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# Spatiality of Two Urban Religious Spaces in Seoul: A Case Study of Myeong-dong Cathedral and Bongeun Buddhist Temple Precincts

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## Abstract

In this study, the spatial characteristics of urban religious spaces were explored. A Catholic (Myeong-dong) cathedral and a Buddhist (Bongeun) temple, both situated in the Seoul urban environment, were included as representative urban religious spaces in Korea. Each space has its own unique spatiality, derived from the related historical, cultural, and religious development processes. The two religious precincts serve as both a religious space and a social area for the contemporary urban population, thus they were examined to investigate the comparative results of the literature review, the on-site impressions, and the social survey's tendencies. The results indicated distinct spatiality and spatial functions: the Catholic cathedral precinct plays a significant role in social functions, while the Buddhist temple precinct is critical to religious functions.

**Keywords:** urban space; religious precincts; spatiality; spatial function; social survey

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## 1. Introduction

Catholicism and Buddhism are two major religions in Korea with foreign origins. The doctrine, religious values, and ascetic practices of these religions have developed in correlation with Korea's historical and cultural growth. Each religion went through a naturalization process, co-evolving with the mores of the Korean people. In addition, these religions have distinct values that are evident in the various doctrines, rites, architecture, music, and arts of the country (Hancock and Srinivas, 2008). Religious space reflects religious doctrine and symbolism in particular, such that each space has its own religious spatiality that embraces the region, society, culture, and historical background of communities (Hervieu-Léger, 2002; Mazumdar and Mazumdar, 2004; Brace, *et al.*, 2006; Stump, 2008).

The city center of Seoul, the capital of Korea, is home to many religious spaces (Anglican cathedrals, Buddhist temples, Catholic cathedrals, Islamic mosques, Protestant churches and Won-Buddhist temples, among others). These religious spaces have unique spatiality in that they serve both religious and social purposes (Ming-chung *et al.*, 2003; Luz, 2008; Özaloglu and Gürel, 2011).

In this context, the religious precincts (the area immediately surrounding the main religious building) of each Catholic cathedral and Buddhist temple have their own spatial characteristics, derived from historical, cultural, and religious development processes.

The present study aims to explore the spatiality and spatial functions of specific Catholic cathedral and Buddhist temple precincts in Seoul in terms of human behavior. Initially the authors examine two religious precincts – the Catholic cathedral, which was derived from the "home church" of the 1st century and evolved into a social center in European cities from the 12th century to the present day, and the Buddhist temple, the origins of which began in the form of monasteries in the 6th century BC that spread from India to East Asia after the 1st century AD. Each of these two religious spaces preserved their own unique spatiality when they were established in Korea, which will be addressed in the literature review.

The second focus of the paper is specifically on Myeong-dong Cathedral and Bongeun Buddhist Temple in Seoul. Overall impressions of each space are described via a walking journey (Rosenberg, 2012) and a social survey addressing public perceptions of the spatial characteristics is conducted. In conclusion, the results of the literature review, on-site impressions, and a social survey are compared in order to examine the contrasting spatial characteristics of these two religious precincts.

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## **2. Two Religious Spaces**

### **2.1 Catholic Cathedrals: The Center of Medieval Urbanization**

In 313 AD, Emperor Constantine of the Roman Empire ended the persecution of Christianity. Christians acquired religious freedom and Christianity was confirmed as a state religion. As a result, it became legal to hold mass in public. In the early years, mass was often held in the "basilica," a public building, which was later transformed to signify a specific type of religious building (Bokenkotter, 2005). Therefore, the first Christian religious space was a public building. This religious space not only had a religious function, but was also used as a space for historical, social, economic, and cultural exchange. It can be speculated that people held various religious and social activities within this space.

In the 12th century in Europe, due to changes in the political landscape, the economic formations of each city developed. Feudal lords moved their operating centers into the city, which in turn generated economic growth that altered the building and design of the respective cityscapes. Building cathedrals demonstrated the city's religious and social power. Catholic theology at the time supported the building of giant cathedrals (Baldwin, 1997). Thus, cathedrals were the main drivers of medieval European society's urbanization.

