

THE GRANITE TOWER

THE KOREA UNIVERSITY ENGLISH MAGAZINE

DECEMBER
2020
VOL. 506

*Home is
where the heart is*



**KOREA
UNIVERSITY**

COVER STORY

The Muddy United States Presidential Election

FEATURE

- 16 Delivery Workers' Rising Deaths — The Problems Behind the Scenes and Possible Solutions
- 18 Media, Where the Eyes and Ears Are — MBN's Illegal Fund-Raising and Acts of Deception
- 20 A Child-For-Sale Post Reveals In-Depth Issues Facing Unmarried Parents

THE GRANITE TOWER

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EDITOR'S LETTER

Home Is Where the Heart Is

Everyone may have a different image that comes to mind when they think of *home*; it could be their family, their own room, neighborhood, or even the entire nation. That is, *home* does not represent merely the physical building of residence but an abstract concept that encompasses our emotions of the sense of belonging. The expression "Home is where the heart is" also presents such an idea that home is where we feel that we belong, associated with care, warmth, and love.

In this sense, the December Issue of *The Granite Tower* (GT) focuses on on-going societal issues that are especially related to our home and society. Our Cover Story deals with the recent United States (U.S.) presidential election and its impact on our home, South Korea. In particular, as the 2020 U.S. election has been surrounded by numerous controversies, the article strives to dispatch them and analyze their influence on the election results and the world. Furthermore, the Feature section delves into different issues that can be close to one's *home*, such as the lack of support for single-parent families and the recent overworking problem of delivery workers.

GT has experienced many changes this year due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. As I am writing my last Editor's Letter, I would like to take the time and thank all of the editors and reporters who have contributed their best efforts to create the magazine in such a challenging time. For the past two years, GT members have been like family to me, and that being, GT undeniably has been part of my understanding of *home*. The memories as a reporter and the Editor-in-Chief will always have a special place in my heart. GT will, without doubt, continue to work towards shedding light on important issues in our society, and I sincerely wish the best for the organization and the remaining staff members.



By Jun Uhnjin

(uhnjin@korea.ac.kr)

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

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Prospering With One Another: The “KU Co-Prosperity Project”

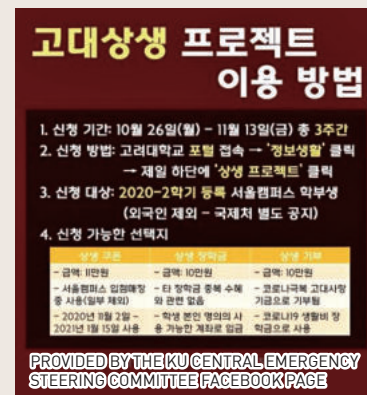
By Joo Hannah hannahjoo01@korea.ac.kr

On October 26, Korea University (KU) opened applications for the “KU Co-Prosperity Project,” providing KU students with three options to support themselves and others amidst the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Students applied individually via the KU Portal to Information Depository (KUPID) by the November 13 deadline.

The project provided three choices: a 100,000 Korean won scholarship to be deposited to the individual student’s bank account, a coupon worth 110,000 Korean won that can be used at on-campus stores, or a 100,000 Korean won donation made to the KU Love Fund. With these options, KU is hoping to support its students and revitalize the commercial areas near campus. In particular, the KU Love Fund is to be utilized in improving the online learning environment and providing

additional scholarships for struggling students.

As of November 8, over 70 percent of enrolled students participated in the project, with the large majority applying for the individual scholarship. KU is hoping that every student has taken advantage of and benefited from this project. 



| The “KU Co-Prosperity Project” Manual

Fixing Blind Spots in Healthcare With Mobile Hospitals

By Nam Eun Seo eunseo0222@korea.ac.kr


On November 10, the Korea University Medical Center (KUMC) and the Hyundai Motor Chung Mong-Koo Foundation signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the “Ondream mobile hospital building business,” promoting the production of mobile computed tomography (CT) buses to facilitate emergency coronavirus disease (COVID-19) responses.

In the early stages of COVID-19, CT scans can help obtain more accurate testing results compared to the use of other similar technologies. However, CTs being costly and sensitive to transportation, their use is generally limited in medically disadvantaged areas. The MOU aims to produce specialized buses equipped with mobile CT machines, which would contribute to containing the spread of COVID-19 in less-favored areas.

The President and CEO of KUMC Kim Young-hoon expressed his hopes that “the proactive and preemptive operation of



| President and CEO of KUMC Kim Young-hoon and Chairman of Hyundai Motors Chung Mong-koo Foundation Kwon Oh-kyu celebrating the MOU

Ondream mobile hospitals will contribute to ending the COVID-19 pandemic.” The MOU certainly seems to be a milestone on the road towards a brighter post-pandemic future. 

The Reinstatement of Professor A of the Department of Food Bioscience and Technology


By Kim Sur Hyun surhyunk01@korea.ac.kr

Previously in 2017, Professor A of the Department of Food Bioscience and Technology was dismissed due to criminal charges, yet the professor has recently returned to his position following the university’s decision. Students from this department have protested against Professor A’s reinstatement, making the Korea University (KU) Student Council of the Department of Food Bioscience and Technology upload a campus poster about this issue on November 18.

On the campus poster, the Student Council mentioned they did not know about this matter and asserted that it is the school’s duty to protect students’ right to education and guarantee their right to know. The Department of Food Bioscience and Technology displayed disappointment in the higher decision and announced that it would endeavor to recover from the events that happened back in 2017.



| KU Life Sciences & Biotechnology East Building

Therefore, they have asked the school to inform current school members about the reason for Professor A’s dismissal in 2017 and the reinstatement. 


KUSU Second Reelection Called Off Due to Low Voter Turnout

By Jung Eun Chong jecdavid@korea.ac.kr

On November 27, the second reelection for the 52nd Korea University Student Union (KUSU) was called off due to a low voter turnout of 25.21 percent, failing to reach the minimum of 33.3 percent to initiate the vote counting. Extension of the voting period was discussed in the 10th meeting of the KU Central Election Commission held at 8:30 P.M. later that day but was rejected.

In the reelection held online for three days from November 25 to 27, the Election campaign team *Moment* was the sole candidate. It consisted of Kim Chan-hee (‘18, Health and Environmental Science) running for the President of KUSU and Lee Jin-woo (‘17, Chemical and Biological Engineering) as his running

mate. On November 19, during the online public hearing on *Moment*, it promised to firmly hold KU students’ positions when negotiating with the school for issues including the tuition refund.

With the reelection called off this year, the third reelection is scheduled to take place in March or April next year. 



| A notice regarding the cancellation of the second reelection for the 52nd KUSU

A Place Where My Heart Is

By Kweon Seoyoung kb071531@korea.ac.kr

"The magical thing about home is that it feels good to leave, and it feels even better to come back," said Wendy Wunder. Everyone has their own special place, including their home, that serves a special meaning in their minds — whether it be one's favorite restaurant, cafe, or park. A home, in this matter, creates further meaning than being a mere physical space to live in. *The Granite Tower* (GT) asked four students at Korea University (KU) about the concept of *home* or for their honest stories about a place that encompasses the idea of *home*. Wherever it is, one thing is for sure — our home is where our heart is.



Jung Subin ('17, Public Administration)

When I first began living apart from my family, my new home was just a lonely place. After coming home from school and the festive times outside, the only thing that awaited me at home was silence. Waking up in the morning, whenever I unknowingly blurted out, "Good morning," only the wall was gazing back at me with its blank face. Now, however, I am with friends who help share my loneliness: a small cactus Ping-ping and a golden hamster William. Counting the days I water Ping-ping, seasons go by quickly and every sound William makes is adorable. With these friends, my home is now a place where I can feel comfort and warm communion.



Jeon Eon ho ('19, Korean Language and Literature)

Ironically, I ponder upon the meaning of home while I am on a journey, somewhere far away from home. For me, thinking of home means thinking of those whom I love. People own their houses, while houses embrace people — that is the way we live. When I am relaxed, I like to take a look around my house, and the things around me seem to be just enough to impress me. Even the leaves peeking from the door gap and the sunlight reflecting on the high building window are admirable. I am inspired and encouraged by these fleeting moments every day.



Lee You Na ('19, Materials Science and Engineering)

My home has to be a place that fits me well. I have various hobbies that I enjoy in my freetime; therefore, my home has to be a place that can accommodate the equipment necessary for my pastimes. My home is a place where I can install musical instruments, drawing tools or a cooking oven and decorate to my liking. At this unique place where I can create into a space for my own, I feel comfort and warmth. Although the school laboratory is not my actual home, I work, learn, and study there for my future, without any doubt, it is also a special *home-like* place for me.



Lee Seongwoo ('20, English Language and Literature)

To me, home is a place where I can easily control my inner state. I often get stressed out trying to carry out my hectic daily schedules outside. Therefore, home is a grateful place where I eat delicious food and talk comfortably with my family, thereby relieving the tension and regaining my inner peace. Furthermore, I gain confidence that I can overcome the anxieties lying deep within my mind and solve my problems by reflecting on myself without any disruption at home. I believe that this balance between intimacy and privacy is necessary when defining the genuine meaning of *home*. **K**



Flying to the Future

— Indoor Location Determination Technology

By Park Sumin smpark1030@korea.ac.kr

New Excellent Technology (NET) certification is granted by the Korea Industrial Technology Association to new technologies developed primarily within the country. NET certification was created for the commercialization of technology transactions. In October, the research team of Professor Choi Lynn (School of Electrical Engineering) received NET certification for terrestrial magnetism location determination technology (LDT) based on deep learning. Professor Choi's research team is the only university research team to have received NET certification either last year or this year.

Conventional LDT based on the global positioning system (GPS) cannot be used to determine indoor location because it is difficult to receive a GPS signal indoors. An alternative, indoor LDT based on radio waves, one of the most commonly used modern technologies, also needs additional equipment such as beacons and application processors, ultimately reducing the economic benefit of LDT. On the other hand, terrestrial magnetism LDT based on deep learning determines a location using a recurrent neural network (RNN). This technology computes the indoor location from accumulated data related to the distribution of the magnetic field on Earth using machine learning. It does not require additional equipment, and the error is very low compared to LDT based on radio waves.

Bae Han June (Graduate School of Electrical Engineering) mentioned the Earth's magnetic field produces stable signals that can reduce determination error resulted from the instability of signals — unlike the radio waves. The research team had difficulties

distinguishing and understanding different movement patterns of pedestrians for all new cases, so they resolved the problems by implementing deep learning. Therefore, using deep learning, the terrestrial magnetism LDT could correct measurement distortions without additional devices.

When the construction of SK Future Hall was completed, Korea University (KU) students were the first to experience a location-based service using terrestrial magnetism LDT. Currently, the research team is designing a positional tracking system for patients and medical teams and an indoor three-dimensional navigation service at KU Anam Hospital using terrestrial magnetism LDT. Navigation systems for the disabled on Korea Train eXpress (KTX) and Seoul Subway lines 1 and 4 are in the process of development as well.

Professor Choi stated that the research team endeavors to advance LDT further so that it can be applied to different environments. The following research



PROVIDED BY
PROFESSOR CHOI LYNN



PROVIDED BY
BAE HAN JUNE

thus aims to develop an algorithm for rapid convergence of indoor location estimation results and achieve cognition of inter-story movements through escalators or elevators. Furthermore, for the places that cannot carry smart devices, the research team attempts to produce substitutive hardware.

Location-based services that utilize terrestrial magnetism LDT based on deep learning are anticipated to be used in our daily lives in the near future. With the commercialization of this technology, general consumers, including the disabled, will be able to take better advantage. In particular, since this technology can be effectively used indoors, it would be helpful for those who have difficulty in finding a location within a building. **K**

Supporting Anam, the *Home* of KU Students

By Kang Min Seo rkdalstj001@korea.ac.kr

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has significantly altered the daily lives of people. In particular, the impact on commercial districts formulated near universities is axiomatic due to the decreased demand of their primary consumers — students and faculty — as university courses are being carried out non-face-to-face. This phenomenon is also apparent in Anam, where commercial facilities Korea University (KU) students frequently visit are located. In order to support enterprises located in Anam, the start-up team Ensemble of KU has launched a new service that could potentially revive the stagnant Anam economy.

The word *Ensemble* implies harmony or unity, or a musical performed by over two people. As the meaning of the word highlights, the start-up team Ensemble pursues harmony of diverse ideas and aims to create novel values. The team members define themselves as a “Project Group,” which refers to a collaborative team that shares a

common mission and works towards a cohesive objective. Ensemble endeavors to support small and local businesses that operate offline services. The objective of the team is to help offline stores sell their products and services online; to achieve that goal, the team is building an effective web tool that store owners can easily access and

thereby make sales through its platform.

The three members of Ensemble are each responsible for different tasks. Park Sunwoo ('16, Business Administration), the team leader, develops back-end servers for Ensemble's web services. Lee Jungyoon ('18, Business Administration) performs front-end website designs, and Jang Sooh ('18, Division of International Studies) manages the team's marketing strategies.

The Anam Restaurant Week Project

To finance small enterprises in Anam and enhance their accessibility, the team launched a service named *Anam Restaurant Week*, a Prepaid-coupon Issuance project. This project first started with a survey that was conducted to identify the needs of the consumers and potential enterprises. After deciding which merchandise to target by analyzing the survey results, the Ensemble team



PROVIDED BY ECONOMY CHOSUN

| A street in Anam with bars and restaurants



PROVIDED BY PARK SUNWOO

| Team Ensemble

paid for large amounts of the merchandise at a discounted price decided in prior in consensus with the vendor. Next, the team issued coupons for the merchandise only with a little amount of difference. After the coupons were issued, KU students could purchase them through online platforms, including Ensemble's webpage, its official Instagram, and also Koreapas and KU Everytime, which are online communities for KU students.

The *Anam Restaurant Week* was held in September for three weeks following two funding weeks in August. In September, seven restaurants received funding, providing coupons to the students at a 20 percent discount on average. About 250 students and faculty members purchased coupons on the official website, which resulted in the sales of 3.3 million Korean won in total. All information related to the project, such as the funding amount, the sales volume, and the completion of consultation with the stores, was disclosed online throughout the *Anam Restaurant Week*.

Consequently, the project allowed

entrepreneurs to utilize cash, and KU students were able to use restaurants at a discounted price. In the current situation where fixed costs such as rental fees and maintenance costs could be burdensome, the Prepaid-coupon Issuance project was considerably helpful to small businesses. The owner of Hippocrates Soup, a restaurant that participated in the service, remarked, “The project is helpful in terms of the revenue, and it also has a promotion effect,” in an interview with *Hankyoreh*.

