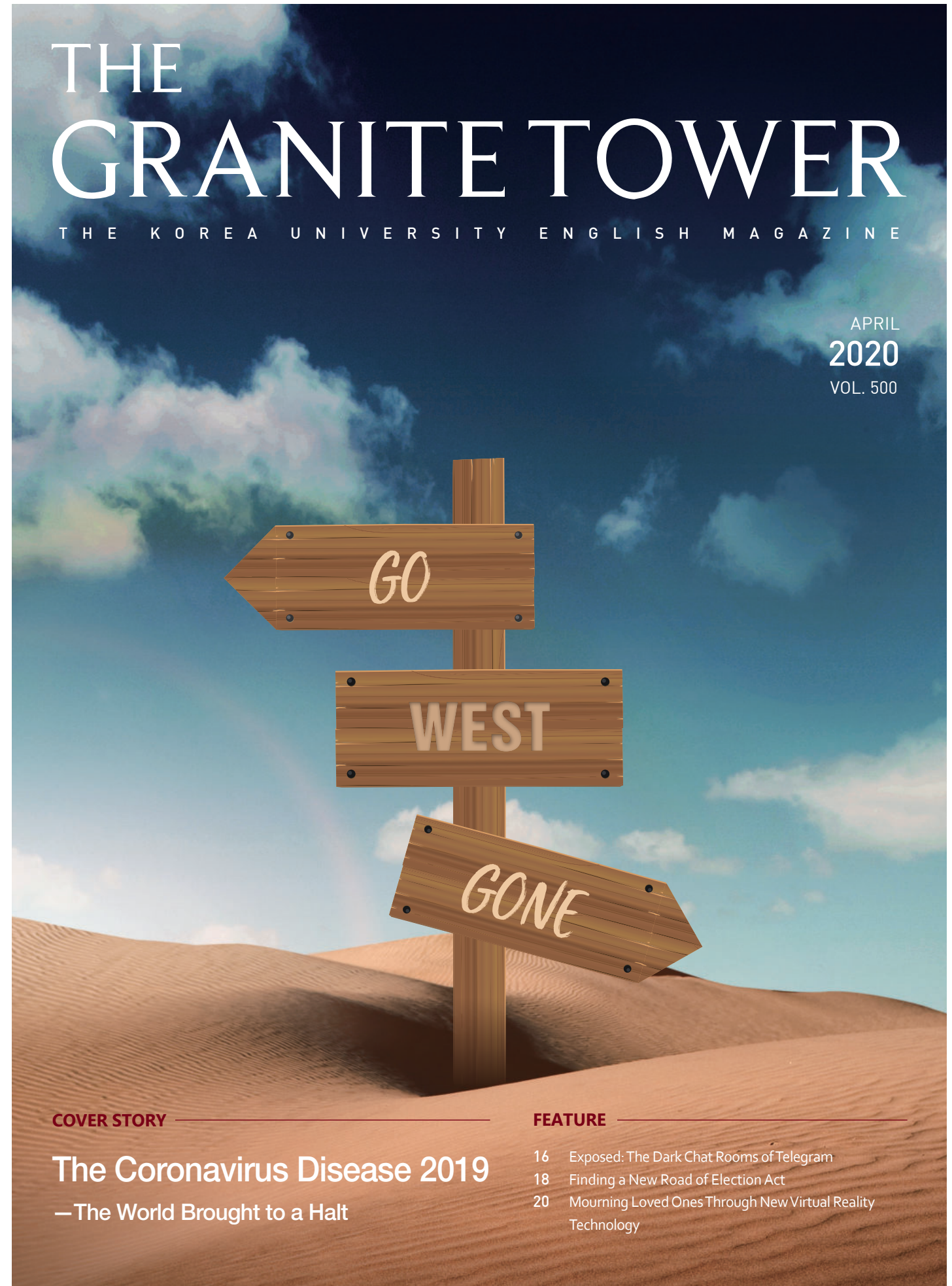


THE GRANITE TOWER

THE KOREA UNIVERSITY ENGLISH MAGAZINE

APRIL
2020
VOL. 500



COVER STORY

The Coronavirus Disease 2019
—The World Brought to a Halt

FEATURE

- 16 Exposed: The Dark Chat Rooms of Telegram
- 18 Finding a New Road of Election Act
- 20 Mourning Loved Ones Through New Virtual Reality Technology

THE GRANITE TOWER

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LETTERS. *The Granite Tower* welcomes letters from all readers. Submit opinions, essays, or general correspondence to thegranitetower@gmail.com. We will do our utmost to ensure that your contributions are reflected in the content and quality of our magazine.

JOINING GT. If you are a Korea University freshman or a sophomore, you are eligible to apply for reporter status at *The Granite Tower*. All members of *The Granite Tower* must complete three semesters at the magazine before they can receive their certificate of service. *The Granite Tower* recruits new reporters twice each spring and fall semester.

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EDITOR'S LETTER


Go West

"Go West, young man" is one of the most commonly quoted sayings from 19th-century United States (U.S.), wherein people held the belief that they were destined to expand across the continent. In this sense, this phrase initially symbolized growth and development, bearing a generally positive connotation.

As time passed by, however, the very same phrase has changed to mean something completely different. Nowadays, "go west" is more often used to signify something that has taken a negative turn, sometimes even used as a euphemism for death.

In many instances, it is the context of a situation that shapes the way a phrase can be interpreted and double-entendres like such allow for a myriad of takes on news reporting. Inspired by this, the April issue of *The Granite Tower* (GT) is our reporters' outlook on different news topics and how they go west.

The different articles in each section offer a variety of interpretation, some literal, some poetical, some erudite, and some commonplace. Above all, at the core of our this month's issue, our reporters explore the situation surrounding the pandemic—what has now become the center of the world's attention—and the different ways circumstances are going west, or have gone west.

Our 500th edition encompasses all the directions that a story could be told in hopes of shedding some light on issues that are equally as important as those that have been dominating headlines the past few weeks. On this note, our team wishes for nothing more than the well-being of our readers. 



By Kim Sun Min
(smkim18@korea.ac.kr)

Editor-in-Chief, *The Granite Tower* (GT)

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Ipselenti – Jiya Hamsung Postponed Indefinitely

By Nam Eun seo eunseo0222@korea.ac.kr

On February 21, Korea University (KU) Cheerleaders announced to indefinitely postpone the 43rd Ipselenti–Jiya Hamsung, which was originally scheduled for May, to the fall semester of 2020. The statement regarding the postponement was announced on the KU Cheerleaders official Facebook page.

With the recent spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) causing unrest in society, public events are being cancelled one after another. In their announcement, KU Cheerleaders stated that considering the fact that COVID-19 is transmitted via respiratory droplets, cheerleading events are extremely vulnerable to the virus. In addition, as the long incubation period of the virus makes the current situation unpredictable, KU Cheerleaders decided that it was impractical to carry out a big-scale event involving more than 20,000 people during

this time.

KU Cheerleaders further claimed that students will be informed with the details of the postponement as soon as an agreement is made with the school. The statement ended with the note that they will do their best to ensure a safe and high-quality event in the future. K



Statement regarding the postponement of Ipselenti – Jiya Hamsung.

KU Institute of Data Science Marks Its Opening

By Jun Uhnjin uhnjin@korea.ac.kr



The opening ceremony of KU Institute of Data Science.

On March 9, the opening ceremony for the Korea University Institute of Data Science (KUIDS) was held at the International Center for Converging Technology. KUIDS aims to support active research and education in the fields of artificial intelligence (AI) and data science (DS).

KUIDS plans to create an environment that encourages the research of AI and DS based technologies. In order to promote convergence research, the institute will design programs facilitating collective AI and DS research in various areas such as humanities, natural science, applied science, and medical science. Furthermore, a “Data Science Academy” will be organized to provide AI and DS convergence education as non-degree courses for KU faculty members, students, and the public.

Professor Kim Sangsig (Department of Electrical Engineering), the first head of KUIDS, stated, “KUIDS will strive to promote research and industry-academic cooperation in order to successfully establish a platform that leads the era of the fourth industrial revolution.” Indeed, KUIDS is expected to pave the way for fostering intensive AI and DS research. K

KU Students Fundraise to Aid Coronavirus Relief

By Kie Hae Seung hayleyyy1215@korea.ac.kr



The final balance sheet of the donation drive.

Led by the KU Student Fundraiser for COVID-19 Relief Task Force (TF) in affiliation with the COVID-19 Special Committee of the Emergency Central Steering Committee (ECSC), the campaign raised over 20 million won, which will be donated to

From February 29 to March 7, an intraschool donation drive under the name “Korea University (KU) Student Fundraiser for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Relief” was conducted.

medical facilities in Daegu under the name “KU Student Body.”

As of 9:00 A.M. of March 7, a total of 22,423,245 won was raised through 759 separate donations. Despite the short eight-day donation period, the drive was able to conclude successfully through active publicity efforts on platforms such as Koreapas, Everytime, and group KakaoTalk chat rooms.

According to the TF’s minutes, communication with medical facilities in Daegu have confirmed that supply donations are most in need. Because temporal restrictions and lack of supply made it difficult to donate disposable masks, an agreement was reached to use the final donation amount for vinyl gown and cash donations.

This commendable act by KU students will hopefully contribute to relieving the national health crisis. K

KU Graduate School of Information Security Signs MOU with SH Corporation

By Nam Eun Seo eunseo0222@korea.ac.kr

On March 13, the Korea University (KU) Graduate School of Information Security and the Seoul Housing and Communities Corporation (SH Corporation) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the joint execution of the education and research for “Smart Home” security.

In accordance with the agreement, the KU Graduate School of Information Security plans to develop and manage the nation’s first “Smart City Security” degree course to enhance the security capacity of “Smart Cities” and “Smart Homes” of public institutions. In return, the SH Corporation aims to create an ideal environment for software development as well as investigate the institutional problems related to “Smart Homes.”

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SH Corporation, Kim Seiyong, stated, “This agreement will enable a safer residential

life by building an environment that allows us to actively confront cyberattacks.” Indeed, the agreement seems to have set an example for public institutions and universities to cooperate for the common good. K



Lee Sang Jin, President of the Graduate School of Information Security, and Kim Seiyong, CEO of SH Corporation celebrating the agreement.

In the Face of Death

By Nam Hye Bin | hyebin@korea.ac.kr

“Death is not the greatest loss in life. The greatest loss is what dies inside us while we live,” said Norman Cousins, an American political journalist. Throughout our lives, it is very important to reflect on the things that we lose internally through various reasons. These losses could be a relationship, morals, or a set of personal values. Imagining the last stop of our life could be a great opportunity to remind us of things that mean a lot to ourselves and to pave the way to a new approach to life. Thus, the Granite Tower (GT) asked four Korea University (KU) students what regrets they would have when they think of their upcoming death and also asked what changes could be made in their lives.

The interviewees were asked to answer one or both of the following two questions:

- 👉 If you were told that you were going to die within a year, what would you change about your current lifestyle and why?
- 👉 If you were to die tonight without having the chance to talk to anyone, what is something that you would regret not having told someone? Why have you not told them yet? (Or anything that you regret not having done)

Kim Hyun-woo ('18, School of Electrical Engineering)

👉 There would be some private and trivial regrets, but in terms of my ideals, I think I would regret having no sincere concerns about our society and its development and not taking any practical action in this regard. I always wanted to be someone who contributed to society with viable actions and words. The notion of justice and contribution was the basic principle of my life, but I feel like I have wasted my whole life, just waiting for the right time to come — a time when I feel like I have enough ability or the internal intention to actually live my ideals. That might be one of my regrets, I think.



Yoo Jun-hee ('18, English Language and Literature)

👉 I would try to wake up early in the morning and achieve things on my bucket list. I tend to wake up late, so I do not have many memories of doing things in the morning. However, when I think of those rare moments that I enjoyed in my morning hours, I feel like there is a certain refreshing atmosphere that I can only feel in the morning. People tend to sleep early and get up early as they get older. Just like that, if I die within a year, I want to live a “life with mornings” that I planned to enjoy in my old age. I would love to feel the sunlight flooding into my room, have leisurely meals, and read books that interest me. In terms of my bucket list, I want to travel abroad and write books, which I have always regarded as special and important.

👉 I don't think there is anything that I want to say to someone but could not. However, I think I would regret not caring about my father's birthday more. I celebrate my mother's birthday every year. However, for my father's birthday, because it is in the middle of the holidays and I just do not know what to give him, I have not taken notice of it very well. I think my father might have been a little sad even though he has not directly expressed this to me. If I were to die tonight, I would regret the times that I did not give my father a birthday present.

Choi Jun-yong ('19, School of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering)

👉 Since death is an abstract notion and people cannot hear any stories about personal death experiences, I will compare it to another similar situation. Considering that death leads to the severance of communication and the loss of your usual lifestyle, I feel like death has something in common with joining the military. My one year before death would not be so different from a year before enlisting. I would just live my life as usual and when only two to three months remain, I would relax and try to achieve things that I have always dreamed of. Then, it would be great to have time to sort out my thoughts on everything — including myself, the people I love, and my whole life.

👉 I always have to say things immediately when I feel like I should do so, so I do not think I would regret not having told someone something.

Choi Soo-bin ('19, Environmental Science and Ecological Engineering)

👉 If I were to die within a year, I would try to contemplate my philosophy and the values that I want to follow. I feel like up until now, I had no interest in social issues or philosophy, so I want to attend to the current social conflicts and my personal problems as well. I would especially try to pursue a deeper exploration of religion. Since I have been religious since birth, I just took my life of faith for granted without knowing the essence or specific motives for it. I want to figure out what exactly leads people today to go crazy over religion because it would help me, in a way, to get or create my personal motivation for leading a religious life. I have always had all these essential questions for a religious person lingering in my brain, but to be honest, I just did not care much, living my busy life. 📖



Providing Cutting-Edge Technology for a Financial Company

By Lee Eun Seo ohhenkwo68@korea.ac.kr

Korea University (KU) Human-Inspired Artificial Intelligence & Computing (HI AI & Computing) Institute researches and develops Artificial Intelligence (AI) models by imitating human intelligence. The institute expects that its research will contribute to industrial development, enhance national competitiveness, and promote happiness to human lives. On February 25, the HI AI & Computing Institute helped one of the biggest financial companies in South Korea—Woori Bank. The institute is playing a significant role in the new project by providing promising technology.

KU HI AI & Computing Institute and T3Q Corporation (Corp.) made an agreement with Woori Bank on developing and applying Regulatory Technology (RegTech). According to Woori Bank, "The usage of innovative technology will strengthen the competitiveness of the company." Through this agreement, Woori Bank will soon be at the cutting edge of regulatory compliance.

