



KOREAN ETHOS

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If we were to describe the predominant ethos of Americans -- those values which influence their social, political and personal life -- we would name: individual freedom, independence, self-reliance, privacy and fun. Western psychology has been more interested in the individual person, individual psychology, ego structure and what is happening in the person's psyche than in community. In the traditional Asian feudal and/or agrarian village society, people were living together and working together mostly in group setting or in close proximity from each other. Their economic, social and emotional lives were tied to each other. In such an environment, allegiance to each other is important. Interest of the group takes priority over the interest of the individual member (SC Choi, UC Kim, SH Choi, 1993). There is a need for emotional bond to each other for mutual help and support. They need to find ways to live together in harmony. The ideology of freedom, independence, individuality and privacy was not developed. Individual did not exist alone independently, but existed mainly in close relations with his/her extended family and collective network. With this orientation, it was difficult to define one's identity without reference to the collective identity to which an individual belongs. They were more conscious of group identity than of personal identity (JH Cha, 1994). Thus Asian psychological interest has been more interested in the psychology of human relations than in the psychology of the individual. It was further reinforced by the Confucian teachings which were primarily concerned with human relations.

Lebra describes Japanese psyche as consisting of

"Ego" (jibun) and social object, namely, "Alter" (Hito, other human beings), with the two influencing each other more than individual ego. Ego is characterized as "porous" with the individual ego and the family ego interacting with each other. This "porous ego" would be regarded as undesirable or pathological by the Western psychology which stresses the importance of the individual ego being protected by firm and strong ego boundaries. However, in the American society, people are increasingly fearful and distrustful of each other, and the institution of marriage, family values, and sense of community are declining. This declining tendency may be attributed, at least partially, to the predominant ideology of individualism. In recent years, it has been recognized that there is a danger in dichotomizing cultures into individualism and collectivism in a black and white manner. It not only clouds our understanding of the otherwise very complex interactions of the two orientations, but also it inevitably leads to our making good/bad comparisons. Attempts have been made to develop a conceptual model of coexistence of individualism and collectivism, and to avoid the distorted dichotomy of either individualism or collectivism (D Sinha & RC Tripathi, 1994).

In this article, I will attempt to describe some of the more important Korean ethos which have greatly influenced Koreans and their social and interpersonal behavior, especially in "old days." They are: *jeong*, *haan*, *chae-myun*, *noonchi*, *paja*, and *muhi*. With rapid Westernization, industrialization, and urbanization, Korean/Asian societies are going through phenomenal

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changes in their social structure, values and interpersonal relations. People are becoming more individualistic, and less collectivistic than 40 or 50 years ago. This coincides with the beginning of Westernization in Asian countries following the end of the World War II. Korean/Asian people are now in a blinded or confused transitional stage, and the ideology of the individualism with emphasis on materialism is taking a strong hold in Asian continents. Therefore, the validity of the below described "tradition-al" Korean ethos is weakening in the present day.

We can still observe that certain ethos are strong and well (i.e. Chae-myun, Muhi), while other ethos such as Jeong are disappearing. Nevertheless, it is essential to know and understand the Korean ethos in order to understand Koreans' psyche and their social behavior (L. Kim, 1990).

Most of young second generation Korean Americans in the United States probably have never heard about the word, *jeong*. They might have experienced *jeong* relations among family members, especially parental love, but they may not have the slightest idea what *jeong* is. It is my hope that an article, like this, will document and let the younger generations know how their older immigrant parents and grandparents had lived in "the old days." It would be also helpful to non-Korean mental health professionals to have a knowledge of the Korean ethos in order to understand Korean immigrant clients better in therapy setting.

JEONG 情, 情

There is no word in the Korean vocabulary more endearing and evocative than the word *jeong*. *Jeong* refers to a special interpersonal bond of trust and closeness. There is no English equivalent. *Jeong* encompasses the meaning of a wide range of English terms: feeling, empathy, affection, closeness, tenderness, pathos, compassion, sentiment, trust, bonding and love.

Jeong strengthens the bonding of relationship between two persons. It is a special affection toward a person. It is not a sexualized or erotic love. Koreans consider *jeong* an essential element in human life, promoting the depth and richness of personal relations. With *jeong*, relationships are deeper and longer lasting. In times of social upheaval, calamity, and unrest, *jeong* is the only binding and stabilizing force in human relationships. Without *jeong*, life would be emotionally barren, and persons would feel isolated and disconnected from others. *Jeong* is more than kindness or liking another. *Jeong* brings about the "special" feelings in relationships: togetherness, sharing, bonding. *Jeong* is what makes us say "we" rather than "I," "ours" rather than "mine" (L.

