

Sacred Spaces

The E-Journal of the
American Association of Pastoral Counselors

Volume 3 2011

In this issue, prominent educators address Korean American topics and issues in pastoral counseling.

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A Note from the Editor

As editor of Sacred Spaces, I wish to offer my thanks to several people and to alert readers to upcoming issues. I first want to express my deep appreciation for Dr. K. Sam Lee's scholarship, editorial acumen, and patience in shepherding this issue. As guest editor, Sam was instrumental in inviting people to write articles and in moving the issue to production. Sam has and continues to contribute in so many ways to the field of pastoral care and counseling—this issue being his latest gift to the field. I also want to thank Hellena Moon and Dr. Jason Whitehead for agreeing to serve on the Editorial Board of Sacred Spaces. Hellena is this year's winner of AAPC's Award for Best Student Article in honor of Donald Capps. Dr. Whitehead is serving a church in Denver and writing a book based on his dissertation. Jason has agreed not only to serve on the Editorial Board, he has also volunteered to be guest editor on an upcoming issue that deals with the advances of neuroscience and how these advances can shape pastoral care and counseling. This provides an apt segue to informing readers of some of the exciting issues ahead. Dr. Horace Griffin is the guest editor on a future issue on African American issues in pastoral care and counseling. Dr. Jaco Hamman will serve as guest editor on an issue on best practices in pastoral care and counseling. This will be followed by an issue on children in pastoral care and counseling. Dr. Joyce Mercer has agreed to serve as guest editor for this issue. So, my deepest thanks to all of you and for those who have contributed to this Journal.

Ryan LaMothe, Ph.D.

Editor, Sacred Spaces: The E-Journal of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors

Sacred Spaces: The e-Journal of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (2011), vol.3

Pastoral Counseling in Korean and Korean American Contexts: Introduction**K. Samuel Lee, Ph.D.¹**

When the work of the Anti-Racist Multicultural Competencies Task Force (“Task Force” hereafter) of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC) was nearing its end (from 2007 to 2010), I suggested to Dr. Ryan LaMothe, the editor of *Sacred Space*, that two issues of *Sacred Space* be devoted to the topic of racial minorities: one for Korean and Korean American topics and the other for African and African American topics. I was elated that Dr. LaMothe readily accepted the suggestion. My gratitude is heartfelt for Dr. LaMothe’s commitment to extend the work of the Task Force by the publication of this and the next issues of *Sacred Space*. His patient, dedicated, and competent editorial assistance made it possible for six Korean and Korean American scholars to complete their work. In this issue, we present six essays that cover a wide range of topics in pastoral theology, pastoral care, and counseling in Korean and Korean American contexts.

Despite a high number of Korean students in pastoral care and counseling graduate school programs in the U.S. and the fast-growing field of pastoral counseling movement in Korea (see Young Gweon You’s article), English language publications in the United States on pastoral counseling in Korean or Korean American contexts have been limited at best, with the exception of doctoral dissertations. In recent years, English publications in Korea are observed to be on the rise. However, their availability in the United States has been likewise limited. To my knowledge, a special issue of *Pastoral Psychology* (March 2006) is the only publication that

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dealt exclusively with the topic of pastoral counseling in Korean or Korean/Asian American contexts. This *Pastoral Psychology* issue included four articles written by three Korean or Korean American pastoral counselors (K. Lee, Kwon, and Son), a religious educator (B. Lee), and two articles written by an Asian American (Clark) and an European American pastoral theologian on a non-Korean topic. (See references for the complete list of singly listed articles.) Besides this special issue of *Pastoral Psychology*, only a scattered and limited number of journal articles and book chapters on the topic of pastoral theology, pastoral care and counseling have appeared in Korean and Korean American contexts. A special symposium issue of *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry* (DeVelder, Lee, & Griesel, 2002) was published on a more general topic of multicultural competencies in spiritual care. Thus, this special issue of *Sacred Space* is, all the more, a significant contribution. The references to this introduction include English publications by the authors of this special issue, a starting point to the compilation of a more comprehensive bibliography.

The first five essays in this issue are written by Korean American scholars. In various ways, they deal with the topic of cultural, clinical, and theological relevance of practices of U.S. pastoral theological education and pastoral care and counseling in a Korean American context. Writing from a broader Asian American perspective, Hellen Moon points out that “the continuous reproduction of essentialized stereotypes” of Asian Americans is rampant in U.S. The diverse groups of Asian Americans in terms of language, history, culture, and national origins are often ignored and homogenized, an effect of which is colonization by the white majority in the U.S. Moon challenges us to critically examine whether such colonization is not operative in pastoral theological discourses. She deconstructs Miller-McLemore’s pastoral theological metaphor, “living human web,” as an illustration of how such a helpful metaphor for some may

have a not-so-helpful meaning for some others. Her article illustrates the complexity of a postmodern constructed reality that calls for pastoral theologians' ongoing and vigilant hermeneutics toward the liberation of all persons. Moon is an all-but-dissertation student at Emory University and receives, with this essay, the AAPC Award for Best Student Article in honor of Donald Capps' numerous contributions to the field of pastoral care and counseling.

Of fundamental significance in Moon's essay is her recognition of the "epistemic hegemony" (Kang, 2004, p. 103) or "discursive homogenization and systematization" (Mohanty, 1991, p. 54) that may be operating within the U.S. discipline of pastoral theology, not recognized by other essays in this issue. Constructive theologian Namsoon Kang's (2004) *theological* question "Who/What is Asian?" makes a significant contribution as pastoral theologians—predominantly controlled by U.S.-based-white scholar—consider seriously and *deeply* the *politics of representation* that tends to remain just below the surface of the pastoral theological discourse. Speaking as Korean or Korean American in the U.S. pastoral theological terrain is a tricky business. On one hand, Koreans are expected to speak as Koreans to be authentic; in doing so, their voices become culturalized, homogenized, tokenized, and ghettoized (Kang, 2004, p. 109). Kang (2004) speaks to the heart of the matter: "When the homogenization is practiced by those who have discursive hegemonic power, it is a form of neo-Orientalism, that is, it re-forms and it proliferates a geographical awareness through theological texts" (p. 111). Does a special issue of *Sacred Space* on the topic of Korean and Korean American contexts give a significant voice to Koreans and Korean Americans? Yes, a significant voice that is needed. However, the issue also leads me to ask whether in some ways this special issue may further "the trap of essentialized identity" (Kang, 2004, p. 104). Granted, we must speak. The critical question is

with what voice should Koreans or Korean Americans speak within the U.S. pastoral theological circle? While serving as a special guest editor of this volume, I am left with this serious question.

Insook Lee introduces the Korean concept of *jeong* as foundational for Korean American women's relationality. In doing so, she also counters the negative stereotypes about Asian women as submissive, passive, quiet, and less-than-ideal. Lee's essay illustrates yet another route by which the ostensibly self-expressive, self-affirming, and self-confident "America" views and colonizes Korean American women. She describes what *jeong* is, how it functions in Korean American relationality, attempts to do a constructive theology of *jeong*, and discusses its implication in pastoral counseling.

Other Korean American constructive theologians use the concept of *han* (Chung, 1990; Park, 1993) and the concept of *jeong* (Joh, 2006) for their liberative potential in interpersonal and communal relationships. They argue that theology is constructive and contextual. For theology to be meaningful, it must be born out of contextual specificity, and thus must welcome the use of Korean concepts such as *jeong* and *han*. On the other hand, Kang (2004) cautions that the use of unique Korean culture-specific terms such as *han* or *jeong* may have an esotericizing or ghettoizing effect in theology, leaving non-Koreans in the zone of unknowability, but more seriously, may provide certain non-Koreans a "new culturalist alibi" (Spivak, 1989, p. 281) by which they maintain Orientalism, scholarly particularism or nativism. Kang's caution or critique is a significant post-colonial insight that must be taken into account more seriously by Korean American scholars.

Sophia Park's essay invites non-Korean readers to enter the Korean American cultural space in congregational life. The Korean American communal or collective value is highlighted in her essay. This is an excellent example of how the Korean American immigrant church

community stands apart from what Insook Lee describes as “the self-expressive, self-affirming, and self-confident” individualistic U.S. society. In communal sharing of meals, the Korean American church community practices its intercultural practice of care for the persons who experience brokenness in their immigrant lives.

Angella Son operationalizes Park’s advocacy of the Korean American church community in a more clinically focused way. Son cites many studies that examine the correlation between racism and depression in U.S. She also points out the inadequacy of the general U.S. mental health care system that does not account for the unique cultural and psychological manifestations of Korean Americans who are depressed. It is important to note that the well-established DSM-IV-TR’s diagnostic categories of depression may not be as relevant for Korean Americans suffering with depression. She addresses the important question of how the Korean American church community can become a site of healing and care for teenagers and young adults.

Jin Sook Kwon’s essay, with its striking title “A Dog with Wings,” demonstrates how a Korean American pastoral counselor navigates through the pastoral counseling certification process as the process relates to the cultural and theological explication. The issues of culture, theology, gender, and class—to name only a few of our multiple social identities—are multiplicatively at work in our counseling or certification situations. This also means that possible oppression that may take place in counseling sessions or in the AAPC certification process can manifest in multiple dimensions: on the individual level, institutional level, and societal level (Hardiman, Jackson, & Griffin, 2010). What may be considered insignificant in the dominant culture, thus dismissed as a non-issue whether in a counseling or in a certification process, may be instrumental in understanding clients or certification applicants from minority

cultures. Cultural differences are not simply matters of cultural diversity. Instead, they are the matters of systemic oppression that bestow unearned privilege on the dominant group members and create an unearned disadvantage for the minority group members (Johnson, 2010). Kwon provides a range of clinical, theological and ethical issues that must be accounted for when counselors are working with clients whose origins and experiences are different from their own.

Young Gweon You's essay, previously published elsewhere, is included in this issue because it provides a helpful historical overview of the development of the pastoral care and counseling field in Korea. You explains that the rapid growth of the field parallels Korea's rapid economic growth, the growth of the Korean church, and the social and cultural changes resulting from globalization. Pastoral care and counseling provides "a holding environment" for Koreans who face "chaotic identity crisis" in a rapidly changing society. You additionally provides, though cursive, snapshot pictures of pastoral counseling programs and centers and research trends in Korean pastoral counseling.

This special issue of *Sacred Space* gives voice to AAPC's commitment to be a professional organization recognized for its anti-racist multicultural competence. In this spirit, I offer the following 2010 *Statements on Anti-Racist Multicultural Competencies* adopted by the Board of Directors of AAPC (see AAPC Multicultural Competencies and Anti-Racism Task Force, 2010):

Statements on Anti-Racist Multicultural Competencies
2010

To be anti-racist multiculturally competent, AAPC must commit itself to a deep care for the governance, policy, and clinical training and practice that is intentionally inclusive and through which members are willing to hear the pains of those who have been historically, intentionally, and systemically excluded and disadvantaged.

The process of becoming anti-racist multiculturally competent AAPC includes AAPC members' commitment to: a) examine racial and cultural identity formation of pastoral counselors and its

implications in personal life and clinical practice; b) analyze critically how AAPC's training, certification, and accreditation standards may reflect racism and monoculturalism, c) engage in contextual and multicultural analysis of all governance, policy, and practices, and d) express explicit concern for managing differences and justice.

Furthermore, members of the AAPC commit themselves to become anti-racist multiculturally competent pastoral counselors by embodying the following values:

Anti-racist multiculturally competent pastoral counselors are committed to pursuing social justice and democratic ideals in which all persons are regarded as having equal worth regardless of identity markers, including but not limited to race, gender, age, sexual orientation, difference in ability, religion, language, and cultural or national origins.

Anti-racist multiculturally competent pastoral counselors appreciate human diversity as a gift, not a barrier, and engage in training and the practice of pastoral counseling in order to serve peoples from diverse backgrounds by acquiring the attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed for competent clinical practice.

Anti-racist multiculturally competent pastoral counselors acknowledge that the pastoral counseling movement in the United States has been significantly formed by White Anglo-Saxon Protestants and that AAPC's organizational structure, culture, governance, and public programs and documents have contributed to systemic exclusion of racial and cultural minorities.

Anti-racist multiculturally competent pastoral counselors commit to bring about individual, organizational, and societal changes to undo the devastating effects of ever-evolving forms of racism and prejudice and are always alert for and responsive to persons and groups experiencing new or newly recognized forms of exclusion.

Anti-racist multiculturally competent pastoral counselors engage in critical self-reflection about ourselves as well as the communities and societies to which we belong. Especially when we belong to dominant groups, multiculturally competent pastoral counselors acknowledge the privileges accorded to us by virtue of our identity and seek to distribute power equitably among all communities.

Anti-racist multiculturally competent pastoral counselors commit to create a safe space where all persons can work through the painful realities and conflicts that arise out of the history of domination and subjugation and out of the differences we bring from our traditions.

Anti-racist multiculturally competent pastoral counselors commit to seek justice "now" because they see the urgency of the individual, organizational and societal changes that must take place, and thus ask, "If not now, when?"

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The “Living Human Web” Revisited: An Asian American Pastoral Care and Counseling Perspective

Hellena Moon, Ph.D Candidate¹

Abstract

There has been a lack of representations of the heterogeneities of Asian Americans, thereby enabling the continuous reproduction of essentialized stereotypes that are reified in film, media, and in mainstream society in every generation since early immigration experiences of Asians to the U.S. My goal in writing this article is to underscore the importance of recognizing Asian American heterogeneity in pastoral care and counseling so as not to further homogenize and colonize Asian Americans in U.S. society. I want to help foster a more nuanced understanding of Asian American clients among pastoral care practitioners. In that regard, this article serves as a state-of-the-field essay of Asian American studies for pastoral care and counseling practitioners. The first part of my article engages in a discursive inquiry of Bonnie Miller-McLemore’s “living human web” metaphor. I argue that we need to re-imagine the metaphor to include more voices from Asian Americans who have notably been silent in the discourse of the web. In the second half of my article, I trace the genealogy of the term, “Asian American,” and how our subjectivity has been understood and defined in the U.S. By doing so, I hope that we Asian Americans may better contribute to the pastoral theological discourse on identity, subjectivity and agency.

Key words Asian American, pastoral theology, pastoral care and counseling, subjectivity, agency

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Introduction

How have pastoral care and counseling practitioners addressed issues of Asian American agency and identity? How have Asian Americans been defined and seen in the field of pastoral care and counseling? How have *we* defined ourselves? There has been a lack of representations of the heterogeneities of Asian Americans, thereby enabling the continuous reproduction of essentialized stereotypes that are reified in film, media, and in mainstream society in every generation since early immigration experiences of Asians to the U.S. This misleading historiographic representational framework of Asian Americans firmly entrenches the power to control past, present, and future Asian American discursive representations in the hands of mainstream European American culture, ignoring the variegated communities of Asians here in the U.S. When Asian Americans are not homogenized or essentialized as a single group, we are assimilated into the dominant culture, thereby eliding our differences altogether. Asian Americans, therefore, are either Orientalized as the “perpetual foreigner” or assimilated as “honorary whites.” My goal in writing this article is to underscore the importance of recognizing Asian American heterogeneity in pastoral care and counseling so as not to further homogenize and colonize Asian Americans in U.S. society. In that regard, this article serves as a state-of-the-field essay of Asian American studies for pastoral care and counseling practitioners.

I first want to engage in a discursive inquiry of Bonnie Miller-McLemore’s understanding that we need to have a more complex analysis of structures and systems that undergird society – i.e., the living human web— and that contribute to our vulnerability as human beings. In the second half of my article, I trace the genealogy of the term, “Asian American” and how our identity has been understood and defined. I describe the paradigm shifts in the field of Asian American studies and the impact that the various shifts have had for

understanding issues of Asian American identity. To understand the psyche of our clients, pastoral care and counseling practitioners need to understand the struggles and immigration histories of the past.

While I am aware that there have been large strides in the past decade to incorporate and understand the importance of intercultural pastoral/spiritual care, I write this article in the hopes that pastoral care and counseling practitioners will gain a better understanding of the historiography of issues affecting Asian American identity. Some of my interpersonal encounters during my units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) mirrored the prejudice, stereotyping, and essentializing that exist in the society at large. To give an example of stereotyping or type-casting me as a certain type of Asian woman, one visiting CPE supervisor made a comment to me that I needed to stop being subservient and docile to my patients! This comment was based on one line of a verbatim where I gave a patient in the emergency room (ER) a blanket because she was cold and had asked for one. The incident was taken out of context in which I took care of the patient's physical needs: she had schizophrenia, terminal cancer and was being brought to the ER because she had a blood clot and had passed out in her home. When I pointed out to the supervisor the context in which I brought her the blanket (and that most ER patients cannot get up to get their own blankets), he had a blank look on his face and said it did not matter. I, in his interpretation, was being subservient. Another example of a racialized interpersonal relationship I had in CPE was with a European American male student who was Roman Catholic. I confronted him with the suspicion that I did not think he respected me, to which he admitted that indeed, this was the case. He admitted to the fact that he did not respect me because he was older than I, and also because I was an Asian woman. He said he was quite aware of Asian culture and how I was supposed to listen to him (and not talk back to him). He did not like the fact that I

contradicted things he said or that I spoke up after he said something. He said that I should be submissive and respectful to him because I was younger and also because I was Asian. He was expecting me to be like his girlfriend, Michiko, and he was surprised because I had not fit the mold of who he thought I was.² Because I was Catholic, he expected me to be submissive to patriarchal culture. When I challenged his understanding of Catholicism by providing feminist perspectives, he immediately got angry and said I was not a real Catholic. He said that, first of all, the Catholicism that I knew was that which was imported into Asia, and therefore, was not the “true” understanding of Catholicism. All in all, my feminist beliefs were completely outlandish to him.

The above stories are just examples of two interpersonal experiences I have had in CPE and do not speak for CPE programs as a whole, nor supervisors. I share these stories merely to highlight how widespread the stereotype of the meek and submissive Asian woman is in our culture, and how it has been ingrained into the mindset of those whom I encounter. The “Asian” woman is a monolithic category in which we are lumped together and seen as undifferentiated from the variegated communities and heterogeneous cultures from which we come. In the first example, I apparently needed to break free from the reins of patriarchy because I was assumed to *be* that Asian woman; and in the second, I was *assumed* to be that woman and in turn, I was chastised for *not* being her! Rarely in pastoral care and counseling do we hear stories that highlight the numerous narratives of Asian Americans who have demonstrated the variegated forms of agency and subjectivity they have embodied and traversed in order to survive and flourish here in the U.S. It underscores to me, the significance of Emmanuel Lartey’s intercultural paradigm for pastoral care, which critiques and problematizes Eurocentric cultural,

² Due to issues of confidentiality, her real name has been changed.

political and economic hegemony, as well as stereotyping in forms of counseling (2003, p.32).

Lartey rightly points out that

Some well-meaning attempts to inform counselors and other carers about ‘ethnic minority clients’ adopted in many forms of ‘multicultural training,’ fall into this trap by perpetuating the myths, for example, about the angry underachieving Caribbean male; the Asian young woman’s oppressive cultural role; the African student’s problem with communication; the problems of the Asian extended family or the single-parent Caribbean family. As such, far from enabling attention to the particular client in question, these forms fuel stereotyping of the most heinous kind (pp. 32-33).

Intercultural care values and recognizes diversity, hybridity, and the complexity of interacting cultures (Lartey, 2003). The fluidity and hybridity of Asian Americans are often overlooked due to perpetuated Orientalist stereotypes of Asian Americans.

Outsiders are not the only ones responsible for the on-going stereotypes about Asian Americans. We have contributed to essentialized views of ourselves. Stories of *han*-filled Korean and Korean American women oppressed by their culture, colonialism, and American imperialism abound in the work of fiction writers and academics (Chu, 2008). For example, the discursive history of Korean feminist theology has portrayed the Korean woman as a unitary subject, one who is poor and a victim of colonialism and superpower politics (Chung, 1990). Asian feminist theologian Angela Wai Ching Wong (2000) has been one of the first to point out this problem of on-going theological discourse that reifies and essentializes the notion of the “poor and suffering woman in Asia,” and calls for a renegotiated postcolonial identity. She argues that the “discourse of ‘the poor woman,’ although it reflects a genuine attention paid to women in the lower strata of Asian societies, dominates the literature of Asian theology, including Asian feminist theology,

and has become the most powerful postcolonial strategy to fight Western imperialism” (p. 7). She correctly problematizes this discursive construct which has somehow constrained the further development of Asian feminist theology (p. 7). Edward Said (1979) and other postcolonial scholars have argued that internalization of colonialist powers’ assumptions about their colonized subjects is part of the problem of Orientalism. Asian Americans’ own essentialist views and theologies, therefore, reinforces the Orientalist gaze. Theologian Namsoon Kang (2011) implores us, Asian and Asian American scholars, to construct a more mature theology that employs a “transethnic” approach.

If we, Asian Americans, are not type-cast into stereotypes, we are then made to believe that being Asian in the U.S. is not a concern, that we are very much a part of the American cultural fabric. We are elided in the discussion of difference all together and discursively assimilated into the dominant European American culture. Derald Wing Sue (1998) argues that “ethnocentric monoculturalism” has been an “extremely powerful, insidious, and pervasive force that [has been] institutionalized in all aspects of society” (p. 46). This has resulted in counseling through an ethnocentric and biased lens, doing great harm to a large number of people who need care. Although there are universal understandings and concerns among human beings, psychotherapist Farhad Dalal (2002) cautions us in essentializing and globalizing cultures (p. 202). What does it mean to portray the Asian American community as part of a “homogenous” U.S., when in reality, we have experienced systematic racial exclusion, been denied citizenship, as well as marginalized in racial discourse? This seems to be part of the on-going complacency in Western liberalism that omits or ignores race and racism. There are those who tend to believe that to ignore or overlook difference shows that people of color are the same as everyone else, when it actually maintains and manipulates the very structures of oppression. Feminist historian

Louise Newman (1999) states that “the national romance with colorblindness ... is a fundamentally misguided strategy—an ineffective way to address the real discursive effects of social hierarchies intricately structured along the multiple axes of race, class, gender” (p. 20). English professor Anne Cheng (2000) warns that “assimilation is never a possibility; it is only an illusion upon which racial melancholia plays and which habitually reinvents itself” (p. 22). She writes, “‘shuttling’ between ‘black’ and ‘white’—the Scylla and Charybdis between which all American immigrants have had to ‘pass’—Asian Americans occupy a truly ghostly position in the story of American racialization” (p. 23).

The boundaries, cultural practices and the processes of creating identity are constantly shifting and being produced in the context of our environment and our histories (Lowe, 1991, p. 64). Who we are as Asian Americans depends as much on the past and future, as well as the present moment in society. Lisa Lowe states that “cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, they are subject to continuous ‘play’ of history, culture and power” (p. 64). To be cognizant of our histories and our past, then, is crucial in understanding our identity and the context in which we inter-relate within our community. So in that regard, I argue that Asian American pastoral theologians and practitioners need to further critique the “living human web” through methods such as sharing our past histories and unearthing stories of resistance.

The “living human web” revisited

In examining the discursive history of the “web” in pastoral care, Edward Wimberly’s (1979) work has been pioneering in examining the inter-related nature of self and society. His work was the first to lift up the importance of context and community in relation to the self, as well as Sacred Spaces: The e-Journal of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (2010), vol.3.

introduce the issue of racism and oppression into the pastoral theological dialogue. Archie Smith (1982) also saw the importance of humans, living in a “web of social relations” (p. 138). “From a relational perspective,” he argues, “psychic liberation and social transformation are dialectically related and interwoven” (p. 228). He effectively has demonstrated “that emancipatory struggle must seek to strengthen awareness of the interrelatedness and interdependence of human life; this includes the life of the psyche as well as social life” (p. 228). In her metaphor of the “living human web,” Bonnie Miller-McLemore has rightly pointed out the confines of relying solely on a therapeutic model of care. She argues for the need, not only to contribute more actively to theological discourse but also to be better versed in the study of public policy, ethics, and other disciplines as it relates to the emotional well-being of an individual (Miller-McLemore, 2005, p. 40). She points out that confronting structural and societal injustices has been pivotal in transforming the traditionally understood work of pastoral care as simply counseling to a broader, more complex awareness of care as including the social, cultural, religious, politico-economic context (p. 41). She further contends that “to be taken seriously by people of color and by white women, it [pastoral psychotherapy] will have to include ... a social analysis of oppression, alienation, exploitation, diversity, and justice in its clinical assessment of individual pathology” (p.41). She correctly emphasizes the inter-related nature of human beings, thereby placing importance on “public policy issues that determine the health of the human web” to be fundamentally linked to that of the “individual emotional well-being” (p.43). “In a word,” she claims, “never again will a clinical moment, whether of caring for a woman recovering from hysterectomy or attending to a women’s spiritual life, be understood on intrapsychic grounds alone Psychology alone cannot understand this web” (p.43).

I see Miller-McLemore’s metaphor of the “living human web” as a tremendous shift and growth within the field of pastoral theology, as well as a useful heuristic device in further engaging in dialogue as a community. At the same time, I also see the need for a more critical examination of the ways in which the “living human web” embodies patri-kyriarchal and imperialistic structures that have created and sustained multiple levels of exploitation and domination that perpetuate societal, structural, as well as psychic injustices.³ I see the need to re-imagine the metaphor of the “living human document in the web” in a way that highlights the variegated ways in which we operate as subjects (with multiple subjectivities) in the greater community of intercultural global citizens (Moore, 1994). We are living human subjects in a kaleidoscope of narrative subjectivities (Benhabib, 2002).

I agree with Miller-McLemore that we need to confront the systems of domination and power that our society continues to uphold. I, therefore, want to elaborate on and complicate her understanding of the web metaphor. I argue that the metaphor of a living human web, while an accurate depiction of our culture here in U.S. society, can also be a precarious metaphor for those who have historically been marginalized by the dominant society. Some webs act as barriers or impediments that serve to confound and knock down flying insects, making them more vulnerable to being trapped in the web below. They may also help to protect the spider from predators such as birds and other insects. As a metaphor, this speaks realistically of our society and the institutions that create and cause inequality. To continue the metaphor, the spider is the

³ Patri-kyriarchy is Professor Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza’s (2000) intellectual framework and category of analysis that addresses the dualistic conceptualization of gender oppression, patriarchy and kyriarchy. “Kyriarchy” is derived from the Greek words for “lord” or “master” (*kyrios*) and “to rule or dominate” (*archein*), in order to redefine the analytic category of patriarchy in terms of multiplicative overlapping structures of domination. “Kyriarchy means the domination of the lord, slave master, husband, the elite freeborn educated and propertied man over all women and subaltern men” (p.95).

privileged individual in society whose status or social power, i.e., race, age, gender, and so on, provides protection from institutional and societal inequalities.

