terms of the structuring of power relations. This was not because cyberspace was not influential, but the state did not pay attention to the representation and significance of what people were doing in cyberspace. Therefore Candlelight 2008 ruptured and unveiled the moment when cyberspace underwent a metamorphosis and transformed into a separate space in the mediascape and made a unique contribution to the formation of Korean culture and politics. Cyberspace had obtained its own territory in our society, as in Franklin's argument that we need to consider the effects of cyberscape separate from that of other mediascapes such as television (2010). The aftermath of Candlelight 2008 should therefore not be read as a transfer of power from corporations to the state, but as a reflection of their anxiety about the emergence of cyberspace as a unique environment.

Conclusion: Candlelight 2008 and the Future of Korean Cyberspace

1. New Approaches to Cyberspace Geography

This dissertation examined the validity of de Certeau's practice theory, his notions of power, place and space in terms of their relevance for our understanding of current cyber control discourses. As indicated in Chapter 1, de Certeau's critical engagement with the Foucauldian concept of the panopticon introduces the plurality of temporalities and subjectivities in our daily lives, which break the power of panopticism. The significance of his engagement with space/place and power is that he validates the power of the third factor, which is the powerless or those who are ignored. Absolute power and control is de-stabilised by ordinary people's unpredictable uses and traversals of place where power holders usually dominate. 'Traversality' refers to ordinary people's perceptions and practices of place, which leads to the emergence of alternative spatial and institutional dimensions that are in the process of being submerged by power. This dissertation argues that the traversality concept outlines how the legitimacy of power can be broken.

The exploration of these concepts led us to an analysis of how internet users traverse (act) beyond the limits of time, location, and politics. This dissertation identified the scholarly rhetoric in cyber control based on a Foucauldian approach to power. For example, Goldsmith and Wu argue that the state dominates in control over the internet. In contrast, Franklin's elaboration of de Certeau's idea, substantiating the power of the internet user group in relation to current internet governance discourses, As a case study of how the concepts of traversality and power works, the dissertation examined the potential power of Korean internet users who traverse cyberspace and challenged the possibility of full cyber control.

In order to further this theoretical argument, the dissertation analysed the consequences of the Candlelight 2008 protest, which followed the public outrage caused by health concerns related to US beef imports. Public concern was vociferously expressed in both Korean cyberspace and on the ground. This dissertation has illustrated how Korean cyberspace has become interwoven with

contemporary Korean society. It also explored the aftermath of Candlelight 2008 as exemplified by the power struggles between the Lee government, the Korean web portals, and Korean internet users. Both the government and the web portals changed their systems in response to the ways in which ordinary internet users responded to their actions. Despite the announcement of new internet regulations, the government was unable to control Korean cyberspace, due largely to the ability of global portals to refuse or circumvent the demands of the domestic internet authorities after a series of hacking incidents, which resulted in a personal information leak.

This effectively empowered Korean internet users to migrate their email accounts and other internet activities away from Korean-based web portals and to utilise global internet resources. The resulting fall in Korean web portal profits led the domestic industry to undertake collaborative action to self-regulate in an attempt to protect their interests, and to supposedly secure the interests and privacy of their users. Therefore, this episode is an example of the power of ordinary internet users to affect changes in the conduct of other power institutions involved in cyberspace through their traversal of global cyberspace outside the boundaries of state domination. The availability of resources beyond the scope of the Korean-language internet provided concrete choices to Korean internet users, which they exploited as a tactic to subvert the power of the government and the web portals. Koreans have furthermore argued that the events of 2008 had a particularly significant impact on the formation of Korean culture and politics, as the protest affected various sectors in Korean society and impacted on the ways in which they viewed cyberspace.

In terms of theoretical insights, two explicit developments in internet studies have been emphasised recently. There are those who depict cyberspace as a battlefield between state and non-state actors, and the latter category includes global corporations in particular as I discuss in Chapter 1. Another important aspect is internet users' online activism. Neither of these viewpoints considers the power of local web service providers, which have dominated non-English based web territories, nor the space where internet users can control power discourses in cyberspace as well as substantiating the power of the powerless, as illustrated by the case study.

Two distinct points were identified regarding the fundamental factors shaping Korean cyberspace. The first was that the Korean government had previously focused solely

on the development of internet infrastructure until Candlelight 2008 demonstrated a policy gap regarding the social and political impact of the internet. The other issue, and closely related to the first, is that the Korean internet market had developed without overt state intervention, which resulted in its rather portal-centric nature. These factors are significant in understanding the Lee administration's legal intervention in Korean cyberspace post-2008. Of central importance from the government's perspective was the question as to how this shaped Korean cyber culture and in turn how this shaped their strategy to control both the web portals and their users simultaneously.

I investigated the Lee administration and the Korean web portals' changing mechanisms when dealing with the internet and its users, with a particular focus on the conflicting relationship between the three players. The project also aimed to re-interpret the negative aspects of Korean cyberspace, for example the distrust which was identified in the observation of online communities, as well as in the case of cyber asylum seekers.

Debating Cyber Control Discourses

One of the contributions of this dissertation is to introduce how the scholarly discussion on Candlelight 2008 had evolved, as seen in Chapter 2, which enabled us to understand how Korean academics paid particular attention to examining the potential power of internet users under the rubric of the digital phenomenon, decentralised networks, and public resistance to elites. The chapter then shed light on the shift of Korean scholarly debates on the dominant internet discourse away from positivistic views of internet users' online activism to the issue of state-centric cyber control discourses. Such a significant shift resulted from an engagement with the 2008 event from a space-centred perspective (i.e. the role of the internet) rather than a practice-centred perspective (users' ways of dwelling in cyberspace before, during and after the event). The main issues and theoretical debates identified here became a foundation for this dissertation and offer an important way of moving the debate beyond cyber control discourses by re-framing the question as 'who controls cyberspace?' This was done by demonstrating how Korean internet users were able

to evade the limitations of nationally bounded cyberspace, which had an effect on state-driven cyber governance as well as on Korean web portals' business policy.

This dissertation then analysed the Lee administration's cyber governance and the Korean web portals' entrepreneurship through their changing logic of operations by highlighting the emerging power of the powerless, namely underground cyber asylum seekers. This pertains particularly to the Korean internet users' migration to global web services. To depart from the dualistic approach to the power struggle in cyberspace, this research project attempted to broaden the issue of cyber control beyond the narrow rivalries between state and non-state actors by addressing the role of internet users as a factor in expanding the scope of Korean cyberspace. I found that the power of the internet users' individual migration to the global web services was derived from the moment when this pattern was noticed by the power holders, the state and the Korean web portals, as it created a vacuum of sorts which was filled by Google and YouTube. This had a significant impact on the reformation of Korean cyberspace.

The dissertation then linked these alternative perspectives to help in understanding the issue of distrust in Korean cyberspace. From a top-down perspective the attitude of the state can be summarised as a focus on the problem of distrust and misinformation, turning cyberspace into an object to be modified through law enforcement. However, the tripartite model showed that this seemingly negative aspect of the Korean internet in fact stemmed from intervention in cyberspace. Indeed, this can be understood as a result of Korean cyberspace users' inability to accept the shifting paradigm of Korean cyberspace from a relatively non-regulated space to a more restricted one. As a consequence, I argue that the ICTs' embeddedness in the Korean society at a cultural-political level, involving the internet in particular, had been a continuous site of struggle. The conflictual relationship between the three dynamics illustrates that the power holders did not construct an optimal mechanism to rule cyberspace in effective economic ways. Rather, the logics of operations of the power holders were based on the gaze in de Certeau's sense, suggesting that panoptics and the Scriptural Economy are appropriate theoretical analogies to use when discussing the strategies of the power holders involved with local Korean cyber territory.

The Limitations of the Gaze and Levels of Surveillance

As discussed in Chapter 2, the demonstrations during Candlelight 2008 in turn generated an increased level of online surveillance by the Lee administration. Government bodies announced new measures such as the expansion of the real name system, the cyber contempt law and the compulsory monitoring system. Furthermore, the power institutions, the police in particular, kept a close watch on the users' online activities in Korean cyberspace and requested that the web portals delete anti-government postings as well as arresting internet users who were antagonistic to the government. The logic of controlling internet users as well as subjugating cyberspace was based on the gaze or even on Foucauldian panopticism in the sense that they were able to monitor what the power agents found problematic by looking at online postings. Korean law therefore encouraged the web portals into a state of compliance with its logic. They in turn became the agents who gazed at and deleted postings on behalf of the Lee administration, all under the scriptural ideology of the purification of Korean cyberspace. The 24/7 monitoring service as illustrated in Chapter 4 illustrates the logic of this gaze as well.

However, as illustrated throughout the case study chapters, the limitation of such levels of surveillance based on the gaze mechanism was soon revealed when the cyberspace dweller escaped its surveillance by choosing the global web services for their online everyday practices, which was beyond the control of the state gaze mechanism. This project attempted to answer the question of what an examination of internet user groups potentially contributes to the academic discourse on cyber control. My argument is that internet users might be seen as mere dwellers in cyberspace from a top-down point of view, but that they also have a certain ownership and control of the internet, and they can become power holders themselves by instilling doubt into the power holders' paradigm. The last issue is a point aptly demonstrated by the Lee government and the web portals' alteration of their strategies due to the activities of the underground cyber asylum seekers.