Kim, 1994).

The word, *jeong*, is usually combined with another word that modifies the nuances of meaning and defines the relationship. *Mo-jeong* is *jeong* bonding between a mother and child. *Jeong* between two friends or among friends is "Woo-jeong (Woo=friend)." *Ae-jeong* (Ae=love) is usually lovers' *jeong*; In-*jeong* (In=human) is human sympathy and universal compassion. The *jeong* relationship between teacher and student is that of an enduring mentorship, not merely a relationship where the teacher has the duty to transmit knowledge to the student. *Shim-jeong* (Shim=heart) is "jeong in the heart." It is the emotions we feel about another in our heart.

Chinese, Japanese and Koreans share the general concept of *jeong*, but each country appears to give the concept a somewhat different emphasis. The Chinese emphasize the aspect of loyalty and reciprocity in relationships, while the Japanese equivalent "Jyo" tends to emphasize sentimental feelings. "Jyo ni moroi" means that one is weak and vulnerable through sentimentality. Ki-ri (responsibility and royalty), is considered the most important ethos among Japanese. Koreans, however, give more importance to the concept of *jeong* as it relates to their daily living than Chinese or Japanese do.

Jeong develops not only in horizontal relations such as friendship, but also in vertical relationships, such those between parent and child, or between teacher and student. "Woo-jeong", *jeong* of two friends, connotes more than an ordinary friendship. Of course, there are different levels of "Woo-jeong," but typically, the friendship is deeper and longer lasting than one between ordinary friends. There is a special quality of having shared the fate together, such as the mutual bond of camaraderie and brotherhood that develops between two soldiers in war time who fought together in the frontline trenches, and shared life and death experiences. *Jeong* can develop among classmates, high school or college alumni, friends who share a faith or common interest, or among professional colleagues. The concept of "soul mate" perhaps comes close to capturing the essence of a friendship with deep *jeong*.

Jeong is not erotic and not sexualized. There is no implication of a homosexual relationship. The only erotic *jeong* is "Ae-jeong (love-jeong)," the *jeong* between husband and wife, or between two lovers, although some would say that erotic *jeong* is also present between a mother and her baby.

Although *jeong* can develop mutually among a group of people, such as alumni, through group identification, it is usually cultivated in a dyadic situation where there has been a give-and-take interaction between the two people. *Jeong* is usually reciprocated, but it can be unilateral.

- more "good earth-mother" archetype
- enduring warmth, care and love

We can also contrast the imagery of "erotic" love with that of *Jeong*. Erotic love can be described as hot, fiery, dynamic, intense, mercurial, pleasurable, unpredictable, and powerful. The imagery of *Jeong*, on the other hand, is: quiet, gentle, nurturing, caring, giving, trusting, loyal, considerate, devoted, dependable, and sacrificial (Wee haee joon da).

Reflecting on the above list of adjectives, I feel that the *Jeong* concept has more feminine quality of love, similar to the "self-in-relation" theory of the feminine psychology which emphasizes caring, connectedness and nurturing relations in love (Baker-Miller 1976, Gilligan 1982, Prozan 1992).

The characteristic prototype of *Jeong* would be "Mo-*Jeong*," meaning maternal love: a good earth-mother type of embracing, unconditionally accepting, and bonding.

정
은
하

There is a Korean expression, "go woon *Jeong*, mi woon *Jeong*," meaning "a beautiful *Jeong* and hateful *Jeong*." The idea is that once *Jeong* is established between the two persons, the *Jeong* bond and trust is unbreakable, even if the relationship goes through hateful and turbulent periods. The Buddhist implication is that the two are bonded together affectively forever by fate, whether they like it or not.

JEONG AND PSYCHOANALYTIC INSIGHT:

Does contemporary psychoanalytic thinking offer any insight or clue to help us understand the role of *Jeong* in our lives?

In his self-psychology, Kohut placed great importance on the role of empathy in the healthy development of the self (H Kohut, 1977). He stated that the empathic responses which emanate from parental figures first, and subsequently from other people, play a decisive role in building substance of the nuclear self. These "others" are called "selfobjects," because they function as nourishing elements of the self. Kohut emphasized that a person needs to experience at every stage of life empathic and affirmative responses from people, or "selfobjects." From this core experience emerge the sense of substance and continuity of one's self through time.