Utilizing RegTech enables a company to comply with regulations in the financial industry. RegTech automizes companies' process of identifying and conforming to financial restraints with various information technologies such as AIs, blockchain, big data, and cloud computing. The RegTech that Woori Bank will adopt uses AI technology to control them to abide by the law. Through this process, the company aims to protect the financial industry and consumers at the same time.

The KU HI AI & Computing Institute not only carried out research to develop




PROVIDED BY WOORI BANK, KU HI AI & COMPUTING INSTITUTE, T3Q CORPORATION

a new AI model, but tried to apply that technology to the real world. Professor Lim Hee Seok (Department of Computer Science and Engineering), the head of the HI AI & Computing Institute, said, "As modern society becomes a 'smart digital era,' more and more industries and businesses should introduce AI technologies to gain competitiveness." Therefore, the introduction of RegTech to Woori Bank will help them create more profits in the near future.

In addition, HI AI & Computing Institute, Woori Bank, and T3Q Corp. made industry-academic cooperation agreements. HI AI & Computing Institute has made numerous research achievements about Natural Language Processing (NLP) and machine learning. Therefore, the institute will be in charge of developing a model based on NLP

and Machine Reading Comprehension (MRC) and will share the technology with the other two companies. Woori Bank will then apply the technique with their financial knowledge, and T3Q Corp. will provide the AI platform and services.

Using RegTech is expected to make the compliance process faster and more cost-efficient. The selection of the HI AI & Computing Institute as Woori Bank's cooperator indicates that the public has acknowledged the institute's research accomplishment. Through this cooperation, they can experience unique interdisciplinary research on finance and technology, satisfying the purpose of their research. KU's research institute will assist Woori Bank to innovate their compliance process. KU will arrange another academic-industry cooperation in the future and continue their research on new technologies. 

Opening New Avenues in Biomedical Engineering Research

By Lee Donghyun real0822@korea.ac.kr

Groundbreaking research with eye-opening results has been conducted at Korea University (KU) by Professor Jeong Aram (Department of Biomedical Engineering) and his research team, who published the research paper "Intracellular Nanomaterial Delivery via Spiral Hydroboration" on February 19. It was chosen as the cover article for *ACS Nano*, which is a world-famous academic journal in the field of nanoscience and technology.

Professor Jeong and his research team developed a microfluidic platform that can deliver various nanomaterials (e.g., gold nanoparticles, functional nanoparticles, etc.) into millions of cells per minute. The transfer of specific substances into cells is one of the most crucial experimental procedures in the cell-based biotechnology and medical fields. Furthermore, the intracellular transfer of nucleic acids allows the expression or inhibition of specific genes for cancer treatment. In addition, gene scissors that treat diseases by modifying certain genes have been successfully delivered into cells.

Motivation for the Research

Currently, biomaterials such as viruses, electrospores, or cation lipids are used to transport nanomaterials into cells. However, these have limitations in terms of stability, price, efficiency, and the rate of reaction. To address these problems, Professor Jeong's team reported, for the first time, the transformation of cells using



spiral vortex flows in microtubules and the opening of the membrane momentarily to effectively inject target materials into cells. The most impressive feature of this new technology is the high reaction rate of millions of cells per minute. Other outstanding features include its highly stable transfer efficiency — regardless of the size and type of target material, — low platform pricing, and accessibility for non-experts without special training.

According to Professor Jeong, this study was not planned until after he and his team had conducted previous cancer research on the measurement of the deformability of single cell-based cancer in order to develop a machine that can diagnose cancer more easily. During this research, Professor Jeong discovered that cell deformation can open the cell membrane, which allows a microfluid platform to transfer nanomaterials into the cell. At this moment, he realized that by making use of microfluid platforms, physicians would be able to cure cancer and save a significant amount of money at the same time.


Prospects for the New Technology

The development of microfluid platforms is a totally new approach in the bioscience



PROVIDED BY JEONG ARAM
Professor Jeong Aram

field, especially when researchers engineer specific cells. Previous approaches each have both positive and negative characteristics, but all of the methods have a common problem: the difficulty in transporting nanomaterials into cells. The results of Professor Jeong's research clearly indicates that this problem can be overcome with high effectiveness.

Professor Jeong expects that microfluid platforms can easily be used in cancer treatment via T-lymphocytes (T-cells). By conducting the research, Professor Jeong hopes people will be able to receive more effective immunotherapy at a cheaper price, which can eventually lead to the rapid development of medical science worldwide. 



Digital Maps Developed by Korea University (KU) Students

By Park Min Ha parkminha@korea.ac.kr

The Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), now officially named as a pandemic, has begat ungraspable circumstances especially for certain countries like South Korea. Hence, many services are continuously being developed for the safety and stability of the people, while also providing convenient and accurate delivery of information. During the early stages of the outbreak, citizens of South Korea were able to stay away from infected areas through *Corona Nearby*, a digital map made by Korea University (KU) students. Since the release of their second service, *Masks Nearby*, the developers are meeting great anticipation from citizens as their ideas and actions continue to battle the chaos of the Coronavirus.

Corona Nearby was first introduced to the public on February 1. The service functions as a digital map that pinpoints the location of the clinics and places that confirmed Coronavirus patients had visited. Within just two days since its official launch, the service accumulated more than 3.9 million users and made its way to the real time query of the South Korean portal site *Naver*. The service operated side by side with other comparable services such as *Coronaita* and *Corona Map*, that share the same hopes of providing reliable information to frightened citizens. On March 4, however, *Corona Nearby* announced that it will stop updating the service due to a lack of information and motive to continue.

The developers behind *Corona Nearby* are four KU undergraduates—Choi Juwon ('18, Industrial and Information Design), Kim Jun Tae ('17, Media and Communications), Park Ji Hwan ('15, Psychology), and Lee In Woo ('12, Chinese Language and Literature). Among the four talented developers, Choi Juwon shared, "After seeing a lot of people sharing information among themselves to stay safe from the novel coronavirus, the four of us decided to gather our collective knowledge into creating a meaningful service for our society."

👤 Moving on to *Masks Nearby*

On March 7, the developers released their second service, *Masks Nearby*, and gained immediate attention from the media and citizens. The news had spread as the programmer and

celebrity figure, Lee Doo-hee, introduced the launching of *Masks Nearby* through his social media. The overall planning and development stages were conducted by the students, while Lee supported them by funding the server cost and helped the team with technical difficulties.

Masks Nearby provides the estimated inventory of masks in pharmacies, post offices, and supermarkets around South Korea. Following the government's system to fundamentally control the mask shortage, the service also implemented a function that allows users to confirm the days on which they are eligible to purchase a mask. The website specifies that "the information on the location of pharmacies is not in real time," and is also promoting their fundraising campaign for further mask donations.

As the situation with the Coronavirus worsened rapidly, the developers

decided to move on from *Corona Nearby* towards a more suitable service to truly help the people. "We got the idea when we heard that one of our acquaintances had come back from a devastating journey to the pharmacy in which he found out that there were no masks left for him to buy," said Choi. "We realized that there needed to be a more realistic service to help people, instead of informing them about which places to avoid through *Corona Nearby* when it is nearly impossible at this point."

However, the service met obstacles as the inventory remains unstable or unknown for most of the distributors around the country. "We were originally planning on disclosing the inventory of all public vendors, but many pharmacies were reluctant to provide such information," said Choi. "We are hoping to utilize more of the government or corporate open data for the database as more people start to use this service."

👤 Receiving Support From Hyundai Card and Other Organizations

As citizens' interests in information services such as *Corona Nearby* increased rapidly, so did the interest of companies in sponsoring and collaborating with the developers. Hyundai Card was one of the first to contact the *Corona Nearby* team, offering them financial and spatial support through their "Studio Black" project. Studio Black provides benefits such as a full studio to work in, and the provision of more investment opportunities for the developers. "It is nice to have such a place for our regular meetings," shares Choi. "On the other hand, I still wonder sometimes if we really do deserve to be in such a



PROVIDED BY CHOI JUWON

Developers Choi Juwon, Kim Jun Tae, Park Ji Hwan and Lee In Woo.

great place."

Lee Doo-hee also contributed significantly to the success of *Masks Nearby* by bringing on more organizational support for the developers. The team is now receiving more data and technological support from a variety of providers. After receiving an immense amount of positive feedback and experiencing heavy traffic on the website, Lee responded, "We will try to increase the number of servers quickly, so that more people can use it." He ended, "I think coding is more meaningful when there is social influence involved," and thanked the team of KU undergraduates for their efforts.

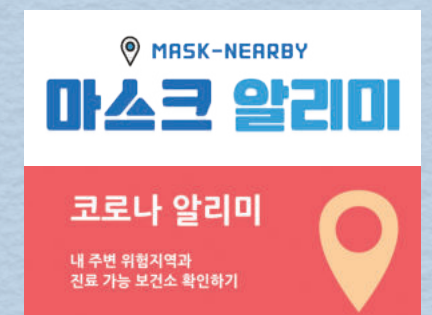
👤 KU's Like Lion

Like Lion is an educational organization that provides insight on programming and IT-services. Managed by Lee Doo-hee, the organization was first created in 2013 and has been producing many IT-based services created by teams of skilled undergraduate students. Choi shared that his experience at *Like Lion* KU helped him significantly in the development of *Corona Nearby*. "For the one year I spent as a member of *Like Lion* KU, I practiced

shaping and implementing my ideas through various events," said Choi. "I think that is why I was able to organize and create *Corona Nearby* as soon as I made the decision to do so."

Among the team members, Choi and Park Ji-hwan will stay at *Like Lion* KU as the management committee this year to work on their next curriculum.

As exemplified by the four developers' outstanding efforts in aiding societal action, *Like Lion* is seen to evolve further into a nationwide educational organization. *Masks Nearby* will continue to serve as a reliable information service for citizens, all living on with a shared desire and optimism for the pandemic to finally go west. 🇰🇷



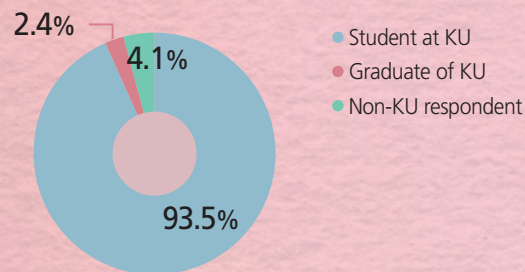
Cultures and Perceptions That Should *Go West* at KU

By Park Min Ha parkminha@korea.ac.kr

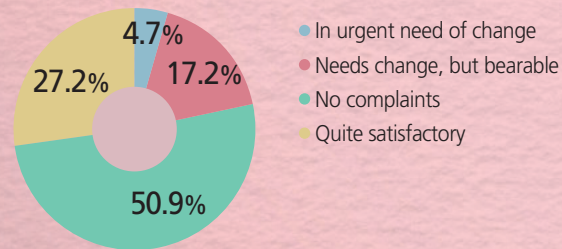
Minjok Godae! Korea University (KU) is often described with keywords that highlight its prominent culture and identity; *tradition, makgeolli, and unity* are some of them. These perceptions were created in the distant past but seem to be deeply embedded in the lives of KU students to this day. If you could change such cultures or perceptions of KU, which ones would you change? Otherwise, what new practices would you like to bring to KU? *The Granite Tower* (GT) surveyed 169 KU students to find out.



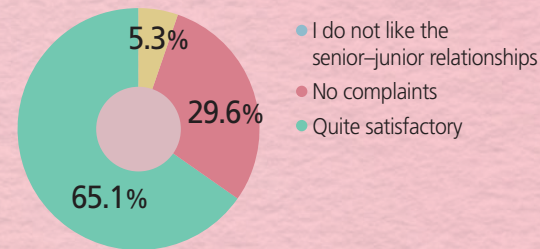
Q1. Please choose the option that fits your current status.



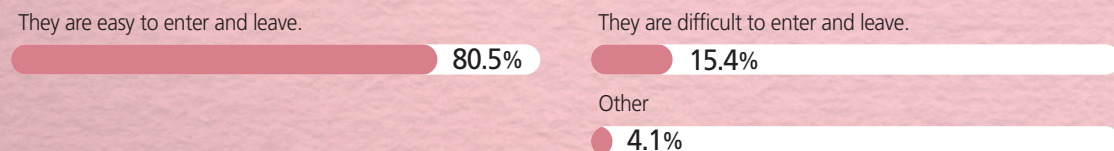
Q2. How do you feel about the drinking culture at Korea University?



Q3. How do you feel about the freshmen-senior relationship at Korea University?



Q4. How do you feel about the applying/leaving process of student-led clubs and academic organizations at Korea University?



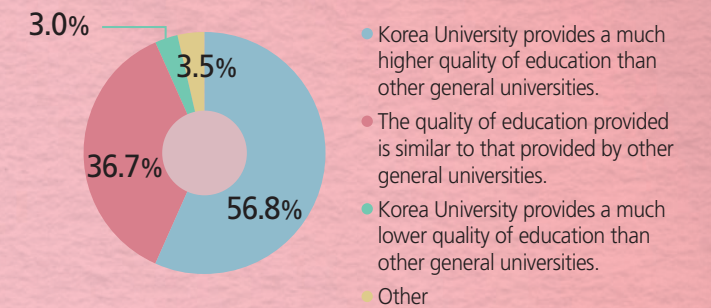
Q5. What do you think is the purpose of applying for/entering student-led clubs and academic organizations at Korea University? (multiple answers allowed)

- Members tend to apply to build friendly relationships with others. (72.2% - 122 respondents)
- Members tend to apply to build academic qualifications. (59.2% - 100 respondents)
- Members tend to apply to pursue their hobbies and interests. (67.5% - 114 respondents)
- Other (0.6% - 1 respondent)

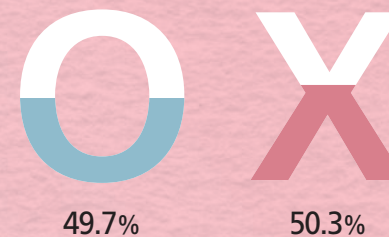
Q6. Please choose the option(s) that describes the public image of Korea University. (multiple answers allowed)

- Professional (20.7% - 35 respondents)
- Progressive (11.8% - 20 respondents)
- Traditional (73.4% - 124 respondents)
- Exemplary (15.4% - 26 respondents)
- Collective (86.4% - 146 respondents)
- Liberal (10.7% - 18 respondents)

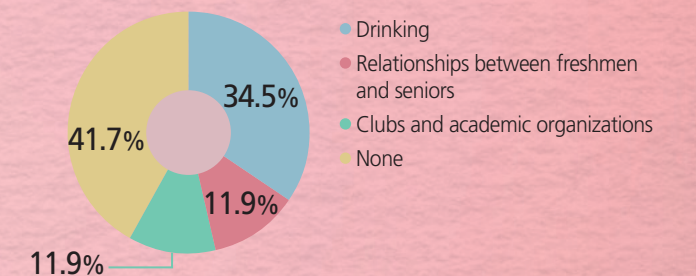
Q7. What are your thoughts on the public image of Korea University's quality of education?