During this period, the primary communal areas in Europe shifted from rural monasteries to urban cathedrals. Rural-to-urban migration increased over time; therefore, the center of most medieval cities, the square where a Gothic cathedral was built, became the center of daily life (Duby, 1981). Cathedrals with gradually rising ceilings imply religious spatiality, which express honor towards an absolute God. When entering the main gate of the cathedral (the upper part of the main gate with a bell installation), visitors experience a sacred space, separate from the secular world. In other words, the religious spatiality of a cathedral begins with the main gate and spire and is limited to the internal space of the cathedral (Scott, 2003).

Cathedrals clearly played an important role in commerce and public gatherings. For example, Chartres Cathedral is famous for the stained glass that was consecrated and made by various guild merchants and masters. Forty-three of the stained glass windows illustrate various trades from that period (Williams, 1993), commemorating its role as a nexus for workers from various professions. Open markets were held in the ambulatory of Notre Dame Cathedral, which was under the jurisdiction of the chapter of the cathedral, and the dean of the chapter managed the market's operations. The three squares located in front of the cathedral formed a stage and were usually the most coveted spot in the market. It is said that fuel, vegetables, and meat were sold at the south gate, while

clothing and leather were sold at the north gate (Stan, 2001).

Additionally, cathedrals were the only large-scale public buildings. All civil meetings were held there and the space was sufficient enough that some cities did not feel that it was necessary to build a city hall. From time to time, the cathedral served as a place for court proceedings, college graduations, and even business meetings. The cathedral was truly a "house for civilians." Cathedrals' crypts and other designated places in the square served as lodging spaces for outsiders. Stonemasons, carpenters, and other technicians waited at cathedral to be hired. Even selling food was permitted inside cathedrals, as long as order was maintained. Pilgrims were able to eat or rest in the cathedral's square or in various internal coves. Thus, cathedrals during medieval times provided open space for people in need (Lee, 2008).

In 1785, Seung-Hun Lee, who was baptized in Beijing, China, began to promulgate Catholicism into Korea. At first, Catholicism was introduced to Koreans from a scholarly point of view, but soon afterwards, in 1795, the Chinese priest Father Mun-Mo Ju was sent to Korea. The first Korean priest, St. Andrew Dae-Geon Kim, was later ordained and the Catholic Church of Korea began to grow. In 1831, the Diocese of Joseon was established by the Vatican, and the Foreign Missionary Society of Paris took charge of Korea and began a formal mission. Fierce conflict with the traditional Confucian social system quickly arose, with countless persecutions taking place that led to critical situations.

After the fierce persecution of Christianity, freedom of religion was granted in 1882, and the official construction of churches began. The priests of the Foreign Missionary Society of Paris purchased properties and built churches there. The first Romanesque cathedral in Korea, the Yakhyeon parish Church (today's Junglim-dong Parish Church), was built in 1892, and the first Gothic cathedral in Korea, Jonghyeon Cathedral (today's Myeong-dong Cathedral), was built in 1898 (The Research Foundation for Korean Church History, 2010). Thus, the first cathedrals in Korea were very significant in that their architectural influences mirrored the Christianized cosmopolis of the European Middle Ages (Lilley, 2004) and, like Western cathedrals, they had squares where people could gather.

### **2.2 Buddhist Temples: The Center of the Ascetic Practice**

In the 6th century BC, at an early stage of Buddha's propagation, his disciples believed that an ideal religious state involved possessing nothing material; therefore, they did not have regular residences. However, due to India's weather conditions, it became necessary to have one space for Buddha's disciples to practice religious purification together. Therefore to avoid the rainy season and to harmonize the fast-

growing religious order, Buddhists stipulated that they were to abstain from evangelical tours during the three months of the rainy season. This is called "varsa" ("quiet life"), where Buddha's disciples gather together and live communally. They together made space to have varsa. This space is the origin of the Buddhist temple (Kim, 2005). Thus, the first Buddhist religious space was a religious shelter. This religious space functioned as a place where Buddha's disciples cohabitated, took part in their ascetic practices, and taught Buddhist doctrine.