The living web, then, is an apt metaphor for our global community—with its obstacle courses and pitfalls specifically designed to marginalize certain people and communities, as well as to create and maintain inequalities in society. While the metaphor of the web was meant to help us imagine our inter-connected nature as persons and as a community; it also evokes images of solitude, individualism and autonomy as a web is typically woven and occupied by only one spider, i.e., one individual. Catherine Keller (1986) used the image of the web to signify the spider’s creative potential to spin and weave from her own body. At the same time, the web metaphor calls to mind how the web was built to protect only certain individuals and groups, similarly as capitalist U.S. society values individualism and autonomy. The web was meant to house and protect only the spider that built it, and it was meant as a pitfall for others. In that regard, it is a very self-centered, ego-centric model—as is appropriate for our society here in the U.S. based, as it is, on an autonomous, liberal self. Spider webs create vulnerability, just as capitalist society creates situations of vulnerability. Although not meant to be interpreted as such, the web becomes a metaphor for predatory behavior and survival-of-the fittest, individualistic society which well-represents U.S. society.

Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton (2005, p. 3) refer to empire as a web of “trade, knowledge, migration, military power, and political intervention that allowed certain communities to assert their influence and sovereignty over other groups”. They argue that

these ‘imperial webs’ functioned as systems of exchange, mobility, appropriation, and extraction, fashioned to enable the empire-building power to exploit the natural resources, manufactured goods, or valued skills of the subordinated group. In offering the

image of the web, we want to emphasize the interconnected networks of contact and exchange without downplaying the very real systems of power and domination such networks had the power to transport. The web’s intricate strands carried with them and helped to create hierarchies of race, class, religion, and gender, among others, thereby casting the conquerors as superior and the conquered as subordinate, with important and lingering consequences for the communities they touched. The image of the web also conveys something of the double nature of the imperial system. Empires, like webs, were fragile and prone to crises where important threads were broken or structural nodes destroyed, yet also dynamic, being constantly remade and reconfigured through concerted thought and effort (p. 3).

The web metaphor in pastoral care and theology has acknowledged these systems of exploitation and domination and has engaged in work to address the pitfalls in the web, as well as care for those who are vulnerable to inequalities in society. Yet, we still need to hear from the voices of those on the margins. We need to recognize the living human document as a subject and the web as a potential structural power to oppress and control. We need to see that the “living human document” has subjectivity, agency, as well as the ability to navigate through the obstacles of oppression in society. In our pastoral care and counseling work, we have to create space for subjects’ agency within postcolonial structures and ongoing U.S. imperialism, militarism as well as anti-colonialist measures of nationalism.

Currently, none of the metaphors in pastoral care adequately addresses the experiences and realities of the “Unitedstatesean” of Asian descent.⁴ We should, therefore, re-envision the metaphor of the web to reflect the lived realities of the kaleidoscope of differences that characterize U.S. society. The web metaphor brings with it notions of victimization, and many

⁴ I employ legal scholar Janet Halley’s (2006) neologism.

women or people of color may not be comfortable with a metaphor that places their life experiences in a hegemonic web of oppression and domination and depicts them as victims of a capitalist society. While not intended, the web metaphor also stirs up images of the spider who represents the ideologies of colonialism, imperialism, militarism and nationalism that sustain the patri-kyriarchal structures that our society maintains—whose threads hold together such structures that create vulnerability. In this regard, pastoral care and counseling practitioners need to engage in on-going critical conversation about the colonizing and racializing legacies of its past history—and the ways in which counseling can be a colonizing practice if not attuned to the intercultural pastoral care needs of an individual and her/his community.

In the communal-contextual paradigm as well as the intercultural paradigm, pastoral counselors and theologians have begun to acknowledge the subjectivity and agency of subjects—that *they* provide the knowledge of *how* we should care without othering in the process. Archie Smith (1982) saw the importance of how “the black church can effectively address these themes [of the problem of false consciousness] by becoming aware of its own historical context and the forces that gave it rise” (p. 228). In the tradition of Smith, then, I see the importance of knowing the history of Asian American subjectivity. I provide a brief genealogical overview below in the hopes that it will kindle our imaginations to construct more refined Asian American pastoral theologies and theories that underscore our hybridity, fluidity, and heterogeneity. In engaging in such creative work, I think it is crucial that we unearth histories and stories of Asian Americans’ subjectivity and agency.

Historiography of Asian Americans in U.S. history

First two periods of Asian American historiography

Sucheng Chan (1996) argues that Asian American historiography can be broken down into four periods. The first period (1870s-1920s) looks at the early wave of immigration by the Chinese and Japanese. Christina Klein (2003, p. 224) notes how “the racialization of Asian Americans ... was achieved through a series of laws restricting immigration and naturalization. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 prevented the entry of laborers for ten years, and ultimately led to the severe imbalance of Chinese men versus the number of Chinese women in this country. The Exclusion Act was then extended in 1904, which was followed by the 1917 Gentleman’s Agreement (Klein, 2003). This created the Asiatic Barred Zone, prohibiting immigration from any person whose ancestry could be traced to the Asian Continent or the Pacific Islands (Klein, 2003). This was followed by the Immigration Act of 1924, which was also known as the National Origins Act, prohibiting entry into the U.S. for permanent residence to all persons whose national origin was within the Asia-Pacific Triangle (Klein, 2003). Klein (2003) notes how this was the first and only act of legalized immigration discrimination based on race in the U.S.

The second period of Asian American historiography extends from the 1920s-1960s (Chan, 1996). The Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 prevented any further immigration from the Philippines, which was still a U.S. colony at the time (Klein, 2003). Repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943 allowed for the immigration and naturalization of Filipinos and Indians in 1946, followed by an amendment to the War Brides Act in 1947 (Klein, 2003). Klein (2003) notes how under the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act, all Asians in the U.S. were eligible to become naturalized citizens. By the 1950’s, Klein (2003, p. 226) states that “Asians could begin to claim the status of ‘immigrant’ at the very moment that it was being held up as a privileged category of American national identity”. Robert E. Park of the University of Chicago School of Sociology is

the leading figure during this second period of Asian American historiography. This period is characterized by its focus on the “Oriental Problem”—that is, how Asians did not assimilate into U.S. culture (Chan, 1996). Henry Yu’s (2001), *Thinking Orientals*, examines in-depth the debate of the “Oriental Problem” during this era that Asian Americans posed by not assimilating. Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1994) argue that the Chicago School, led by Park, was the first to advance a new approach to race using social scientific methodologies, as opposed to biological categories. Omi and Winant argue that the category of ethnicity emerged during this period to understand racial formation. This approach theorizes that other immigrants to the U.S. could and should assimilate into American life just as other white ethnic groups did when they came to the U.S. The problem that sociologists examined is that Asians did not assimilate; hence, the “Oriental Problem.” The first two periods of Asian American historiography, therefore, framed the question of Asian presence in the U.S. as a problem—how we failed to assimilate and were seen as deviant from other immigrants who came to the U.S. We were the “perpetual foreigners” of the “living human web.”

Third period of Asian American historiography

In the third period (1960s-1980s) of Asian American historiography, we see the resistance of Asian Americans to negative portrayals of our presence here in the U.S. with stereotypes like “yellow peril,” “coolie,” “gook,” which persist today. Sucheng Chan (1996) and other scholars note this period as the beginning of Asian American Studies as a discipline, resisting the dominant assimilationist paradigm. While the publication of textbooks in this period are crucial, Chan argues that voices from the community in the form of magazines, newspapers and other popular writing were more important from a historiographical perspective. It underscored the political consciousness of Asian Americans. The origins of Asian American

Studies can be traced to the student strikes in the 1960s (Chan, 1996). These strikes were pervasive and were the dominant narrative of Asian American studies, foregrounding political activism that sought social transformation. The 1968 student strikes at San Francisco State University and University of California, Berkeley culminated in the academic institutionalization of Asian American Studies.

So the emergence of the term, Asian American, came to existence in the late 1960s. During this period, the tone of voice among Asian American activists and intellectuals was angry and the emphasis was on the systemic victimization of Asian Americans. Michael Omi (1994) notes that prior to this period, there were no people who referred to themselves as such, using the term, “Oriental,” which refers to objects, not people. Until this period, therefore, Asian Americans were objectified in every sense of the term. Yuji Ichioka coined the term, “Asian American” which emphasized the collective pride of being Asian, at the same time claiming the right to be American (Kang, 2002a). Yen-le Espiritu (1992) idealistically notes how the pan-Asian concept has allowed us to be free from the constraints of nationalism. In historicizing the usage of the strategic term of Asian American, it was also a reference to our solidarity with other Asians abroad who were reviled by the U.S. due to wars with Japan, Korea, and Vietnam.

Asian American Studies grew out of progressive pan-racial and pan-ethnic movements for civil rights, social change, as well as a desire for strength as a political community (Ono, 2005). The field emerged due to Asian American student protests and desires to be included in academic curricula. Perceived as the “perpetual foreigner,” they felt that their histories were always left out of the U.S. mainstream historiographical landscape. In many universities across the country, the field continues to be developed through methods of activist struggles and protests for inclusion in academic curricula. Asian American Studies has, therefore, emerged as

more of an activist, praxis-oriented field as opposed to the more theoretical discipline of Asian Studies (Area/Regional Studies). The umbrella term, Asian American, serves to denote common experiences as racial minorities in the U.S. While there are significant differences and divisions among the many ethnicities that constitute the umbrella term, it is a strategic political term of unity and solidarity to resist dominant structures of anti-Asian and Orientalist sentiments here in the U.S. It is a political category of distinction—yes, we are marginalized yet resistant to forms of discrimination and erasure as a community. Asian American activists and intellectuals have actively sought inclusion as an academic discipline that seeks to create epistemologies and unearth histories and individual stories of Asians in America. At the same time, the movement’s goal is recognition for inclusion in the racialized U.S. environment—that we are, indeed, part of the fabric and kaleidoscope of “Unitedstatesians” (Halley, 2006). The field of Asian American Studies seeks to integrate the experiences and histories of Asian Americans as being vitally important to U.S. history. Gary Okihiro (1994) has argued that the dominant values of U.S. society such as democracy, civil rights, and human rights emerge from the epistemologies and histories of those on the margins of society. We test the validity of American values and principles of democracy through the struggles of marginalized subjects.

The 1970s is characterized by a more moderate tone of voice in the writings, as opposed to the militant tone in the 1960s. A well-known book in the field that was edited by Frank Chin (1974), et al.: *Aiiieeee! An Anthology of Asian American Writers*, promoted pan-Asian identity as an empowerment strategy. The writers of this anthology located their political subjectivity here in the U.S., promoting the cultural nationalist paradigm characteristic of this time period. Chin rejects any connection to his Asian identity as a way of rejecting the “perpetual foreigner” image of Asian Americans at this time. When Asian American Studies programs were established, most

of the students and those writing in the field were Asian Americans born in the U.S. Many were third and fourth generation Americans with virtually no emotional connection to their Asian ancestral homelands. Scholars have pointed out this emphasis of disclaiming their ancestral homeland ties in order to emphasize their “Americanness.” In retrospect, however, this cultural nationalist claim is criticized for promoting an anti-immigrant stance, an aspect which I will discuss this aspect later in my article. So this period saw a shift from an assimilationist approach to one emphasizing oppression and victimization. I underscore that the origins of the term, Asian American, was also a way of showing resistance to racism, discrimination, and non-recognition of Asian Americans as being part of the fabric of U.S. cultural identity.

Sucheng Chan (1996) argues that the historiography of Asian American studies has only recently come of age since the early 1980s, and prior to that period, Asian Americans were objects of writings by missionaries, politicians, journalists, etc., during which time, almost all of the writings about Asian Americans was Orientalist and biased. Chan (1996) states that the period of the 1980s and early 1990s focused on questions of agency. The writers have become more nuanced in their analysis of Asian American subjectivity in understanding the diverse forces at work in racial understandings of Asian Americans—that both structural forces and human agency contribute to the construction of Asian American subjectivity. This period of Asian American historiography saw the creation of an Association of Asian American Studies, an important structural body that has helped to generate theories, ideas, and have lively debates on issues important to the field (Chan, 1996). It was also an important organization for students and faculty (whose institutions did not have any Asian American Studies programs) to receive feedback on their work. In this period, we also see a shift in the demographics of the students in the field—as opposed to the earlier periods where most of the students and faculty are several

generations away from their ancestral Asian heritage, this period sees a greater increase in the number of students who are of foreign-born immigrants. So, while pan-Asian American identity has been crucial for cultivating the political consciousness necessary to fight against the tides of racism in the earlier decades, the concept of such a non-existent homogeneity among the incredibly diverse and variegated Asian populations is increasingly being critiqued and underscored in the period as problematic.

“Transnational turn” of the 1990s

Since the field’s beginning, Asian American studies has taken a “transnational turn” in the early 1990s, with a greater focus on the transnationalism and diaspora of Asians in the global community (Okamura, 2003). A point of tension for the field is in the usage and interrogation of the terms, “Asian,” “American,” and “Asian American.” The phenomenon of diaspora and issues of transnationalism have resulted in a critical interrogation of the meaning of “Asian American,” as well as a self-reflection of the field itself. “Asian America,” critics argue, is not a place existing solely in the U.S.—it is a discursive site made up of diasporic Asian and Asian American communities and individuals. Earlier divisions and boundaries of those who are “Asian” and those who are “Asian American” are becoming more murky, porous, fluid, transnational and intercultural. While Asian Americanists previously disdained the field of Asian studies as being a by-product of post-Cold War culture, there is growing interest by Asian Americanists in this more recent period to have conversations and engage in overlapping work with those in Asian Studies.

Lisa Lowe’s (1991) article, “Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Marking Asian Differences,” has become a classic in the field, paradigmatic of the period of the “transnational turn” for later works to come. Lowe argues that rather than seeing “Asian American identity,” as

being fixed and established, we should see ‘Asian American cultural practices’ which produce identity that are never complete. The practices constitute on-going changes in understanding our identity; it is a matter of becoming, constantly in formation and in transformation. While she emphasizes the importance for seeing Asian American identity as a political organizing tool for solidarity and for asserting our agency in the upstream battle for recognition to various injustices we have encountered; at the same time, she sees the importance of signifying our differences and heterogeneity as a way of disrupting Orientalist constructions and representations of Asian Americans. Differences such as ethnicity, generations removed from one’s ancestral home place, refugee versus non-refugee, Asian Americans of mixed race, gender difference, as well as class differences all need to be taken into consideration.

At the same time, Lowe (1996) argues that the issue of immigration is the most important discursive element for Asian American subjectivity and in that regard, she argues for non-differentiation between Asian Americans who are American and those who are of immigrant status. At the same time, she argues for recognizing differences within the Asian American community. The issue of immigration has been one which thoroughly divides us as a community, not only because of the questions of citizenship and the rights that Asian American citizens hold, but also because of variegated experiences that result from whether one is of the immigrant generation, children of immigrants, or generations removed from the actual embodied experience. I understand to a certain degree, Lowe’s logic in this because she sees that despite differences, we need to maintain political solidarity. To that extent, she emphasizes the importance of a “collective agency” of Asian Americans, a group that would otherwise not adhere to one another as many groups historically have not gotten along outside the realm of a political strategy of American resistance.

As an example, there has been historical animosity among East Asian groups (China, Korea, Japan) towards South Asians; and among East Asian groups, Koreans have held hostile feelings towards Chinese and Japanese. Yet, here in the U.S., the racism that all Asian Americans have experienced has compelled a united voice for solidarity among very different ethnic groups. So while it is crucial to construct an Asian American cultural identity that takes into account our intra-Asian differences, we need to politically maintain its positioning as a unified, albeit heterogeneous, group that does not forget the earlier progressive solidarity work that has held us together as a marginalized group—and in Lowe’s eyes, therefore, it is important to see Asian immigrants and Asian Americans as a collective body. Lowe’s (1991) classic article argues for interdisciplinarity in the fields of Asian, American, and Asian American studies which would help us rethink our understanding of Asian American identity.

In an important article, Sau-ling Wong (1995) uses the concept of a “denationalization,” which includes an increasingly blurred boundary of who is considered to be Asian American and who is “Asian,” as well as between the academic fields of Asian American Studies and Asian Studies. She notes the shift from the domestic American perspective to a diasporic one. All of these changes occurring in Asian American Studies as well as the debate in what and who constitutes Asian America/n is impacted by changes abroad as well, such as influences of Western imperialism in the cultural, economic, social, and political production on Asian countries and its people (Wong, 1995). She argues that it is more helpful to see modalities of Asian American subjectivity than to speak of it in phases. That is, unpacking the meaning of Asian American subjectivity needs to be examined from multiple lenses of the local, domestic, diasporic, transnational, and so on—as not happening in various phases but as occurring in complex ways simultaneously (Wong, 1995).

Numerous other scholars have advocated for a ‘transnational turn’ in the field of Asian American Studies and argued for greater interrogation of the discursive historiography of “Asian” and “American.” David Palumbo-Liu (1999) uses the term, Asian/American, to denote that the slash signifies the distinction between “Asian” and “American,” at the same time that it can also constitute a fluid movement between the two. Both “Asian” and “American” are unsettled meanings in Asian American discursive historiography. Like Lowe, he argues that the boundaries that have been constructed between the two terms are not as solid as once assumed (Palumbo-Liu, 1999). Immigration, border crossings and diasporic communities are part of the American landscape, that is, U.S. culture is significantly shaped by its counters with Asian peoples and countries.

Laura Hyun Yi Kang’s (2002) work also contributes to the ‘transnational turn’ in Asian American Studies that critically investigates “heterogeneity, hybridity, and multiplicity” in identity formation. Like Palumbo-Liu, she also uses the slash in writing Asian/American to underscore the role of immigrant subjectivity. She wants us to challenge the problems of a disciplinary approach in critically examining the heterogeneity of Asian/American women. She argues that the discursive significance of “Asian American women” arose in dispersed, fragmented moments—not in a coherent, homogeneous way that describes the historiography of pan-Asian ethnic identity. “Asian American women” as a political category became fixed once government organizations adopted the term as a category of existence. Asian/American women were/are doubly oppressed as being women and Asian American and have had to navigate the essentialism and stereotypes that both oppressions have thrown upon us. She argues that we do not fit into the dominant feminism of a white women’s liberation movement, nor do we share the dominant Asian American movement of liberation that has been constructed from a masculinist

norm. She argues that we need to challenge dominant paradigms of knowledge and subject formation in the academy which mainly relies on disciplinarity. Such scholarship is problematic in reifying representations of Asian/American women and limits our possibilities of how we come to know and be Asian/American women. My critique of Kang’s work is that she has not escaped the bounds of her own critique—namely, she reifies existing discursive structures of Asian/American women by the very categorization itself. How is her work a part of a different type of representation of Asian/American women?

Kandice Chuh’s (2003) work serves as a novel approach to the question of “Asian America” on which the field should reflect. She argues for a ‘subjectless analysis’ that deconstructs representations of Asian America as monolithic. She contends that we need to go beyond an identity politics on which the field is currently based. She argues that rather than foreground the problem of race as the primary category of analysis, the field needs to rethink possibilities for organizing itself. She displaces the identity-based model that dominates the field, as well as the nation-state. She argues that Asian Americanists need to disclaim America and imagine another ‘home’ beyond geographic borders. While she argues for a more praxis-oriented, liberative approach to the problem of Asian American issues, her work is more theoretical and utopia-focused. Her approach is rather elitist in that it does not address concrete problems that exist for Asian Americans living in the U.S. While she argues for a ‘subjectless discourse,’ she does not provide an adequate alternative to a rights-endowed subject. I think she is conflating legal discourse that essentializes an abstract “rights-endowed subject” that does not take into account variegated differences between peoples in a particular identity group because of the very structures of the law, with that of how subjectivity in a rights discourse can foreground agency and political voice for an individual.

In discussing the paradigm shifts of the term, “Asian American,” Jonathan Okamura (2003) has rightly noted how the early Asian American studies movement was *both* international and nationalist in its origin. The student strikes at San Francisco State University and University of California, Berkeley were partly resistance struggles to U.S. foreign policy in the Third World. The strikes were protests of liberation of Third World people at home, as well as abroad—that is, a concern for the domestic as well as international community of marginalized subjects. Okamura has interpreted this as seeing the seeds of transnationalism in the early Asian American movement. His approach is helpful because he sees the two ‘phases’ as being coexistent and interdependent, rather than separate ‘time and space’ occurrences. Like Sau-ling Wong, he argues for the importance of both perspectives: we need to focus on the community and concerns of Asian Americans living in the U.S. as primary for the field, at the same time addressing and examining the larger transnational context of global economic and political forces. He gives the example of female Asian migrant workers as being the focal point of transnational and local concerns for the Asian American community.

The term, “transnational racism” has entered the vocabulary of Asian American Studies, as those in the field argue that whether Asians are here in the U.S. or abroad, the racializing process is in effect. Gary Okihiro (1994) also addresses a similar concern in his work, “When and Where I Enter.”⁵ He argues that immigrant subjectivity is a process that occurs prior to an Asian even entering the U.S. since as early as the 5th century B.C.E, Europeans were observing Asians and Orientalism has informed the colonization and domination of Asians in Asia and in the U.S. Therefore, Asian Americanists need to see race as the critical category of analysis and continue in the work of coalition-building and community organizing. Pastoral theologian K.

⁵ Okihiro borrows the title from Paula Giddings’s (1994) work on the history of African American women, “When and where I enter: The impact of black women on race and sex in America.”

Samuel Lee promotes the importance of partnering and creating alliances among peoples of all races, ethnicities, sexual orientation, and so on (2009, p.4). He emphasizes that all identity groups “promote its stance in alliance, not in competition, with other identity groups if we want to build an inclusive moral, political, cultural, and economic democracy” (p. 9). Americanist George Lipsitz (2000) sees the importance of ongoing transnational work and analysis while adhering to the earlier progressive political vision of the field of Asian American studies. He is one who sees the strategic importance of the political term, “Asian American,” and its necessary existence for offering a prescriptive to ongoing racial injustices in the U.S. Despite its critique of homogenization and glossing over of differences, he argues that it is an important framework for Asian Americans and for the field of Asian American Studies itself.

Asian American women

In historicizing the gendered history of Asian Americans during the time of civil rights activism, many Asian American feminists highlight their “invisibility” and “marginality” within the larger Asian American movement (Kim & Zia, 1997). Even though many Asian American women were at the center of the activist endeavors, their work was not recognized as part of a larger struggle of the second wave feminist movement (1960s-1980s) in working towards eradicating sexism and oppression of women. Asian American feminist consciousness benefited and collaborated with this dual academic/activist endeavor as part of the second wave feminist movement as well. Asian American feminists utilized the intellectual feminist theoretical framework that was being produced by the Euro-American women’s movement, and they were able to build networks with them. Kim and Zia (1997) note that Asian American feminists need to continue challenging Euro-American women in a way that unites, not divides, the U.S.

feminist movement. They recognize the tendency for Euro-American feminists to put forth an agenda, expecting that all women will support this as their community’s agenda (p.60). Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1999), in her work, has challenged how power is utilized in dominant groups and how these groups impose and assert their perspectives, their beliefs and practices as that which should be embraced by all of humankind. She carefully nuances the importance of feminism’s awareness of its responsibilities towards emancipatory struggles of other women without homogenizing the variegated contexts of women. Helen Zia asserts that the basis for collaboration is that “even though we can’t assume unity with white feminists, we can hope that because of their experience with gender oppression we may be able to reach a common understanding” (Kim & Zia, 1997, p. 61).

Conclusion

Stereotypes of Asian Americans are still so pervasive that we are still regarded as foreigners here in the U.S. after more than two hundred years of the first Asian immigrants’ arrival. Playwright David Henry Hwang (2003) laments that stereotypes of Asian Americans continue unabated, even when the particulars change. He states that he has become

Less interested in seeking the Holy Grail of authenticity and more convinced of the need to create characters who burst from the page or stage with richness, complexity and contradictions of real people. At its core, a stereotype is bad writing: a one- or two-dimensional cutout devoid of humanity, and therefore prone to demonization (pp. xiii-xiv).

Robert Lee (1999) notes how Orientalism, like other theories of domination and difference, relies heavily on establishing authority over the Other through knowledge of and access to the Other's language, history, and culture as a privilege of the colonial agent.

Edward Said (1993) stated that narrative is crucial to hegemonic discursive power, and that “stories are at the heart of what explorers and novelists say about strange regions of the world; they also become the method colonized people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their own history” (p. xii). Miller-McLemore (2005) insists that those within the web who have not yet spoken must speak for themselves. She contends that “if knowledge depends on power, then power must be given to the silenced” (p. 46). She states that “we must hear the voices of the marginalized from within their own context” (p. 46). The power to narrate is significant, especially in the web where the dominant voice is the European American voice. The current web metaphor, then, is limited in stimulating our imaginations to construct theologies that do not victimize or stereotype Asian American communities or other persons of color, *mainly* because our voices have largely been absent.

In order to locate us in the pastoral theological discursive web, I have examined the trajectory of Asian American subjectivity by providing a brief genealogical context of the term, “Asian” and “Asian American” within U.S. society. In this article, I have highlighted scholars' works that successfully piece together a representation of Asian immigrant subjectivity. I have written this article in order for pastoral care and counseling practitioners to be better versed in understanding the genealogy of Asian American struggles for establishing our subjectivity here in the U.S. I anticipate that this state-of-the-field essay on Asian American subjectivity will stimulate our imaginations to construct more sophisticated Asian American theologies that underscore our subjectivity and agency. This, I hope, will then strengthen our work with Asian

Americans in pastoral care. Through variegated forms of agency, I hope we, Asian Americans, can metaphorically participate in weaving threads of justice on the "web" where all communities of color can flourish with equal dignity.