Ensemble's Vision and Its Next Step

When asked of Ensemble's future plans, Park stated, “We plan to enlarge our business model because we want to support more stores facing difficult situations these days. Also, we are striving to develop new models that will promote our services to a broader audience.” In an interview with the KU Pride Club, the team also stated that they are planning to broaden their targets to flower shops and bars in Anam.


The team expressed enthusiasm for business growth by continuing to initiate new projects, being open to feedback, and actively investigating different market environments. “Unfortunately, we cannot reveal our next project specifically yet. However, we can clearly state that our future projects will carry on targeting small and local businesses,” claimed Park.

In addition, Ensemble displayed an interest in information literacy, in terms of the ability to utilize new technologies, especially in the *untact* era where online

platforms have become more important than ever. Ensemble stated that the convenience of the technology should be accessible to every business, especially to relatively small stores that are not familiar with new technologies. “As Ensemble's primary customers are small and local businesses, we will strive to support them with great web services,” mentioned Park.

The Special Bond in Anam

KU is notable for the distinctive bond between the students and graduates, which forms a strong community. Such a strong bond also applies to not only the campus but also the Anam area. “When we are in Anam, we feel as if we were in our hometown. People around the campus, including store owners, service providers, and other neighbors, have always lived in harmony with KU students, and that really makes people care about each other in this challenging time,” stated Park.

Anam is like a *home* to numerous KU students. This includes the restaurants, bars, and cafés in which students often spend time with their friends. Anam also reflects all of the students' university experiences, including their hardships and happy moments. In this sense, the start-up team Ensemble and its projects for the Anam area could be interpreted as a contribution towards KU students' *home*. As the revenue figure of Ensemble's projects indicates, the support of KU students for the project and the team is projected to steadily increase in the future as well. By standing together as one, KU students are reconstructing the community. 

Disappointing Revelations From KU's General Inspection

By Joo Hannah hannahjoo01@korea.ac.kr

This year, Korea University (KU) was subject to its first-ever general inspection by the Ministry of Education (MOE). The results were shocking, revealing several accounts of corrupt actions by some faculty members. Most infuriating to KU students, who have failed in their demands for a tuition fee refund, was the fact that almost 70 million won — initially intended for research purposes — was spent at Gangnam entertainment facilities. The inspection also revealed questionable admissions and grading practices. These disappointing revelations about the institution students often refer to as their *home* has struck a nerve: can we trust KU with our hearts?

The problems reported by the MOE have especially infuriated students due to their close association with student life. According to *Hankyung News*, the 70 million won spent during 221 visits to entertainment facilities were mostly funded by student tuition and taxes. The current People Power Party representative and ambassador to China Jang Ha-sung is one of the 13 professors accused of the illegal use of school funds.

Even more closely related to student life, the MOE expressed suspicions about the admissions and grading processes. Despite having officially stated that they would select three times the final admission number in the first stage of the admission process for student athletes, KU increased this to 5.5 times. Ultimately, a student who had passed the first stage with top scores failed to succeed at the final admission

stage. In addition, there were multiple cases where KU students whose parents are KU professors registered for their parent's class and received high scores. In these cases, the professors did not submit reports explaining the basis for assigning these grades.

Why the Sudden Inspection?

The MOE has been extremely clear about the purpose of this financial and academic investigation. When announcing its inspection plans last year, the MOE emphasized it was necessary due to the high government funding of private universities, estimated to be around 7 trillion Korean won. It was deemed imperative to confirm that the government's — and ultimately the taxpayers' — money was spent correctly.

The main selection standards for this year's investigations were whether the university had been investigated before and the size of the student population. Based on these criteria, of the 111 universities nationwide that had not been subject to inspection since their founding, the 16 universities with over 6,000 enrolled students were investigated. Expanding on the purpose of accountability and transparency, the final reports on these universities have been made available to the public on the MOE's official website. This includes the comprehensive report on KU, which outlines the aforementioned cases of corruption.

KU Students Taking Action

Unsurprisingly, students were shocked and angered at the results.



The KUCESC Logo

Shortly after the news broke, the KU Central Emergency Steering Committee (KUCESC) issued a statement calling for KU to responsibly carry out legal action, officially apologize to the members of the KU community, clearly explain the details of the cases, and collaborate with the community to prevent them from happening again. Regarding the student organization's immediate action, the head of the KUCESC, Shin Saehe ('18, School of Media and Communication), explained that "because students make up most of the school population, it was important for students to be involved in the process of solving KU's problems."

Notably, the KUCESC's statement questioned KU's rejection of certain student demands due to a lack of funds. The audit revealed that, rather than a lack of funds, its dishonest allocation hindered the promotion of student life. In response to this, Shin stated that "while [students] may be able to demand more financial support after this incident, it will not solve the entirety of fund shortage problems. Yet, the

embezzled funds could definitely have been utilized to fix several issues. We will take advantage of this opportunity to demand the accounting and allocation processes of funds to become more specific and efficient."

The KUCESC also claimed that "KU has always led the spirit of the times as active intellectuals. This incident, however, goes against that sentiment and has made a permanent mark as a disgraceful event in KU's history." In addition, the biased grading and admissions have led students to demand reflection on KU's sense of ethics. Not only were the students angered and disappointed, they were also embarrassed.



Working Towards Cleaner Academic Institutions

KU was not the only university heavily criticized for its fraudulent activity. Yonsei University was revealed to have experienced corruption in its admissions process, Jeju University was issued a warning by the MOE after 54 problematic findings, and several other universities faced similar charges. These incidents of mass corruption and fraud at multiple universities suggest that these issues need to be approached as a systemic problem.

The MOE subsequently announced that financial inspections of private universities would be expanded, both in terms of the number of schools investigated and the period in which inspections would be conducted. It also announced intentions to inspect at least 10 universities each year. However,

despite the support from numerous other ministries within the government, the MOE still requires more physical resources for its audits.

Within KU, after the first official discussion between the KUCESC and President Chung Jin-taek on September 28, students were promised that the demands from their official statement would be met. Since then, KU has consistently updated the KUCESC on its progress; as of November, the withdrawal procedures from the accounting fraud have been concluded, while the finalization of disciplinary action still remains. KU is also deciding whether to reopen the Innovation Committee, which was initially founded after the 2019 accounting inspection, to investigate accounting fraud. Regarding the suspicions surrounding student athlete admissions and students registering in their parents' classes, KU is currently in the process of filing administrative litigation.

As institutions of the highest academic level, universities have the responsibility to be exceptionally transparent and accountable. In addition, because universities receive vast amounts of public funding, the government must also ensure the transparency of these institutions by conducting frequent, spontaneous, and thorough inspections. While the results of KU's first general audit were all-around disappointing, students are hoping this incident can become the opportunity for KU and other universities to become more honest, prompting them to pursue financial accountability and academic equity. **K**

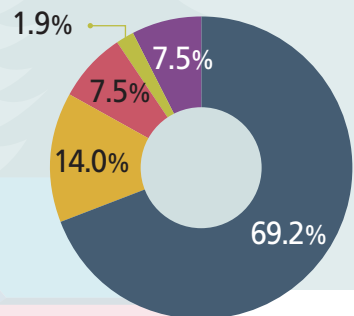
Do You Consider Korea University Your Home?



By Choi Minji | qdana511@korea.ac.kr

How important is it for students to feel a sense of inclusivity in a college environment? How do students at Korea University (KU) feel about their sense of inclusivity at KU? *The Granite Tower* (GT) conducted a survey to find out how KU students feel about this. Given that the definition of *home* is a place where you feel a strong sense of belonging and inclusivity, we aimed to find out how many students at KU consider KU to be their *home*.

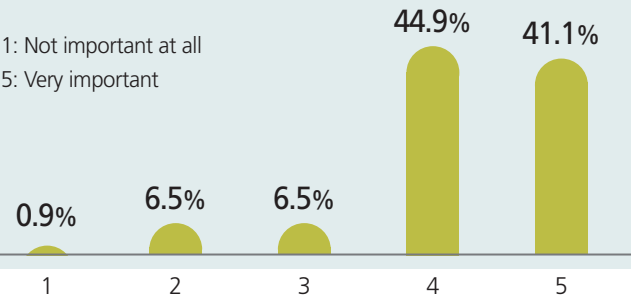
1. Please choose the option that best matches your current status.



● Freshman ● Sophomore
● Junior ● Senior ● Graduate student

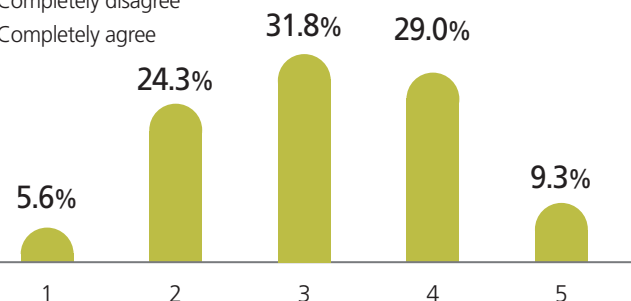
2. On a scale of 1 to 5, how much value do you put into feeling a sense of belonging in a college environment?

1: Not important at all
5: Very important



3. On a scale of 1 to 5, how strongly do you feel that KU is your home? (Home: a place where you feel a strong sense of belonging and inclusivity)

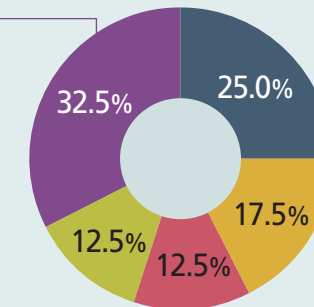
1: Completely disagree
5: Completely agree



4. (Only for those who selected either 1 or 2 in Q3) What is the main reason that you don't consider KU your home?

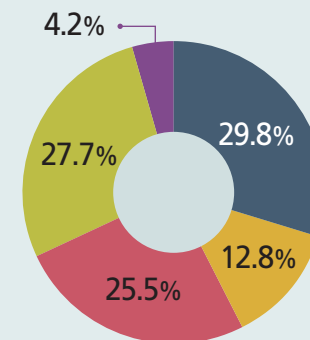
Some other reasons included

- COVID-19
- Have not gone to school enough to feel at home



- Classmates
- Lack of support from the school (in terms of academics, career, student welfare, and so on)
- Clubs, societies, and extracurricular activities
- The school atmosphere
- Other reasons

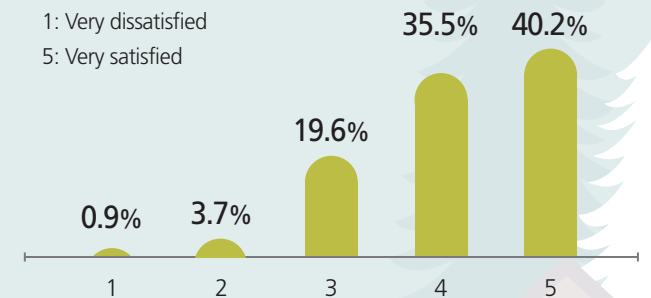
5. (Only for those who selected either 4 or 5 in Q3) What is the main reason that you consider KU your home?



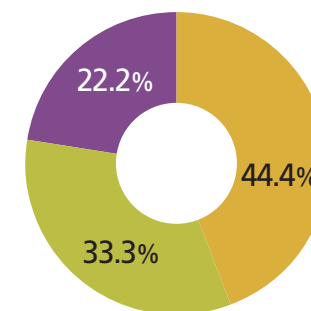
- Classmates
- Sufficient support from the school (in terms of academics, career, student welfare, and so on)
- Clubs, societies, and extracurricular activities
- The school atmosphere
- Other reasons

6. On a scale of 1 to 5, how satisfied (or happy) are you with your choice of coming to KU?

1: Very dissatisfied
5: Very satisfied

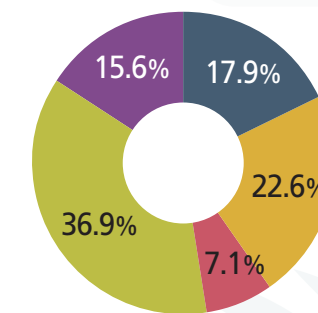


7. (Only for those who selected either 1 or 2 in Q6) What is the main reason that you regret coming to KU?



- Classmates
- Lack of support from the school (in terms of academics, career, student welfare, and so on)
- Clubs, societies, and extracurricular activities
- The school atmosphere
- Other reasons

8. (Only for those who selected either 4 or 5 in Q6) What is the main reason that you are satisfied with coming to KU?



- Classmates
- Lack of support from the school (in terms of academics, career, student welfare, and so on)
- Clubs, societies, and extracurricular activities
- The school atmosphere
- Other reasons

Living a Stress-Controlled Life

— Emotion Regulation and Stress Management

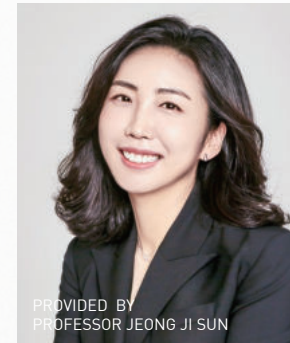
By Kim Sur Hyun | surhyunk01@korea.ac.kr

According to the *Mental Health Foundation's* 2018 study, "74 percent of people have felt so stressed they have been overwhelmed or unable to cope" with the stress. Luckily, Korea University (KU) provides students with a course that teaches how to regulate and manage stress. This course may be beneficial to those who need support with handling their emotions, especially during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.



The Emotion Regulation and Stress Management course is taught by Professor Jeong Ji Sun (Graduate School of Education). Professor Jeong acquired her Counseling Psychology Ph.D. at the University of Tennessee and became a licensed psychologist. As an international student herself, she explained that she "understand[s] the difficulties of international students and the difficulties of students taking classes in other languages other than their native language." This personal background led her to design her class as an English language core general studies course.

In an interview with Professor Jeong, she expressed a big passion for her job. As a professor, she wants to teach this class to every student, especially to those who are under a lot of stress. She emphasized and assured students by saying, "Stress is not something wrong but something very meaningful in our life right now. It is hard to think of this because you may be tired of stress, but close your eyes for a moment and take a deep breath. Just by taking a different view of the current situation, not only will your mind but also your body will react differently to the stressful situation."



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PROFESSOR JEONG JI SUN

| Professor Jeong Ji Sun

Understanding the Concept of Stress

According to the course syllabus, the purpose of the course is to "provide positive psychological approaches to understand stress." After taking this course, students will gain a better understanding about their values and how to make effective choices to reduce their stress and ultimately increase positive emotions. In this year's fall semester, the course is taught every Monday and Wednesday from 10:30 to 11:45 A.M. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the class is currently being held online through Zoom.