Fred viewed the essence of human nature as the "guilty person," wrestling between the id and the superego, whereas Kohut described human nature as a "tragic person," who is in search for empathic relationships in the restoration of self suffering from inner emptiness, iso-

JEONG AND LOVE:

Jeong is not experienced instantly, but grows over time. It is not a "love at first sight." It needs a certain period of "incubation" so that the *Jeong* bonding can occur. *Jeong* is like water coming up slowly and gently sipping through sands in the beach. It is not a gush of water. The process occurs more naturally and less intentionally than in love.

The concept of love has been richly dealt with in the history of Western culture and religions. The Western concept of love includes a variety of types: divine love (Agape), erotic love, maternal love, brotherly/sisterly love, platonic love, altruistic love, etc., to name a few. But *Jeong* does not fit into any one of these categories. *Jeong* is the common denominator within all of these types of love. One may say that "love" itself is also the common denominator. "Love" is a beautiful and powerful English word, but unfortunately the word has been overused, abused, commercialized, and sexualized to the degree that the word "love" has lost its clarity, beauty, meaning and power. *Jeong* can be love in the Western sense, but there are important differences in the nuance and quality. I would characterize those differences as follows:

LOVE (Western)

- more direct in expression
- more physical, behavioral
- more action-oriented
- active, positive, forward, outward
- more need/desire-related
- more intentional, volitional
- tends to be possessive
- more contractual
- differentiated with boundary
- separated self
- happiness, joy

JEONG (Asian)

- more indirect in emotional expression
- more affective, attitudinal
- more relational
- passive/aggressive, waiting, thinking, more inward
- more survival- and connection-related
- more naturally developing
- tends to be protective
- more unconditional
- less differentiated, and more fused

lation and fulfillment. I feel that the unique characteristics of jeong as empathic interpersonal relationships would be a valuable ingredient in affirming and encouraging the development and maintenance of a sense of self.

I feel that Winnicott's concept of "holding environment" helps us understand how it is important and essential to have a stable, holding environment for healthy emotional growth (DW Winnicott, 1965, 1986b). Again it is compatible with the idea of emotionally nurturing environment supported by the positive acceptance and affirming relationships of *jeong*.

I have already touched on the differences or contrast between love and *jeong* in the table.

Jeong appears to have a different affective quality than that of love. It seems that *jeong* represents a more primordial and primitive ways of relating than love, almost similar to an affect of mother-infant union or "return-to-the womb," a symbolic world of being more fused and less separated in the individuation-separation process. It has the quality of symbiotic interdependency. The concept of *jeong* corresponds with a "good earth-mother" type of love, as well as Jungian archetype. In contrast, love appears to be an affective experience of union in a developmentally more mature and individual state (ES Park, 1995).

BOUNDARY ISSUE

Western psychiatrists or psychologists raised boundary issues. They often raises a question that such *jeong* relationship in the family may contribute to developing "an enmeshed family" and "poor ego boundaries." It is true that, according to the Western point of view, most Korean families tend to be "enmeshed" with *jeong* relations, with the consequence of presumably "poor ego strength and ego boundaries" of individuals. The word "enmeshment" is a negative term, but it does not have to be from the Asian point of view. Asians feel that individual independence is a Western idea and maybe a desirable goal for Westerners. But for Asians, good "human relationships" are a desirable goal, and more important than individual independence. If individualism is pushed too hard, it may lead to a breakdown of marriage, family, and community. Each individual may exist for themselves without a sense of belonging and community, and is inclined to "do my own things." Already there are too many lonely and isolated people in the US. A recent trend to return to family values in the American political debate is indicative of the awareness that emphasis on individual independence and freedom perhaps may have gone to too far, and needs to be pulled back a little.

THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF JEONG

Some Western psychiatrists and psychologists are of the opinion that Koreans/Asians are not psychologically minded and are not suitable for psychodynamic psychotherapy. I disagree. Once a relation of *jeong* is developed with the therapist, psychological and emotional interactions would be very rich, intense, psychologically savvy and quick-minded. It would not be much different from the experience of transference and counter-transference (L. Kim, 1992).

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In the American way, people call a person by name (especially the first name), such as among siblings, sometimes even uncles or step-father. In Asian way, a person is addressed or called by the nature of the relationship, i.e. younger or older brother, mother=son, or brother-in-law, etc.