The initial introduction of Buddhism to Korea took place from the 4th to 6th century. In the early stages, Buddhist temples in Korea were commonly built in the middle of cities, similar to their locations in China. Later, more temples were constructed in suburbs and mountain areas, so as to focus primarily on meditation and ascetic practices. Most Buddhist temples in Korea are located in the mountains, reflecting the influence of feng-shui and Zen Buddhism (Kim, 1987).

Most traditional Buddhist temples in Korea are located on the gentle slopes of mountains, with the structures mirroring the virtues of the religion, representing a convergence of terrain features, Buddhist doctrines, and folk beliefs (Abramson, 2011). Buddhist temples are wooden-framed, and the limited material options and framing technology has made it difficult to build large-scale internal spaces (Han and Lee, 1986; An, 2014). In light of these limitations, the role of internal space segues into external space. Therefore, in the construction of Buddhist temples, the main building is not only an internal space itself, but also a symbolic center for external space (An, 1980). In other words, the religious spatiality of Buddhist temples is not limited to their internal space, but extends to the entirety of the Buddhist temple precinct, including the external space.

The most emphasized element in Korean Buddhist temple architecture is that external space accommodates change, consolidation, hierarchy, and more (Ju, 1996). Before entering a Buddhist temple precinct, there is often a water space that symbolizes purification. Visitors then pass the *iljumun*, which is the first gate of the temple. As one passes through a series of gates, stone pagodas and stone lanterns are seen. Continuing along this route leads to the *daewoongjeon*, which represents the main building of the Buddhist temple precinct (Cho and Jeong, 1995). Thus, phased space is the core concept of a Korean Buddhist temple.

The design of Buddhist temples is explicitly tied to the religion's doctrines. Visually, temples show phased space leading toward the *jubuljeon*, which are the main buildings of a Buddhist temple. These buildings help visitors concentrate on the surroundings, lending a strong feeling to the *jubuljeon*, where pagodas, lanterns, and the *daewoongjeon* are located. The phased gates of the route represent unity and order, so the space is not felt as a static area, but as a continuum.

The Buddhist temple precinct is made up of a rising route that passes through many gates. This route provides visitors with a sense of expectation. One experiences the dramatic effect of feeling a climax when passing through the gates that lead to the *jubuljeon*. Walking along the route toward a forest instills a sense of religious tranquility; however, the walls and phased gates form a unified constructional space that evokes Buddhist religious spatiality (Lee, 2007).

The gates of a Buddhist temple need to be interpreted, not only as physical structures, but also as symbolic indicators. There are normally between one and three gates in a temple, with each gate expressing a development phase of the Buddhist faith. Gates function as external entrances and exits, of course, but also as psychological purification pathways. This reflects the core tenet of Buddhist doctrine that followers need to pass through a series of gates, as in life one must pass through difficulties, to reach the peak, "Nirvana." Furthermore, the opposing aspects of the temple as viewed through the internal space suggest a picture frame (Lee and Yu, 1988). Every design element in the Buddhist temple acts as a device to reinforce faith, with religious spatiality extending to the external space due to the technical limitations of the construction materials.

### **3. Spatiality of Two Religious Precincts**

#### **3.1 Catholic Cathedral Precinct as a Social Square**

A cathedral's internal space contains religious spatiality. Since the cathedral functions as a public square, it has social spatiality. In order to express religious authority and social order, cathedrals are often located at the center of the city, high on a hill. A typical example is the cathedral in Chartres. Residences, businesses, and cultural institutions surround the cathedral, implying the existence of an absolute God (Strachan, 2003).

Since the square is located on a hill, routes leading up the hill focus on, and end with, the cathedral above. Within the routes, there exist facilities that have various social functions. In order to enter the cathedral, visitors must pass through the cathedral precinct, which acts as a buffer before entering the religious spatiality. In other words, the cathedral precinct functions as a secular social square, in contrast to the internal space of the cathedral, which is a sacred place.