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Korean American Women's Relationality: Jeong and Its Implication to Pastoral Psychotherapy**Insook Lee, Th.D.¹**

Abstract This article reconceptualizes Korean American women's relationality in terms of the Korean concept of *jeong*. In particular, I argue that the concept of *jeong* reframes Korean American women's sense of self as it can function as a source for empowerment, given the context of Western cultural norms of self assertion.

Keywords: Asian American women, Korean American women, *jeong*, and feminism.

In U.S. culture Asian women are often stereotyped as submissive, passive, and quiet. These stereotypes often carry negative connotations and convey Asian women as undesirable or "less-than" ideal, contrast to the European American women viewed as self-expressive, self-affirming, and self-confident. In the heavily self-oriented U.S. culture, Asian women's life-styles, personalities, their ways of thinking, and self-images tend to be devalued. Along the similar vein, Asian women are often viewed as "victims," particularly of the Confucian patriarchal society, who need be liberated by the "cultivated" Western sisters and brothers. Unfortunately, these views of Asian women have been uncritically addressed in Asian feminist theology itself.²

Nearly ten years ago, Wong Wai Ching, a Hong Kong native, provided a critical reflection on Asian theology and Asian feminist theology (Kwok, 2002, p. 96). In her provocative book, *The poor woman: A critical analysis of Asian theology and contemporary Chinese fiction by women*, Wong argued that the first generation of Asian feminist theologians depicted Asian women as either victims or national heroines. Wong (2000) argues that the

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² Among the examples are Fabella and Amba (1988) and Chung Hyun Kyung (1990).

general struggle of Asian countries of national liberation and reconstruction after the Second World War has deeply affected the theological movement of women in Asia. The poor Asian woman, she continues, has become a constitutive part of an Asian identity that privileges suffering as a strategy against the continued material and cultural colonial encroachments of the West in the Asia. The themes of poor women's suffering and their courage to fight it have been highlighted in national ideology, making them both victims and national heroines. Among many examples, Wong (2000) referenced the work of Kwok Pui Lan, one of the leading Asian American feminist theologians. She contended that Kwok "identifies with the materially and physically deprived women of Asia and insists that feminist theology in Asia cannot be anything but a story of suffering" (p. 45). Though Kwok disagreed with Wong's criticism,³ I have observed in various conferences, workshops, and seminars that most presentations of Asian women still revolve around their experiences of suffering and victimization.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1991), an Indian feminist critic, is another scholar who is concerned with the tendency to stereotype Asian American feminist theology. She argues that "Third World women are represented as a uniform group of victims; they are victims of male violence, victims of the colonial process, victims of their traditional familial system, victims of the economic-development process, and victims of their religious code" (p. 57). As a result, an "average third world woman" is one who "leads an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender and her being 'third world'" (p. 56).⁴

³ Kwok (2002) responded to Wong's criticism by arguing that Wong ignored the differences and "lumps" Asian feminist theologians' cultural specificities "in the figure of the victim." Kwok responded, arguing that Wong herself had constructed the victim/heroine binarism and used it as a framework to select materials from Asian feminist theologians' writings (p. 99).

⁴ Using Mohanty's (1991) critiques, Wong contends that the nationalist use of poor women and their suffering as victims and heroines greatly confines women's self-understanding and restricts the further development of theology of and about women in Asia (p. 19).

While I agree that these descriptions of Asian women as victims have contributed to disclosing various aspects of Asian women's oppressed realities, I think it is important to pay attention to Wong's critique that this kind of theological construction of Asian women is, in Kwok's words, "too rigid and overgeneralized" (p. 94) and "limits the further development of Asian feminist theology" (Wong, 2000, p. 7). As Wong claims, Asian feminist theology has reached an impasse that needs to be broken through.

This paper is a response to this call and an effort to reconstruct and revalue Asian, particularly Korean, women's lives, focusing on their relationality. In Korean culture people are taught a specific way of relating to others in family, community, and society. This unique way of relating or relationality may be described by a Korean term *jeong*. *Jeong* permeates the lives of Korean people, especially women. Unfortunately, this *jeong*-based relationality is often misunderstood, by non-Koreans as a manifestation of a weak personality resulting from the lack of sense of self and self-assertiveness. This misguided interpretation of Korean women's relationality by non-Korean persons would be a good example of the failure in intellectual imagination (Fiorenza, 1989). Cross-cultural understanding would require an "intellectual conversion" that can allow people to see data in a different culture from a completely new perspective as if navigating between two different paradigms (Kuhn, 1962, p. 36).

I offer alternative intellectual imagination to view Korean women's relationality of *jeong* as a manifestation of radical, subversive power which can point to the theological vision of empowering "vulnerability" and "submission," which I will discuss later in this paper. I hope this reinterpretation of Korean women's relationality can help pastoral counselors to reevaluate their stereotypes, if any, about Korean women and reexamine their belief that somehow they have to

intervene to liberate Korean women from their sociopolitical bondage, perhaps an inadvertent imperialistic motif.

I will define *jeong* below first. Then, I will attempt to construct a theology of *jeong* in relation to Daniel Migliore's and Sarah Coakley's theologies of power and submission. I argue that *jeong* would be a corrective to Western "cultural fear" of "submission, dependency, or vulnerability" (Coakley, 2002, p. xiv). Following this, I will describe the potentially transforming power of *jeong* and its implications for pastoral care of Asian and Asian American women.

What is *Jeong*?

Jeong is a unique Korean concept of relationality. It permeates the ethos and sentiment of Korean people in their daily lives. In the Korean language, friendship is understood as *woo-jeong*, emotion as *gam-jeong*, affection as *ae-jeong*, sympathy as *dong-jeong*, heartlessness as *mu-jeong*, and compassion as *in-jeong* (Oh, 2000, p. 49). *Jeong* is one of the most popular themes in Korean literature, pop music, and soap operas. A famous Korean pop song singer sings, "I have given you *jeong* and now I cry because I have loved you so much." The singer laments over *jeong* that has been shared with a lover who has left the relationship. *Jeong* exists in the relationship with family members, friends, lovers, neighbors, and even with any animate or inanimate objects such as pets, old houses or cities, and chairs that one has used for a long time.

Perhaps because *Jeong* predominates Korean people's lives and is such a complex concept, it is not easy to define *jeong*. Koreans know and feel that *jeong* is there, but *jeong* evades any clear conceptualization, even for Koreans. Young Yong Kim, a Korean scholar, defines *jeong* as a mental and emotional sense of "ties that is unwittingly shaped through direct

and indirect contact with and through common experiences with an other for a long time” (quoted in Oh, 2000, p. 46). *Jeong* is in this sense similar to attachment although not identical. Attachment can exist in fear, but *Jeong* exists mostly in emotional warmth.

Kyoo Hoon Oh (2000), a Korean critic, defines that *jeong* is similar to but different from love. According to him, love is passionate while *jeong* is “quiet” and “gentle.” *Jeong* often develops, he continues to argue, without a conscious process or decision over a period of time (p. 63). Oh (2000) does not clearly define “love” when he compares it with *jeong*. It seems that he thinks of “love” as a passionate, affectionate emotional reaction or response to an other, as often shown in a romantic love. Though the meaning of “love” must be expanded beyond such simplistic understanding, what Oh tries to argue here is what a Korean saying represents: “in a place where love has left, *jeong* still remains.” Then, at one moment, one realizes that there has been *jeong* between them. In a similar vein, Kye Tae Lee (1994), a Korean writer, compares *jeong* to a charcoal fire turning into ashes, the heat that lasts a long time. The fire is not burning and we cannot see it, but we know that it is there because we feel “warm” (p. 137). Likewise, *jeong* is not boisterous or showy, but quiet and gentle. It permeates heart to heart without noisy words. Korean people connected in *jeong* often do not express their affections toward each other, by saying, “I love you.” They tend to differentiate love and *jeong* in their emotional lives.

Jeong is similar to intimacy but not quite the same. Oh (2000) explains that once people develop hostility toward each other, intimacy goes away while *jeong* remains (p. 64). There is a Korean word, “*mi-oon jeong*,” which can be translated into “odious *jeong*.” It exists between people who frequently quarrel and dislike each other. In the midst of these hostile and spiteful feelings, one feels connected with the other on a deeper level of human warmth (Park, 1998, p. 110). An old Korean saying goes, “The more we fight, the more *jeong-ful* we become” (Oh,

2000, p. 66). This means that people sometimes become more connected by engaging with each other through arguing and quarreling. A couple married for a long time say, "We've come to have both odious *jeong* and gentle⁵ *jeong* toward each other" (p. 66). When they are asked if they still love each other, the old couple answer, "Love? We live in *jeong*!" For Koreans, *jeong* is a more powerful relational term than love.

Kyu Tae Lee (1994) compares *jeong* to "glue" that connects individuals in the community (p. 165). Without the glue, the community is simply the sum of individuals and thus cannot stand on its own. To explain this point, Lee quotes Kierkegaard's illustration of porcupines deserted in the frozen land. They feel cold and lonely in that cold land and therefore approach to each other to warm themselves. However, their thorns hurt each other to bleed. So, they cannot come closer to each other but have to stay distant, cold and desperate. Lee argues that it is *jeong* that softens the thorns and "glues" people with each other (Lee, 1994, p. 164).

Jeong develops gradually over an extended period of time. Once *jeong* has developed in a relationship, however, *jeong* does not become extinct easily. *Jeong* is "sticky." It won't go away. That is why *jeong* often becomes the source of sorrow and regret; a lover may express her sorrow and regret by saying, "I shouldn't have given *jeong* to him." People cannot "cut off" *jeong* easily willfully. Once *jeong* is formed, it maintains its own life dominating people involved. A self-in-*jeong* or *jeong*-ful-self is thus a vulnerable self, existing in a precarious territory. *Jeong* is, in this sense, a double-edged sword. It can be a powerful source of "unconditional" acceptance of and connection with the other and, at the same time, a source of hurt and pain for people involved. Many Korean poems, movies, and lyrics express these sad, hurtful, and vulnerable sentiments of entangled *jeong*. In general, Korean women, more than

⁵ The original Korean word for "gentle" is "*ko-un*." It is not easy to translate this word into English. Its literal translation is "pretty and delicate."

Korean men, are expected to relate to others in *jeong* because Korean women's lives are more relationship-oriented. Therefore, Korean women are more under the impact of *jeong*, both negative and positive.

Theology of *Jeong*

To discuss *jeong*, we must discuss another major ethos of Korean people, *han*. These two ethos are interwoven in a deeper dimension of the Korean psyche and exert its influence upon the emotional lives of Korean people (see Lee, 1994, p. 12). Korean liberation theologians, or *Minjung theologians*, define *han* as “brokenheartedness” or the “woundedness of the heart” (Joh, 1993, p. 20). Throughout Korean history, the Korean people called *Minjung*, referring to the lower-class of Korean people who do not possess political, economical, and social power, have experienced continuous social, political, and economic oppression and exploitation. When *Minjung* have no channels to fight against these injustices, they internalize the feeling of powerlessness and hopelessness and develop *han* in their psyche, both personal and collective. *Han* is “entrenched in the hearts of the victims of sin and violence and is expressed through such diverse reactions as sadness, helplessness, hopelessness, resentment, hatred, or the will to revenge” (Park, 1993, p. 10). In short, *han* is the cry of the marginalized and oppressed.

Han, as an expression of the deepest wound of the oppressed and the cry for justice, can be a creative source of transformation both for the oppressed and the oppressor. However, *han* itself cannot save the victimized because its ethos includes the desires, conscious or unconscious, for retaliation and revenge. Kyoo Hoon Oh (2000) argues this point in his doctoral dissertation of *Dimensions of [Jeong] in Korean Christians*. According to Oh, *han* cannot explain how Korean marginalized people, *Minjung*, have survived harsh political, social, and economic realities for

such a long period of time. *Han* “can only tell how they were forced to possess the feeling of being turned inward, hardened and stuck to their hearts” (Oh, 2000, p. 239). Oh argues that *han* views the oppressed primarily as victims. Jae Hoon Lee (1994) explains that Korean shamanism has been developed around the reality of *han*. The shamans, the living symbol of *han* in Korea, become themselves through the experience of *han*, while the main pursuit of their rituals is to resolve the *han* of the people.

In contrast, Oh also argues, *jeong* tells how the victimized people of *han* have survived the situation of oppression and exploitation. To survive the harsh realities, *Minjung* have developed “a strong bond in which they help, share, care, and cooperate with one another” (Oh, 2000, p. 240). It is the sticky *jeong* that transcends the limits and boundary of *han* and extends the capacity of embracing life itself, people in conflict, and harsh realities. *Jeong* thus represents “communality, commitment, cooperation, interdependence, and sacrifice” (Oh, 2000, p. 241). *Jeong* empowers and transforms the “victimized” subject of *han* into the “agent” (p. 240). How would this be possible?

Jae Hoon Lee (1994) argues that *han* develops into three different forms: *won-han*, *hu-han*, and *jeong-han*. Lee (1994) uses Melanie Klein's theory of child development to explain the dynamics of *han*. For more details, see Lee (pp. 27-56). *Won-han* is *han* turned into anger, grudge, and hate. It calls for vengeance and revolution. *Hu-han* develops when *won-han* goes deeper and become extreme. Lee (1994) is concerned with the dangers of *hu-han* because *hu-han* tries to justify destruction and violence. Finally, *jeong-han* is *han* that develops the feelings of “sorrow, love, self-reproach, resignation, and emptiness” (Lee, 1994, p. 36). According to Lee, it is a depressive mode of *han*. Thus, when hate gets stronger, it becomes *won-han* or *hu-han*. When love gets stronger it becomes *jeong-han*. *Han* is thus “the mixture of love and hate” (p.

37). Then Lee argues that *jeong-han* is “a feminine *han*” which is “a passive, ineffective, compromised, and domesticated way of exorcising *han*” (Joh, 2006, p. 23). Ko Eun, famous Korean poet and social activist, also laments that “*jeong-han* is a corrupted form of the original masculine *won-han*,” and he advocates the recovery of the masculine *han* (J. H. Lee, 1994, p. 15).

Here we can see the patriarchal stereotype of power. Aggression and vengeance are idealized as masculine power while love and embrace are devalued as “feminine” submission. Wonhee Anne Joh, a Korean American feminist theologian, opposes this viewpoint and contends that the devaluation of *jeong-han* is a patriarchal prejudice which considers aggressiveness and domination as a masculine and an effective way of dealing with oppressive realities. I would agree with Joh and argue for the potentially “liberative power of *jeong*” (Joh, 2006, p. 23) in transforming and overcoming *han*. I would also argue that such patriarchal prejudice against *jeong-han* renders Korean women passive, submissive, and quiet, and thus victims. I believe that this bias originates from the misconception of “power” and “submission.” I contend that Korean American women’s relationality of *jeong* is a radical redefinition of power that counteracts the typical meanings of “power” prevalent in the contemporary popular culture, both American and Korean.

The power of *jeong* exists in its radical, inclusive, and “sticky” way of relational connectedness. It embraces and includes the Other even though the Other is a stranger⁶ or an

⁶ Here is an illustration: A man entered a restaurant to eat his late dinner alone in a deserted area in a small village. He ordered a hot soup with steamed rice. While waiting for the dish to come out, he saw two men at the next table and heard their conversation. One man was old, and the other was young. They were father and son. The son wore an army uniform and seemed that he was on vacation to visit his father. The father looked shabby and was selling fruit and vegetables on the street. The son had helped his father all day long, and they stopped at this restaurant on the way home. The father said to his son, “Eat this good beef. It’s delicious. You must be very hungry.” The father took some of meat from his dish and put it to son’s plate. His son said, “Father, I have enough. You yourself eat it.” “I am O.K., son.” Seeing this, the owner of the restaurant, without any words, brought more meat and placed it on their table. “This extra is free for both of you,” He said. The man sitting next finished eating and went to the counter

enemy.⁷ Jeffery Jones (2000), an American lawyer who has lived and worked in Korea for more than twenty years, was asked, “What about Korea has attracted you so much?” He answered, “Korean people’s *jeong*.” Many foreigners who like the Korean culture say a similar thing. Without hesitation, they pick *jeong* as one of the most unique features of “being Korean.” Korean *jeong* invites even outsiders into a strong bonding experience of “connectedness.” This “stickiness” of *jeong* often overcomes a binary perception of reality, such as the powerless/the powerful, oppressor/oppressed, rich/poor, and insider/outsider. Thus the power of *jeong* is not the power of domination and forcefulness based on binary division. It is the “submissive” and “subversive” power of radical embrace and connectedness.

Sarah Coakley (2002), an Anglican systematic theologian, commented on “the current valency of the terms ‘power’ and ‘submission’” and noted “the near-universal resistance to according to the latter any positive value” (p. xix). Coakley discusses this cultural resistance to submission and passivity and traces the origin of the resistance back to “the Enlightenment” which “demand[s] for an empowered human autonomy” (p. xii). The human autonomy and freedom of the Enlightenment idolizes “liberative power” (p. xv) against humility, receptivity, and submission, which are viewed as weakness and powerless. Coakley warns that such “continuing cultural fear of ‘heteronomy’—of submission, dependency or vulnerability—represents not just an intellectual, but also a spiritual, crisis of some magnitude” (p. xiv).

Coakley, however, acknowledges that the reconstruction of the meaning of power and submission is a “double-edged” sword for feminist theologians. How can the call for the

to pay. He said to the owner, “The soup was good!” Then, he paid more than he had to pay. The owner looked at him and said, “It is more than what you ate.” The man said, “This is also for their food too.” The man left the restaurant without saying anything to the father and son. He just smiled at them when he left. Korean people know what the story means. It is a story of *jeong* shared with a stranger.

⁷ *Jeong* for an enemy is a more sensitive topic because it exists in the subtle, murky boundary of love and hate. “I hate the person. But just because of *jeong*, I cannot hurt him/her. I feel pity and compassion toward him/her, and I feel pain for him/her.” This dimension of *jeong* is discussed in relation to the theology of the cross in this paper.

liberation of the powerless and oppressed possibly “coexist with revalorization of any form of ‘submission?’” (p. xv). Then, she inquires why themes of ‘fragility,’ ‘vulnerability,’ or ‘self-emptying’ have been relatively muted in white Christian feminist writings, while secular feminists and Black womanist theologians have, in a variety of ways, tackled these themes more directly (Coakley, 2002, pp. 71-106). Coakley (2002) contends that “there is another, and longer-term, danger to Christian feminism in the repression of all forms of ‘vulnerability,’ and in a concomitant failure to confront issues of fragility, suffering or ‘self-emptying’ except in terms of victimology” (p. 33).

Korean feminist theology of *jeong* tackles this issue of submission. *Jeong* takes seriously the theme of “power-in-vulnerability” (Coakley, 2002, p. 5) as manifested in the spiritual paradoxes of ‘losing one’s life in order to save it,’ (p. 4) which is one of the “backbones” (p. 5) that has shaped many Christian traditions. An example is a theology of *kenosis*, a Greek term meaning self-emptying. Coakley defines *kenosis* as “power-in-vulnerability” as manifested in Philippians 2:7 (Coakley, 2002, pp. 5-39). However, as Coakley warns, we have to be cautious in reconceptualizing ‘power’ and ‘submission’ because ‘submission’ and ‘vulnerability’ has been historically delegated to the subordinate ‘female’ and used as an opportunity for masculine abuse. I acknowledge with Coakley that the task is “the tortured battle to bring feminism and Christianity together” (p. 5).

Some contemporary theologians have tried to redefine, or rediscover, the meaning of Christian power, which is radically different from the understanding of power in the secular, popular culture. Daniel Migliore (2008) is one of them. In his book, Migliore asks, “Is there a power that does not oppress but sets people free?” (p. 8). Based on 1 Corinthians 1:20-31, he argues for the power of God that is at work in the “weakness” of the cross, which is radically

different from “the American myth of the superhero” (p. 24). He shows how superhuman power secularizes the Judeo-Christian hope of divine powers that can conquer forces of evil and redeem the world. The problem is, Migliore argues, that “God as father” has been distorted by the image of “sheer almightiness” that turns into “the power of control and compulsion” (p. 26). He claims that the image of “God as father” must be “purified of its patriarchal connotations and interpreted in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ” (p. 26), whereby power is conceptualized as the servant lordship of Jesus.

Walter Wink (1998) is another theologian who tries to rediscover the meaning of the Christian power. He advocates for “nonviolent resistance” and warns against “the myth of redemptive violence” (p. 48) prevalent in the popular culture. Similar to Migliore, Wink (1998) contends that the myth of redemptive violence is the projection of the hierarchical, authoritarian, and patriarchal social system that uses violence to maintain the order. He claims that we have to establish new order based on Jesus’ Third Way, succinctly manifested in the Sermon on the Mount and Jesus’ submission on the cross (Wink, 1998, pp. 99-127). Jesus’ Third Way is “the methods of opposition” that is neither acquiescence nor assault, “flight nor fight” (Wink, 1998, p. 101 and p. 110). It is a third way that helps us to protest and to secure our human dignity, without mirroring our evil opponents. This is also a way to open, through radical embrace and connectedness, the possibility of the enemy’s recovering their humanity.

Likewise, *Jeong* is not about victimhood but related to this Christian vision of power. *Jeong*-ful self might experience hurt in reaching out for the other but recovers its sense of “agent” in the paradoxical and subversive power of the biblical sense of “weakness” (1 Corinthians 1:18-31). As Jaroslav Pelikan (1996) claims in his discussion of Mary the Mother of Jesus, this seemingly weak and submissive power is active “obedience open to the future” (p.91).

The theology of *jeong* is in this line of the Christian tradition of Jesus' nonviolent servanthood. The paradoxical power of "submission" and "vulnerability" is nurtured in the heart of Korean women's relationality of *jeong*. This power exists in the domain of paradox and therefore must be carefully dealt with and analyzed as the sources of both positivity and negativity. Unfortunately, however, I have the impression that these potential treasures have been viewed mostly from the negative perspectives out of the fear of the possibility of being abused. As a consequence, the power-in-vulnerability has turned out to be associated only with a victim's passive submission. This tendency has to be overcome to rediscover Korean women's power and identities that resonate the Christian power in paradox.

Implications for pastoral psychotherapy

The power of *jeong* to heal and open up new avenues of life is great. At the same time, as mentioned above, *jeong* is a double-edged sword. It can either empower women or hurt and damage or distort women's sense of self. This double-edged aspect of *jeong* emerges from the radical openness and vulnerability in the process of embracing the Other, without calculating the benefits and losses obtained from relationships. This ambiguity of *jeong* resonates with Migliore's ambiguity of power in that human beings are both agents and sufferers of power (Migliore, 2008, p. 7). Korean women can be both agents and sufferers of *jeong*. In this sense, *Jeong* exists in a "gray space" (K. T. Lee, 1994, p. 117), where we cannot clearly draw the line of any opposites of love/hate, friend/enemy, outsider/insider, or victim/perpetrator. Instead, this is a space of reaching out for the other in "warmness" of profound humanity. How would this ambiguous *jeong* affect Korean women's lives and well-being? And how can pastoral counselors use this powerful force in positive ways?

Carol Gilligan (1982), in her discussion of women's development of an ethic of care, contends that a disequilibrium takes place when care becomes confused with self-sacrifice in "the conventions of feminine goodness" (p. 74). In caring for others, the self becomes wounded and neglected. Brita Gill-Austern (1996), a U.S. feminist pastoral theologian, also argues that uncritical acceptance of "society's vision of the good girl" (p. 306) can do great damage to women's lives. Such conformity may distort and pervert the true meaning of love and self-giving and dangerously glorify suffering. To avoid this distortion, Gill-Austern distinguishes self-giving that is "life-giving" from unhealthy, life-depriving forms of giving that causes "the scapegoat syndrome for women" (p. 308). Nevertheless, Gill-Austern would not give up the essence of self-giving and self-denial in Christian women's lives. Instead, she asserts that "women need to resist the increasingly widespread tendency to condemn all forms of self-giving" (p. 315). For her, "self-denial" is a form of "self-transcendence" that is at the heart of the gospel, and "the self-abandon" paradoxically is the "deepest kind of self-fulfillment" (p. 314).

Pastoral counselors with Korean women practicing *jeong* have to pay careful attention to Gill-Austern's distinction between healthy and unhealthy kinds of self-giving. A *jeong-ful* self is Other-oriented and aspires for self-fulfillment through giving, sharing, and reaching out. Such a *jeong-ful* self often empowers Korean women and is also empowered in/by the mutuality of *jeong*. Concerns about the concept of a *jeong-ful* self, however, involve a perverted understanding and practice of *jeong* which can negatively influence Korean women's well-being. Without undervaluing and misdiagnosing Korean women's practice of *jeong*, pastoral counselors need to help Korean women transform their propensity for *jeong* into the power of changing themselves and others. The following edited story somewhat this point.⁸

⁸ The author uses the pronoun, "he," to refer to the snake. I do not change it into an inclusive language simply to avoid complicated syntactic problems.

A bad snake once lived in a village. The snake would harass town people by frightening and biting them. One day, the snake began to feel bad about what he was doing. So he visited a holy snake on the top of the mountain. The holy snake's sermon inspired and converted the snake. The bad snake promised to be a totally different snake and vowed never to bite a human again. From that time on, the villagers realized that the bad snake was no longer dangerous. Then some naughty boys came to tease him. "Hey, you slimy creep! Show us your fangs, if you've got any. You're a wimp, a cream-puff, a disgrace to your species!" The snake was angry but had vowed not to bite. Seeing that the snake was now passive, the boys grew bolder and threw stones at him. Though he was fast enough to bite one of them, he did not. The boys came closer and started hitting him over the back with sticks. Eventually, the snake realized that, in the real world, you had to be mean to protect yourself. So, he gave up the vow. The holy snake saw him coming, all battered and bruised. He asked, "What happened to you?" "It's all your fault. You told me not to bite. Now look what's happened to me! Religion does not work in the real world." "Oh, you stupid snake!" the holy snake said. "I told you not to bite. But I never told you not to hiss, did I?" (Brahm, 2005, pp. 144-146)

This story tells us that the theology of *jeong* needs the theology of "hiss" to protect *jeong* from turning into a perverted form of self-depriving. These two elements, "submission" and "hiss," do not negate each other but, instead, make each other complete in a paradoxical way. By being assertive in practicing *jeong* would empower and mobilize Korean women's potential for achieving radical relationality of embrace and inclusivity.

