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Am I Good Enough? Dealing Pastorally with the Shame of Women in the Amalgam of Korean Confucian and Christian Culture

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AM I GOOD ENOUGH?

DEALING PASTORALLY WITH THE SHAME OF WOMEN

IN THE AMALGAM OF KOREAN CONFUCIAN AND CHRISTIAN CULTURE

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A Glossary of Korean/Chinese Terms

sam-kang ---------- three elements of the way of living

boo-we-ja-kang ---------- the father should be model for the son

boo-we-boo-kang ---------- the husband should be a model for the wife

goon-we-shin-kang ---------- the king should be a model for the servants

oh-ryoun ---------- five essential ethics in terms of human relations

boo-ja-you-chin ---------- closeness between father and son

boo-boo-you-byoul ---------- difference between husband and wife

goon-shin-you-euy ---------- respect between king and servants

jang-you-you-suh ---------- order between the old and the young

boong-woo-you-shin ---------- trust among friends

chemyun ---------- social face in Korean; principles to follow, obligations to fulfill, or face to save in order to meet others with a dignified attitude without a sense of shame

mientze ---------- public face in Chinese

taimien ---------- public face in Japanese

yeom-chi chemyun ---------- self-inflicted or self-shamed social face in Korean

suchi chemyun ---------- other-inflicted social face in Korean

nunchi ---------- implicit and non-verbal modes of interpersonal and situational interaction in Korean or Korean tact

namjonyobi ---------- inherent superiority of men and inferiority of women

uri ---------- we-ness in Korean

jeong (or *cheong*) ---------- affectionate attachment or bond in Korean

unhae ---------- gracious favor in Korean

no-chuh-nyuh ---------- old maid or spinster in Korean

eun-jang-do ---------- a 4-5-inch silver dagger

hyun-mo-ynag-cho ---------- sacrificial mother and submissive wife

sam-jong-chil-do ---------- the three obediences that were required to Korean women in traditional Korean society: obedience to the father in childhood, to the husband during marriage, and to the son in the old age

jia ji sui ji, jia gou sui gou ---------- if married to a rooster a woman should follow the rooster, and if married to a dog she should follow the dog (Chinese)

xiao ren ---------- morally inferior men in Chinese

han ---------- deeply ingrained sorrow and agony in Korean

chang-pee ---------- a sense of shame in Korean

Abstract

In this paper, the literature review of shame is examined: the definition of emotions, the relationship between shame and the self, the definition and characteristics of shame alongside with guilt, the social nature of shame, and the female quality of shame. After examining the previous attempts on shame and its relationship with culture, this paper argues how shame functions, particularly in Korean culture, employing a cultural-anthropological, a societal-anthropological, and a Korean native-psychological approach. Furthermore, the paper explores the relationship between shame and Korean women in the amalgam of Korean Confucian and Christian context. The negative and positive roles of shame among Korean Christian women are also analyzed. After applying shame context to the mission setting and my own personal experiences, I will suggest some approaches in terms of dealing with shame from a pastoral viewpoint.

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Introduction

Have you ever felt that you are not adequate, insufficient, and defective no matter how hard you try? Have you ever questioned yourself: "Am I good enough as a daughter/son, mother/father, student, teacher, worker, etc.? Am I good enough as a human being? Am I accepted and loved?" These kinds of questions come from an internal cry of echoing self-doubt in times of testing our value. We all want to feel valuable and worthy in our being, no matter what we do and who we are. However, when shame gets in the way, we feel anguish of our soul deep inside. Shame is the sharp pain of inadequacy. Shame is the painful experience of fearing one's mistakes to be exposed, but more than that, fearing that we are the mistakes.[1]

This paper will deal with shame, particularly Korean Christian women's shame rooted in Korean Confucian and Christian cultures from various perspectives. Korean culture is a face-saving culture in which one's identity is based on the assessment of others in the group.[2] Behind this communal identity lies the hidden shame of self and the fear of not being good enough. In this communal, hierarchical, and patriarchal society, Korean women often feel more ashamed than men.[3] As a Korean woman myself, I began an inquiry into how shame functions in Korean culture in relation to women, particularly in the Confucian and Christian context. I will explore this issue using Korean cultural, societal, and indigenous psychological-anthropological perspectives. Using my own experiences and research, I will examine how shame influences and affects Korean Christian women, both negatively and positively.

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[1] Susan Nelson, "For Shame, For Shame, The Shame of it All: Postures of Refusal and the Broken Heart," in *The Other Side of Sin: Woundedness from the Perspective of the Sinned Against*, ed. Andrew Sung Park and Susan Nelson (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012), 75.
[2] Zuk-Nae Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," *Transcultural Psychiatry* 36 (1999): 187.
[3] Boyoung Lee, "Caring-Self and Women's Self-Esteem: A Feminist Reflection on Pastoral Care and Religious Education of Korean-American Women," *Pastoral Psychology* 54 (2006): 338.

Part One:

The Literature Review of Shame

What are Emotions?

Emotions are a cognitive and analytical expression of internal feelings.[1] Psychologically speaking, emotions are defined as "affect," an articulated or observed sensational response to particular circumstances.[2] Many scholars try to make a clear definition of emotions. Given their contextual complexity, however, it is not easy to interpret them. Turner expresses this difficulty: emotions are "the complex of causal effects" amidst many interdependent components.[3] The various elaborated factors beget different interpretations of emotions. In fact, emotions function differently according to the variance of phenomena: "biological and neurological, behavioral, cultural, structural, and situational; and depending upon which aspects of emotions are relevant to a researcher, a somewhat different definition will emerge."[4] Largely, scholars identify emotions from two perspectives: biological and socio-cultural aspects. Research shows that emotions are related to the physical chemistry of human bodies such as peripheral nerve structure or sense organs.[5] The anatomy of emotions is a scientific area that is beyond the scope of research in this paper.

Sociologists stress the socio-cultural element of emotions. They argue that emotions are more than just perceptions or senses of awareness, but a formula of reaction in a social system. According to Steven Gordon, the genesis of emotions lies in the values of a society: "members of

[1] Nico H. Frijda and Batija Mesquita, "The Social Roles and Functions of Emotions," in *Emotion and Culture: Empirical Studies of Mutual Influence* (American Psychological Association, 1994), 51.; Riwha Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture: An Interpretation of Self Psychology and Korean Indigenous Psychology" (PhD diss., Drew University, 2008), 1.
[2] Jonathan H. Turner, "The Sociology of Emotions: Basic Theoretical Arguments," *Emotional Review* 1, no. 4 (October 2009): 341.
[3] Turner, "The Sociology of Emotions," 341.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.

a society are socialized into a culture and learn a vocabulary of emotions."[6] Frijda and Mesquita state that emotions are closely associated with their circumstances.[7] Given the context of the social nature of emotions, they depict them as "phenomena of readiness or unreadiness for interaction."[8] In a way, a socio-cultural setting brings about emotional mechanism.[9] Sociologically speaking, emotions have their significance mainly in the context of culture and society.[10]

Shame and the Self

From a psychological perspective, shame is a "self-conscious emotion" directed "toward the self as a whole."[11] Among self-conscious emotions which include "empathy, sympathy, envy, guilt, pride, and regret," shame is the emotion that depends upon self-observation the most.[12] According to recent studies, shame requires the completeness of the self—not a part but an integrality of being.[13] In shame, the entire self is exposed before the judgment of self as well as that of others.

The self is an important concept in shame. According to Heinz Kohut, the self is defined as "the center of the individual's psychological universe."[14] Kohut illustrates the inevitable relationship between "narcissistic self" and shame.[15] His self-psychology unpacks the idea of "the ego ideal," which is the "ideal shape" of the self as contrary to the "actual self."[16] Kohut concludes, "shame is a reaction of an ego that has failed to fulfill the demands and expectations

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[6] Ibid.
[7] Frijda and Mesquita, "The Social Roles and Functions of Emotions," 51.
[8] Ibid., 56.
[9] Ibid., 52.
[10] Turner, "The Sociology of Emotions," 341.
[11] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 2.
[12] Ibid., 2.
[13] Ibid.; Andrew P. Morrison, *Shame, the Underside of Narcissism* (Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press, 1989), 9.
[14] Morrison, *Shame, the Underside of Narcissism*, 68.
[15] Ibid., 71.; Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 19.
[16] Morrison, *Shame, the Underside of Narcissism*, 67.

of a strong ego ideal."[17] In a similar vein, Piers and Singer argue, "Shame…occurs whenever goals and images presented by the ego ideal are not reached."[18] Lewis states, "Shame is about the self; it is thus a 'narcissistic' reaction, evoked by a lapse from the ego-ideal."[19] Wilson Jr. also talks about the intimate relationship between shame and the ego ideal found in French psychoanalysis.[20]

Morrison emphasizes narcissistic elements in shame: how shame reveals egotistic components in its nature such as "cognitive sense of failure," "fantasied perfection," and "a reflection of a sense of inferiority."[21] The centrality of the self is the common factor in both shame and narcissism, excluding the different emphasis on the side of the self: in shame, the self is understood negatively whereas the self is revered in narcissism.[22] In either case, the self is "the center of experience" and the self is in enormous want "to be admired by others."[23] In a shame experience, the self is magnified to the extended degree in a totally unwanted area that one wishes to hide from the observation of others.

Shame and Guilt

There are two facets of shame, named by scholars as "discretionary shame" and "disgrace shame."[24] Unlike "discretionary shame" which functions a positive effect on social relations by keeping the personal perimeter of the self, "disgrace shame" is referred to as "the self-

[17] Ibid., 71.
[18] Gerhart Piers and Milton B. Singer, *Shame and Guilt: A Psychoanalytic and Cultural Study* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1971), 26.
[19] Morrison, *Shame, the Underside of Narcissism*, 51.
[20] Emmett Wilson Jr., "Shame and the Other: Reflections on the Theme of Shame in French Psychoanalysis," in *The Many Faces of Shame*, ed. Donald L. Nathanson (New York: Guilford Press, 1987), 182-185.
[21] Morrison, *Shame, the Underside of Narcissism*, 48.
[22] Helen Block Lewis, "Shame and the Narcissistic Personality," in *The Many Faces of Shame*, ed. Donald L. Nathanson (New York: Guilford Press, 1987), 95.
[23] Lewis, "Shame and the Narcissistic Personality," 97.
[24] Robert H. Albers, "Shame and the Conspiracy of Silence," *Journal of Ministry in Addiction and Recovery* 7 (February 2001): 52.

feeling…less than it wants to be, less than at its best it knows itself to be."[25] In this paper, I will focus on the definition and the characteristics of disgrace shame.