The functions of the cathedral precinct as a social square were influenced by the formation of Europe's medieval cities, a tradition that is still evident in modern-day European cities (Kang, 2012). The center of major European cities usually hosts a cathedral, where various social activities related to Catholicism can be found. This tradition spread to other parts of the world with the propagation of Catholicism. In the case of Korea, French missionaries helped build the first cathedral on top of the hill at Jonghyeon (today's

Myeong-dong), the center of Seoul, in 1898. Therefore, the cathedral precinct plays an important role in social spatiality (see Fig.1.).

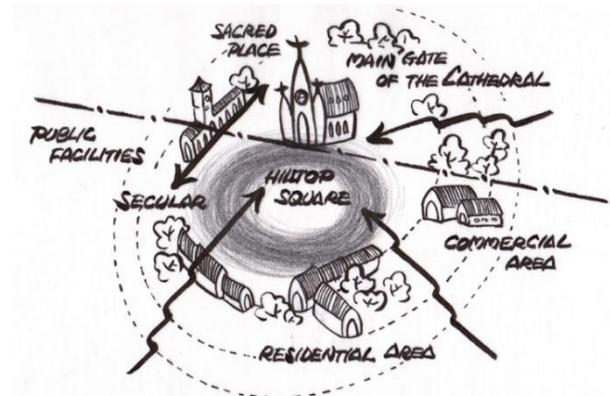


Fig.1. Catholic Cathedral Precinct as a Social Square  
(Image Drawn by the Author)

### 3.2 Buddhist Temple Precinct as a Religious Garden

The Buddhist temple precinct favors strong elements of religious spatiality rather than social function. This means that, after passing through the iljumun, ascetic practice begins. When passing through the gates of a precinct, visitors come across various Buddhist symbols that enhance the feeling of the ascetic practice. In other words, the Buddhist temple precinct is an extension of the ascetic practice itself (Lim, 2011).

Therefore, accepting that the Buddhist temple precinct is focused on religious spatiality implies a separation from secular values. Due to the general characteristic of temples being located near mountains, the route begins at the bottom of the mountain and heads towards the peak, with a water space encountered as visitors proceed. After passing through the iljumun, one enters the Buddhist temple precinct, a place with inherent religious spatiality and which indicates complete separation from secular space. Therefore, the Buddhist temple precinct itself is a religious garden, a space for ascetic practice. The Buddhist temple precinct plays an important role in religious spatiality.

The function of the Buddhist temple precinct as a religious garden was influenced by the formation of China's Buddhist retreat space, a tradition that is still evident in modern-day Asian Buddhist temples. The gentle slopes of mountains and spaces toward the center of nature usually host Buddhist temples, where focused ascetic practice related to Buddhism can be found. With the propagation of Buddhism, this tradition spread to other parts of East Asia. Korean and Chinese monks first entered Goguryeo to spread Buddhism, building training facilities in order to progress in their ascetic practice, removed as far as possible from the secular world, establishing the first Buddhist temple in Korea. Subsequent Buddhist temple precinct has played an important role in religious spatiality (see Fig.2.).

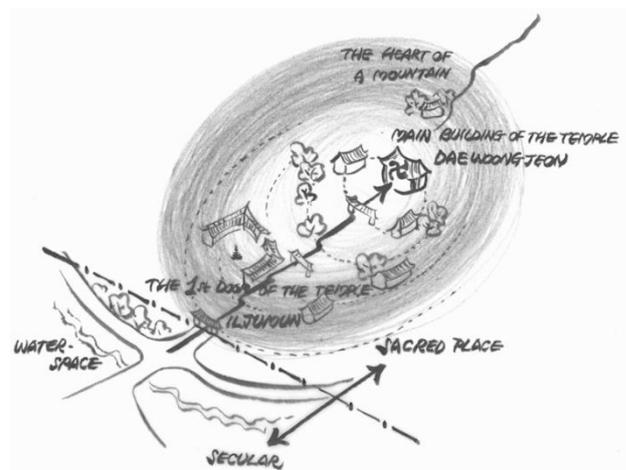


Fig.2. Buddhist Temple Precinct as a Religious Garden  
(Image Drawn by the Author)

## 4. Perceptions of the Spatial Characteristics of Two Religious Precincts

### 4.1 Site Selection: Myeong-dong Cathedral and Bongeun Buddhist Temple

Walking as journey and a social survey were conducted in order to explore the spatiality and spatial functions of two religious precincts in Seoul as perceived by modern urbanites. Myeong-dong Cathedral and Bongeun Buddhist Temple were each presented as survey spaces within the urban landscape. In particular, these two religious precincts were perceived as spaces that modern, urban residents can visit easily as part of their everyday lives (Nam and Kim 2014).