On Mondays, the professor uploads a video lecture that talks about the theories of stress and emotions. On Wednesdays, there is a real-time Zoom meeting where students practice the skill the professor teaches that day. The Zoom class allows students to interact with each other and share their stories on how they manage their emotions. In addition, students are able to talk about their experience regarding the skill the professor taught and how that skill helped them cope with their emotions. Unfortunately, since the class is held online this semester, there are difficulties facilitating an active discussion among students. Professor Jeong explained that

although "it is important for students to share their experiences and practices," due to the circumstances, there is "a lack of communication between professors and students."

Meaningful Lifetime Assignments


The course requires creativity and consistency. To fully gain the best results out of this class, the students must be willing to participate in all assignments and work on the skills individually outside the classroom. The major assignments of the course are the Feel Better Fast Diary, the Inside Out Assignment, the Interview Assignment, and the Feel Better Fast Portfolio. One of the most beneficial assignments for self-development is the Feel Better Fast Diary, which has to be completed every week. It consists of writing down a skill taught in class, the mood before and after using that skill, the effectiveness, and a comment regarding the student's experience using this skill. A total of 13 Feel Better Fast Diaries are required to be completed during the entire semester.

Another important assignment is the Interview Assignment. The purpose is to apply the theories and the skills that the student learned in the class and help out another person using those skills. For this assignment, the student has to interview a person who is experiencing a stressful situation in their life. The student is expected to describe the situation and incorporate the knowledge they have learned in class. This assignment not only helps the student to learn about different stress management skills and recap what they learned during the semester, but it also helps others understand how to cope

with stressful situations. In some ways, it works as a therapy session and a great practice outside of class.

Secrets for a Happier Life

To receive a good score in this class, participation is crucial. Attendance is important to the final grade, so students are encouraged to attend every class and actively participate. Rather than merely working towards getting a good score, it is better if the student tries to learn and apply the skills taught in class in real-life situations. Professor Jeong stated, "The subject of stress management and emotional control is not just knowledge that you have to understand with your head, but skills that you have to practice in your life."

The ultimate goal of this course is to demonstrate an understanding of positive psychological approaches to stress. Professor Jeong mentioned that, as all people face many stressful and emotionally vulnerable situations in their lives, classes for mental health should certainly be taught at school. She stated, "Just as we go to the gym to exercise and take care of our physical strength, we learn how to take good care of our minds in the mental gym." In fact, we all experience stress and have to cope with it, yet many never learn exactly *how* to cope with it. The Emotion Regulation and Stress Management course will be helpful for those students who are not good at handling their emotions and wish to learn how to manage them. The course will ultimately help students live a lifelong healthy and stress-controlled life. 

Delivery Workers' Rising Deaths

— The Problems Behind the Scenes and Possible Solutions

By Kang Sungmin sungminpw2001@korea.ac.kr

On October 15, a 36-year-old contract parcel delivery worker of Hanjin Express, a logistics company was found dead at his home. According to the *National Delivery Civic Task Force (NDCTF)*, a group working for the rights of delivery workers, it was the unendurable amount of labor that led to his unfortunate demise. According to *Yonhap News*, 10 other parcel delivery workers have died in 2020 and is believed to be related to overwork. The major trigger for the growing workload has been discovered as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, which caused a rapid increase in online shopping and delivery services. The death of the late Kim is not only an unfortunate happening but a product of deeply rooted problems within the delivery system of South Korea.

According to *Yonhap News*, NDCTF disclosed a text message that Kim sent to his superior just four days before his death. In the message, the worker asked for a reduction of work and a sufficient amount of time to rest. "It's 5:00 A.M. when I return home. After I eat, clean up and go straight back to the (company) terminal, I have to sort parcels again without any sleep whatsoever," the message read. In return, Hanjin Express has stated that Kim already had underlying issues regarding health and that his delivery load was near the supposed average of 200 parcels per day. Nonetheless, the workers' group wholeheartedly rebuked the company's explanation, explaining that Kim's daily load reached the above average range of 300 packages during Chuseok.

Demoralizing Status Quo for Delivery Workers

On October 10, the survey results on the status of overworked courier workers were announced by the *Overworker Task Force*, a delivery service union. According to the survey, the annual working hours of delivery men were about 3,700 hours, twice the average of Korean workers. The accident rate was 25.9 percent, more than 50 times the average of Korean workers.

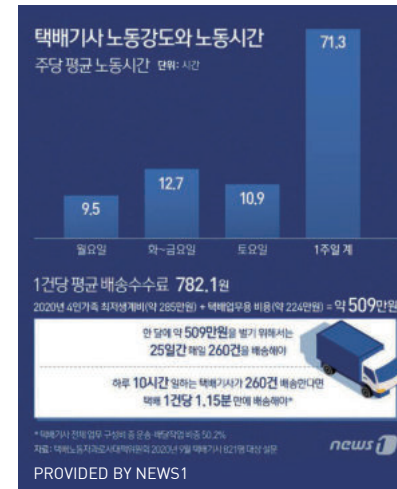
In terms of the usage of delivery services, COVID-19 has shifted people to use delivery systems more frequently, for it eliminates the need of getting outside and endangering oneself to the virus. As a result, the annual number of courier services per Korean citizen jumped more than 20 times from 2.4 in 2000 to 53.8 in 2019. Additionally, it was already noted that the delivery market is ever-expanding, increasing by an average of 11.65 percent every year to 5.4 trillion

won in 2018 and 6.3 trillion won in 2019, which is estimated to reach 7 trillion won in 2020. As the number of delivery services increased, so did the working hours of the workers.

Currently, the social security subscription rate for delivery workers is also disastrous. According to the *People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy*, a South Korean non-governmental organization, only about 15 percent of the 50,000 delivery workers are covered by industrial accident insurance, even though it is mandatory by law. Therefore, delivery workers cannot afford to lose their jobs or suffer from diseases and accidents, which are frequent happenings.

Fundamental Solutions

In order to fundamentally solve the long-hour labor of delivery workers, there



Delivery Service Labor Intensity and Time

is a need to raise delivery fees that have been declining and turn attention to special employment workers who have often been given a blind eye within the law. Despite earning unprecedented amounts of money from COVID-19, delivery companies have not given any attention to improving the treatment of delivery workers. *The Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport of South Korea*, which is in charge of the classification work, recommended a raise and even requested the president to act, but the responsible companies have continued to stay silent.

In addition, carrier companies should have human resources dedicated to classifying "free labor," which accounts for more than 40 percent of the parcel delivery workload. The courier has plenty of room to prepare personnel exclusively for classification work. *CJ Korea Express*, which controls half of the domestic delivery market, saw its net profit more than double to 36.2 billion won in the second quarter of this year compared to the same period last year. Therefore, as other delivery service companies also had similar growths, it is plausible that they

have more time and energy to prepare additional personnel.

Legal measures are also needed to strengthen social security for delivery workers. *The Industrial Accident Insurance Act* in South Korean law allows special employment workers to apply for "applicable exclusions" that do not require them to subscribe to industrial insurance if they want to. However, there have been too many cases in which users abuse industrial insurance exclusions. When making a delivery contract, the application for exclusion from industrial insurance is attached to the contract. In turn, the industrial insurance coverage rate has now only exceeded 10 percent.

However, the industrial accident insurance subscription of courier workers cannot rely on the union's organizational rate. Therefore, the law should be revised to eliminate "applicable exclusion applications" and allow users to pay all industrial insurance premiums paid by operators and delivery workers half and half, as ordinary workers do. Only then can mandatory industrial insurance be effective. In the case of employment

insurance, the effectiveness issue should be highlighted.

To solve the problems, the Minister of Employment and Labor, Lee Jae-gap, announced the *Measures to Prevent Overwork of Delivery Engineers*. In the measures, the government plans to restrict late-night delivery after 10:00 P.M. and that if 10:00 P.M. is not sufficient, the system will be adjusted to maintain proper working hours for delivery service workers' needs. In addition to setting a time limitation, the government plans to encourage the spread of the five-day workweek by introducing a Saturday holiday system for delivery drivers considering the volume of deliveries.

However, the government's issue of this measure was not received well by the public, facing a backlash that states that the measures only touch the surface of a problem so deeply rooted in the workplace. Likewise, a more profound solution is in dire needs. Whatever the outcome is, it is imperative that there should be a change in delivery workers' rights. **K**



People demanding apologies from CJ Logistics for the death of Seo Hyung-wook

Media, Where the Eyes and Ears Are — MBN's Illegal Fund-Raising and Acts of Deception

By Kweon Seoyoung kb071531@korea.ac.kr

The word *media* is a plural form of the Latin word *medium*, which means “a middle ground.” As a medium connecting people and the world, news and broadcasting systems should follow solid media ethics, including pursuits of truth, the realization of social justice, and respect toward human beings. However, at times, media channels' traits as private companies generating profit can conflict with the pursuit of public interest. Recently, such a dilemma between private interest and media ethics rose to the surface in South Korea. Maeil Broadcasting Network (MBN), a comprehensive programming channel covering news, drama, entertainment, and culture, has been suspended for violating the Broadcast Act. In the new *untact* society, media has become more of a *home* to the people's eyes and ears. Now may be a relevant time to reflect on the ethics of media.

On October 30, the Korea Communications Commission (KCC) imposed a strong administrative measure on MBN, requiring all broadcasts to be suspended for six months. An illegal capital provision of MBN was the main cause of the punishment. In order to launch a comprehensive programming channel in 2011, MBN made a borrowed-name investment to cover the minimum paid-in capital of 300 billion Korean

won. MBN employees were lent 60 billion won from a bank, later buying stocks with the money and making borrowed-name investments, and eventually raising illegal funds for the establishment of a comprehensive programming channel. Later in a 2014 and 2017 comprehensive channel re-approval evaluation, MBN again submitted a false stockholder list and forged financial statements, continuing to commit violations.



The Price for the Illegal Action

According to the current Broadcast Act, MBN's illegal capital provision is a serious offense that could even have led to a cancellation of approval for general programming channels. After arguments on whether to cancel the approval or suspend broadcasting activities, KCC decided to suspend all the broadcasting services by MBN.

Such a decision implied that MBN admitted the fact regarding the illegal capital expedient at the time of its establishment, and KCC further filed criminal charges against MBN, former Maeil Business TV (MBTV), and its representatives at the time.

However, the administrative disposition has received a grace period of six months. The reason for this is to protect the people's right to watch and to save small-sized production companies and broadcasting channel operators that have been producing programs for MBN. By offering a grace period, KCC aims to give audiences a sufficient notice time regarding the suspension of MBN's broadcasting activities, as well as minimize the shock that goes toward the broadcasting market.



Adding Insult to Injury

The problems have continued bumper to bumper. From November 3 to 6, KCC operated a comprehensive channel review committee to review the re-approval of MBN and Joongang Tongyang Broadcasting Company (JTBC), which were two companies whose validity period of a comprehensive channel license had expired. The approval criteria included public responsibility of broadcasting, the realization of social fairness, cultural necessity, public interest, and programs' adequacy. While JTBC has passed the approval, MBN scored 640 points, less than the basis score of approval of 650 points. Although MBN attained satisfactory evaluations in other matters,

it fell astray on evaluation regarding its compliance with broadcasting laws. In this regard, KCC has announced that the unsatisfactory results could lead to a refusal of re-approval or conditional re-approval. Accordingly, KCC stated that they would affirm MBN's solution to the problems pointed out and their plans for enhancement. MBN admitted its faults on October 28 and publicly apologized by acknowledging the illegality and promising to prevent a recurrence of the situation.



Future Challenges

Now MBN has to refill the capital worth tens of billions of Korean won that they illegally covered in order to become a comprehensive channel and also pay a fine of 200 million Korean won for the offense. To make matters worse, the six-month suspension of all broadcasts is presumed to bring out a heavy loss for the company. According to Professor Shin Haerin (School of Media and Communication), the actual impact of the sanction would be analogous to closing down the station given the length and severity of the measure. Furthermore, it would entail other types of irrevocable damages, such as losing the viewership base and threatening the livelihoods of employees, other partners, and subcontractors.

“The verdict certainly serves as a forceful note of caution, not only for other general service channels but to and across all forms of media and legacy,” mentioned Professor Shin. She pointed out the need to seriously reexamine the role and responsibility of the media in terms of its



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PROFESSOR SHIN HAERIN

Professor Shin Haerin

function as a public service. South Korea's general service channel approval system itself also has loopholes, requiring a more thorough evaluation of its quality and reliability. Professor Shin emphasized, “The MBN's incident certainly calls for a reexamination of the assessment process for the approval and re-approval system and its actual practice.”

There is no doubt that media, a middle ground connecting people with the world, plays a significant role in our society. Only when the press faithfully performs their role, can transparent politics, economy and social culture be maintained and the people's right to know be enhanced. However, oftentimes, as the saying goes, “Much water runs by the mill that the miller knows not of.” That is, the media themselves will first have to abide by the law and strive for transparency in accounting and management. “As part of an established media company with a long history, there would be a need for MBN to take its viewership into consideration, implementing proactive measures to readdress the betrayal of trust,” said Professor Shin. The eyes of the people will be on MBN's future course of action and their fresh public appearance six months later. **K**

A Child-For-Sale Post Reveals In-Depth Issues Facing Unmarried Parents

By Kang Yun Yeong dramatizationpersonality@korea.ac.kr



On October 16, an unusual post on Karrot Market, an online second-hand market, was left by an anonymous woman with an attention-grabbing title: “36-Week-Old Child Up for Adoption” on Jeju Island. The seller added two photos of the child along with an asking price of 200,000 Korean won. The post was quickly deleted but became extremely controversial and attracted the attention of the authorities. The person who left the post was revealed to be a single mother to an unwanted child who had suffered through postpartum depression and uploaded the post during a breakdown; she deleted it after she had returned to her senses.

Upon receiving the report, the Jeju Municipal Police started investigating the anonymous uploader, known as Miss A, to charge her with a violation of the Child Welfare Law. Through Internet Protocol (IP) tracking, it was revealed that she had given birth on October 13, so the child was only three days old at the time of posting on Karrot Market. When confronted by the authorities, Miss A stated that raising a child would have been difficult as a single mother, especially given that the child’s father could not be contacted and was not legally responsible for the child. Further inquiries revealed that, aside from the mother’s odd post, there were no other health problems for both Miss A or her child.

The Root of the Issue

Life is not easy for single mothers in South Korea. In particular, mothers who do not have other means of support — the father absent, and no law established to hold them accountable — are faced with the pressure of childcare. One burden that single mothers face is postpartum care fees. Postpartum care provided by the current government is not funded well, and most care centers are costly. For instance, most care centers charge 1,000,000 Korean won a week, but the government funds provide only 700,000 Korean won at most. This means that government support does not cover even the minimum costs, and some people do not have access to public funds.