According to Fossum and Mason, shame is defined as "an inner sense of being completely diminished or insufficient as a person. It is the self-judging the self."[26] Shame refers to the inadequacy of the self. Shame is a painful reflection on the self and its deficiency.[27] Morrison states that shame is "a sharp and searing feeling of failure and defectiveness about oneself."[28] Wilson points out that shame is an acute awareness of "a soul-deep sense that there is something uniquely wrong with me that is not wrong with you or anyone else in the world."[29] Shame is connected with a feeling of unworthiness, a sense of inferiority, failure, personal incompetence, and a fear of not being good enough.[30] Brown unpacks the definition of shame as "the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging."[31] According to Miller Creighton, shame is "the awareness of inadequacy or failure to achieve a wished-for self-image, accompanied by or originally arising from the fear of separation and abandonment."[32] Dietrich Bonhoeffer views shame as an agonizing heartbreak over the fundamental alienation: "Shame is man's ineffaceable recollection of his estrangement from the origin, it is grief for this estrangement, and the powerless longing to return to unity with the origin…Shame is more original than remorse."[33]

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[25] Albers, "Shame and the Conspiracy of Silence," 53.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 14.
[28] Andrew P. Morrison, *The Culture of Shame* (Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson, 1998), 40.
[29] Sandra D. Wilson, *Shame-Free Parenting* (Downers Grove, III.: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 14.
[30] Morrison, *The Culture of Shame,* 42-48.; Morrison, *Shame, the Underside of Narcissism*, 48.
[31] Brene Brown, *Daring Greatly: How the Courage to be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead* (New York, NY: Gotham Books, 2012), 69.
[32] Young Gweon You, "Shame and Guilt Mechanisms in East Asian Culture," *The Journal of Pastoral Care* 51 (1997): 58.
[33] You, "Shame and Guilt Mechanisms in East Asian Culture,"64.

From a sociocultural perspective, shame is a by-product of one's desire for acceptance and recognition.[34] Ausubel asserts that it is the "agony of being found wanting and exposed to the disapproval of others."[35] According to Nathanson, shame is characterized as the "fear of disgrace" and "the anxiety about the danger that we might be looked at with contempt for having dishonored ourselves."[36] Shame is the fear of being exposed at any cost and is "a self- conscious awareness of being different from the prevailing norm of acceptability."[37] Shame is the fear of being oneself. It is a feeling of deficiency as a result of failing to measure up to certain expectations posed by others.[38] In a similar vein, shame goes with "fear of evaluation," "blame" or "stigmatization."[39] Shame and blaming go hand in hand. When people are afraid of being ashamed in the eyes of others, they blame others.[40]

On the other hand, according to Ausubel, guilt is described as "self-rejection to an injured conscience."[41] Ruth Benedict argues that "guilt is shameless, involves no external sanctions, and is concerned with inner convictions of sin."[42] Piers and Singer use the term "superego" in pulling out the concept of guilt: "Guilt, then, is the painful internal tension generated wherever the emotionally highly charged barrier erected by the superego is being touched or transgressed."[43]

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[34] Francis Inki Ha, "Shame in Asian and Western Cultures," *The American Behavioral Scientist* 38, no. 8 (1995): 1117.
[35] David P. Ausubel and Theodore M. Newcomb, "Relationships Between Shame and Guilt in the Socializing Process," *Psychological Review* 62 (1955): 378.
[36] Donald L. Nathanson, *The Many Faces of Shame* (New York: Guilford Press, 1987), 67.
[37] Albers, "Shame and the Conspiracy of Silence," 53.
[38] Andrew P. Morrison, "Shame, Ideal, Self, and Narcissism," in *Essential Papers on Narcissism*, ed. Andrew P. Morrison (New York: New York University Press, 1986), 105.
[39] Sungeun Yang and Paul C. Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 32, no. 3 (Summer 2001): 364.
[40] Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 364.
[41] Ausubel and Newcomb, "Relationships Between Shame and Guilt in the Socializing Process," 379.
[42] Ibid., 383.
[43] Piers and Singer, *Shame and Guilt*, 16.

What, then, is the difference between shame and guilt? Tangney and Dearing present Helen Block Lewis' proposal on the different focus of the self between shame and guilt.[44] That being said, shame centers on the self, whereas guilt focuses on behavioral issues.[45] In the case of making mistakes, one who has a guilty feeling announces that "I did err," while one who has a feeling of shame declares that "I am a mistake."[46] Albers states that "guilt is principally phenomenological in nature while shame is primarily ontological."[47] Shame is about the fear of rejection or abandonment, whereas guilt deals with the fear of penalty or revenge.[48] In terms of the ego concept, as portrayed earlier, shame refers to tenseness among ego and ego ideal, whereas guilt represents pressure amid ego and superego.[49] Lewis addresses the distinctness of shame and guilt in five categories: "stimulus," "conscious content," "position of self in field," "nature and discharge of hostility," and "characteristic symptoms."[50] In these specific categories, shame is described as "involuntary self," "autonomic responses such as rage, blushing, tears," "self-passive," "self-focal in awareness," "self-imaging and consciousness," and "humiliated fury," while guilt is delineated as "voluntary self," "specific activities of self," "self-active," "self-absorbed in action or thought," "self-intact," and "religious indignation."[51] However, these two are so intricately tied together "in terms of act and being" that sometimes it is hard to separate them.[52] Young Gweon You argues that shame and guilt are not disconnected, rather

[44] June Price Tangney and Ronda L. Dearing, "What is the Difference Between Shame and Guilt?" in *Shame and Guilt* (New York: Guilford Press, 2002), 18.
[45] Tangney and Dearing, "What is the Difference Between Shame and Guilt?" 18.
[46] Wilson, *Shame-Free Parenting,* 14.; Albers, "Shame and the Conspiracy of Silence," 53.
[47] Ibid., 53.
[48] You, "Shame and Guilt Mechanisms in East Asian Culture," 58.; Morrison, "Shame, Ideal, Self, and Narcissism," 352.; Piers and Singer, *Shame and Guilt,* 29.
[49] Ibid., 25.; Morrison, *Shame, the Underside of Narcissism,* 11.
[50] Lewis, "Shame and the Narcissistic Personality," 113.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Albers, "Shame and the Conspiracy of Silence," 53.

"different sides of the same coin," although shame focuses on the "psychodynamic process" more so than guilt.[53]

Shame and Socialization

Many scholars have proposed that shame is a social phenomenon. Scheff emphasizes that shame is "the premier social emotion," given the fact that it helps to understand the intimate links between the self and community.[54] The self is a communal being, the existence of which cannot last without the support of other social beings. The interpretation of the self's collective nature is supported by a contemporary sociologist, Charles Cooley.[55] Scheff borrows the notion of "the looking-glass self" from Cooley, which indicates the social disposition of the self.[56] In this self-observing process, self-feelings are confined to two considerable emotions, shame and pride, in three levels:

> A self-idea of this sort seems to have three principal elements: the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his judgment of that appearance, and some sort of self- feeling, such as pride or mortification.[57]

In this context of self-feelings, the self is conscious of the "imagined judgment" of *others*, which results in either shame or pride.[58] Morrison, in *Culture of Shame*, unpacks the social nature of shame:

> We project our own negative judgments about our shortcomings onto others. That is, we experience our shame through the eyes of another, assuming that her vision of us will be the same as our own verdict, and that she views us with disdain.[59]

From a sociological perspective, emotions are intrinsically communal and do not have meaning until they are named by society and its cultural associations.[60] While every emotion is

[53] You, "Shame and Guilt Mechanisms in East Asian Culture," 63.
[54] Thomas J. Scheff, "Shame in Self and Society," *Symbolic Interaction* 26, no. 2 (May 2003): 239.
[55] Scheff, "Shame in Self and Society," 242.
[56] Scheff, "Shame in Self and Society," 242.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Morrison, *The Culture of Shame*, 119.

socially composed, shame is distinguished from other emotions. According to Scheff, there are six essential emotions sociologically defined: "Grief, love, pride, anger, fear and shame."[61] He affirms that shame alone is sparked by the absence of relatedness, when the other emotions are aroused by the problem of association.[62] Shame is characterized as "a signal of threat to the social bond."[63] Scholarly analysis reveals that "shame is most often experienced in the presence of others."[64] Deonna argues that shame is all about being put in the view of others.[65] Shame arises when there is an audience. It is an unexpected exposure of the part that one does not want others to see. Since shame is experienced socially, it functions to maintain the social system.[66] Morrison argues, "shaming is a central first step in the socialization process."[67]

On the other hand, there is another aspect of shame that emerges in the absence of a social context. One can feel shame when alone. Morrison illustrates that shame not only occurs in reaction to public disgrace or embarrassment in the company of others, but in solitude, aside from social contact.[68] Shame appears in an independent fashion "as an internal experience" that has nothing to do with social interaction.[69] This viewpoint of shame as autonomous and solitary emphasizes the essential relationship between shame and the ego ideal: "Failure to reach the goals and values of the ego ideal generates shame and that this shame reflects both internal and nonsocial, as well as interpersonal elements."[70] Nathanson and Fowler, although they acknowledge the significance of social interplay in shame, stress this solitary aspect of shame:

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[60] Turner, "The Sociology of Emotions," 341.
[61] Thomas J. Scheff, "Social-Emotional World: Mapping a Continent," *Current Sociology* 59, no. 3 (2011): 354.
[62] Scheff, "Social-Emotional World: Mapping a Continent," 354.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Julien A. Deonna et al., *In Defense of Shame: The Faces of an Emotion* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 23.
[65] Deonna et al., *In Defense of Shame*, 23.
[66] Morrison, "Shame, Ideal, Self, and Narcissism," 352.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Morrison, *Shame, the Underside of Narcissism*, 48.
[69] Ibid., 9-10.
[70] Morrison, *Shame, the Underside of Narcissism*, 10.

"Shame lies within our innate neurological construction…the basic stimulus and response are part of our genetic heritage."[71] Broucek, on the contrary, emphasizes the social facet of shame, that shame is primarily caused by accumulated dissatisfaction that comes from social relations.[72] In brief, shame emerges from both non-social and social contexts, internal and external authority, and inward voice and the voice of outward circumstances.

The Female Embodiment of Shame

Shame is a universal emotion experienced by both men and women. Although the experience of shame might be different between men and women, there is no denial that shame experience is personal and it is painful to both parties.[73] Still, it is reported that women are more linked with shame than men. Johnson and Moran argue that shame is "a primary female affect."[74] Research shows that women are more liable to shame than men.[75]

There are two reasons behind the female embodiment of shame. The first is the idea that "shame is embedded in the female body."[76] It is manifested in the stories of women and girls who "bear potential chamber of shame within themselves" throughout the history.[77] Freud asserts that shame locates itself in the physiques of females.[78] The female body is a powerful source that can give women shame experiences.