Myeong-dong Cathedral, located in the center of Seoul near a transportation hub and surrounded by a 10-lane main road and a concentration of large administrative facilities and commercial buildings, is the symbolic headquarters of the Korean Catholic Church. And the cathedral has remained a symbolic focal point for the democratic movement and activities in Korea in the 1980s. In addition, it has been designated a national historic site due to its architectural significance as the first Gothic-style cathedral in Korea.

Bongeun Buddhist Temple, which was the government's official temple during the Joseon Dynasty, is located in Samseong-dong, the downtown area in the south of Seoul. The history of the spatial structures of Korean Buddhist temples has been studied. Based on its history, architectural style, and aesthetic value, it is a good representative of traditional Korean Buddhist temples in Seoul. Similar to Myeong-dong Cathedral, Bongeun Buddhist Temple faces a 16-lane main road with convention center, commercial and financial buildings. Both Myeong-dong Cathedral and Bongeun Buddhist Temple are representative religious spaces in Seoul. Fig.3. and Fig.4. show the current status of two religious spaces and surrounding area, respectively.

## 4.2 Overall Impression: Walking Through Urban Religious Precincts

The route chosen began at Samilo (8-lanes of traffic) and headed toward the Myeong-dong Cathedral. This area is characteristic of a busy urban city, with the population and the number of cars evoking a dynamic atmosphere (see Fig.3.(a)). After leaving Samilo and entering into Myeongdong-gil (pedestrian way) the scenery changes into an old cityscape with various offices and shops, where Myeong-dong Cathedral is first seen. When facing the entrance of the cathedral, the route changes from a chaotic urban environment to a welcoming religious space (see Fig.3.(b)).

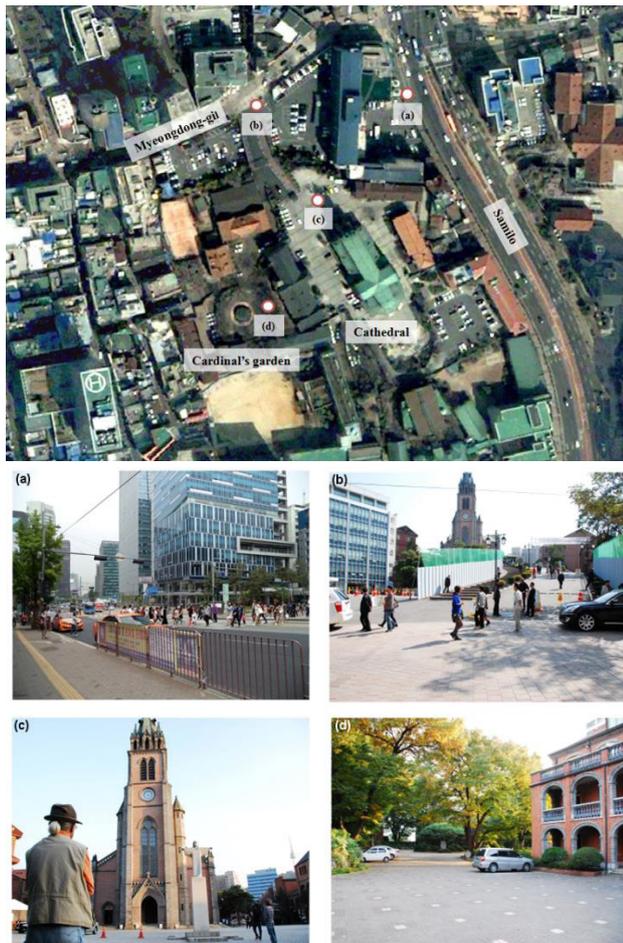


Fig.3. Myeong-dong Cathedral Area Map and Walking Tour:  
 (a) In the Vicinity of Samilo (8-Lanes of traffic);  
 (b) In the Vicinity of Myeongdong-gil;  
 (c) In Front of Myeong-dong Cathedral; (d) In the Cardinal's Garden  
 (Photographs Taken by the Author)

