The Development of a Relational Masculine Spirituality in the Context of Current South Korean Unemployment Issues

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Abstract

This thesis proposes a relational spirituality for middle adult Korean males who have faced dismissal from their workplaces as a result of the Korean financial crisis in 1977 and the GFC in 2008. The causes of such dismissals and the consequences for the unemployed, alongside the rise in Korean male suicide and mental health problems are analysed.

It draws on both Western and Confucian cultural influences in the formation of Korean men. The middle adult task of individuation is discussed in terms of the need to integrate the midlife polarities, particularly in the contemporary Korean cultural climate. An integrated, relational self is proposed as a goal for contemporary midlife Korean males. Such men have been enculturated into a militaristic and authoritarian male identity which has created breakdown in personal, societal and familial relationships. It is argued that emotional intelligence is essential for midlife development so that men can learn to relate to themselves and to others.

This thesis also recommends a model of servant leadership for middle adult Korean males such as servant leadership by which people are inspired, encouraged and empowered. Servant leadership is proposed as an effective model of leadership to contemporary Korean males who have experienced authoritarian leaders and dictators from their early years.

Middle Adult Spirituality for Korean males is proposed as one that is embodied, emotionally integrated, enabled to deal positively with anger and attentive to appropriate relational boundaries. In both Chapters Four and Five I draw on my own formation and lifestyle as a male Korean who is committed to the Christian life of a Jesuit. In Chapter Five I will conclude with an understanding of spirituality in terms of servant and relational leadership and as a lifelong challenge to self-transformation. The purpose of this chapter is to offer an inclusive, integrated and relational spirituality (rather than exclusively Christian) which can
be communicated to and shared those midlife Korean males with different beliefs and value systems who may be searching for a deeper meaning for life and who choose to attend the programs and workshops described in the final chapter.
Declaration of Originality

I certify that this thesis contains no material previously published or written by any other person, except where due reference is given in the text.

KIM, Chongdae
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I would like to express my special thanks to all those who have contributed in many ways to the completion of this thesis.

It is not common for Korean males in their 50s to undertake higher study. But when I presented a proposal for the studies to the Korean Province of the Society of Jesus, it was accepted. The Australian Province of the Society of Jesus likewise accepted me. To these two provinces, my special thanks.

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INTRODUCTION

Generally speaking, men’s identity as breadwinners and economic providers for their families has been important in every culture. In particular, Korean men think that they cannot have the authority of the breadwinner without economic success. In order to keep their authority as providers for their families, they work hard to keep their place in the workforce so that they can continue to earn money to keep the family together. Consequently, for their identity and success they depend more on the company they work for and on work relationships than on their families.

However, the economic environment has changed since both the 1997 and the 2008 Global Financial Crises. The change in the economic environment does not guarantee the continued employment of middle adult Korean males any longer. Many of them were dismissed from their workplaces and they lost direction and a sense of meaning and purpose for their lives. As a consequence, many Korean males are facing despair and seeing suicide as the only possible solution. Some of the dismissed workers abandoned their families and committed suicide. The breakdown of personal and family relationships is one of the serious social matters of Korean society these days. The purpose of this thesis is to propose a spirituality for Korean men which helps them overcome the crisis of identity of both role and identity that has resulted among working class unemployed males.

In Chapter One, I will discuss what kind of social matters have been happening due to the change of the economic environment. I will discuss some cases of massive dismissal in the automobile and shipbuilding industries. Middle adult Korean male workers have been dismissed from their workplaces since the 1997 Financial Crisis in Korea. After their dismissal, some workers committed suicide and others abandoned their families. Thus, personal and family relationships were broken down. But internally, those men suffered from the experience of loss of their authority as breadwinner and as their direction of lives as

1 See the economic index in the Appendix 1-4.
unemployed workers changed. I will examine what causes the breakdown of personal and family relationships and some of the male developmental issues that have resulted from their losses.

There are historical and cultural factors that have affected the social situation of dismissed workers in Korea. Thus, in Chapter Two, I will discuss how history and the contemporary culture have influenced the formation of contemporary Korean men. I will examine the historical influence of Confucianism, and in particular, the influence of *Samgang Oryun*² to Koreans, the influence of anti-communist culture, military culture, fascism and state-controlled economic developmental policy. The heritage of this rigid culture deprived middle adult Koreans of their autonomy and freedom. Drawing on the writing of M. Shawn Copeland I will also discuss the influence of the rigid culture from the anthropological view point of the ‘social body’.

As the rigid culture deprived Koreans of autonomy and freedom, it has also prevented them from developing their adult self psychologically. In Chapter Three, I will discuss how some factors of Korean culture make it hard for them to develop their understanding of what it means to be a ‘self’. The middle adult task of developing their own inner self cannot be done when middle adult male workers experience the loss of self and of their social role caused by their dismissal. Therefore, they face the loss of their identity and sense of belonging to society. Thus, I will discuss how to engage in the task of individuation through which they can become their own self in middle adulthood. The middle adult task of Korean males will be discussed in terms of creating a balance between the midlife polarities: young and old, masculine and feminine, creation and destruction and separateness and attachment in order to develop their authentic self. Therefore, this task of balancing between polarities of life is important to middle adult Korean males.

One of the midlife tasks is to integrate all experiences, both positive and negative. This is a

spiritual task. Thus, in Chapter Four, I will discuss a relational spirituality for middle adult Korean males. Spirituality is not something which only religious people have, but one which everyone can have and develop. In this sense, I will talk about spirituality in its general and relational aspect. This spiritual development is closely related with the growth of a mature adult self which requires emotional awareness. If we are aware of our emotions we know who we are and we can become more effective in our relationships. I will also discuss how middle adult Korean males deal with anger and shame. Dealing with the negative emotions of anger and shame is important for them as they have grown up in the hierarchical and rigid culture of Korea. Then I will discuss relational spirituality from the Korean tradition. For this, I will discuss relational aspects of *Samgang Oryun* and suggest what is missing in Korean culture to live the relational spirituality of *Samgang Oryun*. Middle adult Korean males have lived with their false self which was formed under the rigid culture. The way to live a lifelong challenge to self-transformation may be helped by developing a relational spirituality.

In the final Chapter, I will discuss servant leadership and relational spirituality and this will be informed by my own understanding of my Jesuit spirituality and my personal response. I will conclude this Chapter with recommendations and possible programs for developing self-awareness and relationships.
1.1. Introduction - Exclusion of Korean Male Workers from their Workplace since the 1997 Financial Crisis.

“A society is defined by who is excluded.”

In my experience, modernisation was a national movement to get rich. I still remember a song which begins with ‘Let’s live well! Let’s live well, too! …’ Living well in the song means to have plenty of money. Not to ‘live well’ in the Korean society of the period of ‘Economic Plans’ from the 1960s to the late 1970s in which I grew up meant that the cause of poverty was because people had failed in life. Therefore, in my view, the national plan for economic development at that time was for the Government to get rid of poverty and for all to be rich. This is my impression of the economic development that I was formed in from school days till my teenage years. People were encouraged to work hard for the economic development of the State by the government.

In 1962 President Park Chung-hee (1961-1979) initiated his ‘Five-Year Economic Development Plan’ for the modernisation of the nation. This economic development plan, which was renewed every five years, has driven the industrialisation of Korea and led also to urbanisation. People in agricultural areas moved to cities and formed the industrial reserve forces and the urban poor who received cheap wages. The government promoted the development of heavy and chemical industries during the period of ‘The Third Five-Year Economic Development Plan’ (1972-1976) for the purpose of achieving the stable development of the Korean economy.\(^1\) In order to develop heavy and chemical industries, the government had to raise foreign loans and supply labour. Heavy and chemical industries were crucial for the defence industry in South Korea in order to build self-reliance in national defence.\(^2\) To build a strong military force and to develop industrial economy were the two

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main goals of the dictator’s policy in the presence of the threats from communist North Korea. What Park Chung-hee did for this purpose was to link military service with the organisation of the industrial economy. “Since 1973, when Park’s regime introduced the Military Service Special Cases Law, tens of thousands of conscripts annually have worked in factories and research centres designated by the state in lieu of mandatory military service.”\(^3\) The workers in the industrial fields of that period were praised in Korean society as a ‘pillar of industry’. Korean male workers played an important role in national economic development and they were highly respected. The Korean economy has continued to prosper. However, it faced a financial crisis in late 1997, and on November 21, the government decided to accept relief funds from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Faced with the 1997 financial crisis, insolvent companies tried to decrease expenses by dismissing workers citing structural adjustment. According to the national statistics, the number of unemployed rose from 568,000 people in 1997 to 1,490,000 people in 1998.\(^4\) Thus, the status of men in the workforce changed during the financial crisis.\(^5\) They were no longer the admired ‘pillar of industry’ but a nuisance in the industrial sphere.

In this Chapter I will describe the situation of labour workers in Korea. First, I will describe how many workers were laid off from their work place, telling of some cases of massive dismissals: Daewoo Motors, Ssangyong Motors, Hanjin Heavy Industry and Construction and other companies of shipping industry. Second I will describe the workers’ experiences of suffering because of unemployment. Third, I will discuss family breakdown and men’s suicide as consequences of dismissal. Finally, I will examine male developmental issues raised by their experiences of suffering in order to suggest ways in which men’s masculinity can flourish more effectively in contemporary Korean society.

\(^3\) Ibid., 55.


\(^5\) While both women and men were in the workforce, my focus in this thesis is on the impact that the loss of employment had on the cultural identity of the male - traditionally the breadwinner of the family.
1.2. Industrial Corporatization and Human Consequences

The IMF demanded of the Korean government a tight fiscal policy and structural reform in four sectors: the public sector, the banking sector, the corporate sector, and finally the labour market sector. Thus the Korean economy was exposed to market fundamentalism and labour workers were exposed to easy dismissal for the sake of labour market flexibility. The Korean economy was rescued from bankruptcy, but still suffered severely for its dependence on the IMF. The experience of massive dismissal became more common from the IMF era.

1.2.1. Massive Dismissal in Motor Industry

1.2.1.1. Daewoo Motors

The government planned to sell insolvent companies overseas in order to overcome the financial crisis. A prerequisite for the sale overseas was the layoff of workers. On February 16, 2001, Daewoo Motors, one of the car producing companies, announced the layoff of 1,725 persons. Daewoo Motors was sold to US General Motors after the massive dismissal. Inchon, where Daewoo Motors was located, was traditionally an industrial area. The layoff at Daewoo Motors was the first massive dismissal in Korean society and it had a major impact on the Korean labour force. As a result many people began to be interested in what was happening to these dismissed workers. Several civic groups and religions formed support groups in social solidarity with them. After several years some of the dismissed workers were reinstated. Even so, the dismissed workers suffered in their social relationships as a result of the layoff.


1.2.1.2. Ssangyong Motors

Ssangyong Motors, which was trusted by the people, is one of the major car companies in Korea. But this company was sold to several other car companies at the end of the 1990s. On January 27, 2005, the company was sold to Shanghai Motors of China with the promise of investment and development of the company. But Shanghai Motors did not make investments. Rather the new company was suspected of stealing the advanced technology of Ssangyong Motors. Without any investment by the mother company, Ssangyong Motors suffered short term losses in 2005 and 2006. The company announced the dismissal of 986 workers on July 10, 2006 citing managerial difficulties. Faced with the threat of strikes by the labour union, the company withdrew the dismissal list and promised an investment which was equivalent to USD 300 million. Unfortunately, nobody trusted the company’s promise of investment.

Due to deteriorating management practices, Ssangyong Motors applied for court receivership on January 8, 2009 and this was approved on February 6, 2009. The company announced the dismissal of 2,646 workers for ‘structural adjustment’ on April 8, 2009. The company was placed under court receivership and the dismissal of 2,405 workers was reported to the Ministry of Labour on May 8, 2009. The labour union of Ssangyong Motors went on strike on May 22, 2009. The strike lasted for 77 days. However the strike was brutally suppressed by police commandos on 5\textsuperscript{th} August 2009. This was not the end of the sad situation of the workers of Ssangyong Motors. It was just the beginning of the tragedy of dismissals that followed.

1.2.2. The Shipping Industry & Relocation outside Korea

1.2.2.1. Hanjin Heavy Industry & Construction

Korean society has experienced frequently massive dismissals since the 1997 financial crisis. In March 2002, Hanjin Heavy Industry and Construction, a shipbuilding industry in Busan,

\footnote{These data were collected from Gong Jiyong, \textit{Uijanori (Musical Chair Game)} (Humanist, 2012). 178-187.}
announced the dismissal of 650 workers. The decision was taken by the company. The labour union did not accept the decision. It took a year and three months to forge an agreement between the company and the labour union. But the company soon ignored the agreement. So Kim Ju-ik, the head of the labour union of the company climbed a tower crane, a part of facilities for ship construction, and stayed there for 129 days as a protest against the decision of the company. The company refused to negotiate with the labour union while Kim Ju-ik was in the crane. He was totally isolated and frustrated with the reaction of the company. On October 17, 2003 he committed suicide on the crane. Kim Jin-sook, a female union leader cried over his death and said in a funeral speech; “If I had known this was going to happen, I wouldn’t have joined the union.” It was so sad that a union activist had to lose his life because of this. The dispute unfortunately aroused little public interest.

Hanjin Heavy Industry’s crackdown on workers continued. On December 15, 2010, the company announced another 400 names of those to be dismissed, citing managerial difficulties. This time, on January 6, 2011, Kim Jin-sook climbed the tower crane which Kim Ju-ik had climbed and had committed suicide, in protest against the decision of the company, staying there for 309 days. In fact, the company had another shipyard in Subic Bay in the Philippines. While the shipyard in Subic Bay received several orders from customers, the shipyard in Busan did not. Suspicions were raised that the company tried intentionally to shut down the plant intentionally, citing its poor performance in sales.

While Kim Jin-sook was in the tower crane, civic groups and religions remembered Kim Ju-


ik who had fought a lonely battle and had committed suicide there. A few social activists initiated the ‘Hope Bus Project’\textsuperscript{13}, a people’s gathering every weekend at the crane in the shipyard where Kim Jin-sook was staging her protest. Crowds rallied spontaneously. Several thousand people gathered every weekend for several weeks waiting for her come down safely and for the company to withdraw its reckless dismissal. This showed a really beautiful solidarity in our society, but it is sad that workers have to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their fellow workers.

1.2.2.2. Impact on Other Companies of the Shipbuilding Industry

There is a high possibility that massive unemployment will emerge in the shipbuilding industry.

The characteristics of the shipbuilding industry are, first, combination and integration of labour intensive industries, capital intensive facilities and recently, technology intensive industries. … Second, … products by orders of customers make it hard to standardize product lines, … Lastly, this industry has a structure that repeats regular industrial crises.\textsuperscript{14}

While the capacity has been increased because of overlapping investment, the number of orders received is decreasing. “In 2009, 66 shipyards were operating, but at the end of 2015, 19 shipyards stopped operating or shut down.”\textsuperscript{15} Currently, the shipbuilding industry of Korea is undergoing a difficult time.

\textsuperscript{13} The first “Hope Bus” gathered at the shipyard of Hanjin Heavy Industry & Construction in Busan on 11\textsuperscript{th} June, 2011.

\textsuperscript{14} Bae Gyusik, “Joseon Saneobui Gujojeog Wigi” (A Crisis of Ship Construction Industry), \textit{Wolgan Nodong Riview (Monthly Labour Review)} \textit{Vol. 139} (Korea Labour Institute, Oct. 2016). 11. Retrieved via Internet, 20\textsuperscript{th} October, 2017, https://www.kli.re.kr/kli/pdicalView.do?key=19&pbcltListNo=8766&schPdicalKnd=%EB%85%B8%EB%8F%99%EB%A6%AC%EB%B7%B0&schPblcateDe=&pageUnit=10&searchCnd=all&searchKrwd=&pageIndex=2 and Download

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 14.
1.3. Unemployment in the Labour Force: Short and Mid-term Consequences

1.3.1. Loss of Identity equals Loss of Meaning and Purpose

It is employment that enables people to sustain and even improve their social status. Breadwinners need money to support their families, maintain their relationships with others and to live decent lives. Loss of employment means loss of identity for the breadwinner. It is hard for male workers to imagine their lives without employment. Loss of employment can cause breadwinners to suffer loss of reputation, career and the sudden breakdown of relationships. Some dismissed workers suffer from the loss of authority within their family. Others suffer a sense of guilt at failing in their role as breadwinner.

1.3.2. The Distress of Unemployment: “Dismissal is Murder!”

For the Korean labourer, dismissal may be experienced as similar to being murdered. Loss of jobs can mean a loss of identity and meaning. Dismissal sends most ordinary people into the abyss of despair. After the announcement of the dismissal list from Ssangyong Motors, a series of deaths followed. Several dismissed workers and their family members died of extreme stress or else committed suicide. The first suicide occurred when the company announced the dismissal list on April 8, 2009. During the 77 days of the strike, another five people died. The twenty-second person died by suicide on March 30, 2012. The number of suicides was 12 out of 22 people. This was 15 times higher than the national suicide death rate. Despair forced them to kill themselves.