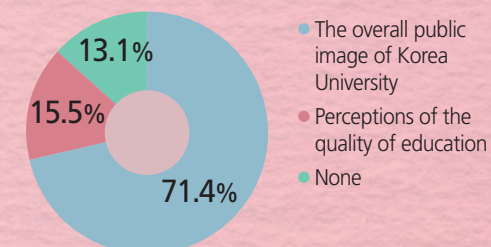
Q8. Would you like to change any culture(s) or perception(s) of Korea University?



Q8-1. Which culture(s) would you like to change?



Q8-2. Which image(s) would you like to change?



Q8-3. Are there any new cultures or perceptions you would like to introduce to Korea University? (Free response)

- o "A university that openly communicates with students and keeps up with trends"
- o "A university that breathes *prestige and luxury*"
- o "No more *traditional and drinking* images"

Supporters of Korea University Football Players



By Lee Eun Seo ohhenkwo68@korea.ac.kr

Staff in the football front office manage the team's finance, contract, and also promote their players' strengths to the public. For home games, the front office takes charge of managing and promoting the game as well. Most football teams have a front office to get sufficient support. The front office plays a crucial role in the players' welfare, and it can also affect the quality of the games. Korea University (KU) also managed the front office to "revive the depressed university football games" by attracting students' attention.

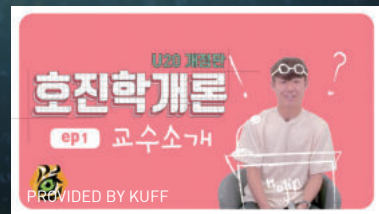
Korea University Football Front (KUFF) is the front office of KU's football team established by organizing students who are interested in football. Although the Annual Ko-Yon Games are held every year, not many students know which players are on the KU football team. Therefore, KUFF members decided to support and promote the team to attract students to be interested in the football players as well as the Annual Ko-Yon Games. Furthermore, the members want to draw more attention to university football games.

Newly established in 2019, they recently held the second recruiting period until January 15. KUFF manages the soccer team's affairs, produces promotional videos for the team, and organizes events. They also sponsor energy drinks, create

KU players' profiles, and distribute replica football uniforms. Besides this, KUFF provides information of University-League (U-League) games and encourages students to come and watch the games.

⚽ Attention Grabbers of the KU Football Team

The KU football team is composed of a promising player, Jeong Ho Jin ('18, Physical Education), who was selected as the Korean national team member of the 2019 Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) Under-20 (U-20) World Cup. The South Korean team eventually became the runner-ups in this world cup. KUFF recently uploaded five video clips of player Ho Jin's interview, called *Hojinhakgaeron*, meaning "Introduction to player Ho Jin." This video clip covered personal stories of the player, such



The Video *Hojinhakgaeron*

as what motivated him to start playing football and what role he played in the national team.

Ahn Youn Kyoung ('16, Environmental Science and Ecological Engineering) and Heo Sik ('17, Life Sciences) were in charge of producing the video. They decided to introduce Jeong because, although he was a very competent player, he did not receive much attention compared to the professional players in the national team. Ahn served as an interviewer, and Heo was the chief director of the video. Ahn commented about



PROVIDED BY AHN YOON GYUNG

Ahn Yoon Gyung ('16, Environmental Science and Ecological Engineering)

her colleague Heo, "He edited the video until the morning of the day he joined the military." Thanks to his efforts, the video clip received a great response, and many fans participated in the events.

According to Ahn, since Jeong was so famous due to the excitement of the U-20 World Cup at that time, KUFF was concerned about whether they would be able to cast him for the interview. However, Jeong willingly promised to do the interview with them, and he even gave a sweat suit of the Korean national players as a prize to one of the students who wrote supporting comments in their postings.

⚽ Participating in the U-League

U-League is a football league among universities in South Korea. The Korea Football Association (KFA) established the league in 2008 to normalize university football games. The KU football team recorded for the most wins in

this league. They had won the league twice so far, in 2016 and 2017, tying with Yonsei University and Yong In University.

KUFF's most significant responsibility is to draw audiences to watch the home games of U-League. Before the match, KUFF notifies the schedule of the games online and offline. On the day of the game, KUFF sets up a booth in the Green Field and guides the audiences. They provide drinks and inform the audience which is the best seat to enjoy the games. During the game, KUFF takes photos and reports how the game is going on their Instagram Story.

After the game, KUFF manages on-the-ground events for the audience. They either choose randomly or pick some viewers through a quiz and give presents such as soccer shoes, football uniforms, or signed balls. They also interview some of the players. Due to their efforts, KUFF once attracted an audience of 220 people. According to Ahn, "Without all the support of the students, KUFF cannot manage to hold these events. We will try our best to keep on supporting the players."

This year, KUFF is planning a "foreigner's day" event. KUFF will invite international students and exchange students as well as Korean students for the games.

In addition, KUFF wants to film a video log (vlog) of the players. According to Ahn, "Many fans are interested in the daily lives of KU football players. As these players are still enrolled students, we want to show how they attend classes, train in their teams, and manage their lives at the dormitory."

The KU football team will be playing in group four in the U-League this year. As the players made significant achievements in the previous U-Leagues, they are expected to produce a remarkable result this year as well. KUFF will continue their support in managing the players and the games. They will also promote the games through SNS postings and holding events to draw a larger audience. Information about the KU football team will be uploaded immediately at www.instagram.com/kuff_official or www.facebook.com/kuff.official. Please give much support to KUFF and the KU football team. **K**



Exposed: The Dark Chat Rooms of Telegram

By Kie Hae Seung hayleyyy1215@korea.ac.kr

Best chatrooms full of real-time slaves." Such a chat room description exposes the clearly disturbing psyche behind the recently surfaced series of cyber sex crimes, informally referred to as the "Telegram Room No. N" case. Under a system involving sexual exploitation and illegal distribution, these chat rooms have created never-ending vicious circles of sexual slavery and harassment towards their victims. Harder to trace than ever before, it seems cyber sex crime in Korea has mutated into a disturbing elusive form; one that must soon be grasped and eradicated.

In November, 2019, *Hankyoreh* became the first journalism source to report in depth on the "Telegram Room No. N" case, a set of sexual exploitation crimes on Telegram, an open-source instant messaging service. According to *Hankyoreh*, at least 30 women's personal information and explicit photographs were illegally distributed through Telegram since February 2019. Each chat room had 300 to 700 participants who openly, verbally, and sexually harassed the victims. There were eight chat rooms that were each given a number, hence the name "Room No. N." Beginning with this now infamous case, a stream of sex crimes, similar in design, has followed the secret chat rooms of Telegram with no signs of stopping.

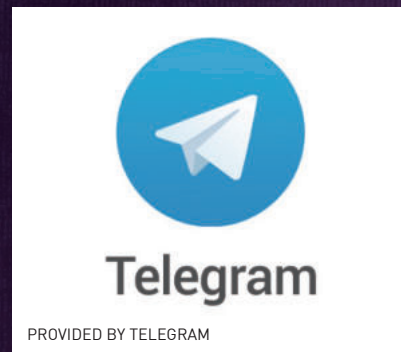
The Mechanism Behind Crimes

While the "Room No. N" case and its copycats fall under the general category of "cyber sex crime," they can be grouped under a narrower category because they follow the same mechanism. Although the tactics of individual criminals vary, these crimes follow the pattern of contact,

leverage establishment, distribution, and production. Through these steps, the chat room creators become equipped with a sustainable financial model with which they operate the sexual exploitation chat rooms on Telegram.

The assembly of extortion begins when contact is first initiated. An unsuspecting victim is contacted through a personal account on internet platforms, such as Twitter. The criminal then extracts personal information by pretending to be a police officer who is investigating the victim for certain charges or by sending a false log-in link into which victims enter their ID and password. In other cases, the victim initiates contact after reading an internet post imitating a job advertisement. With the extracted personal information, leverage is established and the offenders blackmail victims into sending them nude photographs and videos.

This explicit content is then illegally distributed in secure Telegram chat rooms, sometimes along with the victims' personal information. After paying a designated



Telegram's logo

amount of "sponsor fee" with untraceable cryptocurrency, such as Bitcoin, chat room participants devour and verbally abuse the victims sexually through the photographs and videos they received. From then on, because of the already established leverage, it becomes easy for the chat room operators to force victims to continuously deliver sexual content. Some offenders, such as the infamous "Baksa," go so far as to take their operation off the virtual world and retain offline workers who track down and blackmail victims in person.

Is There a Way Out?

Despite severe proliferation of sexual

exploitation crimes utilizing the same mechanism since the "Room No. N" crime, this set of crimes has yet to be collectively quashed due to legal implications. The most commonly cited obstruction to investigating such crimes is the location of its server. Like other programs of its kind, Telegram is not a Korea-based company and its server exists overseas, most recently operating in Dubai. This specific property causes issues regarding investigation of information stored in non-Korean servers by Korean authorities because the only way to investigate would be via cooperation with the Dubai police, leading to technical and legal difficulties.

According to Professor Lee Won-Sang (Chosun University, Department of Law), "Because Korea already has criminal cooperation treaties with many nations, in normal circumstances, cyber sex crime investigations are possible. However, in a realistic sense, these types of investigations take longer than usual and may be stunted due to the cooperating country's situation." Therefore, while Korean criminals on Telegram are legally subject to investigation from Korean investigatory agencies, it is not easy to carry out because of technical difficulties regarding transnational police cooperation.



Professor Lee Won-Sang

Direct regulation of platforms also seems to be a difficult road; platforms with criminal activity, in this case Telegram, are often able to evade investigatory agencies' power. Korea's political and economic national power, smaller in comparison to superpowers' such as the United States (U.S.) and Russia, makes it challenging to enforce domestic laws on foreign enterprises like Telegram. In such circumstances, enthusiastic regulation of criminal activity on the platform's part can only be voluntary, not legally mandatory.

Although it seems like there is obstacle after obstacle, the issue of online sex crime has too great of a magnitude to abandon. Cooperative investigation with other nations has unfolded and can continue despite difficulties. Multinational investigations into dark web child pornography websites and the main

server of Soranet have concluded successfully by charging the responsible parties. The public's support for sex crime resolution is notable as well; with over 100,000 digital signatures, "The Petition for the Resolution of Sex Crimes on Telegram" became the first ever to be considered for legislation through the National Assembly Petition system. Being considered, however, seems to be where its progress ended. Although a reform bill on sexual violence was voted for in a plenary session of the National Assembly on March 5, it seems that a disappointingly small proportion of the four main requests of the petition was indeed included in the bill.

The most important step that needs to be taken, however, is a fundamental one. In addition to suggesting the introduction of novel investigative methods such as undercover operations and limited online searches, Professor Lee comments, "The current domestic laws regarding sex crimes are very patchy and without basis. Therefore, the resolution of cyber sex crimes in Korea lies not in simply raising sentence periods but reforming the entire criminal law and justice system to encompass cyber crime."

While the tactics behind cyber sex crimes have been constantly evolving to evade legal consequences, it seems the criminal law system has not, leaving legal loopholes wide open for exploitation. Unless the necessary actions are taken, other crimes with similar designs will make reality a repetitive nightmare for current and potential victims. Although the method with which this issue will be resolved is undetermined, it seems clear that it is about time for cyber sex crimes to go west once and for all. **K**



National Assembly petition regarding the resolution of digital sex crimes on Telegram



Finding a New Road of Election Act

By Kweon Seo-young kb071531@korea.ac.kr

Despite the twists and turns, the South Korean politics is pioneering and carving out a new road to democracy. On December 27, 2019, the *Revised Public Official Election Act* passed the Assembly plenary session after a long struggle. With numerous discussions made to reach an agreement, the revision of the *Public Official Election Act* was led, regarding an interlinked proportional representation system and voting rights for 18-year-old students. Problem being that it contains both significance and limits at the same time, it has been a topic of controversy. With the general election approaching, the public's eyes are on how the new act will influence the political situation in Korea.

The revised act includes changes such as proportional representation system of parliamentary seats and voting age, and is to take its first effect on the 21st general election in April 2020. Although the revised act finally reached an agreement and was passed, controversy regarding an Interlinked Proportional Representation System (IPRS) has remained through the whole process. Opposition from the United Future Party (UFP) and the original purpose of the election law revision were in conflict. There were attempts to launch a filibuster by the UFP and even physical actions to stop the passing of the bill. What is it about the revised act that caused the smooth and peaceful agreement in parliament go west?

Ⓜ Ignition of Change by Minority Parties

The existing election system was said

to be the cause of a large number of voting resignation. In the 20th general election held in 2016, 50.3 percent of the votes were for resignation. In the general election, each voter casts two ballots; one for a candidate the voter supports and another to vote on the political party that they support, regardless of region. There are total of 300 seats in the Congress, of which 253 allocated through a vote by the former, and the remaining 47 seats based on the percentage of votes each party won in the latter. This currently existing system is difficult for each party to have their votes reflected in the seats, thereby creating a serious discrepancy between the percentage of votes won by parties and the percentage of seats held by each party.

Kang Ki-suk, the chairman of Korea News Agency Commission (KONAC)

shared a view that it also creates a monopolization of two major parties, stating, "Only candidates of particular parties are elected in particular regions, which makes it hard for the minor parties without a regional base to produce winners," also adding, "This leads to a problem that the people who support the minor parties do not have lawmakers who represent themselves in the Assembly." Even if they have won a large number of proportional representation votes, it is



PROVIDED BY MBC NEWS

| Revised Election Act being passed.

limited. As such, out of 253 seats, the Democratic Party (DP) and the UFP held hold 116 and 91 seats respectively, showing an overwhelming proportion.

Thus, in order to minimize the distortion of the people's will and enable more diverse policies and ideologies in the Congress, the key of the revision, IPRS was proposed. If a party got fewer seats in the district but at the same time got high percentage of votes in the party vote, it guarantees the party to take more proportional representative seats. It can be seen as more advantageous for minor parties—especially the 3rd and 4th most popular parties, Bareunmirae Party and Justice Party—which take relatively fewer seats in the district.

Minority parties are expected to have a wider way of winning seats in the Congress, paving a way for the two-party-oriented domestic politics to move toward a multi-party format. Professor Park Hyun-sung (Division of Liberal Arts and Social Science, Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology) stated, "If the number of parties that hold seats increases due to the introduction of a multiparty system and the enhanced proportional representation, it is likely that a culture of consulting with each other will be encouraged. Hence, making it difficult to determine policies without the consultation between parties could reflect the views of more diverse voters."