2. Future Research Directions

When attending various conferences and symposia on the topic of cyber control and digital democracy I noticed that there is a tendency in the internet discourse to find new languages with which to understand current events. The scholarly endeavour to redefine the cyber public sphere and internet users' anti-state activism, for example through the understanding of the voices which were heard during the Arab Spring, are a case in point. One particular example of this was the 'Media, Power & Revolution' symposium held in London in April 2012. One thing I learned from this conference was that cyber governance is treated as an antagonistic feature in the examination of digital democracy. In the same vein, optimistic views on the internet in terms its facilitation of collective voices have changed to a more pessimistic perspective; a change which stems from current oppressive state intervention in cyberspace. I have also noticed that there have been certain scholarly tendencies, under the heading of 'Misunderstanding of the Internet' (Curran et al. 2012). These attempts to redefine and reconfigure the internet from the bottom up, and there by unveil the different perceptions that various groups have on the web and the net, while also reassessing the internet from various perspectives. This academic endeavour, of some twenty-year duration, to return back to the foundation aims to correct the misconception that cyberspace is 'place' to be occupied or dominated fully, and also highlights the mystification of online activism as a form of radical social change. By the same token, the role of the SNS, for example during the Arab spring, needs to be clarified. Do we see it as a component of the webs that have been used to make voices heard, or is it to be understood as a new generation/version of the net (net generation) that can change the logic of operations performed in society? Such different positionings should be carefully explored and examined. Meanwhile at conferences that focused on the role of SNS during the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street vis-à-vis their role in expanding the power of the (non-)state actor, I have discovered that reconsidering the negative aspects of cyber culture, apart from the role of hackers, has been less developed.

It is with this in mind that I have decided on the future direction of my research, namely to reinterpret the history of Korean cyberspace from the internet users' perspective. There are voices in cyberspace which have been defined in an explicit

way based on dichotomised concepts, whether they are positive or negative. What I mean by dichotomisation is that we place the users' agency in a direct and binary framework in which they react only to power discourses. In fact, power started to be formed through the existence of the individual cyber dweller. S/he then negotiated the power equation with his/her own language without dealing directly with the power holders who spoke so constantly of freedom, equality and democracy, without those same power holders demonstrating any legitimate concern for the people.

Little in the way of previous research has been conducted to gauge the implicit significance of this approach, namely a tripartite model. I believe that a genealogical evaluation of Korea's internet history, and more specifically focusing on the tripartite relationship between the state, web service providers and users, will shed light on the constellation of the cyberspace dweller. Indeed this issue has been submerged within the dominant tendencies in Korean scholarship which have viewed the internet either from a cyber cultural perspective without consideration for power influence dynamic, or from a rival viewpoint which emphasise the anti-establishment nature of the internet.

3. Moving into the Age of Social Media

With reference to the Lee administration's cyber intervention, if Korean cyberspace reflects Korean society on the ground, then the Lee administration's intervention reflects on Korean society. The struggles between the three players and the resultant anxieties were largely due to the perception that the Lee administration had over-reacted. For example, the Prime Minister's Office ordered prosecutors to investigate four of its ethics officials over allegations of conducting an illegal probe into a certain civilian.

Kim Jong-Ik, who ran a medium sized company, hyperlinked a moving image suggesting President Lee's corruption in 2008. It was reported that the Prime Minister's Office not only requested officials to target inspections at Mr. Kim, but also to pressure his employees and the bank which held stock shares in Kim's company in order to drop its value (J.H. Song, June 2010). His life was ruined by the this surveillance and pressure, and Kim sold his company and stayed in Japan for a

long period due to the government's pressure (ibid.). Despite his appeal to the court, they ignored the case. However, it was revealed that Mr. Kim was not the only victim of the Lee administration's surveillance.   On 30 March 2012, a KBS (Korean Broadcasting System) journalist revealed that the ethics team of the Prime Minister's Office 'kept reports on a broad range of people', and that public servants were 'mandated to watch politicians, journalists, civic groups and labor activists' (S.H. Choe, April 2012). Regarding the uncovered documents, the journalist Kim Tae-gyu reported that:

> The document discovered also made it clear that Lee was at the top of the line for receiving the surveillance reports, presenting a flow chart for the official line that read "VIP reports go to public ethics officer → BH [Blue House, the President's residence] unofficial line → VIP [or Chief of Staff]". (T.G. Kim July 2012)

However, the ethics team made an attempt to destroy evidence after this was revealed (S.H. Choe, April 2012). The opposition parties have accused the presidential office of being behind certain surveillance activities and an independent counsel was tasked with investigating this. However, prosecutors could not establish a prosecutable case, although it was a moot point whether this was intentional or not (T.G. Kim July 2012).

In this context, it was not only Korean cyberspace which was perceived as being the subject of state repression.   It was reported internationally that Korean media democracy in general was heavily repressed. Reporters without Borders published an account entitled 'Internet Enemies' which defined the status of the Lee administration's freedom of speech as 'under surveillance' in 2009, 2010 and 2011 (Reporters without Borders, 2011). As a consequence, the Lee administration was ranked 51st on a list of 179 states (the highest ranking representing the freest state), a fall of eleven levels compared to the previous administration (Ibid.).

Away from issues associated with narrow political venality, technological developments yet again introduced new issues and concerns. Mobile internet landed sensationally in Korean citizens' daily lives when smartphones appeared in 2010. It was a sensational development as there were no local powers to intervene as yet and people had adopted this medium together with SNS, Facebook and Twitter, as a political tool against the Lee administration. People started to discuss its functionality

in facilitating 'pure' voices and raised their hopes high in terms of moving closer to an egalitarian and freer society. As a consequence of this, the Korean scholarly debate relating to cyberspace tended to shift focus from the online forum to discussing the role of SNS.[50] However, the power holders soon began to appropriate the new terrain, which was seemingly similar but different from cyber territory. Politicians and business enterprises started to use the tool for their own ends. For example, politicians used the platform to freshen up their image while business enterprises used it to market their products through mobile ads and considered SNS's launch as a new platform for a new market. As a consequence, the myth of SNS's political potential began to disperse.

While the Lee regime's misunderstanding of the internet was unveiled and SNS became embedded in Korean society, another Candlelight protest against the US beef imports began in April 2012, when mad cow disease was found in the US but the Korean government would not stop importing American beef[51] (Kyunghyang Special Edition, May 2012). The public and various civil society solidarity networks including the opposition party requested a ban on US beef imports, as the Lee administration had promised during the 2008 Candlelight Protest. However, the 2012 Candlelight Protest was not as large or sustained as the one in 2008. In fact, it had little impact on political circles. Although this is also something to be studied more fully in future research, one thing for certain is that this illustrates the reason why we need to go beyond a techno-centric discourse when we study the internet. Rather than over-evaluating the politically transformative power of new technologies, we need to focus on the varying voices of ordinary people as articulated in our daily online/offline lives, and to examine how they are developed and deployed.

However, despite that recent international developments have also changed the equation once again. When looking at the emergence of the cyberscape as Franklin

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[50] The discourses on SNS tends to focus on the role of SNS in terms of its impact on the reality on the ground (M.J. Kim et al. 2012), its information sharing functionality (J.K. Kim et al. 2011), and lastly its impact on the political activity (H. Kum, 2011).

[51] The Korean media reported that the US Department of Agriculture announced that mad cow disease was found in California on the 22 April 2012. However, the Lee government argued that only a few cows were found to be diseased and therefore it was not necessary to ban US beef. Furthermore, 'the Korean government emphasized the trade disadvantage to other sectors that would result from banning American beef imports'. As a consequence, a candlelight protest was held (Kyunghyang Special Edition, 15 May 2012).

terms it (2010), and given the particular characteristics of Korean internet culture, I noticed a similar pattern flow. It was not long ago that the Iranian government blocked the internet so that citizens could not disseminate their protests relating to the June 2009 election (The Guardian, 15 June 2009). It was also relatively recently that people enthusiastically expressed their views regarding the role of SNS as a means of spreading democracy during the Arab Spring (Alexander, 2012). We thought that we were witnessing the collapse of American neo-liberalism by means of the voices heard in the Occupy Wall Street and other associated movements, which resonated in the US. However, we can now see that the space where there had been hope, as evident in professionals' online activism on Facebook during the Arab Spring, is now being deserted. We are also witnessing repressive censorship in the US and the UK, including for example the case of SOPA in US (Rushe et al., December 2011) and in bills relating to email scrutiny in the UK (Morris, March 2012). We had previously thought that only authoritarian states such as China and Iran were able to manipulate internet architecture through aggressive censorship. However, although it will be professionally and skilfully camouflaged, the same logic governs these bills. We must now recall John Perry Barlow who proclaimed 'A Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace' in 1996 (Barlow, 1996), who expressed the hope that cyberspace would be filled with pure voices.