While *jeong* makes it possible to enrich our life and environment with nurturing and meaningful personal relations, it does have dark side with serious side effects. In its pure form, *jeong*, like love, may expect and demand the reciprocity of loyalty and trust. Therefore, if that loyalty is betrayed, it can be as hurtful and destructive as when love is betrayed. As already mentioned above, boundary issue can be problematic. Westerners and Westernized Koreans may fear that their personal and private lives could be easily encroached upon, intruded or interfered with by *jeong*-related people. This can be a source of conflict and tension. We need a balance between privacy and connection.

which refers to suppressed anger, hate, despair, the holding of a grudge, or feelings of "everlasting woe" (KW Lee, 1995). Anger is likely to transform into *haan* feelings over time, when one could not express anger and rage outwardly, and when one could not, act out, revenge, forget, push away, get over with, resolve, dissolve or unknot the anger, especially in the old days when they did not have much options. Koreans so readily understand and deeply experience *haan* that it is a folk term used by common people.

The original Chinese character for *haan* has the meaning of "to get even with, to revenge." But when we look at how Koreans have used the word, we see that it takes on different meanings. The Korean use of the word emphasizes aspects of suppression of anger, indignation, and holding a grudge. The notion of getting even with is secondary. In English, the spelling of *Haan* has been Romanized. Frequently, it is spelled as *Han*, and it has also appeared in English article as *Hahn* and *Haan*. *Haan* why I prefer the spelling *Haan*. Also if spelled *Hahn* or *Han*, the word often gets confused with a surname *Hahn* or the *Han* dynasty of the Chinese.

The word *Haan* is often combined with a second word to express the different nuances of *haan* feeling. Examples are: *Haan-ian* which means "crying and lamenting *haan*"; *Hwoe-haan* which means "*haan* with remorse and regret", similar to Japanese word *zan-nen*; *Won-haan*, which is "revengeful *haan*"; *Jung-haan* which is a "*haan* of passive acceptance and resignation." Korean scholars believe that *haan* is not simply a private emotion of a person who has suffered a lot; rather it is a pervasive "collective" emotional state among Koreans who have historically experienced an abundance of tragedies and pain in their lives. As a result of its geographic positioning (Korea is a bridge situated among China, Japan and Russia) Korea has been invaded and occupied frequently by surrounding military forces. Korea has even become a tributary nation to China and Japan. Under foreign military occupation, Korea — "the land of Morning Calm" — has been trampled, burned, and destroyed repeatedly.

Even in the twentieth century, Korea was occupied by Japan for 35 years until the end of World War II. Even after her liberation from Japan, tragically Korea was divided into two Koreas, a tragic victim of superpower cold war strategy. Millions of North Koreans escaped from communist North Korea to South Korea leaving behind family members, relatives and friends. To this day, they have not seem their loved ones over 40 years. In addition, Korean war erupted killing millions of people, including many American and UN soldiers. Korean

edness.

Another dark side of *jeong* is about the risk of developing in-group vs. out-group phenomena. It has the potential of leading people to protect each other within the circle of in-group, and discriminating against outsiders (SW Lee & HN Lee, 1993). That was the way they used to survive and protect themselves against invaders in feudal/tribal villages and provinces in the past. Koreans are known for being very kind, helpful, hospitable and compassionate to members of their affiliates, but they may be lacking in these attributes toward strangers and outsiders.

Some criticize that Koreans are too survival-oriented, and that they are primarily concerned with their family members, their kins and friends. They say that Koreans are weak in social and community conscience, social justice, and public etiquette (KW Lee, 1995). Also regional distrust and biases still exist in Korea. In this regard, Koreans/Asian countries can learn lessons from the experiences of American society in its effort to promote social justice.

Related concern is that *jeong* relations can cloud one's rational objectivity in the process of decision-making, such as in business transactions, personnel selection, etc., resulting in a potential risk for nepotism and corruption. Mixing *jeong*-relations with official matters in public life has been problems in Asian countries. As citizens become more sophisticated and enlightened politically with strong public education and respect for law, there should be every effort to stop mixing public matters with private personal relations, especially, in the public and political arena.

The in-group vs. out-group phenomena have split community organizations, and have been damaging Korean-Americans' efforts to organize themselves effectively in a community-wide effort for political and social causes. That is because organizations are often influenced by personal relations centering around a strong group leader.

Finally, I feel that the unique Korean/Asian concept of *jeong* can help us understand a new dimension of human emotions and interpersonal relationships, especially among Korean/Asians, that has thus far not been known to Western psychology. In spite of some side-effects, *jeong*-relations are generally conducive to life-affirmation and emotional nurturing. *Jeong* is a fascinating concept in the Asian traditions that deserves further attention and study.

HAAN 恨, 恨

Haan is the opposite of *jeong*. It is Korean word

War ended 40 some years ago, but the political problems have not yet been solved. The tension between North and South Korea, and the threat of military action, are continuous. Some call the tragic division of Korea as a "modern day Korean *haan*" (SC Paik, 1993).