At the end of the rising route, toward the top of a hill, is the main gate of the cathedral. Due to the amount of pedestrian traffic around the cathedral, this site is considered a 'social space,' which presents a distinctly different dynamic than the social space of the surrounding city (see Fig.3.(c)). The route then passes into a comfortable space that heads toward a garden located at the back of the cathedral. With an artificially constructed circular landscape in the center, the surrounding trees

convey a sense of comfort to visitors. This feeling is more a gentle psychological comfort rather than one of religious tranquility. As can be seen in the images, the Myeong-dong Cathedral alters the spatial feeling, from a comfortable feeling to one of relief, which culminates in the garden at the end of the route (see Fig.3.(d))

The route starts from the Yeongdongdaero (12-lanes of traffic) and Bongeunsaro (8-lanes of traffic) intersections, with the entrance to the Bongeun Buddhist Temple directly meeting Bongeunsaro. The temple is surrounded by COEX, large hotels, offices, and shops that form the emerging downtown (see Fig.4.(a)). After entering the Bongeun Buddhist Temple from the busy motorway, a gentle slope leads to its first gate, the jinyeomun, which signifies the beginning of the Buddhist temple precinct. After passing through the jinyeomun, visitors walk through an artificially constructed water space on the left and encounter a rising route with stairs that leads to a welcoming religious space. Water sounds provide aural 'fresh' feelings at this site (Jeon, *et al.*, 2012). A second gate, the beopwangroo, greets visitors at this point (see Fig.4.(b)).



Fig.4. Bongeun Buddhist Temple Area Map and Walking Tour:  
 (a) In the Vicinity of Bongeunsaro (8-Lanes of traffic);  
 (b) In Front of the Beopwangroo;  
 (c) In Front of the Daewoongjeon; (d) On a Side Path with Trees  
 (Photographs Taken by the Author)

After passing through the second gate, a pagoda of the Buddhist temple is encountered. The pagoda is located in front of the daewoongjeon, which is the main building of the temple. Religious ceremonies take place at the pagoda, denoting it as a 'religious space.' Here, there is a sense of tranquility (Watts, *et al.*, 2011), rather than one of ordinary comfort (see Fig.4.(c)). At the back of the daewoongjeon, a steep ramp of stairs leads to a space with a stronger sense of tranquility. The annex of the Buddhist temple, the yeongsanjeon, and a side path with trees emphasize the space's feeling of tranquility. As seen in the images, the route toward the Bongeun Buddhist Temple proceeds along a tree-lined pathway, evoking a sense of religious tranquility prior to reaching the interior of the temple (see Fig.4.(d)).

The route towards Myeong-dong Cathedral presents visitors with a welcome change from the dynamic feel of the cityscape, as it transitions into a comfortable gathering place. This feeling is more a gentle psychological comfort than one of religious tranquility. Conversely, the route toward Bongeun Buddhist Temple appeals more as an explicitly religious space. What is the source of the different feelings conveyed by the cathedral and the temple?

## 5. Social Survey

### 5.1 Social Survey Plan

A social survey directed at the spatiality and spatial functions of the Myeong-dong Cathedral and Bongeun Buddhist Temple precincts was carried out in April, 2013. A total of 99 subjects (53 men and 46 women) took part in an on-site social survey at Myeong-dong Cathedral. The age distribution ranged from teenagers to people over 50 years old, with the greatest number of participants (64.6%) being in their 20s or 30s. A total of 101 subjects (54 men and 47 women) took part in an on-site social survey at Bongeun Buddhist Temple. The age distribution ranged from teenagers to participants over 50 years old, with the greatest number of participants (54.5%) being in their 20s or 30s.