In Miss A’s case, the lack of financial support from her parents and partner, along with the difficulties of being a single parent, paralyzed her with great fear. Her partner was unable to support a child, and she had to wean the child for seven days before putting them up for adoption. While she was one of the lucky cases who received limited funds from the government, her parents’ lack of support and her lack of income represented an economic burden.

Unsupportive Laws for Single Mothers

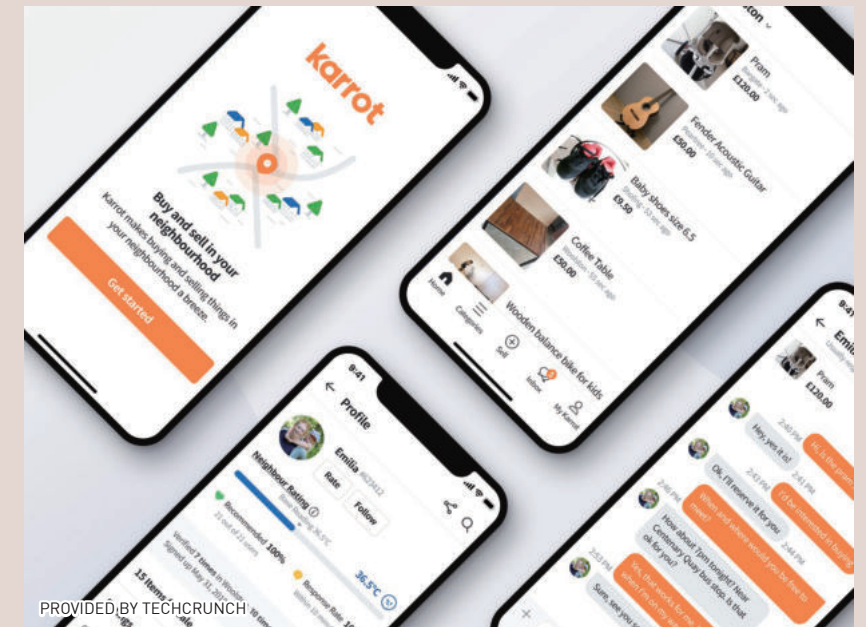
One suggestion behind Miss A’s action made by the Governor of Jeju Province, Won Hee-ryong, is that the current law requires a birth report for the child in order to put them up for adoption. The

Special Adoption Act also legally requires a period of seven days after birth before adoption in an attempt to convince the parents to rethink their decision about the adoption. Furthermore, the law indicates that the parents should gain the approval of the family court to put their child up for adoption — meaning that the birth and adoption would be in the public record. The law was initially amended to encourage parents to keep their children and reduce the international adoption of Korean children. The intentions of the law aside, this act has caused great difficulties for mothers who face circumstances similar to Miss A’s. Many clauses included in the Special Adoption Act establish obstacles for adoption, and the public record preserves the social stigma, which, in extreme cases, can lead to a loss of employment opportunities in the future.

Lastly, there is no specific law in South Korea that charges neglectful fathers, and their lack of support cannot be brought before the court, unlike in the United States (U.S.), where child support is enforced by law. A lot of mothers are left charged with the responsibility of the child without payment in a workforce that would discriminate against them. Therefore, it can be concluded that the rights of single mothers are not fully protected by the law in South Korea. This is clearly something that needs to be reviewed, both in informal social



The Child-for-Sale Post on the Popular Secondhand Trading Application



The Karrot Market application

settings and by the government as a whole.

A Solution That May Be Difficult to Achieve

The solution for single mothers lies in the hands of higher institutions. According to *The Dong-A Ilbo*, while the government is certainly doing its best to support single mothers with social policies, most of its well-meaning programs are underfunded and act as a gateway to social stigma for the women. Furthermore, the archaic laws that fail to make runaway fathers legally responsible for their child add to the mental and economic burden that these women are not equipped to face. As previously stated, the current policies have been designed to discourage international adoptions and encourage biological parents to keep their children — but it is clear in Miss A’s case that this legal requirement damaged her mental health and put her child in a dangerous situation.

Furthermore, campaigning for social awareness is also an important step in acknowledgment beyond the traditional mindset. Modern society has opened possibilities for families to take in diverse forms and different sizes. Some cannot afford to maintain the nuclear family forever due to circumstances out of their control. Recognizing the reality of the people living in circumstances different from the stereotypical greatly improves their situation; eliciting acceptance in place of shunning and sympathy would normalize single parenthood.

Overall, it is impossible to completely blame this incident on Miss A. While her irresponsibility is an undeniable factor in this incident, there are institutions and the actions of her ex-partner that had influenced her into this form of breakdown. There is limited support for unmarried mothers, and it must be noted that to gain legal support, many have to jump through unreasonable hoops with difficult standards to meet. **K**

The Muddy United States Presidential Election

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By Yoon Seok Jun tom13@korea.ac.kr

The United States (U.S.) has written a new history in the recent presidential election held in early November. An unprecedentedly high ratio of voting through distanced mailing and numerous problems regarding the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and human rights created extensive tension between the two candidates, Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. and Donald Trump. The U.S. has never faced such division in its home, politically polarized between the two sides, and the society left like an unpinned grenade. Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are set to be the next authority who will totally alter what Trump has built so far. What they will do for the U.S. and the world is to be revealed soon.

Donald Trump: Make America Great Again

Born into a real-estate rich family, Donald Trump has grown into a successful businessman in his career despite experiencing several failures. When he declared that he would run in the presidential election in 2016, the nation literally made fun of the man; even major broadcasting stations such as *Fox News* and *Central News Network* (CNN) derided his move as “the beginning of the end of Donald Trump.” However, shattering everyone’s mockery, Trump was elected as president, triumphing over Hillary Clinton despite the total number of individual votes were standing in Hillary’s favor. Not only was America in surprise, but the globe was also stunned that a politically inexperienced man had sat down to rule the world’s most powerful nation.

Trump’s courses of action, however, were not as atrocious as the public expected after all. He has achieved the lowest unemployment rate since George Bush’s term and made history with the North Korea-U.S. Summit both in Singapore and at the 38th parallel. No other U.S. president has tried to communicate so directly with the Kim regime, and Trump was the first-ever to actually step inside North Korean territory.

On the other hand, Trump also brought major conflicts in foreign relations, such as reinforcing the Mexico-U.S. border wall to promote the nation’s economy and assure safety.

Previous U.S. presidents have not gone as far as Trump did, especially with China, banning the Chinese cellphone industry and application market. He also sparked racial division in the states, causing a phenomenal number of protests all over the territory regarding the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement.

Finally, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the globe, Trump walked into his dark days. He was criticized for not being alarmed about the crisis, seldom wearing a mask, even when countries such as Taiwan, South Korea, and Hong Kong had provided role models to quickly lower daily confirmed cases in the early stages. Moreover, he had not put much effort into lowering the infection rate by making repugnant statements in interviews such as “the more you examine, the more confirmed cases will be.” With a grand finale, Trump’s COVID-19 diagnosis in early October was by far the most decisive



| Donald Trump on his electoral campaign

issue that led to Trump’s falling credibility.

Joe Biden: Build Back Better

Unlike Trump, Biden was born into a comparatively underprivileged family and did not do well in studies. However, he was extraordinarily physical in American football and later studied law in order to achieve his dream of becoming the U.S. president. He then entered the Democratic Party as a senator at the age of 30 and held his position seven more times before running for vice-president under the former president Barack Obama. Biden’s 35 years of achievement in law, foreign affairs, and national defense was highly appreciated, and now he stands to become the next president of the world’s most influential country.

As an experienced politician, Joe Biden has consistently stated that foreign affairs are the key to building a

strong nation. According to Biden’s official campaign website, he asserted that Trump’s policy of rejecting the global economy and culture should be put aside, and “the U.S. should thrive by reforming international organizations and treaties” to regain leadership around the world. Moreover, Biden’s plan to “Secure our Values as a Nation of Immigrants” shows a more open manner to a wide range of races. Such promises worked as a positive point in this election.

However, Biden was halted by a sexual assault allegation by his former staff assistant Tara Reade in March, where she filed a case accusing Biden of sexually harassing her in her past career. She mentioned that Biden touched, penetrated, and kissed her several times without consent but could not accuse him at the time. Instead, she complained to Biden’s executive assistant and two top aides, who declined to take action. The case lit up again in the 2020 presidential election, and *The New York Times* investigated seven other women who complained about Biden and reported that a few of them believed Ms. Reade’s account. The case is closed for now, but the suspicion still leaves its trail.

The Election Promises

Both sides, considering that they have extremely different perspectives on many issues, have proposed quite distinct election promises from each other. During his regime, Trump kept a significant number of his promises by cutting domestic business’s taxes,



| Joe Biden on his electoral campaign

revising trade tariffs, and reinforcing the immigrant policy. Also, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was replaced by Trump’s new U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, setting the margin on exempting tariffs on products higher.

However, Trump’s decisions were not always pleasing for certain people. For instance, former regulations about opening the nation’s border to immigrants from Syria and Libya have been eliminated. He claimed these countries are “terror-prone places” and their people are “detrimental to the interest of the United States.” In addition, the nation’s exit from the Paris Climate Agreement, an international accord “aimed at curbing climate change by reducing greenhouse gases,” proved Trump’s indifference to the global climate crisis. The agreement included over 200 nations, and President Trump became the third to exit, following Syria and Nicaragua.

There were also a few promises

Trump failed to accomplish during his regime, the first being repealing Obamacare. Obamacare, also known as the Affordable Care Act (ACA), is a medical system that successfully reduced the number of people without health insurance. Trump did not believe in Obama’s spirit and practically rescinded the tax penalty for not registering for the ACA, which was mandatory before. Moreover, his ambition to root out the Islamic State of Iraq and the Syria (ISIS) from both the internet and the real world did not work. What is now left for Trump is to rebuild the nation’s manufacturing industry and carefully restore the domestic economy up to a four percent growth rate per year.

In contrast to Trump’s move, Biden plans to take more care on solving the pandemic, eradicating racial discrimination, and keeping track of global warming, mentioned Professor Ha Shang-Eung (Department of Political Science, Sogang University). Along with his slogan, “Build Back Better,” one of

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| Professor Ha Shang-Eung

his major plans, “Beat COVID-19,” consists of detailed highlights such as implementing mask mandates nationwide and rebuilding the medical defenses that Trump has dismantled to “predict, prevent, and mitigate” pandemic threats. Meanwhile, Professor Ha also stated that the new government might not successfully be able to eradicate racial problems since “it is not easy for the federal government to unilaterally propose new regulations and laws to individual states.”

Another significant step Biden scheduled is to restore global partnership and bring back American leadership abroad. He plans to recover from the scene Trump made with his sudden departure from the 2019 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit, and strengthen alliances with South Korea, Australia, Japan, and other Asian democracies, while “sustaining an ironclad commitment to Israel’s security,” as *Joe Biden.com* proposed. Looking forward to the recovery of the relationship with America and its firsthand alliances, South Korea hopes to yield enhanced military and trading policies in the coming years.



The Intense and Unexpected Results

What has made this year’s election result so hard to predict lies in the election system the U.S. has. Unlike the South Korean presidential election, where most votes are held in dedicated buildings, the mail-in-ballot system was talked about to have unfair results and is “fake,” according to Trump. However, Professor Ha does not believe in Trump’s words, stating that, “the system caused no trouble so far, and five states – Hawaii, Washington DC, Oregon, Colorado, and Utah – have been only accepting mail-in-ballot for the past years.”

In addition, Professor Ha finds no justification in Trump’s claim that mailing was in the Democrat’s favor because the system is purposed to provide voting opportunities even to those who work or cannot physically visit the polls. Also, as the opportunity goes to those who live in rural areas, he added that “people in the rural area are more likely to vote for the Republican Party,” claiming that mail-in-ballot is as equally fair as the traditional voting polls. However, he said that this election’s postal vote result might have been in the Democrat’s favor because Republican favorers tended to vote on the spot – for Trump’s constant claim of mail-in-ballot at risk of manipulation.

The postal voting system was not the only determining key in the election, but there were other factors also that greatly affected the result. Trump’s failure to prevent and respond to the

current pandemic must have been the major reason that led him to defeat. Professor Park Ihn-hwi (Division of International Studies, Ewha Womans University) added some note on the result that the election was not a “Trump vs. Biden” but rather a “for Trump vs. against Trump” match. He suggested that masks worked as a “political symbol” of the current pandemic for citizens as Trump rarely had one on, and Biden constantly wore one in official meetings and speeches.

In addition, cases of misconduct and discrimination against black Americans and Asian citizens clearly put Trump in second place. Although Trump was keen on manipulating the unemployment rate and certain tax policies, what he lacked was regarding basic human rights and kind-heartedness to other races. Meanwhile, Biden was also halted for his misconduct on Ms. Reade, but it did not affect much of his public support since there was not enough evidence and testimony to support the case.



The Battle Against Voter Suppression

“Voter suppression never went away. The tactics just changed,” said the Center for Public Integrity in an analysis published on October 28. During the days leading up to the election, some American citizens – especially those of color – claimed to have experienced “barriers” to voting. The U.S. elections are indeed known to have a long history of voter suppression, an attempt to deny certain groups of people their

voting rights with tactics that prevent them from having their ballots counted.

“There are around three voter suppression tactics – in terms of state laws – being discussed at the moment, starting with voter identification (ID) laws,” Professor Ha explained. Different states in the U.S. have different requirements for voter identification. In the mid-2000s, however, several states began to push for laws that required photo IDs – which, in the U.S., mainly consist of passports and driver’s licenses. “The problem,” said Professor Ha, “is that a significant number of ethnic minorities living in disadvantaged areas do not own passports or driver’s licenses.”

Professor Ha also pointed to felon disenfranchisement laws as another instance of voter suppression in the 21st century. “Several states practice laws that disenfranchise felons who have been held in custody for over a year, and some do not give back felons their voting rights even after they finish their sentence,” he said. “Because the judicial system of the U.S. tends to be biased against ethnic minorities, one could say that felon disenfranchisement laws effectively lead to racial discrimination.” The U.S.’s policy of removing names from the voter registration list can also work against ethnic minorities who do not have Anglo-Saxon names, Professor Ha added. Although these policies of “voter purging” are necessary due to the movement of population between states, they can work against voters belonging to ethnic minorities when applied too rigidly, he explained.

PROVIDED BY
PROFESSOR PARK IHN-HWI

| Professor Park Ihn-hwi



Stand Back and Stand By

Yet there also looms an equally dangerous threat in the long and turbid presidential elections – post-election violence. “Stand back and stand by,” Trump told the Proud Boys when asked to denounce and disavow white supremacist organizations during the presidential debate. The Proud Boys, some of whom were involved in the Unite the Right rally, is an organization in which members call themselves “Western chauvinists,” yet is seen by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Anti-Defamation League as an extremist organization. The public, however, pointed out that Trump’s words sounded closer to a call to arms rather than a public denunciation.