Ⓜ Political Parties with a Long Face

The UFP is unsatisfied with the

revised election law, since its seats in the parliamentary along would be reduced. Although they argue that the IPRS violates the principle of direct and equal election, the harsh impact of IPRS on their political power is their fundamental reason for opposing the IPRS. The UFP, a conservative party, currently has 119 seats which is more than a rate of 40 percent. However, once the revised election law is applied, it will be difficult for the UFP to gain more than 100 seats.

Although the UFP showed strategies for delaying the plenary session of the Congress through filibuster, the revised election law was passed and the UFP accordingly announced that it would create a satellite party. They are seeking to secure a large number of proportional representative seats by encouraging voters who support their party to vote for their satellite party, and later merge again. Kang of KONAC mentioned the possibility of being alienated from the original purpose of the revision of the election law, saying "Although the DP is working on various measures such as solidarity with civic activists and other progressive parties, the spirit of the law revision is in situation of being undermined." The DP is critical of the satellite party drive for now, as they cannot rule out the possibility of creating a satellite party as well.

The reaction of minority parties to the revised election law is not entirely positive either. The original intention was to reduce the number of seats of



PROVIDED BY KANG KI-SUK

| Kang Ki-suk of Korea News Agency Commission

regional constituencies and increase the number of proportional seats. However, after the agreement was reached, the proportion of seats returned to its original status.

Ⓜ How is it going to be?

According to Kang, "The previous proportional representation system was not an interlocked system, so it tended to be monopolized by large political parties, but now by adopting a quasi-IPRS, the equality of votes has improved and the value of democracy has been enhanced." On the other hand, he also pointed out that "It is not a full IPRS which has some limits, and in the next general election, related laws should be revised to prevent the trickery of large major parties."

Although controversies of the revised election law were mostly based on interests of each party, the fundamental right of national sovereignty, civility and cohesion should not be deprived. The consequences of the pioneering in the election law still remain in question. After all, elections are by and for the citizens. **K**

Mourning Loved Ones Through New Virtual Reality Technology

By Park Min Ha parkminha@korea.ac.kr

Imagine meeting your beloved ones once again after their death. Their eyes, nose, hands, and even fingers will look just as they did before, taking you back in time and helping you say goodbye for the last time. Now in 2020, such a dream has been developed into a vivid reality through virtual reality (VR) technology. Will such trends in VR technology open new doors for the industry? Or will it last as just a momentary movement that is bound to bring on controversy?

On February 6, *Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC)* aired a special human documentary called “I Met You” on a surprising application of virtual reality (VR) technology. The documentary showed a mother having a saddening encounter with a virtual version of her daughter Na-yeon, whom she had lost to blood cancer, made using VR technology and visual effects. Responding to a *YouTube* upload of the documentary, viewers “shed tears” and commented that their “hearts ached so much that it was almost uncomfortable to watch.”

In regard to the trend, Professor Kim Jounghyun (Department of Computer Science) shared, “Utilizing computer technology to remember our loved ones has long been perceived as an attractive application of VR and computer graphics for some time.” According to Professor Kim, VR technology had slowly emerged from



PROVIDED BY PROFESSOR KIM JOUNGHYUN
| Professor Kim Jounghyun

the growing computer graphics community around the mid-1990s. VR was able to provide more of an interactive experience compared to traditional computer graphics and had thus seemed more attractive to users who were now able to “draw up a much higher level of empathy”—just like “I Met You” did for Na-yeon’s mother and the viewers of the documentary.

🕒 VR Technology in South Korea

As for South Korea, it is surely a well-known leader in the industry of gaming

technology and is now stepping into the world of VR as well. In fact, South Korea is excelling in the field of VR gaming, combining the nation’s conventional expertise with up and coming interactive technology for all generations to enjoy. “There are now quite a few VR gaming theme parks or pavilions throughout the country,” Professor Kim commented, highlighting the bright future of the Korean VR industry.

Indeed, most of the popular streets in cities have VR gaming sites or even theme parks and VR cafés ready for customers to enjoy. According to *Seoul Economy*, the VR industry of South Korea is projected to be worth a total of 5.7 trillion South Korean won this year. This is less than the expected value of the global VR industry, but surely a great increase since its official introduction and commercial success in the late 2010s. Citizens, especially the younger

generation, are now more than used to the term *virtual reality*, as even schools and afterschool programs are making use of the new technology to better the students’ learning experience.

🕒 Computers and VR Technology

Even so, many have a hard time distinguishing VR from traditional computer graphics. “Virtual reality seeks to achieve a total experience, while computer graphics is more about reality,” explains Professor Kim. “Reality is surely important in VR, but it is not everything.” While it may seem odd that virtual reality focuses less on creating *realistic* graphics, it simply means that VR relates to a more multidimensional, sensual experience for users. “To provide a complete experience, multimodal interaction is important—that is, providing believable feedback in our multiple senses: visual, aural, tactile, haptic, and even olfactory or taste.”

Simulating and delivering such experience to human users are challenging tasks that VR technology tackles. The technology “emulates how humans communicate and interact in the real world, such as talking, applying, and feeling for forces, gestures, and emotions,” Professor Kim says. “Artificial intelligence (AI) will play even more important roles in the future in the sense of enabling technology for understanding the intentions of the human user and translating them into a believable form.”

🕒 More Trends in VR Technology

Professor Lee Jongtak (Department of VR Media Contents, Korea



PROVIDED BY PROFESSOR LEE JONGTAK
| Professor Lee Jongtak

Polytechnics University) shared his insight that most commercial VR services being developed in the current state are related to video games or educational material. “Commercial entertainment such as VR game rooms are experiencing quite a success these days. As a result, companies such as SONY are releasing a lot of VR games suitable for household play.”

“The application areas for VR are very wide,” explained Professor Lee. “In addition to gaming and entertainment, as technology that allows one to experience something that cannot be attained in the real world, it can be used in training, education, medical treatments, and tele-presence and communication. We are currently experiencing another revival of VR due to some recent advancements in various key technologies, such as computer graphics hardware, inexpensive display headsets, and stable sensors.”

🕒 Obstacles to Overcome

While highlighting the importance and the potential of the VR industry, Professor Kim and Professor Lee also shared their concerns about the obstacles that might hinder its growth. “I feel that we still need to overcome

several obstacles to truly bring VR into our lives,” said Professor Kim. “Headsets need to become lighter and more usable, *sickness* to be lessened, the interactions more natural, and the platforms more standardized. Once improvements are made in these aspects, it would kick-start the ecosystem of more content and wider user base.”

Professor Lee elaborated that the technology’s narrow focus on games and education needs to expand further into more diverse applications. “A diverse development of VR technology could help the stagnant technology in military, firefighting, disaster prevention, and the medical and industrial fields.”

In a similar manner, the most important progress to be made in general would be in the hardware. “We have already experienced such an issue before during the launch of 3D televisions,” said Professor Lee. “There was a massive investment into this new TV-technology, but not enough hardware, or television models themselves, that were compatible with the technology.” Professor Lee suggests that more research and development in hardware should be made in order to prevent such mistakes from happening within the VR industry.

Virtual reality technology is surely a promising and futuristic field, providing groundbreaking entertainment and even added efficiency to our daily lives. In order to overcome the limitations facing the industry, there is great hope that the computer mega minds of our generation will turn these dreams into an easy reality. 📖

The Coronavirus Disease 2019

— The World Brought to a Halt

By Jun Uhnjin uhnjin@korea.ac.kr

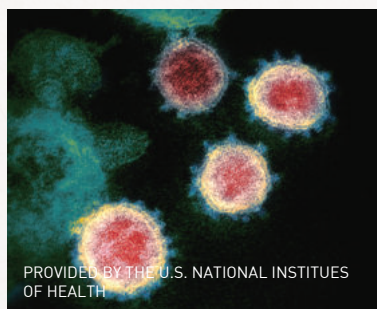
By Nam Eun Seo eunseo0222@korea.ac.kr

Face masks sold out in every pharmacy, people stocking up on emergency food supplies, and not a soul to be seen in the usually crowded downtown streets; what seems reminiscent of a disaster film is the grim reality of the situation in South Korea at the moment. It is the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). With the rapid spread of the virus in Europe and the Middle East, the World Health Organization (WHO) has officially declared the outbreak a pandemic. As the number of confirmed patients and death tolls increase by the day, the world is holding its breath as it watches the pandemonium unfold.



COVID-19 is a respiratory disease first detected in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei, China. On January 30, the WHO declared the outbreak a “public health emergency of international concern,” and on March 11, finally declared the outbreak a pandemic. As of March 13, around 133,210 cases have been confirmed worldwide in over 40 countries with more than 4,950 deaths. The South Korean government has raised the alert level for COVID-19 to its highest, with 7,979 confirmed cases, 17,940 suspected cases and 67 deaths within the country.

However, this is not the first time a coronavirus has wreaked havoc on humanity; coronaviruses have struck the world in devastating ways twice in the past two decades – once as the deadly SARS outbreak in 2003, and the other time, as the MERS outbreak in 2015. According to the WHO, COVID-19 has a contagiousness lower than that of SARS and higher than that of MERS. It also has a fatality rate of about two percent – lower than that of SARS and MERS, which were around nine percent and 38 percent,



PROVIDED BY THE U.S. NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
| Microscopy image of the coronavirus

respectively. Yet what is surprising is that, despite the comparatively lower contagiousness and fatality rate, the number of confirmed cases as well as death toll of the novel coronavirus disease have far surpassed those of SARS and MERS.

The Overburdened Chinese Medical System

Many attribute the early spread of the virus to the Chinese government’s alleged failure to handle the situation both medically and politically during the early prevention stages of the pandemic. Pre-existing faults in China’s stagnant medical system seem to have aggravated the situation, as Chinese hospitals struggle with the strain of the outbreak. According to the *New York Times* (NYT), China is “relying on a medical system that is overburdened even in normal times.” Indeed, medical facilities in China are hopelessly overwhelmed and unable to provide patients with even the most basic care; and the lack of medical support is even worse in smaller cities such as Wuhan.

As early as mid-January, eight hospitals in Hubei sent out a call for N95 masks, goggles, and surgical gowns. In a press conference during the same week, the Wuhan health commission admitted that the virus had put a strain on their medical system, stating that there were “long lines and a shortage of sickbeds.” The Chinese government’s lockdown policy did not help either. According

to the *NYT*, China’s lockdown of several major cities, including Wuhan, could be a potential obstacle to getting medical supplies to hospitals. The death toll for the Chinese medical staff show just how dire the situation is. As of February 26, 1716 medical staffs in China have been infected, six of them dead.

Caixin Media, a Chinese news outlet, reported another incident that gained attention within Korean society—Chang Kai, a Chinese film director in Wuhan and three other members of his family had died from the coronavirus disease because they could not find medical care in time. In his will, the film director said, “After a few days of taking care of my parents, the coronavirus mercilessly took over me and my wife. We went begging to countless hospitals but none had enough sickbeds to take us in.”

Authoritarian Regime Backfires

The biggest part of the Chinese government’s misstep in containing the disease, in its early stages, stems from China’s political problems. The new coronavirus disease has helped shine a light on problems in the Chinese regime that have been festering for decades. With more than 60 online restrictions created by its government and implemented by local branches of government-owned internet service providers, China has had its share of censorship accusations. According to the *British*



PROVIDED BY GETTY IMAGES
| A patient arriving at the Wuhan Red Cross Hospital in China

Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the Chinese government defended its right to censorship in a document outlining the government’s attitude towards the internet.

In light of the recent coronavirus outbreak, the Chinese government has been criticized for worsening the situation by neglecting – or even trying to cover up – the spread of the disease during the first few days of it being reported. When the existence of the coronavirus was first reported by Doctor Li Wenliang in a viral screenshot of a medical school alumni group chat, he was interrogated by the police and was branded as a “rumormonger” by China’s Supreme Court, according to *Cable News Network* (CNN). He was even forced to write a statement acknowledging his “misdemeanor”. In addition, *Radio Free Asia* (RFA) reported on February 3 that the Chinese government issued a

“censorship” order on local media covering reports about COVID-19 in China.

Many claim that such initial neglect towards the virus led to the sharp increase in the number infected patients in China during the early stages of COVID-19. “If the officials had disclosed information about the epidemic earlier... I think it would have been a lot better. There should be more openness and transparency,” said Doctor Li in an interview with the *NYT*. Such incidents have undoubtedly demonstrated the need for international transparency and the danger of ulterior motives regarding disease control.

South Korea Braces Itself

The Korean government began strengthening their measures for COVID-19 on January 3. They

strengthened heat monitoring and medical inspections of those entering the country via Wuhan and claimed that they would subject people entering from China with symptoms of the virus to quarantine measures. The alert level for COVID-19 was raised to its third highest level on January 20, when the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Korea, and then raised to its second highest level on January 27 when the fourth confirmed case emerged. The government eventually raised the alert level to its highest on February 23; this was the first time the alert level for an infectious disease was raised to its highest level since the Influenza A (H1N1) crisis in 2009.

Currently, the management of an infectious disease is largely divided into managing the pathogen itself, the spread of the pathogen, and finally, the host, according to Professor Jang Sungin (College of Medicine, Yonsei University). “The first step South Korea is capable of taking is managing the spread of the pathogen, which is again divided into quarantine, isolation, and hygiene management. Prohibiting the entry to Korea from Wuhan is the quarantine measure our country has taken, and separating confirmed cases within the country from others who are susceptible to the disease is the isolation measure,” says Professor Jang.

On March 2, the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(KCDC) released its seventh edition of the COVID-19 response guidelines for local governments in order to “minimize the damage” caused by the spread of the disease. The seventh edition advised local governments to form their respective patient care team composed of medical professionals, who would classify the patients’ severity into four levels. The guideline advised a swift hospitalization for patients with severe cases, while suggesting that those with milder cases should be quarantined in temporary “daily care centers” set up at government-run facilities or other local accommodations.

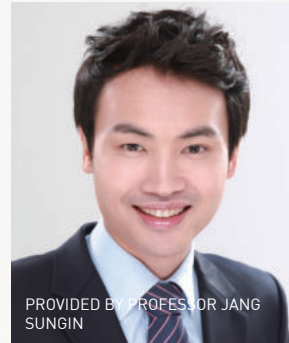
As the situation grows more dire with infections taking over local communities such as Daegu, the country seems to be in need of new measures to fight the outbreak. Regarding the outbreak in local communities, Professor Jang says, “We must work on slowing down the spread of COVID-19 and focus on the efficient treatment of the patients. He added, “Since COVID-19 is highly infectious with no known cure, we must prepare for a nationwide epidemic. Protocols and effective resourcing measures must be prepared in case the situation in Daegu spreads to the entire nation.” Regarding possible prevention measures, Professor Jang suggested that a national shutdown may be effective. “However, as the disease is continuing to spread in other countries including China, there is a possibility that the pathogen re-enters

the country to revive the epidemic,” he added.