After the strike they fell into despair because of social exclusion and criticism. There was no justice for the dismissed workers of Ssangyong Motors. They had no hope, “because the regime, mass media and public opinion labelled them as rioters, and even we did not give

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16 This expression was the “slogan” through which the dismissed workers of Ssangyong Motors raised social issue.

17 Gong Jiyoung, 148.
them any opportunity to complain of injustice.” Therefore, they felt shame in their local community. They could not feel a sense of belonging to the community nor did they receive any social support from there. They experienced total social exclusion.

Even their neighbours began to criticize them as ‘communist, selfish, rich and radical labour workers’ and avoided them. … The parents of the labour workers and their wives also demanded that they come off strike because they believed the distorted reports of the mass media. They were much more prone to mental illness because of social prejudice and distortion. One of fellow workers of Ssangyong Motors, who attended the strike and resigned before dismissal, acquired a license in order to change his job. But he was refused employment because he had worked in Ssangyong Motors. He used to ring Kim Deuk-jung, one of union leaders of the company, and talk about his suffering from social exclusion before he committed suicide. “People around me don’t want to talk to me when they know that I worked in Ssangyong Motors. … How do you answer or react when you hear you are a commie?” He committed suicide on March 30, 2012. He was the twenty-second person who died this sad death.

1.3.3. The Consequence of Traumatic Change: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

As mentioned above, the Ssangyong Motors workers’ strike was brutally repressed by police commandos on 5 August 2009. The final negotiation between the labour union and the company had been held on 30 July 2009. However, on 2 August 2009, the company announced that negotiations had failed and the plant’s electricity was cut. In a serious affront to workers’ human rights, their food and water supplies, as well as access to medical care,

18 Ibid., 149.
19 Ibid., 18.
20 Jung Hyeo-yoon, Geuui Sulpungwa Gippeum (His Sorrow and Joy) (Humanitas, 2015). 149.
21 Gong Jiyoung, 204.
were blocked. The workers were isolated in the plant for two days. Then, on 5 August 2009, before dawn, police commandos entered the plant and brutally crushed the workers. Under this pressure, union leaders sought negotiation and were forced to surrender. Although the strike ended at this point, the trauma of the strike endured. This was a violent experience that they did not want to remember and talk about, but rather wanted to avoid. They could not bear to gather and discuss the strike, such was their trauma.

Many dismissed workers of Ssangyong Motors, as well as their family members, who had to watch the violent scenes of suppression from outside, suffered post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Few social leaders and experts were aware of their suffering and vulnerability to suicide as a consequence of the loss of employment at Ssangyong Motors. One psychiatrist, Dr. Jeong Hyeshin was aware of this situation and recognized the symptoms of PTSD. She began to meet several dismissed workers for psychotherapy from March 2010 to treat their psychological trauma. When she went to meet them, only 40-50 people out of the 2600 affected people gathered. “It was difficult for them to gather because it was too painful to hear such stories as Ssangyong Motors and the strike.” Some workers began to see her to talk about their experiences. Presumably their gathering formed a ‘self-help group’. Before they met together they had been isolated from each other. However, after they met together they could share their difficulties, hopes and joys with each other. This ‘self-help group’ fostered a communal consciousness-raising experience.

1.4. Family Breakdown and Shame: Key Consequence of “Job Loss”

1.4.1. Family Life of Dismissed Workers

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22 Gong Jiyoung, 195.

23 Ibid., 196.

24 Ibid., 32.

Most of the dismissed workers were the breadwinners in their families. They suffered not just economic stress and unemployment but also from the psychological and emotional loss of the respect and dignity that employment gave them. Depending on the life stage and age of the male breadwinners, the degree of the impact of their unemployment has been different. Early adulthood, (age 30s) is the time when they marry, form a family and have children. The experience of middle adulthood (Age 50s) is the time when they are preparing for the marriages of their adult sons and daughters. This means that, “while dismissed workers of early adulthood suffer from loss of confidence due to the decline of social status, dismissed middle adulthood workers suffer from a sense of guilt due to their inability to play their role as the breadwinners” and caretakers for their sons and daughters. This period can be a time of despair for males who feel a sense of failure.

The families of the dismissed workers also suffer from economic stress. The dismissal of the breadwinner of the family means that there income decreases and all family members have to adjust themselves to the changed environment and the hardship of financial loss. Though families try to overcome the economic stress, problems do happen when the unemployment of the breadwinner endures. For some dismissed workers it is not easy to find another job. Men’s identity as the breadwinner in the family is very important in Korean culture. Moreover, employment of the wives of the unemployed husbands in order to support the house income creates difficulties if the wife becomes the breadwinner in the family. The existence of different heads of household shows:

the decline of traditional family characteristics of patriarchal ideology. … This causes confusion of identity of the role of breadwinner and leads to renegotiate the power structure in the family which has been formed by the productivity role of the breadwinner.


27 Ibid., 537.
Chapter One: Korean Male Workers in a Changing Economic Environment

The dismissed workers experience “damage to their pride and feel anger, shame and inferiority.” Sometimes, these negative emotions cause tension between spouses, and the increase of tension leads to family breakdown. When husband and wife experience family disintegration, they offer different reasons for the breakdown of family based on their different experience.

For wives, the strength of the family bond and equality of power between husband and wife are more important than the ability of wealth. On the other hand, for husbands, the traditional gender role of the breadwinner is important. Thus when the role of breadwinner is ignored their pride and confidence is hurt.

1.4.2. Suicide and the ‘Collective Disposition’ of Korean Culture

Society in general suffers from the impact of unemployment. Although the multiple deaths of former workers from Ssangyong Motors may have been an isolated case, the rise of the suicide rate in Korean society since the 1997 financial crisis shows social problems caused by unemployment. The impact of this financial crisis was huge, and the negative results appeared in all areas of Korean life. The suicide rate in Korea was 13.1 persons per 100,000 people in 1997 and 18.4 persons in 1998. Thus, suicide has become a social issue. According to the National Statistics of Korea, the suicide rate reached a record high of 31.7 in 2011, decreasing gradually since then, with a rate of 26.5 persons in 2015 (male, 37.5; female, 15.5). Since 2004, Korea has had the highest suicide rate in the world. In 2015, suicide was ranked the fifth highest cause of death in Korea.

It is argued that a sociological factor rather than a psychological factor causes suicide.

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28 Ibid., 538.
29 Ibid., 539.
31 Ibid, 19.
Durkheim called the sociological factor a ‘collective disposition’ in culture. Korean sociologist, Song Jaeryong follows Durkheim’s assumption, and explains “Korea’s suicide phenomenon is simply a social and cultural phenomenon that is related to ‘family habits’ which form a ‘collective disposition’ in Korean culture rather than merely personal psychological problems.”

Traditionally, family members are protected and cared for emotionally in the family. This is usually dependent on the father’s role as breadwinner. Family members are normally fully supported by the father in their family life. These are the ‘family habits’ which have formed the ‘collective disposition’ of a success-oriented culture in Korea. This strong success-oriented family culture has become an obsession for many Koreans.

Those who are unemployed have suffered from their failure in the workforce. Frustration, loss of meaning and depression are the consequences. This has contributed to a significant increase in the rate of suicide.

The traditional family structure has changed from the extended family to the nuclear family since the early 1960s as a consequence of industrialisation. However, after the mid-1990s, the breakdown of family relationships due to unemployment has resulted in the increase of male suicide.

Traditionally, unemployment was seen as a family problem to be solved together. But the traditional family relationships have changed since mid-1990s. “This change refers to awareness of the importance of the autonomy of individuals in the family and of new family relationships based on intimacy rather than hierarchy.”

Unlike the traditional family, the nuclear family has not been able to play the role of counsellor and protector for family members. There has been no public system to replace the role of the family as counsellor. “The lack of family as counsellor and the absence of the public system’s role of counsellor

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33 Ibid., 139.
34 Ibid., 159.
35 Ibid., 162.
create an environment in which individuals experience suicidal impulses.”

1.4.3. Shame and Its Cultural Consequences

Shame is an emotion of self-judgement through which we are aware that we are exposed “to others, or to the self, as being defective, lacking, or inadequate”\(^{37}\). The emotion of shame, in its distorted forms, “can lead us to create ‘false selves’ in order to meet the conditions of worth in our families of origin, or in our workplaces, social roles, or even in our churches or synagogues.”\(^{38}\) The communal consequences of shame are revealed in social discrimination. This distorted form of shame “cannot be healed without attention to issues of economic and political justice, equality, and the effective affirmation of inclusiveness in societies.”\(^{39}\) For example, in Korea, the right to strike of labour unions is often regarded as antisocial behaviour even though it is legal and allowed in the law. Moreover, strikers are often labelled as communists. As North Korea is a communist nation and hostile to South Korea, people who are opposed to the government policy with respect to the division of Korea between North and South are regarded as communists and antigovernment. To be named as a communist is not only shameful but is also almost a death sentence in Korean culture. Some dismissed workers were frustrated and felt shamed when they were named communists. This shame might have been the cause of their tragic suicide. There is little evidence of the capacity of shamed men to work together to bring about change. The evidence suggests rather that they are unable to adapt to change. Their cultural heritage has contributed to their rigidity and lack of resilience.\(^{40}\)

\(^{36}\) Ibid., 163.


\(^{38}\) Ibid., 93.

\(^{39}\) Ibid., 121.

\(^{40}\) Male spirituality in regard to these issues will be addressed in chapter 4.
1.5. Male Developmental Issues in the Suffering of Dismissed Workers

1.5.1. Crisis of Identity and Sense of Belonging

As I mentioned above, while the Korean economy was developing, Korean men were praised as ‘pillars of industry’. They worked hard following the policy of the State. Through their participation in economic development they found their identity as family breadwinners. Korean men’s identity has been closely aligned to their productive role, which has given them a sense of value and purpose in society as well as authority and power as family breadwinners. Their loss of employment consequently led to loss of self-worth and identity. This devaluing of self usually resulted in the breakdown of personal and family relationships.

The family and the workplace are the two most important fields of men’s lives. When they are working, their job provides them with a strong sense of belonging to the workplace. However, this is not the only way for men to find their identity. The female Korean novelist, Gong Jiyoung comments:

> The workplace is not only the place from which they can get money and food. It is through the workplace that workers can have food and clothes, guarantee human lives, form human relationships with others to achieve social goals, maintain their dignity and pride, and, finally, enrich their lives. These two fields, family and workplace, are our life. Family breakdown does not necessarily lead to the breakdown of their work life. But when the workplace is lost, most families break down and workers may lose their identity.\(^{41}\)

Men’s sense of belonging to their workplace tends to be stronger than belonging to their family. With the loss of employment, men lose their position and role in their family. Their crises through loss of employment are an invitation for them to restructure their identity and relationships.

1.5.2. Different Responses to Dismissal between Male and Female Workers

\(^{41}\) Gong Jiyoung, 93.
There have been many analyses of the situation of Korean workers from economic, sociological and health perspectives. Now it is necessary to discuss this matter from the perspectives of male developmental issues. Male and female workers respond differently to job dismissal. Personally, I was involved in the struggle of contract women workers of the Kiryung Electronic Company for more than ten years. Male workers fought aggressively against the dismissals as well as against Korean society in general. However, when they failed in their efforts the men gave up working together. When they lost their battle against dismissal they tended to despair and lose everything. The male crisis is characterised by losing hope and giving into despair. However, men’s lives do not need to end with such traumatic change. Just as women were able to adapt to these radical changes, so too men can be taught to become less rigid and to open themselves to new possibilities.

Female workers sought to keep working together to uncover and expose an unjust system. They continued to support each other. They also protested against Korean society and fought for social change in various ways, rather than falling into despair and killing themselves as the men did. Female workers continued to fight their battles together. Although they were defeated several times they continually overcame each crisis by regrouping together in solidarity. These groups began to include men ready to learn from and work with the women. It may be argued, then, that struggle in solidarity with others can be a key factor for victory against injustice. I clearly saw the difference between the positive and negative responses of male and female workers. It is necessary to understand male issues with reference to the isolation of dismissed and defeated male workers and to recognise the importance of both men and women working together in solidarity with others.

1.6. Conclusion
The situation of unemployed Korean workers shows the consequences of the struggle for justice in the face of the diverse demands made by a changing economic environment after

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42 I will discuss this in Chapter Three.
Chapter One: Korean Male Workers in a Changing Economic Environment

the 1997 financial crisis. This struggle has had tragic consequences for Korean workers, especially males. They suffer not just economic stress and unemployment itself but from the sociological and psychological consequences. The rigidity of the male workers’ upbringing has led to a focus on their conformity and performance according to the expectations of those higher in rank than themselves. Male relationships in the workforce carry the expectation of ‘friendships’ that are focused on gathering in the hotel after work. These conversations keep men’s emotions below the surface. The alcohol that is the basis of their coming together offers less accountability for what might be said in the ‘weakness’ of any expression of emotions.

The loss of men’s respect and dignity due to unemployment has had significant consequences on family lives and on Korean society at large. Whereas men respond to suffering by isolating themselves, women work together and socialise together in friendship groups. Intimacy with each other can be achieved in women’s workplaces or family meetings.

Dismissed male workers suffer from mental illness caused by what they experience as social prejudice, distortion of justice and social exclusion. Some of them suffer from the breakdown of personal and family relationships. They do not notice how their wives and female family members are dealing with the changed situation. Women are more able to adapt to change than men. Their experience of loss of their traditional roles confronts dismissed workers with several key male developmental issues, such as crises of identity and sense of belonging and imbalance between masculinity and femininity. In particular the lack of resilience and the capacity to adapt to change causes males to stay closed rather than open to new possibilities.
Chapter Two: Historical and Cultural Influences of the Formation of Korean Men

2.1. Introduction

The novel, *The Vegetarian*\(^1\) illustrates a violent, single-minded, and conformist aspect of Korean culture. This novel also shows Koreans’ intolerance of people who do not conform to the conventional customs and mores of the culture. Yeong-hye and her husband are an ordinary couple in South Korea. She is a dutiful housewife and he is an ordinary office worker. Their peaceful married life has been disturbed since Yeong-hye decided to become a vegetarian. South Korean culture is intolerant of any individualistic behaviour such as that of vegetarians. So Yeong-hye was considered an aberrant and unconventional person by members of her community. She lost weight noticeably as she continued her vegetarian lifestyle. Her parents and other relatives did not understand her non-conforming vegetarian practice. They tried to persuade her and even tried to force her to eat meat again. Her husband did not understand her behaviour either. One day, her father fed her meat by force. In order to do so, he behaved violently and beat her. As a consequence of the rejection and violence she experienced, Yeong-hye eventually committed suicide.

It is not only non-conformists, but all Korean people have suffered from the rigid, violent and uniform culture of Korea. These oppressive circumstances have caused Koreans to lose their autonomy and the capacity to make their own decisions. It is important first to examine how, over the decades, the formation of Korean men has been controlled by their cultural rigidity, displayed in Korea’s Confucian culture, anti-communist ideology, military culture and dictatorship and State controlled economic development policy. Then, I will discuss how this rigid culture and oppressive conditions have influenced the formation of Koreans. I shall examine it from the viewpoint of the relationship between the ‘social body’\(^2\) of Koreans and the oppressive circumstances. Then I will discuss how Koreans in general might find hope through developing a relational spirituality.

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\(^2\) This will be expanded in Chapter Four. M. Shawn Copeland’s research is the source for this term: *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race and Being* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009).
2.2. Confucianism: A Source of Hierarchical Culture

For almost two millennia Confucianism has influenced the Korean way of living. It affects the morality, philosophy and religion of Koreans. During the Three Kingdoms Period (57 B.C.E-668 C.E), each of the three kingdoms “supported Confucianism not only as an important part of Chinese learning, but also as an institutional means of maintaining its aristocratic power and its socio-political order.” During the Koryeo Dynasty (918-1392) the Confucian tradition began to “exert a profound impact on Korean thought, religion, socio-political systems, and ways of life.” Although Koryeo was founded on Buddhism, its Buddhism harmonized with Confucianism. Buddhism was regarded “as the religious foundation for personal salvation” in contrast to Confucianism which became “the moral and social-political basis of ordering the state and governing the people.” As a result, “Confucianism, which previously had little political power in comparison with Buddhism, began to develop into an institutionalized state ideology from middle of the eleventh century.”

With the decline of the Koryeo Dynasty, the Choson Dynasty (1392-1910) took over. This dynasty had its foundation in Neo-Confucianism.

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3 Shilla (57 B.C.E.-668 C.E.) was located in the south eastern part of Korean Peninsula; Paekje (13 B.C.E.-668 C.E.) was located in the south western part; Koguryeo (37 B.C.E.-668 C.E.) was in the northern part of Korean Peninsula and Manchuria. Shilla unified the three kingdoms at 668, and the Unified Shilla lasted till 935.


5 The unified Silla was in decline and was divided into three kingdoms at the end of the ninth Century. The Koryeo dynasty was begun from 918 in one of the three kingdoms and finally reunified them kingdoms in 936.