The public’s reaction to Trump’s comments reflects the growing fear of post-election violence among the American public living in a society that is perhaps the most polarized it has been in the 21st century. On September 8, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) claimed in a draft assessment that white supremacy remained the “most lethal

threat” to the U.S., while peaceful protests gone violent such as a minority of the BLM movements, are also the object of concern for some people. According to a poll conducted on October 14 by *YouGov*, an international market research company, 19 percent of Americans believed that violence could be justified in the name of politics, while 56 percent believed that there would be increased violence after the elections. Such a result seems to support the possibility of post-election violence in an overly heated society.



Not Going Down Without a Fight

As mentioned above, there have been countless obstacles in this year’s presidential elections. However, the biggest one yet remains to be cleared, as experts’ predictions have come true: President Trump filed a series of lawsuits in an attempt to challenge the results of the election both before and after the race has been called. Trump’s campaign filed lawsuits to stop the vote counts in a number of battleground states, including Pennsylvania, Georgia, Michigan, Arizona, and Nevada. In his claim, Trump argued that election officials in the battleground states have allowed ballot fraud to rig the election in favor of liberals. However, no concrete evidence of irregularities was offered, with two lawsuits immediately denied in Georgia and Michigan.

With Biden having become the president-elect, President Donald Trump and his legal team promised that

the legal effort to contest it would roll on. Shortly after the news of Biden's win, Trump's lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, alleged that the election in Philadelphia, which had contributed to Biden's win, was involved in fraud. Trump added in his remarks at the White House on November 6: "If you count the legal votes, I easily win." He also claimed that Biden's surges in battleground states were the result of "corruption."

? An End to Trumpism

Regardless of Trump's string of lawsuits and threats, on November 7, Biden laid out his plans for office along with his vice president-elect Harris. His presidential agenda, comprising issues such as COVID-19, the economy, climate change, and immigration, presented a stark contrast to that of the incumbent Trump. According to *The Washington Post*, Biden announced that the U.S. would rejoin the Paris Climate Accord and the World Health

Organization (WHO) on his first day of office — essentially reversing Trump's decision to leave both agencies. Biden's promises appear as a break from the individualism that characterized Trump's time in office and a return to multilateralism.

Perhaps one of Biden's most visible breaks from the Trump government is his plan for the complete transformation of the government's current COVID-19 response, which has often been criticized as "messy." Biden has made it clear that he would prioritize the combat against COVID-19, including plans for more widespread testing and a policy of cooperating with state leaders to enact nationwide mask mandates. On November 9, Biden announced the formation of a 12-member new coronavirus task force: "The advisory board will help shape my approach to managing the surge in reported infections; ensuring vaccines are safe, effective, and distributed

efficiently... and protecting at-risk populations," he said, emphasizing his science-based approach towards the pandemic.

Compared to that of Trump, who has shown a rather dismissive attitude towards COVID-19 by constantly underplaying its significance and refusing to wear a mask during public appearances, Biden's pandemic response shows a stronger stance against the pandemic. "This is not about Democrat, Republican or Independent," Biden said in an address in August. "This is about saving American lives, so let's institute a mask mandate nationwide, starting immediately."

Another central agenda of Biden's administration is the tackling of "systemic racism." Many believe that a key factor that allowed Biden to win over the Democrats is his focus on healing and unity in a time of division. An example is his policy on racism. He announced his plans to lift Trump's travel bans on travelers from 13 countries, most of which were Muslim or African nations. Experts also expect Biden to reopen to all qualified applicants the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which the Trump administration had stopped accepting. Regarding the issue of police violence — one of the many triggers of polarization in American society — Biden promised to expand the power of the Justice Department and strengthen the investigation of police departments that practice excessive force and discriminatory policing.



Citizens in masks stand in line to cast their vote

🌀 Korea — Still Caught in the Crossfire?

There has been much attention within the country as to what Biden's win means for South Korea, which has often found itself caught in the crossfire between international superpowers in the past. Some experts believe that Biden's win puts pressure on South Korea to make a choice between the U.S. and China in terms of the economy. "It is true that Korea, who maintains close diplomatic relations with both the U.S. and China, feels more pressured to choose a side whenever conflict intensifies between the two countries. In retrospect, one of the most prominent outcomes of the Trump administration is the intensification of the U.S.-China conflict," mentioned Professor Park.

However, such pressures will not diminish with the Biden administration, according to Professor Park. "All politicians have a tendency to rely on their own experiences, and Biden is characterized by his time as the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and as Vice President during the Obama administration who took part in unprecedented diplomatic policies. Biden will believe that he knows China better than anyone else, and will pressure China albeit in a different manner than that of the Trump administration... the Korean government will eventually realize that the strategical ambiguity they have taken between the U.S. and China is no longer feasible."

In addition, the Biden administration will want to emphasize the importance of the cooperation between Korea, the U.S., and Japan, said Professor Park. "They will eventually demand us to actively take part in the cooperation system between the three countries. Although this does not pose itself as a problem as it is fundamentally in accord with our national interest, the pending issue concerning Korean victims of wartime forced labor demands to be resolved." According to Professor Park, what matters now for the Korean government is to first establish a central principle for their diplomatic policy, then apply a principle that suits Korea's national interest regardless of both countries.

☢️ Nuclear Dilemma Remains

Another dilemma that faces South Korea is the new chapter in the U.S. – North Korea relations. In a very different manner from the incumbent President Trump's, Biden has continuously emphasized the importance of a diplomatic approach to North Korea and its nuclear issue. "With regards to North Korea, Biden has emphasized his decision to take a bottom-up method rather than Trump's top-down method," stated Professor Park. The Biden administration is also more likely to pressure North Korea into a "global standard" of a sort. This may not necessarily be good news for the U.S.-North Korea relations, however. He emphasized, "With North Korea having announced the completion of their nuclear ammunition, the Biden administration

will have to pay attention to the nuclear dilemma."

However, according to Professor Park, North Korea seems unlikely to attempt any sudden armed provocations considering that their economy has been gravely affected by the closing of their borders following the COVID-19 pandemic, "although it is hard to say anything for certain at the moment." He added that an ideal U.S.-North Korea relationship would be one of mutual gain achieved through a step-by-step process. Nonetheless, further progress on Biden's North Korea policy depends on whether or not Trump concedes to the election results, as Trump's unwillingness to do so has led to a restriction on the flow of national security information to the president-elect Biden.

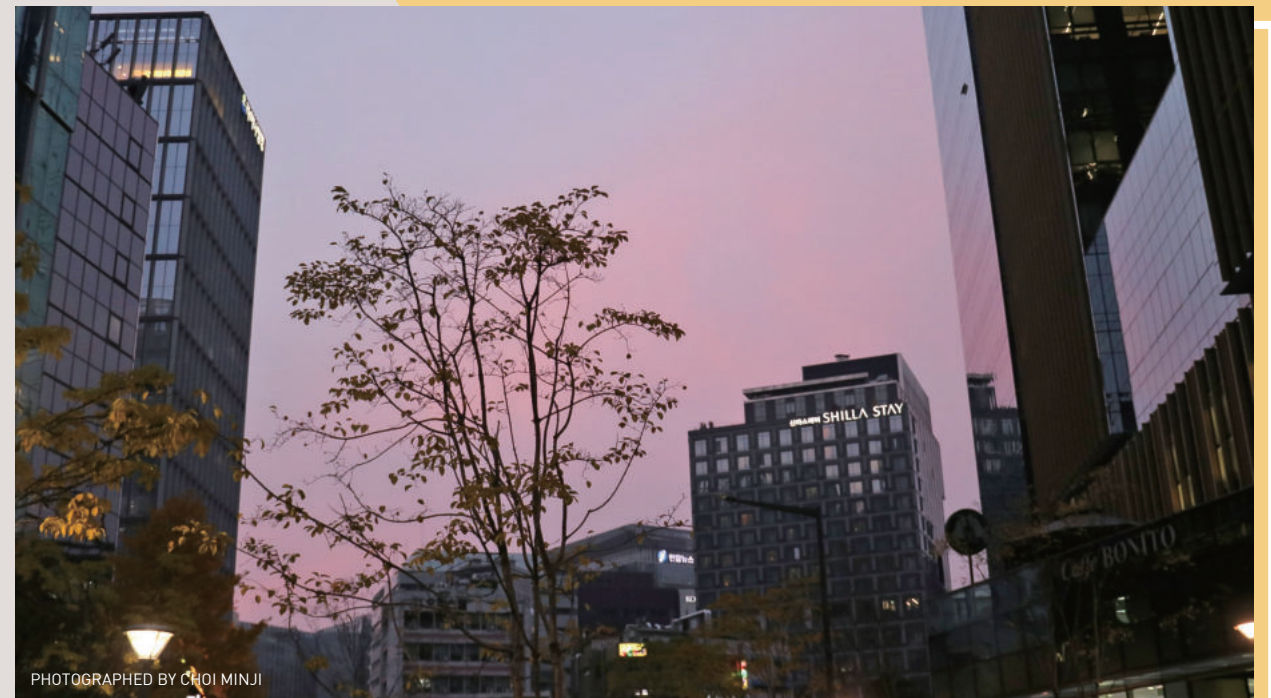
▶️ "The Time to Heal in America"

It has been a tough road for the 2020 U.S. presidential elections, and the country remains scarred by past mistakes, including those concerning the pandemic and other international conflicts. Yet the most important wound to mend is perhaps the deep political polarization that has essentially split American society in half, and which has doubtless taken its toll on international society as well — including Korea. "This is the time to heal in America," said Biden, making a call of unity in his victory speech on November 7. After years of division and chaos, it indeed seems to be time to put political differences aside to co-exist not as democrats and conservatives, but rather as members of humanity. **K**

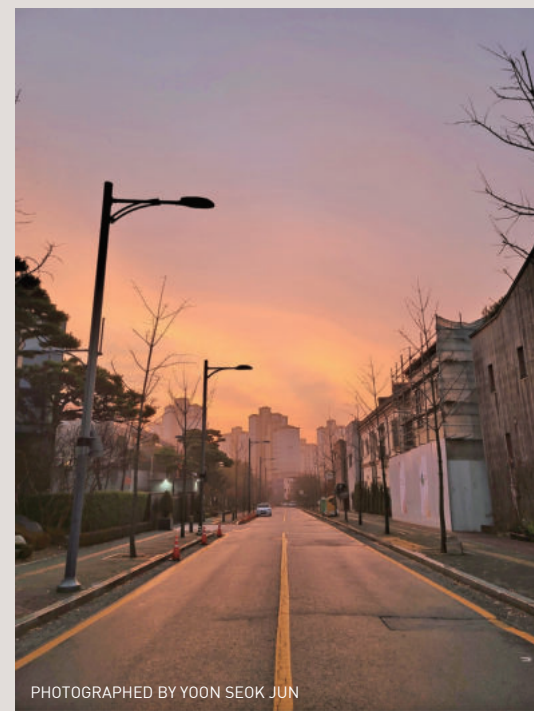


PHOTOGRAPHED BY YOON SEOK JUN


By The Granite Tower Photo Division



PHOTOGRAPHED BY CHOI MINJI



PHOTOGRAPHED BY YOON SEOK JUN

At the end of a day comes a weary soul. Rest at home works as a salve on your soul and keeps you in a state of balance. The essential easement or emotional fulfillment from one's home gives an account of the phrase, *Home is where the heart is*. As our way towards our *home* is our way towards our *heart*, the natural scenery along the path to our home sometimes makes us sentimental. *The Granite Tower* (GT) Photo Division saved the moments of going home and the shots of purple and pink tinging the clouds, to seize a momentary twitch of happiness. 



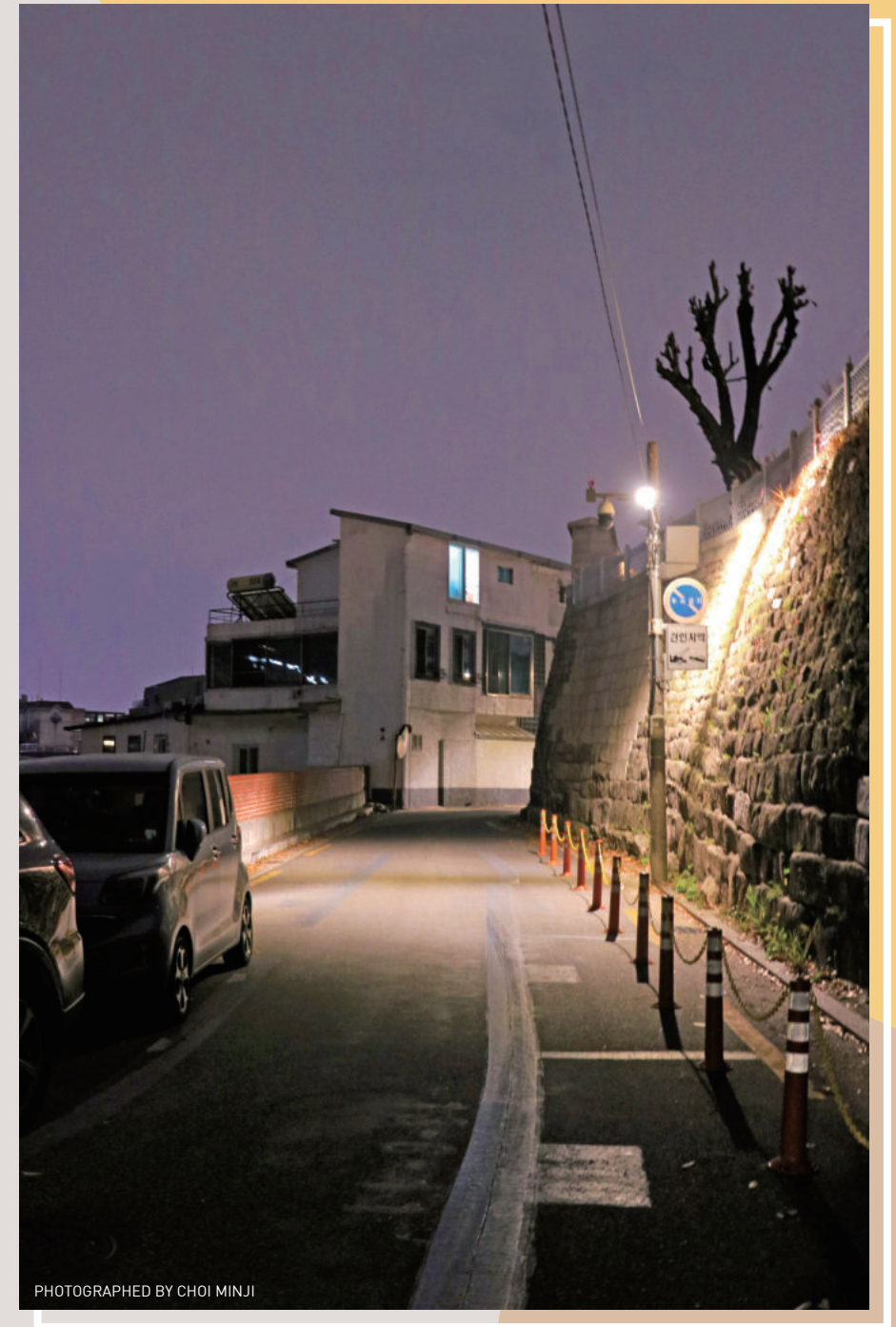
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PHOTOGRAPHED BY CHOI MINJI

Leading Digital Innovation in the National Assembly

— Secretary-General of the National Assembly, Kim Young-Choon

By Choi Minji qdana511@korea.ac.kr

In the midst of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, interactions have become more contact-free, and online-based meetings have started to take over from traditional offline gatherings. The National Assembly, where Kim Young-Choon ('81, English Language and Literature) acts as the Secretary-General, has also joined this trend by promoting a new venture, "Digital National Assembly."