Korean Government's Response Under Criticism

Much like the case in China, the South Korean government has not been able to escape the accusation of failing to contain the spread of COVID-19 during its early stages. One of the biggest accusations claim that the Korean government worsened the epidemic by ignoring the Korean Medical Association’s suggestions regarding COVID-19. According to *MSN News*, the Korean Medical Association claimed that the government has “refused to accept the Korean Medical Association’s suggestions to restrict entries into the country from China” despite them warning the government more than six times.

The South Korean government was under fire, once again, by citizens and the media alike when it was revealed that, due to the lack of sickbeds in Daegu, two COVID-19 patients died while they were isolating themselves at home, awaiting treatment. Those angered by the incidents called for improved measures regarding patients in self isolation. In addition, various calls have been made for the improvement of laws regarding COVID-19, from the need for forcefully running tests for suspected patients to the need to acquire sufficient sickbeds by establishing medical facilities specialized for infectious diseases.



PROVIDED BY PROFESSOR JANG SUNGIN

| Professor Jang Sungin (College of Medicine, Yonsei University)

A Red Light in the South Korean Economy

According to the *Asia Business Daily* (ABD), the distribution industry in South Korea is estimated to have experienced a loss of more than 370 billion Korean Won as of February 20. This is due to the skyrocketing number of businesses unexpectedly closing due to the spread of COVID-19. After confirmed cases of patients diagnosed with the virus were announced, places where the patients previously visited closed their doors to proceed with disinfection measures and prevent further infections.

Buildings from shopping centers to large factories carried out quarantine operations in February. For instance, the Lotte Department Store located in Myeong-dong closed its doors for three days once the first patient of COVID-19 in South Korea was discovered to have visited the store. As the store is known as one of the busiest department stores with heavy traffic, the *Maeil Business Newspaper* assessed that even closing for one day

would result in a loss of tens of billions of Korean Won. Even when open, businesses faced difficulties due to the deterred economic activities of consumers avoiding outdoor activities. Overall, the three domestic department store giants—Lotte, Shinsegae, and Hyundai—are estimated to have experienced a sale reduction of 500 billion Korean Won during the month of February.

Various factories, including the Samsung Electronics’ Gumi plant and Hyundai Motors’ Ulsan production factory, had to undergo a cessation as well due to emerging cases of COVID-19 among employees. Amore Pacific, a South Korean cosmetics corporation, decided to temporarily close down its production facility in Osan for disinfection measures. The company stated that the closure holds the possibility of disruptions in production. Likewise, COVID-19 has

indeed placed South Korean businesses and consumers in an emergency situation.

On March 13, President Moon Jae-in convened an emergency meeting to review the domestic economic and financial conditions at present. As COVID-19 induced a major shock to the economy, President Moon expressed his concerns by describing the present situation as an “unprecedented economic emergency situation not comparable to those of MERS or SARS.” In order to minimize the financial damage and revive the shrinking economy, the importance of being attentive to the voices of citizens and aggressively implementing effective measures was strongly emphasized.

COVID-19 Permeates Japan

Japan was also one of the countries that could not escape from the wrath



PROVIDED BY NEWSIS

| Jung Eun-Kyeong, Director of KCDC

of COVID-19. “A petri dish” is how the *NYT* depicted the Diamond Princess cruise ship which had been docked in Yokohama since February 4. After a passenger who had left the cruise ship in Hong Kong tested positive for COVID-19, over 3,700 passengers on board were required to remain on the ship in quarantine. Virus tests were performed on passengers by medical teams, and those who tested positive were then allowed to disembark from the ship for medical treatment.

According to *BBC*, Kentaro Iwata, a professor specializing in infection diseases at Kobe University, criticized how the government handled the cruise ship situation. Stating that the ship was “completely inadequate in terms of infection control,” he emphasized how passengers were vulnerable to the infection due to the ambiguous distinction made between the contaminated and infection-free areas within the ship.

Among the passengers of the Diamond Princess, 697 cases of COVID-19 infection and six deaths were reported. Additionally, cases of infection were discovered in passengers who returned home after initially being tested negative. For example, eight of the 164 Australian passengers evacuated to Darwin were reported to have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Katsunobu Kato, the Health Minister of Japan, stated that domestic follow-up examinations for the virus will

be increased for the Japanese passengers who have left the ship.

Furthermore, as Japan is the host country of the 2020 Summer Olympics, concerns surrounding the international event have escalated. On February 25, Dick Pound, a senior member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) stated that the cancellation of the Olympics is a possible decision to be made considering the current COVID-19 situation. According to *Consumer News and Business Channel* (CNBC), Pound stated that the situation must be carefully monitored in order to check whether it can be said with confidence that the Tokyo Olympics is under “sufficient control.” The official decision regarding the Olympics is expected to be made in May, after a comprehensive consultation with the WHO and the United Nations (UN).

Facing a Worldwide Economic Plunge

The influence of COVID-19 did not only limit itself to Asia but led to an economic downturn stretching across the globe. On March 7, *Bloomberg* construed the COVID-19 outbreak as a catalyst to “a standstill” in the world economy. Based on the estimation of China’s weak gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 1.2 percent in 2020 first quarter year on year, it suggested that without a quick plan of action, China will generate a shock to the financial market and even cause a long-term recession.

However, business strategies of multinational corporations completely withdrawing from China are forecasted to be of low possibility. Professor Lee Wang-hwi (Department of Political Science and Diplomacy, Ajou University) explained that multinational corporations have endeavored to diversify their supply

chain in order to reduce the damage of unpredictable natural disasters. For instance, after the United States (U.S.)-China trade war, western firms including those of the U.S. pursued relocation of production facilities from China to countries in Southeast Asia.

In spite of such efforts, numerous corporations are maintaining and even expanding their facilities in China. Professor Lee pointed out, “The reason behind the difficulties of multinational corporations to decrease the dependency on China is due to the fact China is *the workshop of the world* and possesses the world’s largest consumer market at the same time.” Therefore, the possibility for corporations to completely depart from China is expected to be shallow.

The Questionable Response of the WHO

The WHO, known for its primary role of securing better public health and combating diseases, has faced major criticisms after its initial response to COVID-19. During a press meeting in January, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Director General of the WHO, praised the “commitment” and “transparency” of the Chinese government toward the outbreak. However, criticism followed this compliment after China was questioned about news manipulation and control — measures which were significantly incongruent with “endeavors toward transparency.”



PROVIDED BY PROFESSOR LEE WANG-HWI
| Professor Lee Wang-hwi (Department of Political Science and Diplomacy, Ajou University)

The interlinkage between health and politics was also mentioned by *CNN*. As the WHO heavily depends on the financial backing and cooperation from member states, the decisions made by the agency have long been criticized for being politicized. In particular, the fact that China is “one of the wealthiest donors” to the WHO increased the suspicions behind the excessive praise for China’s measures from the Director General. Undeniably, the WHO’s response to COVID-19 was an incident which displayed the existing political intrusions to the international agency.

Coronavirus and Racism against Asia

According to *TIME*, “several accounts of racism and xenophobia have been reported and documented on social media” after the outbreak of COVID-19 was officially revealed. Anti-Asian hate-crimes increased, including verbal insults and physical attacks. *Columbia Broadcasting System* (CBS), a U.S. radio and TV network, pointed out

racist incidents in Asian American communities as well. In particular, businesses in New York City owned by Asian Americans have undergone “massive losses” — one restaurant even stating to have experienced a “50% drop in business.”


At the UN Human Rights Council’s 43rd session, Michelle Bachelet, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, stated her concerns about the spread of worldwide discrimination due to the disease. Bachelet accentuated that the pandemic has induced “a disturbing wave of prejudice against people of Chinese and East Asian ethnicity.” As the impact size of COVID-19 is predicted to be extended, an earnest request for governments to combat against the current racism issue was voiced.

Will an End to Coronavirus Come?

Despite the fact that there is currently no definite vaccine targeted for COVID-19, a vaccine and medical treatment for the infectious disease are under research. According to *Yonhap News Agency* (YNA), a research group in the Korea Research Institute of Chemical Technology (KRICT) reported to have discovered neutralizing antibodies that can fight against COVID-19. Such research was possible through finding similarities between the dielectric substance of COVID-19 and those of SARS and MERS. The antibody is predicted to contribute toward the

development of an effective vaccination for patients of COVID-19.

Furthermore, on March 6, *Korean Broadcasting System* (KBS) reported that the Ministry of Science and Information and Communications Technology (MSIT) of South Korea plans to conduct experiments to test drugs suitable for COVID-19. Through cooperation with the Korea Research Institute of Bioscience and Biotechnology (KRIBB), the MSIT will screen more than 2,000 drugs approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and develop experimental mice for animal testing. Although sufficient time will be required to develop a safe and effective medication for COVID-19, the research is expected to be pushed ahead considering the urgent need.

Globalization — though are escalating, shines with numerous positive aspects through lowering the barriers between countries worldwide, vulnerabilities do lie in cases of the rapid spread of deadly diseases. Now, COVID-19 is becoming a representative case of a global pandemic. Although concerns are rising for COVID-19 serving as a momentum for countries to reinforce their barriers, the indispensable need for worldwide cooperation continues to remain. In order to prevent further grievous damage from not only COVID-19 but future global health crises, citizens, political parties, and countries should actively unite to weather the pandemic with proper policies and treatment. 



PROVIDED BY THE GUARDIAN

| The Diamond Princess cruise ship quarantined at Yokohama



PHOTOGRAPHED BY KWEON SEO YOUNG

Light is perceived to drive out darkness. Darkness, however, does not exist without light. Light does not exist without darkness either. One's darkness and brightness can be defined differently from people to people. One's negative and positive experiences, one's inner minds and outer minds or secrets and not-secrets. Both, however, often coexist and makes up a person's richness.

B E A NEW COLOR



PHOTOGRAPHED BY KWEON SEO YOUNG

By The Granite Tower Photo Division

The world after death and death itself are commonly put into darkness and black as the color. It is only in life that people can actually feel the vast and multifarious colors. One of the great happiness in life is drawing the flash of inspiration from the impressions of colors. So why not try to find colors around you in the midst of repetitive daily routine? Without your attention, those colors might eternally fade away into darkness where you never could get them back.



PHOTOGRAPHED BY KWEON SEO YOUNG



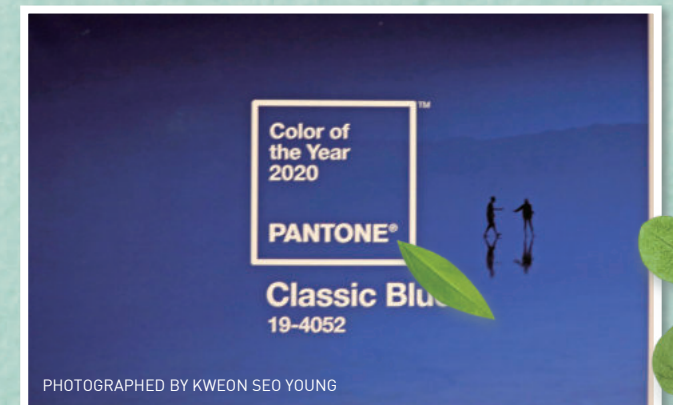
PHOTOGRAPHED BY KWEON SEO YOUNG

Color is the place where our brain and the universe meet.
-Paul Klee-



PHOTOGRAPHED BY KWEON SEO YOUNG

What color would you bloom for this year?



PHOTOGRAPHED BY KWEON SEO YOUNG



There are times when we go west. You get hurt from people and experiences, and then are totally lost. You might even start to feel like you are a lost cause. Nonetheless, it is the simple yet valuable happiness of everyday that gives us the power to go through all the vicissitudes. Spring, is a perfect time of the year to feel great happiness! All creatures start to enjoy the exuberant atmosphere and they themselves be the source of the vitality. Feel the happiness unique to spring!



"The heart is like a garden. It can grow compassion or fear; resentment or love. What seeds will you plant there?"

- Jack Kornfield

Music: A Therapeutic Habit to Go West

By Lee Donghyun real0822@korea.ac.kr

Vocal Play Season 2 is a survival musical audition program in which university students representing their school compete against each other. A non-professional singer from Korea University (KU), Kim Taehoon ('12, Spanish Language and Literature), became a sensation by making it to the semifinal of the program. By competing in the semifinals with his outstanding singing skills, he raised the status of KU in the entertainment industry.

Motivation to Go West

Kim's musical interest and talent are not simply the product of his own efforts. Kim felt that the environment he grew up in encouraged him to develop his musical habits. His parents both have artistic abilities and his brother likes to sing. Because the people around him all seemed interested in music, Kim also



Kim Taehoon ('12, Spanish Language and Literature)

began to devote his attention to music at a young age. Growing up, he invested four hours a day in singing and motivated himself by watching YouTube videos of different singers.

Additionally, the television show that he liked the most was *American Idol*, which is a survival audition program held in the United States (U.S.). Every time he watched *American Idol*, he would dream of singing in front of crowds and judges. The part of the show where participants receive feedback from judges thrilled Kim because he was amazed at how the judges pointed out the contestant's weak points. Watching the participants overcome their weaknesses through endless practice indirectly helped Kim to achieve his goals. By watching the videos of the winners of *American Idol*, he pursued his dream to participate in an audition program in Korea.

After entering Korea University (KU), he joined Kugga Band — a KU vocal club — and enjoyed practicing his singing with other KU students. According to Kim, because there are many talented students in the club, he was able to learn and practice numerous singing skills. On the spur of the moment, a great opportunity to show his singing skills presented itself. A new survival audition program, *Vocal Play Season 2*, launched in December 2019, sent an invitation letter to Kugga Band in order to recruit participants from KU. Kim was selected with two other members of the club to participate in the program.



Vocal Play Season 2

Participating in the audition program made him a little nervous because most of the participants were majoring in music. In order to overcome this, Kim reminded himself not to try too hard; this really helped him to concentrate on his performance. In fact, he showed the value of the time and effort that he had invested in his singing ability by

advancing to the semifinals of the program.

The Process of Self-Development

Participating in the program has greatly helped Kim in several ways. While he was preparing for his performance behind the scenes, he watched and learned how professional musicians compose and arrange songs. Due to the fact that Kim is not a professional when it comes to music, at first, he did not know how to fully express the numerous ideas he had for his performance. Therefore, whenever he presented his ideas during the rehearsal, he paid attention to how the audio staff handled the musical equipment. These experiences gave

him the courage and motivation to further devote his time to music.