6 Chung, Edward Y.J., 2.

7 Chung, Edward Y.J., 3.

8 From late thirteenth century, some scholars, such as An Hyang (1243-1306) and Paek I-jong (1275-1325) introduced Neo-Confucianism of Chu Hsi (1130-1200). This propagation of Neo-Confucianism gave an insight of the new state religion and ideology to scholars who were disillusioned with the entrenched aristocrats and corrupt Buddhists in the late Koryeo period. Finally, this environment and Neo-Confucianism provided a strong
Neo-Confucianism was considered as the new intellectual, ethical and spiritual guide for scholar-officials to sustain a centralized, bureaucratic Confucian state. … Confucian ethics emphasizes the essential link between learning, self-cultivation, family regulation, social harmony, political order, and cultural prosperity.\(^9\)

The educational institutions of the Choson Dynasty were divided into government schools and private schools. The government established the ‘Seonggyunkwan’, the Royal College in Hanyang (Seoul) and Hyanggyo, a Confucian temple and school to teach local students in the provinces. There were also Seodang, private schools.\(^10\)

2.2.1. *Samgang Oryun* (三綱五倫, Three Guiding Persons of Relationships and Five Principles of Relationships)

The Choson Dynasty ruled a society that could not ignore the influence of the Confucian scholars. There were highly academic philosophical debates among them. *Samgang Oryun* did not make an important contribution to the people’s understanding of Confucianism but it provided the most important ethical virtues which have influenced Koreans’ ordinary lives and social relations over a long time. In order to cultivate Confucian refinement, the government publicised how to practice *Samgang Oryun* by explaining in painting and translating in Hangul (the Korean Alphabet) to people who did not read Chinese characters. The part played by *Samgang Oryun* in Korean culture has been both negative and hierarchical.

2.2.2. *Oryun* (Five Principles of Relationships)

Confucianism understands human beings as social beings and it regards social harmony as


important. The *Oryun* categorizes five relationships in human social relations and provides five principles in the relationships.

Human beings cannot survive without having social relationships and they develop their relationships such as the father-son relationship, the husband-wife relationship and the fraternal relationship and relationship with neighbours, friends, and state. In order to maintain a harmonious society in these relationships, Confucianism presents *Oryun* (Five Principles of Relationships) as the Great Declaration of Ethics.¹¹

First, the principle and foundation of the relationship between father and son is one of intimacy and close relationship (*bu ja yu chin* 父子有親). Second, the principle and foundation of the relationship between a king and his vassals is a just and righteous relationship (*gun shin yu ui* 君臣有義). Third, the principle and foundation of the relationship between husband and wife is one of different roles and duties (*bu bu yu byul* 夫婦有別). Fourth, the principle and foundation of the relationship between young and old is one of order and respect (*jang yu yu suh* 長幼有序). Last, the principle and foundation of the relationship between friends is one of trust and intimacy (*bung u yu shin* 朋友有信).

### 2.2.3. *Samgang* (Three Guiding Persons of Relationships)

While *Oryun* emphasizes the horizontal and mutual dimension of relationships, *Samgang* (Three Bonds) has a vertical dimension. The image of the fishing net consists of the knot and the guide rope at the edge of the fishing net. *gang* (綱) is the guide rope at the edge of the fishing net. Thus *Samgang* describes the three persons who play a main role in relationships as the guide rope of the fishing net. The main person who guides the relationship between vassal and king is the king (*gun wee shin gang* 君爲臣綱). The father guides the son in their relationship (*bu wee ja gang* 父爲子綱). The husband guides the wife in their relationship

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(bu wee bu gang 夫為婦綱). The guiding person leads the other in the relationship by example. It follows that the role of the three guiding persons in the relationships can be understood not as one of power but as one of responsibility.

2.2.4. Distortion of Samgang Oryun

Samgang did not appear in early Confucianism. It was emphasized later by other Confucian scholars for political reasons.

Samgang was instituted in order to establish the authority of king, father and husband in the process of establishing an absolute monarchy of the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD). The origin of Samgang is traced back to Han Feizius (280 BC-233 BC). He emphasized that the vassal should serve the king, the son should serve the father, and the wife should serve the husband.\(^{12}\)

In this interpretation the authority only of the senior person in the relationship was emphasized, with the result that the junior person was inevitably bound to obey. When the duty of the junior person in the relationship was readily understood by all, there was no need to emphasize the responsibility of the senior person.

The distorted hierarchical forms of Samgang resulted in the social emphasis on role. In the Choson Dynasty those who held the roles of Chungshin (忠臣) (men of loyalty), of Hsiaoja (孝子) (men of filial piety), and of Yeolyeo (烈女) (virtuous women) were elevated into model human beings in their family and social lives. The meanings of Oryun were also reduced to a vertical and hierarchical relationship by Samgang. Thus, the relationships have been hierarchically interpreted. The foundations and principles of relationships, which prescribe important qualities in human relationships, such as intimacy and love in the father-son relationship, justice and righteousness in the king-vassal relationship, different roles and duties in the husband-wife relationship, order and respect in the old-young relationship and

\(^{12}\) Ibid., 213.
trust and intimacy in the friendship relationship, have been rendered meaningless.

The result of this is, first, that the father-son relationship loses intimacy and love. Without intimacy and affection, the relationship becomes distant and conditional and is based on formality. Second, the prevailing Korean culture promoted the hierarchical aspects of the ‘king-vassal’ relationship hierarchically and ignored the aspects of justice and righteousness during this era. This hierarchical understanding of relationships was accepted not only by leaders in their abuse of power, but also by those who are in the ‘vassal’ position. They blindly obeyed the orders of their leaders without any thoughts or questions to the contrary. This unquestioning subordination to the power makes possible the ‘banality of evil’, as described by Hanna Arendt in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*:

> He merely, to put the matter colloquially, *never realized what he was doing*. It was sheer thoughtlessness—something by no means identical with stupidity—that predisposed him to become one of the greatest criminals of that period... Such thoughtlessness can wreak more havoc than all the evil instincts taken together... - that was, in fact, the lesson one could learn in Jerusalem. 14

That is why Koreans in subordinate roles who collaborate with the authoritarian culture, are enabling the oppression to be sustained.

Third, Korean culture has also understood the husband-wife relationship hierarchically. The wife has been subordinated to her husband, and women have been easily marginalized. Finally, Koreans have tended to favour age over youth in the young-old relationship. This tendency has contributed to forming hierarchical relationships. In this relationship, the older person may be relaxed in his authority, while the young person may be nervous in dealing with the older person. This hierarchical relationship prevents Koreans from developing trust

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13 I will discuss more in Chapter Four. 4.4.


15 See Chapter Three 3.3.1.1 for reference to the midlife polarities.
and intimate relationship with one another and from forming creative relationships based on mutual respect.

2.3. Anticommunism: A Polarising Culture

The origin of anti-communist reaction can be traced back to 1920. The Japanese Governor-General of Korea tried to promote negative images of communists to Koreans through anti-communist education. During the Japanese colonial era, anticommunism was not a dominant ideology at government level and there was no serious conflict between communists and anti-communists. However, serious conflict began when Korea was divided into north and south after the liberation of Korea from Japan.

Koreans found it sad and unfair when the Korean Peninsula was divided into North and South at the end of the Second World War. The Soviet Union (USSR) and USA army occupied the northern and southern parts of the 38 Parallel respectively. The future of the Korean people was ignored by both governments and was sacrificed for the political advantage of USA and USSR in the Cold War between them. The US Army Military Government (USAMG) maintained the police, security personnel and bureaucrats of the Japanese colonial government, and re-appointed police personnel and bureaucrats because of its colonial understanding of the language and Korean culture. Collaborators with the Japanese government appeared in power again and suppressed the grassroots political movements and


organizations which were “aiming at the redistribution of land and other resources.”\textsuperscript{19} The USAMG wanted to establish a ‘friendly’ regime of anticommunism in South Korea in the period of the Cold War. Consequently “the conservative Korean elite (the collaborators of Japanese colonial government) and the USAMG shared a fervent anti-communism.”\textsuperscript{20} The privileged minority of collaborators with the Japanese colonial government regarded people who did not agree to their political positions as communists and treated them with brutal violence to defend their political interests. Their violent activities and distortion of public opinion were systematically committed under the connivance of the state.\textsuperscript{21} South and North Korea finally fought each other in the Korean War (1950-1953).

The Korean War left serious scars on the people of South and North Korea. Afterwards it was essential for political leaders of both South and North Korea to adopt a hostile policy towards each other. General Park Chung-hee obtained political power by a military \textit{coup d’etat} on May 16\textsuperscript{th} 1961 and his military government “asserted anti-communist ideology as national policy and enacted ‘Anti-communist Law’ on July 3, 1961. \ldots The ‘Anti-communist Law’ was abolished on December 31, 1980 and partly absorbed into the ‘National Security

\textsuperscript{19} Moon Seungsook, \textit{Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea}. 24.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 25.

\textsuperscript{21} For example, the 4.3 (April 3, 1948) Incident of Jeju Island was the most tragic incident, apart from the Korean War. The people of Jeju celebrated the memorial day of the 1919 March 1\textsuperscript{st} Independent Movement on March 1, 1947. Police misunderstood the gathering as an attack on the police station and fired on them. Six were shot dead and eight were injured. This shooting incident later led to the Jeju 4.3 Incident. The Jeju chapter of the South Korean Labour Party began to mount a systematic opposition against the police and led a general strike on March 10, 1947. The US military government acknowledged the seriousness of the situation and sent a team to investigate the incident. But the investigation team took a strong partisan position by placing more blame on the ‘instigation of South Korean Labour Party’ than on the ‘Police Firing’. Members of Seobug Cheongnyeondan (the Seobug Young Men’s Association), a far right wing anti-communist organization and the Support Police were sent to Jeju from the inland and began to arrest the leaders of the strike. Terrorism and torture ensued. The South Korean Labour Party began an armed uprising from April 3, 1948, which the government repressed with armed attacks on the movement till September 21, 1954. The number of the estimated victims is between 25,000 ~ 30,000. See The National Committee for Investigation of the Truth about the Jeju April 3\textsuperscript{rd} Incident, \textit{Jeju 4.3 Incident Investigation Report}, (Jeju 4.3 Peace Foundation, 2003), 647-648, 651-652. retrieved via Internet, 16\textsuperscript{th} December 2017, http://www.jeju43peace.or.kr/report_eng.pdf
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Anti-communist laws became a useful political tool for dictators to maintain political power. By means of the ‘National Security Law’, those who opposed government policy were named as communists and outlawed. “Due to the anti-communist ideology of South Korean society, which has not allowed opposite opinions against government, the civil society of South Korean has not been able to have any opportunity of social discussion to make consensus among several sectors.” Nearly thirty years of military dictatorship, starting from Park Chung-hee to Roh Tae-woo (1961-1992), “totally limited the autonomy of civil society and intensified the political monopoly by political elites.” The Vietnam War, for example, provided the Park Chung-hee regime with a good opportunity to control and monitor people by anti-communist ideology. “One of the significant consequences of this long-term involvement (in the Vietnam War) was the reinforcement of the unthinking acceptance of anticommunism among the populace, exposed as it was to mass mobilization and ideological propaganda.”

In another example, Chun Doo-hwan and his associates distorted the facts about the Gwangju citizens’ upraising on May 18, 1980 by describing it as a riot ordered by the communist North Korea for their own political interests.

Chun Doo-hwan, Noh Tae-woo and their followers (‘The New Military Group’) led

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22 National Archives of Korea [Korean], retrieved via Internet, 28th November 2017. http://contents.archives.go.kr/next/search/listSubjectDescription.do?id=003333


26 President Park Chung-hee was assassinated on October 26, 1979. Civic demands for democracy which were completely ignored under Park’s regime multiplied after his assassination. Politically motivated army officers, such as General Chun Doo-hwan and some other followers took political power in the military coup d'état on December 12, 1979.
distortion on the democratic movement of the 5.18 Gwangju citizens’ upraising. … The New Military Group intentionally spread the risk of invasion of North Korea, made a national security crisis and defined the 5.18 Gwangju citizens’ upraising as a riot caused by communists in order to seize political power and finally linked the 5.18 Gwangju citizens’ upraising with rebellion conspiracy of Kim Dae-jung in order to remove their political opponents and rivals.27

Gwangju was totally isolated because of inaccurate news in the mass media, and the Gwangju citizens’ upraising was brutally repressed. Finally, the escalating military tension between North and South Korea at the time of elections also became a regular strategy adopted by the conservative party in order to secure their political interests.28 Anti-communist ideology was a useful instrument, not only to monitor and discipline people but also to serve the political interests of the regimes of dictators.

2.4. Military Culture: Violence and the Internalizing Hierarchical Structures

Most men in South Korea must enlist in compulsory military service for a certain period of time. The military culture has long been very strict. “They have four experiences; an experience of uniform and hierarchical culture, an experience of accepting division between North and South Korea, an experience of male chauvinism, an experience of physical violence and pain.”29 In fact, the military culture of Korea was permeated with institutional violence. Human dignity and rights were constantly ignored. Military service has played a


28 For example, Korean Air Flight 858, with 115 passengers on board and bound for Seoul from Abu Dhabi, disappeared off the radar over the Indian Ocean off Myanmar on November 29, 1987. This was the period of campaign for the presidential election. The Korean Agency for National Security Planning announced that the flight had exploded mid-air due to explosive planted in the cabin of the plane by a North Korean agent. The bombing was used for the presidential election by the ruling conservative party in order to stir public opinion in its favour. See the Hankyoreh English Edition (News Paper), July 12, 2007. retrieved via Internet, 30th November 2017, http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_national/222043.html

29 Kwon Hyeok-bum, Yeoseongjiuui, Namjarul Sallinda (Feminism Saves Men), (Seoul:Tiohanauimunhwoa, 2006), 184.
role in remoulding Korean men to learn a uniform and hierarchical culture, to learn how to accept and endure institutional violence and how to use violence towards others, especially those in lower ranks, through experiencing physical violence and pain. Korean men also learn collective responsibility and ethos of sacrifice of minority for the majority which justify institutional violence and sacrifice of the individual in the military service. They learn to carry out orders without thinking or questioning. Diversity and creativity are considered unnecessary in the army. Under these circumstances, soldiers internalize absolute obedience to and self-sacrifice for the army organization and the nation. They also come to regard the North Korean army as the main enemy of South Korea by experiencing the division between the two Koreas. Such a military confrontation between North and South has created anxiety and tension and allows more hierarchical control.

The Korean problem is that the military culture of violence is not to be found only in the army but throughout our society and culture. It is reflected in patriarchal culture and strict discipline within the family, corporal punishment in school, hierarchical structures of decision and even hierarchical rank among women. “If children learn that abuse, punishment, and violence are ways to impose authority and command respect, they will reproduce that behaviour and the result will be a violent society.”30 Thus, the cultural violence engendered by the military culture produces even more violence.

2.5. Fascism: An Inflexible Culture

2.5.1. Making People of the State

Before the Choson Dynasty was annexed by Japan (1910), some intellectuals tended to regard the Samurai Spirit which underlay Japanese militarism as a means to modernize the Choson Dynasty. A pro-Japanese intellectual, Choi Seok-ha described the Samurai Spirit as Japanese...
patriotism. For Japan, “it is not the nation that exists for the sake of the individual, but it is the individual that exists for the sake of the nation. This is Japanese patriotism for the sake of the nation.” With this Japanese influence, “during the first decade of the twentieth century, such dutiful members of the nation acquired a new name, kungmin, meaning, literally, ‘people of the state’”

Park Chung-hee, one of the leading officers of the Japanese imperial army who won political power by a coup d’etat on May 16, 1961, became president of South Korea and succeeded to the “historical legacy of imagining modernity primarily as military and economic superiority.” Park’s regime strongly emphasized anti-communist ideology as central to national identity and pursued an economic development policy in the military form of dictatorship because he seized political power by the coup d’etat and lacked justification for it. He amended the constitution to allow a third term of presidency on October 1969 and declared the Yushin constitution on December 27, 1972 that legitimated his long-term regime.

Park Chung-hee drove an economic development plan from 1962 in order to catch up with developed countries. He proclaimed ‘The Charter of National Education’ on 5 December 1968. The charter begins with the first sentence; “We have been born into this land, charged with the historic mission of regenerating the nation.” Students during his regime had to memorize it. Secondary school students also learned allegiance to the nation and sacrificed themselves for it. They gathered in the school grounds for patriotic assemblies on Monday mornings. These assemblies included rites such as saluting, pledging allegiance to the national flag, singing the national anthem and paying a silent tribute to patriotic martyrs.

31 Park Noja, Nanun Pongryeokui Sekirul Kobalhanda (I accuse of the time of violence) (Inmulgwa Sasangsa, 2005), 331.

32 Moon Seungsook, 21.

33 Ibid., 20.

34 Moon Seungsook defines the model of Park Chung-hee’s modernity as ‘militarized modernity’. See 23-24.
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Through these processes, Koreans learned they were a part of the state and became *kungmin*.

A scholar, Kwon Hyeok-bum insisted that ‘state-centred masculinity’ standardized Korean men through a totalitarian group culture. He also explained how South Korean society embraced state fascism.

South Korean society could not internalize the important values of equality and freedom without citizenship as the main agent of modernity. This social situation made the South Korean society state-centred. In particular, the state fascism of the South Korean society was enforced more after 1960s by the national economic modernization policy in order to catch up with developed countries and military security policy under the situation of the Cold War of division between North and South Korea.