Each war, each political and social upheaval, brought about suffering, personal losses, and unbearable woes to Koreans. Few have been spared the loss, pain, and suffering. Most have fought and struggled for survival, and somehow managed to exist. Some even have thrived. But they harbor deep feelings of *haan*: suppressed anger, resentment, and underlying depression. They have suffered feelings of indignation at having been victimized unfairly. However, for their own survival, as well as to live in harmony with the teachings of Confucius, they have had to swallow and suppress their feelings.

The *haan* in "collective subconscious psyche" of Korea is related to historical, political and social upheavals Korean has encountered for many centuries. But, in addition, there has been a great deal of personal misery, suffering and victimization in their domestic lives of Koreans. Traditionally, Korea had been a class-oriented society in which the ruling class, the "Yangban" had oppressed and abused the poor and the underclass, the "Ssang-nom". Also in the traditional Confucian society, the status and role of the female is subservient to that of the male. As a result, women have to endure much hardship and injustice. The poor and powerless had no recourse to appeal the injustice. In order to tolerate, they had to moderate their anger and indignation. Some scholars (KS Choi, 1991) speak of two different sources of *haan*: a *haan* derived from kong-no which means "anger over public matters," such social and political injustice, and a *haan* derived from Sa-no, "anger over personal matters," i.e., abuses by in-laws or husband.

FOUR PHASES OF HAAN:

Sang-Chin Choi (1993), a Korean psychologist, described the four experiential phases of *haan*. The first phase is experiencing of rage, anger, hostility, hate, and desire for revenge for the injustice done to him or her. An example would be: a wife who had been cruelly treated and abused by her mother-in-law, especially in the old days when it was impossible to divorce, she realizes that she can not do much in the way of retaliation and revenge on her mother-in-law. Therefore, in the face of the reality and situation, she tries to, or have no choice but to try to, control and suppress her anger and rage. She would start reevaluating the situation, and begin to feel that perhaps it was her fault, at least, partially. This would help her dull the intensity of her anger. She begins to

HAAN AND SYMBOLISM:

Some call Korea a nation of *haan*, and a nation of suffering. A Korean psychiatrist stated that *haan* is "something that has been formed, accumulated, and precipitated in mass in the depth of Korean psyche over generations - - - it is deeply imprinted in the collective subconscious of the Korean people" (Prince 1989). A well known poet, Ko-Un, expressed his view graphically: "Koreans are born from the womb of *haan*, grew up in the bosom of *haan*, and live out *haan*, die leaving *haan* behind."

When seen in this way, *haan* is a symbol, a sign-language of the Korean psyche and Korean history. *Haan* is the Korean version of victimization syndrome, analogous to the Holocaust when used as a symbol by the Jewish people. Korean folklores, songs, poems, novels, dancing, art work, autobiographical literatures are full of *haan*-ridden stories where motive and themes are derived from *haan* experiences.

A *haan*-ridden person feels that he or she is an innocent victim, who suffers not because of one's own fault or mistake, but because of the fault or mistake of another. That someone else could be a bad master, an abusive husband, a cruel mother-in-law, a corrupt government, or an invading foreign powers. Or it could be fate, nature, calamity or supernatural power. The common expression

entertain some self-blame. This is the second phase. She would feel depressed and pessimistic.

The third phase is the period when she begins to dwell on the situation again, and starts questioning the rational of her second phase thinking, namely, self-blame. "I am powerless. I do not have power nor position to get even with my mother-in-law. Is it my fault? Isn't it injustice? Why does this has to happen to me? Why me?" She begins to feel sad and resigned. This sadness phase may last long time. This melancholic sentimental-ly could be expressed in a sublimated way, if she is talented, into singing, writing of diaries or poetry, and other art forms. It is usually about this phase of *haan* when Koreans discuss about *haan*. The second phase is a transitionary phase between the first and the third phase.

In the fourth phase, she begins to detach her *haan* feeling from herself by putting emotional distance and objectify her *haan* experiences. She would talk about it as if it belongs to someone else.

She would describe it in a third person's experience. During this phase, she may be calmer, more silent, and lonely. Her *haan* feelings could be even transformed into trans-reality and transpersonal experiences. She may accept it as her fate.

syndromes in the appendix of the Revised Diagnostic Manual (DSM IV) published by the American Psychiatric Association (1994). The DSM-IV edition describes Hwa-byung as: "A Korean folk syndrome literally translated into English as 'anger syndrome' and attributed to the suppression of anger. The syndrome includes insomnia, fatigue, panic, fear of impending doom, dysphoric affect, indigestion, anorexia, palpitation, generalized aches and pains, and a feeling of a mass in the epigastric area." There have been debates as to whether or not Hwa-byung is considered as a Korean culture-bound syndrome, or a clinical syndrome of "anger disease" that is more universal in nature, but is called differently in different ethnic cultures.