This survey was constructed based on previous landscape studies (Oh, 1994; Im, 2009; Hsieh and Lee, 2010). The survey questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part addressed the importance of spatial elements in the two religious precincts, with respondents being asked to rate their importance. The evaluation was divided into features focusing on each space's religious and social elements. The religious elements were composed of items such as: "sense of separation from the urban area," "sense of an enclosure that feels comfortably surrounded," "circulation system that leads the flow of people to the main building," "religious architecture," and "garden sculptures." The social elements were composed of items such as: "open space for holding events," "space for gathering," "personal relaxation," and "information board."

The second part of the survey questionnaire addressed the respondents' current satisfaction with the two religious precincts, asking them to rate their satisfaction levels. The evaluation was also divided into features about each space's religious functions and social functions (Low, *et al.*, 2009). The religious functions were composed of items such as: "separating urban space from a religious space," "accommodating religious events," "space for prayer and self-reflection," and "inspiring a sense of religious tranquility." The social functions were composed of items such as: "connecting urban space and a religious space," "accommodating social events and meetings," "serving as a gathering space for friends," "space for personal relaxation," and "serving as a psychological comfort." Five-point scales were used to evaluate the importance ratings and satisfaction levels, from -2 to +2. The average scores were set as 0, with a range from -2 to +2 (-2; not at all, -1; slightly, 0; moderately, +1; very, +2; completely).

### 5.2 Results

Table 1. shows that there were significant differences between the perceived importance of the spatial elements in the Myeong-dong Cathedral and Bongeun Buddhist Temple precincts. In order to calculate an "importance rating" for the spatial elements of the two religious precincts, the average values of the responses were determined using independent sample *t*-tests.

Table 1. Perceived Importance of Spatial Elements in the Myeong-dong Cathedral and Bongeun Buddhist Temple Precincts

Spatial element	Mean value (-2 ~ +2)	
	Cathedral	Temple
Sense of separation from the urban area	0.88	1.09
Sense of an enclosure	1.23	1.28
Circulation system that leads to the main building	1.12	1.06
Religious architecture	1.22	1.21
Garden sculpture	1.02	0.95
Open space for holding events	0.52	0.42
<i>Space for gathering</i> *	0.51	0.21
Personal relaxation	0.85	0.70
Information board	0.77	0.81

\**p* < 0.05 \*\**p* < 0.01

Every spatial element in each religious precinct had a higher-than-average importance rating. In both religious precincts, the religious spatial elements were deemed to be more important than the social spatial elements, which mirror the primary spatial purpose of these two religious spaces. Religious elements, such as "sense of separation from the urban area" and "sense of an enclosure," in Bongeun Buddhist Temple precinct had importance ratings that were higher than for the Myeong-dong Cathedral precinct. Social elements,

such as "open space for holding events," "space for gathering," and "personal relaxation," in the Myeong-dong Cathedral precinct had an importance rating that was higher than for the Bongeun Buddhist Temple precinct.

However, there were no statistically significant differences in the spatial elements, except in regard to "space for gathering," which was considered more important for the cathedral precinct. This suggests that the cathedral precinct was more significant for social gatherings and events than the Buddhist temple.

Table 2. shows that there were significant differences between the perceived current spatial satisfaction for the Myeong-dong Cathedral and Bongeun Buddhist Temple precinct. In order to calculate a "spatial satisfaction level" of the two religious precincts, the average values of the responses was determined using independent sample *t*-tests.

Table 2. Perceived Current Spatial Satisfaction in the Myeong-dong Cathedral and Bongeun Buddhist Temple Precincts

Function	Mean value (-2 ~ +2)	
	Cathedral	Temple
<i>Separating urban space from a religious space **</i>	0.01	0.46
Accommodating religious events	0.16	0.40
Space for prayer and self-reflection	0.32	0.59
<i>Religious tranquility *</i>	0.09	0.40
<i>Connecting urban space and a religious space *</i>	1.21	0.98
Accommodating social events and meetings	0.13	0.14
<i>Serving as gathering space for friends **</i>	0.87	0.33
<i>Personal relaxation space *</i>	0.09	0.35
<i>Psychological comfort **</i>	0.08	0.47