Current world events such as Egypt's protests and Occupy Wall Street are reminiscent of Candlelight 2008 and its aftermath. With regards to this it is important to point out that state as well as non-state actors will continue to exert their power after the revolution has ceased and that nothing seems to have changed significantly from the top-down perspective. It was not a 'victory of the ordinary people', but rather a case of cyber activism acting as a catalyst which gave ordinary people in each nation the confidence to make their voices heard online, as well as offline. In response to this, my concluding remark is that internet users may be merely cyberspace dwellers from a top-down view of the ownership and control of the internet, but they can become power holders themselves by instilling doubt into the power holders' paradigm. At this point we must pay particular attention to how we find, locate and discuss the implicit voices of the citizen and the netizen, who will respond to the state's power over the scriptural economy.

Appendix I: Brief Descriptions of Interviewees

This appendix contains a brief description of my interviewee participants (40 in total). The interviewees, who were not named throughout this research, are delineated here as their statements may guide the reader to a better understanding of the context of this thesis. It also includes people who I contacted by email. The purpose of this appendix is to provide detailed information of the interviewees. Due to the confidentiality and anonymity that this research must keep to, the names of the interviewees and detailed information of their status will not be given. The institutional dynamics relating to their organisation will only be described. I used the real name of the interviewees when they wanted to use their own name in my research. Furthermore, transcription note will be provided, if necessary, in order to give the readers a sense of a conversation. Each paragraph is not connected in chronological order.

A. Total No. of Interviewees: 40

Classification	No. of Interviewees
Ordinary People	16
Members of online Café	4
Officials at Governmental Bodies	5
Journalists	3
Officials at Korean Web Portal	4
Activist	2
Professor/ Researcher	5
Total	39

B: A List of Interviewees

Interviewees related to the internet industry

Interviewee A

Interview Date: 08/07/10

Location: a café near the interviewee's office

Interviewee A works for a Korean Web portal company. A's company is one of the biggest web portal companies in Korea. For her, the 2008 Candle Demonstration was one of the important events that had happened in Korean history. She suggested to me that I should be careful attaching any significances to the events relating to the Korean web portals, because many of them were exaggerated by the press.

Transcription Note

The beginning of time – it was a liberal space without worry or anxieties.

The internet has always taken the role of a liberal space. However, due to the Korean government's excessive reaction and a political dynamic, it seemed that the internet was considered as a special space during a period of the Candlelight Demonstration. The internet activities of users were neither different nor explosive compared to their other internet activities.

The only difference is that Daum has its identity as a medium which has encouraged users to develop various forum spaces... Naver has its identity as a platform and a search engine... I think that internet portal sites have to maintain a neutral stance…

The Fair Trade Commission's accusation that Naver acted as a monopoly was political. Firstly, the Fair Trade Commission's accusation relating to Naver's market dominance, which was the fundamental issue, turned out to be false, because they had calculated Naver's sales including that of Daum.net and SK Communications. In fact, we took 70% of market share at that time (Interview, 8 July 2010).

Korean Version: 기본적으로(공정위의 문제제기는) 정치적인것이었어요. 그렇게 때문에..첫번째는 시장지배력이 있는냐의 이슈인데..본질적 질문에 대해서 아니였던 건데..뭐냐며는 매출에 대한 시장지배경재력을 3사(네이버 다음 네이트)의 매출을 쥐어짜서 만든 형식이예요. 첫번때, 그쪽(공정위)에서 시장지배력을 가지고 있는지에 대한 판단의 자체가 저희가 검색의 시장지배력을 가지고 있다고는 할 수 있어요 왜냐하면, 숫자상으로 봤을때, 당시에 70%정도 되었으니까. 그렇지만 매출에 대한 지배력은 가지고 있지는 않았거든요.

Google has characteristics different from the Korean web portals. Google does not generate its own content. Google does not own its content. Instead it is an instrument for conducting web searches. Google conducts web crawling, ranking websites and generating relevant lists for its users ... In contrast, when Korean web portals began to launch their businesses, there were few websites written in Korean. In fact, there was no Korean content. There was content such as blogs and online cafe services that users had created with tools offered by the web portals. Another content category is one that web portals created on their own, not through the users contributing to the database. It is fair that Google cannot use the content in the second case (Interview, 8 July. 2010).

Korean Version: 구글은 네이버와 같은 한국 포털과는 성격이 틀리죠. 구글은 자체적으로 컨텐츠를 가지고 있지 않고 웹 문서 검색만 하던 기업이었고 여러가지 미국에 존재하는 다른 웹사이트의 웹 문서를 모아서 전달해주는 역할을 주로 했었던 것이고, 반면, 한국의 포털 사이트들은 한국의 포털이 시작했을 때 한국어로 된 웹사이트들이 소수밖에는 되지 않았죠. 웹사이트의 웹문서라는 컨텐츠 자체가 거의 없었던 거이구요. 그런 의미에서 한국에서 포털은 자기의 도구를 이용해서 UCC 를 만드는, 즉 자체적인 컨텐츠를 제공하는 형태로, 생산적으로 유저들한테 제공해서 컨텐츠를 생산하게 했다는 그 측면이 하나 있고, 또 하나 자체적인 DB 를 만들었죠. 그 부분에 대해서 100%, 예를 들면, 다른 사이트인 구글같은 경우에 100% 네이버처럼 자유롭게 이용할 수 없는 걸 당연하다고 생각이 든는거죠.

Closure of the video-streaming service... We merely made a business judgment … Video service did cost a lot of money, but there were already well developed services available in the market, for example YouTube, Pandora and Afreeca. Thus, Naver did not necessarily develop this service to continue its business in this sector (Interview, 8 July 2010).

Korean Version: 기본적으로는 다음이나 네이버나 돈이 걸려있는 서비스는 아니었다. 다만, 사업적인 판단은 했던 것 같습니다....비디오 스트리밍 서비스라는 것이 엄청나게 돈이 많이 들고 이미 발전한 서비스고요. 예를 들면 유튜브도 있고 또 한국에서 독립적으로 서비스하던 회사도 있죠. 판도라나 아프리카 등등. 따라서 굳이 네이버가 이 부분을 강화해서 사업을 할 이유는 없었다. 그런 이유에서 서비스를 접은 것이죠.

Interviewee B

Interview: 13/08/10

Location: Interviewees' Office

B works for an association associated with the internet industry. B used to work for a web portal company. Although B tried to be as official and neutral as possible during the answers, his critical stance on the government, including previous ones, could be picked up on during the interview. As B had been working for the Korea internet industry for a long time, his explanation of the history of Korean policies on the internet was quite helpful to understand that he viewed the Lee government's internet policies as actual cyber control.

Transcription Note

The effect of the internet began to be discussed widely from the Roh government. Some people said that the Roh government came into being because of the internet. Obviously it would be illogical to say that the internet made the Roh government. Rather, in politically correct terms, it was said that the Roh government was made by the internet, because internet users used the internet actively in order to support the president Roh. Under these circumstances, the people began to be interested in the effects of the internet and had realised that there was no legislations that could cover these. As a consequence, the various laws began to be either implemented or planned. In this vein, it when the Information Communication Network Law began to be revised annually (Time: 18:13).

Despite the awareness about the effects of the internet, no legislations or laws in order to promote the software of IT enterprises had been invented during the Roh government. Rather, the Roh government still focused on promoting IT hardware and infrastructure by implementing policies such as IT 830. Furthermore, the policies during the Roh government were introduced strategically in order to encourage manufactures, such as Samsung, and telecommunication companies to invest more fund in order to develop infrastructure device industry and network enhancement. (19:33) Whereas, the Roh government had not made a significant effort on promoting members of Korean Internet Companies Association that made value-added service via the Internet network (19:52).

From this perspective, the government policies up until the Roh government cannot be considered as positive. Furthermore, the debatable policies and systems relating to the internet at present were set up and passed the parliament mostly by the Roh government and the ruling party, Uri Party, where the president Roh belonged and took the majority in the Assembly at that time (20:04).

Therefore, it is hard to say that new regulations have been implemented after Lee Government. Many regulations were implemented before. At the beginning of the Lee government, the government drove its political stance relating to the internet to

tightened restrictions. However, the political stance of the government at present has changed to business friendly and the growth of the internet industry (by deregulations) (20:32).

As explained above, the most fundamental point that we need to consider relating to the Internet regulation is the political stance of the government. Obviously, although the political stance of the government changed, the legislative system would not be changed straightforwardly and instantly, because the law revision must be passed (by the parliament). By the same token, the regulation of the government cannot be shifted from restricted to relaxed although the political stance of the government has changed. (21:37) Therefore, it seems appropriate to see the political stance of the government as such, whether they concerns more about tightening the regulation or relaxing the regulation on the Internet (21:57).