About Kim Young-Choon

Kim Young-Choon was a member of the 16th, 17th, and 20th National Assembly and has since assumed the role of the Secretary-General. Before becoming the Secretary-General, Kim worked as the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. Considering the current shift in the social atmosphere associated with COVID-19 and the need for action to protect the natural environment, the National Assembly has decided to launch two new projects under Kim's supervision — the Digital National Assembly and the construction of Sejong Assembly Hall.

GT What motivated you to become involved in the National Assembly as a politician?

Kim: When I first entered college, I did not have any interest in politics. However, a shocking event that happened during my freshman year changed everything. One day, as I was getting ready for class in a large classroom, a classmate ran up to the front of the classroom and started to

shout, "Fellow students, we cannot live like this..." Even before she could finish, ten men who were sitting in the front row ran up to her and dragged her out of the classroom. It turned out those ten men were police officers who were staking out the classroom.

I painfully lived through my college life having to witness similar events happen one after another. A thought that always

came across my mind was, "Do I have to live like this? Do I have to accept this reality?" My awareness of and fury at society back then, in which human dignity was severely violated, led me to participate in student activism seeking a democratic society.

When I was a senior in college, I was expelled from school and sent to jail because I revived the student council

and became its president. At this stage, I started to see how politics was deeply embedded in my life. In 1987, I decided to join the movement for a constitutional amendment to ensure a direct election system. The election system has not always been like it is today, where the president is elected based on the ballots cast by each and every voter. Back then, the president was elected based on the votes of an electoral college involving a small number of people. I thought that a true democratic society could only be formed through the amendment of the constitution for a direct election system.

During that time, former President Kim Young-Sam was the co-chairman of the Council for the Promotion of Democracy. I visited him and expressed my eagerness to join the movement and eventually worked as his secretary. This was the starting point of my involvement in politics. After a series of twists and turns, former President Kim asked me to support him during the presidential election in 1992. Accordingly, I returned to school, finished my undergraduate studies, completed my graduate studies, and subsequently started working for him. This is my story of how I jumped into politics.

GT What is the key role of the secretariat and the Secretary-General of the National Assembly?

Kim: The Secretary-General of the National Assembly has a lot of roles. I am responsible for the administrative work of the secretariat and other various organizations within the National Assembly that involve approximately 5,500 people. I am also in charge of the human affairs and budgetary matters in

the National Assembly, and I handle various administrative issues related to the aides of the members of the National Assembly. The secretariat supports the various activities of the members, and I take care of administrating these duties as well.

GT The National Assembly is working to achieve digital innovation through the establishment of different teams. Why is this needed, and what is the National Assembly's plan in achieving this goal?

Kim: Initially, we attempted to achieve a wider range of digitalization at the National Assembly to improve the level of service for the public. There has been criticism that the National Assembly is not very friendly in terms of providing information to the public.

While we were working on this project, the COVID-19 pandemic emerged. In this situation, online activities started to become more common in place of face-to-face meetings, so we needed to acquire and set up the appropriate equipment and operate it effectively. Thus, with the COVID-19 outbreak, our goal for a more digitalized National Assembly has been expanded to achieve major digital innovation. The long-term goal for the project is to modernize the National Assembly and all associated environments to better represent our society during the ongoing Fourth Industrial Revolution.

For this, we have established the Digital National Assembly Promotion Team and have worked on this project for two months. When I worked as the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, I initiated a similar project in




Secretary-General Kim Young-Choon

which I eliminated the division between different departments and promoted collaborative work. This project was pretty successful and has since been noted as exemplary. Therefore, I decided to try something similar to this in the context of the National Assembly.

The National Assembly is already seeing some significant shifts in terms of digitalization as the entire National Assembly is now set up with equipment for online interactions, much of which has been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

GT Do you have any advice for students at KU?

Kim: I hope KU students and alumni would not only consider their personal growth but also contribute to the nation's and humanity's well-being.

Even when you are engaged in your personal matters, you can contribute to the nation and humanity through your personal success. In order to do so, you need to spend time reasoning by yourself, reading books, and constantly studying the world and the people in it. I believe that people, even by just doing the things they like, can grow to become healthy citizens. 

Thailand's Bid for Full Democracy

By Choi Chan Woo katachai@korea.ac.kr

"Freedom cannot be bestowed; it must be achieved." This is a famous quote by former United States (U.S.) President Franklin D. Roosevelt and probably suits the situation very well for the Pro-Democracy protest in Thailand. The protestors are making history not just by their significant number but also by challenging the Thai monarchy — which is not an ordinary phenomenon in this Buddhist nation.



Tens of thousands of protestors take over Bangkok

According to *New Mandela*, an academic blog on South East Asian affairs, Thailand has had 13 successful and nine unsuccessful military coups since 1932. This has resulted in 29 Prime Ministers during a period in which the U.S. had 15 Presidents. Likewise, Thailand did not have a stable government and had only one Prime Minister serving a full term, Mr. Thaksin Shinawatra, who was able to do so during a turbulent period with continuous military coups and political instability.

How the Protests Started

Thailand has two main political camps: the so called Red shirts and Yellow shirts. To put it simply, the Reds mainly consists of farmers and lower-income groups, while the Yellow shirts comprise members of the ruling class, such as the middle class, civil servants, and aristocrats. The Reds are in favor of populist policies, while the Yellow shirts support the royal family.

The political turmoil increased in 2006 when the Yellow shirts opposed the then

Prime Minister Mr. Thaksin, and a military coup then followed to depose him. The Thai military then drew up a new constitution that led to elections in 2007, in which the Red shirts won again. The Yellow shirts formed another opposition group, which deposed another Prime Minister and appointed a member of the Yellow shirts as Prime Minister.

The Red shirts did not accept the new Prime Minister and took it to the streets, leading to another round of elections in 2011, which concluded with a Red shirts Prime Minister. This event led to the latest coup in 2014 after the Yellow shirts refused to acknowledge the new Prime Minister. As can be seen by all these changes, Thai politics has had a strong divide for a long time and has been waiting for another change.

The latest protests in Thailand were triggered after the FFP (Future Forward Party) — the political party associated with the Red shirts — was dissolved in February this year. Protests saw a short pause during measures to stop the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-



Youth led protests in Thailand

19) but resumed in mid-July with demands for the current Prime Minister's removal, a new constitution, and a halt to the harassment of activists. Some of these protestors went so far as to demand a reform of the monarchy, which alarmed the Yellow shirts.

Why Recent Protests are Special

Unlike past years of political turmoil, recent protests stand out for many reasons. One of these is the protestors' demands that the Thai King, Maha Vajiralongkorn's power be curbed. According to Professor Han Yuseok (Center for Intangible Cultural Heritage and Information Science, JBNU) such a demand is remarkable in that the Thai constitution states that the King must be held in a state of "revered worship." The resistance shown by the people here is therefore, noteworthy.

Another unusual fact about the recent events in Thailand is the challenge to the current Prime Minister, Mr. Prayut Chan-o-cha. As a former member of the Thai military junta, Mr. Prayut became Prime Minister in 2014. Due to all the political instability and its incomplete democracy, there has always been social unrest that

led to frequent military takeovers. Experts say that this is what developed a *coup culture* in Thailand.

The *coup culture* does not imply that the Thai culture is prone to coups, but it has normalized coups in its society, as people see them as a way to bring back law and order. According to the *Consumer News and Business Channel* (CNBC), an American news agency, this phenomenon occurs in nations which are neither fully democratic nor dictatorial. The huge crowds challenging the military government is, therefore, an unusual occasion which might help Thailand to break out of its never-ending cycle of military coups.

Protestor's Tactics

This year has seen protests across the globe, and tactics are changing to suit the situation of each protest. Thailand, for example, has not only been following Hong Kong's example by utilizing umbrellas and becoming leaderless as a movement, but it is starting to develop its own unique tactics. One example was bringing Korean pop (K-pop) into protests. A huge portion of the protestors are high school and university

students, and this may be why K-pop made its entrance in Thailand's pursuit of full democracy. To use Professor Han's words popular culture may be in use in order to unify people from all generations.

As protests in Thailand started to prolong, many people have searched for methods to keep themselves occupied at rallies while advertising their cause. Thailand's K-pop protest has seen the inclusion of many popular songs such as *Into the New World* (2007), which was also sung at student rallies against former South Korean President Park Geun-hye in 2017. Peaceful protest methods, such as the K-pop protest, have significantly raised awareness of the movement whilst showing its peaceful nature.

One of the protestors told the *South China Morning Post*, a Hong Kong-based English newspaper, that *Into The New World* is meaningful for the movement because when it is translated into Thai, it translates as inspiration and the start of the new world with true democracy. Many see this unique form of protest as a method for generations to connect and have more interest in Thai politics.

Thailand's pursuit of full democracy remains an ongoing issue, and the political stalemate is one that will not end in the near future. Many aspects of the movement, such as curbing the power of the Thai monarch, will remain controversial. However, as the protests stand out from their many predecessors, many people hope real change can be achieved with the current political movement and that this change will be for the better — just as South Korea has experienced in its history. **K**

Recovering the Land for the Nation

— The Armenia-Azerbaijan War

By Lee Donghyun real0822@korea.ac.kr

The year 2020 has been strenuous for everyone around the world due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). However, another event that could impact the world negatively has recently occurred. A war broke out between Armenia and Azerbaijan, one which also involved several other countries, including Iran and Turkey. International society initially urged the two countries to stop the war and make peace, but the war escalated despite previous peace treaties and ending up violating the Geneva Convention and other international laws that protect the right of soldiers and civilians. The war ended, with Azerbaijan the victor, but the possibility of another war erupting in the near future remains.

On September 27 of this year, a civilian woman, and a child in the town of Artsakh, Armenia, were killed in an attack by Azerbaijan. In retaliation, the Armenian government announced that they had shot down two Azerbaijani military helicopters and three drones and had destroyed three tanks. This caused Azerbaijan to declare war against Armenia, with both civilians and soldiers becoming targets of attack.

The conflict has centered around the Artsakh province, which was originally the territory of Azerbaijan. In 1989, however, the Armenian government decided to take control of Artsakh because most of the people living in the province were Armenians. In seizing authority over

Artsakh, 350,000 Azerbaijanis were banished from the region, aggravating the political and military tensions between the two countries. Consequently, war erupted in 1992, right after the two countries achieved independence from the Soviet Union, causing Azerbaijan to lose a significant amount of land.

A Powder Keg of Nationalism

Considering the fact that Armenia is a Christian country and Azerbaijan is a Muslim country, the conflict between the two countries appears to be fueled by religious differences. The suppression of Christians by Muslims had been severe within Azerbaijan, which motivated Armenia to take over Artsakh. In the

war of 1992, Azerbaijan lost much of its territory; in order to recover their land, they then engaged in consistent skirmishes. *The Huffington Post*, an American news outlet, referred to the region as “a powder keg” due to the continuing conflict. In fact, many other countries, such as Russia and Turkey, had expected a full-scale war to break out again.

However, religious conflict was not the leading cause of this year's war.



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The Azerbaijani Military

In fact, the main reason for the 2020 Artsakh war was the nationalistic movements in the two countries. After the war in 1992, Azerbaijan's remaining territory was divided into two disconnected areas, one of which was totally surrounded by Armenia, hindering economic and social exchange with the other, larger Azerbaijan region. Insisting on territorial integrity, the Azerbaijani government demanded that Armenia return the land that they had conquered in the 1992 war. On the other hand, Armenia had no choice but to confront Azerbaijan because 70 percent of the residents of Artsakh are Armenians. Armenia argued that they had to protect their citizens living in Artsakh, and this provided a reason for Armenia to enter the war.

Since 1992, the Armenian government had consistently argued that its occupation of Artsakh is legitimate, but no other countries have supported this claim. According to Professor Oh Chong Jin (Department of Turkish-Azerbaijani Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies), it was difficult for Azerbaijan to reclaim Artsakh due to the presence of the Russian military in Armenia. However, in 2020, Russia implicitly allowed Azerbaijan to attack Armenia by announcing that they would not intervene with the nationalistic movement occurring in the Caucasus area. This announcement could have been interpreted as a strong motivation for Azerbaijan to declare war on

Armenia to recover Artsakh.

A Time to Move Forward Despite Remaining Threats

On November 10, Armenia and Azerbaijan signed an end-of-war declaration. According to *Hankyoreh*, a South Korean newspaper, most of the experts concluded that the war in 2020 ended with complete victory for Azerbaijan. Armenia agreed to evacuate their military from Artsakh and hand over 30 percent of the province to Azerbaijan. In addition, Armenia agreed to allow Azerbaijanis to pass through their territory with their permission when traveling between the divided regions.

From the perspective of Armenia, the best way to avoid further military action is to minimize the conflict with Azerbaijan. Professor Oh explained that the opposition political party in Armenia has consistently argued that a friendly relationship with Azerbaijan would be the best solution for Armenia both socially and economically. He pointed out that Azerbaijan is now developing from an ethnic state into a nation state, which means that it considers civilians to be more important than ethnic groups. This policy of the Azerbaijani government has allowed other ethnic groups to be welcomed into the country, providing an opportunity for the Armenian government to improve the relationship.

From an economic perspective, it



PHOTOGRAPHED BY KIE HAE SEUNG

Professor Oh Chong Jin (Department of Turkish-Azerbaijani Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)

is crucial for Armenia to work together with the economy of Azerbaijan because Azerbaijan possesses significant natural gas and oil reserves. Currently, Azerbaijan transports these fossil fuels to the Black Sea by traversing Iran and Turkey. However, if Armenia and Azerbaijan collaborate economically, Azerbaijan can transport their fuels to the ocean by passing through Armenia only, which is beneficial for both countries.