The second reason is found from various studies that women have a tendency to be more "field dependent" than men.[79] Johnson and Moran stress this inclination in women, quoting the

[71] Pileun Lee Park, "Reconsidering Korean Women's Shame: Constructive Function of Shame for Korean Women's Christian Education," *Journal of Christian Education and Information Technology* 10 (October 2006): 97.
[72] Park, "Reconsidering Korean Women's Shame," 97.
[73] Brown, *Daring Greatly*, 85.
[74] Erica L. Johnson and Patrician Moran, *The Female Face of Shame* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 10.
[75] Johnson and Moran, *The Female Face of Shame*, 10.
[76] Ibid., 15.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid., 10.
[79] Ibid., 13.

notion from Helen Block Lewis.[80] According to Lewis, "field dependence" refers to a "cognitive style that catches the self in relation not only to its physical surround but in relation to others."[81] Lewis states that women's sense of shame is structured by two essential facets: "Women are defined more by their ability to maintain interpersonal relations than are men, an ability which in turn makes them more vulnerable to social pressures to conform to traditional feminine norms."[82] Manion contends that women have a tendency to "organize their personal sense of self around feelings of shame…around a sense of disappointment in failing to meet some proposed ideal, especially in the eyes of others."[83] Research shows that the frequent shame experiences for women occur within family relations.[84] That being said, the "transmission of cultural norms" happens in the system of a family, especially in the relations between mother and daughter.[85]

Brown's research proves that women's dominant shame trigger is how they look before the eyes of others.[86] According to Brown, women experience intense shame when they do not feel and look perfect before others, when they feel they are being criticized by others, or when their flaws are revealed in others' eyes.[87] No matter how old they get, women experience shame about not being physically attractive or good-looking. The next shame trigger for women and girls is "motherhood."[88] There is no need to be a mother in order to undergo motherhood shame. This shame is universal. This motherhood shame is bound with cultural expectation that women's value is generally decided according to their roles as mothers or promising mothers, no

[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid., 12.; Lewis, "Shame and the Narcissistic Personality," 103.
[82] Johnson and Moran, *The Female Face of Shame*, 12.
[83] Ibid., 13.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Brown, *Daring Greatly*, 86.
[87] Ibid., 85-86.
[88] Ibid., 86.

matter how successful they are in society.[89] For Brown, however, the most shameful struggle for women is to reach the outward expectations that they should be perfect. To women, shame is "never enough"—"never enough at home," "never enough at work," "never enough with parents," and "never enough" with everything.[90] The perfect standard that they "should be" in terms of who, what, how according to societal norms puts an enormous pressure upon women and often leads to shame if they do not reach outward expectations.[91]

[89] Ibid., 86-87.
[90] Ibid., 86.
[91] Ibid., 88.

Part Two:

Shame and Culture

How Shame is Influenced by Culture

Although shame is a universal phenomenon, shame experiences or triggers vary according to sociological and anthropological backgrounds or value systems among different cultures.[1] In a word, culture is an important factor to determine the shame experience. What, then is the concept of culture? Morrison, in *Culture of Shame*, unpacks the notion of culture "as a body of customs relating to particular civilization."[2] The anthropologist Rynkiewich defines culture using a sociological framework:

> Culture is a more or less integrated system of knowledge, values and feelings that people use to define their reality (worldview), interpret their experiences, and generate appropriate strategies for living; a system that people learn from other people around them and share with other people in a social setting; a system that people use to adapt to their spiritual, social, and physical environments; and a system that people use to innovate in order to change themselves as their environments change.[3]

Culture includes the patterns of human conduct, attitude, or demeanor. Segall et al. view culture from a cross-cultural standpoint:

> To the cross-cultural psychologist, cultures are seen as products of past human behavior and as shapers of future human behavior. Thus, humans are producers of culture and, at the same time, our behavior is influenced by it. We have produced social environments that continually serve to bring about continuities and changes in lifestyles over time and uniformities and diversities in lifestyles over space. How human beings modify culture and how our cultures modify us is what cross-cultural psychology is all about.[4]

As the term of cross-cultural psychology implies, culture and human interaction are indispensably related. Hong concludes, adopting the notion from Berry, that culture involves

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[1] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 2.
[2] Morrison, *The Culture of Shame*, 195.
[3] Michael Rynkiewich, *Soul, Self, and Society: A Postmodern Anthropology for Mission in a Postcolonial World* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2011), 19.
[4] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 55.; M. H. Segall et al., *Human Behavior in Global Perspective: An Introduction to Cross-Cultural Psychology* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999), 23.

both "in the group" and "inside people or between individuals."[5] Shame is a social emotion. Therefore, shame occurs in cultural, social, group, and individual circumstances. And shame is interpreted differently according to diverse cultural backgrounds.

Individualistic Culture vs. Collectivistic Culture (Asian vs. Western)

The study of individualism and collectivism in this section serves the purpose of exploring the functions of shame in various cultural contexts. The definition of individualism and collectivism is delineated according to Hofstede:

> *Individualism* pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family. *Collectivism* as its opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive ingroups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.[6]

The simplest discrepancy between individualism and collectivism is the different concept of self.[7] In individualistic cultures, the "I" consciousness is emphasized, whereas in collectivistic cultures the focus is on the "we" concept.[8] This distinction is derived from the difference of socio-cultural viewpoints within Eastern and Western cultures.[9] Kagitcibasi names two cultures: individualistic cultures are identified as "cultures of separatedness" because "separation from ascribed relationships" is required in this culture, as well as significance "on achieved relationships."[10] He describes collectivistic cultures as "cultures of relatedness" where "ascribed and interpersonal relationships serve as a societal foundation."[11]

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[5] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 55.
[6] Ibid., 61-62.; Geert Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1980), 51.
[7] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 61.
[8] Rynkiewich, *Soul, Self, and Society*, 62.
[9] Ibid., 61.
[10] Ui-Chol Kim, "Individualism and Collectivism: Conceptual Clarification and Elaboration," in *Individualism and Collectivism: Theory, Method, and Applications*, ed. Ui-Chol Kim et al. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 23.
[11] Kim, "Individualism and Collectivism," 23.

Individualism emphasizes the individuals' personal value, self-worth, and independent competence. It is illustrated "by an explicit and firm individual boundary between self and others."[12] This individualistic idea brings on "a sense of self with a sharp boundary that stops at one's skin and clearly demarks self from nonself."[13] In this culture, it is not obligatory for individuals to be attached to any sort of affiliation or group.[14] Researchers report that people from Western cultures, such as Europe and North America, show the characteristics of individualism.[15] On the contrary, specific and clear "group boundaries, coupled with undifferentiated self-group boundaries" well describe collectivism.[16] Collectivism centers on the relational aspect, emphasizing "the views, needs, and goals of the in-group rather than of oneself."[17] This culture requires the sacrifice of individuals' personal interests. It also demands the active participation or eagerness for individuals to collaborate with group members.[18] In this culture, individuals are compelled or pressured to belong to a group or any association.[19]

Gyuseong Han and Sung-Man Choe describe how two cultures encompass the perimeter of social circles in each of their societies. Collectivistic cultures determine their in-groups through "tradition" which means their heritage within the circle of "family," "school," work, and even "regions."[20] This traditional clique builds up developing communal group culture. In individualist cultures, however, people decide their social networks according to their personal

[12] Ibid., 27.
[13] Ibid., 28.
[14] Ibid., 27.
[15] Ibid., 29.
[16] Ibid., 33.
[17] Jae-Ho Cha, "Aspects of Individualism and Collectivism in Korea," in *Individualism and Collectivism: Theory, Method, and Application*, ed. U. Kim et al (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 157.
[18] Cha, "Aspects of Individualism and Collectivism in Korea," 157.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Gyuseog Han and Sug-Man Choe, "Effects of Family, Region, and School Network Ties on Interpersonal Intentions and the Analysis of Network Activities in Korea," in *Individualism and Collectivism: Theory, Method, and Applications*, ed. Uichol Kim, Harry C. Triandis, Cigdem Kagitcibasi, Sang-Chin Choi, and Gene Yoon (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 213.

interests or activities. This coterie partnership is based on free-willed and independent choices. Therefore, group members are not bound in everlasting fidelity or dedication to one another.[21]

Ui-Chol Kim delineates major aspects of each culture. According to Kim, individualism underscores "*I* versus *you* distinction," "distinct and independent individuals," "abstract principles" and "contracts."[22] Kim states that Shweder and Bourne employ the term "egocentric contractual" in depicting American individualism.[23] In individualism, relations are established by "mutual consent and contractual relationship."[24] Another important characteristic of individualism is that it enhances one's rights which "protect individuals' autonomy and freedom to pursue their own goals."[25] Collectivism underlines "*we* versus *they* distinction," "collective welfare," and "relationship shared by the in-group members."[26] In collectivism, individuals are "interdependent" for the sake of collective goal in groups, rather than individuals' personal interests or rights.[27] In this culture, individuals form family-like relationship in their in-groups but are required to devote themselves to the good of groups above their own benefits.

Korean culture is illustrative of a collectivistic culture with a strong group assimilation.[28] The best example of the group inclination in Korea is a family system.[29] In traditional Korean culture, family values or family-related things are significant in defining the characteristics of collectivism.[30] Collectivism in conventional Korean culture can be distinguished in several aspects: "dependence in interpersonal relationships," "hierarchy in the groups," "courtesy," "affection or a sense of interpersonal attachment," "family or bloodline," and "old ways or

[21] Kim, "Individualism and Collectivism," 30.
[22] Ibid., 27-29.
[23] Ibid., 30.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid., 31.
[26] Ibid., 32-34.
[27] Kim, "Individualism and Collectivism," 39.
[28] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 66.; You, "Shame and Guilt Mechanisms in East Asian Culture," 59.
[29] Ibid., 60.
[30] Cha, "Aspects of Individualism and Collectivism in Korea," 161.

tradition."[31] Riwha Hong articulates additional significant factors that portray typical Korean collectivism: "filial piety," "ancestor worship," "communal support for success," and "sacrifices required of women."[32]

In terms of different viewpoints of shame in cultures, scholarly analysis reveals that shame is more displayed in the collectivistic Asian culture than it is in the individualistic Western culture.[33] Ruth Benedict concludes that shame is "more deeply felt" in Japan, a typical collectivistic culture, than in an individualistic culture, such as America.[34] However, other research contends that it may not be the case that Asians are subjected to more acute shame but probably are "more aware" of their shame than Westerners.[35] Ha explores different shame concepts in two contrasting cultures. In view of its mindset about shame, Asian culture is more familiar and cognizant of shame, whereas shame is more hidden in Western culture.[36] In terms of value system, Asian collectivistic culture highly values "respect" and "approval," therefore shame occurs when not enough respect or approval is given.[37] In Western individualistic culture, an individual's "love" and "happiness" are valued more than gaining respect and approval so it is less affected by the exposure of shame in public.[38] Nam-Guk Cho illustrates the most distinctive difference between collectivism and individualism: that between shame and guilt.[39] That is, collectivism is conducted by shame: "Shame represents the face-saving aspect of the culture that

[31] Ibid., 162.
[32] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 66.
[33] Ha, "Shame in Asian and Western Cultures," 1114.
[34] Ibid.; Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (New York: New American Library, 1974), 224.
[35] Ha, "Shame in Asian and Western Cultures," 1114.
[36] Ha, "Shame in Asian and Western Cultures," 1115.
[37] Ibid., 1118.
[38] Ibid., 1116.
[39] Nam-Guk Cho, "The Emergence of Individualism in Korean Organizations," in *Psychology of the Korean People: Individualism and Collectivism*, ed. Gene Yoon and Sang-Chin Choi (Seoul, Korea: Donga Publishing Corporation, 1991), 211.

is important in public situations.[40] Individualism is governed by guilt: "Guilt represents the intellectual aspect of the culture that asks for responsibility from each individual."[41]

[40] Cho, "The Emergence of Individualism in Korean Organizations," 211.
[41] Ibid.