The debatable policies at present were set up during Roh government. It is hard to say that new regulations have been implemented after Lee government [however] the reason why the public think that the Roh government had less regulation on the internet, is that they were not well aware of the regulations at that time. I think that they know and feel when the changed regulations become problematical [for their uses of the internet]… the government [normally] applies regulations to solve the adversary effect. They set up new policies for the public good. Well... they cannot unveil the political intention for the new legislations officially even if they have. Anyway... the famous examples are the issue of privacy protection, defamation and violation of other's right in the cyberspace. There were laws or jurisdiction to deal with these issues before. Even though the law existed to deal with these matters, they wanted to set up a new law that would only be applied to the internet and conducted additional punishment. As these new legislation standard was stronger than that of the existing laws, it sometimes breached the basic human rights… the business enterprises merely followed this, but these were normally applied to the public via our service platform. That is, if a person's basic human right is infringed while he/she uses our service

In fact, the rate of using Agora had radically increased after the issue of the cow disease began. Traffic itself increased. However, there was an adverse effect on us. Although it was not Daum.net's intention, the internet users centred upon Daum.net, Agora and café, so big press companies such as Chosun stopped providing news. This was due to the boycott campaign of the big companies that were in favour of beef import and against the demonstration, and the online cafes in Daum.net centred on this activism. The press companies criticized the reaction of the Daum.net to the users' movement. That is, they saw us from the perspective of Old Media enterprise. Daum.net by law deleted the posting if the Korean Communication Standard Commissions requested. From their perspective, we were the service runner and they thought we could erase any postings if we wanted to. After the 2008 Candlelight Demonstration, Daum.net suffered a bit [laughs].

The 2008 Candlelight Demonstration has demonstrated the dilemma that web service providers had. Politically correct, Daum.net did not contribute anything to the demonstration. It was the internet users who used the Daum.net service, Agora and café to make their postings. The misconception could have been made in the way that Daum.net encouraged the activism of its users... This misunderstanding may come from the lack of the understanding about the internet as a medium.

Interviewee C

Interview: 03/09/10

Location: Office

Interviewee C works for a Korean web portal company. C's response to my question was quite official, because C said sometimes 'well, officially speaking' or said to him 'how did I respond to this?' I had the impression that C seemed to get used to giving the official line in response to political questions relating to the relationship between the Lee government and the web portals.

Transcription Note

The decision to eliminate 'Agora' on the News Section on the main page was to follow the Press law. The issue of the Press law revision was being discussed at that time. During the consultation, the provision that new contents should not be confused with the user created contents was added. Therefore, we had to take this into consideration and had to set up our clear standpoint. (Interview, 3 Sept. 2010)

Korean Version: 초기화면에서 아고라를 뺀 것은 중요한 변화였으니까. 그 이유는..뉴스아래 아고라가 있었는데, 그부분은 그때 당시 언론중재법, 신문법이다든지의 법개정 논의가 되었는데, 논의과정에서 신문 컨턴츠랑 이용자 컨텐츠의가 햇갈리지 않아야 한다는 조항이 들어갔구요, 헷갈리지 않아야 한다는 조항이 들어갔으니 참고하지 않을 수 없었고, 그러다 보니까..형행법에서 사회적 논란이 있는 부분에서 투명하게 보여야 했지요.압박때문이라고 해석하진 않습니다..

We are also a victim of Cyber Asylum Seeking. Last year, Gmail was No.1 [in the Korean market] in terms of time duration. What this signifies is that people, who use email, actively moved [away] from our company to Gmail. After the email account of the writer of the TV programme *P.D. Note* was scrutinized by the government, our email service usage rate dropped significantly. It is worrying … If people leave, because the quality of our service is bad, then we should be able to attract them back again by upgrading our service. If not, something is wrong (Interview, 3 Sept. 2010).

Korean Version: 사이버 망명은 저의도 피해자인데요. 저의고객도 많이 나가셨어요. ..듀레이션 타임(duration time) 있어요. 그거는 작녁에 Gmail 이 1 위로 올라섰어요. 무슨이야기냐면, 이메일을 활발하게 쓰는 사람일수록, 평균 듀레이션 타임이 1 등이라는 것은 이메일을 활발히 쓰는 사람들이 Gmail 로 갔다라는 것이거든요. 저의이메일 서비스가 좋은 서비스라고 생각을 하고 ..아직 Gmail 에 떨어진다고 생각을 하지 않고 훨씬 더낳은 서비스라고 많은 기증을 제공하고 있다고 생각을 하는데, 사람들이 내 이메일 압수수색되는거 싫어라는 등의 이유로 떠나신다면 꾕장히 아..안타깝죠.. 저의가 사이버 망명을 심각하게 생각하는 부분이 사실 TV pot 이라든지 이메일이 대표서비스인데, PD 수표 작가사건 때에 툭툭 바뀌니까 꾕장히 우려를 하는데, 음...예컨데 이메일 압수수색이 제한적으로 꼭 필요한 경우만 할 수 있도록 법원에서 신경을 써주려고 한다는 그런 얘기 들은바 있습니다. ..국경없는 인터넷 성격의 특성상 작년에 처음으로 사이버 망명을 경험한 것 아닙니까? 그런부분에서도 주목하고..저의가 서비스 경쟁력이 떨어져서 다른 서비스로 이동한다고 하면 열심히 해서 따라잡으면 되는 것이지만, 그렇지 않은 부분에 있어서 문제가 된다고 한다면 시정해야 된다는 생각을 하구요..

Different judgments on the postings relating to the Cheonan sinking illustrated the difference between the state and the web portals' view of cyberspace. It is a question of whether one sees online information merely as potentially infodemic and malicious, or if one accepts the possibility of disinformation that can be corrected by the users (Interview, 3 Sept. 2010).

Korean Version: 약간의 시각차이가 들어나는 것이죠..인터넷에 있는 정보들이 그렇게 다 유언비어이고 다 나쁜것들 전염병성의 것들이냐..아니면 이정도는 우리가 건강하게 받아들이고 인터넷에서 자정되어 가는 부분들이 있느냐 이런 부분들에 대해서 서로서로 노력하는 과정이라고 생각을 해요..

We have so many lawsuits to deal with as well as the constitutional appeal nowadays. I think the reason why our company is being sued in various cases is that the current laws and legislation are unbalanced. If so, we obey the law, but we also want to keep a balance.

Well, it seems that after they have been through the 2008 Candlelight Demonstration, he (the president of the Korean government) tends to think that if false information is diffused via internet, it links with anti-government movement. Furthermore, there are many people in the political circles, both the ruling party and the government, who believe that the Korean internet was bombarded by false information. In 2009, there were 10 policy priorities announced by KCC among which only one section was related to internet. That was the sincerity of the internet. Protect Infodemics. Simply speaking, among 10 policy priorities, only one which

elated to the internet was concerned with bout false information on the internet that show how the ruling party and the Blue House [the president's residence] were worried about this…

In the mobile internet era, it is difficult to compete with the global brand. iPhone has its own app. market and Android has its own market. For example, Google account is necessary to use the Android market. So… we make every endeavour to provide localized content for the Korean mobile internet users. Apart from the service development, to escape from circumstances where the regulation on the internet would cause an adverse effect on us, KCC and stakeholders in the private section and professionals form Regulatory Reform TFT in the Regulatory Reform Committee. Wow what an official statement it is... [laughs]

Interviewee D

Interview date: 06/09/10

Location: D's office

D works for a web portal company behind which was less competitiveness. As a consequence, company business of D was not significantly involved in the issue of the 2008 Candlelight Demonstration. As a consequence, D expressed her opinion more freely than other interviewees. D stated that her company made a serious effort to restore internet users in the mobile Internet era. This confirmed that the paradigm of the Korean internet market shifted to the mobile Internet phase. Furthermore, like other interviewees in the Korean internet industry, D thought the launch of Korean Internet Self-regulation Association (KISO) as the moment when the Korean web portals gained power as an institution.

Transcription:

The government wants to deal with this matter (Korean navy ship sunk in the sea) through the law, because the jurisdiction is flexible depending on the governments' interpretation. KISO acts to protect users. If the Korean web portal did not have power, the postings would be deleted. We had a reason to resist to the government.

Korean Version: 정부는 기존 안에 대해서 법쪽으로 처리하고 싶어하는 것이고 법쪽은 갖다 붙이면 다 맞는거니까. KISO 이용자 입장을 보호한다는 입장에서 역할을 하고 있다. 포털이 지금보다 더 힘이 없다면 다 삭제되어야 하는 상황인데.. 나름 모여서 저지하며 논리적 근거 만들고 맞서고 있는게 KISO 죠.

In the past, we could not see the face of the netizen, so they used abusive words with a 'what the hell' mind. Not anymore. Now the Netizen culture is far higher than that of journalist. They know that the front page of newspapers is not an important issue in our society, but the front page is the space for the newspaper company to say what

they want. By the same token, the new consumption is circulated by SNS nowadays. Well, I think that it is natural a phenomenon. The SNS users can share the important news with acquaintances. News from Twitter is produced faster than actual news from other media companies. However, the real name system is not applied to Twitter. There are followers who want to receive the tweets. I have found that people are very cautious about writing something on Twitter. That is, trust must give the answer to the issue of real name system. .