\**p* < 0.05 \*\**p* < 0.01

The current spatial satisfaction for each religious precinct had a higher-than-average satisfaction level. There were statistically significant differences. In terms of religious functions, such as "separating urban space from religious space" and "inspiring a sense of religious tranquility" and social functions, such as "space for personal relaxation" and "serving as a psychological comfort," the Bongeun Buddhist Temple precinct showed significant predominance over the Myeong-dong Cathedral precinct. Conversely, in terms of social functions, such as "connecting urban space and a religious space" and "serving as a gathering space for friends," the Myeong-dong Cathedral precinct was more prominent than the Bongeun Buddhist Temple precinct. It is important to note that, regarding the spatial satisfaction of the religious functions, the Bongeun Buddhist Temple precinct scored higher than average on all items compared to the Myeong-dong Cathedral precinct (Jeon, *et al.*, 2014).

The primary spatial functions of the Myeong-dong Cathedral precinct were "connecting urban space and a religious space" and "serving as a gathering space for friends." These spatial characteristics mirror the social functions of the cathedral precinct performed throughout periods of urban development in Europe. Therefore, cathedral precinct connects the world with a religious space, act as a venue for social gathering and friendship, and serve as a "social square" that satisfies various related needs.

In contrast, the primary spatial functions of Bongeun Buddhist Temple precinct was "separating urban space from religious space" and "inspiring a sense of religious tranquility." These spatial characteristics mirror the primarily religious function of the temple precinct that emerged throughout the history of Buddhist temple formation. Buddhist temple precinct aims to separate the world from religious space, tend to be seen as tranquil spaces where people can pray and be self-reflective, and serve as "religious gardens" that reflect Buddhism's religious values in the space itself.

## 6. Conclusions

Catholic cathedrals have their roots in the 1st century "home church" of Jesus' disciples in Jerusalem, Israel. These cathedrals later became centerpieces of urbanized medieval European society. As various social activities are held within the cathedral, its precinct serves as a social area. The religious spatiality of a Catholic cathedral precinct is limited to the internal space, while external spaces function as open social areas. Accordingly, the outer cathedral precinct serves as a kind of buffer area that must be passed through in order to enter the internal space of the cathedral. Furthermore, the cathedral precinct functions as a "social square" characterized by earthly features in contrast to the sacred, internal space of the cathedral. The introduction of Catholicism in Korea after the 18th century meant that Korean cathedrals integrated Western church spatiality and spatial functions in a way that reflected Korea's modern history.

Conversely, Buddhist temples began as community residences for ascetic practices by Buddha's disciples in the 6th century BC. Since temples are a hub of religious activity, separate from secular matters, temple precinct plays distinct roles in terms of their spatiality. The religious spatiality of Buddhist temple precinct is comprehensive, including both the internal and external space. Buddhist temples, due to limitations imposed by the construction materials used, are unable to limit their religious spatiality to their more modest internal spaces, but instead consciously extend and integrate religious spatiality into external spaces as well. Thus, a temple precinct tends to represent a unified, single religious space. Therefore, the temple precinct has the spatiality of a religious garden that fully reflects Buddhist values, a nature-friendly concept, and clearly separates secular and religious values. Since the 4th century, when

Buddhism was introduced to Korea, Buddhist temple spatiality and spatial functions have become a blended and integral part of Korean society and culture.

The contrasting spatial characteristics of the two religious precincts are perceived in a similar way in the minds of the modern urban population. From the survey results, the spatial functions of the Myeong-dong Cathedral precinct are related to merging the secular and sacred aspects of life, hosting religious events, and serving as a gathering place, e.g., a "social square." In contrast, the Bongeun Buddhist Temple precinct is interpreted as a tranquil place that separates the sacred from the secular, hosts religious events, and serves as a space for prayer and self-reflection, embodying the idea of "the religious garden." The Myeong-dong Cathedral and Bongeun Buddhist Temple precincts are distinct, representing two very spatially different areas with different spatial functions and environments.

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