But the state-centred identity of Koreans became weakened in the late 1980s, as was shown by the democratic uprising of June 10 to 29, 1987. “The alliance among various sectors of civil society succeeded in obtaining a concession from the regime for a direct presidential election.” This meant that the political power of the people had grown enough to demand a democratic system of government. “The authoritarian regimes had stifled political freedom in order to achieve economic development. But some changes of the socio-economic structure caused by industrialization began to weaken the foundation of political power of the authoritarian government.” These changes finally began to be evident in the late 1980s.

### 2.5.2. State Controlled Economic Development: Making a Male Dominant Culture

To build a strong military defence and to develop industrial economy were the two main

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38. Park Kwagn-joo, 63.
goals of his policy in the presence of the threats from communist North Korea. For this purpose, Koreans first had to become obedient to the state, accepting the institutionalized violence of the nation and sacrificing themselves for the nation. Korean men in particular were forced to remould themselves to accept the violence and hierarchical culture in military service. As was mentioned in Chapter One, Park Chung-hee connected military service to development of the heavy and chemical industries giving advantage to those who completed military service. Koreans were forced to obey and sacrifice themselves in their work places. “Corporate culture in major business firms was characterized by rigid hierarchy based on rank, the command mode of one-way communication, and a collective ethos used to justify individual sacrifice.” 39 Through the process of industrialization, Korean men were integrated in the labour market and they dominated the skilled workforce. “In the process of rapid industrialization, emergent urban middle-class families adopted the normative gender division of labour.” 40 On the one hand, Korean men were able to take the central role of family provider, which was regarded as the core of masculinity and privileged status in the family, by the monopolization of the labour market of skilled workers. On the other hand, women were marginalized in the workforce and they were forced to be obedient to their husbands and to confine their role to care for the family.

This social environment is now and Korean men are being excluding from their workplaces. This new experience of unemployment has led them to face the crisis of the loss of their identity as breadwinner and their sense of belonging to their family and society. It has been difficult for Korean men to face these crises and finally to adapt themselves to the changed environment. Because Korean culture has been rigid and given men a privileged place in their culture for a long time, change was foreign to them. In their culture of rigidity they have resisted change and the challenge to adapt themselves to the changed environment. But now is the time to adjust themselves to a new environment and to find an answer to the questions of who I am and of who I belong to.

39 Moon Seungsook, 42.

40 Ibid., p. 65
2.6. An Anthropological Understanding of Koreans and Their Hope

2.6.1. The Human Body and Cultural Rigidity

I have discussed above of the elements of the rigid culture Koreans have experienced. Now I will summarize how Korean men have been influenced by it. First, under the political domination of an ideological anti-communist culture, akin to McCarthyism\(^\text{41}\) in the USA, many Korean people at that period lost their voice, power and position. The previously peaceful Korean society was suddenly filled with paralysing fear of Fascism. This anti-communist ideology has driven Korean society into collective division and mistrust.

Second, cultural rigidity has deprived Koreans of any sense of freedom and of responsibility for their lives. The sense of freedom and responsibility is important for a person to mature and for the nation to enable people to live together freely and autonomously. “Every human being looks to the future of fulfilment, especially in exercising personal acts of freedom and responsibility.”\(^\text{42}\) A hierarchical and violent culture has forced people to conform to authoritarian control and to become subjects of dishonest and corrupt power.

Third, cultural rigidity has forced many Koreans to live functional roles rather than to share their love and warmth with others in their relationships. The result is that they have become insensitive persons who do not reflect on their lives or connect with others in friendship or in suffering. Many Korean men have not learned to experience their role of fatherhood but have been satisfied with exercising the authority of the breadwinner in their family by providing economic support to their family. Some political leaders have confused strong leadership with political power. Such leaders lacked empathy with the result that they were ignorant of the suffering of the powerless.

\(^{41}\) A vociferous campaign against alleged communists in the US government and other institutions carried out under Senator Joseph McCarthy in the period 1950–54.

The human body remembers all kinds of experiences, including oppression. “The body seems to be a kind of warehouse in which all our experiences—the whole of our lives—are recorded.”43 Our behaviour is closely related to what we experience. “The body is the place where many contemporary social and psychological processes are articulated.”44 Ultimately, in such oppressive cultural circumstances, many Koreans lost their freedom of mind and spirit and autonomy. They have been deprived of any understanding of the possibility of personal or cultural transformation or any hope of freedom. They are characterized by despair for their future and for the future of their sons and daughters.

2.6.2. The Body as Social

Our experience and relationships are embodied in our human body. There is a social structure and history in the human body that underpin who we are. “The body shapes human existence as relational and social.”45 The oppressive circumstances have been internalized in Koreans and they have contributed to malformed ‘social body’. Consequently, there has been cultural, societal and historical malformation in the Korean ‘social body’. “The social body constrains the way the physical body is perceived. …that realization in large measure hinges upon cultural perceptions and social (political, economic, technological) responses (affirmation or rejection or indifference) to the physical body.”46 This understanding of Koreans as members of a ‘social body’ formed by the oppressive circumstances has acted as a censor of their freedom, responsibility and autonomy. Because of cultural rigidity Koreans have conformed to repressive cultures and systems. If they did not, they had to suffer many disadvantages. This, however, is not the end of the story. “When our body is perceived sensitively, it has a

45 Copeland, S., 2.
46 Ibid., 8.
voice of its own which cannot be ignored. … it can become our voice as part of society”⁴⁷
These unjust circumstances have led them to ask questions about what it means to be a human being. Some people have resisted the oppressive situation and have been penalized for their protest. But they continued to resist the oppression and continued to question what human existence means under the oppressive circumstances they experienced.

Just as Yeong-hye killed herself meaninglessly, Korean men have regarded suffering as meaningless. But suffering and death are not meaningless. Human beings can be transformed. Koreans’ awareness that the ‘social body’ has been formed by the historical and cultural influences is the beginning of their transformation. This Korean ‘social body’ should grow into a relational being and finally into a spiritual being, because to be a ‘social body’ is to be a relational human being. Korean men need to be open to more authentic human relationships. They also need the courage and understanding of their own selfhood to move from being an oppressed social body, which has experienced adversity and oppressive circumstances of distorted Confucianism, anti-communist culture, dictatorship and state centred fascism, to an integrated and relational body-self.

2.7. Conclusion

Confucianism has influenced Koreans’ way of living and thinking over centuries. In particular a distorted understanding of Samgang Oryun led to the development of a hierarchical culture. Also influential for Koreans were the Japanese colonial rule and the division of the Korean Peninsula due to the Cold War. Especially, anti-communist policy led to division and conflict in South Korean society. Those who had political power did not hesitate to appeal to it to commit violence against their political opponents. In this situation, it was through military service that Korean men learned to sacrifice themselves for the nation by accepting institutionalized violence and a hierarchical culture and relationships. Through

⁴⁷ Moltmann-Wendel, E. 3-4.
the process of military service, dutiful members were categorized as *kungmin*, ‘people of the state’. Dictators mobilized them to serve economic development. In order to survive Koreans became accustomed to define themselves by functional roles rather than to express themselves freely and warmly to others in their relationships. They lost any understanding of the possibility of personal and cultural transformation and any hope of freedom.
3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the historical, cultural and political influences of the formation of Korean men. They were unable to live autonomous and self-directed lives because of their cultural rigidity and unresolved shame or self-doubt. Therefore, these men had not been able to develop their authentic adult selves and were without inner directedness in situations of crisis such as dismissal. In this chapter, I will discuss the developmental aspects of the formation of Korean men from both Confucian and Western perspectives. Especially, I will discuss what aspects of Korean culture have prevented middle adult male Koreans from developing their authentic adult selves in relationship and how these cultural aspects have affected their formation. I will also discuss the midlife task of individuation which if it is undertaken will enable them to develop their inner self and gain a balance between the midlife polarities.

3.2. Korean Culture and the Task of Individuation

3.2.1. Individuation

According to the Analects of Confucius, age forty is Bulhok (四十而不惑). This means that men have entered into a stable life cycle that does not cause confusion between their own self and their male identity. This Confucian understanding is similar to the term, ‘individuation’, a term coined by C. G. Jung and Western developmental psychologists such as Daniel Levinson to commonly describe the experience through which a man becomes more uniquely individual. “Acquiring a clearer and fuller identity of his own, he becomes better able to utilize his inner resources and pursue his own aims. He generates new levels of awareness, meaning and understanding.”

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1 For my understanding of the task of individuation I have drawn on the research of Goldbrunner: especially J.Goldbrunner, Holiness is Wholeness and Other Essays (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964). I have also used secondary sources such as Carroll, L. P. and Dyckman, K. M., Chaos or Creation (New York/ Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1986).

without pain but usually through some experience of ‘identity crisis’\(^3\). This inner awareness of self and identity is particularly important for Korean men, because the rigid culture of Korea has prevented them from developing their authentic self and relationships with others. From now on, I will discuss how Korean culture has influenced the psychological formation of middle adult males and made it hard for them to integrate the middle adult challenges to develop their lives.

### 3.2.2. Importance of Social Position

One of the reasons why middle adult male Koreans have an understanding of their inner self has something to do with the culture, which places great importance on men’s social position. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Korean society has been influenced by authoritarian leaders and hierarchical culture. Authoritarianism means to accept the belief that there are higher and lower levels of authority, and authoritarianism forces people to accept or respect higher authority and lower status levels without question. The most important principle in the military organizations and even corporate organizations is the dominance of superiors and the obedience of inferiors. To have a higher position is to have the right to demand an authoritarian relationship from subordinates. Thus, many Koreans, both men and women, tend to obey and conform to the orders of those in higher positions. But they tend to look down on and ignore the opinions of people in lower positions. Some Koreans are subservient to those who are in higher positions than themselves and cruel to those who are inferior to them.

The question of why it is hard for middle adult male Koreans to live their own life, is closely related with the question of their understanding of their own selves. Only when they address the question of their identity can they live their own life according to their desires and hopes. Unfortunately Korean culture has not allowed asking such questions of identity, of hopes for the future or about their place in society, because in Korean culture their social position determines the response. Rather, they have been taught to be more accepting of their social

position rather than their identity.

We, Koreans cannot ask question of ‘who I am’ properly, because we have lived in a circumstance which ‘I’ does not exist. When I was adolescent I used to ask similar question about ‘I’. But I realized that the question was not about ‘I’ but about ‘my position’. Thus I forget to ask question about ‘I’ when I am getting older and get a higher position.4

People carry out their tasks in various employment positions and in their social relationships. Unfortunately, under the hierarchical culture where lower status are subordinate and as such they are often regarded nothing, Koreans have lived the competitive lives since their childhood in order to succeed in life by achieving higher positions. As a result, they become more interested in social positions than ‘I’ in their lives.

3.2.3. The Person as the Role and the Person in the Role

The reason why middle adult male Koreans cannot live their own life can be interpreted from the concept of ‘persona’ of Carl Jung.5 The ego is distinct from the Self. The ego is the centre of the conscious personality and the Self is the centre of the total personality, including the conscious and unconscious aspects.6 Ego develops from childhood with the growth of consciousness. The external environment, especially the expectations of others, such as parents, teachers, church and peers greatly affects the development of the ego.7 In the first half of life,

one of the tasks of this primary ego development consists in establishing what Jung calls a persona, a sort of public image or mask by which one relates to the outer world, the outward face of the psyche or personality. … The use of our persona, then, is a necessary part of the ego’s ability to cope with life.8

However, our persona is “a collection of masks that others want, simply living a ‘role,’ or a

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4 Jeon Ingwon, Namjaui Tansaeng (Emerging Man) (Purunsoup, 2003), 15. [Korean]
5 In this section I draw on the writings of Goldbrunner and Carroll & Dyckman for my Jungian references.
6 Ibid., 29-30.
7 Ibid., 29.
8 Ibid., 30.
series of roles. ... While the persona is necessary for survival, we risk becoming too identified with our own or others’ expectations of who we are.\(^9\) That is, we cannot have a real sense of who we are only with our persona. This understanding has not been part of the Korean formation of persons.

In Korean culture, people are not able to call others, who are older or higher in position, by their personal name, but rather by the name of their relationship, occupation or social status, such as father, elder brother, teacher, sergeant and so on. In this culture, it is hard for them to have a sense of self apart from their role. Moreover, they tend to be confused between the person in the roles given by the name of their relationship, occupation and social status and the person as the roles. They have had tendency to identify their own self with the roles of the name of their relationship, occupation and social status.

Jeon Ingwon reflects on the social environment of Korean’s over-identification with persona, a social role in Namjaui Tansaeng.

> The problem is to mistake their social role as the real self, not the persona or mask. Therefore, it is hard for Koreans to ask even proper question of ‘who am I?’ ... From this viewpoint, Koreans’ tendency to be a ‘good person’ has a problem in itself, because good people think of themselves as the role of good daughter, son, mother, father, wife and husband without knowing that they wear the masks.\(^{10}\)

Consequently, Koreans tend to over-identify themselves with their roles of good son, father, teacher, etc. This is not healthy, because the persona and their own self cannot be same. Problems arise when they confront the division between their masks and their own self. As they are getting older, they realize that the masks they have worn do not function well in their close relationships such as their family relationship. This is the time that they ask a serious question of ‘who am I?’

\(^9\) Ibid., 31.

\(^{10}\) Jeon Ingwon, 16.
3.2.4. The Socialized Consciousness

The difficulty of Koreans in living their own life can be interpreted from the view point of development of consciousness. Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey describe the development of adult consciousness in three stages: the socialized mind, self-authoring mind, and self-transforming mind in Immunity to Change. Those people whose meaning-making is that of the socialized mind have not developed their own authentic self: “we are shaped by the definitions and expectations of our personal environments.” They have learned to conform to the expectations of their social group: “our self coheres by its alignment with, and loyalty to, that with which it identifies.” Thus, they limit their thoughts and opinions to those of their leaders. They follow their expectations, beliefs and values. They have a narrow and unexamined understanding of their own personal accountability or responsibility for their own decisions. They measure their fidelity and loyalty by their ability to function effectively within the norms and expectations set by the authorities who set the level of obedience and accountability. Socialised selves do not understand the idea of dialogue, because while dialogue requires a person to understand their own thoughts, beliefs and convictions, they do not have their own opinions and ideas. Rather, within the socialized consciousness any different or personal ideas are seen as a threat to the group they belong to. Therefore, the decision of the group is not made by debating about diverse opinions but by conforming their opinions to those of the leader of the group. Any debate or expression of diverse of personal convictions is disloyal and it may cause conflict. But “it is through conflict and sometimes only through conflict that we learn what our ends and purposes are.” Conflict can generate growth in personal consciousness and therefore independence or a personal self.

11 There is great deal of research into the nature of consciousness. However, the focus in this thesis draws on the research of Kegan, R. and Lahey, L. L. Immunity to Change (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press, 2009).
12 Ibid., 16.
13 Ibid., 17.
14 Ibid.
When adults are limited to supporting the convictions of the ‘established’ leader or of the socialized group they have little understanding of their own inner world. In his text *In Over Our Heads* Robert Kegan explains adult mental development which is reduced to conformity as psychological dependence. Such a restricted worldview removes personal responsibility and places it on “An infallible guide outside ourselves, in which we comfortably invest authority and to which authority we pledge loyalty, fidelity, and faith—this is the essence of psychological dependence.”¹⁶ Where communities are characterized by authoritarian leaders and systems, then personal responsibility is absent.

In Korea, especially during the regimes of military dictatorship, the State exercised the oppressive role of leadership. In those times, Korean males were reduced to playing what might be described as a ‘sacrificial role’¹⁷ in the context of State-controlled economic development. Sacrificing themselves for the State, in their conformity to the authorities, Korean males thought they were being loyal. However, “when obedience concentrates itself completely on a higher and guiding ‘other’, it becomes blind, that is, blind to the world.”¹⁸ Blind obedience was expected of loyal Korean people throughout those authoritarian eras. They became subservient. They thought that they were loyal to the State in their obedience but they were failing the next generations.¹⁹

Because Koreans were sacrificing everything for the economic development, functional roles rather than affective relationships were imposed in this period. However, Koreans’ sacrifice to the State was not the sacrifice of a genuine ‘self’ but a forced sacrifice imposed by their leaders and the societal expectations of conformity. This was because people formed by a

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¹⁷ One of the commonly used expressions for encouraging sacrifice for the State was “Sacrifice of the minority for the majority!”


¹⁹ As was mentioned in Chapter Two, this is an example of ‘banality of evil’.
socialized consciousness over-identified themselves with the State. Thus, their sacrifice for
the State was an ideology not an expression of the wisdom of life. In this restricted social
environment, the emotional adult development of Korean males was minimal.