We [the Korean web portals whose market share remains low] do not see any hope in the current internet market. The users hold and take a stand on the famous Korean web portal… So we are preparing for the mobile internet era with every means available.

Government Bodies relating to the Internet:

Interviewee E

Interview date: 06/08/10

Location: E's office

E works for Korean Communications Standards Commission (KCSC), an independent statutory organization, where they advise both the web portals and the Korean Communications Committees. As stated in the main text, KCSC is criticized, because the roles that they play are considered as a governmental body. E was also aware of this criticism and made several statements in order to support KCSC as an independent statutory organization. Furthermore, E also expressed that KISO, a self regulatory organization, did not play well in terms of harmonising with KCSC. This had proven that there existed tension between KCSC and KISO. His overall responses to my question were quite official.

Interviewee F

Interview Date: 12/07/10

Location: F's office

Interviews F entered the governmental body after the 2008 Candlelight Demonstration. As a consequence, F's statement relating to the 2008 Candlelight Demonstration was a personal to some extent. However, due to the tasks F was processing was directly related to the policies on the Internet, I was able to hear the problematic issues in terms of processing. For example, F told that due to the lack of officers in the government, once a political issue had risen as a hot topic, the rest of issues put behind.

Transcript Note

Our organization used to deal with the Ministry of Information and Communication. This is broken down into two government bodies, the Ministry of Information and Communication and the Ministry of Public Administration and Security ... Sometimes we each deal with at the same job at the same time. The reason for this is that Information Security Policy Department in the Ministry of Information and Communication deals with Personal information in a private sector, whereas, KCC has a Department of Personal Information Security and Ethics, which also deals with the personal information. Due to the fact that the Network Act covers personal information, this departmental overlap confuses the issue. In the past, the Ministry of Information and Communication used to encompass all (Interview, 12 July 2010).

Korean Version: 저의가 원래는 정통부를 상대하는 기관이었다가 방통위 행안부 직여부로 쪼개진 거라고 알고 있는데, 근데 그때는 어땠는지 모르겠지만 지금은 아마 그런게 있죠. 비슷한 업무를 중복적으로 하는거가 어쩔수 없이 좀 있죠. 왜냐면, 그..행안부 직재령에 보면은 저기가..이거는 하나의 예인데 행안부 직재려에 보면은 이런게 있어요. 민간분야에 한정하는 건데 정보보호 전반은 아니고, 개인정보 민간정보에 관한 개인정보를 행안부의 정보보호 정책과 이런데서 담당을 하게 되는데 이게되게 애해한게 음 방통위가 지금 정보통신망법을 주로 많이 보잖아요. 근데. 방법에 지금 개인정보 관련된 부분이 있단 말이예요. 그..저기 방송통신위언회에도 개인정보보호 윤리과가따로 있고. 그러니까비슷한 내용의 개인정보를 행안부에서도하고 방통위에서도 하는거예요 그런 문제가 있죠.

Researcher: 'Is this your personal opinion of it?'

Interviewee at a government body: 'No' [laughs] (Interview, July 12 2010).

Korean Version: 사람들도 개인적으로 만나보면 사람들 의견이 다 다르고, 그 사후에 문제가 됐을때 사후적인 취급 어렵잖아요. 그리고 이게 뭐라그럴까, 일단 저희가 그거를 사전검열적 의미로 쓰겠다는게 아니라 그 사후에 문제가 됐을 때 그 후 사후 취급 하기가 어려우니까 처음에 경고를 하겠다는 의미로 하는거예요. 그러니까 자기 이름을 걸고 하는 말이기 때문에 말을 조심을 할 것이며 이런게 있으니까 너희가 주의를 하라고 하는거지 너네 잘못하는 사람들 다 이거 망법으로 처벌해서 뭐 감옥에 갈거다가 아니라 그런 의미가 더 강한거예요.

리서처: 그거는 개인적인 의견인가요?

인터뷰인: 아니죠 (웃음)

Interviewee G

Interview Date: 22/07/10

Location: a café near G's office

Interviewee G was one of members in the governmental bodies who had involved in the reform bills on the Internet during and after the 2008 Candlelight Demonstration until 2009. With my re-confirmation of confidentiality about the interviewee, G narrated behind story and background of the governmental bodies' announcement relating to the reform bills on the internet straight after the demonstration. During the Interviewees, G expressed his/her dilemma between own ideology on the Korean cyber culture and G's obligation to follow the order of the government.

Transcript Note

The fast development of the Internet enabled Korea to have the best infrastructure and hardware, and it became a strong IT power as a consequence … However, there were no thoughts about the development of content, i.e. how it could be used. The discussion culture in cyberspace had not yet been established (Interview, 22nd July 2010).

Korean Version: 우리나라가 IT 강국이 된 데에는 하드웨어를 먼저 깔았잖아요. 하드웨어적으로 먼저 IT 강국을 구축해 놓고 나서 그안에 컨텐츠나 문화에 대해..소위 인터넷 윤리에 대해 생각을 않했어요. 그런부분은 쭉 빠져 있었던 거고..

The VIP [referring to the President] did not know about the Internet, well he doesn't have any political philosophy on this … He did not know the power of the Internet, so there was no preparation for communicating with the public via the Internet at the beginning of the Lee government … That is, the 2008 Candlelight demonstrations was the result of miscommunication ... he did not know how to handle the issue of the Internet politically.(Interview, 22 July 2010)

Korean Version [KV]: 높으신분은 인터넷에 대해서 잘 모르시는 분이예요..

VIP 는..인터넷에 대한 소통에 대한 준비가 안되어 있었는데, 이러한 일련의 과정을 거치면서.. 모든분야를 아우를 수 있어야 되는데 미숙함을 정권초기에 노출시키신거 같아요. 그부분의 문제가 뻥 뚫렸던게 촛불때 제대로 대응을 못하고 소통못하고..

The preconception of the policy maker is that if the law is established and the regulation begins to be implemented, the outcome is spontaneous ... By the same token, I think that the Ministry of Justice (and other government bodies) announced that stronger regulations were going to be implemented in advance, because this would work more effectively (Interview, 22 July 2010).

KV: 제일 쉬운게 뭔지 아세요? 법을 만들어서 못하게 하자하면 결과물이 바로 나올거라는 착각을 하는 거예요...법무부가 앞서서 강한구제를 말하지 않았었나..마치 바로 효과를 볼것처럼...

There was no time for them to listen to public opinion because it was an important moment when they had to show positive results to a V.I.P [refers to President Lee]'. (Interview, 22 July 2010)

KV: 이사람 (대통령) 의 (인터넷)에 대한 색깔이 없다보니..

그게 굉장히 효과를 볼것처럼..이게 오랜 협의끝에 만들어지면 괜찮은데..그때는 높은분한테(대통령)에게 결과물을 빨리 보이면서 정권을 안정적으로 가지고 가려 하는 분위기 속에서 만들어 졌고, 지금 돌이켜 보면..여러모로 미숙했던 시기였던 것 같아요.

With reference to 'Minerva', the government were not indifferent to finding out the reason why he appealed to the public so much. Instead, the government officials acted spontaneously with the assumption that he had lied on the Internet, so arrested him and muzzled him. That is the reason why people think that the government oppresses the freedom of expression without consideration (Interview, July 22 2010).

KV: 미네르바에 대한 대처방식에 여유가 없었던건 사실이예요. 그 사람을 지켜보면서 네티즌이나 국민을 끌어당기고 있나에 대해 생각을 못하고, 이말은 거짓이니까 체포를 해서 빨리 입을 막아버려야 겠다라는 즉자적 대응을 하니까 표현의 자유를 억압하고 있다고 안좋게 보여지게 만든것 같아요.

Interviewee H

Interview Date: 06/08/10

Location: His Office

Transcript Note

KISO stood against KCSC and refused the request to delete the postings. However, there was a hidden truth, which was not exposed by the media. Web portals enquired with KISO about deleting the postings relating to the Cheonan naval sinking, which contained certain rumours. KISO stood at the side and officially announced that the web portals would not delete the postings as KCSC requested. However, some portals had deleted the postings by themselves. This was not reported to the public. As a consequence, public opinion was shaped by the sense that the relationship between KISO and KCSC was a conflicting one, a battle between commercial self-regulation and state-centric regulations (Interview, 6 Aug. 2010).