Of interest is the findings that most Hwa-byung patients were aware that the cause of Hwa-byung is psychogenic in nature. When they were asked what they think caused the symptoms, most answered that the symptom stems from suppressed Hwa (anger and fire) for too long.

In the survey, when they were asked what kind of difficulties they thought were associated with their person-al Hwa, their problems were multiple. 72% of them said they were having troubles with their spouses in the form of such things as extramarital affairs, alcoholism, and domestic violence. 68% had in-law problems, and 35% felt their difficulties with children could be attributed to Hwa. In addition, social factors were cited: 65% were related to poverty, 58% some kind of life hardship, and 32% unfair blame and criticism.

HWA AND RELIGIONS:

What do Confucian and Buddhist teachings have to say about *hwa*? While Korean folklore has recognized *hwa* as a prevailing experience for a long time, *hwa* or emotion like *hwa*, are rarely mentioned in other Asian traditional literatures, including Oriental medicine. The Confucian traditions recognize various emotions, however, they emphasize the importance of having "proper four feelings," and using self-control so as not to arouse the "improper seven feelings." People were taught to control and suppress *hwa* through self-discipline. In Buddhism, we find a similar attitude. Buddhism tend to ignore *hwa* and other human emotions, pointing out the impermanence and uselessness of emotion for the true self. This position can be easily understood, if one believes that all human suffering has its source in human desire, and that all emotions arise because of desires. Contrary to these "high-minded" religions and teachings, we find a large number of references to *hwa* in the popular folk traditions and shamanism. According to the

used to express *hwa* feeling is: "Uh-gul-ha-da", which refers to feelings of indignation at the injustice done to him or to her. A Korean theologian, Suk-mo Ahn (1992) takes the interpretation of *hwa* one step further. For him, *hwa* refers not only to pent-up emotion of anger and the holding of a grudge, but also carries the image of woundedness, the wrecked meaning of life, the fragmentation of self and world, and most of all, a strong sense of "why me?" and "why this to me?" It is almost akin to the experience of mourning.

HWA AND HWA-BYUNG:

이화병, 화병, 화
의정, 이화병

From a clinical point of view, *hwa* is considered as a causative factor in the development of a Korean culture-bound psychiatric syndrome called "Hwa-byung". Hwa-byung literally means "fire (Hwa) disease (Byung)" or "anger disease." The syndrome manifests in the mixture of clinical depression, anxiety and somatic symptoms characterized by the presence of a "lump" and pressure in the throat or chest (SH Lee, 1977a). The syndrome is most common among women, especially married women who are beyond the middle age and of low social class standing.

According to Sung Kil Min's survey (1986) of 100 Hwa-byung patients seen at the Yonsei University Hospital Outpatient Clinic, Seoul, Korea, the symptoms most frequently complained of were: oppressive and heavy feelings in the chest, a feeling of a mass in the chest or abdomen; a feeling of something hot and pushing in the chest; a sensation of heat in the body; feelings of something boiling up, or burning inside. Other physical symptoms include: headaches, palpitation, indigestion, etc. Generally the patients complained of physical symptoms, but when they were asked of emotional symptoms, they mentioned frequently: sadness, pessimistic view, loss of interest, temper, startle, nervousness, and even suicidal thoughts. Other emotions include: rage, hate, resentment, frustration, mortification, regret and shame. Hwa-byung has been known in Korea as a folk medical term for a long time. Interestingly, Korean immigrant patients who were seen at clinics in Los Angeles manifested symptoms of Hwa-byung. It was Keh-Ming Lin (1983) of UCLA who first reported in an English language psychiatric journal citing 3 Korean Hwa-byung cases in 1983. Subsequently several research articles appeared in the American journals, which has aroused an interest in the syndrome among mental health professionals (KY Pang, 1990). Hwa-byung is now listed as one of culture-bound

Korean shamanism and folk beliefs, *haan* has been regarded as one of the prime causes of human suffering, illness and misfortunes. In fact, some claim that the Koreans' indigenous psychology is primarily the psychology of *haan* (SC Paik, 1993).