The development of intimate relationship is a fundamental task of adulthood. But it is hard
for Koreans to be aware of their own relational self in the rigid and inflexible Korean society,
because they tend to over-identify themselves with the norms of society by their conformity
to the authorities. Deprived of their authentic self, they cannot find their identity in an
intimate relationship. When they can develop their consciousness from the socialized
consciousness to ‘self-authoring’ consciousness and have a sense of who they are, then they
can develop intimate relationships.\(^{20}\)

### 3.3. Midlife Individuation of Male Koreans

Generally speaking, before the age of forty, people tend not to follow their own inner
authority, but they follow the social expectations which tradition and culture have generated
and they neglect or suppress their inner self. However this leads to men’s middle adult sense
of failure and despair “We cannot live the afternoon of life according to the programme of
life’s morning—for what was great in the morning will be little at evening have become a
lie.”\(^{21}\) By conforming to social expectations, and not listening to their inner selves such men
become one-sided and unbalanced. They have been faithful to their social positions and roles
with which they have identified themselves. However, midlife men experience several
aspects of loss in their lives: loss of health, loss of confidence, fear of others’ criticism and
fear of difficulty in maintaining their position in society. These experiences of loss and fear
are, described as midlife crises, and raise such questions as ‘Who am I?’ and ‘To whom do I
belong?’ While they are answering the questions, they begin to realize that the roles, social

\(^{20}\) See Kegan, 1994, Chapter One.

status and occupation do not mean their own self but mean social responsibility and power. 
The process of finding the self in middle adulthood is the task of ‘individuation’.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, Koreans have been unable to live autonomous and self-
directed lives because of the cultural rigidity. They are confused with false self, formed by 
social norms, or they identify themselves with their roles, social status and occupation. They 
are psychologically immature. They regard the economic support for the family as the most 
important expression of their love for the family. They think that their authority of 
breadwinner comes from their ability to provide for their family. When they lose their job, 
they think that their identity and therefore their authority as breadwinner has gone. Thus, 
those men who were dismissed from their workplaces experience the feelings of loss of their 
power and authority and the conflicts that follow in their family. These conflicts raise a 
question within them, “Who am I?” and “To whom do I belong?” Unfortunately, some of 
them lose their meaning for life and they abandon their family or commit suicide. However, 
they are not defined by their role and job. They are more than their role and jobs. Their 
relationships are more important than their work identity. Thus, it is important to ask a 
question, “Who am I?” The closer they are to their authentic self the deeper can they develop 
their relationships with others. These crises of identity and relationship are midlife issues. 
The process of finding their own self is the task for middle adult male Koreans.

**3.3.1. The Task of Gaining a Balance between Polarities of Life**

When men face a crisis in their lives, it is not so much a matter of physical issues as it is of 
the faulty choices they make in terms of polarities in life, such as young/old, masculine/
feminine, destruction/creation and attachment/separateness. Thus, they tend to prefer 
young to old, and masculine to feminine, and regard destruction and separateness as negatives. This tendency results in one-sided and unbalanced lives. Daniel Levinson 
emphasizes the importance of achieving a balance between these midlife polarities if a man is

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22 Levinson, D., 243-244
to become his own person in middle adulthood. “Middle adulthood may be the most loving and creative season in the life cycle. They are less tyrannized by the ambitions, instinctual drives and illusions of youth. They are more deeply attached to other and yet more separate, more centred in the self.” In this sense, we are invited to work towards living a freer, and authentic life by working through the midlife polarities.

3.3.1.1. Young/Old Polarity

Levinson emphasizes the gaining the balance between ‘young/old’ polarity as the major task for individuation. Before age forty, people commit themselves to the outer world of work and relationships and try to conform to the social and cultural expectations in order to succeed in life. In this period, they naturally regard physical health, which is a major aspect of youth, important. They associate life and vitality with the young, and death and diminishment with the old, and they prefer to be young rather than old. The problem is that nobody can overcome the experience of getting older. Rather, people experience the feeling of loss through age. In midlife, people begin to experience the weakness of physical health and the departure of their children for their independent life and marriage and they meet sickness and death in the lives of their relatives and friends. These feelings of loss in midlife “often bring one face to face with the realization of mortality and with it a fear of approaching death.” Then, people realize that they cannot escape from getting older. It is natural to get older. Therefore, the midlife challenge is to see ‘young’ and ‘old’ from different perspectives.

The midlife terms ‘young/old’ do not mean specific age levels. We are both young and old at

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23 Ibid., 243-244.
24 Ibid., 209.
every stage of life in terms of biology, psychology and capacity for relationships.\textsuperscript{26} ‘Young’ represents possibility, energy and potential and ‘old’ completion, stability and wisdom. We do not have to prefer either young or old. We need both. This means that we need to achieve a balance between the two. “A man must give up certain of his former youthful qualities—some with regret, some with relief or satisfaction—while retaining and transforming other qualities that he can integrate into his new life.”\textsuperscript{27} We cannot easily achieve this attitude of life.

Some people who worked hard in the past realize that their past skills and careers do not necessarily provide them with a successful future. Some other people lose their jobs and face the feeling of loss. In particular, Korean workers have been exposed to the loss of employment since the 1997 Global Financial Crisis. They have been forced into ‘voluntary early retirement’ in their age of forties. These days, an expression like an ‘Age Forties Syndrome’ is familiar. Some people even compare the dismissed workers who lose their confidence to the experience of sexual impotence: a ‘Man with drooping Head’. Therefore, to get older means to be on the way to becoming useless. In the worst cases, this devaluing of self frequently results in the breakdown of personal and family relationships and suicide.\textsuperscript{28} They see no hope or sense of value for their existence. However, this is a crucial turning point through which they can realize their real identity and sense of belonging and dealing with relationships. To get older is not meaningless. The real task of middle adult Korean males is to achieve a balance young and old polarity. They may change to another job or they may choose a completely different type of work. But sometimes, or often these days, they may not find any opportunity to find a job. In this case, it may be a good idea for them to invest in other aspects of life such as family or leisure to which they have not previously committed themselves. To begin a new work needs a vitality of youth. But the wisdom of age is also necessary to enrich life. These two poles do not have to be separated but should be balanced

\textsuperscript{26} Levinson, D., 209.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 210.

\textsuperscript{28} See 1.2.1 Massive Dismissal in Motor Industry.
within us and society. Men can be freed from the pressure of having the role of breadwinner in their family. They can also take opportunities to mix with young people to assist them by offering them wisdom and experiences of their own so that the young people can begin to understand their own challenges and manage their own life projects.

3.3.1.2. Masculine/Feminine Polarity

There are various understandings of gender in terms of biological, social and psychological meanings of gender. But in most cultures, people have been required to split gender roles: men are masculine and women are feminine. In this cultural circumstance, masculinity has been regarded “physically strong, instrumental, goal-oriented, focusing on achievement, lacking in emotional and interpersonal skills, and relating to women in a dominant manner”, whereas femininity lacking in bodily strength, relational, caring and emotional. Moreover, the sexual dualism which separates spirit from body, identifies spirit with male and body with female and gives a hierarchical control of male over female has made “the systematic subordination of women to men.” This cultural expectation on split gender role and the sexual dualism has led men to refuse or suppress femininity in them and society.

The men who have been formed under Korean hierarchical cultures are not relational. There are some reasons. Firstly, men easily tend to associate power with masculinity and weakness with femininity. They do not want any sign of weakness in them to be revealed. The way of defending weakness is to be rigid and inflexible. Perhaps the extreme appearance of the excessive form of masculinity to femininity can be seen in the authoritarian personality. In

29 This is a changing issue because of the movement towards understanding the lesbian / gay / bisexual, intersexual and transsexual identities that are now under discussion in society.

30 Ibid., 229.


32 Ibid., 22.

33 Levinson, D., 232.
this sense, those who have an authoritarian personality cannot develop intimate relationships with others. People must allow themselves to be vulnerable in order to develop intimate relationships. Secondly, men who understand masculinity as one of independence seem “to feel ashamed when they feel intimate and attached,” because the feeling of intimacy and attachment means “the failure to live up the inner ideal” of being a hero, strong and self-governing as men. Until they can accept loss and failure in their lives, that shame isolates them from the group to which they belong. This is another reason why men have difficulty in being relational. Thirdly, men regard thinking as masculine and feeling as feminine and men are encouraged to carry out their tasks “in a highly impersonal way”. They are “not permitted feelings that involve dependency, intimacy, grief, sensuality, vulnerability. Such feelings are associated with childishness and femininity.” Where there is no feeling shared there is no intimate relationship.

Lastly, a functional role rather than a relational role, such as a responsible father and husband, is regarded as important in the family relationship. This functional role in women is one of being maternal or sexual. Women who are expected to be a devoted mother and wife and who have a maternal role should not be interested in sexual acts. Women who are the objects of sexual conquest for the men’s sexual role have a different kind of role. The most influential experience of masculine gender socialization is the compulsory military service which most Korean men have experienced. They are educated to be proud of men and to have superiority to women. “Men are a part of ‘State-Military Service-Male’ network. Only men are honoured to carry out the noble task of protecting the State. Men who endure arduous military training are superior to women who cannot experience the military service.”

34 Nelson, J., 71.
36 Ibid., 35.
37 Levinson, D., 233.
38 Ibid., 234-235.
Moreover, they learn hierarchical military culture in which power is decided by rank, and the rank defines the person. This understanding of power has an aspect of violence and creates a power-oriented person, a form of authoritarian identity. Therefore, Korea men have been culturally deprived of the opportunity to be aware of the feminine polarity in their psyches from their childhood to early adulthood.

The contemporary culture of Korea is also strongly influenced by military culture where masculinity is emphasized. People understand all organization as military structure. Many companies give preference to former military officers when selecting new employees. The leaders of organizations such as corporates and schools prefer completing hard tasks by fair means or foul. It is hard for middle adult Korean males to live their own lives in this context. “In a society where manliness is excessively emphasized, it may be inevitable that human duties rather than rights are emphasized and ultimately people are forced to live a different life from that of their desires and hopes.” Thus, men learn to repress their desires and hopes and to follow social expectations as duties. Therefore, they are isolated from their own inner world. This makes it hard for them to develop intimate relationships with others, men or women.

However, “In the language of Jung, all human persons are androgynous, containing within themselves the fullness of both femininity and masculinity, having the capacity for the best traits of each gender.” Femininity is not unnecessary part of male personality. Men should embrace feminine side of personality. Levinson discusses the femininity that men need to embrace in order to be connected with others.

To be feminine is to lack bodily strength and stamina, to be more concerned with feeling than with thought. … it is the feminine in a man that leads him to be soft and dependent,

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40 Ibid., 166-167.
41 Son Soongyoung, “Gieobgwa Namseong” (Corporation and Men), Ibid., 211.
to accept second best rather than fight for the top. It is feminine of him to experience great depth of feeling, to be ‘sensitive’, submissive, aesthetic.\(^{43}\)

For this, men need to “allow the feminine to play a ‘larger and freer part’ in their lives; to develop their sensitivity and to be more in touch with their capacity to relate.”\(^{44}\) Therefore, when men embrace the feminine side in themselves, they can be more relational. This is also a task for middle adult Korean males for their relational connectedness.

### 3.3.1.3. Destruction/Creation Polarity

The essential question in dealing with the polarity of destruction/creation is “How do I deal creatively with hurts I have caused and that others have caused me.”\(^{45}\) I think that this question is about ways we relate and exercise power. “To have the power to do great good, we must bear the burden of knowing that we will cause some harm- and in the end, perhaps, more harm than good.”\(^{46}\) We may hurt someone unintentionally. the problem of power is when we exercise it without consciousness of the destructive capacities that we have. This question has to do with what kind of person we want to be between a hard and difficult person and an easy and soft person. A hard and difficult person can be rigid and inflexible in relationships.

It is unfortunate that Korean culture is hierarchical and some old people and some of those who have power tend to exercise their power over others. They are not generous to others but rigid and inflexible in relationships. Personally, I have experienced many stubborn and difficult adults since childhood. I, sometimes, am also immature when I deal with a person of authority.\(^{47}\) On the contrary, an easy and soft person can be more relational and generative in

\(^{43}\) Levinson, D., 233-234.

\(^{44}\) D’Apice, M., 59.

\(^{45}\) Carroll, P. & Dyckman, K. M., 64

\(^{46}\) Levinson, D., 224.

\(^{47}\) See Appendix 8.
relationships. This person is open to new ideas and “can listen to and learn from others and has not become set in past ways, inflexible or rigid in thought or opinion.”\textsuperscript{48} They are “able to relate intimately with another, to be more concerned now with enriching the lives of others.”\textsuperscript{49} Therefore, it is important for middle adult Korean males to encourage others and be generative in relationships.

### 3.3.1.4. Attachment/Separateness Polarity

In middle adulthood, we feel the need to be separated from the outer world in order to seek the need of our own self and inner desire. The basic questions related with this polarity are; “What do I really want? How do I feel about my life? How shall I live in the future?”\textsuperscript{50} These are the questions of the ‘true self’, not of the ‘false self’ which has been formed by over-identification with social expectation and culture. We need to be more interested in our own self. The more we become our authentic self, the less we are attached to social expectation and the more we have freedom.

In Korean culture, middle adult males are strongly attached to their social identity as providers for the family. This is, in a sense, a heavy burden to them. The more they are attached to the identity of family providers, the more they are attached to their workplaces and the less can they be interested in their inner desires. They need to be persons of their own selves. This is a very important separation for them. “The major developmental task of middle adulthood is to find a better balance between the needs of the self and the needs of society.”\textsuperscript{51} This individuation process is one of the most important developmental tasks for Koreans because they are confused between their social status and role and their sense of their own self.

\textsuperscript{48} D’Apice, M., 69.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 62.
\textsuperscript{50} Levinson, D., 241.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., 242.
3.4. Conclusion: The Middle Adult Korean Male as an Integrated Self with Relational Connectedness

The psychological growth of middle adult Korean males has been greatly influenced by the cultural rigidity. Firstly, they could not ask themselves “who am I?” under the authoritarian culture. Rather their social position which could determine their role and social status was of greatest importance. Secondly, it was hard for them to have their own self, because they tended to over-identify themselves with their persona and their role in their social position. Finally, this rigid culture created socialized rather than self-authoring consciousness. They were dependent on significant leaders and their authority. Consequently, they had to face economic environmental change without forming their authentic self. Loss of employment and the cultural rigidity meant that the middle adult Korean males were confronted by the two important questions: “Who am I?” and “To whom do I belong?” These are midlife developmental questions.

In order to answer these developmental questions middle adult Korean males need to undertake the task of individuation in order to know who they are and who they can choose to become as adults. For this they need to developing their ego and identifying themselves with their persona rather than their masks. In this sense, achieving balance between Young/Old, Masculine/Feminine, Destruction/Creation, and Attachment/Separateness Polarities is also important for middle adult male Koreans. First, they cannot recover youthfulness as they are getting older. But they can develop other qualities of their life and integrate them into their new life. This is the wisdom of age. Second, they need to empathize with others and develop their relationships. To embrace their feminine helps them to be relational. Third, many old Korean men are not generous and easy but difficult and rigid. They often hurt others in their relationships. They need to be conscious of the destructive capacities in them and to try to be more relational and generous in their relationships. Finally, Korean men are strongly attached to their social identity as breadwinners. They need to separate themselves from their social expectations and to seek to discover and develop their own self and their inner desires to become their true selves.
Chapter Four: Developing an Integrated and Relational Spirituality

4.1. Introduction

There are also scars on the blade of grass.

The petals also have scars.

Walking on the grass field with you

When we sit there and see the sunset

The blades of grass which have many scars shake hands.

The petals which have many scars are the most fragrant.

- Jeong Hoseung, “There Are Also Scars On The Blade Of Grass”

By middle adulthood most people have hope for success and happiness in their lives. But when hope is lost then people can fall into the depths of despair. In writing about suffering, Jeong Hoseung, a Korean poet, writes about human hope for a meaningful life. The midlife task is to integrate our life experiences, both positive and negative and to continue to renegotiate relationships with ourselves, others and to think about the question of meaning or purpose for life. This is a spiritual task that confronts all people. It is of particular importance for the contemporary middle adult Korean male.

Spirituality includes all aspects of human lives. It is “what being human is all about”. The spiritual person takes the human condition seriously and tries to integrate all aspects of

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1 A poem of Jeong Hoseung quoted from Gong Jiyoung, Uijanori (Musical Chair Game) (Humanist, 2012), 157.
2 Streeter, C., Foundations of Spirituality (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013), Introduction xvi. While for many people the understanding of religion is found in the call to belong to particular community groups for community worship, prayer or other forms of connectedness to a Higher Cause or Being, spirituality is a more integrative and inclusive way of relationship.
human life including human desires and yearnings as well as negative emotions and experiences. Middle adulthood invites us to move beyond our functional lives, to be in touch with our inner desires and to become more connected to our inner self, to others, to our world and to God or Mystery. Scripture scholar Sandra Schneiders describes spirituality as a lifelong commitment to the human search for meaning and purpose. It is “the experience of consciously trying to integrate one's life in terms, not of isolation and self-absorption, but of self-transcendence, towards the Ultimate Value one perceives.”

This understanding enables the integrative approach that I am taking in the description of relational spirituality in this chapter.

In this chapter, firstly, I will describe a mature adult spirituality. Then I will introduce an example of relational spirituality from Korean tradition and culture. The significance of anger and personal and social shame will be examined in relation to Korean male identity formation. I will also discuss key elements of contemporary relational spirituality. I will discuss what it means to be a male and a spiritual being in the contemporary Korean context. My approach to spirituality in this chapter will be more general and focus on relational aspects. In Chapter Five I will conclude with an understanding of relational spirituality in terms of servant leadership and as a lifelong challenge to self-transformation.