KV: 천암함 같은 경우에도 160 개 중에서 5 개 밖에 시정 요구를 안했고 그 5 개는 누구나 납득할 수있는 것만을 했는데도 사회적으로 천암함에 대해서 위원회 심의를 했고 사업자 한테 보냈는데 사업자 단체에서, KISO 에서 거부했다. 거부하면서 '막무가내 심의 몽둥이질'이라고 하면서 심의 위원회의 심의결정에 대해 부정적으로 보도했다. 우리는 보도자료에 심의내용 자체를 그대로 보도했다. 사회적으로 혹시 오해를 받을까봐. 천안함에 대해 하게 되면 반드시 정부정책과 반대되는 이야기를, 합동조사단과 반대되는 이야기를 할까봐 몇 건을 심의했고, 몇 건을 심의없음이라고 했고, 그리고 몇 건을 시정 조치 요구를 한 것, 시정 요구를 한 것은 5 개인데 이건 무엇이다 라고 내용을 전부 다 첨부자료해서 보도자료로 보도했다. 근데도 불구하고, 천안함 관련 게시물의 시정 요구를 KISO 가 거부하는 입장을 밝혔다고 해서, 사실 언론에 공표되지 않은 부분이 있는데, KISO 에 의뢰한 것, 포털들이 의뢰를 했고 의뢰한 것 중에서 일부는 포털들이 KISO 가 거부했음에도 불구하고 삭제를 스스로 했다. 그리고 게시자도 자진해서 삭제를 했다. 이런 것들이 있는데도 불구하고 아무튼 거부한 사실만 공개를 하고 드러나서 자율규제와 공적규제를 경쟁적이고 적대시하는 관계로 모는 여론이 있었던 것이다.

Interviewee I

Interview Date: 02/09/10

Location: His Office

I was able to hear the tension exhibited between the web portals and the press and the government relating to the news articles.

Demonstration Participants

Interviewee J

Interview Date: 11/08/10

Location: A Café

J had experience many anti-government demonstrations during the 1980s, which was reflected in the interview. J sometimes compared the demonstrations that he had participated in in the past with the 2008 Candlelight Demonstration. For J, the characteristics of the 2008 Candle Light Demonstration, which were rooted in online activism, were a new experience.

Interviewee: Agora ID. Han Pan

Interview Date: 07/09/10

Location: The Court

He is an Agora User and ex-Administrator of Duam.net Café 'Anti-2MB'. I met him at the court. It was a day when judge declared him guilty due to his anti government activities. He believed that the government agents were spying on him. He met famous Agora users on the ground and took part in the 2008 Candlelight Demonstration together.

Members of Online communities

Agora Justice Forum

Interviewee: K

Interview: 08/09/10

Location: A Restaurant

K is one of the staff of Agora Justice Forum. I was able to hear about the detailed background of the conflict between the members. In particular, it was meaningful to hear about the distrust among the members, which had resulted from the user ID: Nanunuma's real identity on the ground.

Transcript

The moment of the candle demonstration is still vivid in my mind. It was like virtual reality came into the actual reality. I did not feel its physical pressure until Minerva was arrested. It visualized the personal freedom was being repressed.

During the candle demonstration, I felt the line drawn between inside the media and outside on the ground disappear.

Reading postings in Agora had given me an obligation to go out and take part in the real demonstration on the ground, because I felt guilty not responding to the article that urged us to come out on the ground. So I went along by myself.

Before Minerva was arrested, people had never felt any physical pressure (from the government online) … People made a consensus that they were (just) actively communicating in cyberspace. Then, the governmental power began to intervene online. Then, people suddenly realised that this was (also) a reality and they thought they needed to come up with something quickly (Interview, 08 Sept 2010).

KV:미네르바가 구속되기 전까지 물리력을 못느끼고 있었어요. 이건 가상현실이구, 아 가상현실은 아니다. 온라인에서 활발한 커뮤니케이션 이다라는 생각이 있었는데, 공권력이 들어왔잖아요. 사람들이 이게 현실이다, 너무 갑자기 들어왔다. 대책을 세워야 한다.

User ID 'Live with modesty' set up the 'Agora Justice Forum.' However, the police visited his workplace. He was very worried about his family and the risk to his social position, so he gave up his role in the café. The current administrator, WooGongLeeSan, (then) took over the position of administrator.

Then, the masters of the cyberspace (refers to the Agora users whose postings were acclaimed by other Agora users) gathered together for the cyber Asylum. That was the reason why I joined the café….However, the people from the section of Economic Forum in Agora supported the cafe, but they didn't want to take part in as they didn't want to get involved in the political issue.

There was an assumption that the café was made by Minerva. User ID IYouYouI, who was indeed one of the most *influential figures* in Agora Justice Forum, and other users thought that Minerva arrested on the ground was not the real Minerva.

Oxymoronically, the bad man (refers to President Lee) has been having a good influence on the society, because of him, we realized our right, and express opinions. Really we have realized that we had to do it well. It is going to be very dangerous not think about it.

In fact, I joined the Agora Justice Forum, because the rumour was that Minerva had created it. I thought that the arrested Minerva was not the real one. Then, there were postings uploaded in Agora which had the same rhetoric and sense that Minerva created before. Then, these were erased and reappeared again. People thought that there was a real Minerva and he was using other nicknames instead of Minerva(Interview, 8 Sept 2010)

KV: 처음엔 리드미가 나이 많은 할아버지인 줄 았았다. 모든 사람들이 말은 안했지만 그가 미네르바처럼 행색을 했다 생각한다. 그래서 지지자들이 많이 생겼는데 알고 봤더니 20 대 후반의 어린 청년이더라. 그런데 자기가 그것에 대해서 별로 신경을 쓰지 않았던 것 같다. 내가 두개의 아이디를 가지고 있건 뭐 상관있냐, 큰 문제가 될 거라고 생각 안했다. 근데 나이를 속인 것에 대해서는 윤리적인 책임감을 느끼지만 내가 의도적으로 그런 것은 아니다. 왜냐하면 글을 쓰는 사람은 언제나 나였기 때문에 그게 표면적으로 할아버지로 보이던 청년으로 보이던 나는 나니까 괜찮다고 생각했던 것 같다.

He did not say directly, he tended to act like Minerva (online). Many people followed him. At the beginning, people got an impression from his writing style that he was an old man. He did not realise that his use of two IDs would cause problems.

(However,) it is a more serious issue that he deceived us by not revealing to us his age. (Interview 8 Sep 2010)

Minerva was released and the situations did not get worse as we had thought … There was no preparation, no expertise among the members of administrators … We also have a job on the ground, and it would take too long to complete one task in the community (Interview 8 Sep 2010).

KV: 미네르바가 풀려났다. 그래서 우리가 우려할 만한 상황이 아니다. 나중에 다음도 다 넘어가고 이렇게 될 줄 알았는데 그런 상태까지는 가지 않으니까 사람들이 한 곳으로 모아지다가 와해되는, 절실하지 않았다. 사람들이 다음 주식을 사자 했을 때는 힘이 있는 줄 알았죠. 뭔가 준비해오던 사람들이 있었기 때문에 힘만 조금 몰아주면 될 줄 알았는데 힘을 몰아주러 와서 보니까 아무것도 없는 것이다. 그런 상황이었다. 우리 운영위원들도 솔직히 행정적인 것만 처리할 줄 알았지 어떤 분야의 전문가들이 아니니까. 근데 저보고 사이트를 디자인해 달라 이런식으로 했었다. 근데 저는 경력이 2년차쯤 되서 사이트 한두개 만들어 봤던 사람인데 포털 디자인을 한다는 것이…직장생활 하면서 하는 것도 버거웠다....현실적인 부분에서 많이 걸렸다....각자 현업에 종사하면서 돈 조금씩 모아서는 1년이 갈지 10년이 갈지 모른다고 했다.

Interviewee: L

Interview Date: 11/08/10

Location: A café (near L's office)

L is a member of Agora Justice Forum. He was a journalist during the 2008 Candle Light Demonstration. L could not officially take part in the demonstration as well as express hostility towards the Lee government. J did not think that the Cyber Asylum Seekers' Project had succeeded. He strongly believed in the existence of online users, who were hired by the government, and had formed the supportive opinions for the government in the Korean cyberspace.

Transcript Note

I could not officially take part in the 2008 Candle Demonstration, but being there unofficially and personally. I was worried about my company. If my presence in the demonstration was revealed, my company will be damaged in terms of its journalistic status ... Well, I revealed everything after I resigned…I also felt dispirited…Apart from 'Minerva and Boredom Window' who were arrested early, I have seen someone arrested by the police. I intentionally have done nothing that will have an effect on the company that I used work for… So... there is disruption between my obligation as a office worker and my personal character.

Well… Personally speaking, I feel the pain of defeat. Millions gathered, but nothing changed. I feel desperate… I do not visit Agora nowadays, the quality postings have disappeared.

I think that the reason why the Korean cyberspace became depressed is that the officials, who hide their identity in the cyberspace, work out quite well. They come in the online communities and dilute the public voices differently. (Interview, 16 Sept 2010)

KV: 인터넷 활동 침체이유는 청와대 소통관들의 역할을 잘하고 있어서죠..물타기로 들어와서 반대로 만들어가고..알밥들이 유무형적으로 도와주고..

Interviewee: Administrator of Exile Korea

Interview Date:

Location: Email Correspondence

Email Correspondence with him gave me insight into the Cyber Asylum Projects in terms of mapping the constellation of the projects. N.B. Appendix II

Journalists

Interviewee: M

Interview 09/07/10

Location: A Café (near his office)

M has written many articles relating to the Korean cyber culture. His stance on the Lee government was hostile like his articles. His articles were used in the main text of this paper with reference to a literature review.