Pastoral psychotherapy for Korean American women, then, should be conducted within this cultural context of *jeong* that deeply permeates their lives, assisting these women to actualize

their healthy *jeong*-ful selves. Ignoring the actualization of this unique cultural *jeong*-ful self of Korean American women would end up depriving them of their essence of being and relating. Even after they think they have fully actualized their selves by the standards and norms of the Western selfhood, they would feel "it is not quite right." Empowering *jeong* as their source of strength might be a step toward searching for their cultural identities.

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Come and Eat: Sharing Food as a New Cultural Space that Heals

Sophia Park¹

Abstract

The act of sharing food creates a new dynamic cultural space, gathering people to come and interact, moving from disconnection to reconnection, restoring relationships with self, with others, and with God. In this article, the role of food, as agents of healing in the Korean American church context, is discussed. Also, drawing on the Lord's Supper, as exemplified by Jesus as the pre-figuration of the "New Covenant," sharing of the church meals embodies the participation of the "already but not yet" Kingdom of God. Furthermore, sharing of food can be an intercultural practice of care by faith communities that can restore broken societies and in an increasingly globalized world.

Keywords: sharing food, cultural space, Kingdom of God

Introduction

One of the distinguishing marks of Korean Immigrant churches is that after Worship on Sundays, meal is shared - not just coffee and doughnuts. Interestingly, this phenomenon of sharing a meal at church has slowly been disappearing in the increasingly individualized, fast-paced lives of Christians in Korea but has persisted for Korean Americans. One reason is that while Koreans in

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Korea live in a land with shared culture, language, and identity, Korean Americans in North America live in a “new home land” - away from family, friends, and familiarity. The loss of significant communities and the isolation that comes from living away in an unfamiliar place have led many Korean Americans into broken-heartedness (Brock, 1993). However, church meals have functioned to bring people together and have brought healing through sharing, remembering, and creating a new community.

Various topics on food and the effects of food have been researched and written about – from food habits, food politics, nutrition, to eating disorders – however, there has been a gap in the literature that addresses the healing effects of food and the sharing of food, especially for immigrant communities. Korean food represents a cultural space that embodies the home country for Korean Americans. Eating Korean food recalls the memories, reconnecting oneself to the nostalgic people and places, reinforcing one’s cultural identity and finding comfort. Moreover, the action of sharing or partaking of Korean meals together initiates movement of bringing people together, forming relationships, and creating community. In this sense, partaking of meals creates a new cultural space where dynamic flows of movements are created moving from disconnection to reconnection within oneself, and with each other, finding healing of broken-heartedness. Therefore, church meal can become an important pastoral practice of care in the Korean American churches, where sharing of ethnic meals can bring healing of broken hearts by reconnecting and restoring relationship within self, with other people, and with God.

In this article, I will first look at the social conditions that bring broken-heartedness to Korean Americans. Secondly, I will discuss the significance and the healing effects that food has on Korean Americans. Thirdly, I will look into pastoral theological dimensions of how meal-sharing, drawing from the Lord’s Supper, can be an agent of restoring relationship with God and

enable participating in the “already but not yet” kingdom of God. Lastly, based on the implication that all people are welcomed to the Lord’s Supper, I propose that sharing food can become an important intercultural practice of care by faith communities. Sharing ethnic meals creates a new cultural space, bringing persons of different cultures and different languages together, crossing-over and experiencing each other’s cultures, and sharing in the communion that can restore broken-societies in an increasingly globalized world.

Broken-Heartedness” of Korean Americans, living in-between cultures

As immigrants, starting life in a new land with new people, language, and culture is difficult. Furthermore, confronting the continuous flow of complicated and relentless challenges of adjustment without competency in the English language and adequate knowledge to navigate the system can lead to what Rita Nakashima Brock (1993) calls “broken-heartedness.” In this section, I will discuss Brock’s notion of “broken-heartedness” and show the context of immigration experience that has led many Korean Americans to be broken-hearted. But before I start, I need to clarify who the Korean Americans are in this article. For the purpose of having a clear narrative and arguments, I have chosen my subjects to be 1st generation Korean Americans of the Third Wave (1965–present) immigration from Korea to United States. This group of Korean Americans represents the largest segment of the Korean immigrant communities at the present time. In addition, the phenomenon of sharing food at church is common across this segment of Korean Americans. I also want to clarify that even within this group the Korean American group identity is not uniform but diverse. Categories have been devised to measure one’s degree of Koreanness and Americanization by their generational standing such as 1st generations (*Ilse*), 2nd generations (*Ise*), and 1.5 generations (*Iljeomose*). Although the three

categories have been commonly used, corresponding definitions have varied. Such a generation-based categorical representation does not account for Korean adoptees to the United States and those with mixed ethnic and cultural heritages. More importantly, Lee (2006) criticizes that such a categorization represents a linear model of cultural identity and inadequately represents the complex experience of Korean American bicultural experiences. In her book, *Journeys by Heart*, Rita Nakashima Brock (1993) states: “We live in a broken-hearted society” (p. xi). Brock’s theological anthropology recognizes that we are all relational beings. However, through domination by abusive power, our relational needs have been disconnected. As a result, we live in a disconnected society where the hearts have been broken in each one of us. As a Feminist theologian, Brock is able to draw upon and offer analysis of situations of exclusion in terms of global power arrangements, living with the inferior position of this power, that leads to annihilation of identity and community. Even though Brock is specifically addressing gender-based suffering in patriarchal context, it is my belief that a feminist method and framework of theology can speak to and help many minority immigrant communities on the margins of dominant western society. In addition, as an Asian-American, Hispanic and Japanese, who has lived in North America, Brock understands the difficulties of living in-between cultures. What then does she mean by “heart” and what does broken-heartedness look like for Korean Americans? Brock uses “heart as the root metaphor to powerfully suggest the various holistic dimensions of self: heart is the center, the inner most region, and most real, vital meaning and core of our lives. The human heart is symbolically the source of emotions, especially ones such as love, empathy, loyalty and courage. The profoundest intellect lodges in our heart where thought is bound with integrity, insight, consciousness, and conscience. To know in our heart is to understand at heart. Memory dwells in heart, for in remembering by heart we know in ways

that lie deep within us. To have a change in heart involves a shift in perspective of our whole being. In heart abides also in our spirit, for faith and trust are not acts of mind, but of heart. Heart is what binds us to others, safeguards our memory, integrates all dimensions of ourselves, and empowers us to act with courage. The union of physical, emotional, and spiritual suggests itself in the very word *heart*, which also is the physical center of our bodies, their vital source. Finally, the heart encompasses the emotional and spiritual dimensions of our lives (Brock, p. xiv). For Brock, heart is what it means to be human – the core of the self that is relational of a fully lived experience (Brock. p.25). Moreover, depending on the quality of relationships with others and the self, the heart can flourish or can be damaged. They are recreated continuously through feelings, connectedness, and memory (Brock, p.17). If flourishing and living with heart entails living in connection with self and with others, as relational beings, many Korean Americans are living broken-hearted. Regrettably, however, the immigration experience, for many Korean Americans, has been a situation of gradually “losing heart” – a life of increasing disconnection within the self, with family, and with the larger dominant society. Coming from a communal culture, where self was defined through roles and functions, and identities reinforced through communal memberships, losing the communal connection through immigration meant losing one’s identity and one’s self. For them, inability to join in the dominant society and experiencing downward mobility, encountering racial prejudice, and increasing difficulty communicating with their children, due to cultural and language differences, have been the main reasons for Korean Americans to slowly lose a sense of identity and become broken-hearted. In order to better understand the immigration context of the 1st generation of Korean Americans of the Third Wave, I will briefly write about the history of Korean immigration to the United States. The First Wave (1903) of immigrants consisted of contract laborers from Korea, wanting to find work, to

fill in gaps created by labor problems with contract workers from China and Japan. The Second Wave (1951-1964) of Korean immigrants were mostly the wives of American Servicemen, who took part in the Korean War of 1950-1953, war orphans, and students supported by American sponsors, some of whom were seeking political asylum. The Third Wave (1965–present) of Korean immigrants was the result of the 1964 Immigration and Naturalization Act, which abolished the strict quota for Asian immigration. This group provides the context for understanding the background of most 1st generation immigrants of today. The Third Wave immigrants were a highly educated population for whom the most important reason for emigration has been economic (Light and Bonacich, 1988). Park (1997, p.32) confirmed this in her research, finding that 48% of Korean immigrants listed economic reasons as motivation for immigration. Economic reasons included for example securing resources for their children's education. Much to their disappointment, however, and unlike their counterpart European immigrants of the past, Korean Americans have been unable to blend into the mainstream, encountering many obstacles. Korean Americans, although with their high education level, had difficulty entering into the dominant culture due to insufficient language skills, and the adversity stemming from racial and ethnic prejudice. Whereas immigrant groups who speak English, such as those people from the British colony of the Caribbean islands, Indians, Filipinos, found jobs in public organizations, most Korean immigrants came with limited speaking abilities could not (Park, p.41). Even with considerable educational and professional backgrounds, but without proficient English, their training has not been transferable to the American business sector. Therefore, many have been forced to take a different path (Kitano and Daniels, 2000, p.112). Sook Ryul Ryu's "Poem by a Yellow Woman" illustrates the "broken-heartedness" caused by downward mobility in class and status of 1st generation Korean Americans. My brother who has

Master's degree in English literature thinks about Norman Mailer's American Dream while selling fishes and vegetables to his white neighbors twenty-four hours a day. My sister, who liked the paintings of Picasso's Blue Period, is working on a sewing machine, with dyed blond hair (Park, 1997, p.36). Another challenge that Korean Americans face is the adversity stemming from racism and ethnic prejudice and its effect on self-esteem and identity. Kitano and Daniels (2000) correctly observe that the present-day immigrant is confronted with multiple challenges, including conflicts in norms and values, achieving a healthy identity in a predominantly white society, and the variable levels of acceptance by both the majority and other minorities already living here (p.112). Jung Young Lee, in his autobiographical book, *Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology*, writes poignantly about his own struggle of identity: being in-between cultures and marginalized by both. He writes, I chose membership in the dominant society, but it rejects me because of my root in the other world. Hence, I want to be accepted by the world of my ancestry, but it also rejects me. I am unwanted by both worlds, yet I live in them. That is why I am an absurd creature. I am supposed to be a part of the Caucasian-American society, but I do not really belong to it because of the way I look, speak, and behave. The more closely I identify myself with my cultural ancestral land, which has changed in its own way, and it has become a strange place. Moreover, I have changed by adopting the American life style, and this exacerbates my reception back into the Korean culture in Asia. I am a part of two worlds without wholly belonging to either" (Lee, 1995, p. 44). Having left the home country, they belong neither to the people of their lineage nor to the people of their residence. Their loss of identity living between two conflicting worlds is a sentiment shared by many Korean immigrants. In addition to the problem of assimilating into the business sector, difficulties were also encountered in the home front. Unlike other early immigrant groups of Chinese, Japanese, and

Filipinos, who came largely as individuals, Korean immigrants often arrived in family groups. Consequently, the gap of intergenerational differences, both in language and acculturation, among family members significantly increased. Because of insufficient language abilities, many families were forced to open small businesses, which meant long hours – often working more than twelve hours daily and six or seven days, weekends, and holidays. Grandparents played an active role, contributing greatly by raising grandchildren while parents were working long hours. As children start school, learn English and make western friends, grandparent's influence of the Korean language and culture start to decrease. In addition, parents have limited time and energy, and emotional reserves to give to their children. As children got older and became more “Americanized,” parental communication with their children became increasingly difficult for neither the parent's English nor the children's Korean was sufficient for communication in a satisfying way. Operations of small businesses also impact the organization of the family, often diminishing the authoritative role of the husband/father and upsetting the power dynamics. Generally, the acculturation levels are faster for women than for men. Thus, the wives surpass their husband language skills, taking on more business responsibilities, all the while attaining more power in the marriage. In addition, especially when the parent's English is limited, older children play an active role in paying bills, ordering materials, interpreting for the parents, and working in customer service after school. Consequently, the family roles and the power dynamics are shifted as parents lose authority. The family no longer strictly adheres to the patriarchal hierarchy that was believed to have established order and stability in the family. This shift in power directly added to the conflict at home between western-based value systems – individuality and autonomy – with Korean family values of harmony, interdependence, and obedience. Conflicts within the family relationship had more detrimental consequences; disturbs

identity formation in children. Children living in a bi-cultural environment juggle living in two cultures that are vastly different in terms of language, values, and way of life. Struggling hard to fit in either or both cultures, these children find themselves in the place in-between: that of western society and Korean family. Shuttling back and forth from culture to culture and trying to fit in both cultures negatively impacts the formation of a healthy sense of self. Many children feel like “nomads,” living in cultures that do not reflect who they are.(Suarez-Orozco, 2004) Their reality is the feeling that they have not found their social location, being in-between two cultures, included in neither, outside of both. Consequently, not having been provided a consistent environment as an anchor to form a sense of self, and lacking a self-identity that can ground them in life, many have entered relationships with an uncertain, insecure, and anxious self – one that lacks self-esteem. This situation has resulted in many Korean-American children continuing to seek relationships (usually from the western culture) that can provide validation of their identity and self-worth; however, these relationships often fail to connect at a mutual level. Therefore, developing and sustaining relationships that are mutual, satisfying, and empowering has proved to be difficult.

Constructs found in Heinz Kohut’s theory in self Psychology can be used as an evaluative tool to show how living in two cultures diminishes the formation of the self in ways fundamentally different from the way the self is formed for those living in mono-cultural settings. The basic assumption in Kohut’s theory of identity-formation is that the self is formed and reformed through ongoing interactions between self and what Kohut terms *self-objects*. For the healthy self to form, characterized as having the capacity to be attuned with the other, maintain relationships, and also to enjoy them, receiving empathic understanding, healthy mirroring, and idealization shown to self is crucial. Living in a bi-cultural setting provides different cultural

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self-objects which mirror back different values, ethos, and priorities. These inconsistent mirroring and differently valued reinforcements disturb the formation and growth of a healthy self into “self” comparable to Kohut’s “weakened self,” consisting of low self-esteem. From my counseling experience with those living in-between cultures, I have found it necessary to empower them to rethink their distorted self-identity from feeling “out of place,” insignificant,” and “isolated,” and “living an elusive existence,” formed as a result of simultaneously living in two cultures. Broken-heartedness for Korean Americans, that comes from isolation and disconnection with self and with others, not only started with the immigration experience of leaving the communal culture and one’s connections to family and friends, but persisted with the challenges of assimilating into the new land; mainly the inability to enter into the mainstream of the dominant society and the unraveling of family relationships, the foremost relationship that secured identity and membership.

Significance of food for Korean Americans

Food and eating is essential for human existence. Food nourishes the body and gives sustenance. However, food also has a social function and shapes social reality. Rappaport (2003) asserts the notion that food carries profound social-psychological meaning, and our eating behaviors represent important ways of “being in the world” (p.11). Traditional food and eating habit represents the cumulative tradition of one’s cultural group, shaped by habitat and history. Food, as a product of a nation, the people, and the culture, becomes a symbol to represent the people. This has been true for Koreans where the food has been intricately connected in the shaping of the Korean people’s psychological, emotional, social, and cultural self. Food creates memories of the psychological and emotional effects of eating which then are stored into the person’s

history. In addition, social significance of food has been in the power to connect people. Because food is so intricately connected with one's emotions and psyche, food can also be the agent to heal broken-heartedness – where memory of the emotional and psychological suffering is stored. In this section, I will discuss the process and the significance of food in the shaping of Korean person's psychological, emotional, social, and cultural being.

The power of food in shaping the person starts even before birth. Research has shown that taste preference starts developing well before birth, more specifically when fetus starts to occasionally ingest amniotic fluid at about 12 weeks gestation. Taste conditioning continues on through infancy ingesting mother's breast milk where taste of the mother's diet is passed onto the infant. Mennella and Beauchamp (1990) conducted a study investigating the effects of garlic ingestion by the mother on the odor of her breast milk and the suckling behavior of her infant. Upon evaluating the milk samples, a significant increase in odor intensity peaked in strength two hours after ingestion. The infants were attached to the breast for longer periods of time but were found to be sucking more when the milk smelled like garlic, proving that the infants detected these changes in mother's milk. In light of the finding, it is reasonable to conclude that Koreans have been predisposed to Korean foods from before birth that have inclined them towards eating spicy *kimchi* and other distinctive Korean foods, which is also the start of forming a cultural identity. Also the food that the mother eats is shared with the baby and the two are brought together into connection, forming a community where relationship has already started.

Food habits are continually learned and adapted throughout childhood. By law of association, all of us learn, through simple conditioning, to associate food with certain emotions which, through memory, get embedded into our beings. Through associations, food creates social and emotional and cultural memories in the psyche and becomes part of the person's

history. Food choice and food habits are largely conditioned through association of social settings and cultural backgrounds of persons. Special occasions and traditional holidays are some events where significance of food is strengthened through the association between food and the events. I will look at three such life events that are culturally specific to Korea, where food shapes the person's being.

Sickness is a life situation where food is associated to the event. What kinds of food we associate with sickness varies by culture. In America, chicken-noodle soup seems to be most commonly prescribed and therefore, chicken-noodle soup is given to the sick for a speedy recovery. In Korea, *juk*, porridge made with rice with particular ingredients - clams, pine nuts, beef, vegetable – is meticulously made and given to the patient. Through making *juk* and caring for the sick, the caregiver and the sick are brought together in relationship. By eating *juk*, emotional comfort is created and integrated into the self.

Birthdays are also associated with certain kind of food. In America, there is no birthday without a cake; it is a symbol representing celebration of a birthday. In Korea, rather than a cake, *miyeokguk* (seaweed soup) is a staple on a birthday menu, enjoyed with the family. Eating *miyeokguk* gathers together the family in celebrating a birthday, bringing emotional comfort. These memories in turn reinforce one's cultural identity.

Traditional holidays are also celebrated with gathering of families and eating of traditional meals together. Turkey and stuffing, yam and pumpkin pies, and gathering of family are recalled when thinking of Thanksgiving holiday in the United States. *Chusoek*, Korean thanksgiving, is celebrated with a feast of traditional food and gathering of families, together making and eating *songpyeon*, a particular rice cake that is associated with and eaten only on

chuseok. Memories of celebrating with extended family, emotions associated with the event, and one's cultural identity are all created and reinforced through food.

Sharing food as an element of healing for Korean Americans

We have seen how food has been important in the shaping of Korean American identity. Living as immigrants and broken-hearted, food through church meals have brought comfort to Korean American Christians. Sharing church meals has been an important practice of care for Korean Americans. In this sense, food, through church meals, has been an agent of healing through the act of sharing, remembering, and creating community.

Through the sharing of food, a new cultural space is created where healings happen. Food conjures up memories – both pleasant and painful ones – because with eating the particular food is associated with people, places, and situations. For some Korean Americans, *miyeokguk* may invoke good memories of eating a meal with family and friends and celebrating a birthday. While many Korean Americans will not eat a hamburger because having eaten it too many times upon arriving to the United States, it has been associated with loneliness and survival on a tight budget. In this sense, the food itself, is not the agent that brings healing but it is in the power of food to gather people together and sharing a meal is what initiates healing. Food, through gathering of people and sharing of meals, creates a safe, holding environment. When eating a hamburger brings too much pain, one will not want to eat it alone. However, when hamburgers are offered as a meal, sharing the meal with others may make eating a hamburger more tolerable. With positive association to the group, one may find gradual healing of the pain that was associated with hamburgers. In this sense, the power of healing of church meals is in the power of food to gather people in sharing of the meal.

Sharing a meal together in community initiates remembering, a necessary step in healing. Early memories of communal eating with friends and families are recalled. Food, through daily eating and sharing meals on special occasions, has become the means by which bonds with families have been forged and memories created. These memories reconnect back with the self to remind immigrants of who they are, namely that they are not only the downward mobilized, hard-working, socially isolated, and broken-hearted immigrants but that they, too, are interconnected in close and loving relationships.

Remembering also connects a person back to childhood memories of food bringing comfort. They are usually traditional foods that have been associated with positive feelings of love and care. When mere thoughts of specific foods evoke comfort and feelings of security, actual eating of the food gives grounding and assures the heart that all will be well. Gabaccia (1998) confirms this when she writes, “People turn to comfort foods when they must cope with stress, and there was plenty of that in the culturally luminal, and changing, lives of immigrants, their children, and grandchildren” (p. 179). She adds, “Change is stressful, generating a demand for comfort foods” (p. 179). Through remembering positive associations with food, Korean church food has brought comfort.

Fond memories of relationships, not only sustain, but also heal the hearts. As we have seen earlier, Brock says that “heart” is where one’s memory lies, for in remembering by heart we know what lies deep within us. Remembering our deeply connected self “leads to a shift in perspective of our whole being” (Brock, 1993, p. xiv), integrating all dimensions of our being. Because this is the place where healing can begin, heart simultaneously becomes the place of healing. Thus, healing of heart empowers one to act with courage, to reach out and connect with

others, for heart is what binds and connects self with others (Brock, p. xiv) and to create new memories that will sustain our hearts.

Regularly sharing meals creates an intimate community. Douglas (1972) states that “drinks are for strangers, acquaintances and co-workers. Meals are for family, close friends, honored guests... Those we only know at drinks we know less intimately” (pp. 61-81). In this sense, to be included for meals signifies unconditional acceptance and relationship. According to Douglas, church meals build “inclusive hospitality” in contrast to “selective hospitality.” Whereas “selective hospitality” consists of selecting people from what anthropologists call ego-focused categories such as people selected for their closeness, through “inclusive hospitality,” community solidarity is both demonstrated and actualized (Douglas, 1984, p. 33). Korean church meals qualify as “inclusive hospitality” where people are invited for no other reason than they are part of the church community. Where eating has been a social and political activity where agendas are present in deciding whom we eat with, what we eat, and how frequently, gathering and eating together without pretenses preserves the sincerity of the community and the members within it. Food, through the act of sharing Korean church meals,² has been a source of bringing

² The question of “Who cooks the meals?” then can be made. Is it fair that women end up cooking while men enjoy the meal? While the main focus of this article is not on cooking, I am aware of the implications and will address briefly my observations gained through relationships with these women. I understand the sensitivity of this subject matter and my intention is not to endorse the role of cooking for women but to represent the viewpoint of some women who cook meals at church.

First, contrary to what I had believed, I have found that there are women who believe that cooking is their responsibility, a ministry for them to serve their family of God. However way the above might be interpreted by the readers as to why and how these women came to believe as such, the fact remains that they operate out of this worldview. While there are women who do not enjoy cooking but accept it as their role of life’s necessity, others take pleasure in it. Some women find identity in their cooking ability and delight in feeding others. For some women, as immigrants, cooking and eating Korean food has become a way to experience and preserve her culture as well as a cultural connector, passing down her culture to the next generation. While cooking church meals requires hard work, many women find fulfillment in their ability to contribute to the life of the church. Second, working in the church kitchen has become times of haring” and “caring” for women. Working together in the kitchen has become not only an occasion to work but a time of fellowship, of sharing life stories, and showing care and concern for one another. Informal gatherings in the kitchen has become a place where, through laughter and tears over shared stories of women,

people together. Sharing of meals has been an invitation and an initiation into the church community. Whatever class one's food habit is identified with, whatever gender one belongs to, which sub-cultures they represent, in immigration church community, everyone has equal membership. Through sharing of meals together Koreans Americans have formed new relationships, strengthened the old relationships, found comfort, shared memories, renewed their identities, and healed their broken hearts.

Pastoral theological dimensions of food: A new community redefined

Humans are relational beings not only with each other but also with God. In the previous section, we have seen how food, through sharing, remembering, and creating, has brought Korean American Christians in restoring relationships with self and with others that heal their "broken-heartedness." As a Christian community, food can be understood as a cultural element that creates a new cultural space where all sorts of people can come and be connected with God and with one another, and where various activities can be created. That is, through sharing meals together, broken-heartedness can be healed as well as restore our relationship with God and with one another. In this section, I want to propose that an action of sharing meals connects us with God and helps us to remember who God is and who we are. Second, the Lord's Supper, as exemplified by Jesus, is the pre-figuration of a new cultural-covenantal space, where sharing of church meals or partaking of the Lord's supper embodies the participation in the "already but not

significant bonds have been formed, disengaged relationships renewed, and broken hearts restored. Third, planning church meals require more than cooking food. Table set-ups beforehand as well as the labor of cleaning the dishes, sweeping and mopping the floors, and removing trash afterwards are necessary. Church meals are communal activity which starts with the preparation of food, sharing of meals, and the cleaning afterwards as a shared activity of the whole church, not only labor of few women. Different functions that make church meals possible are and should be shared by all. Unless the labor is shared equally among men and women, nevertheless in different parts, significance and the healing effects of church meals will diminish if not defeat the purpose for women, and by extension, the whole church.

yet” kingdom of God, a new community created no longer by bloodline but by sharing meals with one another.

God is the source and the giver of food. God is the Creator and the sustainer of life. The petition for *daily bread* in the Lord’s Prayer (Luke 11: 1-4) has two implications. First, the source of the bread/food is from God; second, the lives of petitioners depend on God. God continues to give God’s people their *daily bread* and therefore, people’s lives revolve around God. Through food, humans are intimately connected with God but also to the created order, recognizing the creaturely nature of humans. People have been given the privilege to rule the earth but at the same time, are dependent on the earth for sustenance. Being dependent on the created order necessitates that people live in a manner where such care is reciprocated with nature and with other creations. Jung (2004) even claims that “eating is a spiritual practice that reminds us of who we are in the global ecology” (p. 6). Life requires people to be relational with God and with each other.

Just as God had been present with the people of Israel through giving them *manna*, providing *daily bread* signifies God’s presence with the people of God today. Food expresses relationship, and eating together sustains, restores, and extends them. The communal frame of relationship reveals God’s grace in that “being nourished and revived are almost always communal acts whereby we are sustained together as we sustain others” (Jung, p. 124). Grace is not a substance occasionally meted out by God but a relationship with God and his creation. (Hellwig, 1992). Wherever meals are shared, God is present. God is alive and present in people’s lives, in the life of the church, and in the life of the culture (Jung, 2006, p. 18).

Sharing of church meals signifies the presence of God in the ‘already’ but also has the symbolic representation of eschatological community, the ‘but not yet’ of the Kingdom of God.