4.2. Spirituality: Mature Adult Spirituality

Our life journey is a journey toward integration, mutuality and maturity of relationships. As people move through the different life periods of emerging adulthood and middle and late adulthood their relationship with their inner self, their adult relationships and their understanding of experience of God or of ‘Ultimacy/ Mystery’ is open to significant changes.

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“An adult self is the pivotal reality on which human development depends. … If we take human development seriously, then we are able to take adulthood seriously.”

The adult self is an integrated and relational self. In *Finding God Again* Shea discusses key elements of mature adult spirituality: mutuality, embodied selfhood, integration of feelings, intimacy and the capacity to take responsibility for our own lives as adults.

### 4.3. A Middle Adult Spirituality: Embodied, Integrated with Appropriate Boundaries

To be an adult self is to be an embodied self. This means that “the body is owned by the self, and the self is attuned to the body. Self and body are united.” However, as I argued in Chapter Two, the oppressive and unjust cultural circumstances in Korea have contributed to a malformed awareness of the male embodied self. Shame and failure have been consequences of such male formation at an early age. In a repressed culture some mature men were able to sublimate the pain into meaningful suffering. They worked to integrate their understanding of their own ‘body-self’. But as they aged many became blind to the oppressive and unjust social structure in which they were formed. In order to adjust to the oppressive and unjust social structure, they conformed unquestioningly to external authority. They had a disconnected ‘body-self’. It is through an embodied and integrated spirituality that adults can continue to develop effective relationships in society.

A fruit of such spiritual development is that emotions are integrated into adult self-awareness. Our emotions tell us who we are. “As a self, I am a subject or center of feelings, weaving together many different strands of relatedness into my identity.” Self-awareness grows and a

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6 The references to Shea’s research in this chapter were taken from two sources:

1. *Finding God Again*
2. *Adulthood, Morality, and the Fully Human*

7 Ibid., 60.

8 Ibid., 61.
sense of our own uniqueness is a consequence. “Once the capacity to feel is gone, then, the person as a unique identity is lost.” Those who cannot recognize their own emotions cannot connect with their inner self, and they find it hard to empathize with others. The importance of positive emotions and of their role for social connection is recognized by developmental researcher Vaillant, “Love is the shortest definition of spirituality” This “spirituality is more about us than me.” It is a relational rather than a simply cognitive way of functioning as an adult.

All our emotions, positive and negative such as grief and affection, but particularly the positive emotions of empathy are important for people to be able to connect with others’ suffering and to develop deep relationships. Under a hierarchical culture Korean men were encouraged to act in functional roles rather than develop relational exchanges with co-workers or with family. Thus, they were not aware of their emotions as they developed. Intimacy was absent and they had few close relationships. They were also poor at expressing their emotions. Rather, under an authoritarian culture, they have tended to repress their fear and anger unconsciously and often in the end projected them violently onto others who are in lower positions, for example, on the wife and children in their family. This violent expression of negative emotions has resulted in the breaking down of family relationships. In short, Korean men have experienced relationship breakdown and isolation because of their lack of empathy and the violent expression of their negative emotions especially anger.

For this reason they need to learn to trust their emotions, to express their emotions authentically and to develop the capacity to empathize with others. It is important for men to deal with the emotion of anger if they are to grow in their spiritual lives.

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9 Ibid.


11 Ibid.
4.3.1. Dealing with Anger

Fear and shame are important human emotions which inform us that we are losing something. “When a special vulnerability or personal weakness is exposed, anger flares as a healthy defensive response.”\(^{12}\) Likewise, anger is another important emotion which compensates for the fear and the shame. However, we should express anger properly. If we express anger appropriately in gentle words and language, then we can protect ourselves and build better relationships with those who hurt us or cause us fear. The problem is that fear and anger have been often repressed and then expressed destructively and violently. When we express anger violently, it hurts and breaks our relationships.

The hierarchical and rigid culture of Korea has not allowed people in general and men in particular to express their anger. The message of anger is that “something is blocking legitimate needs or desires.”\(^{13}\) People who are in hierarchically lower positions have to repress their anger and may project their anger violently on to those who are lower in status than themselves. Korean women and children are always in hierarchically lower positions than males. They are therefore vulnerable to the projections of anger from men. But working-class men are not allowed to express anger in the workplace because their expression of anger is considered as impolite behaviour. Accordingly they repress their anger and repress any conscious awareness of it, looking then for a suitable opportunity to project it on to others, such as their family members.\(^{14}\) But when sons of angry fathers become adults they project their anger in the same way what they experienced from their fathers. This means that anger is transmitted from generation to generation. This vicious cycle of anger is reinforced by the hierarchical culture.

If Koreans want to stop this vicious cycle of anger and develop positive relationships with

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\(^{13}\) D’Apice, M., *Noon to Nightfall*, 87.

others, they need to pay attention to the way they project their anger on to weaker people. They need to pay attention to their negative emotions and the false or shadow self that they repress or may be unaware of. “It is for us now to acknowledge this, to befriend the shadow, accepting it as an essential part of our total personality.”  

Then the emotion of anger will not control us: the self-aware person can control their anger.

To deal with anger is a process of growth. When we deal with anger we may meet the unprotected inner self. This unprotected inner self is the shadow of our personality left undeveloped. The unprotected inner self feels fear and is angry. If we follow the immature way of the unprotected inner self, our behaviour is immature. We need to communicate with the inner self. We can be mature when our inner self grows mature. There is also mutuality between our self and our inner self. If we pay attention to our true and false self, and our inner as well as our outer selves, we can grow in our capacity to deal with anger in mature adult ways.

4.3.2. Social Shame and Male Identity in Korea

Another aspect of men’s struggles with their identity surfaces with the issue of the experience of shame. Generally speaking, men’s identity as breadwinners and economic providers for their families is important in every culture. Where an understanding of their true self is dependent on their social as well as personal identity, the two are connected. For men, “working hard and providing materially for their families is the major way of expressing love.”

Most men believe that it is more important for them to support their family materially than emotionally. The loss of identity for Korean men, in particular, who think that they cannot have authority as father unless they have success as breadwinners, there is a loss of self in their relationships. In order to keep their authority as providers for their families,

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15 D’Apice, M. 50.
16 For such possible ways, see Appendix 8.
they work hard to keep their job so that they can continue to earn money to keep the family together.

As a result, for their identity and success they depend more on the company they work for and on work relationships than on their families. They have been conditioned to regard their developing relationship with their family members as less important than their workplace relationships. But problems arise because if they lose their job they lose their sense of worth and identity in their family. This crisis of loss of the sense of identity in their workplace and the impact of their job-loss on their family leaves them with a crisis of identity and the shame of their failure as breadwinner and as head of their family because their authority has gone.

As mentioned in Chapter One, many workers felt shame when they were dismissed from their workplaces. Behind their shame they experienced deeply the loss of their identity and of the experience of belonging to their workplace and their family. Some men refused to accept their dismissal and protested against the company. They experienced social shaming and violent treatment for this behaviour to accept their situation by the police. For many men, both the suffering of the loss of their job and the violent reactions by the authorities to their resistance brought about post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Another form of violence to the dismissed workers and their family members came from their being called selfish and radical people and communists. This was another form of social shame through which they felt themselves excluded from society. Left with no immediate solution or compensation for their lost jobs and without any redress to their situation of isolation and identity loss, many men experienced deep shame and failure as men. In such dire situations some men simply closed themselves off from others in shame. The consequence of this for many was their choice of the tragic end of suicide – they lost their sense of self-worth and identity. When they experienced themselves as caught in a void of despair suicide was the only way out.
These two different human yearnings for an authentic sense of themselves and of their social and family identity were lost when they lost their job. Shame and the total loss of their sense of selfhood was the consequence.

Although the feeling of shame is a negative emotion, if shame is accepted and integrated through the efforts to rediscover their true self, then people who are suffering can relate with compassion and understanding to others who share the same pain. The acceptance of loss and the integration of shame can open people to intimacy and empathy in their relationships with co-workers who are jobless, friends, lovers, spouses or children. “Spiritually, shame is related to the deepest places of truth in our souls. . . . Shame, in its positive influence, is the caretaker of our worthy selves and identities. When we listen attentively to the voice of our healthy shame, we speak and act from our ‘center’.”  

Through the feeling of shame we can grow in our self-acceptance and become open to others.

4.3.3. The Transformation of Social Shame

We expect respect and honour, “a social measure of our worth” 19 from others. “The economy of social shame is driven by an interminable search for respect and honour.” The social shame is also a social measure of worth. “Our deep desire for respect recruits us to dependence on society’s constant approval. Every society takes advantage of this leverage to compel conformity.” 20 The messages of social shame that men receive when they refuse to conform themselves to conventional expectations of acceptance of their lot are clear: “We will show you how to act here; you cannot survive apart from our approval and protection.” 21 Sometimes, in Korean culture the messages sent to the shamed male take the form of rejection. When people do not fit in they are named as communists, or as defiant males or in

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20 Ibid., 148.
21 Ibid., 149.
other negative terms. Those who reject their failure to conform can “expose the person and threaten expulsion from the group”22. The consequence of this is their loss of place in society. Thus, social shame can often lead men to create ‘false selves’ in order to meet the conditions of social roles and worth in their society.

In order to free themselves from social shame, men need to learn to trust their inner desires so that they can follow what they want for themselves rather than what society expects. Through the process of learning to trust their inner desires, men who have overcome their social shame can grow in “a sense of depth”, “self-esteem” and “autonomy”23. Then, they can begin to discover their own personal goals. Thus, those who exercise their assertive selves can ignore the social shame and find their own purpose and meaning for life.

Sometimes, the experience of social shame has “cultural roots, the hidden assumption and unspoken rules that govern our common life.”24 This makes for a polarizing culture that discriminates against and shames those who refuse to conform. This social shame can be violent in its consequences.

Men who experience such shaming can work together to transform social shame through ways by which they can work together to develop and support alternative groups and communities and develop mutuality in their relationships. Invalidating the destructive forces of social shame requires men “to challenge the way prejudice lives in us and in the groups we belong to.”25 For example, one of the expressions, which I have heard since childhood, is “If you talk too much you are a communist!” This expression was not directed towards criticizing Communists. This derogatory expression was aimed at creating prejudice against

22 Ibid., 150.
any individual who opposed the conventional expectations of their society and contributed towards their exclusion from society. However, the person who refuses to accept the social shame imposed on them has the chance to grow into more mature identity and sense of belonging to authentic communities.

Such integrated and self-aware adults recognize clear boundaries in their relationships. This task takes time, because we also need time to grow in self-awareness. “Relationships are made when the boundaries of selves are respected.” Human beings grow through mutual respect, not through a culturally established hierarchy of relationships. Thus, mutuality can help to transform authoritarianism. This truth is particularly important for contemporary middle adult Korean males.

When boundaries are clear intimacy can grow by sharing openness, understanding and love. Some people identify themselves only with their roles and jobs and they have such a tunnel vision of adult life and rigid boundaries that they live disconnected lives. In contrast, “Intimacy is about empathy, openness, vulnerability, and unconditional love—the four qualities that are the relational power at the heart of any mature spirituality.” These four qualities are “the heart of compassion, and without a living compassion there is no real spirituality.” As described in Chapter Three, only a genuine self, which is not defined by others but has been developed from the integrated self, can be offered to others in intimate relationships. Thus, when midlife males have a genuine self they can grow in intimacy.

28 Ibid., 63.
30 Ibid., 233.
This mature adult spirituality is embodied, integrated, relational and empathic. The awareness of clear boundaries is important. Spiritual growth is the process of human maturity through which we can become more authentic selves in relationship. The human journey towards individuation is a lifelong process of a living spirituality of relational connectedness where people share their relational journey with others throughout their lives. This is particularly important for Korean males who have lived through a culture of self-rejection and oppression.

4.4. Relational Spirituality in Samgang Oryun

In Chapter Two I introduced Samgang Oryun (三綱五倫, Three Guiding Persons of Relationships and Five Principles of Relationships). Even though Samgang Oryun, during the hierarchical period of monarchy and dictatorship, became an ideology which restricted men’s freedom, autonomy and perspective of the people, some aspects of relational spirituality can be recognized in the original meaning of Samgang Oryun. In particular the father-son relationship and mutual family and friendship relationships are foundational to this thesis.

The father-son relationship is derived from Samgang and in Oryun. Samgang mentions bu wee ja gang (父爲子綱).31 Traditionally this has been interpreted to say that the father is the most important person and hierarchically dominant in the relationship. The dutiful son becomes the focus of the relationship and obedience and submission are its expression. However, if we consider proverbs, such as “Like father, like son” or “Like master, like man”, it is obvious that the responsibility of the father is equally important. This means that the father guides the son in the father-son relationship and helps his son to live a responsible life.

31 See Chapter Two 2.2.3.
Another aspect of the father-son relationship from *Oryun is bu ja yu chin* (父子有親)\(^{32}\). In the intimate relationship between father and son, there is mutuality. The father meets the son’s expectations and the son responds to what the father expects. In mutuality there is “equivalence between persons, a concomitant valuing of each other, a common regard marked by trust, respect, and affection in contrast to competition, domination, or assertions of superiority.”\(^{33}\) The father-son relationship in *Samgang Oryun* is based on mutuality. The father, the primary person, should encourage his son and give him freedom and responsibility showing trust, respect and love. The son should also give back trust, respect and love to his father. This intimate father-son relationship is not formed in a moment but should be developed through lifelong commitment and growth in communication and understanding. Companionship is important for Korean males especially father-son relationships.

The distortion of *Samgang Oryun* has affected the life of contemporary Koreans. The mutuality in the father-son relationship has been ignored and the duty of the son has been emphasized. The father-son relationship has lost affection and intimacy as a consequence. Without intimacy and love in father-son relationship, sons may feel “the psychological and the physical absence of fathers” and the “spiritual or emotional absence”\(^{34}\) from their fathers. So absent fathers create lost sons\(^{35}\) who feel father hunger. This “is a great gaping wound that many carry, without realizing it or, at least, without being able to name it.”\(^{36}\) For this reason it is urgent in the present time to work to restore mutuality and intimacy to the father-son relationship and to work towards developing a spirituality of relational connectedness.

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\(^{32}\) See Chapter Two 2.2.2.


\(^{35}\) Ibid., 18-19.

Chapter Four: Developing an Integrated and Relational Spirituality

Oryun also mentions the friendship relationship (bung u yu shin 朋友有信). This implies that the foundation of the relationship between friends is trust. “Trust is rooted in the emotional experience of love, attachment, and gratitude.” 37 The relationship of friendship is affective and connected in trust. “Without trust, we become vigilant and paranoid.” 38 Such connectedness of mutual respect and trust supports and nourishes deep friendship, essential for Korean midlife males.

4.5. Christian Spirituality: The Lifelong Challenge to Self-transformation

First I will present a contemporary understanding of the challenge for Korean males to work towards integrating their understanding of themselves in terms of the cultural and spiritual influences that have shaped their adult lives. I will then move to a discussion of the Christian understanding of life for contemporary Korean men.

We need to know who we are in relationship to God, to ourselves and to those people who are part of our lives. In order to develop intimate relationships, it is important to have an internal identity, an awareness of our own responsibility to become authentic selves.

There now is a ‘self’ to be brought to others, rather than derived from others. Genuine ‘self’ sacrifice is now a possibility. Intimacy can, finally, be a reality. There is a self which can surrender its rebellious independence of freely chosen interdependence with others and with God. 39

To develop our self-understanding in midlife we need to know who we are and who we are choosing to become as adults.

In Invitation to Love Thomas Keating describes the true and false self. He discusses the false self that “seeks happiness in satisfying the instinctual needs of survival/security,

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37 Vaillant, G., 72.
38 Ibid., 105.
affection/esteem, and power/control." Keating emphasizes the importance for people of trying to develop their awareness of the influence of the false self on their relationships, “One of the biggest impediments to spiritual growth is that we do not perceive our own hidden motivations.” If people want to change the direction of their lives because they are aware of the importance of their spiritual life they need to be aware of the false self which “is the syndrome of our emotional programs for happiness grown into sources of motivation and made much more complex by the socialization process, and reinforced by our overidentification with our cultural conditioning.” To be unaware of the false self can mean people experience problems in their relationships without having any understanding of the reasons for such failures. Because of the cultural conditioning that has taken place it may be helpful for male Koreans specially to develop their understanding of the impact of the false self in their lives and to discover how and what kind of false self is formed in the authoritarian Korean culture.

As has been discussed earlier, Koreans have not been allowed to be autonomous but have been made submissive ‘kungmin’, people of the state because of the inflexibility of the culture. Those who want to succeed in life in this rigid culture are conditioned to be satisfied with their position which reinforces their social status. Most men over-identify themselves with their place in the workforce. The more they are interested in their social status, the less they are aware of their true self. They are also conditioned to be more interested in functional skills that reinforce their status than in developing any relational connectedness with those with whom they work. They have been trained to understand leadership as the exercise of power and skills through which they can exercise control over others. This style of power leadership often becomes abusive and breaks down relationships. Thus, Korean males generally lack a sense of their own identity and belonging in the workplace and in the family.