Part Three:

Shame and Korean Culture

The Characteristics of Korean Culture in Regard to Shame

The Confucian Culture in Korea

Since shame differs according to people's value system and the cultural setting, shame for Korean people should be understood from Korean aboriginal contextual perspectives. In order to comprehend significant components of shame dynamics in Korea, it is important to examine Confucianism which has been the inner foundation in traditional Korean society.[1]

Confucianism is related to collectivism, as it advocates group prosperity, correspondence, balance, and peace within the group.[2] The fundamental aim of Confucianism is in "collective welfare and harmony."[3] In this culture, individuals are strongly encouraged not to show or pursue personal interests but to assimilate themselves to going after in-group benefits.[4] Confucianism views "self-centeredness or selfishness as a primary root of evil or disorder."[5] This implies that one who considers others' needs above one's own is honored as a virtuous person. In order to obtain honor and integrity, individuals are required to leave their egoistic desires behind. According to Kim, they are obligated "by ascribed relationships that emphasize their common fate."[6]

[1] You, "Shame and Guilt Mechanisms in East Asian Culture," 62.; Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 99.
[2] Kim, "Individualism and Collectivism," 26.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] You, "Shame and Guilt Mechanisms in East Asian Culture," 62.
[6] Kim, "Individualism and Collectivism," 26.

An-Bang Yu and Kuo-Shu Yang introduce "Confucian ethics" and its major philosophy.[7] According to them, Confucianism assumes that "the life of each individual is only a link in that person's family lineage, that an individual is the continuation of his or her ancestors, and that the same reasoning can be applied to the individual's offspring."[8] This philosophy is proved by Confucian emphasis on ancestor worship and family clan.

Confucianism regards filial piety as the highest value of all virtues. Yao suggests filial piety as "the cornerstone of Confucianism and the fundamental Confucian virtue."[9] The foundation of this belief is derived from a religious conviction that its value is originated from Heaven.[10] There is a saying that shows the core of Confucian virtue: "In Buddhism, the ego disappears into the cosmos, in Confucianism it disappears into the family."[11] This provides the perspectives of Confucian teachings on life's "continuity and eternity," that "the family provides an individual not only with the source of life, by which he is related to the past, but also with a sense of continuity, by which he is extended to the future."[12] In Confucianism, individuals are expected "to value education and skill learning, to practice self-discipline, and to respect authority."[13] Confucian ethics encourage individuals "to be reputable, to honor their parents, and to achieve glory first and wealth second."[14]

Even though it originated from ancient China, Confucianism has been a national doctrine and a pillar of principle in traditional Korean society ever since the Yi-Dynasty. The Yi-Dynasty approved Confucianism as its ruling dogma, and it subsequently influenced the psychology of

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[7] An-Bang Yu and Kuo-Shu Yang, "The Nature of Achievement Motivation in Collectivist Societies," in *Individualism and Collectivism: Theory, Method, and Application,* ed. U. Kim et al (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 240.
[8] Yu and Yang, "The Nature of Achievement Motivation in Collectivist Societies," 240.
[9] Xinzhong Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 203.
[10] Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism,* 203.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Yu and Yang, "The Nature of Achievement Motivation in Collectivist Societies," 242.
[14] Ibid.

Korean people.[15] The significance of Confucianism as a dominant ethical ideology to Korean culture is profound. It still influences Koreans' mindsets.

Confucianism teaches a "whole way of life" as its ultimate goal.[16] For the sake of achieving this purpose, it proposes its ethical principle: "*sam-kang oh-ryoun*," a "strong force for morality."[17] "*Sam-Kang*" indicates three elements of the way of living: "*boo-we-ja-kang* (the father should be model for the son," "*boo-we-boo-kang* (the husband should be a model for the wife), and "*goon-we-shin-kang* (the king should be a model for the servants)."[18] "*Oh-ryoun*" involves five essential ethics in terms of human relations: "*boo-ja-you-chin* (closeness between father and son)," "*boo-boo-you-byoul* (difference between husband and wife)," "*goon-shin-you-euy* (respect between king and servants)," "*jang-you-you-suh* (order between the old and the young)," and "*boong-woo-you-shin* (trust among friends)."[19] The appropriate relations "between father and son, ruler and subject, husband and wife, elder and younger, and friends" are necessitated in order to manage tranquility and conformity.[20] These moral values have been the benchmark in terms of weighing the conduct of Koreans.[21] Therefore, breaking these values is regarded as a disgraceful and shameful thing. Since Confucianism stresses personal connections or ties, it brings on several systematic virtues, such as "the concept of honor, reverence for others, harmony, proper order in society, and a keen awareness of what others do for us and what we

[15] Angella Son, "Confucianism and the Lack of the Development of the Self Among Korean American Women," *Pastoral Psychology* 54, no. 4 (March 2006): 328.
[16] Son, "Confucianism and the Lack of the Development of the Self Among Korean American Women," 328.
[17] Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 365.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 365.
[20] Yung-Chung Kim, *Women of Korea: A History from Ancient Times to 1945* (Seoul, Korea: Ewha Womans University Press, 1977), 53.
[21] Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," 186.

should do in return."[22] Failing these ethical values brings upon individuals shame and an emotional detachment in Korean society.[23]

Korean Face-Saving Culture

Face-Saving is one of the most distinguished characteristics in Korean culture in relations to shame.[24] It is a by-product of Confucianism, which values human relationships, particularly harmonious family or close kinship dynamics. "Face" illustrates "an external expression of one's inner nature."[25] "Saving face" connotes that "one's behavior has complied with others' expectations in a specific situation."[26] Considering this social phenomenon, the expressions that Koreans commonly use in everyday life are: "saving one's face," "losing one's face," or "maintaining one's face."[27] Particularly, "losing social face" causes feelings of shame and even denigrates an individual who experiences shame into a "non-human" position.[28] Given the fact that the preservation of family honor is at the heart of Confucianism, the purpose of face-saving in Korean culture is to manage social face for the sake of family honor.[29] Therefore, shame arises when one cannot maintain face and disgraces the reputation of family or the group that one belongs to.

It is necessary to preserve one's face in society for the sake of keeping social order and harmony regardless of an individual's wants or needs. Ui-Chol Kim illustrates that "face is lost when a person… 'fails to meet essential requirements' that come with his or her social

[22] You, "Shame and Guilt Mechanisms in East Asian Culture," 62.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," 186.; Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 366.
[25] Sang-Chin Choi and Ki-Bum Kim, *"Chemyeon-Social Face in Korean Culture,"* Korea Journal 44, no. 2 (2004): 31.
[26] Choi and Kim, "*Chemyeon-Social Face in Korean Culture,"* 31.
[27] Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," 187.
[28] Choi and Kim, "*Chemyeon-Social Face in Korean Culture,"* 32.
[29] Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," 187.

position."[30] Individuals are required to accomplish their assigned roles in a society in socially accepted or recommended demeanor, rather than in their own preferred way. This implies that "the private self" and "the public self" exist together in social relations in this face-saving culture.[31] In all social interactions, the desire of the private self should be restrained in order for the public self not to lose face, if they collide in certain circumstances. That is, "the cultural expectation is that if there are conflicts, individuals must suppress their own desires, locate them within the private domain, and not display them in public."[32]

The phenomenon of face-saving is prevalent in East Asian cultures, especially China, Korea, and Japan, and they have their own terms of public "face": "*mientze* in Chinese," "*chemyun* in Korean," and "*taimien* in Japanese."[33] *Chemyun* is an indigenous Korean term for "social face."[34] Many Korean scholars argue that *chemyun* is a distinctive attribute in Korean face-saving culture. *Chemyun* is defined as "principles to follow, obligations to fulfill, or face to save in order to meet others with a dignified attitude without a sense of shame."[35] This shows a connection between *chemyun* and shame. It is defined as "an inscriptive image of self" that is developed as Koreans seek after "social acceptance, acknowledgement, recognition, and approval."[36] The notion of *chemyun* is rooted in Confucian culture so that not only one's social standing but one's virtue, morality, or honor are tested.[37] From the context of *chemyun* in Korean society, one's whole self, including capability, social rank, and even integrity or morals are brought to the table in experiencing a sense of shame.

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[30] Kim, "Individualism and Collectivism," 37.
[31] Ibid., 36.
[32] Ibid., 37.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid., 31.; Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 115.; Yung-Wook Kim and Jung-Eun Yang, "The Influence of Chemyon on Facebook and Conflict Styles: Searching for the Korean Face and Its Impact," *Public Relations Review* 37, no. 1 (2011): 60.
[35] Choi and Kim, "*Chemyeon-Social Face in Korean Culture,"* 33.
[36] Kim and Yang, "The Influence of Chemyon on Facebook and Conflict Styles," 61.
[37] Choi and Kim, "*Chemyeon-Social Face in Korean Culture,"* 31.

There are two types of *chemyun*: "*yeom-chi chemyun*" which implies "self-inflicted or self-shamed" and "*suchi chemyun*" which means "other-inflicted."[38] The former occurs when one realizes that one's actions do not conform to the social norms or *chemyun* paradigm. In the latter case, shame emerges when others publicly denounce one's conducts according to the principle of *chemyun.*[39] In traditional Confucian culture, self-shamed *yeom-chi* was more prevalent than other-shamed *suchi*, while *suchi* is more prevailing than *yeom-chi* in modern Korean society.[40]

Korean *chemyun* culture puts a strong emphasis on the "exterior relationships," instead of "one's inner world."[41] Koreans have a tendency to look good in the attention of others or group members rather than paying attention to their own feelings or ideas. The primary purpose of *chemyun* culture is to preserve the honor of family or close kinship group rather than individuals. In comparison with the concept of face in Western culture, *chemyun* contains social features which imply an "other-sensitive" disposition.[42] In modern Korean society, this face-saving culture appears superficial in order to look good to others, rather than being good for its own sake.[43]

One's social position or rank is a significant component in terms of shame experiences related to *chemyun* in Korean society.[44] The intensity of shame that one experiences depends on one's social status. In other words, "the higher the status or position of the shamed person within the group, the more intensely the person is likely to feel shame, as the person of higher social

[38] Ibid., 33.; Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 168.
[39] Choi and Kim, "*Chemyeon-Social Face in Korean Culture,"*32.
[40] Ibid., 33.; Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 168.
[41] Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," 187.
[42] Kim and Yang, "The Influence of Chemyon on Facebook and Conflict Styles," 61.
[43] Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," 191.
[44] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 169.

status or position is given higher *chemyun.*"[45] And one's *chemyun* is closely associated with that of family. When an individual loses *chemyun,* the whole family or the group to which that individual belongs is shamed.[46]

Korean *chemyun* culture paves the way to the growth of unique social behavior in Korean society: "*nunchi.*"[47] It implies "implicit, indirect, and…non-verbal modes of interpersonal and situational interaction."[48] The main purpose of *nunchi* is to preserve *chemyun* in vulnerable situations.