Transcript Note

Once the President suggested one direction, it would be very difficult for officials under his to show another direction, for example explaining the importance of information technology. The governmental bodies act in accordance to the President's area of interests. Therefore, once the President has showed antipathy to IT, it would have been impossible to suggest new IT policies. (Interview, 9 July 2010)

M: (IT 에 대해) 대통령이 이런(부정적)생각을 가지고 있으면, 밑에서는 '이런 것이 중요합니다. 이쪽으로 투자해야 합니다.' 라는 조언이나 제언을 하기가

어려워 지거든요. 대통령이 가지고 있는 관심분야가 뭐다하면 그것을 서포트하기 위해서 정부부서가 일사분란하게 움직이기 마련인데, 대통령이 IT 에대해 거부감을 가지고 있구나 하는 것이 정부기관에 전달이 되면 관련 정책안을 내놓기가 어렵죠.

In order to control the Internet which performed the role of public opinion channel, the Lee administration found the weak links which are libel, toughened penalties for replies of postings and even mobilized the police. It was an effort to summon Internet Service Provider (ISP) to expunge postings (Interview 9 July 2010).

M: 여론의 파이프라인 노릇을 기성매체보다는 인터넷이 했다는것에 민감해하고, 정부쪽에서 어떤식으로든 통제를 하려고 약한고리들을

찾았는데, 그 중 명예훼손..댓글에 대해서 처벌을 강화하고 신고를 대량으로 하고..이것에는 경찰과 같은 국가권력이 많이 동원이 되었습니다. 경찰이 ISP 에게 게시글들을 무차별로 삭제해달라고 요청을 하고 이것을 법제화하려는 노력이 있었죠.

Interviewee: N

Interview Date: 28/07/10

Location:

N was a journalist who wrote articles relating to the 2008 Candle Demonstration and Cyber Asylum Seekers Project.

Interviewee: O

Interview Date: 13/09/10

Location: Office

O is an ex-Journalist who works for a PR company and is for a speaker social networking service. In the same manner as other officials at the internet industry, he tried not to make his own judgment on the Lee government's Internet policies. He also has stated that he unofficially took part in the 2008 Candle Light Demonstration. His stance on the Korean Internet culture was positive. Moreover, he thought that the government was concerned about the power of the Internet users. However, his positivism seemed rooted in the shift of the Internet culture from the community and blogging based culture to SNS(Social Networking Culture).

Transcript memo

The interesting thing is that the government tried to form good relationships with power bloggers. In the past, the government had tried to make one ealier with newsmen accredited to the Blue House and had organized meetings with them. Now they organize meetings with power bloggers as well, because they are able to influence public opinion.

Scholars

I interviewed some Korean scholars. These scholars had published articles relating to the 2008 Candle Demonstration and its aftermath. They wanted to keep their name overt. Their interview statements were similar to their articles, which were quoted in the main chapter of this paper.

Interviewee: P

Interview 06/07/10

Location: His Office

Interviewee: Q

Interview 09/08/10

Location: His Office

Activists

Interviewee: R

Interview Date: 07/07/10

Location: His office

R is an activists specialising in internet regulation. His explanation of the history of the regulation on the internet was useful.

Interviewee: Dong-Won Choi

Interview Date: 05/08/10

Location: Jinbo.net Office

He is an activist and studying for a PhD on hackers.

Students

Interviewee: 11 High School Students

Interview Date: 20/08/10

Location: A Class Room

A Focus Group Interview

I conducted a focus group interview with 11 high school students, because there is much literature relating to the high school students' participation in the 2008 Candlelight Demonstration. However, no interviewees took part in the demonstration or were interested in it. I expected that this was because, they were too young. When the demonstration occurred. Furthermore, they did not use email that often. Rather, they relied on the text messaging for communication with their friends.

Teachers

Interviewee: A High School Teacher

Interview Date:

Location: 12/09/10

Teachers A Café

I interviewed a high school teacher, who had taught 11 high school students whom I had interviewed. The teacher argued that the current educational system only paid attention the student's successful entrance to the university.

Interviewee: Teachers

Interview Date: 12/09/10

Location: Restaurant

Three middle school teachers were interviewed. They were not interested in any political issues relating to the 2008 Candlelight Demonstration. They did not feel any pressure from the government's cyber control. However, I was told that they had received official documents from the Office of Education advising them not to encourage student to take part in the 2008 Candlelight Demonstration.

Appendix II: Online Interview with the Administrator of Exile Korea.

1. What is the main reason for opening a place for cyber asylum?

In early July 2008, the article of 'the death of female demonstrator' was spread on Agora and broadcasted on TV. The first person posted this article on the Web was arrested for an offense of spreading the false fact and did legal penance for 10 months. The evidences were just around 100 vague pictures of candle demonstrators and riot polices, taken by his mobile phone from the late night of 31st May to the dawn of 1st June near KyungBok palace, and some eyewitness's replies which couldn't prove the truth.

As a consequence of the ambiguous evidence, for several months, netizens had argued that if it was true or not and some sensitive postings had been eliminated (or assertions that their posting had been deleted by the authority had widely been spread.), and some of them were investigated by the police.

I do not know if it is true or not. In my personal opinion, it might be misunderstanding of the first witness since the evidence was not enough to prove it. However, I noticed that the most interesting thing was not the truth but the form progressed with debates in the Internet space. It seemed that someone systematically tried to obstruct the online debates through Daum, part time employers and government authority. Now and then, I tend to pay my attention to the forms and structures rather than contents. I believe that if I only focus on the contents, I might be befogged, whereas if the form of argument is being structured, the appropriate conclusion naturally can be generated. Therefore, I wanted to keep the form of healthy debates.

There was consensus in May that censorship on Agora got tighter. To put it correctly, it was 24th May 2008 when the police conducted a strong repression on the demonstration participants. Along with the arrest of the public, the police gave us the impression that they considered Agora as a criminal organization. They asked the arrested if they were member of Agora at first.

It was 26th May 2008 when a salary-man, Sung, opened Agorian (agorian.kr). That is, netizens had agreed that they may have left Agora, or needed at least one alternative website to substitute for Agora.

31st May 2008 to 1st June 2008, the demonstrations were intense, and the censorship on Internet got tighter because of the death theory of the university student. As a consequence, the ideas stated above had begun to appeal the netizen.

However, I was just an audience at that time.

In mid June 2008, a netizen S contacted me. I was running a website, democracykorea.org, and he saw this. He wanted to open a website with a same format as Agora by using overseas server and asked me to help with regard to the publication in English. So, I helped him searching server hosting and we discussed the problem of Agora deeply.

(Actually, I opened democracykorea.org due to the forceful suppression against the peaceful demonstration rather than the issue of the US beef import. The issue is not important.

The important thing is the form of communications between the people and government. If the government intercepted a pathway to communicate with the people, it is absolutely wrong.)

Anyway, S was supposed to open a temporary site in the early July, but it had been delayed due to his busy schedule. So I personally opened a very simple website. It was on 26th July 2008. I firstly focused on preserving urgent materials. The reasons are as follows: (1) S had kept developing a site which was similar to Agora, there were many live debates on Agorian.kr and I wanted to avoid overlapping investments; (2) this site was created very quickly, so most of functions on my Website did not work properly. Thus, I only expected to use the posting board in which I could preserve materials.(3) At that time, the highest censorship through Agora was on materials which could prove a forceful suppression. In order to maintain this form, I needed 'repository' to keep the evidence without being disturbed by manipulation or censorship. I think I have covered the question number 4.

2. How did you learn the technique and knowledge to open and maintain this site?

I have 10 years experiences in Web design and programming. It is not my major but means to make money for life.

3. Among postings on your site, what is the rate of contents created in this site and contents taken off from Agora?

At the beginning, I aimed to preserve materials from Agora. On the board, I informed my suggestion to make netizen upload postings on the other places before posting here.

In September 2008, ID, 'Sometimes' forwarded me his or her all materials in 'Agora Library' and materials of http://blog.daum.net/kotoryhks . From October 2008 to March 2009, I produced and distributed the programme 'Agora percolator; so that users could bring all postings from Agora with just one click. For the last 1 year and 7months, over 95% of postings on this place of asylum were postings on Agora

4. I am wondering why you haven't developed a live debate room like the one on Agora. Didn't you have any plans to create that?

(1)   I have already answered for this question as mentioned earlier.

(2)   Between March and April 2009, the number of visitors flooded due to the increase of the interest on cyber asylum. Some people asked me to create something like Agora so I reformed some parts adding 'recommendation/ objection' and 'Best' on the right side whose functions borrowed from Agora

(3)   However, I never introduced the live debate system to this place because Argorian.kr was depressed and S's site was provisionally stopped. In fact, I did not want to invest my money and time since I could not draw the plan for producing Ajungpho café.

To tell you the truth, Agora is not a live debate room. It was a BBC system of PC communication system of 20 years a ago and just combined with pretty skins. It is not a proper structure to do a live debate. I still could not find an alternative to this problem. That is why there is no live debates here.

In addition, to develop a live debate room, the form should be similar to 'Google Wave' whose functions of board, chatting room and repository had been unified altogether.