41 Ibid., 3.
42 Ibid., 12.
The personal struggle towards individuation is particularly connected with spiritual development. A mature midlife male identity is not derived from over-identification with a special group or groups or from their cultural conditioning. Authentic identity does not come from outside but from inside one’s own self. When people have worked to develop a strong personal sense of who they are and of their place in society they experience their own agency and their place and purpose for living. When people have a sense of belonging in their community they grow in their social relationships. This means that they will usually be welcomed into their social groups, sustain their identity, and experience connectedness with others.\textsuperscript{43} Only those who have self-awareness can be authentically relational. For men to live a spiritual life in the contemporary Korean context they need to be aware of their true and false selves and to develop their relationships with themselves, with others and with what is ultimate in life for them.

In this chapter I have described Middle Adult Spirituality for Korean males as one that is embodied, integrated of emotions and able to deal positively with anger and attentive to appropriate relational boundaries. In Chapter Five I will conclude with an understanding of spirituality in terms of servant and relational leadership and as a lifelong challenge to self-transformation.

5.1. Introduction

In this concluding chapter I will move forward from the understanding of spirituality to an understanding of different approaches to leadership and the use or abuse of power. I will present a model of relational leadership based on the research and writings on servant leadership\(^1\) for the contemporary middle adult Korean male. The importance of emotional maturity for leadership will also be developed. This relational approach is intended to offer hope to those Korean men in particular who have experienced fear, shame and failure in their adult lives, especially in their workplace and family relationships. For these men friendship and intimacy has also been lacking in their development. I will also describe my own understanding of relational or servant leadership as a midlife Jesuit committed to ministry. I will then suggest some practical programs and workshops that will be helpful for Korean males to develop relationships and ways of exercising leadership that are relational and enabling of positive family and workplace relationships.

Because adult Korean males are usually influenced by the models of leadership based on leadership exercised as power, status and skill that they received from their cultural experience of hierarchical leaders and dictators they need to learn other models and ways of relating. The problem is that leadership based on status, power and skill cannot develop authentic relationships and in many cases such a model may destroy the relationships. An important question for contemporary Korean males is “What kind of leader do I want to be?” rather than “What kinds of leadership models do I have to follow?”

Leadership involves more than skills, techniques or strategies. It depends also on the ways in which the leader grows in awareness of inner maturity and in relationships. In his study of a spirituality of authentic leadership Doohan describes the role as one of “a passionate response

\(^1\) See Robert K. Greenleaf, retrieved via Internet, 6\(^{th}\) July 2018, [https://www.greenleaf.org/what-is-servant-leadership/](https://www.greenleaf.org/what-is-servant-leadership/).
to the yearnings of our heart.”

He describes the task of leaders as a process of self-development and transformation that takes place when leaders are able to pay attention to their emotions and become more self-aware. “Growth in leadership parallels a movement away from self-centeredness toward greater self-transcendence in the progressive discovery of others and the world we share.” Leadership development has its foundations in a relational and integrative spirituality. For Korean males who have suffered from loss of self-worth or identity in their workplaces and family lives, particularly in middle adulthood, it is important to develop better relational connectedness and to learn new understandings of their leadership. The workshops and programs which conclude this thesis will be directed towards developing a spirituality of leadership, which focuses on serving, empowering and empathizing self and others, particularly for Korean males in the period of middle adulthood.

5.2. Servant Leadership and Empowering Leadership

5.2.1. Servant Leadership

The understanding of servant leadership is not easy for many contemporary men to grasp, particularly Koreans. The model was first proposed in 1970 by Robert Greenleaf and subsequently became popular amongst Western leadership and management writers. The concepts of servant and leader seem to be quite different from each other. But Greenleaf integrates them: “The servant-leader is servant first … It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. … The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served.” This approach is very different to the Korean culture of leadership that has formed middle adult males and caused despair and suicide. The corporatization of the workplace and the loss of identity for workers discussed in Chapter One have their foundations in ‘power over’ rather

3 Ibid., 28.
4 Greenleaf, R., retrieved via Internet, 6th July 2018, [https://www.greenleaf.org/what-is-servant-leadership/](https://www.greenleaf.org/what-is-servant-leadership/).
The importance of a very different model of support, acceptance and challenge is real in the contemporary Korean context. Authenticity is essential in servant or relational leadership.

To be a servant leader means to “shed self-interest and give priority to other-centered leadership.” The first interest of the servant-leader is in the growth and well-being of people and communities to which they belong. Greenleaf presents the following qualities for being a servant leader: listening, acceptance, empathy, foresight, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, healing and serving. These qualities have not been important in Korean culture.

5.2.2. Empowering Leadership is Relational Leadership

To be a servant leader is not to be without power. Power is necessary in running organizations and for the leadership of the people who work for them. How the leader of the organization understands and uses power affects the direction of the organization and the satisfaction of its members. Kenneth Boulding in Three Faces of Power distinguishes three ways in which power can be used: threat power, exchange power and integrative power. Threat power is “the ability to force opponents to give in for fear of unpleasant consequences.” Leaders whose understanding of power is that of threat impose their will over others. Koreans have experienced this ‘threat power’ from dictatorships and hierarchical culture.

Exchange power means “the ability to produce and exchange objects of value.” The worker

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6 Doohan, L., 18.
7 Greenleaf, R., 30-50.
9 Ibid.
does his work and is rewarded for this. The contract between the worker and the employer is understood and each has to do what has been agreed to. Exchange power is about function not relationships. The last dimension of power that Boulding describes is integrative power. This dimension of power is “the ability to achieve what one desires through love, nurturing, loyalty, and other positive forms of connection with people.”

The problem is that the uses of power can create a fixed gender role: men for threat power and women for integrative power. Men are encouraged to earn huge salaries and to have higher position in order to be accepted as ‘real men’. When they are less powerful, they easily define themselves as less successful and therefore less of a man. Such negative self-understandings and loss of identity are what middle adult male Koreans have experienced when they were dismissed from their workplaces. A new approach to identity and belonging and even to their own leadership roles is needed for contemporary Korean midlife males. “Men must assign more value to integrative power and less to threat power and change power.” In this way they can learn not to impose their will over others but to empower others. If they redefine power in this way, they will “feel powerful while they rear children, care for the ill, develop better quality intimacies, and so forth.”

This is also a positive aspect of developing a balance between the midlife construction/destruction polarities that can destroy relationships.

The role of leadership refers not only to a person who exercises leadership but also to their ability to develop and maintain effective relationships. “Leadership is the influencing, motivating, guiding, directing or co-ordinating of individuals, groups, communities, or organizations in a way that affects their behavior or actions, especially in relation to bringing about change or resisting change.” Although leadership is related to a person’s activity and ability, it does not mean that skills, techniques or strategies alone are important, but rather something how the leader is growing in awareness and in inner maturity. Lifelong self-
development is integral to leadership development. An important issue for the community or social leader is to help promote the discovery of meaning and purpose in each person’s own life. Such personal development enables the leader to support these values in the people they work with in their social and organizational life. In this sense, leadership is “a call to conversion”. The leadership is then a transforming approach. A leader is not simply born but formed in and through their family, social and organizational life. “It means we have to unite the major dimensions of our personal, community, and organizational sides of life into an integrated whole, where deep convictions and inner values permeate everything we do.” For middle adult Korean males, the task of leadership is one of both inner connectedness and growth in social relationships.

5.3. Integrated Leadership: Emotional Awareness, Intimacy and Friendship

Good leaders should never exercise the power of force over the people they lead. Rather they inspire them to think and make decisions for themselves. Reason alone is not enough but the development of imagination is also important for effective leaders. An important leadership task is to exercise their imagination and to be in touch with their inner world. They need to articulate the “dream they hold that elicits optimism or compassion, or a sense of connection - aspirations that point toward a hopeful future.” In his writings on the primacy of emotions for leadership development, Daniel Goleman describes how leadership works in group: “Great leadership works through the emotions.” Followers expect supportive emotional connectedness from their leaders. “When leaders drive emotions positively … they bring out everyone’s best. We call this effect resonance.” When leaders are unable to energize the positive emotions of their followers, their efforts may fail and disconnectedness can result.

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15 Doohan, L., 17.
16 Ibid., 18.
17 Ibid., 19.
19 Ibid., 3.
20 Ibid., 5.
In illustrating the simple aspects of using emotions in personal or group leadership, Goleman offers several examples. He points out that leaders can show their emotional state through their faces, voices, and gestures, e.g. “smiles are the most contagious.”21 “Leaders with that kind of talent are emotional magnets; people naturally gravitate to them.”22 On the contrary, “negative emotions—especially chronic anger, anxiety, or a sense of futility—powerfully disrupt work, hijacking attention from the task at hand.”23 Effective leadership involves helping people to respect rather than fear their emotions. For the Korean male whose childhood and adult formation has been one that ignores or negates the importance of emotions this is a challenging task.

The importance of emotions in relationship to becoming a mature adult self was discussed in the previous chapter and it is equally important to recognize that both positive and negative emotions are important for successful leadership in family, workplace and community leadership. The emotions also tell us who we are. We should not suppress our emotions but respect them. “Effective leadership demands the same sort of capacity for managing one’s own turbulent feelings while allowing the full expression of positive emotions.”24 Those leaders who lack empathy and who also express their negative emotions violently are described as dissonant leaders. The consequence of such dissonance is ‘disconnected adulthood’.25 This is of particular importance for middle adult Korean males for their future relational lives.

For a person to be a resonant leader, Goleman comments that the four domains of emotional intelligence, “self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship

21 Ibid., 10.
22 Ibid., 11.
23 Ibid., 13.
24 Ibid., 48.
25 Ibid., 11
management” are needed. Self-awareness means leader’s self-knowledge of emotion. Without having self-knowledge of our own emotions we cannot manage our relational lives. Rather, our emotions control us. Self-awareness is very important for self-management. With this emotional self-management, leaders can control their emotions and can maintain transparency in their family and social lives. The leader’s transparency is important in hierarchical culture. On the contrary, socialized leaders in hierarchical society do not have self-knowledge. They cannot be effective leaders because they only follow the pattern of the cultural expectations and social programming which have formed them. Socialized leaders who do not recognize their own emotions will be poor at managing them, and less able to understand them in others. They have no empathy for others. Thus, the emotional self-knowledge of leaders is important for communities and social groups.

Social awareness has its roots in emotional intelligence through which the leader can attune to other’s feeling in the moment. In other words, social awareness is an ability of empathy. Those who have emotional intelligence of social awareness can manage relationships well. Thus, social awareness is the foundation of relationship management. Especially, “empathy, which includes listening and taking other people’s perspectives, allows leaders to tune in to the emotional channels between people that create resonance.” The Korean culture, in which leaders cannot empathize with others in suffering, needs the leader’s social awareness. Only those who have self-awareness can have social awareness and can manage relationships. The former president Park Geun-hye, whose impeachment was finally agreed by the Constitutional Court of Korea on 10th March 2017, was a typical example of a leader who pursued absolute power but who lacked empathy. On the contrary, the present President Moon Jae-in, who was elected as the new president after Park Geun-hye, has been supported

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26 Ibid., 30.
27 Ibid., 31.
28 The families of the victims of ‘The Sewol Ferry Disaster’ (16th April 2014) have lost sympathy for Park’s apology because she did not show empathy, sorrow, guilt in front of the victims. See “Why does Park Geun-hye’s apology always not sympathise?” SisaIn (Weekly Magazine), retrieved via Internet, 26th June 2018, http://www.sisain.co.kr/?mod=news&act=articleView&idxno=20186
by Koreans because of his capacity for empathy.²⁹

Both social awareness and relational leadership require the capacity for empathy. But this is something that is unfamiliar to many middle adult Korean males. Empathy and intimacy are connected and they are both important for relational connectedness in general and friendship in particular. But many Koreans believe that talking about personal matters or emotional difficulties with other men is not manly. They tend to regard intimacy as irrelevant and seek functional companionships. For companionship they organize shared activities like sports and work and they often commit themselves competitively to the activities. “When men are close, they achieve closeness through shared activities, and on the basis of shared activities, men infer intimacy simply because they are friends. Yet, there are times when a man becomes aware that something is lacking.”³⁰ Consequently, male friendship is often less close, more casual and men find it hard to sustain authentic relationships. In this sense, men need to learn to be friends with each other using their emotions and to share what is happening to them personally and psychologically in order to develop friendships in their family and social groups.

The importance of developing friendships and of relational spiritual development will be an important part of the programs and workshops that will be a consequence of this thesis and its importance for my future ministry for Korean males in middle adulthood. This focus may be expanded later but this will depend on how it is received and by the evaluations. I intend that the programs will begin with small groups of men who I will meet in the various ministries in which I work on my return. I will discuss with these groups my ideas and suggestions. I will collaborate with a small group of prospective leaders.

²⁹ In particular, the scene in which he gave a big hug to a daughter of the victims in the 2017 Memorial Ceremony of the 5.18 (1980) Gwangju Citizens’ Uprising touched everyone’s hearts. Refer to the Gungmin Ilbo (the Gungmin Newspaper), retrieved via Internet, 26th June, 2018, http://news.kmib.co.kr/article/view.asp?arcid=0011477572

³⁰ Kupers, Terry A., 129-130.
5.4. Servant Leadership and Relational Spirituality: A Personal Response

Servant leadership for me is what my vocation is as a Jesuit. The journey that I have begun is about deepening my understanding of who I am as a midlife male Korean Jesuit. For “if one is a servant, either leader or follower, one is always searching, listening, expecting that a better wheel for these times is in the making.”31 Revisiting my own memories, have helped me to discover in essence what servant leadership is about. The “goal is not total transformation but a dedication to daily renewal. Spiritual leadership is a form of ongoing daily conversion.”32 This conversion is about coming to deeper acceptance of who I truly am, and not getting rid of my shadow. It is a path that begins with honesty that leads to authenticity. It is indeed heartening for me to read these life-giving words of both affirmation and self-acceptance, “for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Corinthians 12.10) The following quote is at the heart of what I seek and I look forward to hasten my pace, homewards. “The Servant-leadership concept is a principle, a natural law, and getting our social value systems and personal habits aligned with this ennobling principle is one of the greatest challenges of our lives”33

To embrace who I truly am, i.e. both my weaknesses and strengths takes a life time and this is what in essence, my leadership as a Jesuit is about. Failure to accept myself also implies my incapacity to accept or be with another in their shortcomings or pain. In any rejection of my own vulnerability, I am like the thief in John 10:10 that “steals, kills and destroys,” whatever stands in the way of my self-serving needs. “The servant always accepts and empathizes, never rejects. The servant as leader always empathizes, always accepts the person but sometimes refuses to accept some of the person’s effort or performance as good enough.”34 Conversely, committing to the humble process of being a servant leader, i.e. my commitment toward the journey of authenticity, I begin to fulfill the deepest yearnings that reside at the core of my true self. This is what John 10:10 speaks of, “I came that they may have life, and have it

31 Greenleaf, R., 23.
32 Doohan, L, 15.
33 Ibid., 52.
34 Greenleaf, R., 33-34.
abundantly.” I serve not my needs but the needs of the other, because I have first received this life in abundance.

5.5. Recommendations and Possible Programs for Developing Self-Awareness and Relationships

I have discussed the important task of developing authentic identity and relational connectedness for middle adult male Koreans. Above all, I have discussed that when they establish their authentic self they can be relational. In order to grow in self-awareness and authenticity, they need to develop their true self through practices that open them to greater freedom. In this regard, The ‘Examen of Conscience’ of the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola can provide a practical methodology for expanding self-awareness to them. Some Christians and searchers for authenticity who do not have a creed can be encouraged to develop their self-awareness through the daily practice of the Examen of Conscience. They can be helped to develop a deep relationship with their own self, others and God. This Examen of Conscience is a very important means of connectedness and prayer, not only for Jesuits but also for many men and women who have learned this practice. This practice is exercised twice a day, once before lunch and also before going to bed. The Examen of Conscience can be a good methodology for expanding self-knowledge to middle adult Korean males to help them to develop their inner life and to grow in personal freedom.

As a middle adult Korean male, I was preoccupied with ‘conscience’ and I understood the Examen of Conscience as having “narrow moralistic overtones” and I focused on my actions. However, I have learned the new understanding that the Examen is a practice of consciousness, rather than conscience. The Examen is not a ‘legal’ exercise before a God of

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35 See Appendix 6 for the method of the Examen of Conscience.
judgement. It is a reflective process to help me develop a deeper relationship with God and awareness of myself. The Examen is a means of developing authentic self-knowledge. We are invited to search for and reflect on the inner movements we have experienced that day, such as thoughts and emotions as well as our actions. Especially, we need to reflect deeply on our emotions, because our emotions help us to understand who we are at a deeper personal level. Sometimes we can be out of touch with what kinds of emotions we experience.

The Examen of consciousness is an individual’s prayer or process of reflection. There can be various gatherings like self-help group. Members of these groups can have opportunities for various experiences. It is a reflective process involving the task of sharing life experiences using the \textit{SEE, JUDGE, ACT} Method of the Young Christian Workers (YCW).\textsuperscript{37} This YCW movement has contributed to the transformation of individuals and enabled social change in many countries.\textsuperscript{38} This is a method which I can use with midlife Korean males who are searching for hope and purpose for their lives as they experience loss and failure as they age.