Shamans work with innocent or unfortunate, *haan*-ridden clients by offering care and healing. Korean shamanism uses complex forms of ritual called "*goot*," Goot ritual includes: invoking ancestral souls, dancing, chanting, narrating the patient's *haan*-ridden life story, and eventually going into a trance state. The *goot* is to resolve the dead's *haan* as well as that of the client. The process to release *haan* is called "*Haan-puri* (unknot and let out *haan*)" (KT Lee, 1987). Almost all shamans are female, and most of the clients are female. Commonly the female shaman herself has a history of *haan*-ridden life herself, and becomes a shaman following her healing through help of a shaman. To be able to share one's deep feelings of *haan* with someone who has similar *haan* experiences is considered most helpful in the healing process.

There is one more side to *haan*. *Haan* can create and energize a strong motivation, not to give up, but to persevere and fight on until justice is done. It generates a driving force to do better, to excel, and to succeed in achieving goals, even if it takes a long time. It may also create a desire to get back at, and get even with, the oppressor and enemy who caused the *haan*.

Some Korean scholars have observed that the frequent anti-government demonstrations by college students in Seoul that include throwing fire-bottles, are basically ritualistic expressions of their *haan* and *haan*-rage. Better educated and Western-aculturated Koreans, especially women and members of younger generations, have become more verbally assertive and emotionally expressive without suppressing their feelings of anger and *haan*-related emotions.

CHE-MYUN 氣 體 運

Che-myun literally means "body and face," and refers to face-saving in the sense of saving social face or saving the external facade to maintain respectability. As in other Asian countries, face-saving behavior is very important to Koreans in their public and social relationship. Maintaining *che-myun* protects one's sense of dignity, self-respect, and respectability. Honor is an important concept to live by for Koreans, and the honor of the individual as well as his or her family is maintained through *che-myun*. *Che-myun* helps to promote harmonious relationships. For example, face-saving may help a person to behave more gracefully, and moderate his or her temper in facing a person, even if he or she is very

angry with the person. *Che-myun* also promotes the development of mutual obligations and responsibilities. If a person does not respond in a reciprocal manner, he or she loses face. If a person does you a favor, it is your turn to return the favor. Hence, *Che-myun* is conducive to the development of a reciprocal bond and mutual relationships between and among people. Asian societies historically have been very social status-oriented. Therefore, generally Koreans/Asians are very conscious of their social status. That's why they like titles, honors, academic degrees from Ivy-league colleges, brand-name products, etc. People display *che-myun* behavior to maintain their social status, pride and prestige.

However, sometimes the *che-myun* behavior can be pretentious. If *che-myun* behavior is exaggerated, it can lead to a behavior of "*huh-seh*" or "*ki-mae*" in Japanese. *Huh-seh* is similar to the Western concept of bravado or show-off. A person may want to assure others as well as oneself of his or her status and prestige by driving a Mercedes and living in an expensive house in a exclusive area, even if he or she is actually living on a tight budget. In the spirit of *huh-seh*, one may give an expensive and extravagant party for friends, even if it means going into debt. Koreans especially are known for their very generous hospitality to house guests.

A concept related to *che-myun* is a behavior of *ab-dul*. In Korean *ab* means "front," and *dul*, "back." It refers to presenting an external facade to a person's face, but behave differently behind the other's back. This is similar to Takeo Doi's (1985) two fold theory of social consciousness of Japanese people. It is a behavior of "*Onoie and Ura*," "external public display" and "internal private reality." This theme is often played symbolically in Asian theatrical dramas or dancing wearing carved wooden facial masks, such as in Kabuki, Korean Tal-Choom, and Chinese traditional opera. Carl Jung also spoke of a "persona," an external social person. The behavior of *ab-dul* represents a willful effort, perhaps sometimes desperately, to maintain a facade, not only to save one's own face, but to pay the courtesy of being pleasant or presenting one's best to the other person. An example is smiling to a person's face, while being angry with him or her inside oneself. It is difficult to be totally honest and open all the time, and to show one's real or raw feelings—especially when one wants to maintain social harmony and civility.

NOONCHI 氣 恥

In Western culture, verbal communication is very important. It is emphasized that verbal communication be

threatening to others.) fear of being embarrassed and humiliated with a physical defect, etc. TK is considered to be related to excessive cultural emphasis on *noonchi* (SH Lee 1993b, 1995c).

PALJA ㅍㅈㅊ

Palja means "fate" or "destiny," and is derived from terminology used in fortune telling. In the traditional Korean and Asian societies, a person's role and life status were essentially predetermined, not only by one's gender and birth order, but also by one's social status, role, and the position accorded by one's family status and heritage. Individuals had little control over their lives. Using the modern psychological terminology, one's locus of control is not within oneself, but in the hands of fate and destiny.