In addition, Kim also took lessons from other participants. Because most of the participants were majoring in music, Kim was in unfamiliar waters because he had not studied music at the same level as other participants. However, Kim saw this environment as an opportunity to learn useful information from these professionals. Not only did the other participants help him grow, but the judges of the program also played a crucial role in helping Kim qualify for the semifinals. Famous singers joined the program as judges who decide whether participants have an outstanding singing ability. Kim mentioned that singers like Sweet Sorrow and Ailee supported the participants in many ways, such as providing restoratives for their throat and showing them how to perform technical singing.

After the program finished, he personally met up with several contestants and became friends with them. According to Kim, the new relationships he made after the program were his most important achievement. By meeting these new people, he could learn new musical skills from them. Before he entered the program, he practiced singing by himself, but, now, he sometimes practices singing together with his new friends. Looking back at his experiences during and after the show, Kim realized that the time he spends singing is enjoyable and precious.

Moving Further West

Kim promised himself he would continue to practice his singing. Meeting new people who are music

professionals increased Kim's motivation to maintain his habit. Nevertheless, Kim said he will not be participating in other survival audition programs. The survival audition program definitely helped Kim to acquire professional musical knowledge, but he thought that this experience was enough for him. However, if he has a chance, he wants to join a music entertainment show, such as *I Can See Your Voice*, in which ordinary people like him can participate and show off their singing.

At the end of the interview, Kim gave his own advice to students who are interested in music as a pastime. Kim said, "Students should do whatever they want to do. If students want to sing, there is no reason for them to resist this positive impulse." He believes that, as students, it is important to have hobbies because they relieve some of the stress from studying. Kim mentioned that music, especially singing, is a great habit for anyone, regardless of their ability level, because leisure facilities for music are well-developed in Korean society. He also wants other students to seek special experiences that may seem difficult or impossible, similar to his experiences. Solid habits have the potential to become a firm basis for students to move west and experience something new. **K**



Mexican Woman Becomes the Victim of Another Homicide

By Lee Eun Seo ohhenkwo68@korea.ac.kr



Mexican citizens were outraged because Fatima Cecilia Aldrighett, a 7-year-old girl, was brutally killed. She was missing on February 11, and the next day, the police found her corpse in a plastic bag. The suspects of the homicide were found to be a couple, one of them being a friend of Fatima's mother. Moreover, another 25-year-old woman, Ingrid Escamilla, was found skinned and mutilated on February 15. After this incident, citizens started protesting. Many women are resisting the fact that they are frequent targets of violent crimes in Mexico.

The term *femicide* means female homicide, but it does not include all the murder cases of women. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "Femicide is generally understood to involve intentional murder of women because they are women, but broader definitions include any killings of women or girls." On February 24, the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres launched a "call to action" against human rights violations and "alarming levels of femicide." Likewise, the UN has been dealing with femicide very seriously. Latin America had suffered from increasing numbers of femicide, and Mexico was no exception.

Fatima was kidnapped after school by her mother's friend. The surveillance camera captured the suspect, and the police started the investigation. The police found out that Fatima was sexually abused and killed brutally. After the crime, the suspects disposed of the dead body inside a plastic bag. The woman who kidnapped

her and her husband were arrested as suspects. People were outraged by this incident and made hashtag movements such as #JusticiaParaFatima on Twitter, meaning #Justice for Fatima.

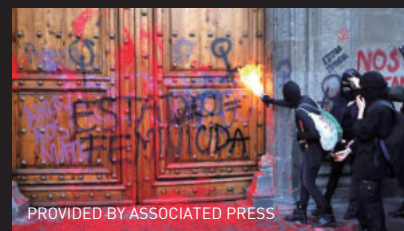
Ingrid Escamilla was killed by her partner in Mexico City on February 15. The police found her body the next day, with some of her organs missing. The 46-year-old man, who was her partner, was arrested at the scene. He later insisted that he had to kill Escamilla because she threatened him with a knife. Some news media photographed the corpse and reported the photo on the front pages of their newspapers, which incurred the anger of the citizens even more. People were infuriated and protested, demanding a change in the law.

Strong Resistance Followed

Mexico City's mayor Claudia Sheinbaum wrote on Twitter, "Femicide is an absolutely condemnable crime. It is appalling when hatred reaches extremes like in the case of

Ingrid Escamilla." People are actively protesting against femicide in various ways; holding a vigil in front of Escamilla's house, marching, and tweeting. On March 8, at the International Women's Day, more than 80 thousand women marched in Mexico City. On March 9, women – including the first lady of Mexico – participated in a national strike called #UndiaSinMujeres, meaning "Day without women."

The recent two brutal femicides triggered Mexicans to fight back. Several feminist organizations protested in front of the National Palace several times in February, censuring the government's response after the incident. They painted



PROVIDED BY ASSOCIATED PRESS
Protest in front of the National Palace

one of the doors of National Palace with blood-red paint writing "femicide state" and other slogans against femicide. The protestors claim the administration did not actively respond to reform the society against the rising number of femicides.

People are also protesting online through twitter by sharing a picture drawn by an anonymous artist, with the hashtag #JusticiaParaIngrid, criticizing "the one who killed Escamilla," "the one who leaked the picture," and "the one who profits off morbidity." They are insisting that along with the culprit, the news outlets that used this issue to make a profit should also be held accountable.

However, the Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (Amlo) showed a passive attitude toward solving gender-based violence problems in Mexico. According to the *The Guardian*, the Mexican president only showed a "tone-deaf response" to the crimes. Their disappointment was reflected in the approval rating of the president, dropping to 57.1 percent on March 5, 2019, a fall of about 10 percent since August, 2019. The president also once attributed the cause of femicide to the neoliberalists, causing a controversy—this remark also affected his declining approval rating.

Citizens condemn the government for not bringing out concrete policies to stop



PROVIDED BY ALJAZEERA
Women Marching in International Women's Day

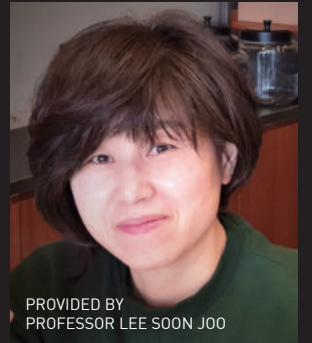
the problem. The Amlo Administration is reluctant to take responsibility. Furthermore, the Mexico attorney general Alejandro Gertz Manero said the current standard for classifying femicide made the situation seem more severe than it is. He then said he is willing to change the process. This remark enraged the citizens even more.

Femicide Prevalent in Mexico

According to the UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed, "We are increasingly seeing a rise in femicide, and even in countries where the overall number of murders is decreasing, the proportion of women being killed is increasing." 10 women, on average, become the victim of femicide every day in Mexico. In 2019, 1006 cases of femicide were registered. According to the Mexico attorney general, femicide cases have risen 137 percent in the last five years.

According to Professor Lee Soon Joo (Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies, University of Ulsan), "The deep-rooted tradition of Machismo and patriarchy are all the causes of femicide in Mexico." A male chauvinism like Machismo can encourage some delinquent men to commit crimes when they saw women defy or if they want to show off their superiority.

Another cause of the frequent femicide in Mexico is the weak judicial system. A report from the Committee on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) points out that the "systematic pattern of impunity" is severe in Mexico. Moreover, many female victims cannot access the justice system, and a large number of femicide cases do not go



PROVIDED BY PROFESSOR LEE SOON JOO

Professor Lee Soon Joo (Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies, University of Ulsan)

through formal investigation. Although some states of Mexico managed a stringent law — 40 to 60 years imprisonment or life sentence — to punish femicide cases, it is not often applied due to the impunity.

Perhaps the 1006 cases of femicide are underreported because there might be more un-investigated cases. Professor Lee pointed out that there had once been a stark difference between the femicide statistics provided by the government and the civic organizations. The authority had announced that 45 femicide cases happened in Ciudad Juarez from January, 2018 to November, 2019. In contrast, the Red Mesa de Mujeres en Ciudad Juarez (RMMC) announced that 109 women were murdered in this city from January to August, 2019.

The recent two issues raised awareness on femicide again. Citizens expressed their opinions by protesting online and offline. This problem, however, is not only limited to Mexico. Femicide is prevalent all around the world. Professor Lee insisted, "We have to be aware that femicide is an issue of our neighbors, friends, and families." The global community, including South Korea, should face this issue and put forth an effort to eradicate femicide. **K**

Pioneering Peace between the U.S. and the Taliban

By Kweon Seo-young kb071531@korea.ac.kr

“19 years, that’s a long time...I think there’s a good chance that we will have a deal,” said President Donald Trump of the United States (U.S.), indicating a noteworthy breakthrough in negotiations that the U.S. and the Taliban have been holding for a few months. The impact to follow is still veiled, but the world is paying attention to a new frontier in the long history of war between the U.S. and the Taliban. Will there be peace at the final destination of the long journey or will the peace go west?

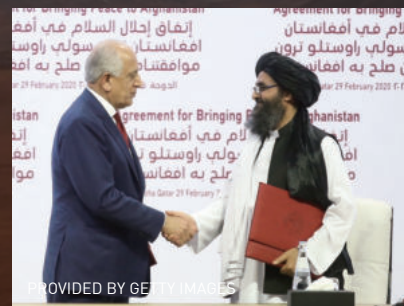
On February 21, Mike Richard Pompeo, the U.S. Secretary of State officially stated that the U.S. and the Taliban have been holding talks to promote political stability in Afghanistan and reduce the number of the U.S. troops stationed in the region. The agreement began with negotiations between the U.S. and Taliban representatives in Qatar in 2018. According to the *New York Times* (NYT), at the annual Munich Security Conference, the U.S. and the Taliban had agreed on a draft peace treaty regarding a seven-day reduction in violence. It includes the U.S. withdrawing 5,400 troops from Afghanistan within 135 days and closing five military bases and at the same time, Taliban prohibiting armed syndicates. The decline of hostility is the first step to an Afghan peace agreement.

History of Conflict

Afghanistan had been occupied by

the Soviet Union for 10 years since 1979. After several civil wars, the region has been ruled by the Taliban forces. As the center of the U.S. was subject to a fierce attack on September 11, 2001, the U.S. pegged Al Qaeda’s Osama bin Laden as the individual behind the scenes. Later as the Taliban refuse the U.S.’s demand to hand over Osama bin Laden, the U.S. attacked Afghanistan, removing the Taliban from government. Soon after, the Taliban attempted to rebuild their forces thereby currently occupying roughly half of the Afghanistan territory. Since then, the U.S. army has been stationed in Afghanistan for 18 years, fighting a long battle. As reported by NYT, in 2019, the average death rate of civilians was almost seven per day and the U.S. dropped more than 7,000 bombs and missiles along with the Taliban and armed groups carrying out more than 25,000 attacks.

Starting from the mid-2018, the U.S. and the Taliban attempted to reach an agreement by entering into a peace negotiation at Qatar. In September, 2019, the two sides closely approached to an agreement by preparing a draft for the peace negotiations that includes the withdrawal of some U.S. troops. Trump planned a meeting with the Taliban leaders in person, only to pronounce, shortly after, that Taliban agreement is “dead,” breaking the negotiations as the U.S. troops were killed in the bombing terror of the Taliban. The *Associated Press* (AP) has



US and Taliban signing the peace deal

stated that on February 11, two U.S. soldiers were killed by an explosion of a U.S. vehicle on a road in southern Afghanistan’s Kandahar province, and later several more terrors followed. These series of terror attacks have been a negative factor in negotiation between the two sides, further unnerving regional situations.

What Does It Say and Why It is Worth Knowing

Agreement on a reduction of violence was the first step for a plan toward peace between the U.S. and the Taliban. The U.S. official has stated that the Taliban’s adherence to the reduction in violence for one week should be well maintained in order to get a formal peace pact signed. The violence reduction deal is highly specific. It mentions that the deal is applied to a wide range of agents such as Afghans and American-led coalitions. Furthermore, it contains contexts including roadside rocket attacks, roadside bombs, and suicide bombs which have been frequent during the 18 years of war.

As the one week *reduction in violence* successfully passed, the U.S. and the Taliban signed a peace agreement in Doha, Qatar on February 29. The four-page agreement includes a 14-month timetable for the withdrawal of the U.S. and its allies’ military forces. The U.S. is about to reduce the number of its troops from 12,000 to 8,600 within 135 days. It also states that the Taliban will start preventing individual and groups including the Al-Qaeda from using Afghanistan territory to threaten the security of the U.S. and its allies. In a word, Taliban vowed to cut off its

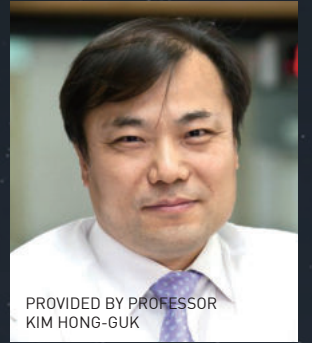
alliance with Al-Qaeda. Besides, they also pledged to start intra-Afghan negotiations on March 10, in order to reach a consistent ceasefire between the Taliban and the Afghan government.

Professor Kim Hong-guk (International Politics, Daejin University) mentioned the significance of the peace agreement saying, “There are unstable aspects of breaking the cease-fire agreement such as the Taliban attacks and U.S. air strikes, but it is significant in that it has ended a long war and begun to walk the path of peace.” Despite the dark history that the U.S., the Taliban, and Afghanistan have made until today, there are chances for the deal to break down.

Obstacles on the Way to Peace

Although the Taliban has played a significant role during a fight against the Islamic State (IS) in Afghanistan, it is hard to overlook the tie between Taliban and Al-Qaeda that had been maintaining. Moreover, some armed groups unrelated to both the Afghan government and the Taliban are not so welcoming of the peace treaty. The long conflict has made space for profitable routes to these groups, allowing them to grow narcotics trade, which might become difficult once there is peace. Therefore, the possibility of these groups’ violence for the sake of their financial profitability is predictable.

Professor Kim Hong-guk showed an analysis that the withdrawal of the U.S. army might cause public security of Afghanistan to become unstable, saying “Given that the Afghan government was excluded from the peace



PROVIDED BY PROFESSOR KIM HONG-GUK

Professor Kim Hong-guk

agreement, the Taliban and the Afghan government are likely to engage in fierce conflict, leading to confusion. The possibility of the U.S. military intervention cannot be ruled out if an agreement between the Taliban and the Afghan government is not carried out properly.” Also adding the need of the U.S. military, which has long intervened in the war, to provide compensation and support for reconstruction along with international society’s responsibility to cooperate.