Korean Hierarchical/Patriarchal Culture

According to most Korean scholars, Korean society is hierarchical and paternalistic in its socio-cultural framework and structure. Its hierarchy and a social caste system originated from Confucianism. Previously, I noted that Confucianism puts a high value on human relationships. There is a clear order and a degree of appropriateness in terms of every relationship "between father and son, ruler and subject, husband and wife, elder and younger, and friends" in Confucian culture.[49] In this relationship order, father, ruler, husband, and elder are in higher position than son, subject, wife, and younger. Therefore, there exists a superior status and inferior rank in the hierarchical system. Confucianism sets its goal as a preservation of harmony and peace within a societal system. Korean hierarchical culture requires the inferior and the weak to submit to the superior and the strong in order to keep up the balance and the order of the society.[50] In short, "harmony is based on the sacrifice of the weak and powerless."[51]

[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid., 170.
[47] Ibid., 171.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Kim, *Women of Korea,* 53.
[50] Lee, "Caring-Self and Women's Self-Esteem," 345.
[51] Ibid.

Patriarchy is another feature of Korean culture that is influenced by a Confucianism that views a patriarchal social structure as the ideal society. Confucianism was influential for combining "the patriarchal family structure…with strict patrilineality."[52] There is a Korean indigenous term which implies Korean patriarchal culture: "*namjonyobi*," which states: "Men should be respected; women should be lowered."[53] In Korean Confucian culture, other family members upheld the authority of a father as a male head of a family.

The patriarchal system produces "permanent inequality" among males and females in Korean culture.[54] J. B. Miller suggested the concept of "permanent inequality."[55] Miller contends that permanent inequality determines a certain group of people "as unequal by means of what sociologists call ascription: that is, your birth defines you."[56] Put in other words, one's biological attributions such as "race," "sex," "class," "nationality," and "religion" decide one's social status forever.[57] According to Miller, there is an invisible message in a society that the dominant and superior group marks the lower group as inferior and inadequate.[58] For example, a male child is supposed to grow to be decent and useful whereas a female child is expected to be rather secondary and lower in a male-dominant society. This principle is applicable in Korean hierarchical and patriarchal culture. Although women's social status has improved dramatically in contemporary Korean society, the idea of "permanent inequality" still prevails in the minds of Koreans.[59]

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[52] Son, "Confucianism and the Lack of the Development of the Self Among Korean American Women," 328.; Clark W. Sorensen, "The Myth of Princess Pari and the Self Image of Korean Women," *Anthropos Freiburg* 83, no. 4-6 (1988): 405.
[53] Lee, "Caring-Self and Women's Self-Esteem," 345.
[54] Son, "Confucianism and the Lack of the Development of the Self Among Korean American Women," 328.
[55] J. B. Miller, *Toward a New Psychology of Women* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 6.
[56] Miller, *Toward a New Psychology of Women*, 6.
[57] Son, "Confucianism and the Lack of the Development of the Self Among Korean American Women," 326.
[58] Ibid., 327.; Miller, *Toward a New Psychology of Women*, 7.
[59] Son, "Confucianism and the Lack of the Development of the Self Among Korean American Women," 327.

Korean Communal We-ness Culture

Another important characteristic of Korean society is *we-ness*.[60] *We-ness* is translated as *uri* in Korean.[61] *Uri* is a term that represents Korean collectivistic culture.[62] The communal nature of Korean culture also stems from Confucianism. According to Korean scholars, "through the combined system of immediate and extended family strictly based on Confucianism, Koreans develop communal personhood and practice their communal values."[63] The concept of *we*-ness is explained as follows:

> *We* does not mean the coexistence of I and You as independent individual units…I and you exist not as separate units but as a united one. At the moment when two individuals abandon their own perspective and put themselves in their partner's shoes, they become one, not a separate two.[64]

The oneness that "I and you" experience as a consolidated existence comes from the concept of family.[65] In *uri* culture, a private or individual boundary which differentiates "I and you" vanishes and *We* and the idea of one family are reborn.[66] Koreans stress one big family social atmosphere in all relationships so they put "our" in nearly everything, not "my" thing, even referring to "our wife," instead of "my wife."[67]

The term *We* in Korean *uri* culture does not entail a corporate pool of individuals. Researchers asked two group of people—Canadian and Korean—what the word *We* implies to them.[68] The survey shows that *We* indicates "affection," "intimacy," "comfort," and "acceptance"

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[60] Lee, "Caring-Self and Women's Self-Esteem," 344.
[61] Ibid.; Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 105.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Lee, "Caring-Self and Women's Self-Esteem," 343.
[64] Ibid., 344.; Soo-Won Lee, "The Cheong Space: A Zone of Non-Exchange in Korean Human Relationships," in *Psychology of the Korean People: Individualism and Collectivism*, ed. Gene Yoon and Sang-Chin Choi (Seoul, Korea: Donga Publishing Corporation, 1991), 92-94.
[65] Lee, "Caring-Self and Women's Self-Esteem," 344.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Lee, "Caring-Self and Women's Self-Esteem," 344.
[68] Sang-Chin Choi and Soo-Hyang Choi, "We-ness: A Korean Discourse of Collectivism," in *Psychology of the Korean People: Collectivism and Individualism*, ed. Gene Yoon and Sang-Chin Choi (Seoul: Dong-A Publishing & Printing Co., 1994), 69.

to more than half of Koreans who responded (55%), and "oneness," "sameness," "bonding," and "of the same kind" to 16% of the group.[69] To the Canadian group, however, *We* means "I and others," "two people," or "people around me" (32%), or just "a group of individuals" (28%).[70] *We*-ness in Korean culture encompasses a quite different meaning than that of the Western culture.

There is an important driving factor beneath Korean *uri* culture: *ieong* (or *cheong*).[71] *Jeong* is a Korean indigenous expression in describing human relations in Korean society.[72] Hong illustrates that it is normally interpreted as "human affection," but given the nuances used in various circumstances in Korean cultural context, it is hard to define *jeong* exactly.[73] *Jeong* as "the affective bond of *uri*," develops in one's mind during the lengthy period of time through interactions with others or "non-human" objects.[74] *Jeong* occurs when heart to heart dialogues happen.

An obscure boundary between *I* and *you* and the concept of we-ness in *uri* culture break the common rule of "the social exchange theory."[75] According to this theory, general human relations are understood as benefit-seeking relationships based on the profits they gain from each other.[76] From this perspective, all human relations are designated as reciprocal or trading connections as if human beings are property or mere possessions. Lee argues, however, Korean *jeong* space overcomes this calculating relation and reaches to the point "where I and you exist

[69] Choi and Choi, "We-ness: A Korean Discourse of Collectivism," 69.
[70] Ibid.
[71] This pronunciation varies according to authors. Some indicate, "*jeong*," others say, "*cheong*." I will use *jeong* in this paper.
[72] Lee, "The Cheong Space," 85.
[73] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 111.
[74] Ibid., 112.
[75] Lee, "The Cheong Space," 87.
[76] Ibid.

not as separate units but as a unified one."[77] This *jeong* concept is originated from the extension of family-oriented relations, which Confucianism stresses as utmost value in its teachings. Lee concludes, "It is illustrative of the extension of family relations to social relations in Korean society that the expression 'you are my family' is used to show friendship."[78]

On the other hand, *uri* culture has a side effect. *Uri* culture highly values conformity and togetherness. So it does not approve of diversity and individuality. There is a Korean saying that shows the unique characteristic of Korean *uri* culture: "Don't be visible too much."[79] This implies that in *uri* culture, there is an invisible pressure for individuals to conform to the normality of Korean society. It has the nuance that failing to force oneself to the norms of the society might cause shame. In this culture, Koreans are hypersensitive to others' approval and quickly respond to shame which exists as a result of the observation or assessment of others. *Uri* culture compels Koreans to accommodate themselves to be compliant in many circumstances. In *uri* atmosphere, they not only give in to the pressure of the group to conform, but are blended in other members of the group to blame those who digress.[80] Therefore, in order to avoid shame and condemnation, one assents with others in public, "even if one feels like disagreeing."[81] In this case, Koreans use shame to bring about behaviors that fit with group norm, even if those behaviors are not morally correct.

How Shame Functions in Korean Culture

In order to appreciate complex human behaviors and how shame is put into effect in Korean culture, I will take an integrated methodological approach, that includes a cultural-

[77] Ibid., 93.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 364.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.

anthropological approach, a societal-anthropological approach, and a Korean indigenous psychological approach.[82]

The Cultural Anthropological Approach

Given the significant influence of Confucian teachings on nearly every aspect of Korean society, I will explore how the elements of Confucian culture contributed to bring shame on Koreans. It is also important to address the connection between shame and cultural values in contemporary Korean society.

As noted previously, Confucian culture honors collectivistic family-related values and considers the negligence of the five moral virtues a shameful act. Among the five moral values described earlier, the most significant shame involves the lack of children's filial piety to their parents and also the defiance of a wife to her husband.[83] This kind of shame is derived from a family framework or connection. In conventional Confucian culture, an individual's success or failure was directly attached to that of one's family.[84] Honoring one's family and parents was considered as the highest value, while degrading the family was viewed as significantly disgraceful thing one could do. For this purpose, an individual's life was sacrificed or considered much less important than the honor of the family. Therefore, disgrace and defilement of the family name become the source of shame in Confucian culture.[85]

What Confucianism most stresses is "human relationship," and it idealizes "what is expected in our behavior toward others."[86] This philosophy leads to several important values such as respect, deference for other people, correspondence, and appropriate rule in social

[82] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 83.; Rynkiewich, *Soul, Self, and Society,* 15.
[83] Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," 187.
[84] Ibid., 189.
[85] Ibid., 188.
[86] You, "Shame and Guilt Mechanisms in East Asian Culture," 62.

structure.[87] However, more than anything, this Confucian principle influences people to be sensitive to what other people do for them and also how they should pay back what they received.[88] If Korean people are not sensitive to this kind of what to expect or what to give relationship, they feel detached or isolated from the relationship, which causes great shame in them.[89]

Confucianism is based on "the Five Relationships" which I explained in earlier section: human relationships amongst father and son, husband and wife, elder and young, ruler and subject, and friend and friend.[90] In all relationships, Confucianism emphasizes the notion of "*unhae*," a Korean indigenous term, meaning "gracious favor."[91] Michael Kalton describes the idea of *unhae*:

> Closer analysis reveals that the concept implies a twofold obligation those in superior positions should grant assistance, *unhae*, to those who depend upon them and need their help, the recipients of this favor in turn owe a debt of gratitude which can be repaid whenever a fitting occasion arises. The kind of obligation involved in this is not so much a matter of duty in the strict sense as it is a matter of simply behaving in a fitting, human manner.[92]

The greatest and the most essential *unhae* is "the gift of life and nurture one has received from one's parents," which is described even "as vast and boundless as Heaven."[93] This leads to the veneration of filial piety, a virtue of respect for one's parents, elders, and ancestors. The notion of *unhae* plays an essential function in causing shame in the minds of Korean people: "If someone doesn't payback grace, he or she feels shame."[94]

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[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Ibid., 63.
[92] You, "Shame and Guilt Mechanisms in East Asian Culture," 63.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.