How were people to cope with their misfortunes of not their own making? They were to accept their fate with a stoic, fatalistic, or religious and philosophical attitude: "That is my palja," "that is my fate." In the old days, acceptance of one's own palja was probably the only option available.

Going along with fate through non-action, and accepting the nature the way it is, is the essence of Taoism (SC Chang, 1982). This is one of the strong reasons why religions, such as Buddhism, Taoism, Shamanism, and the philosophy of Confucianism have appealed to, and thrived among, so many Koreans.

Religions help people cope with woes of life and accept their palja more readily. But now better educated, younger generations do not adopt stoicism and fatalism as did older generations. Nonetheless, because historical-ly Koreans have suffered a lot, the idea of palja has a firm hold among Koreans.

With the beginning of the 20th century, people all over the world developed such a strong confidence and faith in the advancement of science and technology that people thought that human kind can chart the course of nature and can solve all the problems at hands with science and technology. I think the arrogance of science has emerged. In recent years, however, people began to realize the limitation as well as potential destructiveness of science and technology. People begin to have more awareness of ecological issues and respect for nature. Earthquake, natural calamities, the unchanging viciousness of human nature, unsolved medical disease, such as cancer, immune disorders, genetic factors in many diseases, etc., all point to the power of the nature, in spite of the scientific efforts to harness and control the nature. Even in the U.S., people are now beginning to talk more about fate, acceptance and surrender. The rapid increase

clear and explicit. However, in Asian culture, verbal communication is less clear, more subtle, indirect, and often non-verbal. Westerners who live in Korea often complain that Koreans are not communicative. A Korean may respond: "We, Koreans, carry on conversations without talking. We can tell how you are thinking and feeling, without explaining to me." Korea has been even called a "noonchi culture."

The Korean word *Noonchi* means literally "measuring with eyes." It is an intuitive, sixth-sense perception of another person -- a capacity to size up and evaluate another person or situation quickly and intuitively. With *noonchi* one develops heightened awareness of, and sensitivity to, another person's gestures, facial expressions, voice, the way of talking, body language, and other non-verbal cues.

In Asian countries, "honorific" language system is highly developed (SC Chang, 1988). Depending on whom you are talking to, one uses different word and sentence structure. There are several words meaning "you," and which "you" one uses defines the relationship between the addresser and addressee. It is somewhat similar to the German language which also has three different words of "you," and the speaker select which word to use according to the level of intimacy or formality that is appropriate. There are also ways of "talking up" or "talking down" to the person.

Having an acute sense of *noonchi* is necessary and desirable in a hierarchical society where the emphasis is on observing the proper protocol and manners in interpersonal interactions. The intuitive ability of *noonchi* helps one discern where one stands in relation to a person or situation, since it is important to accord appropriate respect through the use of appropriate language and manner. In order to live in peace and harmony with people in crowded housing in a congested city, one needs to scrutinize others and accommodate their needs and feelings as much as possible. Hence, to describe a person as being without *noonchi* is a derogatory remark. It implies that the person is insensitive, uncouth, unmannered, and uncultured. In another word, he is a jerk.

On the other hand, excessive *noonchi* may be a sign of insecurity, hypersensitivity, and possible anxiety. If carried to an extreme, clinical manifestations of social phobia and paranoia may occur. A culture-related subtype of social phobia, called "Taein-Kongpo (TK)" in Korean, and "Taijin-kyofu" in Japanese, has been of great interest among Asian psychiatrists. Examples of TK symptoms include: fear of blushing, fear of one's hands shaking when in writing in front of someone, fear of bad breath or body odor offending someone, fear of gazing (i.e. fear that one's gaze might be seen as too sharp, fierce and

of conservative Christian movement and the popular books, such as "Care of the Soul" (T Moore, 1992) reflect the new mood and awareness of the limitation of human's own power and self-sufficiency. *Palya* is still alive and well.

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Muht is a Korean word used to describe the quality of being "exquisite, beautiful, splendid, refined, elegant." A person of *muht* is someone who knows how to enjoy life; someone who appreciates nature, art, music, and poetry. The person is likely to enjoy good food, wine, refined clothes, and may be even good-looking. Hence, people like to date or marry such a person of *muht* taste. The ethos of *muht* probably promotes the development of exquisite musical, artistic and other cultural tastes and appreciation among Koreans. Koreans love music -- especially singing -- even when the are sad. Koreans are regarded as very artistic and musical, and Korea has produced some world-class musicians. For the many Koreans who have had a painful history of war, suffering, and *haan*, the goal of having a *muht*-rich life is a hope and desire for them to attain.

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