The historical first step toward the end of 18 years of war has been taken. However, given the fact that the peace treaty was a ‘half-way agreement,’ there are concerns after the negotiations remain. Now that they have succeeded in taking the first step, they have to find a way to address international concerns. “For the South Korean government, that has been maintaining a close diplomatic, economic and cultural friendship with Afghanistan, it is an important international agenda to contribute to peace in Asia and the world,” said professor Kim Hong-guk, pointing out the importance of internationally establishing a peaceful society beyond Afghanistan to the world. **K**



International Companies Facing a Harsh Reality in Iran

By Lee Donghyun real0822@korea.ac.kr

International companies such as Samsung Electronics are currently facing the harsh reality of Iran's unstable economy, closing down some of their retail stores in Iran. In response to this, Mohammad Jafar Na'nakar, the head of the legal department of the Iranian Ministry of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), announced that Iran could refuse the entry of executives and staffs of the companies. In addition, Na'nakar warned that they could impose a partial ban on the registration of Samsung phones with Iranian mobile operators. As the conflict between Samsung and Iran increases, other global companies face a dilemma in that they can neither withdraw from nor profitably maintain their operations in Iran.

Because Samsung Electronics decided to pull out of Iran, its retail stores were the first to deal with the consequences firsthand. On February 16, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi tweeted a picture of a Samsung Electronics sign being removed from one of their stores along with a message in Korean and Iranian saying, "Some companies left Iran following United States (U.S.) harassment, and they have to know that it is hard to return when they leave Iran." On the same day, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Arachi announced, "It would be difficult for companies that sympathize with the U.S. and abandon Iran

to step back into the Iranian market."

Foreign Companies Consider Withdrawal

A lot of international companies are aware of the fact that they will eventually have to confront this situation and decide whether to leave or stay in the Iranian market. Iran has been dealing with economic sanctions imposed by the U.S. in 2018. The U.S. has also passed a bill as a warning to countries who continue to trade with Iran that they will also have economic sanctions imposed on them. Therefore, countries looking to maintain a friendly relationship with the U.S. have no choice but to obey these economic sanctions against Iran, which has caused several problems for foreign companies that have a significant number of Iranian customers.

The first problem is that companies cannot export their goods to Iran. Iran was an important customer for

companies based in Japan, France, Turkey, Germany, and Korea. Nevertheless, when the U.S. introduced the economic sanctions, the companies were no longer able to export to Iran, leading to a loss of market share in that country. The second problem is that companies are unable to operate facilities in Iran. Companies with factories in Iran can no longer produce goods because they cannot deliver the necessary supplies to these factories. As a result, companies that have invested in Iran by building facilities will not gain any profit, which has become a considerable concern.



Professor Rhee Dong-eun

The Economic Situation in Iran

Iran is also facing a problem of its own due to the economic sanctions. According to a report by the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency's (KOTRA) Tehran Trade Center, Iran's economic growth in 2019 fell 9.5 percent. Iran's crude oil exports have plunged to nearly zero since May 2019, and if oil exports continue to decline this year, it is expected that there will be an inevitable economic downturn. The inflation rate was 35.7 percent last year and is expected to be 31 percent this year. The fiscal balance as a ratio of the gross domestic product (GDP) fell 4.4 percent in 2019, and it was forecast to decrease a further 5 percent this year. The current account lost 12.2 billion dollars in 2019 and is expected to lose 15.5 billion dollars this year.

Iran's industrial production index exhibited a sharp decline of 27.6 percent in

2019 and is continuing to fall due to a downturn in factory operations and a rise in unemployment. According to Iran's customs office, Iran's exports fell sharply last year by 25.4 percent on a cumulative basis due to the economic sanctions, while imports shrank 27.4 percent. To make matters worse, international companies, which account for a significant number of jobs for Iranian citizens, are considering leaving the country. In the worst-case scenario, Iran will face a severe economic depression due not only to the sanctions on the oil industry but also to the departure of international companies.

The Connection Between International Companies and Iran

According to Professor Rhee Dong-eun (Division of International Studies), the connection between international companies and the Iranian economy is weak. The foreign direct investment rate inside Iran is one percent, which is low compared to other countries. However, Professor Rhee still emphasized that Iran will face a bleak future if foreign companies leave because, nowadays, many industries are closely interrelated. Therefore, if an industry fails in Iran's market, negative spillover effects can occur domestically, which will inflict greater damage, particularly to the job market.

With Iran's economy now at its lowest point, the withdrawal of multinational corporations may not immediately be a decisive blow because there are more serious problems occurring in the Iranian economy. However, the departure of these corporations will lead to a reduction in investment, which will subsequently affect the long-term growth of Iran's economy. Professor Rhee believes that

this is a factor that can weaken Iran's growth potential, even when the political and diplomatic issues between Iran and the U.S. have been resolved.

When foreign companies leave Iran, the high emotions and trust issues between the two countries may be more serious than reflected in the numbers. Iran is known to have a strong affinity for Korea because of the powerful effects of *Hallyu*. Culture is a valuable asset for Korean companies in terms of making future inroads into the Iranian economy. On the other hand, if the Iranian government is offended by Korean companies leaving the country, it could be difficult to normalize the cultivated market in Iran. Professor Rhee mentioned that there is a possibility that the U.S. will lift the economic sanctions against Iran in a few years, but the negative feelings among Iranian consumers towards companies that decided to leave could last much longer.

The strategies available for our government and companies to solve this problem with Iran are very limited. It is more crucial to search for ways to achieve public exchanges and cooperation rather than an official diplomatic agreement between the two governments. Seeking a compromise between Korean companies and Iran will promote a more stable relationship for the future. 



Samsung's Evacuation from Iran



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Priceless Atoms Realizing Dramatic Physical World

- Laplace's Witch

By Kweon Seo-young kb071531@korea.ac.kr

"Each and everyone realize a dramatic physical law when it becomes a collective even if each lives in obscurity... like atoms." A representative Japanese detective novel writer Higashino Keigo, conveys a gentle impression and moral lesson through his novel *Laplace's Witch*, unlike other detective stories. Keigo densely condenses physics, mathematics, humanities of love and revenge along with his science-fiction aspect in the novel.



PROVIDED BY GOODREADS.

Laplace's Witch (2016)

Higashino Keigo is a Japanese writer, proudly known for mystery novels. With his novel *The Devotion of Suspect X*, Keigo won an Edgar Allan Poe Award that honors the best mystery works of the year, wherein more than 15 of his novels have been made into a film in and out of Japan. Based on Keigo's scientific knowledge, he is well loved for the variety of genres of his works ranging from mystery novels with chilling twists and thrilling storylines to unique fantasy novels.

In the novel *Laplace's Witch*, Keigo carefully deals with the emotions and drama of each character behind the incident. A bodyguard with a strict sense of duty to save someone, a detective digging up the truth for a promise, and a

researcher who jumped into the middle of a huge incident out of curiosity. These unique personalities struggle to get to the bottom of hydrogen sulfide poisoning accidents, trying to reveal whether the mysterious deaths are simply accidents or murders.

Through plotting a storyline based on hydrogen sulfide poisoning, the novel introduces an exquisite fusion of science and mystery. There is a saying that man is weak in the face of the inviolable laws of nature. However, what if we could accumulate and analyze all the physical phenomena? The background of this novel is Laplace's equation. French physicist Laplace argues, "If there is anyone who knows the position and amount of movement of all atoms in the universe, we can explain all phenomena in the past and present, predict the future." The author easily melted this esoteric science through a thrilling twist and flashy action.

Mystery novels often only focus on crime and investigation. *Laplace's Witch*, however, contains a meticulous contemplation about humanity. It tells

stories about the inner world of human beings that cannot be explained through science, such as tragedies that a family that lack love faces. Showing these diverse aspects of humanity through various characters who are not main characters of the story but are in each of their lives the author gives a tranquil impression. The author conveys a message, that through cooperation and harmony of each man, just like atoms, can achieve dramatic laws of physics and more.

With its distinctive characters and the author's scientific knowledge complemented by his unique imagination, the book does not miss either amusement or impression. For those who live a busy and daunting lives, the book says, "There is no meaningless stone on a board, no meaningless atom in the physics." **K**

Book Information

Title: *Laplace's Witch*
Author: Higashino Keigo
Publisher: Hyundai Munhak
Publication Year: 2016
Pages: 521

Audrey Chu

- Breaking Barriers in Music

By Nam Eun Seo eunseo0222@korea.ac.kr

"I just need time, I'm gonna make it mine, gonna make this whole damn world mine." This bold statement, together with a mix of dreamy vocals and a hypnotizing beat, creates an alluring atmosphere that makes the listener immediately surrender to the music. As shown in her critically acclaimed single "Time," Korean-American singer Audrey has a knack for captivating whomever is listening to her voice. A Korean-American female artist is not easy to find in the American music scene; but Audrey is not afraid to use her musical talents to pave the way for fellow minority artists. Enchanting at times and dynamic at others, Audrey's music is sure to help her break barriers in music.

Audrey Chu is a Korean-American singer songwriter who was born and raised in New Jersey. It was in high school that Audrey first started posting her own music on Instagram, where she was discovered by Anwar Sawyer, a producer of the American entertainment agency RocNation. She also recently signed with Arista Records, a major American record label that produced musical giants such as Whitney Houston and Avril Lavigne. What is especially worth celebrating is the fact that Audrey is the first Korean female artist to sign with Arista Records.

As unprecedented as her contract with Arista Records is Audrey's bold challenge towards the American music industry. As a Korean-American female artist, Audrey knows how difficult it is for Asian Americans to break through gender and racial barriers in the music industry. "Coming as an outsider... motivates me to make work that lives outside those bounds of race and gender," said Audrey in an interview with *Paper Magazine*. She hopes that she can serve as an example



PROVIDED BY GRUNGE CAKE

| Audrey Chu

for future Asian American artists to break into the mainstream.

Apart from her bold vision, Audrey's unique musical style is also worth paying attention to. Her music can be described as a unique mix of pop, rhythm and blues (R&B), and trap. Her musical genius is perfectly embodied in her single "Time," in which she talks about passing through different eras in one's life. The soothing retro beats make a perfect background to her soulful R&B vocals. The immaculate blend of jazz, pop and R&B elements is almost hypnotic to the ears. She also contrasts the somewhat dark lyrics – about wasted potential in life – with the

colorful, ethereal music video almost reminiscent of a daydream.

In her recent experimentation with rap music, one can see a completely different side of Audrey. This is well shown in her song "Souffle," where she uses a mixture of trap sounds and an ingenious rhyme scheme to explain the hardships of her first time living away from home. Audrey claims that her moving between different genres of music parallels her own identity. In an interview with *Paper Magazine*, she said, "My music speaks to being a Korean-American, walking this fine line between worlds."

Audrey's music is like a roller coaster; from the very first beat, it will sweep the listeners off their feet for a mesmerizing ride and, whether they like it or not, will not let them go until the last second. She has a bold vision, and she has the musical talents to help her bring that vision to life. As she says in her song "Time," it is indeed only a matter of time before she breaks down barriers in the music industry. **K**

Into the World of Ethics with Four Complex Characters

By Nam Hye Bin | hyebin@korea.ac.kr

What happens to us when we die? Is there life beyond the grave? If there really is an afterlife, what does it look like? Is there a good place made for good people and a bad place for bad people? Then, who gets to set the criteria for getting into the good and bad places? *The Good Place* is a comedy series that pleasantly reimagines the afterlife, a mystery that will never be solved.



| Jason, Janet, Michael, Chidi, Eleanor, and Tahani

The Good Place starts with a scene where Eleanor Shellstrop arrives in an afterlife paradise called The Good Place. Eleanor, who has lived her whole life selfishly, realizes that a system error must have mistakenly sent her to the good place and another (good) Eleanor to the bad place. Her struggle to stay in The Good Place develops into a great adventure for her and three other main characters — Chidi

Anagnonye who was a former professor of moral philosophy, Jason Mendoza, a DJ from Florida, and Tahani, a brilliant hostess and socialite from England — in their search for good and evil - and morals.

Essential, Heartwarming Life Lessons

In dealing with moral issues, the series not only focuses on commonplace ethics but also investigates an alternate point of view on conventional ideas regarding morals. For instance, the fact that the characters are told that most prominent philosophers have been sent to the bad place goes against people's expectations. This gives people an opportunity to think about whether some of their famous ethical and moral positions might have some drawbacks that have not been paid much attention. For example, Chidi is described as someone who causes his friends and family distress with his mulling over every small decision that he makes.

While this sitcom introduces some new viewpoints, it still investigates the basic yet essential nature of good and evil based on the main characters' behaviors. When the four main characters are faced with the task of becoming a better person, they start to intentionally display behaviors that are commonly regarded as good. However, they receive minus points for these acts, reinforcing the important message that the essence of being a good person does not lie in the actions themselves, but rather in the motives behind them. Small, trivial kindnesses and concern for others are sufficient as long as you have good-hearted motives.

This sitcom stands out because it does not try to fit every character into a certain mold. Rather, it focuses on showing the diverse attributes of human beings. Characters exhibit both positive and negative sides, and the subtle

depiction of these personalities sometimes looks very similar to our own lives, so it is easy to empathize with the characters' situations and deeply embrace them.

Enjoyment in Between

One of the charms of the series is the meme culture shared by fans of the sitcom. The four characters, each with their own unique personality, combine to create hilarious scenes, sometimes with light jokes and puns, which liven up the atmosphere of the series. For instance, drunk Eleanor does not remember her soulmate Chidi's name: "You are a nice person, Chidi... Ariana Grande." Moreover, since this series is set in the afterlife, characters from *The Bad Place*, who love to boast about the horrible and ridiculous methods of torture that they have come up with, also show up. Whimsical humor hidden within the scenes provides an abundant source of funny GIFs.

The visual effects and sound effects appropriate for the setting of the afterlife adds to the fun of watching the series. There are various imaginative objects, people, or even animals that appear with the help of subtle computer graphics: a baby elephant made of pure light, a chowder fountain, rainbow lights coming from a character's mouth, and so on. Furthermore, the sound effects fit so well with each scene, increasing the overall immersion level.

In Search of *The Good Place*

Through their efforts to learn and



| Jason, Chidi, Tahani, Michael, Eleanor, and Janet

practice moral actions, the main characters actually start to show some changes. Michael, the designer of the *Good Place* mentions, "I was just trying to prove that humans could torture each other. Instead, they helped each other, and got better." People tend to help one another and they get better and happier by doing that. These people are exactly who the series thinks should be found in a *good place*.

The very different backgrounds of the characters, including their personality, job, and race, is also not a coincidence. People from all different environments meet, try to help each other without prejudice, and form beautiful relationships. They try to embrace each other as they ask questions about what viewpoints and attitudes are required to form long-lasting relationships. Seeing this, viewers may eventually recognize that they can make the current world that they are living in a good place.