Although the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan has had a long history, perhaps the recent declaration of the end of the war could provide the momentum for cooperation between the two countries and perhaps the chance to achieve social, political, and economic stability. Now is the time to seek permanent peace between the two countries and plan to move forward. K

France Under Muslim Terrorist Attacks

By Jung Eun Chong jec david@korea.ac.kr

A nation known for its long-held conviction about “tolerance” is under siege by Muslim extremists. On October 29, a terror attack in Notre Dame Cathedral in Nice led to the death of three people and several other injuries. What shocked the nation was the brutality of the attack, as one of the casualties had been found to be beheaded inside the cathedral. The prime suspect reportedly hailed “God is great” upon the arrival of local police, bearing the form of the Muslim extremists. Again, terror attacks that targeted France emerged as a “*déjà vu*” to those who witnessed the homicide against *Charlie Hebdo* claiming 17 people in January of 2015.

The severity and bare brutality of the crime have been enough to alarm many. However, the fact that recent terror attacks carried out by Muslim extremists have been on the rise is of utmost concern. Indeed, the terror attack on October 29 was preceded by a shocking attack on October 16, when Samuel Paty, a teacher, was beheaded on the street just because he had used the

satirical cartoon image of Muhammad once published by *Charlie Hebdo* in class. Again, the culprit turned out to be a Muslim immigrant who, after the arrest, shouted, “God is great.”

National Reaction to the Successive Terror Attacks

France instantly reacted to the brutal attack in Notre Dame Cathedral in Nice. On November 7, a memorial was held for the victims in the same cathedral. French Prime Minister, Jean Castex, stated, “This government is relentlessly doing its best to fight off these extreme Islamists.” He also pointed out that France had again become a target for this kind of extremist attack. After the attack in Nice, the government doubled its troops deployed on the streets, watching for any signs of potential massive terror attacks. Citizens were also enraged at the recent attempts to

jeopardize their freedom of speech, as shown in the case of Samuel Paty. This led to a nationwide memorial for the victimized teacher as well as protests against extremists harming innocent French citizens.

In the wake of the recent terror attacks, French President Emmanuel Macron has implemented rather harsh policies against Muslims by shutting down mosques and disbanding some of the Muslim communities in France. He commented, “France is under attack. We will not abandon our values of freedom in the face of terrorism.” However, his vehement policies against Muslims have instigated opposition by several Muslim communities. Thus, there remain possibilities that recent terror attacks and the ensuing strengthened measures could lead to internal conflicts in France.

It is estimated that nearly six million Muslims reside in France, constituting ten

percent of the whole population. While the Muslim population is gradually claiming a bigger portion in France, their quality of life has not met with favorable conditions. Most Muslim immigrants in France now live on the outskirts of cities where they suffer from unstable, outdated infrastructures. To make matters worse for those immigrants, the French government does not “tolerate” differences when it comes to its immigration policies. Instead, it maintains a strict assimilation stance, thereby prohibiting the creation of other ethnic communities inside the nation. Extremists target this loophole, luring young immigrants living in abysmal conditions to retaliate against the oppressive French government. Analyses show that the *Charlie Hebdo* incident in January and the mass serial terror attack in Paris later that year were executed by immigrants brainwashed by extremist doctrines.

Some experts point out that this long-held cycle should be stopped before it leads to more anger-driven terror in France. Thus, there is a roiling national debate on the extent of freedom of speech. Even if freedom of speech is a set

of rights that must be respected in accordance with the constitution, hate speech is publicly denounced and, at times, even punished by laws. Muslims are claiming that the satirical portrayal of Mohammad falls within the category of hate speech. This argument reflects Muslim customs that strongly forbid even a slight sketch of a mere outline of Muhammad, which shows how much the figure is worshipped in the Islamic world.

In contrast, the majority of French citizens, as shown in the recent poll done by the French Institute of Public Opinion (IFOP), believe that freedom of speech is an unalienable right that should not be infringed even by strong religious convictions. Likewise, even if the satirical portrayals can stir up unnecessary conflicts, freedom secured by the *Great Revolution* in 1789 should not falter under any occasion.

Global Implications of the Terror Attacks

President Macron’s strengthened measures and recent statements heavily criticizing extremist Muslims have also

instigated global religious conflicts. As other European nations line up with France on combatting terrorism, Islamic nations such as Turkey have strongly criticized the President’s approach, commenting that the French government is undermining Muslims and their core religious values by overreacting with force. Indeed, the recent terror attacks have caused what can be seen as a full-scale dispute between the Western and Islamic worlds.

At the front of the Islamic side, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has been clashing with President Macron. President Macron declared after the brutal murder of Samuel Paty that even the satirical portrayal of Muhammad should be protected by the freedom of speech. In response, the Turkish President vehemently rejected this, saying that “President Macron needs a mental treatment.” He went further by stating that all the European leaders siding with France are fascists and held by “the Nazi chains.”

As Turkey is taking even bolder steps by accusing the United States (U.S.) of siding with France and insinuating a possible military operation utilizing its nuclear forces, the world is stricken by an unprecedented all-out conflict. However, all parties must not forget that there is no winner in this kind of conflict. Even the seemingly superior side, the Western world, has a lot to lose if terror attacks plague their main cities. Therefore, as the issue of immigrants and religions has become indispensable for all Western nations with a steep increase in Muslim immigrants, it should be tackled carefully considering the potential consequences for each nation’s immigration policies. **K**



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France in memory of the victims

A Desperate Longing for Home

By Kang Min Seo rkdalstj001@korea.ac.kr

Kareiski is a Russian term that refers to the Koreans who were deported in the early 1900s from the Soviet Union. Koreans had lived in the Maritime Province, which is adjacent to the Korean border, from long ago to cultivate crops. In 1937, the Soviet Union government decided to use the Maritime Province as a military base and forced Koreans to relocate. *The Kareiski's Endless Wandering* sheds light on their history of forced relocation and their yearning for home, making the readers empathize and pay attention to them.

The Kareiski's Endless Wandering is a historical novel which starts with a depiction of a Korean town in the Maritime Province in 1937, when the People's Commissar of Soviet Union patrolled the village forcing the villagers to board the Siberian train. The compartments were once cargos, with no beds and only a brazier in the middle. The cold wind blew in through the holes of the walls as the train traveled through the frozen waste of Siberia for approximately 40 days. The book conveys the fact that numerous people died due to the cold as well as starvation before the train arrived at its destination, spreading Koreans throughout Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and

other parts of Central Asia.

The characters of the story are unique and attractive. The main character, Dong-wha, is portrayed as a woman with an iron will, which is notable considering the temporal setting of the book. In the early 1900s, women were considered passive, and sexual discrimination prevailed in Korean society. However, Dong-wha's personality appears to be independent and strong, which helps the people around her to adapt to the strenuous conditions in the new surroundings. Through this trait, readers can comprehend her efforts to face the situation rather than sinking into emotions.

It is also mentioned that Dong-wha's family is related to Ahn Jung-geun, a historical figure who carried on an independence movement in defiance of Japanese coercion. Tae-suk, a boy who later marries Dong-wha, is also based on an actual spy who worked for the Korean resistance, along with one of the other main characters, Hong Bum-do, who was a notable general who fought against the Japanese army in the Bongoh Town battle. In practice, a number of

independent activists were living in Maritime Province, where the surveillance of Japan was not severe. This depiction emphasizes the Korean peoplehood and encourages the readers to better relate *Kareiski* with Koreans.

In the story, Dong-wha, in spite of the censorship of the Soviet Union and their policies to only use Russian, continues to possess Korean books and teach Korean to her children. Historically, *Kareiskis* used Korean and continued to retain the Korean culture and lifestyle. Their distinctive ethnic characteristics or identity as Koreans led them to remain a Korean minority group in central Asia. For them, Korea was where their hearts were and where they could call *home*. As the book extends the attention to the Korean diaspora and delivers the voices of *Kareiskis*, it indeed reflects the genuine sentiments of *home*. **K**

Book Information

Title: *The Kareiski's Endless Wandering*
 Author: Moon Young Sook
 Publisher: The Bluebook
 Publication Year: 2012
 Pages: 230



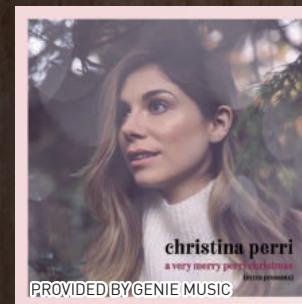
The book cover of *The Kareiski's Endless Wandering*

Christmas Leads Back Home

– Christina Perri's *A Very Merry Perri Christmas (Extra Presents)*

By Kim Sur Hyun surhyunk01@korea.ac.kr

The cold winter breeze, the smell of pine trees, and the scent of cinnamon are all signs that the year is coming to an end. After a chaotic and unexpected year with various challenges towards humanity, ending it with positive energy would be the best option for all of us. One way to do so would be by raising our holiday spirit — drinking hot chocolate, sitting by a warm fireplace, and listening to Christina Perri's Christmas album *A Very Merry Perri Christmas (Extra Presents)*. Her album emits emotions that may not only raise one's holiday spirit but also help one to prepare for a merrier end-of-year celebration.



Christina Perri Album Cover

Christina Perri is an American singer and songwriter who gained recognition after her single "A Thousand Years," which appeared on the soundtrack of the movie *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn*. On October 16, 2013, she released her album *A Very Merry Perri Christmas*, which had one original song, "Something About December," and five cover songs. After the popularity of her album, she added two more covers, "Let It Snow (Acoustic)" and "I'll Be Home For Christmas," and named her new album *A Very Merry Perri Christmas (Extra Presents)*.

In her video "A Very Merry Perri Christmas: The Making of the EP," she mentions that "there is something that

happens at Christmas where everything is more heightened." Perri always had a dream of writing her own Christmas song. When she was a child, the very first song she ever sang was a Christmas carol, which still lives in her memory. This personal memory is what inspired Perri's original song, "Something About December," which was written alongside her brother, Nick. According to an interview with *Pop Dirt*, a music news website, Perri mentioned that the song is very personal, but at the same time, can be relatable to any listener. The song contains a soothing melody that is produced by the piano in the background. With her soft vocals, she makes the song heart-warming and joyful.

On the album, Perri covers seven songs. One of her most popular covers is "I'll Be Home For Christmas," originally sung by Bing Crosby. This song was originally recorded in 1943 from the perspective of a United States (U.S.) soldier in World War 2 that could not go back home for Christmas. The lyrics read, "I'll be home for Christmas if only in my dreams,"

portraying a sad reality to the listener. The original song is accompanied by the violin, which creates a gloomy ambiance. On the other hand, Perri's cover is accompanied by piano sounds instead, giving a twist to the song and making it upbeat and hopeful. Another notable cover is the fourth track, "Ave Maria." Although the song's lyrics are written in French, it transmits Perri's emotions perfectly even to international listeners. Through this song, Perri gives a lesson to the listeners that music has no boundaries.

Although Perri's album mainly consists of covers, the way she sings gives warmth to the listener and brings Christmas joy. In particular, her love for Christmas carols has helped her emit those emotions to the songs in the album. This is one of the reasons why so many listeners are able to feel the same Christmas spirit she experienced when she was a child. Her album *A Very Merry Perri Christmas (Extra Presents)* plays a big role in making anyone's holiday season a special one. Her music not only gives Christmas jingles but also leads people back home. **K**

The Overlooked Dimensions of Family

By Kie Hae Seung hayleyyy1215@korea.ac.kr

The title of the television (TV) series *This Is Us* may seem opaque but is, in fact, crystal-clear in explaining its main topic: family. The seemingly lazy title is entirely understandable in that it attempts to encapsulate the sheer complexity of the meaning of family. By following the lives of members within a family, *This Is Us* deeply explores the ways in which domestic influences impact us. Whether or not you relate to the specific incidents in the series, it brings to light the one universal constant when discussing the matter of family, which is that one's family — or even the lack thereof — influences you, whether you like it or not.

Currently airing its fifth season, the first season of *This Is Us* premiered on the American network National Broadcasting Company (NBC) in 2016. The show illustrates the lives of the Pearson family: Jack and Rebecca, the parents, and Kevin, Kate, and Randall, the children. While episodes primarily focus on the present where the three children are adults, flashbacks often occur in relation to storylines. Scenes in the 1980s with the younger Pearsons in their childhood are relatively common. Nonetheless, the show does not hesitate to transition to other time periods or perspectives to make its point.

Myriad themes appear throughout the seasons; addiction, weight issues, adoption, racial issues, and death are just a few. One may worry that such diverging topics could lead to a lack of focus and depth. Despite this valid concern, heavy issues are woven into the relationship dynamics within the family in



| Season 1 poster for *This Is Us*

This Is Us, which creates a single focal point while discussing various themes. Critics seem to agree that the show does this successfully, judging by its numerous accolades. As a series, it was selected as Outstanding New Program at the 2017 Television Critics Association Awards, and has won Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series at the 2018 and 2019 Screen Actors Guild Awards.

No Unremarkable Encounters

To call *This Is Us* a character-driven show may be an understatement. Major events shape the plot of the show, but the focus seems to be on *how* and *why* those events affect individual characters' psychology and action. Moreover, this inclination extends not only to the main characters but even to characters that seem comparatively irrelevant.

At the show's beginning, Randall, an abandoned newborn, is discovered and dropped off at a hospital by a fireman, ultimately to be adopted by the Pearsons. Interestingly, *This Is Us* focused on the sequence of events that preceded and followed the fireman's life after his discovery of Randall. By giving even seemingly irrelevant characters a backstory, *This Is Us* demonstrates everyone's lives are interlinked. The idea that there is no coincidence in who we meet every day — even as a passing



| Beth and Randall during a fight

stranger — is reflected in the message that *This Is Us* delivers.

Distributing focus on separate characters also circles back to the primary topic of *This Is Us*. If encounters with passers-by have meaning, just how powerful is a family's influence on an individual? Family is often one's earliest and most constant teacher, whether it be good or bad education one receives. *This Is Us* consistently projects a stance that family influences an individual, sometimes even beyond the realm of consciousness.

Same Topic, Different Genre

One of the reasons *This Is Us* is praised is its balanced treatment of family life. The truth is that currently there are few TV programs which deal with the topic of family in a serious manner. So-called *exciting* lifestyles such as those of lawyers, police, and even criminals are reserved for heavy drama, and family and everyday matters are cast aside into lighter genres when there are both different facets and depth to family life.

A standout storyline in the show is that of Randall and his wife, Beth. *This Is Us*

unfolds the story of how Beth and Randall's desires to pursue individual ambitions clash with their united goal of raising their children with care. While Randall's life becomes frantic with his duties as a newly appointed city councilman, Beth's long-awaited dream to teach dance is put on the back burner. Ultimately, the two attempt to realize their ideal careers as well as family life but fail, and an explosive and painstakingly raw fight occurs.