The phrase *daily bread* from the Lord's Prayer (Luke 11: 1-4) has been interpreted by biblical scholars largely in two ways. Luke Johnson (1991) translates the phrase as *the bread we need* (p. 178). On the other hand, Joel Green (1997) asserts the phrase to mean *the bread pertaining to the coming day*, as the *bread of the kingdom* (p.442). Sharing of the *daily bread* through church meals signifies living in the presence of God 'here and now' but also attests to living out the coming Kingdom of God. In this section, I contend that the Lord's Supper, as exemplified by Jesus, is the pre-figuration of the "New Covenant" community, the 'not yet' of the coming Kingdom of God, that Korean churches are "living out" through meal-sharing practices.

The Lord's Supper has been a subject of numerous debates through exegetical work for centuries, by theologians and biblical scholars alike, in the pursuit of uncovering theological and symbolic meanings of the event. However, for the purpose of my paper, I will approach the Lord's Supper, as representing the life and death of Jesus, where Jesus, in his ministry, through food, communicated the "new" coming kingdom of God by abolishing the law. In order to describe the radical impact the Lord's Supper had in the religious circles during Jesus' time, it is important to briefly explain the cultural ethos of food at that time.

Gillian Feely-Harnik (1994) explains that food served as one of the most important languages in which Jews expressed relations among human beings and between human beings and God (p. 19). Food, through the dietary law, had been used by the Jewish temple authorities to determine who a 'true' Israelite was and how the 'true' Israelite custom should be defined. Food functioned as a system of categorizing classes of people with the doctrinal standard of purity. Jeremiah argues that Palestinian Jewish society at the time of Jesus, particularly in Jerusalem, was organized by law according to degree of purity.. Carefully arranged marriages were the means of political as well as religious salvation (Jeremiah, 1969). Only pure Israelites

had full civil and political rights where Israelites of unknown lineage were prohibited even from becoming members of the assembly of the Lord (Deuteronomy 23:2) (Jeremiahs, p.41).

There were, however, many categories of people in the Jewish society who did not conform to the ideal of the law. In addition to Jews of mixed or illegitimate origin, these included “sinners,” the members of despised trades such as tax collectors, herdsmen, peddlers, or tanners, the physically deformed, Samaritans, and, to certain extent, women (Feely-Harnik, 1994, p.43). Gentiles, as being ignorant of the law, were the definition of “sinners.” Social contact with these people including their bodies, clothes, beds, cooking vessels, and eating was avoided as defiling. Jeremiahs (1958) describes the prevailing attitude of Jews towards Gentiles as “uncompromisingly severe.”

Jesus entered ministry in such hostile and divisive climate in the Jewish culture. Just as Jewish Israelites used food to express and maintain their beliefs of the law, Jesus and his followers, having a radically different interpretation of the law, used food to establish a new covenant (Feely-Harnik, 1994, p.108). Throughout his ministry, Jesus consistently ate with “many tax-collectors and sinners” (Matthew 9:10-13; Mark 2:15-17). He even received tax-collectors into his own circle of disciples. In addition to eating with them, Jesus and his disciples broke the Sabbath, one of the fundamental observances distinguishing Jews from gentiles, by picking and eating corn (Feely-Harnik, p.68). He asked for water to a Samaritan, a woman no less. Jesus also spoke in parables of the Messianic banquet (Mark 2: 18-22; Matthew 9:14-17; Luke 5:33-39), overturning the Jewish social and religious order for salvation.

As Jesus used food and sharing of food during his ministry to reverse the existing social order based on the purity law, the Last Supper also was an event where Jesus transformed the existing law to impart a “new” covenant, brought by his life and death. The Lord’s Supper

recorded in I Corinthians 11: 23-26 reads: “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.” Jesus refers to the bread to be his body and the cup as the “the new covenant in his blood,” which should be eaten and drunk in memory of him and of his sacrifice. Jesus was the human sacrifice that sealed the “New Covenant”; and “anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself” (11:29). Partaking of the Lord’s Supper creates a new cultural space where we participate in the new covenantal space with God.

The Last Supper, in the synoptic gospels, is referred to as a Passover Seder, a symbolic re-enactment, rendered in food, of the miraculous deliverance of the Jews from bondage (Matthew 26:2, 17-19; Mark 14:1, 12-16; Luke 22:1, 7-13, 15). As a symbolic representation of salvation in food patterned exactly after the Passover, however, every critical element in the Passover is absolutely reversed: the time, the place, the community, the sacrifice, and ultimately the significance of the meal (Feely-Harnik, pp.130-148). Feely-Harnik describes the Passover as a feast celebrating kinship and nationhood where Jesus’ sacrifice symbolized the death of family polity. God’s new covenant, as demonstrated in Jesus’ ministry, includes all humanity (p.19). Thus, the Lord’s Supper has become the pre-figuration of the heavenly wedding feast the “new” covenant brought about by Jesus.

In the act of sharing food, or the Lord’s Supper, a new cultural space is created where, through God’s presence, relationship with God is restored. Furthermore, the church or the people of God become the embodiment of the “new” covenant, exemplifying the eschatological presence as symbolized by the Lord’s Supper. Not only does meal-sharing practices have healing effects of the broken-heartedness of Korean Americans, through sharing, remembering, and creating community but also healing of relationship with God, through participating in the

“already but not yet” Kingdom of God. Meal-sharing practices can become pastoral practice of care that creates space where people connect with one another but also to the Kingdom of God.

Implications for pastoral care in a globalized society.

Just as the Lord’s Supper signifies the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, so also the new community or the Kingdom of God is created and expanded as people share meals with one another, that is, partaking of the Lord’s Supper. No longer was bloodline the essential requirement to enter the Kingdom of God. Jesus, in his ministry, welcomed and extended the invitation of sharing meals with everyone – especially the downtrodden, the outcast, and the broken-hearted. In this section, I will propose the implications of the Lord’s Supper in the global society in which we live and how food and action of sharing meals can be the agent to form new intercultural relationships.

We live in a broken society that is disconnected. Due to globalization, we have as neighbors people of different race, ethnicity, and religions. Even though we live in the same neighborhood, sharing the physical space, many times we live in separate cultural spaces, without significant interactions or cultural exchanges. Many realistic reasons exist; language barriers, cultural and religious differences, fears that stem from stigmatizing news reports of disputes and wars. Even though globalization has helped in bringing diverse people together, a crucial reason for not reaching out is the broken-heartedness in each of us.

We live in a society, where inherent in the necessary social structures is the domination system (Wink, 1992), where abuse of power, injustice, and exclusion abound. Living in such a system, we damage others and are damaged by others. The consequence has been that we are living in a disconnected society of relational beings where the hearts have been broken in each of

us. Living in a globalized but disconnected society where language and cultural boundaries abound, food transcends language and cultural barriers providing the space to connect, relate and interact. If we understand food as a cultural space, we then can have a cross-cultural experience when we are sharing different kinds of ethnic meals.

Some people have been drawn to ethnic eating as a way of experiencing other cultures. While eating ethnic foods may satisfy one's curiosity, it does not facilitate making bonds with their people. Diamond (1995) even suggests that ethnic restaurants are colonial-style cultural hierarchies. He continues to say that the non-dominant culture, in this case the dishes, décor and service provided by the restaurant, are exoticized, fetishized, and consumed. The ethnic culture, in turn are patronized and racially stereotyped, while always seeking the "authentic" experience through which they can encapsulate, simplify and therefore tame the culture. For others, having ethnic restaurants at close proximity generates fear (Gabbacia, 1995, p.230). The reason, Gabaccia notes, is because the market place food becomes easily detached from its culture of origin (p.230). The people, who are the embodiment of their culture in which food is a part, has been disjointed. Ethnic food eaten by itself loses the relationality when the people are taken out. Connection and relationships happen when ethnic foods are shared with the people it represents. Sharing ethnic food with each other creates a new dynamic cultural space where we can cross over into each other's cultures and experience the history, the culture, and all that their food represents. By sharing ethnic food with others, we come together to have inter-cultural relationship that is mutual and reciprocal, not imperial or hierarchical.

Sharing can be symbolic gesture of exemplifying Jesus' ministry of reaching out and inviting all to the table. Jesus used food and meal-sharing as a way to connect with people; not only with socially and religiously acceptable people, but with all people regardless of their

cultural, social, or religious backgrounds. Jung (2004) affirms that the eating and drinking practices of Jesus, his disciples, and early Christian communities were mission practices, witnessing to God's redemption of the whole created order (p.30). In this way, Jesus' meal-sharing practice becomes an example to extend our relationships beyond our own ethnicity or church boundaries and to include all people regardless of cultural, social, or religious backgrounds.

Summary and Conclusion

Sharing of meals after worship has been an important pastoral practice of care in immigrant churches, including Korean American churches. The action of partaking of Korean meals together initiates movement of bringing people together, forming relationships, and creating community. Church meals has been an agent of healing through the act of sharing, remembering, and creating community. In this sense, partaking of meals creates a new cultural space where dynamic flows of movements are created moving from disconnection to reconnection within oneself, and with each other, finding healing of broken-heartedness. The action of sharing meals at church not only connects us with one another but also with God, helping us remember who God is and who we are. By means of the Lord's Supper, the pre-figuration of a new cultural-covenantal space as exemplified by Jesus, sharing of church meals or partaking of the Lord's supper signifies the presence of God in the 'already' but also has the symbolic representation of eschatological community, the 'but not yet' of the Kingdom of God. This new community of God is no longer adhered by bloodline but by sharing meals with one another.

The act of sharing ethnic meals can also be an important intercultural practice of care in an increasingly conflict-ridden globalized society. Jesus also entered ministry in a hostile and

divisive climate in the Jewish culture and used food to reach out and interact with those who were different. Jesus consistently ate with “many tax-collectors and sinners,” receiving many into his own circle of disciples, overturning existing social and religious order. The act of reaching out and sharing meals with people who are different than ourselves transcend language, culture, and religious boundaries, creating a new cultural space where dynamic flows of movements are created that brings people together, exchanging cultural experiences, connecting and building relationships. Just as it is written in the Lord’s Prayer: “May your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is heaven,” the Kingdom of God is here in us, among us, and around us as we share meals with one another.

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Korean American Churches as Positive Selfobjects for Youths and Young Adults:

Understanding effects of racism on depression

Angella Son, Ph.D¹

Abstract Many studies correctly note that Korean Americans are at higher risk for depression than European Americans as a result of acculturative stress such as language problems or cultural differences and cultural particularities such as the high expectations of Korean American parents on their children or lack of knowledge of and shame attached to mental health disorders such as depression. I, however, argue that racism generates negative selfobject experiences and heightens the risk of suffering from depression among Korean American young people. To alleviate this devastating situation, I suggest the role of Korean American church as positive selfobject as opposed to racism that produces negative selfobject experiences in Korean Americans. I then offer some specific pastoral strategies for Korean American churches as positive selfobjects in order to address the harmful effect of racism on Korean American youths and young adults as well as the lack of knowledge of and shame attached to mental health disorders, in particular depression, in the Korean American community.

Keywords depression, racism, Korean American, youth, young adult, Heinz Kohut, selfobject

Introduction

Depression among American people has not only increased in numbers but also in the range of ages of those afflicted by it in recent years. According to the National Institute of Mental Health (July 2010), about twenty-one million adults, ages eighteen and older, suffer from clinical

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depression in the United States. This figure makes up about 9.5 percent of the United States population and a further forty million adults, or another 18% of the population, are experiencing prolonged periods of anxiety in life. While depression had long been considered an adult problem (e.g., SAMHSA, 2004), the onset of depression is now shown to occur in teenage years if not in childhood. According to The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)'s 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health Report, close to nine percent of youths between ages of twelve and seventeen are estimated to have experienced depression for a period of two weeks or longer.

In addition, related mental issues such as suicide, addiction, abuse, and violence add to the gloomy portrayal of the current condition of our society. According to NIMH (July 2010), in the United States about eleven people per one hundred thousand commit suicide. Committing suicide is not limited to a certain age group but is widespread including children of ages ten to fourteen and elderly people sixty-five years old and older. Moreover, it is not an exaggeration to say that most, if not all, of us know someone who finds security in substance abuse or alcohol addiction. Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse is no longer just someone else's problem but many of us are aware of abuse situations in our life or someone close to us. Sadly, because of such incidents as the Columbine shooting and the Virginia Tech shootings, we know all too well that violence among teenagers and young adults is no longer foreign to us.

It is thus imperative to address depression for the health of society as a whole. In this paper, I venture out to examine depression of a particular population group, Korean American youths and young adults. I chose this group because of the disturbing findings from some of the current studies on depression indicating that Korean American young men and women are at higher risk of being depressed compared to other ethnic young people, particularly European

Americans. This study is an attempt to highlight the gravity of the problem of depression among Korean American young men and women and argue how racism in our society, in addition to the cultural conflicts between Korean and American cultures, magnifies the effect of depression among Korean American young people. I thus examine the urgency to tackle the high risk of depression among Korean American youths and young adults, racism as negative selfobject experiences of and its effect on the high rate of depression among Korean Americans, and Korean American church as positive selfobject in promoting better mental health care for Korean Americans.

Urgency to address the high rate of depression among Korean American young people

Most mental health professionals, if not all, turn to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR, 2000) when in diagnosing their clients with any mental disorder including depression. DSM-IV-TR (APA, 2000) classifies depression as a mood disorder along with the Bipolar Disorders, Mood Disorder Due to a General Medical Condition, and Substance-Induced Mood Disorder. Diagnosis of these mood disorders generally requires the presence of one or a combination of the mood episodes—Major Depressive Episode,² Manic Episode³,

² DSM-IV-TR defines the criteria for Major Depressive Episode as following:

Five (or more) of the following symptoms have been present during the same 2-week period and represent a change from previous functioning; at least one of the symptoms is either (1) depressed mood or (2) loss of interest or pleasure.

Note: Do not include symptoms that are clearly due to a general medical condition, or mood-incongruent delusions or hallucinations, depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day, as indicated by either subjective report (e.g., feels sad or empty) or observation made by others (e.g., appears tearful). **Note:** In children and adolescents, can be irritable mood markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities most of the day, nearly every day (as indicated by either subjective account or observation made by others) significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain (e.g., a change of more than 5% of body weight in a month), or decrease or increase in appetite nearly every day. **Note:** In children, consider failure to make expected weight gains insomnia or hypersomnia nearly every day psychomotor agitation or retardation nearly every day (observable by others, not merely subjective feelings of restlessness or being slowed down) fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt (which may be delusional) nearly every day (not merely self-reproach or guilt about being sick), diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness, nearly every day (either by subjective account or as observed by others), recurrent thoughts of death (not just fear of dying), recurrent suicidal ideation without a specific plan, or a suicide attempt or a specific plan for committing suicide The symptoms do not meet criteria for a Mixed Episode (see p. 365).

Mixed Episode,⁴ and Hypomanic Episode⁵. For instance, Major Depressive Disorder is diagnosed with the presence of one or more Major Depressive Episodes whereas Bipolar

The symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

The symptoms are not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or a general medical condition (e.g., hypothyroidism).

The symptoms are not better accounted for by Bereavement, i.e., after the loss of a loved one, the symptoms persist for longer than 2 months or are characterized by marked functional impairment, morbid preoccupation with worthlessness, suicidal ideation, psychotic symptoms, or psychomotor retardation. (Ibid., p.356)

³ DSM-IV-TR defines the criteria for Manic Episode as following: A distinct period of abnormally and persistently elevated, expansive, or irritable mood, lasting at least 1 week (or any duration if hospitalization is necessary). During the period of mood disturbance, three (or more) of the following symptoms have persisted (four if the mood is only irritable) and have been present to a significant degree: Inflated self-esteem or grandiosity, decreased need for sleep (e.g., feels rested after only 3 hours of sleep), more talkative than usual or pressure to keep talking, flight of ideas or subjective experience that thoughts are racing, distractibility (i.e., attention too easily drawn to unimportant or irrelevant external stimuli), increase in goal-directed activity (either socially, at work or school, or sexually) or psychomotor agitation, excessive involvement in pleasurable activities that have a high potential for painful consequences (e.g., engaging in unrestrained buying sprees, sexual indiscretions, or foolish business investments).

The symptoms do not meet criteria for a Mixed Episode (see p. 365). The mood disturbance is sufficiently severe to cause marked impairment in occupational functioning or in usual social activities or relationships with others, or to necessitate hospitalization to prevent harm to self or others, or there are psychotic features. The symptoms are not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication, or other treatment) or a general medical condition (e.g., hyperthyroidism).

Note: Manic-like episodes that are clearly caused by somatic antidepressant treatment (e.g., medication, electroconvulsive therapy, light therapy) should not count toward a diagnosis of Bipolar I Disorder. (Ibid., p.362)

⁴ DSM-IV-TR defines the criteria for Mixed Episode as following:

The criteria are met both for a Manic Episode (see p. 362) and for a Major Depressive Episode (see p. 356) (except for duration) nearly every day during at least a 1-week period.

The mood disturbance is sufficiently severe to cause marked impairment in occupational functioning or in usual social activities or relationships with others, or to necessitate hospitalization to prevent harm to self or others, or there are psychotic features. The symptoms are not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication, or other treatment) or a general medical condition (e.g., hyperthyroidism).

Note: Mixed-like episodes that are clearly caused by somatic antidepressant treatment (e.g., medication, electroconvulsive therapy, light therapy) should not count toward a diagnosis of Bipolar I Disorder. (Ibid., p.365)

⁵ DSM-IV-TR defines the criteria for Hypomanic Episode as following:

A distinct period of persistently elevated, expansive, or irritable mood, lasting throughout at least 4 days, that is clearly different from the usual nondepressed mood. During the period of mood disturbance, three (or more) of the following symptoms have persisted (four if the mood is only irritable) and have been present to a significant degree: inflated self-esteem or grandiosity, decreased need for sleep (e.g., feels rested after only 3 hours of sleep), more talkative than usual or pressure to keep talking, flight of ideas or subjective experience that thoughts are racing distractibility (i.e., attention too easily drawn to unimportant or irrelevant external stimuli), increase in goal-directed activity (either socially, at work or school, or sexually) or psychomotor agitation, excessive involvement in pleasurable activities that have a high potential for painful consequences (e.g., the person engages in unrestrained buying sprees, sexual indiscretions, or foolish business investments). The episode is associated with an unequivocal change in functioning that is uncharacteristic of the person when not symptomatic. The disturbance in mood and the change in functioning are observable by others. The episode is not severe enough to cause marked impairment in social or occupational functioning, or to necessitate hospitalization, and there are no psychotic features.

The symptoms are not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication, or other treatment) or a general medical condition (e.g., hyperthyroidism).

Note: Hypomanic-like episodes that are clearly caused by somatic antidepressant treatment (e.g., medication, electroconvulsive therapy, light therapy) should not count toward a diagnosis of Bipolar II Disorder. (Ibid., p.368)

Disorders require the presence of a combination of Manic or Mixed Episodes or Hypomanic Episode with Major Depressive Episodes. The term depression in this study is heuristically used and represents both Depressive Disorders and Bipolar Disorders that are not directly attributed by external causes such as medical or substance-induced conditions.

The DSM criteria for depressive episodes are utilized not only in diagnosis by mental health professionals but also in many empirical research of depression. Among these were studies prompted by an effort to make Asian Americans and, in particular, Korean Americans visible in the mental health care system in order to address repeated under-diagnosis and misdiagnosis of depression among Korean American youths and young adults, especially by school systems and their consulted health professionals (Choi et al., 2002). What is alarming is that there exists a consistency in the findings of these studies about the notable higher rate of depression among Korean American young people than those of other racial or ethnic backgrounds, especially European Americans.

What is even more disturbing is that another group of studies have shown that the results of the studies mentioned above do not accurately reflect the rate of depression among Korean American youths. Their studies show that the rate of depression among Korean American young people should actually be higher than those suggested by the studies above. They argue that the questions for diagnostic criteria used in those depression studies use the western criteria, more applicable for European Americans. And that they do not sufficiently account for the culturally diverse expressions of depression and do not include the range of symptomologies as more prevalently experienced by non-European Americans. In particular, Asian Americans are noted to have the tendency to somatize their psychological symptoms (Leong & Lau, 2001), the finding of which is confirmed with studies with Korean Americans (Kim, 1995; Pang, 1998, 2000). For

instance, Miyong Kim (2002, p. 110) criticizes most widely used depression scales as being “linguistically irrelevant and culturally inappropriate” for Korean Americans and develops her own depression scale for Korean Americans. Kim points out that most depression scales focus on the affective dimension of depression and neglect the somatic dimension, which is as significant as affective dimension for Korean Americans.

Moreover, while youths generally tend to experience depression more somatically than adults due to their lack of cognitive grasp of the experience of depression, somatic expression of depression is much more prevalent among Asian American youths including Korean American young people. For instance, Choi and her colleagues (2002) implemented a study of depression among Korean American youths that reflected somatic symptoms of depression such as headaches, back pain, indigestion, stomach pain, dizziness, insomnia, muscle pain, and irritability and included questions more particular to the expressions of depressed mood. They (2002, p. 750) found that “Korean American adolescents, particularly the foreign-born, are at higher risk for depression than Anglos”, a finding also supported by Kuo (1984) and Hovey et al. (2006). Hovey et al. found Korean American youths having twice more likelihood of having depression than those of other ethnic/racial groups. The study by Jang et al. (2009) shows an even more distressing result—up to four times more likelihood of having depression among Korean Americans compared to other ethnic/racial groups. They noted the conclusions from others studies on depression rates for European and African Americans in the range from 9 to 16% and compared their result in finding that “approximately 40% of the younger adult sample and 35% of the older adult sample of [Korean Americans] fall within the category of probable depression.” (p. 131)

While there is a possibility that the high rate of depression among Korean Americans identified in studies is partially influenced by the cultural response styles (Jang et al., 2005), it is nevertheless crucial to recognize the exigency to address depression among Korean Americans, in particular youths and young men and women in light of the high rate of depression. These and other studies (Choi, 1997; Kuo & Tsai, 1986; Oh et al., 2002; Shin, 1994) accurately point out the reasons for possible higher rate of depression among Korean Americans as their acculturative stress such as language problems or cultural adjustment difficulties, and/or various cultural particularities of Korean culture such as the high expectations of Korean American parents on their children, and the lack of knowledge of and shame attached to mental health disorders such as depression.

Racism and depression among Korean Americans

What these studies neglected, however, is the injurious role of racism existing in our society on their mental health. While there are numerous studies on effects of racism on depression among African Americans (Brown et.al., 2000; Davis, 2006; Stevenson, 1997; Williams, 2000), there is a dearth of studies on the link between racism and depression among other racial groups, notably Korean Americans. A few of the studies on depression among Korean Americans that address marginalization as a factor contributing to depression usually discuss them in the context of acculturation stress or maladjustment to American or even Korean culture (Choi et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2006). In other words, the studies assume that the cultural conflict in Korean American immigrant experience has a significant bearing on mental health status. While cultural conflict is one of the major causes of depression among Korean Americans, it is a short-sighted approach to assume it to be the encompassing, if not the only, reason for depression among Koreans Americans. It is important to note racism, i.e., the narratives, myths, public rituals,

political policies, and programs that establish the recognition and treatment of one group as inferior and another as superior, hidden behind cultural conflicts in this society. While cultural differences are easier to define and be negotiated, racism can be very evasive to define, particularly how it is manifested in specific situations, and is almost impossible to be negotiated because of a power differential between the dominant power group and marginalized group.

I thus argue that racism is one of the major causes of the devastating situation in which Korean American young people are at higher risk of suffering with depression than those from other ethnic/racial backgrounds, particularly European Americans. To understand the relation between racism and depression, I rely on conceptual tools taken from self psychology. Self psychology created by Heinz Kohut is most helpful in examining the influence of the society on individual's psychological development because self psychology, by contrast to other psychological thoughts, renders itself to an expansive concept of objects to include non-human objects such as the society as a whole. He has also applied his psychological theories to analyze culture and groups such as the German people and Hitler (Strozier, 1985). Kohut (1977) defined psychological development as the development of a cohesive self, which is self assured and able to claim its independence from, as well as appropriately depend on other selves. This cohesive self thus flexibly negotiates independence and interdependence from other selves as needed by different situations.

Kohut delineates two kinds of object relationships: the relationship between self and an independent object, and the relationship between self and an object which is experienced as a part of the self. According to Kohut, the development of a cohesive self occurs through the latter object relationship, i.e., one's relationship with selfobject. The development of a cohesive self requires empathic responses from selfobjects to meet three major functions (1977, pp. 171-191):

(1) One's healthy self-assertiveness needs to be affirmed in order to develop sound ambition and purposes in life (mirroring response); (2) One's healthy admiration for another needs to be affirmed in order to foster ideals and values in life (idealizing response); and (3) One's talents and skills needs to develop to match one's ambition and ideals ("twinship response"⁶). Kohut thus defines both the types of people who can serve as our caregivers and the types of responses from them that are necessary for individuals to mature and be self-assured in facing life's various and complex challenges in human relationships. We need empathic responses from our surrounding (selfobject), both human and non-human, which is able to see the good in us as we grow (mirroring response); we then eventually form adequate ambitions and purposes in life. We also need empathic responses from our social surrounding (selfobject), both human and non-human, which allows us to share in and own the very greatness we admire in the person, organizations, or community (idealizing response). What is more, we need our social surroundings (selfobject), both human and non-human, to make us feel alike and to encourage and facilitate our development of appropriate talents and skills in our pursuit of both our ambitions and ideals in life (twinship response).

The lack of empathic responses from our surrounding as selfobject, however, brings about the arrest in the development of the cohesive self. The arrest in the development of the cohesive self then subjects the self to more susceptibility to depression. Specifically, Kohut (1977) indicates depression as one of the manifestations of the lack of the development of one's cohesive self. Kohut (1978) writes: "Subsequent to serious and prolonged or repetitive failures from the side of the selfobjects, Joy changes into depression and lethargy" (p. 236). Whether one suffers from depression thus can depend, in addition to parenting, on the ways the society

⁶ Kohut originally included twinship transference as a sub-category of mirroring transference (1971, p. 115) and later set forth it as the third transference (1984, pp. 192-207). Twinship experience is one's sense of alikeness with others, a human like others, or belonging with others.

recognizes and treats to the members of the society. In light of Kohut's delineation of the mirroring, idealizing, and twinship responses as necessary responses from one's surrounding for the development of one's cohesive self and depression as a manifestation of the lack of the development of the cohesive self, it is not difficult to see how racism generates negative selfobject experiences and its damaging effect on the development of cohesive self of Korean American young people. When Korean American young people are treated as less than human beings, all mirroring, idealizing, and twinship selfobject experiences from the society will inevitably be negative.