In contemporary Korean society, major values are influenced by modernism, although the influence of Confucianism is still prevalent. Ever since Korea accepted modernization after the liberation from Japanese oppression in 1945, cultural influences from the West such as "the progress of scientific knowledge," "democratic ideas," or "rationalization" have been a threat to the traditional values of Korean society.[95] Today, western culture dominates present-day Korean culture. Accordingly, the western idea of individualistic achievement and freedom is recognized as critical to society. Additionally, gender equality, rationality, and monetary wealth are considered significant and substantial.[96] Therefore, shame feelings are intertwined with the absence of the newly adopted Western values in modern Korean culture.[97]

Among them, individual inability and poverty have become the major substances of shame.[98] When one is proved incapable as a result of an assessment or test, he or she is ashamed. For example, failing to enter a college is a shameful thing. Also, what kind of school a person goes to determines the ability of that individual. In other words, in Korea "the school decides the future of the graduates; attending a first-class school is something to be proud of and the opposite is shameful."[99] Thus, in order to prevent shame, competition for the better education has become a social phenomenon.[100] Oftentimes, Korean students strive to succeed and be accepted by renowned schools in order to impress others and to demonstrate that they are capable. Penury is also a significant object of shame.[101] In contemporary Korean society, people are looked down on because of their lack of wealth, and their opportunities to succeed in society are limited by that. Therefore, people strive hard to succeed and make money in order to avoid shame. In this

[95] Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," 190.
[96] Ibid., 191.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid.

competitive environment, many Koreans suffer from a sense of inferiority which causes the shame complex.

The Societal Anthropological Approach

There are several social dimensions to look at in relation with shame: shame and social structure, shame and family social standing, shame and "social comparison," shame and gender, and shame and generation gap.[102]

In terms of shame and social structure, the basic foundation and group dynamics of Korean society lie in Confucian teachings, i.e., a strong enforcement to pursue perfect morality in all human relationships. Confucian values are considered "existing norms" in Korean society.[103] The standard of *sam-kang oh-ryoun* which I explained in the section of Confucian culture in Korea, still functions beneath all social relations, influencing Koreans to act accordingly, although traditional values and modern values are in conflict in contemporary Korean society.[104] Therefore, Koreans who do not follow the values feel ashamed and even denounced or blamed by other members of society either implicitly or explicitly.

The second is the relation between shame and family social standing. Since Korean society puts utmost value in family, one's shame can bring damage upon the social position of one's family. If one of the ancestors in a family did shameful things in the past, this might pose a threat to that family's reputation. A father's low-ranking job might cause trouble for his children to find an honorable spouse.[105] In Korean hierarchical culture, one's family's social standing is viewed as a vital element of shame dynamics. If one's family's social standing is inferior and low, one feels shame. For example, in arranging marriage between two people, one wishes to

[102] Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 365.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.

conceal "something shameful in the family's past or present" or in the individual's life.[106] Yang illustrates that "people want to say that a fiancé 'comes from a right family.'…If there is something shameful in the personal or family record, there is a dilemma for an unmarried person and the person's family."[107]

The third dimension is shame and "social comparison."[108] In Korean face-saving culture, shame commonly takes place "because one looks bad in comparison with other Koreans."[109] Koreans make extra effort to examine how they or their families look in comparison with other people because they do not want to be seen poorly before the eyes of others, which causes shame. Thus, they attempt not to confront shame by devoting their money and time into "things they may not value except as they function to help avoid shame," such as a luxurious wedding or birthday celebrations.[110] In this way, Koreans' anxiety or the fear of losing social face in the observation of others becomes a driving force for their social lives.[111] In short, comparison is dominant in contemporary Korean society. Comparison and competition are present in education and at work. Korean's comparing culture brings shame and an inferiority complex upon those who are being compared.

The fourth dimension is shame and gender. In Korean society, shame finds its object, especially with women: "shame is part of what oppresses women."[112] In a traditional setting, women experienced unfair treatment just because of gender and had to risk their lives to prevent them and their families from shame, even in the cases that they had done nothing wrong.[113] The

[106] Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 366.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid., 367.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid., 368.

critical illustration is "*eun-jang-do*"—"a 4-5 inch silver dagger."[114] Women had to carry this small dagger in them to kill themselves in the case of sexual harassment or abuse, which brought great shame not only on themselves but on their families. There is no mention, however, that traditional Korean men carried a dagger to avoid shame. In modern society, there are still significant distinctions between men and women in terms of shame. For example, there is a Korean term for an old maid: "*no-chuh-nyuh.*"[115] Being called by that name is a shameful thing not only to the woman but to her family because it implies her and her family's incompetence not to find a marriage partner.[116] This type of shame, however, is not applicable to men. I will talk about shame and gender more in the section of Shame and Korean Women.

The final dimension is shame and the generation gap. The economic growth in Korean modern society has greatly influenced the mindsets of the young generation and their value system. New generation Koreans encounter a blend of traditional Korean values and modern Western worth. They show the tendency to stick around traditional values to some extent but also are willing to accommodate themselves to Western values.[117] Thus, it causes conflict with the older generation. Many Korean seniors do not approve modern Western-oriented values such as "individualism," "consumerism," "personal autonomy," and "personal freedom" that the younger generation pursues.[118] The elders feel shame when they recognize the young generation's inappropriate behaviors, whereas younger Koreans can experience shame when they realize they caused shame in their elders. In brief, shame occurs in the collision between the older and the younger generation and their different value system.

[114] Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 367.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid., 368.
[118] Ibid.

Korean Native Psychological Approach

There are several interpretations of the "Korean Self."[119] The Korean view of the self indicates "interdependent self," contrasting with "the independent self" used in Western psychology.[120] From a cross-cultural perspective, the Korean self is expressed as "we-self."[121] In fact, the term "we-self," along with "I-self," was first introduced by Alan Roland, a psychoanalyst who made contributions in the area of cross-cultural psychology.[122] Riwha Hong adopts Roland's viewpoint on the self and connects Korean we-self with Roland's "familial self":

> Roland contrasts the we-self with the individualistic I-self, particularly focusing on the familial self. The familial self means a basic inner psychological organization that enables people to function well within the hierarchical intimacy relationships of the extended family, community, and other groups…the familial self encompasses a "socially contextual ego-ideal"…this ego-ideal is contextual or situational rather than abstract; it is consistent with culturally based principles or norms of the society and with culturally defined reciprocal responsibilities and obligations of different groups and hierarchical relationships.[123]

Therefore, Korean self is we-self, familial self, and collective self.

As mentioned above, it is essential to examine Korean aboriginal psychological concepts in Korean society because shame is best interpreted in its own cultural context. Interpreting shame that Koreans encounter in their day-to-day life should be connected with Korean psychology. Korean indigenous psychological notions like *uri* (Korean we-ness) and *chemyun* (Korean social face) were previously analyzed in connection with shame. Korean *uri* culture highly values one-ness, an affectionate bond, intimacy, and wholeness on the basis of *jeong*, but it brings shame to those who do not follow the principle of *we*-ness.[124] In Korean *we*-ness culture, shame goes well with blaming: People give a shameful and accusing look to someone who

[119] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 129.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid., 130.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid., 130-131.
[124] Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 364.

misbehaves in a way that does not conform to social norms.[125] Korean *chemyun* culture is closely associated with shame as well. One's social face is lost when one does not match the essential requirements that are accompanied with one's social status. That is, face-saving occurs as the result of the efforts of maintaining their social face in front of others, thus, avoiding shame.

The concepts of *jeong* and *nunchi* were also examined in the context of Korean *chemyun* culture. I will mention how lack or absence of *jeong* or *nunchi* can bring about shame in Korean society. Korean *uri* culture promotes the development of *jeong*, a close kin-relationship and affection within groups. However, if one does not fit in this *uri* group and does not develop the feeling of *jeong*, that person is likely to be condemned by the group and marked as "arrogant," "selfish," "calculating," "indifferent," and "cool-headed."[126] In this way, the lack of *jeong* can cause intense shame in the minds and lives of Koreans. *Nunchi* is "the major operating mechanism in maintaining *chemyun.*"[127] This Korean common sense is analogous with the Western concept of "reading between the lines," but *nunchi* contains a much greater face-saving cultural context.[128] Koreans have a tendency not to articulate their opinions or feelings directly, thus, *nunchi* functions well in the social lives of Koreans if it fits into situations. If it does not, however, the absence of *nunchi* can create a great sense of shame among Koreans.

[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid., 121.
[127] Ibid., 129.
[128] Ibid.

Part Four:

Shame and Korean Women[1]

The Multi-Faceted Background of Korean Women and Shame

The Confucian Influence on Korean Women's Shame

Confucianism has contributed to Korean women's low self-worth and a sense of inadequacy by putting them into inferior roles in a male-oriented society.[2] Son argues that Confucianism provided the substantial foundation of perpetual discrimination in Korean society amongst males and females.[3] Ever since Confucianism was adopted as the nation's governmental doctrine in the dynasty of Choson in medieval Korea, it had an extensive and profound impact on the lives of Koreans and dominated their entire way of life. Yao contends, "[t]raditionally, Korea prided itself on being a more (orthodox) Confucian nation than the homeland of Confucianism, China."[4] The fundamental social format that Confucianism honors is a patriarchal family system. Hence, Korean society was structured on the basis of an immovable prejudice of male over female.

Under a patriarchal system, "Confucianism held a low opinion of women."[5] In traditional Confucian societies, women had no place to stand. They were restrained to act and think freely. They were not even allowed to choose their own spouses.[6] Women were absolutely required to obey and follow their husbands "no matter who and where he was (*jia ji sui ji, jia gou sui gou* which literally means that if married to a rooster a woman should follow the rooster, and if

[1] Korea consists in two countries: South and North Korea. Since North Korea is a different nation, I will limit my discussion to South Korean women here.
[2] Sorensen, "The Myth of Princess Pari and the Self Image of Korean Women," 407.
[3] Son, "Confucianism and the Lack of the Development of the Self Among Korean American Women," 328.
[4] Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism,* 121.
[5] Ibid., 183.
[6] Son, "Confucianism and the Lack of the Development of the Self Among Korean American Women," 328.

married to a dog she should follow the dog)."[7] According to Yao, Confucius held a discriminative view against women and "put a woman and a morally deficient person on an equal footing," saying, "In one's household, it is the women and morally inferior men (*xiao ren*) that are difficult to deal with. If you let them get too close, they become insolent. If you keep them at a distance, they complain."[8]

The Confucian influence upon women is mirrored in four Chinese phrases. The first is *hyun mo ynag cho,* which means "sacrificial mother and submissive wife," and *nam jon yu bi* which implies the "inherent superiority of men and inferiority of women" as I mentioned previously.[9] The life-long pattern of women under Confucianism is summed up in *sam jong chil do*, "the three obediences—obedience to the father in childhood, to the husband during marriage, and to the son in the old age."[10] The identity and moral excellence of Korean women under the oppressive weight of Confucianism are defined as total "self-sacrifice," obedience, and submissiveness.[11] A virtuous Korean woman was expected to be completely obedient, or rather subservient, in every relationship without having any voice of her own. Thus, Confucianism degenerated Korean women's status as inferior. It is surprising to notice that Korean women "enjoyed a great deal of social and economic freedom" during "Koryo dynasty" which existed before Choson dynasty.[12]

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[7] Ibid.; Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism,* 183.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Son, "Confucianism and the Lack of the Development of the Self Among Korean American Women," 328.; Lee, "Caring-Self and Women's Self-Esteem," 345.
[10] Kim, *Women of Korea*, 44.; Hyo-Jae Yi, "Christian Mission and the Liberation of Korean Women," *International Review of Mission* 74, no. 293 (January 1985): 93.; Grace Ji-Sun Kim, "Han and the Context of Theology for Korean North American Women," *Koinonia: Princeton Theological Seminary Graduate Forum* 10, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 44.
[11] Kim, "Han and the Context of Theology for Korean North American Women," 44.; Son, "Confucianism and the Lack of the Development of the Self Among Korean American Women," 328.; Cha, "Aspects of Individualism and Collectivism in Korea," 163-165.
[12] Son, "Confucianism and the Lack of the Development of the Self Among Korean American Women," 329.