5. After opening the site, have you felt pressure from the government or the third party? (If so, please kindly explain the detail and if you have any materials related this issue, please attach them.)

There were dudes who sent me virus frequently from 7th May 2009. See the link as follows:

http://www.jonathanks.com/blog/2009-05-23/who-sent-a-virus-to-me

Since I declared that I stopped involving in the project of Agora Justice Forum, the attack stopped.

http://www.jonathanks.com/blog/2009-09-16/rm-rf-slash (reference the sixth clause)

Since October 2009, the number of reports on human rights violation has been increased.

However, these did not come from the government, but from politicians, religious organizations and other individuals.

There was a time when an injured party requested measures to K.C.C. (Korea Communications Commission). As a consequence, I received the request deleting the posting.

I mostly accepted the request and deleted the relevant postings. As a matter of fact, some people posted inappropriate contents since I named this site 'asylum'.

Nominally, I have attached finite clauses for having the right to delete contents on this site as authority. Therefore, I have the right to strike users' postings off. However, I have built a good relationship with main users for 1 year, so they do not think that I

have used or abused my power on their contents as Agora have done under the indiscreet censorship. However, it is not possible to provide you the detail due to its confidentiality.

Apart from that, I haven't felt any pressure or interruption for the government of the third party. It is such a small site, so they might think it is not worth to consider it. Furthermore, I have announced that I do not collect and keep any personal information such as users' IP address and social security number. Thus, they might know that I have nothing to hand over to them.

6. Have you been interested in Korean politics?

Yes.

7. How do you usually get information regarding Korea?

Hangyurae, Kyunghyang and Dong-Ah Daily (in order to look at the conservative media), Oh My news Korea (to compare with the extreme progressive media), Chosun Daily (just to see what they are writing), Naver (to look though the edited news by each medium, Agora and so on. Since I live in oversea, so cannot watch T.V.

8. How often do you use Korean portal sites?

I hardly use it apart from the news section at the first page. I stopped using Daum since 'Hanmail' frequently were not compatible with 'Hotmail' when I first came to overseas many years ago. Of course between 2008 and 2009, I used Daum Agora frequently but I currently just read through the best contents section through RSS. I think a personal blog is much better than portal sites. So nowadays, I often visit to bloter.net.

9. Many people think that after the candle demonstration, the censorship of Agora has been reinforced and as a consequence, netizens of Agora has gradually been disappeared. How do think about that?

In fact, the ruthless censorship did not happen continuously.

We say that the capacity of the current government is 2 megabyte, but they are a bit smarter than that. They used a subtle strategy.

(1) a law: they lead a self-regulation.

FUD (Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt) have been spread though the regulations such as an offense of *spreading* the *false fact, Cyber* Defamation law, real-name online interaction, a right for closing a board of a Website for 6 months by the *Minister* of *Culture,* Sports and Tourism. Since a few famous netizens such as Minerva, Languid-window have been arrested, a self-regulation has been reinforced and the fear has widely been spreading.

They are very intelligent. These regulations can continue under the closed characteristics of Korean society. Korea is the only country where the social registration number is needed to subscribe the wet portable and the creation of posting that contains actual thing can be punished under the name of the defamation.

(In UA law, it is not guilty if the truth of the posting is proven, whereas 3 years imprisonment is normally sentenced if the posting is proven to be a fact and 5 years if it was the false information). The majority of the public are not aware of this.

(2) Daum.net: they lost trust.

I am not quite sure how deep Daum communications is involved in the government and cooperate with them. Superficially, everyone says that media has been remaining neutral. In reality, however, it is very difficult to be pure. In particular, it is virtually not possible to maintain neutrality in a country like Korea that has quite strong relationship between politics and business.

I am tired with what the government has been doing. The government can concentrated on controlling the Internet activities since they can afford to pay to hire someone to do the job, but netizens can't keep doing their activities since they have to earn money for living. Thus, majority of netizens have been away for their living in such depressed economic conditions, except a few well organized civic organizations.

10. Why did you start doing this cyber asylum project in Agora Forum?

In fact, Agora justice forum was the only one that has opened under the aim of the development of a website for cyber asylum. There were a few netizens tried establishing a public portal site in http://cafe.daum.net/pro-secutors before opening mine. However, when I knew that, it already stopped its services.

When Agora forum just began spreading its reputation, I had posted some contents which were debated with Mr. S and information which I collected while I run the Cyber Asylum. At that time, I did not intend to be involved deeply. However, as time goes by, I had talked with many people in Agora and then I had gradually been taking an important role in there without any intention.

I had hope that I did not get from other sites, because many famous netizens in Agora took part in this café.

11. I have read your articles summed other articles of the candle demonstration up, how did you collect all the materials?

To put it simply, I was playing on Agora in Daum.net and collected useful hyperlinks. You can get a sense of this if you bookmark these sites and visits there once or twice a week.

12. Could you tell me why you closed the Cyber Asylum project and your personal opinion on all the facts?

I do not want to talk about this in detail. However, the failure of Agora Justice Forum (the cyber asylum project) caused the lost of interest in the cyber Asylum seeking. As a consequence, it indirectly affected on the decline of ExileKorea.net.

Unnecessary site must be gone. If it becomes necessary in further, we can open it again. I didn't want to hold and run it base on my emotion as it would have been waste of time and money.

That was gadfly's idea. I tried to persuade him against using Tor because that would severely limit accessibility, but he was quite stubborn. He doesn't want anybody to know who he is or where he's renting the server. I suspect he's in Korea and doesn't want to get in trouble, but it's just a suspicion.

13. What did you expect from the Cyber Asylum project in our society?

Asylum meant to be return back, not going away for good.

Even if it is a cyber asylum, not all Korean Internet users can do this. However, if a significant number of Internet users take part in this project, we will gain from it as follows

(1) We will be able to experience a very different online culture from Korean culture. Then, there will be a movement that reflects this fresh experience on the domestic online culture. Something deemed to be a natural becomes unnatural as a consequence.

(2) In reality, cyber asylum is not good for Korean internet service providers in terms of making a profit. Korean web portals not satisfied with the real name system and argue that the government only suppresses the domestic company.

That is, the money gives the motivation for the Web portals. The government will be changed by the ordinary people, but they can be changed by robbing from the big companies. Therefore, that ordinary people can give the big companies the pressure to deliver their voices to the government.

Appendix III: Basic Interview Questions

Basic Interview Questions for Everyone:

1. Were there any differences between your personal view to the 2008 CandleLight Demonstration and the official view?

2. Do you think that the 2008 Candlelight Demonstration has had a direct impact on the Lee government in terms of their plan to change regulations?

3. There have been conflicts between institutions. For example, web portals vs. the government. What did you make of this?

4. The government has been planning to publish a paper regarding the second anniversary of the Candlelight Demonstration of 2008. Could you please tell me the current progress in this project?

Questions related to Ordinary Life after Candlelight 2008:

1. Do you think you were interested in political issues of South Korea before the Candlelight Demonstration of 2008?

2. Nowadays, we can hardly see a movement like the 2008 Candle Demonstration which makes such a powerful connection between online and offline communities. What do you think is the main reason for this?

3. What do you think about the government's plan to publish a paper regarding the second anniversary of the Candlelight Demonstration of 2008?

4. What kinds of media do you mostly use to receive Korean news?

5. How often do you use Korean portal sites?

6. Do you think there is an indigenous Korean internet culture? If so, could you tell me the detail?

Global and other issues:

1. There are many organizations and companies that the Korean regulations cannot be applied to. What do you make of this?

2. Were there any cases where your view on the society is contrasted to the government's policy directives?

3. Do you think there is any indigenous Korean internet culture of our own?

Questions related to Agora Justice Forum (AJF):

7. What was the main reason for opening Agora Justice Forum (AJF)?

8. What kinds of activities did you do during the Candle Demonstration of 2008 and how did you feel?

9. Why did you decide to open your internet forum site in Daum?

10. After the Candle Demonstration, the internet censorship in Agora was getting stronger by not only from the government, but also the Daum.net itself. As a result, people said that many debaters in Agora had disappeared. What is your reaction to this?

11. Why didn't you develop Agora Justice Forum as a real-time discussion system like Agora? Did you have a plan to do it?

12. Did you have any pressure from either government or any other third parties after you opened the site? (If so, please tell me the detail and give me the relevant information.)

13. AJF had frequently been mentioned throughout various media. Did it impact on this forum?

14. What were the characteristics of AJF compared to other internet community sites? And what was the most difficult aspect of running this forum site?

15. Did you have a connection with other internet forums or sites?

Questions related to Cyber Asylum:

16. Could you please tell me the reason you began the project of cyber exile? And please tell me the process and issues of the development of the project of cyber exile.

17. How did you think that Cyber Asylum Seeking functioned in the society?

18. Could you please give me your personal opinion on the trouble related to the project of cyber exile?

19. Other projects of cyber exile and other cyber space related to the Candle Demonstration currently tend to remain stagnant. What do you think is the main reason for this?

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