After all the effort put into belonging to The Good Place, will the characters

finally succeed in staying there and living happily forever? Or, will they end up being tortured in unimaginable, horrible ways? Regardless of whether it is a good ending or a bad ending, one thing is sure. Watching this sitcom is an invaluable opportunity to enjoy light jokes and to spend time contemplating yourself, your life, and your death in a philosophical way. Who knows, this series may make your world the good place! **K**

Television Series Information

Title: *The Good Place*
Genre: Comedy, Philosophical Fiction, Fantasy
Director: Michael Schur
Number of Episodes: 53
Release Date: September 19, 2016
Starring: Kristen Bell, William Jackson Harper, Jameela Jamil, D'Arcy Carden, Manny Jacinto, Ted Danson

DELVING INTO THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

— THE MUSICAL *SHINING*

By Kie Hae Seung hayleyyy1215@korea.ac.kr

What would cross your mind if someone told you what you thought was your own free will, exercised after logical analysis, is actually always influenced by a part of your unconscious mind that you do not even acknowledge? This was precisely the basis for the psychoanalytical theories prominent academics Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung advocated for. While their theories directed attention to one's mind, which is often difficult to articulate, a performance was able to translate their ideas into an art form. *Shining*, a newly presented musical, is courageously attempting to convey Freud and Jung's psychoanalytical theories through character dynamics and songs about inner conflict.

The musical *Shining* debuted on February 24 and is on its first run in the Daehakro scene. Performed by a cast of three on a stage decorated with two simple chairs as props and ever-changing lighting sequences, *Shining* tells the story of two pioneers in psychoanalysis—Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung. The narrative, loosely based on historical data, focuses on the relationship between Freud and Jung, which at first is affectionate and respectful, but later becomes turbulent due to insurmountable theoretical differences.

Despite premiering during a relatively unfortunate period when the novel coronavirus kept everyone inside their homes, on opening night, the seats were packed with musical fans hoping to have found a yet-to-be-discovered diamond in the rough. The cast's belting vocals and passionate acting earned them many rounds of applause during the curtain call.

Interwoven Relationships Between the Characters

As the minimalistic stage production and a narrative largely based on inner conflict suggest, *Shining* is a character-driven play to a great degree. Hence, interpretations of the musical rely heavily on the relationships between the three primary characters, Freud, Jung, and Shadow.

Freud and Jung begin the show with a historically noted close relationship, one that can be compared to a teacher and student, even father and son. Freud is painted as a genius outcast of the academic sphere and Jung an aspiring psychoanalysis scholar in awe of Freud's achievements. Unaggressive at first, this clear power dynamic between Freud and Jung later disrupts their peace when Jung starts to challenge his mentor's

psychoanalytic view, which reduces the cause of all human action to libido, a sexual energy. Consequently, Freud becomes intimidated by the possibility of Jung overthrowing his absolute position in psychoanalysis.

Fictional aspects of *Shining*, on the other hand, are all in relation to Shadow, the third main role. Perhaps best described as an avatar of Jung's unconsciousness, Shadow appears only as a voice or hallucination of Jung's right up to the middle of the musical. Shadow is actually a nod to Jung's "shadow theory," the very theory that differentiates Jung's work from the Freudian canon. In accordance with this theory, Shadow represents all the negative aspects of Jung's personality that he constantly tries to suppress, making his character mysterious, dark, and conflict-creating.



The stage of the musical "Shining"

It was, however, a disappointment that Freud and Jung's complex theories had to be reduced and delivered just through vague and obscure lyrics, such as "darkness" and "nightmare," instead of jargon. Interpreting scientific theory into a few minutes of art is no easy feat; maybe the use of simpler vocabulary was unavoidable. However, that did not change the fact that song lyrics were not enough to understand these complex psychoanalysis theories without any prior knowledge.

Biographical Shows and Originality

Despite having elements such as a fictional character, *Shining* is still a primarily biographical show. Freud and Jung's troublesome relationship was historically accurate, and a large portion of the lyrics were interpretations of Freud and Jung's theories on the unconsciousness. As a biographical performance, *Shining* is one of many in Korea's current musical scene.

In the last few months alone, musicals such as *Marie Curie*, *Vincent Van Gogh*,

Rachmaninoff, and *Sidereus*, a musical based on the story of astronomers Galileo Galilei and Johannes Kepler, have run on the Daehakro stage. Although they do not strictly follow historical timelines, they do take from major events, relationships, and achievements of the relevant figures. Many of the performances, being small-scale due to spatial and financial limits, tend to be character-driven. Perhaps this trend is impeding the creation of original Korean musicals, different from the biographical musicals that have been rising in popularity.

Historical figures are undeniably attractive to writers and audiences not only because those characters' physical and personality traits are predetermined, but also because there is an abundance of drama throughout the course of their life. Moreover, the creators are partly relieved of the responsibility of having to logically explain the character and plot from A to Z. *Shining* was not an exception as it invested more time amplifying the interior drama of Jung rather than introducing the extremely well-known relationship between the two.

However, this trend may be detrimental to the Korean musical scene, especially regarding creativity and originality in characters. While borrowing from history may be enjoyable as a passing fad, if endlessly continued, it may become repetitive material that would take up space for potentially more exciting, original characters. It is hard to disregard the somewhat inverse relationship between writing safe, acceptable historical characters, and courageous attempts at creating unique characters despite the possibility of failures, especially when quite a few outstanding original characters thrive and prove their worth in their musicals in Korea.

The word *pioneer* effectively describes the musical *Shining*; the performance is about two pioneers of psychoanalysis and also serves as a pioneer itself since it is one of the first Korean musicals to translate psychoanalysis into performing arts. As all new emergences do, *Shining* seems to have several faults as much as it has virtues. In order to hopefully continue to have second, third, and fourth runs, *Shining* will have to humbly receive constructive criticism from its audience and apply it to its production in order to truly become a production that goes west. **K**

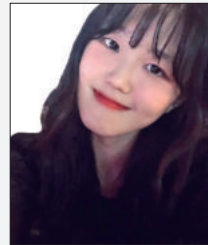
Performance Information

Venue: Daehakro Art One Theater 1
Date: February 24, 2020 to May 10, 2020
Running Time: 100 minutes
Ticket Price: R seat: 66,000 won,
S seat: 44,000 won



All the Same Under the Label of “Human”

Recently, a soldier named Byun Hee-soo underwent male-to-female sex reassignment surgery (SRS), also known as gender reassignment surgery (GRS), while serving in the military, which resulted in her being forced out of the army on January 22. There were numerous people who supported this decision, saying that someone who has undergone GRS could cause problems in the military. However, this appears to be a case of discrimination and active discourse is needed on how the military should treat sexual minorities.




The grounds for the decision were not directly her transsexuality, but rather her lack of male genitalia was classified as a mental and physical disability as stipulated in the Military Personnel Management Act. Some people have suggested that she join the Women’s Army Corps. However, the Korean Standard Classification of Diseases (KDC), based on the World Health Organization’s (WHO) International Classification of Disease (ICD), classifies SRS as a gender identity disorder and this makes it difficult for her to enter the Women’s Army Corps as a staff sergeant.

This situation seems to prove that current Korean military laws are not ready to accept transgender individuals. The presence/absence of genitalia as the reason for disqualification seems to be biased towards biological gender only. The desire of transgender individuals to loyally serve their country should not be ignored. Thus, action has to be taken to give equal opportunities to transgender people. Above all, there should be laws that prevent people from being judged by the presence/absence of certain genitalia. All people should be guaranteed the right to be judged fairly by pre-set criteria that would objectively assess their physical and mental ability to serve in the military.

The atmosphere within the army may be another problem. There could be some soldiers that may feel uncomfortable with transgender people in the same military unit. This issue is difficult to ignore. However, people have to note that this discomfort itself may represent a pre-existing prejudice against transgender individuals. There needs to be an effort on the part of

others to accept them as who they are now, rather than focusing on their change.

Social openness and the development of awareness should be accompanied by systematic and institutional support. Specific guidelines for transgender individuals within the military are required. Hence, there should be active discourse on the possible problems, and ways to minimize these problems should be carefully thought out. For example, the United Kingdom (UK) has established detailed guidelines for every aspect of military life, such as physical examinations, troop placement, clothing, and the prohibition of discrimination. To provide guidelines regarding transgender soldiers in the Korean military, legal rights and fair treatment for everyone should be prioritized.

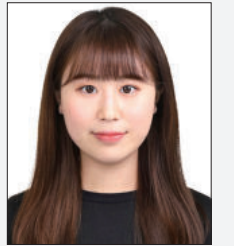
Byun Hee-soo’s situation has significance in that it has raised an essential issue in society. Since the 21st century, more members of sexual minority groups have started to reveal themselves, and accordingly, more effort is required to listen to their voices and to change attitudes towards them. It should be a basic notion that those who are part of a sexual minority group are still humans who should be guaranteed their basic rights and to be treated the same as anyone else. In addition to changing attitudes, changes to laws and guidelines in organizations need to be quickly yet carefully introduced. These efforts would provide a great foundation for a society where sexual minority groups no longer need to hide and are no longer deprived of their rights. 

By Nam Hye Bin
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A Stricter Management System for Propofol Needed

Losing consciousness, delving into heavy ecstasy, and experiencing the feeling of relief from fatigue — these are the common symptoms of being injected with propofol. Propofol, often addressed as “milk injection,” is defined as an anesthetic drug typically used for patients undergoing surgeries. However indispensable propofol is to medical procedures, voices asserting its regulations are rising due to the constant reports of its misuse in South Korea.



The Ministry of Food and Drug Safety (MFDS) of South Korea estimates propofol to be used 75.6 percent of the time for sedation procedures after surgeries. At the same time, it is identified as “a medication with a high mental dependency due to its pleasant hallucination effect.” Indeed, without careful observation, propofol is a drug holding the possibilities of causing significant side effects by lowering blood pressure and suppressing breathing.


In February, South Korean public figures, including actors and executive members of well-known corporations, were suspected of propofol abuse. The South Korean daily newspaper, *JoongAng Ilbo* reported that a plastic surgery clinic in Apgujeong, one of the wealthiest areas within Seoul, is suspected of illegally administering propofol injections. Its excessive amount of propofol usage brought light to the flaws in the current domestic management system of medical drugs — possibly one of the main reasons behind such problematic misuses.

According to *Yonhap Television News* (YTN), propofol is regulated through an online system called the “General Management Record of Drugs” at present. The system is taken care of in the form of an *ex post facto report*, which indicates that hospitals are only required to record the name of patient, the amount of propofol used, and the reason for the usage after administering the medication. However, such post-medication record system creates several loopholes in the management of propofol, including risks of medical chart fabrication or replacement.

At the 2018 Food and Drug Safety Open Forum hosted by

the MFDS, Professor Song Yeon-hwa (College of Pharmacy, Kyung Hee University) pointed out the problems of domestic drug control, emphasizing the need for the transparency of medical drug distribution. Professor Song’s statement supported the need for the MFDS and public health centers to carefully monitor each hospital’s usage of propofol and come forward to regularly supervise any cases of illegal prescription.

First and foremost, the MFDS must analyze the number of hospitals that frequently use large amounts of medical drugs, including propofol. Regardless of size or medical field, all hospitals and clinics must be under surveillance without an exception. In addition, the current system must change to be complemented with a mandatory requirement for real-time reports of medical drug prescriptions. Through such process, the MFDS will be able to better oversee the drug usage along with the name of the patient and responsible practitioner. Furthermore, any cases of drug damage, loss, or theft must be investigated closely in order to prevent the misuse of drugs.

Rather than reducing the existing regulated number of medical drugs and their usage amount, the government must implement a detailed system to record related information immediately after each use. Moreover, the data should be carefully organized to evaluate how medical drugs are being applied to patients. Accepting and acknowledging the crucial need for propofol is inevitable. However, the vicious cycle of repetitive cases of propofol misuse should now come to a halt with proper management improvements and new codes of conduct. 

By Jun Uhnjin
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Mourning the Death of a Flawed Human Being

When retired basketball star Kobe Bryant and his 13-year-old daughter Gianna died in a helicopter crash on January 26, despair swept across the world. As a player for the National Basketball Association (NBA) league, Bryant was often referred to as one of the greatest players of all time. He was, however, also accused of sexually assaulting a 19-year-old girl in July, 2003, regarding which he financially settled a private suit in and issued a public apology. Bryant's sudden death sparked controversy about how media outlets should cover the life and death of public figures.



As the freak accident killing Bryant was reported, the world seemed united with the feeling of sadness for he and his daughter's early deaths and condolences rapidly poured in from individuals and media outlets through social media posts and articles.

Those who suggested a slightly different view on his death, on the other hand, were immediately shut down. *The Washington Post* journalist Felicia Sonmez's retweet of an old article about Bryant's rape allegations led to a bombardment of "abuse and death threats," according to Sonmez. She was also subsequently put on administrative leave without a clear explanation. American television (TV) host Gayle King also received death threats and had to travel with security guards after a clip was shown of her asking an interviewee whether Bryant's rape allegations impacted his legacy.

Perhaps these responses were insensible in some ways. The backlash they faced, when analyzed through the prism of Bryant's admirable legacy as a role model in basketball, black culture, and more, is possible to comprehend. However, it is important to question whether the public in general—especially media outlets—responsibly discuss the good and bad aspects when reporting the life and death of public figures. Some may even argue that media coverage in the wake of death is usually imbalanced and shines a light only on the more favorable qualities of the deceased, consequently glorifying them, whether intentional or not.

The affiliation of a widely admired star with such a negative record is understandably uncomfortable to the public, and

perhaps that is why there are only a few people who are up to the task of mourning the entirety of Bryant's history. However, discomfort cannot be an excuse for media outlets to refrain from telling the whole story. Because journalism sources largely shape the public sentiment, they have a responsibility to report the truth. This is readily applied to political sections that report corruption, or articles that advocate unpopular opinions. Why should the lives of public figures be exempt? In fact, it may even need to be applied more strictly.

When put in unfavorable situations, public figures are able to explain themselves from their own perspective to the public, precisely because of the media. On the other hand, those who are not publicly recognized have no choice but to let the public consensus about them be shaped by the media and their assaulter, who in this case is Bryant. Therefore, while Bryant was able to continuously redeem himself and his reputation after his rape accusation, the victim did not get the same chance to speak up. The same goes for all renowned public figures who have dark pasts. The media, as the ones with powerful voices, have the responsibility to not only celebrate these celebrities, but also to chastise them.

Quoting Bryant himself, "we are all angels, we are all devils." Bryant was able to accept himself as a complicated human being. Media outlets, no matter how difficult it may be, should strive to do the same through their journalism, alongside vigorous debates about the way to do so thoughtfully.

By Kie Hae Seung

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WE LISTEN

The Granite Tower (GT) values your opinion. Send us detailed feedback on GT's April issue—anything from what you liked or disliked reading to what you would like to see more of in our upcoming issues. Contact us at thegrانيتower@gmail.com.

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