In Confucian society, the family name was carried on through descendants, especially a male child. For that reason, infertile Korean women were viewed as "sinners," bringing great shame upon themselves.[13] The preference for a male offspring is still dominant in Korean culture. Although Korean women's social standing was enhanced significantly ever since modernization, research shows that Korea still has the biggest chasm between men and women.[14] Shame still plays a vital role in suppressing women in Korean society.[15] Under the Confucian influence, a patriarchal society like Korea does not present a positive portrait of women.[16] Korean society puts a shame mark on women who are divorced and old maids, or who violate marital purity before marriage. In addition, a conflicting principle regarding celibacy before marriage between male and female subjugates Korean women all the more: "Virginity" before marriage is a humiliation to Korean men, whereas "no" virginity is a disgraceful thing to Korean women.[17]

The Cultural Expectation and the Impact of Media on Korean Women's Shame

The following research shows that Korean women are exceptionally responsive to shame and reveal it through their faces and bodies.[18] Korean women tend to have an unfavorable body image which causes considerable body discontent among them.[19] South Korea has undergone dramatic socio-economic prosperity and expansion during the last couple decades. According to research, South Korea was once one of the most impoverished countries in the world, "with a per capita income less than that of Zaire, Congo, or Sudan."[20] Today, it grew to be one of the richest

[13] Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," 189.
[14] Lee, "Caring-Self and Women's Self-Esteem," 345.
[15] Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 367.
[16] Sorensen, "The Myth of Princess Pari and the Self Image of Korean Women," 404.
[17] Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 367.
[18] Si Yeon Kim et al., "Face Consciousness Among South Korean Women: A Culture-Specific Extension of Objectification Theory," *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 61, no. 1 (2014): 28-30.
[19] Kim et al., "Face Consciousness Among South Korean Women," 24.
[20] Ibid., 25.

with "the world's 11th largest economy" within the short period of forty years.[21] The rapid industrial growth has brought significant social developments including the noticeable enhancement of Korean women's rights and competencies in terms of "political, social, and economic powers."[22]

In some sense, Korean women's improved social status, however, has begotten serious after effects and unintended consequences such as a "high mean of body dissatisfaction" and "eating disorders."[23] From a socio-cultural perspective, this paradoxical phenomenon is partly interpreted as the result of the pressure that the patriarchal society might exercise in order to keep the balance and authority of the social structure against rising gender equivalence.[24] According to this social theory, this kind of tension is used to suppress women and preserve the discipline of the patriarchal society.[25] This assumption might be true, especially in the case of South Korea. Research shows that considering that South Korea has undergone very fast and striking social transformation, South Korean women are placed under higher social pressure than any other Asian group to accommodate themselves to "unrealistic beauty standards" and meet the greater cultural expectations to look beautiful and perfect.[26] Accordingly, South Korean women have an inclination to embrace the impracticable standards and view themselves "as objects to be evaluated on the basis of appearance."[27] This viewpoint causes heightened body disapproval among them and can even bring unhealthy disturbance in eating behavior. Such an unreal

[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid., 25.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Kim et al., "Face Consciousness Among South Korean Women," 25.; Keun-Hee Hong, "A Cross-Cultural Study on the Influence of Public Self-Consciousness and Sociocultural Pressure over Ideal Appearance Attitude and Body Shame," *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles* 34, no. 10 (2010): 153.
[27] Kim et al., "Face Consciousness Among South Korean Women," 25.

expectation for appearance damages Korean women's self-worth and debilitates their self-esteem, thus bringing shame if they do not meet expectations.

Media disclosure is another important factor in causing Korean women to experience shame in Korean society.[28] Through public media such as TV, magazines, or social networking in which a perfect beauty model is frequently idolized, Korean women often internalize the ideal type of appearance. And they compare themselves with "unattainable cultural ideals," they have higher risk to encounter "body shame"—not only body shame but also anatomical face shame.[29] In fact, shame from the size and shape of one's face is great in the case of young Korean women, as compared to Anglo European females. Si Yeon Kim et al., after a pilot experiment on forty Korean female college students whose age spectrum ranged from nineteen to twenty-five years, conclude that "face size and shape" is the most decisive pointer for South Korean women in terms of physical attractiveness.[30]

Such a conclusion is supported by other researchers and Korean traditional scholars who claim that "the traditional Korean conceptualization of ideal female beauty emphasizes the face rather than the body."[31] Other scholars confirm this idea on the basis of the fact that in an extremely hierarchical and strict traditional Korean society, women only showed their faces outside the world, covering their bodies.[32] Therefore, the standard of beauty was decided on the appropriate proportion of women's faces. Apparently, Korean women's "small" and "V-shaped" faces are admired to be beautiful.[33] South Korean women experience shame when their faces are not the size or shape they expect they should be.[34] Put briefly, the bigger the gap they feel to

[28] Kim et al., "Face Consciousness Among South Korean Women," 27.
[29] Ibid., 26.
[30] Ibid., 29.
[31] Ibid., 32.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid., 30.

accomplish their goal to reach the perfect beauty, the greater shame they feel. Brene Brown's research proves this trend of shame that is also prevalent in recent U. S culture: how women are expected to be perfectly female-like by "being nice," and "pursuing a thin body ideal."[35] In this way, women experience shame when they do not accomplish the idealistic expectations.

The Christian Influence on Korean Women's Shame

In light of the Korean mission setting, it is reported that seventy percent of Korean Christians are women.[36] Women play a central role in the history of Korean church formation and development. According to the records of missionaries who served an evangelization work in the modern period of Korea, Korean Christian women are noted for their exceptional conversion experiences and religious zeal, which surpass any other body of people.[37] Their virtues are demonstrated in those reports:

> Though inferior in intellectual capability to males, the simplicity of faith, agility in mental adaptability and the depth of the religious experience of women converts were far more excellent than that of men.[38]

More than that, they facilitated the great revival of the Korean church in Pyongyang in 1907, which was launched by two Korean women who encountered "the presence of spirits" and consequently kindled the fire of prayers and spiritual movement among Korean churches.[39] Overall, scholars recognize the contributions that Korean Christian women made in the great achievement of mission work in Korea which began in the revival movements:

> Korean women thus experienced the community spirit of the church through the revival movement, which contributed in volume and equality to the formation of the church as a community. Long chained to life in the husband's family and to the hard toils of

[35] Brown, *Daring Greatly*, 89.
[36] Yi, "Christian Mission and the Liberation of Korean Women," 93.
[37] Ibid., 94.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.

> housekeeping in poverty, Korean women began to see a new horizon for their life, experiencing a community of love, forgiveness and tolerance.[40]

Many Korean Christian women, however, carry a sense of defeatism and self-deficiency, an inferiority complex, lack of self-worth, and shame feeling despite their Christian faith.[41] They have an inclination to view themselves as more inferior, less accomplished, and incompetent than they actually are.[42] Behind this phenomenon lies Confucian influence in the soil of Korean Christian culture, which might contribute to such tendency in Korean Christian women. For example, many Korean churches are still in the shadow of patriarchal influences.[43] Consequently, discrimination and prejudice exist against Korean clergywomen or women workers at the church.

Another possible reason is the tendency of Korean women to build their self-esteem on relationships in society.[44] Boyung Lee affirms Carol Giligan's research, who contends that "women develop a caring/relational sense of personhood whereas men develop a justice oriented self-concept."[45] However, in a patriarchal society, those relational or caring values are likely overlooked under the authority of male-dominant social structure.[46] A patriarchal society like Korea considers manliness much more valuable than feminine traits; thus, Korean women have a tendency to carry low self-esteem. Still, Korean society cherishes its relational aspects more than other communal cultures.[47] Why then do Korean women show lower self-respect than Korean men?[48] Boyung Lee argues that Korean society's strong hierarchical structure and Confucian influence "that forces less powerful members of the group to sacrifice themselves for the sake of

[40] Ibid., 95.
[41] Lee, "Caring-Self and Women's Self-Esteem," 338.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Yi, "Christian Mission and the Liberation of Korean Women," 102.
[44] Lee, "Caring-Self and Women's Self-Esteem," 338-340.
[45] Ibid., 338.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Lee, "Caring-Self and Women's Self-Esteem," 342.
[48] Ibid.

the larger community" shape Korean women's low self-worth.[49] This is applicable to Korean Christian women as well.

In Korean society, Christianity "brought the freedom for learning and knowledge to those underprivileged, including women of low class."[50] A Christian gospel message was the message of hope and liberation for Korean women, freeing them from the bondage of Confucianism, protecting their rights and positions through education.[51] However, although it is true that Christianity in Korea brought Korean women a certain degree of freedom, scholars question "whether or not Korean Christianity truly liberated Korean women to equal status as men."[52] According to Korean scholars, the primary intention for educating women was to guide them "to be good wives and mothers," which was also Confucian teaching.[53] Korean Christianity emphasized the role of women as wives and mothers and restricted women in the church hierarchy.[54] Korean Christianity contributed to maintain "patriarchal values" in their church setting by encouraging women to comply with "the existing cultural role of women," with the purpose of creating harmonious system in the church as well as in the society.[55] Today's Korean church still regulates women in its hierarchical system, which brings shame and lack of self-respect to Korean Christian women.

Perfectionism is another shame factor that Christianity can bring. Martin argues the negative effect of religion in experiencing shame by borrowing the opinion of Bradshaw:

> Religion has been a major source of shaming through perfectionism. The bible has been used to justify all sorts of blaming judgment. A perfectionism system creates a 'how to

[49] Ibid., 346.
[50] You-Seon Kim, "A Constructive Analysis of Christian Women in a Confucian Culture: In the Cases of Korean-American Clergy Wives" (PhD diss., Drew University, 2009), 86.
[51] Kim, "A Constructive Analysis of Christian Women in a Confucian Culture," 88.
[52] Ibid., 90.
[53] Ibid., 90-91.
[54] Ibid., 92.
[55] Ibid., 107-108.