What is even more notable, however, is that negative selfobject experiences do not preclude some positive responses from the society. Even if a group is positively regarded for a certain aspect by the society, if it pegs them to a role and requires what Judith Butler calls *performativity* that denies its individual members in thriving toward their own purposes and ideals designed in their cohesive selves, it is nonetheless negative selfobject experiences to them. It is thus vital to move beyond: the dialectic understanding of racism as fostering positive and negative representations for the dominant group and the minority groups respectively, and understanding that depression among minority groups is brought on only by the treatment of the minority groups as less than valuable human beings shaped by the advancement of negative representations in them. Instead, even some positive representations of a minority group can contribute to depression among some of its members if the positive representations do not match the designs of their individual cohesive selves and as a result they are forced to put on the clothes of *performativity* regardless its label as positive or valuable. Examining depression within the complexity resulting from the interweaving between racism and the development of cohesive self thus affords far greater and more comprehensive insights into understanding the relationship

between racism and depression than if we were to explore plainly the relationship between racism and depression.

Racism can produce negative selfobject experiences to children of non-dominant groups in both direct and indirect ways. It can create negative selfobject experiences directly to them. In specific, even if we were to assume the ideal care from the family of Korean Americans, it is easy to see how a lack of, if not negative, mirroring and idealizing responses from society can lead to confusion and bewilderment within Korean Americans that can bring an arrest in the development of cohesive self in them. The dissonance between their self-assessment within their families and the societal-assessment of them can exacerbate and lead to disorientation or even disintegration of their cohesive selves. For instance, a Korean American high school boy who is affirmed and encouraged by his family and others to succeed as a lacrosse player would face a mountainous challenge to carry such confidence of his athletic ability as a lacrosse player if the coach and the teammates kept criticizing his play while ignoring his strengths. He may end up becoming a passive player and inadvertently confirm the meta-language of the societal racist structure specifically manifested through the unfair responses from the coach and teammates that are characterized as negative mirroring, idealizing, and twinship responses. This boy's self is then at risk of becoming depleted or, at worst, disintegrated and thus he is at risk of facing depression as his self-state instead of joy-filled self.

In addition, racism can generate negative selfobject experiences indirectly to the children of minority groups by degenerating parenting of their own parents. In specific, racism can bring about deterioration of the parenting by Korean American parents to negative selfobject experiences for Korean American young people in a way that will lessen or even preclude the necessary mirroring, idealizing, and twinship responses from parents to their children. In other

words, racism can immobilize, though at varying degrees, Korean American parents to be the best parents that their given abilities allow them to be. Among many studies, a study of twelve cases of manic-depressive psychosis by Cohen and her colleagues (1986) sheds light on this discussion. While their sample is not sufficiently large enough, the correlation between their description of those experiencing manic-depressive psychosis and the experience of Korean American young people is so remarkably parallel that it would be a gross mistake to dismiss the significance of the study. While their study was with the cases of manic-depressive psychosis, their discussion is nevertheless very illuminating in understanding the dynamic among parenting, empathic responses posited by Kohut, and depression in general. Their discussion on family background and character structure, in particular, is one of the most relevant to understanding the wounding influence of racism on the degeneration of parenting by Korean American parents that can lead Korean American young men and women to be at high risk for suffering with depression.

The first characteristic noted by Cohen et al. is how all twelve families stood out *differently* from other families in their community. The difference, in many cases, was due to their minority status. In some cases, economic hardship or mental illness of one member of the family was what separated these families from other families. The acute sense of social difference felt by these families prompted two distinctive reactions leading to harmful parenting that contributed to manic depressive psychosis in one child in the family. They were preoccupied with fitting in with other families and raising their social status. Their effort to fit in with their surrounding community unfortunately translated into impersonal parenting that stressed a “strict and conventional concept of good behavior” (Cohen et al., 1986, p. 100) according to the opinion of their neighbors. In other words, parents did not own their authority and decide what

constituted good behavior for their children. The parents instead submitted to the authority of “they” or what is acceptable by the surrounding community. As a result, their children also were prevented from developing their own self determination of what good behavior is and were forced to depend on the opinion of others regarding how they should or should not behave. When an internal ability to measure the goodness in life is not developed within children, their life has no anchor to keep their lives stable but is constantly surfing in waves of various lengths and height.

Korean Americans are especially in a double bind with respect to the depersonalization of authority by parents. Korean Americans are set apart from their surrounding community by the very fact that they are Korean Americans, one of the minority groups. Being one of the new immigrants to the United States, their sense of being a minority is even more heightened. In addition, what Cohen and her colleagues did not take into consideration is the influence of a racist structure in the society. Their study was a phenomenological study of twelve families with one of the members suffering with manic-depressive psychosis along with psychological analysis, paying attention to the psychological dynamic in parenting. They did not, however, consider how racism accentuates or rather forces the minority groups’ effort to conform to the societal expectation of them. The desire to be accepted by their own surrounding community so that they no longer have to experience that they are different gets complicated by the societal expectations vis-à-vis designated roles and behaviors of minority persons. In other words, it is not just the desire on the part of the minority to belong to the wider community, but also the silent duress imposed by the dominant group with power in society to dictate the urgent sense of conformity to the surrounding by the minority groups.

Moreover, the dominant power of the society does not expect that the minority group can ever measure up to being a full-fledged member of society. In other words, members of the minority groups are not accepted or belong to society as regular members but only as inferior or blemished members. No matter how desperately minority groups endeavor to fit in, it may not make any difference to their full participation as a member of the dominant group. Korean Americans are thus in a double bind: having a desire to fit in with the rest of the society and being forced to conform to the society while such conformity means to loyally maintain one's minority status of "not fitting in" and never dare to claim a membership in the dominant group. Korean Americans are thus hit by double blows of the depersonalization of authority or authority of "they" that are contrary to mirroring, idealizing, and twinship responses. Korean American parents try very hard to nurture their children but their difference as a minority group inadvertently colors their best effort with the desire to be accepted by the dominant group and relinquish their authority in defining what is good for their children. In addition, they consciously or unconsciously realize that they are running like a hamster on a wheel and never make an inch of improvement in their effort to belong to the dominant group. Instead, they must face the devastating reality that their children are at risk of depression because their children are not only puppets of the authority of *they* but also an endless failure in their effort to wipe away their inevitable difference.

Pastoral strategies to address depression among Korean American young people

The urgency to address the high risk of depression among Korean American young people is starkly clear. In order to take up this issue, I suggest that Korean American church is the most effective resources and it is imperative to mobilize them. While

pastoral counselors or therapists (e.g., Ridley, 2005) are very significant resources, their effectiveness in offering appropriate mental health care for Korean Americans is rather compromised because of Korean American's strong resistance to mental health care due to shame associated with it and delay in receiving mental health care due to diagnosis. While there are a low fraction of Korean Americans who will seek mental health care as needed, Korean Americans generally attach a high sense of shame to seeking mental health care and will avoid it at all cost. Even those who seek mental health care, they usually do so when the mental health problem has reached a very severe level that is often beyond the benefit from pastoral counseling or therapy. Moreover, somatization of depression among Korean Americans often steer them to seek medical help instead of psychological help, resulting in delay in receiving appropriate mental health care. Shin (2002) observes that Korean Americans seek help for mental health care 5.3 years after the onset of the depression in average.

On the other hand, Korean American church can help Korean Americans overcome these two limitations and receive appropriate mental health care when it is needed. In specific, while racism fosters negative selfobject experiences, Korean American churches can provide positive selfobject experiences to Korean American people including young people. It can do so because Korean American church functions as a very important leader in Korean American community. Bent-Goodley (2007) and Freedman's (1998) suggestion of community-based interventions as an effective way to undertake the mental health problems of African Americans is a valuable insight to Korean American community. Korean American church in nature can easily provide community-based interventions. Moreover, it is easy for Korean American church to

offer mutual help and support groups for Korean Americans as is suggested by Beauboeuf-Lafontant (2007) in helping African American women experiencing depression. In addition, it can pull its human, financial, spatial resources and deal with mental health issues in a more wholistic and comprehensive way by making available to Korean American people not only counseling but education about mental health care or any other assistance needed by Korean Americans. Korean American churches thus can address the injurious influence of racism in our society on the dangerously high rate of Korean American young people suffering with depression. Korean American churches also can help the Korean American community to open up to seeking help for mental health issues and effectively handle various mental health issues. Pastoral strategies are thus urgently needed for Korean American churches. While many strategies can be devised, I will limit my discussion to three major pastoral strategies by, as suggested by Ridley (2005) and Cooper et al. (2003), paying a particular attention to culturally specific interventions.

Elimination of dualism between spiritual and non-spiritual

One way to provide an idealizing response by Korean American church is to eliminate the inconsistency caused by the dualistic division of spirituality and social actions that I have highlighted in my previous work on the pastoral care of Korean American women (Son, 2010). Korean American church tends to focus more on the inner state of spirituality and habitually ignore or shy away from a call to social justice. Instead Korean American church can set up social justice as well as inner discipline as one of its ideals. This way Korean American church can embrace both a contemplative spirituality in solitude and a practicing spirituality in connectedness. The foremost steps in this process would be to raise awareness on racism due to

the structural oppression in our society, join in an effort with others to dismantle racism in the society, and provide support to their members, particularly the youths and young men and women in their effort to resist the harmful effect of racism. Korean American church should no longer be silent about racism but take an activist stance on racism. It cannot ignore it and pretend that racism is only an African American problem. In fact, Korean Americans should recognize the problem of racism in the society and acknowledge their own part in sustenance of racism in this society.

In order to raise awareness on racism, while education on issues of racism is helpful, another and perhaps a better strategy would be to reinforce twinship experience between African American churches and Korean American churches, i.e., each Korean American church to develop a close relationship with an African American church and exchange various aspects as Christians. Since many Korean Americans are more inclined to deny the issues of racism negatively affecting their lives, it is best for them to share in the experiences of African Americans who are more honest and ready to name and talk about the devastating influence of racism in our society that treats them as inferior or even non-human beings. For example, both Korean American churches and African American churches are known for good church music in different ways, sharing music can develop a good relationship with one another. Korean American churches usually have very strong choirs mastering the harmony among various parts of alto, soprano, base, and tenor while African American churches generally have strong Gospel choirs mastering the emotional expressions of both high and low; deep and wide. The differences as well as the mastery will offer a good motivation and an appreciation for one another to engage in developing a sister/brother relationship between Korean American and African American churches.

They can also designate a worship service where they invite or are invited by the other to fully participate in worship services together. They can also find some ways to help one another by sharing their strengths to address the weaknesses in the other. While they share their lives with one another, Korean American churches will come to realize that racial discrimination is not only targeted to African Americans but themselves as well. In addition, they will come to realize the excruciatingly devastating nature of pain and suffering from the harmful effects of the racist structure. They will also come to see how deep and wide-spread the influence of racism of the society is on all people excluded from the dominant power group. This way they can naturally come to experience likeness with and join in the efforts by African Americans to address the disturbing effects of racism in our society. This pastoral strategy helps Korean Americans to change their perspectives on and motivate them to address the problems caused by racism in our society.

Korean American churches can also utilize their strengths and provide mirroring selfobject experiences to help people deal with mental health problems augmented by racism in our society. Korean American churches, while elevating spirituality, often treat psychology as a proponent of human desire and they silently ignore it, at best, or publicly denounce it as evil, at worst. Instead of taking this dualistic approach to spiritual and non-spiritual, they can start accepting the profound interconnectedness between spiritual and non-spiritual, in particular, emotional. They should see that emotional or mental health can enhance spiritual health while spiritual health can augment mental health. They thus need to promote mental health in order to enhance spiritual health while they also utilize spiritual interventions to strengthen mental health among their members. Some studies (Lee, 2007; Ai et al., 1998; Baker, 2000; O'Laoire, 1997; McCoubrie & Davies, 2006; Dalmida, 2006) demonstrated that prayer, pastoral counseling,

Bible studies, provision of blessings, and so on helped to decrease depression or other mental health problems or resulted in better mental health. For instance, the studies by Hurh and Kim (1990) and Lee et al. (2004) report the negative correlation between religious activities through church affiliation and depression among Korean Americans. Korean American churches can utilize spiritual care to deal with mental health issues as well as spiritual health.

As a specific strategy, Korean American churches can facilitate positive selfobject experiences by offering group sessions on various issues appropriate for youth, college, and post-college young adult groups and include conversations on how to thrive as a minority in their studies and careers. The groups can be formed as either Bible study classes or group sessions aimed at specific issues such as developing study habits, balancing studies and extra-curricular activities, preparing for college for youth groups, and preparing for job interviews and career or professional development as Christians for college and post-college young adults. However the groups are formed, the leaders can intentionally build the conversations around resistance to the racist structure. The Bible studies and group sessions can facilitate a safe place for youths and young adults to talk about their vulnerability as Korean Americans forced to carry certain stereotypes and roles by the dominant power. These group sessions can be a space where they can freely talk about how the racist structure denies them the opportunity to live as authentic and thriving persons and contribute to the society based on their given and developed talents and skills. The groups can also help to develop skills and strategies to resist destructive influences by the racist structure in our society. These groups can thus be a place where mirroring, idealizing, and twinship responses are augmented so that any damage to their selves by the racist structure can be restored.

Education on mental health issues

In the wake of the April 2007 massacre at the Virginia Tech University in which a young Korean American student, Seung Hui Cho, shot and killed 32 people, and wounded 25 others, before killing himself, Korean American churches need to wake up to the reality of mental health issues. Cho's family and their church could have played an important role in intervention and healing of Cho's mental ailment and possibly prevented such an atrocity if they were open to and informed about mental health issues. Education on mental health issues by Korean American church can buttress mirroring, idealizing, and twinship experiences. By acknowledging the presence of mental health issues within Korean American community, Korean American church mirrors the very experience which Korean American people are ashamed to claim as a part of their experiences. Korean American church can point out as its ideal what health means and can be achieved to take up mental health issues within Korean American community. Korean American church can facilitate twinship experience by making mental health issues public and encouraging Korean American community to share in one another's mental health issues.

Korean American church can promote education on several aspects in order to both inform about and dissipate the sense of shame associated with mental disorders among Korean Americans, in particular depression. Korean American church can help Korean Americans address mental health issues and feel safe to deal with their own or their family member's mental health issues. Korean American church can pay attention to both mental health issues in general and particular mental health issues relevant to the Korean American community. They need to pay heed to the discovery by the World

Health Organization, as it was noted above, that symptoms of depression manifest differently in various cultures in spite of the presence of the core characteristics of depression defined by DSM IV-TR, (Koh, 2001). For example, Korean Americans tend to show depression more in somatic symptoms such as headaches, backaches, stomach problems, etc. rather than in a psychological symptom of sadness (Koh, 2001; Sue & Morishima, 1982). The reverse is also true. A well-known illness known as Hwa-Byung in Korea can be treated effectively once it is recognized that there are significant similarities between its symptoms and those of major depression as categorized by western mental health professionals (Kim-Goh, 1998).

Korean American church can approach education on mental health issues in general and depression in particular by designating one Sunday a year as the “Day of Healing” during which the worship service can focus on the issues of healing including mental health issues. All aspects of the worship service--music, liturgy and sermon--can be devoted to healing and being whole as Christians and open up opportunities for facilitating non-anxious embracing of mental health issues among the congregation. While it is ideal for Korean American church to strictly designate one Sunday as a “Day of Mental Health,” it is much more practical and efficient to address mental health as an aspect of healing and wholeness because it is very important as a first step to help Korean Americans to more easily accept mental health as a part of healing and being whole as Christians. This suggestion is supported by the study by Donnelly (2007, p. 329) that recommends, in place of depression screening fairs, annual community general health fairs to screen depression symptoms among Korean Americans. In other words, dissipating the shame or stigma associated with mental illness while promoting education

about mental disorders among general illnesses *must* be the first priority. The second step of addressing mental health issues alone would naturally follow once the level of shame associated with mental disorders has been sufficiently reduced.

In addition, while a few educational sessions on mental health issues can be held throughout the year, it may be more prudent to hold a special weekend conference on issues of healing including mental health issues, during the weekend of the “Day of Healing.” Since Korean American church usually holds annual retreats, revival meetings, and educational conferences, it would not be out of the ordinary to hold an educational conference on healing once a year. It can invite a pastoral theologian or a mental health professional as the main speaker who can address various aspects of healing for Christians—physical, mental, and spiritual. It can also adopt a format for the conference where they invite several guests who can offer lectures and workshops on various issues of healing including mental health issues. In so doing, Korean Americans can be educated in more detail about depression so that they know how to recognize depression and learn how to respond to depression both as the one experiencing depression and the one living with or caring for the one suffering with depression. This kind of church-wide education at a specially designated conference held annually will heighten the importance of the topic of healing that will lead to a greater awareness in the minds of Korean Americans. Moreover, this emphasis on the importance of healing particularly combined with a regular annual conference will facilitate the reduction of shame associated with mental disorders among Korean Americans.

Provision of resources to address depression

Korean American churches can mediate and/or provide resources to address depression among Korean Americans. Korean American churches can offer information on mental health services and other resources available outside the church community and help the Korean American community learn how to access public services with respect to depression. The role of pastors will be very crucial in helping the Korean American community to be open to utilizing mental health services and other resources. Since pastors in Korean American churches usually carry much weight influencing people's decisions, it will be very important for pastors to open up and share their own experiences of mental health issues. For instance, Reverend Kee Won Huh, one of the second-generation Korean American pastors in New Jersey, opened up about his own experiences with depression in the past and urged his congregation to seek help with their own issues. Several of his congregation members sought professional help with therapists and others have followed suit. Reverend Huh also sought other second-generation Korean American ministers to join in the effort of addressing mental health issues in Korean American churches. He and several other second-generation Korean American ministers are actively promoting the significance of mental health care among Korean American Christians.

These courageous second-generation ministers become good selfobjects to their own congregation by being ideal, mirroring, and twinship figures who demonstrate the importance of openness and vulnerability as Christians in their pursuit of wholeness before God (idealizing response), are more ready to validate others' struggle with mental health issues (mirroring response), and share in the human limitedness exhibited in

mental health problems (twinship response). It is crucial for the first-generation Korean American ministers to take this courageous step that some of the second-generation Korean American ministers have taken. While second-generation Korean Americans are in general more open to addressing mental health issues, the first-generation Korean Americans are far from seeing mental health as an aspect of wholeness as Christians. It is when the first-generation ministers treat mental health issues with normalcy or as a necessary part of one's pursuit of being whole as a Christian that the shame or stigma associated with mental disorders can be dispelled among the Korean American community. They can emphasize and foster how seeking help with mental health professionals is something similar to going to a medical doctor's office for physical ailments. They can seek help with mental health professionals on issues for themselves, especially for the problems of parent-child conflict.

Parenting issues, which are already of high interest among Korean Americans, can be a medium to an easy access to mental health services for many Korean American families. Moreover, parenting can directly bring an effective measure to addressing depression. Studies have shown the direct connection between depression and parent-child conflict. Kim and Cain (2008), in particular, suggest strategies to address depression among Korean American young people that, in addition to informing the Korean American community of the cultural differences between Korean and American cultures, parents need to increase their expression of parental warmth and decrease parent-child conflicts. As the shame associated with mental health issues declines, Korean American families will finally avoid the pitfall of not seeking any help for mental health issues for their family members. Getting appropriate care for mental health issues

promptly can help many who may share similar problems as Seung Hui Cho whose depressive symptoms were ignored by himself, his family, his church community, and his school.

Korean American church can also try to provide resources for mental health care. While relying on external resources for mental health care can involve less cost to the church and even congregation members, it can be cumbersome, as it is noted above, for many Korean Americans, especially those who are less assimilated into American culture or have language problem with English. It is important that churches promote careers in mental health among Korean Americans, especially 1.5- and second-generation Korean Americans, so that there will be more Korean Americans providing mental health services both within and outside Korean American churches. Korean American church can also train lay care teams to help Korean Americans access public services or seek help from mental health professionals. The lay care team can be trained about mental health care, accessing public services, referring to mental health professionals, cultural differences in mental health issues, and translation services so that they can assist Korean Americans in utilizing mental health care with more accuracy and effectiveness.

More importantly, it will be crucial for Korean American church to provide mental-health professional services. This can be done in various ways. For instance, Reverend Huh with other ministers started a team ministry called New Mercy Community Church in which a team of ministers address the various aspects of healing such as physical, mental, and spiritual health. Another model that may prove to be more effective is the collaborative model among Korean American churches to establish regional mental health care services that can provide services to both Christians and non-

Christians within the Korean American community in various regions. The services can be offered at more affordable rates to Korean Americans with the financial support from the churches. Confidentiality can be protected better since the services are located outside and administratively quasi-independent from the churches. In addition, the mental health professionals providing the services will have more sufficient backgrounds to be more contextually sensitive to regional and cultural diversities. It is thus imperative that Korean American churches start committing their resources to providing mental health services as well as finding ways to collaborate among churches in order to provide more cost-efficient and easier access to mental health care.

Conclusion

The notable aspects from the examination of depression among Korean American young adults point to consensus and urgency. A consensus among studies on depression that there is a higher rate of depression among Korean Americans in comparison to European Americans points to an urgency to address depression among Korean Americans. A consensus within the Korean American community that exhibits general ignorance or even deliberate neglect of mental health issues indicates an urgency to educate Korean Americans about mental health issues and help Korean Americans utilize mental health professionals and resources. An agreement within the Korean American community that mental health problems exist indicates an urgency for the leadership in Korean American churches to take the initiative in having an open attitude to seeking help for mental health issues. A consensus among scholars that Korean Americans often somatize their depression symptoms appeals for an urgency for a more particularized depression scale for Korean Americans. A consensus among scholars that cultural conflict between Korean

and American cultures is the main reason for the high rate of depression among Korean Americans points to an urgency to examine the critical role of the racist structure in our society. This study only touched on the interlocking relationships among psychological health, culture, and racism. I proposed how racism promotes negative selfobject experiences contributing to the high rate of depression among and how Korean American church can take on the role of positive selfobject to Korean American young people. Moreover, I have offered a few pastoral strategies for Korean American church as good selfobject in addressing depression among Korean American young people. Many more studies are needed with a focus on the complexity of the influence of racism on mental health among Korean Americans and the development of more informed pastoral strategies.

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A Dog with Wings: The Importance of Cultural and Theological Issues for Pastoral Counseling with a Korean American Christian Client

Jin Sook Kwon¹

Abstract: I illustrate in this paper the importance of cultural and theological issues in providing culturally competent pastoral counseling for Korean American Protestants. I use a clinical vignette to explore the Korean Christian community's mores on alcoholism, the role of the church, and how attachment to the local faith community may impact a church-based pastoral counseling program. I highlight several aspects to point out some culturally distinctive features for my Korean American² client; 1) cultural and theological issues in the Korean American community and how alcohol is an issue for this client, 2) the church's "ineffective" dealing with the issue of alcohol, 3) diverse interpretations of the Bible regarding the use of alcohol, and 4) meaning of counseling for the client in relation to the AAPC Code of Ethics and the challenge for cultural relevance in relation to issues of boundary, dual relationships, confidentiality. Finally, I present treatment and intervention using Relational Cultural Theory and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for this client.

Keywords: Korean American, multicultural pastoral care and counseling, drinking alcohol, Relational Cultural Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Introduction

A dog with wings: multicultural pastoral counselor's identity

"Why did you choose this case for certification? This case doesn't seem serious enough. Why

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² In this article, I use Korean American, Korean immigrant, Korean Christian American interchangeably to refer to the client Jisup Kim as well as other Korean American clients whose identities are multiple and fluid.

does he need counseling?” These were comments made by a European American colleague when I shared with her my decision to use this case for my presentation to the AAPC certification process. I understood her concern, and yet I chose this case for my certification. “Is he an alcoholic?” one of consultants asked. “No, he doesn’t have a DSM-IV-TR diagnosable substance abuse problem,” I answered. “Then, what is his presenting concern? It looks like he has some cultural issues. But can you help me understand?” another consultant asked. Consulting with my colleagues and with my certification consultation committee, I experienced deep care, compassion, and a desire to support and understand my soul-care for this client. I also felt the discrepancy between their standards of care and mine. My understanding of the care which this church member needs is somewhat different and unique because of the cultural and theological context in which this client needs to be understood.

Since The Clinebell Institute of Pastoral Counseling and Psychotherapy at Claremont School of Theology has developed a pioneering project to bridge academia and the community by sending pastoral counseling students into congregations, I have been constantly wrestling with my identity as pastoral counselor in the Korean American church context. It has been an ongoing internal battle to be a clinician whose clinical context is the Korean immigrant community and whose clinical training is done in a Western educational institute. After 5 years of training, I finally decided to choose for my certification process a clinical case with Korean American cultural and theological specificity. One of my supervisors encouraged me to choose this case and said, “This will be a great chance for your certification committee to learn from you about pastoral care and counseling in the Korean immigrant community. That is a great way to contribute to their learning and to AAPC.” Instead of giving me a sense of inadequacy about the case, he empowered me by emphasizing the unique value of my case—the case which can

illustrate pastoral care and counseling that must be situated in cultural and theological context.

A recent book, *Women Out of Order*, focuses on the cultural complexity of care and its value in taking risks (Stevenson-Moessner & Stevenson, 2010, p.ix). In the preface, a story is told about a domesticated bird that finally finds herself as a bird that can fly. This story deeply moves my heart. As a Korean American pastoral counselor whose practice is within a Korean American faith context while my academic and clinical training has been within a U.S. context, I often view myself as a bird who must decide either to live on earth or fly in the sky. Should I keep the Korean way at church while I live the U.S. way at school and at the counseling center? This bird story makes me laugh and cry at the same time because for a long time I thought about myself as a dog with wings. I can bark as a dog and I can fly as a bird. But, I cannot be a flying dog. For so long, I had to pretend to be only one species. But I am a dog with wings. This is a reality of multicultural living, constantly juggling two cultures as I care for the souls who live in two cultures at the same time.