Such a conflict is undoubtedly realistic; the story of married couples struggling to balance career and family can be found practically everywhere. The issue just presented is only one of many prevalent family issues. Nonetheless, these issues are often discussed in simplistic ways during a few minutes of a lighthearted family-focused program. *This Is Us* introduces a novel perspective as it dives into family life and shines a light on an area of life that is perhaps extremely near to many yet is often neglected.

Nevertheless, room for improvement exists. While *This Is Us* successfully introduces many issues, its explanation of resolutions to those very issues are less convincing. The goal of art is not to

perfectly imitate life; however, inconsistencies lie in *This Is Us* as the characters' conflicts are believable, but the ways in which they are absolved sometimes seem too good to be true. In reality, estrangement between family members, refusal to diffuse situations, and stagnant personalities are sadly common. In *This Is Us*, however, characters appear to resolve situations or change for the better comparatively faster. This flaw may perhaps be attributed to *This Is Us*'s existential property as a TV series. If circumstances do not shift or characters do not develop, it would not make for very good TV. Nevertheless, even with this slight flaw, the presence of a novel family drama such as *This Is Us* seems welcome and meaningful.

"There's no me or you or them. There's just us." Quoted from Kevin Pearson, this line comes as close as possible to the essence of *This Is Us*. Yes, everyone is original; yet, we are all undeniably the sum of the influences in our life, family being a significant one. Therefore, sometimes the best way to understand yourself is through those influences. The Pearson family does just that, and for that reason alone, *This Is Us* might be a narrative to take note of continuously. **K**

Television Series Information

Genre: Drama, Comedy, Romance

Creator: Dan Fogelman

Starring: Mandy Moore, Milo Ventimiglia, Sterling K. Brown, Chrissy Metz, Justin Hartley

Running Time: 45 minutes

Streaming Platform: Amazon Prime Video

The Immortal Home

— Musical *Black Mary Poppins*

By Park Sumin smpark1030@korea.ac.kr

"In every job that must be done, there is an element of fun." A big fan of the film *Mary Poppins* (1964) may remember this line and feel nostalgia for the family movie that warmed many hearts. *Mary Poppins* is one of the most famous musical fantasy films based on the novel of the same title. The story of the film revolves around some eccentric experiences of a very special nanny named Mary Poppins and two children, Jane Banks and Michael Banks. Originally a typical family film, *Mary Poppins* has since been dramatized as a thriller musical in 2012, *Black Mary Poppins*.

After *Black Mary Poppins* was nominated as the best original Korean musical in 2012, it was then performed in Japan for the first time in 2014. In 2018, it was also performed in China and has held a grip on the Chinese audience. The reservation rate for the performance at the Great Theatre of China averaged 90 percent over 10 days. After its triumphant performance abroad, a large audience was looking forward to the homecoming of *Black Mary Poppins*.

Black Mary Poppins is set after a fire at the mansion of Dr. Grachen,

who is found dead. Mary Schmitz, the secret research assistant of Dr. Grachen and the nanny of his four adopted siblings, rescues four of those siblings — Hans, Hermann, Jonas, and Anna. Mary Schmitz disappears the day after the fire, but the four siblings cannot recall what happened that night. After that mysterious night, the four siblings pursue separate lives, readapting themselves to different families. However, after 12 years, Detective Balter delivers a secret research note from Dr. Grachen to Hans, which is the starting point of the narrative.

The Projection of Emotions

Unlike other mystery performances, *Black Mary Poppins* does not only focus on the criminal's identity. Instead, this performance places importance on the emotions of each character. Because Dr. Grachen's mansion is where the story starts and the entire memory of the night is hidden, the mansion itself is at the heart of the production. At the same time, it symbolizes both redemption and nightmares for the siblings. Thus, the conflicting emotions of each character about their home attract the audience's attention, in

addition to the details of that mysterious night.

The main narrator in the story changes with each season. Until the third season, Hans is the main narrator. In the fourth season, Hermann becomes the main narrator, followed by Jonas in the fifth. The music composition also varies for each season. Switching the main narrator shines a light on each character's emotions through expressive dialogues and lyrics, which intensifies the audience's reaction to the characters. This unique dramatic composition makes the audience anxious to see the different versions of the main narrators.

Shadows: A Projection of Oneself

The musical starts with the stage covered with a curtain and all the venue lights turned off. The actors start to move behind the curtain like a shadow play. Soon after, dim lighting creates shadows, projecting the movement of each character. The shadows create a gloomy and foreboding atmosphere that continues throughout the performance.

The constant shift between the past and present in the performance is presented using a spinning stage. On this stage, there are only four chairs and a desk, which eliminates any distractions, drawing the focus closely to the psychological changes to the characters. As the stage spins, the time and spatial background changes. According to OSEN, the stage director of *Black Mary Poppins* Seo Yoon Mi applied cinematic techniques on stage

— quick scene changes and overlaps — to render different timelines on the same stage. Consequently, due to these cinematic techniques, the changeover between the timelines and the background does not confuse the audience. Rather, the stage design intensifies the understanding of the story.

Home — The Immortal

For the four siblings, the mansion vanished in a moment because of the fire, but it never disappeared from their hearts. In other words, the four siblings kept their physical distance from the mansion but maintained some emotional distance. Their close connection to the mansion is revealed through their trauma. The actors' expression of their traumatic reactions towards their home makes the audience feel as if they are in the mansion with the characters.

For instance, in the fifth season, the emotions of Hans towards the mansion stands out. At first sight, Hans is cold-hearted and simply immersed in solving the crime, suspecting their beloved nanny, Mary. However, Hans wants to escape from his childhood traumatic experiences in the mansion more than anyone. Although the main narrator of the fifth season is Jonas, the overall structure of the play appears to focus on Hans. Even though the main narrator Jonas endeavored nominally leads the play and convey his thoughts to the audience, Hans appears more attractive.

For each character, even though they

cannot fully remember anything about their home, it remains carved into their hearts, leaving the vestige of trauma. This creates suspense as the audience waits for something to happen to break the dramatic tension. In other words, despite their physical distance from the mansion, their hearts never left, which suggests that it is their genuine home. Likewise, the musical *Black Mary Poppins* creates a connection between home and the hearts of each character in a unique way. By following the emotional changes throughout the story, the audience can sympathize with the characters and feel all of their joy and sorrow. **K**



The Poster of *Black Mary Poppins*

Performance Information

Venue: Daehakro TOM theater, Hall 1

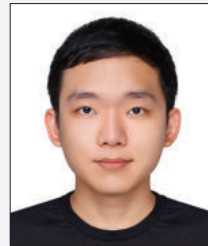
Date: From October 27 to December 31

Running Time: 100 minutes

Ticket Price: R Seat: 44,000 won / S Seat: 66,000 won

Should National Service Be Abolished in South Korea?

Globally, many countries have joined the trend of putting an end to large armies and instead focusing on a core of professional soldiers. Despite this trend, the topic remains controversial in many countries. Proponents of national service argue that it is necessary for maintaining national security, whilst opponents argue that the policy is a waste of government funds. South Korea should consider abolishing conscription due to its inherent problems.



Modern warfare does not require an overwhelming force in numbers to win wars. Conscription was traditionally used to increase the number of people in the population who know how to use weapons to increase the size of the armed forces. However, it was often criticized for giving rise to a ragtag force with little professionalism than an elite force. Therefore, having a huge military might be preferable, but it is not necessary considering its level of professionalism.

Another issue regarding the military would be the exemptions to national military service. According to the Military Service Act, the Commissioner of the Military Manpower Administration may transfer persons with a specialty in the field of arts or sports to arts and sports personnel. This law would mean that the people in the arts and sports personnel are exempt from serving in the military but are only required to participate in a four-week basic military training program. Promoting a policy like this makes it seem as if the value of people is different, even in principle. Even if this is so in practice, as a country with an institutionalized democratic system, we should not further promote this policy as it goes against the notion of equality.

The draft exemption given to these people can be considered as an unfair privilege. The exemption is given to athletes and artists in that they have elevated the nation's reputation. Although winning a prize at an international level can be regarded as part of the nation's pride, there are different interpretations of this idea. For

instance, it is questionable whether a win at an international competition is a benefit that positively influences the nation as a whole or is merely an individual achievement. That is, the justification to give a privilege to national duty for personal achievement in one's career is not fully supported.

Furthermore, there are no clear standards to the list of competitions and prize rankings that allow a chance for this privilege. In fact, this list has been influenced by the public's opinion several times, resulting in amendments of the law in 1984, 1990, 2002, 2006, and 2007. According to *Maeil Business Newspaper*, after the South Korean soccer team reached the round of 16 at the 2002 FIFA World Cup, there was a strong public sentiment to give the players on the national soccer team the privilege to be exempt from military services, which was then supported by the government.

Likewise, the ambiguous interpretations of military service privileges do not support the value of equality. Exemption to the draft, therefore, only serves to make a privileged class that does not have to spend the mandatory 18 months of service within the armed forces. While conscription will remain to be a controversial issue in South Korea for as long as it exists, national service needs re-examination and some amendments, which can be done more properly by removing this unfair system itself. **K**

By Choi Chan Woo
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Is It Too Much? – Samsung's Inheritance Tax

Chairman Lee Kun-hee was a true visionary who transformed Samsung into a world-leading innovator and industrial powerhouse," stated Samsung Electronics' press office. On October 25, Lee Kun-hee, chairman of Samsung Electronics as well as one of the most significant businessmen in South Korea, was laid to rest with his family beside him at the age of 78. With his passing, Lee's heir and how Samsung will be led is currently at the center of attention.



It was announced by the same press office that late Chairman's place would be taken by his only son, Samsung Electronics Vice Chairman Lee Jae-yong, who is expected to pay the inheritance tax. Under antitrust laws and South Korea's tax rules, Lee Kun-hee's family successors are now subject to a 60 percent tax rate on the inherited stocks. Soon after Lee's death, *The Korean Herald* quoted tax experts stating that the Samsung heirs might owe 10 trillion won tax bill, the largest inheritance tax ever to be imposed on a business in South Korea. In turn, questions have been raised over whether or not this substantial inheritance tax is even necessary. While some contend that Samsung should not be exempt from the traditional inheritance laws, clear reasons exist in proving why the tax bill should be reduced.

What is of most concern is that, in order to pay the tax bill, Lee Jae-yong and the Korean Samsung group will have to transfer the astronomical amount of money from their share of stocks. This means that Samsung's Korean executives will be in an unfavorable position regarding their hold of the company itself. According to *Yonhap News*, Lee Jae-yong and his mother, Hong Ra-hee, hold 5.8 percent of Samsung Electronics' shares, and Samsung affiliates hold a 15 percent stake, some of which will have to be sold in order to compensate for the tax.

The major problem with this expected phenomenon is that China and several other nations, which hold a major percentage of the company's stock market amounting to 56 percent, may take advantage of the situation. If several foreign speculative capitals were to combine efforts, it is

highly plausible that they will gain a stronger exertion over the company. Also, there have been pre-existing worries that Chinese capital, which now has sufficient financial power, will try to infiltrate executives of Chinese rivals into Samsung's board of directors.

In addition, as the principal contributor to South Korea's economic growth, any deficit of Samsung corporation may lead to adverse consequences for Korea's entire economy. According to *The Atlantic*, Samsung Electronics was responsible for 20 percent of the country's total exports in 2019, generating its profits overseas and paying bills at home. Moreover, for the past decade, the company's devotion to technological innovation has helped Korea gain competitiveness in the global market and promoted the general welfare of Korean citizens. However, if the insurmountable inheritance tax is firmly executed, there will be at least some form of distressful alteration for Samsung. Numerous companies, including *Nongwoo Bio*, the nation's leading bio-technology company, and *Lock & Lock*, the number one container company, have sold their businesses due to similar inheritance taxes. Substantial or not, these instances shed light upon the possible scenarios for Samsung and the Korean economy.

The inheritance tax for Samsung not only extends to the family but is also closely tied to its stock market and the overall Korean economy. In conclusion, reduction of Samsung's astronomical inheritance tax should be considered. **K**

By Kang Sungmin
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Controversy Over *Democratic Movement Activist* Special Admissions

Pro-democracy activists who participated in democratic movements after 1964 and who suffered reprisals due to this activity are registered with the Ministry of the Interior and Safety of South Korea and protected by law. This legal right, granted by the Kim Dae-jung government in August 2000, allows activists to regain their reputation, receive compensation from the government, and be reinstated to the positions they lost due to their then-recognized crimes. Those related to nationally recognized activists are also able to receive benefits, and one of the most controversial of these is related to university admissions.



The “Democratic Movement Activist” special admissions program was introduced to universities nationwide in 2012. Since then, schools have accepted around 100 students in total, all of them descendants of registered protesters protected by the current administration. However, this application program has generated significant opposition due to allegations of favoritism toward this protected group. This issue is particularly sensitive because university reputation is strongly influential in South Korean society, with students striving to get into a well-known university.

There are two sides to the current controversy — those who are supportive of it as an equal opportunity initiative and those who disagree with it. Those who agree with this admissions program cite the fact that it is a form of social consideration. The activists fought for equitable opportunities for students from various backgrounds, including low-income earners and students from rural areas. Students from these backgrounds, as well as descendants of pro-democracy activists, are supported by the Opportunity Balancing Program, which is a form of social equity for students who do not come from a privileged background.

Those who are against this university policy believe that, due to the vague standards set by universities, applicants under this umbrella are privileged because they are judged under the same expectations as for other applicants. At Yonsei University, the lack of minimum grade standards

raises the possibility of special treatment for the descendants of freedom fighters. Therefore, many of those who criticize the program state that universities need to be more upfront about their standards or create a new program into a system for crystal-clear equity.

With this in mind, the opinion that arises here is something that is divided into two distinct lines, yet ironically demands the same equity in our increasingly unequal society. This is a case where people agree on the solution but disagree about how it is currently being handled, and although opinions may differ drastically, it is clear that everyone wants an equal and just system without bias for certain groups of applicants.

While there is disagreement over the idea of this system being abolished, it is believed that descendants of freedom fighters should have a program to themselves to ensure an equitable system. This is because of the many social disadvantages that the parents of these children faced due to their bravery in standing up for a system they believed was right — a choice that still affects their descendants today. How this will be resolved is still up in the air; it requires expert opinions and time. However, given the controversy, this issue requires attention, a unified front to continue and equalize this equity program, and a desire for a better system to benefit all.

By Kang Yun Yeong

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WE LISTEN

The Granite Tower (GT) values your opinion. Send us detailed feedback on GT’s December 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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