\textbf{Other Possible Programs and Workshops for Korean Midlife Males}

Alternative practices and experiences for growth in self-awareness and inner freedom are as follows:

\textbf{1) Story telling}

As mentioned in Chapter Four, “Without self-disclosure there is little self-understanding.” Members of the group can talk about their lives in relation to some special topics such as unemployment and experiences of shame and conflict. They can share family or workplace experiences. Photos and images can be used for stimulation. They can also draw pictures for

\textsuperscript{37} See Appendix 7.

\textsuperscript{38} The members of the YCW are young adults. There is Christian Workers Movement (CWM), which shares the same spirituality of YCW for middle adults. The members of these groups can meet every week or every two weeks and have life sharing once a month with this method.
the situations they may have experienced.

2) Film Clips

Sometime, people are touched by a film. Thus, watching a film or a film clip together and sharing their feelings and past life experiences is a good way of stimulating different understandings of questions of identity and belonging. Participants may watch a film in a group and then have a sharing session to follow. Or they can watch a part of a film or a short film, YouTube or DVD and talk about their feelings and thoughts. When they share, they can also use photos, images or their own drawings.

3) Preparing for Special Events: Guest Lecturer or Public Events, e.g. TED Event

These may be occasions when larger groups from families or workplaces can meet and discuss the issues raised in the event.

4) Role Playing

Middle adult Korean males have not been encouraged to tell their stories or to express their emotions or even to express their opinions to others. They may engage in role plays in relation to a special situation, e.g. family life after unemployment, their relationship with children and wife, etc. After the play is over, they will be invited to analyze their performance and share their reactions. The level of trust for this takes time. Thus, they need to make time and preparation. For example, the families of the victims of the Sewol Ferry Disaster formed a healing group of play-acting called ‘The Yellow Ribbon’ in October 2015 and

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staged the play ‘Dying Because of Neighbours, Living Because of Neighbours’ in April this year.

5) Playback Theatre

A group may organize Playback Theatre. They invite actors of the Playback Theatre. Members of the group may choose to tell their own story in front of the actors and audiences. After that, the actors show their story with their own emotional responses. The storytellers can find themselves objectively watching the responses of actors. Sometimes, they can find that the pain they experience is not just their own experience but everyone else’s. This gives them a deep sense of freedom, trust and belonging.
CONCLUSION

My research title is “The Development of a Relational Masculine Spirituality in the Context of Current South Korean Unemployment Issues”. For almost half a century, it was the economic development of the country that dominated the thoughts and lives of Koreans beginning with President Park Chung-hee’s regime (1961-1979). For the economic development of the nation, Koreans sacrificed everything and lived their lives according to the expectations of their social status and culture. While their identity and meaning of life were being identified with the national policy and expectations, they, especially middle adult Korean males, have developed themselves as functional people who only complete tasks rather than have a life to live. Thus, they have been taught not to trust their emotions but to be wise by acquiring knowledge that can help them succeed financially in life. However, one of the most serious problems of them is that they have under-developed selves as most have not faced the task of midlife individuation and lack a capacity for intimacy and empathy in their relationships.

Korean culture has aspects of inflexibility. A key reason why middle adult Korean males in the workforce are not relational is the rigid hierarchical culture in which people have roles rather than relationships. They have been formed under a culture of Confucianism, a polarizing culture of communism versus anticommunism, and a dominantly military culture which internalized institutional violence, fascism and dictatorship. Many men over-identified themselves with the expectations culturally placed on them in terms of social place and status. They accepted the imposed self and status of their culture as their own self and status and this meant that autonomy and freedom to develop were denied to them. Psychologically, it was hard for them to claim their own authority; rather, they were trained to depend on external authority.

In order to be relational, middle adult Korean males need to find their own inner self and authority. This is the midlife task of individuation through which they can live differently from the ways they have lived before. In this sense, they also need to make balance between
polarities of life, such as young and old, masculine and feminine, creation and destruction, and separation and attachment polarity rather than pursue one pole such as becoming masculine but refusing the feminine tension. This positive balance of the polarities is very important for mature development.

In order to develop the middle adult spirituality of relational connectedness, Korean males need to be more interested in and familiar with their emotions both the positive and negative ones. Our emotions inform us about who we are in relation to ourselves as selves, to others, and to what is Ultimate in life. “Without self-disclosure there is little self-understanding.”¹ They cannot develop relationships with others or with God or the Mystery of living authentically without having some self-understanding and an awareness of the possibility of self-realization as they age. In previous periods, emotions were not considered important for the logical male. Rather their emotions were suppressed and regarded as unnecessary. Now we have learned that emotions are part of our rational lives. People have affective as well as rational aspects to their consciousness.² Thus, those who recognize their own emotions can empathize with others. They can feel compassion for others who are in pain. Only those who have inner awareness of their emotions can engage in intimate relationships and show their vulnerability to others. Middle adult Korean males also need to foster or to reclaim friendship. They tend to regard companionship as important in male friendship but this is not usually personal. They need to share more personal matters, intimacy and grow in empathy to give and receive emotional support in their relationships. Without emotional support they can be isolated and the loneliness can bring about the tragic end of suicide.

Middle adult Korean males can be leaders in their families and organizations. Emotions, especially positive emotions, are also important for them to exercise leadership. The leader who has positive emotions empathizes with, encourages and empowers others. This leader is

¹ Nelson, J. The Intimate Connection, 50.
² Goleman, D. et al, Primal Leadership, 42.
Conclusion

totally different from the familiar authoritarian leaders of the past, who have exercised their power over others in order to control them. This leadership is what contemporary Korean males have experienced in their early formation. But these days, people need a leader who has emotional intelligence. The servant leader does not exercise power over others but serves, inspires, empathizes with and empowers them. Thus, middle adult Korean males need to grow in emotional intelligence and to exercise the inspiring, empowering and servant leadership in their families and organizations. Relational spiritual development can bring about both personal and societal in communities if it is taken seriously and this is important for Korean males in their servant leadership of the generations who follow them.
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Appendix

Appendix 1

Total Unemployed Persons and Unemployment Rate

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Source: National Statistics
Economic Activity Census,

Appendix 2

The National Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Unit: A Billion USD

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Source: The Bank of Korea
Appendix 3

The Economic Growth Rate

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<tr>
<td>Rate (%)</td>
<td>Economic Growth Rate</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>-5.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
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Source: The Bank of Korea

Economic Growth Rate = \left(\frac{\text{Real GDP for the Year} - \text{Real GDP in the Previous Year}}{\text{Real GDP in the Previous Year}}\right) \times 100.


Appendix 4

Number of the Dead by Major Cause

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<td>Cancer</td>
<td>110.6</td>
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<td>137.5</td>
<td>139.5</td>
<td>140.5</td>
<td>144.4</td>
<td>142.8</td>
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<td>25.0</td>
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<td>Motor Accident</td>
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Sources: National Statistics, Statistics on the Dead by Major Cause

Appendix 5

History and Chronology of Political Events

57 B.C.E-668 C.E (Three Kingdoms Period)

57 B.C.E.-668 C.E. Shilla Kingdom

37 B.C.E-668 C.E. Koguryeo Kingdom

13 B.C.E.-668 C.E. Paekje Kingdom

668-935 The Unified Shilla

918-1391 Koryeo Dynasty

1392-1910 Choson Dynasty

1844 Kabo Reform

1894 Tonghak Peasant War

1895 Sino-Japanese War in the Korean Peninsula

1905 Annexation of the Choson Dynasty to Japan as a protectorate

1910-1945 Japanese Colonization

1945-1948 Rule of the US Army Military Government

1947 Establishment of the People’s Democratic Republic of Korea (North Korea)

1948 Establishment of the Republic of Korea (South Korea)

1948-1960 First Republic (President Rhee Syng-man)

April 19, 1960 Student Uprising and the Overthrow of Rhee’s regime

1960-1961 Second Republic (Prime Minister Chang Myon)

May 16, 1961 Military coup led by General Park Chung-hee
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year Range</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1961-1963</td>
<td>Military Junta Rule</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963-1971</td>
<td>Third Republic (President Park Chung-hee)</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 1971</td>
<td>Declaration of Yushin Constitution</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972-1979</td>
<td>Fourth Republic (President Park Chung-hee)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 26, 1979</td>
<td>Assassination of Park Chung-hee</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979-1980</td>
<td>Interregnum (President Choi Kyu-ha)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 12, 1979</td>
<td>Military coup led by General Chun Doo-hwan</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 18-28, 1980</td>
<td>Kwangju Citizens’ Democracy Movement and Massacre by the Military</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980-1987</td>
<td>Fifth Republic (President Chun Doo-hwan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 29, 1987</td>
<td>Declaration of Democratization</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988-1992</td>
<td>Sixth Republic (President Roh Tae-woo)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993-1997</td>
<td>President Kim Young-sam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-2002</td>
<td>President Kim Dae-jung</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003-2007</td>
<td>President Roh Mu-hyun</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008-2012</td>
<td>President Lee Myeong-bak</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013-2017</td>
<td>President Park Geun-hye (Impeachment was approved by the Constitutional Court on March 9, 2017)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 10, 2017</td>
<td>President Moon Jae-in</td>
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Appendix

Appendix 6

Examen of Consciousness

[43] Method for Making the General Examen

It contains in it five points

First Point. The first point is to give thanks to God our Lord for the benefits received.

Second Point. The second, to ask grace to know our sins and cast them out.

Third Point. The third, to ask account of our soul from the hour that we rose up to the present examen, hour by hour, or period by period: and first as to thoughts, and then as to words, and then as to acts, in the same order as was mentioned in the particular Examen¹.

Fourth Point. The fourth, to ask pardon of God our Lord for the faults.

Fifth Point. The fifth, to purpose amendment with His grace.

Our Father.


¹ Spiritual Exercise No. [33]-[42]
Appendix 7

The SEE, JUDGE, ACT Method of the Young Christian Workers (YCW)

SEE the reality of our lives, our community, and the world; JUDGE the relationship between the situation around us and what we believe should be happening; and finally ACT to create a change that reflects what we believe should be happening.

SEE

What exactly is happening?
Why is this happening? (the causes)
Who is being affected? (the consequences)

JUDGE

What do you think about all of this? (Why?)
What do your values, your beliefs and your faith say about this?
What do you think should be happening?

ACT

What exactly would you like to change? (long term)
What action are you going to take now? (short term)
Who can you involve to help you in your action?

Appendix

Appendix 8

A Little Boy Who I am Growing within Me

At the end of my young adulthood I became more aware of my immaturity in adult workplace relationships. Now in middle adulthood I have grown in awareness of my struggles in my dealings with those in authority. I realize that I have been uncomfortable when I am in relationship with persons of authority. Over the decades, I have grown in my realization that this immaturity has its origins in my childhood.

In July 1999, I travelled to Alice Springs and other places in central Australia. I made a retreat in an aboriginal village, Santa Theresa, a Catholic mission. Santa Theresa is 80 Kilometres away from Alice Springs. The journey took almost 40 hours. The train left Melbourne at 10 pm and arrived in Adelaide around 9 am. I took a rest in Adelaide for 6 hours in order to transfer to the Ghan, which left Adelaide at 3 pm. It stopped at Port Augusta at 10:30 in the evening and then ran to Alice Springs without stopping. It arrived in Alice Springs at 10:30 in the morning. On the Ghan I was one of three passengers with seats in the compartment; all the passengers travelled in berths.

On the journey I talked with a white Australian man in his early twenties. He was visiting his family who lived in Northern Territory. While I was overwhelmed by the dryness of the desert, the expanse of dried trees and the brown spiked surface of the grass, he felt a homecoming in the desert. As the night came on I was unable to see the scenery. I felt like I was going through a long dark tunnel. It was an uncomfortable and disturbing trip. By daybreak he became excited at the thought of seeing his family and returning to his hometown. For me in contrast the desert was a threatening place in which I had to adjust myself to the desert environment in order to survive. My anxiety had grown each hour of my journey to Santa Theresa from Melbourne. Moreover, when I arrived in the village, I felt that the aborigines were unfriendly and that as a stranger I was not welcome. I felt uneasy and anxious.

I was met by a friend who took me to the guest house where I was to make my retreat. A nun, Sr. Bal welcomed me and settled into my room. She was my retreat director. On the first day of my retreat, Sr. Bal asked me a question. “What did you bring here?” My response was that I had brought nothing here! I paused for a little and told her what I had experienced during my trip from Melbourne. Sr. Bal commented, “That is fear! Prepare yourself to be open to a
new environment.” After I met Sr. Bal, I took a rest in the afternoon in my room. Suddenly I realized that I could hear modern musical instruments. I was amazed by the sound of modern instruments in the aboriginal village. So I just followed the sound and arrived in a big block house. I thought that being a stranger I should behave more carefully. So I did not enter into the building but took a quick look inside it. There were several young aboriginal people inside, playing music. On the following day I talked with Sr. Bal about what I experienced. I learned from her that the building was the community building and that I had arrived on the day of a regular dance event for youth. Being aware of my strict boundaries, she encouraged me with these words. “Follow your inner desire, then you can meet God.” Minding these words, I went to the community building each day after dinner on that first week in order to grow in my awareness of a new environment and as I spent time there I grew in my openness to appreciation of the aborigines and their culture.

The following week, I heard the music again. After dinner, I went to the dance. About twenty teenagers came there with their family members. They looked shy. When the music started they moved from their seats little by little to the middle of the dance floor. When the music was over, they rushed back to their seats like arrows in flight. I did not feel as though I was a member of the community. Thus, I did not participate, rather I sat on the edge and observed their dance. While I was watching them dance, a little boy toddled toward me and pointed to the middle of the floor. I understood his message. “Come and join the dance!” I was a bit embarrassed because I thought I did not know how to dance. I thanked him but did not accept his invitation. I encouraged the little boy to return and I continued to watch their dance from my seat. In a few minutes, he returned to me again and I waved him away. But I was uncomfortable, so I returned to my room.

As I sat alone and reflected on my experience I became sorry that I did not accept the little boy’s invitation. The more I reflected, the more uncomfortable I became. I began to reflect on my own childhood experience. I grew up constantly aware of my father’s demand that I study hard and not waste time. As a child, however, I desperately wanted to learn to play the guitar as other teenagers did. But my father did not listen to me and refused my request. He thought that music was not a very important skill in surviving in society. He thought rather that to get high marks in school was the best way for the future. So he demanded that I get high marks. I followed my father’s intention and studied hard in order to gain his acceptance.

Moreover, I thought I had to give something good to my father, and so I did my best in order to get good results for him. But I had to suppress my own will, and I was always anxious and nervous when I did something in front of others. For example, I took part in a speech contest
when I was in primary school. All my family members encouraged me. As my turn approached I was very nervous. I had to tremble and stutter in front of people.

I could not ignore others’ expectation especially my father’s. But I was so nervous and anxious of making mistake that I trembled when I did something in front of others, even when reading a text. My anxiety led me to feel shame. I did not want to show my shame to others. The more I tried to overcome and hide my feelings of anxiety, the more nervous and anxious I became. This was the miserable situation I found myself in.

I think that my ego was developed under the strong influence of my father, so that his expectation shaped my role. When the little boy invited me to dance together, I thought I did not know how to dance and I would have felt shame before others if I had danced together. My little ego which was formed when I was child made me refuse the invitation of the little boy. What if I had forced my little ego to accept the invitation of the little boy and danced with him? That would not have been the right way either. My little ego would have been hurt just as I was hurt by my father’s coercion in the past. It would have repressed his will as I repressed my will. Then, it would have reluctantly joined the dance but would not have been happy, and would have ended up getting angry. One of my ways of getting angry was to reject and refuse adult authority.

If we follow the demand of the little ego which is immature, we behave with immaturity. On the other hand, if we demand the little ego to do something as a duty, the little ego is hurt and eventually gets angry. What can we do? We need to enter conversation with the little ego in order to allow it to grow. “I know your fear. But the little boy invites us to dance together. Why don’t we accept the invitation and go to dance? If you are really uncomfortable, then let’s come back.” In this way I can protect the little ego and finally myself. I can also respond to the little boy’s invitation. This is a form of reconciliation with my little ego. This imagining is important for me to have a sense of mutuality in my relationship with myself and to allow my autonomy to grow within a hierarchical culture.

**Interpretation on the Picture**

I was forced to accept external authority. In particular, my father demanded that I study hard in order to succeed in life. I also forced myself to bring good results to my father. The meaning of the opened and empty hands is that I do not have to bring something to him. This image gives me more freedom.
The red coloured person is my little ego. He knows what is right and what is wrong. But he is not capable of interpreting things rationally because he is little and immature. He is afraid and ashamed of making a mistake. He does not want his inadequacy to be revealed. So he is defensive and gets angry.

The green person is me wanting to have a peaceful life. To have a peaceful life means to nurture the little ego. These two are dancing together. This is my image of reconciliation with myself. These two also refer to ‘I’ and the little boy in Santa Theresa. Thus the dancing means reconciliation between ‘I’ and the little boy.