This article is a reflection on the importance of cultural and theological knowledge that is required to provide culturally and theologically relevant pastoral counseling for a Korean American Protestant client. I will use the clinical vignette to deliberate on Korean Protestant cultural and theological understandings about the use of alcohol in this Christian context, psychological attachment to the local faith community, and the impact of this attachment on the client's openness to pastoral counseling offered at the church by a pastoral counseling staff. I will address this client's perception that drinking is a sin, as he learned from his church. In addition, he believes that the church community is an extended family system and he experiences ambivalent feelings of love and hate in his relationship with the church. Therefore, his experience of loss of the church acknowledges his struggle with the family system which is his

church. Finally, these ambivalent feelings about the church system and his awareness of the importance of the church as a supportive system led him to become open to pastoral counseling. I provided this client short-term pastoral counseling based on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Relational Cultural Therapy.

Clinical vignette: Jisup Kim

Jisup Kim is a pseudonym of my client. He is self-referred at his local church pastoral counseling center.³ He inquired about receiving pastoral counseling, but due to the counselor's current client load, was placed on a wait list. He had to wait three months before a counselor was available. He attended ten sessions over a three-month period. He is a Korean male immigrant, age 49, 5 feet 8 inches tall, weighing 150 pounds. When he reports about areas in which he has confidence, such as business, his affect is euphoric. However, when he talks about church issues, his affect and speech become lethargic, passive and depressed. At the intake and throughout the ten sessions, he denied any suicidal or homicidal ideations, and did not have any history of psychiatric hospitalization.

His presenting problem is a sense of isolation at the church. He reports that he feels a lack of confidence in relating to other church members and participating in church leadership. He feels incompetent as a Christian leader because he occasionally drinks alcohol. He reports that he drinks one or two bottles of beer at social events, such as when he attends social gatherings at his previous church and at business parties.

In the past church, he was an active leader of a large Korean Presbyterian church in Los

³ Generally speaking, most Korean Protestant churches are theologically conservative and evangelical. Regardless of denomination, Korean immigrant churches share similar theological tenets. Most Korean Americans attend Protestant churches, seeking support socially and spiritually. As often with the family, church members have high expectation about the Korean immigrant church, which can be a source of conflict in the church. Therefore, for the Korean Christian immigrant, isolation at church results in significant stress and a lack of support.

Angeles for over twenty years. Due to the Korean Protestant churches' evangelical and conservative nature, his church did not permit church members' use of alcohol and tobacco. However, due to the popularity of drinking in Korean culture, he enjoyed drinking with his church friends. Since his church relationship was his main social support system, he worshipped and drank together with close friends. At that time, he experienced guilt and shame but attempted to minimize his feelings in an effort to suppress a feeling of dualism between his life within and outside the church.

Drinking and smoking is a popular pastime in Korean culture. Alcohol is present at most social gatherings. Korean society emphasizes collectivism and communalism so that drinking alcohol together is viewed as natural socialization in many communities. However, because most Korean churches prohibit the use of alcohol, there are many Christians who drink alcohol and hide the fact in the church. If an individual attends a more conservative church, he or she could easily develop a sense of guilt and shame. Therefore, his practice of consuming alcohol and hiding it is actually quite common among Korean Christians. His cognitive distortion of perfectionism results in feelings of guilt and shame.

In the new church, he has lacked confidence in speaking, experiences difficulty concentrating on the worship service, and even has trouble laughing. His lack of confidence makes him feel isolated in church activities, leadership, and personal relationships. His shame and guilt cause him to feel more isolated, and his cognitive distortion of perfectionism (The elders should be perfect; I have to be perfect; I should not drink), polarized thinking (If I am not a perfect Christian then I am a sinner; if I make even one mistake, I should not do anything), and generalization (This church will be the same as my previous church so I should not drink) all result in feelings of incompetence, inadequacy, and sinfulness. These feelings have made

adjustment in the new church community quite difficult.

Story about Jisup Kim: Cultural and theological dimensions of the care of soul for a Korean American Protestant male client

In this section, I provide my discussion about my case analysis in order to argue some cultural and theological dimensions of the pastoral care and counseling for Kim. Particularly, I will highlight the client Kim's experiences of church community as ambivalent family, the church's ineffective dealing with the issue of alcohol, controversial interpretations of the biblical interpretation about drinking as sin or feast, address the cultural relevance for AAPC's code of ethics in boundary, dual relationship, and confidentiality issues, and provide a culturally attuned treatment and intervention plan.

Church community as ambivalent family

Reading Kim from an analytical point of view, I find that the churches function as an extended family, providing him with positive support, at the same time, impacting negatively. As a result, his attachment to them is ambivalent, an ambivalence that plays a major role in his isolation at his new church community. More specifically, he wants to develop a new and close relationship with his new church community, but he does not know how to develop a healthy emotional distance from his previous church relationships in order to avoid them negatively affecting his new church relationship.

This situation is not unique to the personal experiences of Jisup Kim. The picture described can be expanded to include a broader Korean American population as well. Throughout the Korean immigration history, Korean Protestant church communities have been providing psychological, social, and spiritual meaning for most Korean American Christian immigrants (Kwon, Kim, & Warner, 2001). Kwon, Kim and Warner (2001) assert that over 70

percent of Korean immigrants attend church and that the church functions as their socio-cultural center. Most Korean immigrant churches are small and ethnically homogeneous. Most people speak Korean at the church. The churches tend to be theologically conservative, male-centered, hierarchal, and most members are first-generation immigrants who were born in Korea and come to the states after their young adulthood. Young Lee Hertig (2001) describes the role of the Protestant church as a home away from home and family beyond family. Immigrants attend church to meet their need for a sense of religious purpose (meaning), for social needs (belonging), and for psychological needs (comfort) (Hurh & Kim, 1990, pp. 19-34). Therefore, this church community support system can be considered a “cultural sanctuary” and a “Sabbath of Korean immigrants,” providing, among many other needs, those of mental health (Hurh & Kim, 1990).

Won Moo Hurh (1998) also recognizes that Korean immigrant churches serve a positive function in terms of promoting ethnic cohesion. Seongeun Kim, et al. (2001) report that the immigrant church functions as a parenting partner for working class parents by providing adult supervision and care for immigrant children. Thus, Korean Protestant church communities provide an environment for helping Korean immigrant families adjust to life in a new culture by providing a form of extended family support. There is no doubt that the church functions as a family for most Protestant Korean American people.

Another factor in Jisup Kim’s isolation, although it may seem somewhat removed, is also applicable to a broader Korean Christian community, and that is his limited source for intimate relationships. While not clearly stated in the vignette, he attends the church with his wife only. He did not explicitly indicate why he does not attend the church with his college-age sons who live close by. Even though there is no clear reason, the family does not belong to the same faith community and this fact increases the importance to him of the church community as family.

In relation to the lack of a shared religious and spiritual home with their children, here are other relevant factors that could have negative effects on Korean immigrant families. First, Korean immigrant children are put off by their parents' reinforcement of Christian faith and their inflexibility in reserving Sunday as a day to go to church (Hertig, 2001). From the viewpoint of the immigrant children, their own faith development is important, yet they question their Christian community's religious commitment (Hertig, 2001). Second, Korean immigrant churches may also function as a cultural trap. Because most first generation Korean immigrants expect the Korean immigrant church to be the main place for their connections in socio-cultural, psychological, and spiritual realms, once they lose their connection with the church, they have difficulty substituting another support system to meet their needs for connection in different areas at the same time. Third, some studies indicate this need for connection and the pressure from their Korean American church has an even greater influence on women. Ae Ra Kim (1996) points out that Korean immigrant churches sustain traditional cultural models through male dominance, requiring women's silence and submission to men in public life. Jung Ha Kim (1997) works in Korean ethnic churches, describing them as patriarchal, allowing only male leadership while tending to use women for service rather than leadership. It would be an exaggeration to say these three factors are directly related to Jisup Kim's sense of isolation. However, these insights could be helpful in performing a cultural and theological analysis of relationships within Korean American churches.

For Jisup Kim, the ambivalent role of the Korean American church like a family, the critical role of the church for both a sense of belonging and a sense of critical loss (once that happens) are applicable too. In addition, most Korean American Christian parents' pressure for their children's faith development could also relate with their relationship with churches. In my

clinical case, Jisup Kim's isolation at the church does not seem to be understood as the loss of the most important support system in the presence of people who do not see the church as a major support system.

However, for Kim, the loss of his twenty-year long church community was actually a major loss of his interpersonal support system, similar to the loss of parents and family. Without understanding the cultural significance of Korean American Protestant church communities for Korean American Christians, it is very likely that pastoral care and counseling may fail to assess accurately Kim's needs and desires. For example, culturally attuned care could influence building therapeutic rapport. At the first meeting, Kim reported that he did not have any serious issues. Yet, he had waited three months for a pastoral counselor. This signifies his deep desire for seeking pastoral counseling even though he did not verbally express the need for help. Usually, in Korean culture, people do not wait for three months if they do not feel the need for something. So, the counselor understood the dynamics of the Korean middle-aged male's request for pastoral counseling as an important sign of his desire for help. Also, in my years of experience at the church, I know that few middle-aged Korean males seek pastoral counseling. Thus, I perceived his seeking out and waiting for counseling as suggestive of his need to seek help within the church community, which further implies a desire for pastoral counseling and not secular counseling. Therefore, this deep understanding and application of Korean culture for Kim is helpful to build therapeutic rapport and trust.

Kim's sense of isolation and his seeking pastoral counseling service within the Korean American church setting can be described as what Sang Hyun Lee (2001) identifies in an Asian American theological context as being one of marginality and forced liminality. The immigrant exists in a context of forced liminality, which means living between two cultures and enduring

non-acceptance by the dominant culture. Within Kim's, liminality, he seeks familial connection at the church community and now he looks for a deeper care which is pastoral counseling including familial, social, and even mental health care at the same faith community.

His decision should not be seen as pathological or cynical. Lee (2001) connects immigrants' homelessness with God's homelessness. As the son of God who became part of the human family, Jesus Christ also was homeless and experienced forced liminality during his ministry and life. In Kim's case, the request for pastoral counseling within God's house can be viewed as a sign of this Korean American Christian man's sense of liminality. Tong-He Koh (2001) also points out the role of religion in mental health for Korean Americans. He contends that religion and the clergy can help the client's healing process. Kim faces liminality in his connection and care, and he seeks deeper connection and care at God's house.

In this way, the Korean American church becomes a holistic sanctuary for Kim while at the same time this sanctuary could block his opportunity to seek diverse resources outside of the church family. Therefore, to understand the importance of the client's connection with his church community, its possible positive and negative impact, it is essential that the counselor's assessment and conceptualization of the case be accurate. Again, without understanding this client's deep social, psychological, and spiritual connection with the church community as an extended family system, the care of his soul would have not been possible.

The church's ineffective ministry in dealing with the issue of alcohol

Kim reports that he feels guilt, like that of a sinner, in his mind. He reports that he drank one or two bottles of beer when he attended social gatherings at his previous church and at business parties. As a businessman, he sometimes encounters involvement with alcohol during business meetings and social gatherings. He reports that, as a Christian, he believes that drinking

is a sin.

Historically, Korea was evangelized in the 19th century by American Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries. These foreign missions were developed along with a historical atmosphere of white supremacy and an expansion of American culture as a part of imperialism (Association of the History of Korean Christianity, 1989, p.175). The virtue of temperance was one feature of the American religious culture that developed. From the beginning of Korean mission history, except in a small number of progressive denominations, temperance has persisted as a virtue in Korean churches regardless of denomination. Therefore, drinking is considered a sinful behavior for most Korean Christians.

Ironically, indigenous Korean culture includes drinking as a strong aspect of social activity. A Christian who is taught that drinking is a sin experiences cognitive dissonance between so-called religious life and social life, in the religious self and social self, as was the case for Kim. Without understanding the nature of drinking from social, theological, and cultural perspectives, Korean Christians who drink can develop a serious sense of guilt and judge their drinking as individual pathology. Like Kim, many first-generation Korean immigrants' way of life still reflects Korean culture as it was when they immigrated. Thus, Kim was strongly influenced by traditional Korean culture to see drinking as an important social activity for business and friendship, even in church, yet he was also influenced by the religious idea that drinking was a sin⁴.

⁴According to Seung Ock Jang and Sang Heun Shin's research, Korean office workers are heavily influenced by the use of alcohol. They researched how office workers are influenced by the use of alcohol in their efficiency of work. Heejong Lee and Jegal Chung report that, using CAGE as a clinical screening measure (Cutting down, Annoyance by criticism, Guilty feeling, and Eye-openers) which are four behavioral categories to discern the level of alcohol dependence, 31.4 % of the participants in their study were over-drinkers, 19.5 % abused alcohol, and 90% of the participants suffer from alcohol related disease (Jang & Shin, 2008, 470). In 2006, the highest amount of alcohol use is among males (85.9% vs. female: 61.2%), office workers (86.8%) and professionals (84.6%) (Jang& Shin, 2008, 471). From this research we can see that there is a strong drinking culture in Korean society that impacts most office

My client's guilt and shame, his cognitive dissonance, is not uncommon among Asians who live in this liminal reality. For instance, even though there is little research on Korean American's use of alcohol, one interesting report comes from the *Northwest Asian Weekly*, which featured an article titled, "Does Alcohol Affect Your Life?" This article asserts that among Asian Americans, there are great differences between drinkers and abstainers. Japanese and Cambodian Americans are more likely to be drinkers and Korean Americans and Filipino Americans are more likely to be abstainers. According to Ford Kuramoto (2002, p. 5), executive director of the National Asian Pacific American Families against Substance Abuse Inc. in Los Angeles, "Asian and Pacific Islanders often have different standards of alcohol abuse. Their views often differ from traditional Western views of alcohol abuse in that they may not consider heavy drinking in their home as alcohol abuse." His comments call attention to the importance of cultural differences among Asian Americans, and he adds an important comment: "Due to religious and cultural reasons, Asian and Pacific Islanders feel a stigma more intensely than other cultures" (Kuramoto, 2002, p.5). Because of this shame and disgrace from their cultural and religious values, they try not to draw attention to themselves by seeking professional help.

Keeping in mind the importance of the cultural context to provide the culturally attuned pastoral care and counseling, Jisup Kim, a first-generation Korean immigrant who runs a successful business and deals with Korean companies and Korean connections for his work, is often asked to attend parties and other gatherings where alcoholic beverages are served. These are important social, cultural, and business meetings for him. However, for him, these are also guilt-causing events. When Kim was a part of his previous church community, he had little

workers, professionals, and businessman and women in their work and at social gatherings. Therefore, living in a drinking culture on one hand, and living in a temperance-based culture on another hand, is likely to be stressful for most Korean Christians.

concern about other people's judgment regarding drinking. Therefore, drinking did not create a conflict within him. His previous church community was an affirmative and positive family system even though the religious culture of temperance was still present.

Now, however, he needs to build a new relationship in a new church family system. In this new context, guilt about drinking stings him from deep within his psyche. This is accompanied by his anger at the church leaders who split the "family" (like children's anger against their divorced parents) and eventually made him feel isolated to the degree that he needed to find a new support system.

The quantity and frequency of his use of alcohol does not meet the category of substance abuse. However, he feels himself to be a sinner due to his use of alcohol and his feeling of isolation as a result of his cultural, social, and theological perspectives. His feeling of guilt, isolation within the church, and his attempt to minimize his problem as "not an important issue" has to be understood from cultural, theological, and social perspectives in order to assess his situation accurately and develop an effective treatment plan. Therefore, understanding the loss of his previous church as the "loss of his extended family," the guilt of his drinking could also be understood within the framework of the loss of his major support family system. Now, exposed to another family system with which he has a deep need for connection, he fears exposure of his "sinful" self, and thus seeks professional help within the family system of the church. Basically, he reports his counseling goal as overcoming his isolation at the church and this goal leads to unfolding the cultural complexity of Korean drinking culture at the church and society, and reveals one individual's ambivalence and sense of isolation in this situation.

Kim's perception of himself as a sinner is also related to his spiritual formation and social environment. Ironically, temperance is a cultural norm in Korean churches in Korea and in the

United States but in Kim's previous church the use of alcohol was not encouraged; however, it was not considered a sin. Therefore, Kim's need for belonging and the complex aspects of drinking culture in Korean cultures (church and society) need to be addressed properly for Kim to develop a healthier understanding about drinking, intimacy, and how to embrace himself without feeling guilt and shame.

Diverse interpretations of the Bible regarding the use of alcohol

In order to provide Kim with a healthy understanding about drinking, it will be necessary to provide some guidelines from the Bible. However, biblical interpretations about drinking seem debatable: drinking can be either a sin or a feast. Kim's struggle can be understood in this theological controversy. For example, Richard Land and Barrett Duke (2008) advocate against the use of alcohol for Southern Baptists, seeing the use of alcohol as unfaithful behavior for Christians. They cite Bible verses such as Proverbs 20:1 and 31:6-7 and emphasize the negative impact of the use of alcohol. It is common to use these Bible verses for preaching and education in Korean churches and to reinforce the correlation between drinking and sinfulness. However, Gary Steven Shogren (2000) analyzes drinking and eating as central elements to the Kingdom of God based on his biblical interpretation of Romans 14:17. He associates the positive implications of drinking as important elements of the feast in the kingdom of God. As these theological discourses show, the issue of drinking in Christian faith can lie somewhere between the cause of sin and the symbol of feast. However, the view of drinking as a feast is hardly present in Korean churches, except for a small number of progressive Protestant denominations.

Kim's life alternates between the enjoyment of alcohol in his social and intimate relationships and guilt for indulging in alcohol in his religious and spiritual life. Therefore, his way of asking for help and healing are closely related to his formation of self in the complexity

of race, culture, faith, and the social support systems surrounding him. Kim is struggling with forced liminality, and further faces a very complex liminality because he is caught between two religious cultures and two social cultures. His sense of shame and guilt would have been present even though he had not directly addressed it at the sessions. The reason why he felt a great amount of pressure, guilt, and shame is because of his lack of confidence, and perceived loss of face as well as integrity. Therefore, moving to a different faith community evokes this shame and guilt about his drinking. His relationship to his previous church is important in many ways and, at the same time, in order to preserve his sense of safety, his relationship with his previous church had to be maintained. Therefore, his loss of this previous church was so difficult to move and his has difficult adjustment at his new church leadership.

Meaning of counseling for Jisup Kim in relation to the AAPC Code of Ethics and challenge for cultural relevance

Boundary Issues in Korean American Church Contexts

In the Confucian culture, family honor is important. Disclosing family secrets brings family disgrace. Family is a caring and loving system as well as a closed system in terms of the protection of family honor. A dramatic example can be found in the experience of comfort women who tried to return to their families after WWII: there are sad stories concerning some families who sought honor-killing for these abandoned, wounded Korean women. Sharing one's problems or traumas, much less seeking help for them, is discouraged in this tradition. One church member said, "I cannot go to the secular counseling center. I want church people to help me. I don't want other people to know about me." Another person said, "After your workshop, I finally made up my mind to start counseling." Working as pastoral counseling staff-person at a Korean American church, I have heard these kinds of comments quite often. Kim also started his

pastoral counseling because it is church counseling. He did not want to expose his issue to the outsider. It is more obvious that seeking professional help with younger woman could be a challenge to a Korean middle-aged man. He overcame this cultural challenge to seek pastoral counseling at the church where he feels home. Therefore, the issue of boundary between the client and church pastoral counseling staff could be challenging in certain cultures because of boundary ambivalence. However, Kim saw it as an advantage for his participation for pastoral counseling because in this way he can save face, both individually and for his family. However, paradoxically, receiving pastoral counseling at the church could also increase the possibility of losing face before another church family. Therefore, the boundary issue needs to be understood carefully to help and support the healing process of the client. It should not be a fixed law or policy regardless of the individual diversity and cultural complexity.

Dual Relationship in Korean American Church Contexts

Clinical boundaries between Kim and the church pastoral counseling staff could easily lead into a dual relationship. Kim appreciates the intimate dialogue with the pastoral counseling staff at the church, but this situation could create a challenge for a pastoral counselor, trained according to American pastoral counseling guidelines, who has a rigorous code of ethics for the client and counselor's dual relationship. My role at the church presents difficulties in preventing dual relationships. For example, I see clients at the church, but not all of my clients are members of the church. Legally, I am working at the church, but I am seeing these clients as a clinical staff member at my pastoral counseling institute. Therefore, even though I see clients at the church, the standard of care is set by the AAPC Code of Ethics. Also, my being on staff at the church means that I have multiple roles. For example, in addition to counseling people, I also teach classes and sometimes preach. When congregants come to counseling, they know me already

from my other work at the church. From a Western sense of professional boundaries in counseling, this multidimensional role is tricky, risky, and even possibly dangerous. In the Korean context, it is necessary to build trust with church members through other professional activities so that they will feel safe enough to ask for counseling. Practicing pastoral counseling as a member of a Korean church staff could be interpreted by others as bordering on violating ethical codes regarding boundaries.

However, it is in this way that I encounter the healing journeys of people who never thought of mental health care as an option for them. In this risky, tricky, and seemingly dangerous way, I invite people to try out a new way of healing their deep wounds. In this context, I, who understand their complicated feelings regarding boundaries in mental health care, can show empathy for their tendency to ask for quick solutions, be patient as therapeutic rapport builds gradually, educate the congregation on the nature of mental health, and listen to their ways of surviving bi-cultural/multicultural living as an immigrant.

Confidentiality issues in Korean American church contexts

That I am an immigrant myself as well as a church counselor has meant a lot to people who had closed their minds to the possibility of sharing family secrets outside of the family. An immigrant church counselor should offer a non-anxious presence, a resource, and be an insider/outsider for immigrant church members who are seeking non-threatening, non-attention-drawing care from professionals inside the Korean community. For example, this is how I deal with the Western boundary and with serving the needs of clients who are congregation members.

For most Korean immigrant Christians, the church is an extended family as well as a major social networking sphere. Since they view the church as their cultural and religious sanctuary, they want to seek “sacred care and Christian help” for their mental health, instead of

secular counseling. As noted above, this view of boundaries and other aspects of professional practice could be considered controversial. However, this is one way to engage cultural differences as a critical way of conceptualizing cases and treatment plans. Based upon this discussion, my client's behaviors are more understandable: it explains why he finally asked the church counselor for help, said that he did not have any serious issues, and eventually opened up regarding his issues with a gained trust. Kim also came as an individual client, then wanted to join my church class. Also, he now wants to share with other church members that he is in counseling with me. Sometimes, other church members ask and smile, "I know who is in counseling. You do not have to hide the fact that he is in counseling. He told me that already. Did he come last week?" This seemingly dangerous comment that could break the confidentiality happens, not very often but not very rarely. Dealing with Kim's confidentiality is a challenge, but it is also a necessary practice that I have learned about the value of culture for counseling.

I also learned the value of cultural competence and its importance in counseling from Asian American psychologists Derald Wing Sue and David Sue. Sue and Sue (2003) highlight the importance of culture for the mental health care of Asian Americans. The population of Asian Americans increased five-fold between 1973 and 2001, to approximately 10,242,988 and the majority of Asian Americans are foreign-born (three fourths of Asian Indians, Koreans, and Southeast Asians are foreign-born) (Sue & Sue, 2003, p.327). They offer guidelines for how to interact with Asian Americans in clinical settings. As important Asian cultural values and issues, they list collectivistic orientation, hierarchical relationships, parenting styles, emotionality, a holistic view of mind and body, academic and occupational goals, and being the target of racism and prejudice (Sue & Sue, 2003, p.327). General social problems of refugees and immigrants are

shame, psychotherapy being a foreign concept to many Asian Americans, expectations of counseling, counseling intervention, and family therapy (Sue & Sue, 2003, p. 327).

In my sessions with Kim, I paid attention to his story in light of his being a Korean Christian immigrant. I noted that he used my title of teacher, a common Korean expression for the respected figure, which implied his conception of the therapy as something foreign as well as having a hierarchical relationship. Therefore, I did not completely follow Sue and Sue's guidelines, but many of them were used in the course of my pastoral care. These values and guidelines play an important role in building therapeutic rapport and finally terminating the session. Therefore, dealing with boundary issues, dual relationships, and confidentiality issues are all guided and recommended by the AAPC Code of Ethics. But, everyday, meeting with different clients from different cultures with differing theologies requires us to think about a creative and culturally attuned code of ethics. These cultural differences impact my understanding of boundaries and require me to move from being rigid to more flexible, to develop a treatment plan that is culturally effective. These culturally competent guidelines will help clients find important values for understanding their healing and suffering in relation to seeking mental health care in the United States.

Treatment and Intervention

The theoretical orientation of my work with Kim combines Relational Cultural Theory (RCT, formerly Self-in-Relation Theory) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). RCT focuses on the importance of interpersonal relationships, exploring how individual, familial, and socio-cultural relations influence the client in general (Walker & Rosen. 2004). As Jisup Kim is a Korean American immigrant, it is significant to use the RCT perspective to understand the roles played

by the client's socio-cultural sense of self, his meaning of church community, and his struggle with drinking as a Korean Christian immigrant. The therapeutic relationship also builds the client's capacity for RCT's core values and main therapeutic goals—capacity for mutuality, authenticity, and vulnerability—in order to enhance empathic growth and healing in connection with others. In addition to RCT, I also employed CBT, using David Burn's theoretical framework to explore the client's cognitive distortions related to his presenting problem of adjustment difficulties at the church.

Treatment Goals

My overall goal was to increase client's social interaction at the church and increase his self confidence as a Korean American Christian. Toward this end, I had the following treatment goals:

1. In the therapeutic relationship the therapist will model RCT's core values of mutuality, authenticity, and vulnerability in order to engage the client and thereby enhance his capacity for these characteristics and his openness to healing in connection with others.

2. RCT emphasizes that Kim will benefit from raising his awareness of his socio-cultural location. Kim will be more conscious of and understand better how he, as a Korean immigrant, has suffered from unhealthy church dynamics, the difficult adjustment process in a new faith community, and has encountered a confusing diversity of theological voices within his own faith community. Also, he will increase his authentic sense of self, which will help his interactions at the church as well as his own self-acceptance. RCT's emphasis on empowerment of the client will aid him in his experiences of discrimination and insufficient English competence.

3. Using a CBT framework, Kim will learn to reframe his cognitive distortions of perfectionism, polarized thinking, and generalizations, resulting in more open and flexible

cognitive thinking patterns. Such increased openness and flexibility will contribute to healthier relationships and interactions, more normal affect, and more graceful acceptance of self and others as Christian. For example, Kim will address his cognitive distortion about being either a good or bad Christian. This is one example of Kim's polarized thinking and the framework will help him to understand his theological struggles of shame and guilt.

Treatment Strategy

1. Provide a supportive and safe general therapeutic milieu through therapist's relational responsiveness and mutual empathy.

2. Increase client's awareness of differences in persons as lived realities and gifts of God's creation. It will help him to understand his cognitive distortion of polarized thinking and will decrease it. This change will help Kim to feel less pressured and anxious about his drinking behavior.

- (1) Use David Kiesery's (1998) Temperament Sorter to give him insight into the existence of different personality types and the strengths and weaknesses of his own type.

- (2) Review Kiersey Temperament Sorter result and analysis of his personality indicator. Using this, help him to understand the differences of personality types and help him to understand that personality differences are present in all God's creation. This change will help him to accept his personality as God's creation so that he can feel less anxious and judgmental.

3. Decrease his cognitive distortions: "Polarized Thinking," "Over-generalization," and "Should Statements." Kim will decrease his sense of guilt related to his drinking and will see more positive Christian values and practices in his life. Increase more positive thoughts and

emotions.

(1) Use Cognitive reframing of his view of himself from negative to neutral or positive.

(2) Use David Burn's list of Cognitive Distortions and Daily Mood Log.

4. Increase the ability to view a diversity of theological stances.

(1) Theological issues about drinking will be dealt with by comparing theological stances. Use RCT's concept of therapist vulnerability to help client feel mutual empathy. Therapist will share her own struggle as a Christian leader and as a seminary student in Korea with Korea's drinking culture. Therapist will provide a history of Korean Christianity and prohibition of alcohol as deriving from both nationalism and Christian missionary fundamentalism.

(2) Create a safe space to talk about his drinking history and its related Korean Christian history. Help him understand his drinking and his collective identity as a Korean Christian immigrant will help lessen his guilt and shame. Explain that the origin of the Korean church's fundamental theology regarding drinking is related to certain Christian traditions and theological discourses. Help him understand the broad nature of theology and Christian tradition, which will expand his view on Christianity and where drinking fits into his own theology or faith stance.

5. Increase Kim's support system: increase self-care and build up support system. Kim will be asked to develop a self-care plan as homework. Client will be educated about the importance of growth-full relationships.

Client's progress. Through the treatment, Kim grew in his ability to see how his social, cultural, and theological self with his cognitive distortions affected his difficult adjustment in

creating new connections. He developed a broader understanding of his formation of self and relationship in his given social, cultural, and theological contexts. RCT and CBT helped address his identity, relational issues, and cognitive distortions and increase his healing through connection with others.

At termination, client stated that he wanted to continue to practice a daily mood log to embody more appropriate cognitive patterns. The client terminated the counseling to join the lay leaders' training program, which client had hesitated doing for a year. It was great progress for client to be involved in relationships and ministry in this way. He left counseling with a sense of self-confidence, more open-mindedness for relationship with himself, less judgemental, and with more caring attitudes toward himself, others, and God. He started a new cognitive, affective, behavioral, and theological/spiritual journey in this new church. He was excited to see opportunities to use his potential and resources in ministry in this church, which at one time he wanted to leave.

Summary

I have shared a clinical case and my theological and cultural exploration of how to better understand and care for the soul of Kim in the Korean American Protestant church as a multicultural pastoral counselor. This case has representative values that could possibly help in the healing of thousands of other Korean Christian immigrants who exhibit similar cognitive distortions, experience the same life stressors as immigrants, and who, like my client Kim, are seeking social/emotional/spiritual connection in the Korean American immigrant church community. Therefore, it is essential that the therapist understand the cultural dynamics of the immigrant church context. Without thoughtful cultural and theological analysis, a therapist may overlook the deep layers of Kim's social, cultural, and theological location of drinking and its

effects on his relationships with self, others, and God. Therefore, for an accurate cultural, theological, and social understanding of this client, I explored several issues: 1) church as an ambivalent family; 2) church's ineffective dealing with Kim's use of alcohol; 3) need for culturally attuned code of ethics for AAPC multicultural pastoral counselors regarding boundary, dual relationship, and confidentiality issues; and 4) culturally attuned treatment plan. This exploration has addressed ways in which a client's difficulties can be a combination of individual and social influences. If a therapist focuses on a client only from the point of view of individual pathology, then the client's concern may not be accurately assessed and the care may be ineffective. Care-full, culturally attuned pastoral counseling requires constant dialogue ~~with~~ between the counselor herself and the client who is located in a certain culture, society, and theology.

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History and Future of Korean Pastoral¹ Counseling²

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Abstract The history of Korean pastoral counseling is organized in three historical periods: (1) Era of Birth: Introduction and Translation Period (1950-1975), (2) Era of Growth: Specialization Period, (1980-1999), and (3) Era of Identity: Competition and Autonomy Period (2000-Today). The author analyzes the background of growth in Korean pastoral counseling development, the research trends, and counseling centers and suggests that the Korean pastoral counseling needs to deal with the following issues: co-operation among all professional associations, internationalization, increasing sensitivity to the counseling and professional ethics, church based counseling centers, supervision, focused research, development of the spiritual assessment and diagnostic tools, specialization of counseling practice, uprooting the creative counseling tools from the Korean tradition, networking with secular counseling associations, increasing job opportunity after graduation, and developing the standards for license and curriculum.

Key words: Korean Christian Counseling, Korean Pastoral Counseling, Historical development

Introduction

The Korean pastoral counseling movement attained tremendous achievements in the 1990s. Pastoral counseling appeared to be the most competitive academic field based on the increasing number of student enrollment in major universities. For example, there are almost 253 graduates

¹ In this paper I use “pastoral” counseling as an inclusive term for both pastoral counseling and Christian counseling. I am mindful that this inclusive use of the term, pastoral, is not without problems. It is probably correct that, in Korea, Christian counseling movement is born out of pastoral counseling movement.

² An earlier draft of this article was published at You, Y.G. (2010). “The history and future of Christian (pastoral) counseling.” *Theological Forum*, 60, 93-111.

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(1976-2009) and 33 currently registered students(2010-2011) in the area of pastoral care and counseling at United Graduate School of Theology, Yonsei University. During the past twenty years, over 20 counseling associations have been founded with many counseling institutes or centers, delivering very quality counseling to people in Korea. Another sign of the emergence of pastoral counseling movement in Korea is the increased interest in local churches on the topic of counseling and healing related programs. Special lectures about Christian counseling are being given in churches. The number of laypersons into pastoral counseling field has been rapidly increasing. At this point in its development, it would be helpful to review the current status of the pastoral counseling field in Korea. In doing so, I will consider future direction for the movement. I will delineate three distinct eras of pastoral counseling movement and provide the corresponding social contexts. Then I will suggest the future tasks in Korean pastoral counseling movement.

Three eras of Korean Christian counseling

Era of Birth: Introduction and Translation (1950-1979)

If we delineate the periods of pastoral counseling in Korea, there are three eras. The first era was characterized as the '*introduction and translation*', in which the foreign materials about pastoral counseling were introduced through translation. The courses on pastoral counseling were taught and translations from textbooks were written in English and translated into the Korean language. In 1951, Dr. Hwanshin Lee taught a pastoral counseling course (in Korean *Muneuihak*) at The College of Theology, at Yonsei University. In 1968, Seward Hiltner's *Preface to Pastoral Theology* was translated into Korean. Wayne Oates' (1974) *Christian Pastor*, and Seward Hiltner's (1976) *Pastoral Counseling* were translated. In this period, two

books, *Principles of Pastoral Counseling* by Euyoung Hwang (1970), and *Introduction to Pastoral Counseling* by Peter Van Lierop (1978) who was professor of Yonsei University were written with the attention to the Korean context. Peter van Lierop founded the student counseling center at Yonsei University with a goal to provide a clinical setting in which to put theoretical knowledge into practice knowledge.

Symbolically, it was important to have a clinical setting in the teaching environment. In 1974, Peter van Lierop offered the first Clinical Pastoral Education program at Severance Hospital of Yonsei University. Through this CPE program, he opened up the practical space in which the students were able to deliver pastoral care. More English and German books on pastoral counseling were translated giving greater opportunities to build the students' theoretical foundations. The ability of Koreans to integrate pastoral counseling theory and practice was solidly established.

Era of Growth: Specialization of Pastoral Counseling (1980-1999)

Traditionally, the pastoral counseling area had been under the big umbrella of pastoral theology. This period is noted for the effort to turn Pastoral Counseling into a specialization, apart from pastoral theology. This was the era of the founding of many counseling associations.

In 1982, *The Korean Association of Pastoral Counselors* (KAPC) was organized and provided a foundation for Korean pastoral counseling. Initially, the activities of KAPC were not vital, since it functioned as a community of pastoral counselors and theologians in which scholars and participants shared their idea and concerns. But it became more active after hosting of Asia Pacific Congress on Pastoral Care and Counseling in 1997. I recall watching participants from many parts of the world dancing to the rhythm of Korean *Arirang* on the last day of the conference. It exposed Korean pastoral counseling to the world. This conference was also an

opportunity through which Korean pastoral counselors were acknowledging each other's professionalism.

In 1997, *The Korean Society for Pastoral Care and Counseling* was organized and began publishing *Ministry and Counseling*. In 1999, the *Korean Association of Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy* was organized. This association included Christian social workers, psychiatrists, and scholars. *The Journal of Korean Christian Counseling & Psychotherapy* was launched for discussion for pastoral counseling scholars in 2000. In 2001, *The Korean Association of Clinical Pastoral Education* was organized for pastoral care givers in hospitals and special institutes. Through this organization, Severance Hospital at Yonsei University, Korean University Hospital, and Chungnam University Hospital were officially certified as CPE centers. Initially, Catholic members joined, but later founded their own CPE organization. During this period, we cannot deny that there were some conflicts and chaos. Many associations were very competitive, made their own licensing policy and do not acknowledge the other association's license. Despite the conflicts and struggles between organization, this competition was lead into the proliferation of these associations. It is my evaluation that the rising up of many associations has greatly contributed to the attempt to find professional identity and the developing of the pastoral counseling field as a special area.

Era of Identity: Competition and Autonomy (2000 - Today)

In this period, many counseling centers (academy based systems, independent programs, church related programs) were founded and many courses related with pastoral counseling were actively taught in many theological schools. Many theological schools created their own counseling centers through which students placed themselves into clinical experiences. While the various organizations were busy in introducing pastoral counseling in the second era,

organizations began to make an effort to find their unique identity within Korean pastoral counseling in this third era. After the period of initiating their activities, the associations began to invest their energies in more specifically *Korean* pastoral counseling. They sought to rediscover their Korean roots, and blend them with the field of pastoral counseling. In another direction, the Korean associations put much effort in delineating the specific characteristics of pastoral counseling, differentiating it from secular counseling. This enabled a greater sense of the autonomy of pastoral counseling. In 2009, *The Korean Association of Christian Counselors and Psychotherapy* hosted an international conference through which the fully developed status of Korean pastoral counseling was introduced to the world.

The conspicuous phenomenon of this period was that every theological school valued the importance of pastoral care and counseling as a major academic field in a theological curriculum. The Graduate School of Theology at Yonsei University began accepting 6 credit hours from a CPE program as pastoral care and counseling credits. Many other theological schools showed a big interest in the area of pastoral care, Christian counseling, and pastoral counseling. Pastoral counseling became the most competitive academic major for students to enter at the graduate school. Also, it became a trend to combine clinical experience with teaching and research. Therefore, many theological schools created their own counseling centers so that their students could be exposed to the counseling practicum. This functioned to minimize the gap between theoretical understanding and practice. However, there was criticism that pastoral counseling had become so popularized with under-qualified counseling services.

Contextual factors for Korean pastoral counseling development

The growth of pastoral counseling in Korea is related with the history of economic

growth in Korea. Korean people are in need of safe places in which they can share their problems and expose themselves vulnerable. Looking back over recent decades, Koreans have had a tendency to feel it was too dangerous to expose their weakness to others; the atmosphere everywhere was so highly competitive. Such was the impression that high-speed economic growth made upon people. Korea was gradually transformed into a market economy, which involved embracing not only values associated with capitalism, but also the importing of Western values. I do think it was merely economic growth, but the acceptance of Western values associated with capitalism. The emphasis on economic efficiency have influenced in the way of making human relationship and have created very competitive atmosphere. This atmosphere made people more exclusive to each other. Where there is a problem, they tend to be less reliance on family and local community to address relational problems. They have lost the therapeutic community in which they can get comforts and consultations. The traditional family system, which had functioned as a ventilation space of one's feelings and emotions when family members were in crisis, had collapsed. But the counseling center was there to replace it. A particular need for counseling to treat people's emotional, psychological, and spiritual emptiness came about during the economic crisis in 1997.

Another growth factor was the Korean church. It expanded in numbers of congregational members and in the sizes of the church buildings with the sacrifice of their qualitative growth. When the number of Korean church congregation memberships settled down to a status quo, churches began to take seriously another dimension of growth i.e. care giving. For the qualitative growth, churches adopted counseling tools, such as couple seminars, father school, mother school, parenting school, etc. By doing so, the church provided the congregation members time to re-evaluate their relationship patterns. Also, the growth of the church financially contributed

to management of the counseling centers.

Another factor for the growth for pastoral counseling has been the level of personal conflict in the Korean society. The traditional Korean "self" feels comfortable in community relationships. However, the influx of industrialization brought economic challenges. The "traditional self" which is actually a "communal self", was challenged by an "individual and autonomous self" from Western culture. I call this as a cultural schizophrenia. The indigenous healing for Koreans had been in the community (family, community of faith, village community). However, the Christian culture de-constructed this healing system, so that Korean Christians have lost the former therapeutic framework. This has led them into the culturally schizophrenic state. Korean pastoral counseling has provided a holding environment for these Korean Christians who are experiencing a chaotic identity crisis.

Research trends in Korean pastoral counseling

Korean pastoral counseling has focused on theoretical understanding through the *era of birth* to the *era of identity*. Through translation of foreign works, there has been an emphasis on new theoretical approaches. However, it is to be regretted that articles related with Korean clinical settings are few in numbers. Though Korean pastoral counselors have relied heavily on translated works and benefited from them, there have been few attempts to develop research and theoretical approaches that are sensitive and emerge from the Korean context.

The following table will show the result of analysis on the articles in two pastoral counseling journals: 177 articles published in *The Journal of Korean Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy* and 68 articles published in *Ministry and Counseling*, a total of 245 articles from 2000 to 2009. I analyzed various articles and categorized into 9 categories according to the

issues that the articles are dealing with. The categories of research were counseling techniques, issues and phenomena, spirituality, theoretical reflection, application, identity, suggestions, program and scales, and Korean identity.

Table 1: Content analysis of the pastoral counseling articles published in Korea from 2000 to 2009.

Categories	Number Published	Percent
Counseling Techniques	21	8.6
Counseling Issues and Phenomenon	27	11.0
Spirituality	14	5.7
Theoretical Reflection	82	33.4
Application	71	29.0
Identity	6	2.4
Suggestions	9	3.7
Program, Scales	8	3.3
Korean Identity	7	2.9
Total	245	100.0

From the above table, we may observe that the articles in the pastoral counseling area have been tilted toward the theme of theoretical observation. It lacks the interest or attention to the Korean Christian context. It is necessary to show more interest in finding out the unique Korean identity in pastoral counseling, and in how the theoretical understanding may be applied to the concrete Korean church context. Even though there are some articles on the issue and phenomena, there needs to be more specific interest in the specific issues, e.g., demonic possession, religion addiction, eating disorders, computer game and sex addiction, etc. More specific issues need to be dealt with for pastoral counseling to develop specific strategies for different issues. Also, there needs to be research on the efficacy of different counseling approaches based on the client's evaluation and on the different needs of Christian clients. Such research will benefit the development of concrete counseling skills and strategies in delivering pastoral counseling for Korean Christians.

Another area of concern is on the published books in the area of pastoral counseling in

Korea. A total of 438 books were reviewed on the topic of pastoral counseling, listed in *Korean studies* (www.koreanstudies.net). The review of the books resulted in the following categorization.

Table 2: Content Analysis of Pastoral Counseling Books Published in Korea from 1962 to 2009.

Categories	Number Published	Percent
Translation	201	45.0
Encyclopedia	35	8.0
Practice and Technique	38	9.0
Research	33	8.0
Theory	61	13.0
Introducing Theory	12	3.0
Application	51	12.0
Etc.	7	2.0
Total	438	100.0

In Table 2, it is noticeable that books are composed of translated books. As in the case of the articles, the number of books on theoretical approach is high. It is desirable to see more books on the concrete counseling process by introducing Korean counseling cases and research through the clinical materials. Research on the specific issues is needed. Also, it is necessary to find pastoral counseling methodology and an efficient way to implement pastoral counseling for Korean Christian clients. It is my suggestion to publish books on ethical issues that pastoral counselors need to know about.

Trends in the Institutes and Centers of Pastoral Counseling

There are many associations related with pastoral counseling: *Korean Association of Biblical Counseling* (founded in 1995), *Korean Association of Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy* (founded in 1999), *Korea Evangelical Theological Society* (founded in 2000), *Korea Association of Spirituality & Psychotherapy* (founded in 2000), etc. These associations have focused on their own identity. However, they are not in co-operation with other

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associations. It is necessary for the associations to have dialogue and do co-operative among the associations.

The counseling centers in the pastoral counseling area may be delineated by three categories: 'academy based' centers, 'independent' centers, and 'church-related' centers. First, academy based centers are the *Spirituality and Healing Center* at Methodist Theological University, *Student Counseling Center* at Presbyterian Theological Seminary, *Christian Counseling Center* at Asia United Theological School, *Counseling Center* at Torch Trinity Theological School, and the *Counseling & Coaching Center* at Yonsei University.

Second, the independent centers are *Kim Young Ae Family Therapy Institute*, *Seoul Object Relation Therapy Institute*, *Korea Psychotherapy Institute*, *Arirang Puri Institute*, *Christian Healing and Counseling Institute*, *Christian Woman Counseling institute*, *Christian Group Counseling Center*, *Happy Family Institute*, *Korean Counseling Mission Institute*, *One Love Christian Counseling Center*.

Thirdly, the church related centers are *Youngnak Presbyterian Counseling Center* (founded in 1984), *Yeshim Counseling Center* (Yeshim Presbyterian church), *Daseum Education center* (Hanmail church) , *New Life Counseling Center* (Namseoul Grace Church) *Sarang Church Counseling Center*, *Onnuri Church Counseling Center*, *Somang Presbyterian Church Counselig Center*, *Myungsung Presbyterian Counseling Center*, *Saejungang Church Counseling Center*. The following table shows the different activities of various counseling centers. The categories are education, counseling, and research.

It is my view that the counseling centers need to have three functions: counseling, education, research. But the current activities of counseling centers in Korea are focused heavily on education. It is necessary to give more focus on the counseling itself and enhance the quality

of the counseling service. As a way of managing the counseling center, it was unavoidable to focus on the education. For the long-term purpose, each counseling center needs to characterize their counseling center with specific clinical issues. Also, it would be desirable to give more energy into the research with the clinical data.

Suggestions for the future of Korean pastoral counseling

Currently, Korean pastoral counseling is experiencing continuous growth, but it is necessary to check on it, and make a few suggestions to keep it growing.

1) Incorporation among pastoral counseling associations: We may notice that the research trend in pastoral counseling is too broad. In order to be more focused, the incorporation among the associations is necessary. It would be better to do their activities under one mother association for the sake conserving their energy.

2) International relationships: It is acknowledged that pastoral counseling in Korea has developed a lot internally, but it is necessary to let the world know the progress that the Korean pastoral counseling movement has made. As we noticed in the analysis of articles and books, it is very rare those which attempt to advertize the Korean pastoral counseling materials. It is quite necessary to advertise the Korean tradition in pastoral counseling to the world, with cooperation among the associations.

3) Sensitivity to the professional and counseling ethics: The third period is characterized by high competition among the counseling centers and associations. The main byproducts of this high competition have been the creation of unqualified counselors. It was a fact that the counseling education was done theoretically. Therefore, the counseling quality itself has not proven to be effective at being engaged in appropriate relationships. It would be desirable to

have a standardized licensing system. To maintain a good quality of the licensed counselors, the continuing education system is needed. The issues of confidentiality, the relationship between counselor and pastor, dual relationship, and professionalism in managing a counseling center need to be carefully considered. Also, it is necessary to undertake specific training for different needs. Once they are licensed, it is common to think that counselors can perform every kind of counseling. But it is necessary for a counselor to have his/her own specialty and characteristics in order to escape from a department-like counseling model.

4) Church based counseling: In the U.S.A., a pastoral counselor license is not acknowledged by states, but is seen as valuable by the churches. As pastoral counseling in Korea has become more specialized, it has shown a tendency to become separated from the churches. It is necessary to check again that pastoral counseling is rooted in the church. The board of trustee members at church counseling centers should in fact be church related members. And the staff of counseling centers needs to be Christians to maintain the proper Christian spirit. If one church is not able to support the counselor center it wishes to have, then it may ask several churches to join in supporting it financially together. This co-operative model would have the advantage of helping to keep confidentiality of congregation members.

5) Opportunities for supervision: Theories have been vigorously introduced in the area of Korean pastoral counseling. But it has been rare to find counseling institutes to also incorporate qualitative clinical training. It is my belief that a counselor is reborn through the experience of supervision. But in Korea, it has been very hard to find opportunities to experience supervision. It takes energy, time and money. Also, the opportunities to learn how to give supervision were not provided. In the curriculum of theological schools, it has been hard to find one course on supervision. It is my suggestion that to be an efficient supervisor, it will require 5 years of self-

training after getting a pastoral counseling license. It is also necessary to engage counseling student within various supervision formats: individual supervision, group supervision, team supervision, live supervision, and internet supervision.

6) Focused research: As we have observed, the research in Korean pastoral counseling is tilted toward the theoretical introduction and translation. It is my hope that future research will be done with the clinical data from the setting and be more focused according to the issues and problems.

7) Developing assessment tools: The Diagnostic statistical manual (DSM-IV-TR) guides many clinicians in the diagnosis of the clients. But it is hard to find a guide book for assessing the spiritual health of clients. It would be very helpful if there is a scale or diagnostic tool through which counselors may assess clients' spiritual health and needs. For example, the "Satisfaction Scale of Christian Married Couples, the Healthy Spirituality Scale, and the Spiritual Maturity Scale, which reflect the characteristics of the Korean Christian population, need to be developed.

8) Focused counseling: It would be more desirable to publish manual, text books and articles which focus of the specific issues and problem. For instance, counseling for the aged, demon possessed, homosexuals, homeless people, etc.

9) Development of Korean Pastoral Counseling: We cannot deny that Korean pastoral counseling has followed the American pastoral counseling pattern. However, it is time to rediscover the Korean tradition and raise its own voice. It is necessary to understand Korean clients' unique characteristics. What are the differences in the process of counseling compared with Western clients, and the factors in making therapeutic alliances for Korean clients? Also, it is necessary to theorize by finding out the counseling factors in the Korean cultural tradition.

10) Network with secular counseling associations: Korean pastoral counseling needs to be rooted in the church. But we need to go out to the secular counseling area and show the excellence of pastoral counseling. If we keep good connections with secular counselors, they will refer with confidence to the pastoral counselors when their clients are experiencing religious and spirituality issues.

11) Job opportunities: After graduating with a master-level degree in pastoral counseling, it is now hard to find a job. For the ordained male ministers, it would not be a problem. But for those females who are not ordained, it is hard to be employed in the secular counseling center, or church related counseling center. If job opportunities are not actively provided for these graduates, the popular movement in pastoral counseling will not last long.

12) Standardization: Every association in Korean pastoral counseling has their own standards and requirements. It is desirable to make standardized criteria for every association and have a standardized curriculum. This standardization process will enhance the general quality of pastoral counselors in Korea.

Conclusion

Through this article, I analyzed the current status of Korean pastoral counseling and suggested some practical ideas. Korean pastoral counseling has achieved tremendous development in a short period. This was done by contributions from scholars and clinicians. To keep this development going, it is necessary to be more specialized and have a standardized training system. It is my hope that this pastoral counseling movement is not just a temporary phenomena, but continues to develop help Koreans with their pain and sorrow. It is my regret that more data needs to be collected and analyzed. More research on the evaluation of the

counseling centers with standard objective criteria, evaluation of the curriculum at theological schools, and observation of theological trends in pastoral counseling in Korea needs to be done for the future.

Table 3: Counseling Centers and Types of Services Provided

Categories	Education			Counseling			Res	Lic
	Pub	Cou	Sup	Tel	Int	Dir		
Christian Woman Counseling Institutes	√	√			√		√	
Christian Group Counseling Center	√	√		√	√	√		√
Christian Counseling Center	√			√	√	√		
Kim Young Ae Family Therapy Institute	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Inner-healing Ministry Institute	√	√			√	√	√	
New life Counseling Center	√	√			√	√		
Korean Christian Counseling Institute	√			√	√	√		
Seoul Object Relation Therapy Institute	√	√	√			√	√	√
Arirang Puri Institute	√	√	√			√	√	
Younsei Counseling & Coaching Center	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Spiritual Psychotherapy Center	√	√	√	√		√	√	√
Christian Healing & Counseling Institute	√						√	
Hi Family: Institute of Home and Love	√				√		√	
Korea Family Counseling Center	√	√	√	√	√	√		√
Korean Counseling Mission Institute	√	√			√		√	
Korean Laugh Therapy Institute	√	√						
Korean Psychotherapy Institute	√	√	√	√	√	√		√
Korea Healing & Counseling Institute	√	√		√	√			
One Love Christian Counseling Center	√			√	√	√		

Sunshine Youth Faith Counseling center	√		√	√
Happy Family Institute	√	√	√	√

Notes: Pub=Public, Cou=Counselor, Sup=Supervisor, Tel=Telephone, Int=Internet, Dir=Direct, Res=Research, and Lic=License

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