> get it right' behavioral script in which one is taught how to act loving and righteous. It's actually more important to act loving and righteous than to be loving and righteous.[56]

Therefore, the shame message that "I should be perfect" in practicing Christian religion can cause a great sense of shame of not reaching the perfect standard or expectation in Korean Christian women.[57] In an amalgam of Confucianism and Christianity, Korean Christian women are compelled to be or appear perfect, for example, by obeying their elders, or sacrificing themselves for the sake of "God" and others. They usually internalize those expectations, and thus are exposed to shame if their expectations are not met.[58]

Another general aspect of religion emphasizes hiding one's emotions. Bradshaw continues in describing the shaming function of religion that emotion like anger is discouraged to show:

> In religion, anger is especially considered bad. Many children are shamed for their anger. Children often see parents angry and rageful. The message is that it's okay for parents to be angry, but it's not okay for children...[59]

In Korean Christian culture, Korean Christian women are encouraged to suppress anger and look gracious before the eyes of people. Therefore, failing to conceal or restrain anger causes shame in Korean Christian women.

The Role of Shame Among Korean Christian Women

The Negative Aspect of Shame in Korean Christian Women

As described, many Korean Christian women suffer from low self-esteem, a sense of defectiveness and inadequacy, and lack of self-confidence. In a blended influence of Confucianism and Christianity, Korean Christian women are often subjected to psychological

[56] Sara Hines Martin, "Shame-Based Families," *Review & Expositor* 91, no. 1 (1994): 23.
[57] Martin, "Shame-Based Families," 23.
[58] Kim, "A Constructive Analysis of Christian Women in a Confucian Culture," 85.
[59] Martin, "Shame-Based Families," 24.

burdens due to their flawed self-image and ambiguous self-identity. Still carrying the burden of Confucian influences and Christian teachings, they consider the success of their husbands and children as "a measure of a good life."[60] This is also applicative to Korean American women whose identities are "still defined and determined by the Confucian society of their homeland."[61] They are likely to blame themselves for any embarrassing or shameful situation and criticize their own incompetence. They are inclined to "attribute the difficulty to their own failure to fulfill their 'womanly' role."[62]

Grace Ji-Sun Kim states that *han* plays a part in Korean women's shame.[63] *Han* is a Korean term which shows the depth of sorrow and agony of Korean people.

> *Han* is a sense of unresolved resentment against injustice suffered, a sense of helplessness because of the overwhelming odds against, a feeling of total abandonment, a feeling of acute pain of sorrow in one's guts and bowels making the whole body writhe and wiggle, and an obstinate urge to take 'revenge' and to right the wrong all these constitute…the suppressed, amassed and condensed experience of oppression caused by mischief or misfortune so that it forms a kind of 'lump' in one's spirit.[64]

Korean people integrate *han* into themselves as they undergo suffering and hardship. This is especially relevant to women who have been discriminated in Korean society.

Shame is the basis of "all emotional distress and insecurity."[65] Shame indicates an agonizing pain of social embarrassment. In Korea's face-saving, hierarchical, and communal culture, Korean Christian women experience the feeling of embarrassment and shame by comparing themselves with others. Edelmann illustrates that in a broad sense, "embarrassment" is considered "as a form of social anxiety closely related to shyness, audience anxiety, and

[60] Kim, "Han and the Context of Theology for Korean North American Women," 46.
[61] Ibid., 47.
[62] Ibid., 48.
[63] Ibid., 52.
[64] Ibid., 41.
[65] Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," 182.

shame."[66] Its purpose is to maintain social self-image before the eyes of others. This kind of negative shame is called "toxic shame," which brings about "hopelessness and spiritual bankruptcy."[67] Bradshaw asserts, "Toxic shame is the core of most forms of emotional illness," including "character disorders" and "chronic depression."[68] Toxic shame is detrimental to form a positive self-image and to develop healthy self-esteem. It produces anxiety, depression, and a sense of despair. According to Susan L. Nelson, toxic shame is fundamentally harmful and injurious to recipients. This shame is "a state of alienation born when shame experiences have been particularly devastating...or chronic."[69] It occurs within "shame-based" social system or among very close and important relationships.[70]

Toxic shame conveys self-doubt or self-condemnation, which causes one to question his or her self-worth. Toxic shame experience is portrayed by Gershen Kaufman:

> Times come upon us when doubt creeps inside, as if an inner voice whispers despair. Suddenly, we find ourselves questioning our very worth or adequacy. It may come in any number of ways: "I can't relate to people." "I'm a failure." "Nobody could possibly love me." "I'm inadequate as a man or as a mother [sic]." When we have begun to doubt ourselves, and in this way to question the very fabric of our lives, secretly we feel to blame; the deficiency lies within ourselves alone. Where once we stood secure in our personhood, now we feel a mounting inner anguish, a sickness of the soul. This is shame.[71]

In a case study in a Korean American church setting, many Korean Christian women viewed themselves as valueless, inadequate, unqualified, and undeserved. In not so few cases, Korean Christian women experience toxic shame in a social system and in a family, and consider themselves as insignificant and worthless.

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[66] Robert J. Edelmann, "Embarrassment and Blushing: A Component-Process Model, Some Initial Descriptive and Cross-Cultural Data," in *Shyness and Embarrassment: Perspectives from Social Psychology*, ed. Ray W. Crozier (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 205.
[67] Martin, "Shame-Based Families," 20.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Nelson, "For Shame, For Shame, The Shame of it All," 76.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid., 77.

The Constructive Aspects of Shame in Korean Christian Women

Although many scholars primarily deal with the negative and bleak side of shame, Fowler analyzes a positive aspect of shame, stating that "healthy shame serves as an essential guardian of our desire to be worthy persons."[72] It protects the values and characteristics that are significant to form a healthy self-worth in one's personal and social life. This facet of shame functions positively to shape and reinforce "conscience."[73] Nelson also addresses the positive role of shame as a teacher: shame advises us "when we have pushed a limit... or beyond the stretch of protective social norms"; informs us "when we are frightened or unsure about ourselves in a certain situation"; reminds us "how important it is to be graciously received by another, and how fragile our experiences and relationships can be."[74]

From a biblical outlook, shame plays a positive function in one's relationship with God. A perspective of productive shame in Christianity is delineated as follows:

> Healthy shame tells us of our limits… that we are not God. Healthy shame is the psychological foundation of humility. It is the source of spirituality… our ultimate human need. It pushes us to…become grounded in…God.[75]

Shame leads one into humble acknowledgement that one is separated from God because of sin and that one needs God's unconditional grace. Martin quotes Sandra Wilson in *Released from Shame*:

> Biblical Shame is an appropriate, healthy response when we acknowledge that we are different and less than God made us and that we are separated from him by our sin.[76]

Ultimately, shame guides one to self-realization as a hopeless sinner apart from God and turns one toward God. In a nutshell, shame provides an important moment "to know who I am in front

[72] James W. Fowler, *Faithful Change: The Personal and Public Challenges of Postmodern Life* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 113.
[73] Fowler, *Faithful Change*, 105.
[74] Nelson, "For Shame, For Shame, The Shame of it All," 76.
[75] Martin, "Shame-Based Families," 20.
[76] Martin, "Shame-Based Families," 19-20.

of God."[77] This is truly relevant in Korean Christian women's circumstances. Through her case studies and interviews with Korean Christian women, Phileun Lee-Park concludes that "shame contributed to recognizing Korean women's humbleness for receiving God's grace."[78] In their personal experiences of being Christians, particularly, the Korean women whom Park interviewed confessed that they found God's amazing grace upon undeserved sinners like them. That is, "in the paradox of shame, they encounter God who covers their shameful parts."[79] Put briefly, shame is a key factor to draw Korean Christian women closer to God and enable them to experience the marvelous grace of God.

According to one scholar, another positive aspect of shame is its role in preserving the social framework.[80] In Korean society, shame delineates the social structure and empowers the individual's social life to function. Shame is an important element that leads to the process of socialization in the lives of children in Korean society.[81] In terms of parenting, Korean mothers inculcate a sense of shame, or *chang-pee* in Korean term in their children from a young age.[82] Generally speaking, Korean mothers immediately respond to their children's social misconduct in a teaching tone.[83] It teaches children what the society norms are so that they may gain an understanding of how to avert shame in the larger social setting.[84] Korean mothers teach children shame so that children may not shame their mothers and that they also may not be exposed to public shame in the society. In this way, the culture or the society may continue to perpetuate honor/shame aspects. Just as Lee argues that Korean people need freedom "from feeling

[77] You, "Shame and Guilt Mechanisms in East Asian Culture," 64.
[78] Park, "Reconsidering Korean Women's Shame," 100.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," 181.
[81] Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 371.
[82] Ibid., 369.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.

ashamed, while valuing the sense of shame," the productive sense of shame is a dynamic power to make the proper functioning of society possible.[85]

This kind of effective role of shame fits into the context of Korean Confucian culture. As I mentioned previously, Confucianism highly honors collectivistic values, pursuing the essential goal of prosperity and peace of the group. For this purpose, individuals are strongly encouraged to put the welfare and harmony of their in-groups above their own personal benefits. It is an honor in this culture that individuals sacrifice their own interests to work for the good of the group. In this case, Confucianism contributes to the harmony and welfare of Korean society by prompting Korean mothers to teach their children socially accepted behaviors along with a sense of shame.

In contemporary Korean society, traditional and the modern values coexist. Confucian and Christian influences also coexist. In terms of Christian influence on the positive function of shame in Korean society, Christianity contributes to the preservation of a healthy sense of shame in Korean people. In the case above, Korean Christian mothers can introduce healthy shame to their children by helping them grasp an appropriate self-realization on the basis of Christian teachings.

There is another positive aspect of shame in the amalgam of Korean Confucian and Christian culture. According to Yang, shame safeguards the members of culture who are powerless and defenseless, such as children and aged seniors.[86] Despite social changes, disrespect or carelessness for one's elderly parents is still regarded as a disgrace in Korean society. One of the important commandments Christianity teaches is to honor one's parents and

[85] Lee, "Korean Culture and Sense of Shame," 182.
[86] Yang and Rosenblatt, "Shame in Korean Families," 367.

elders. Therefore, "shame works to provide a safety net for Korean elders."[87] Also, shame plays positively in inseparable family dynamics, particularly in "Korean parent-child relationships."[88] The shame dynamic works in Korean families, albeit not all cases: parents are ashamed when their children are not successful in school or society and children experience shame when their parents do not carry out their responsibilities.[89] This shame may inspire children to do their best and parents to be responsible in doing their duties.

Application in the Missional Setting

You-Seon Kim represents the symptoms of damaged self-respect or low self-worth through her case studies on the wives of Korean American ministers.[90] Grace Ji-Sun Kim unpacks the autobiographical accounts of Korean American churchwomen who experience shame both in their personal and ministerial aspects. One clergywoman felt shame when she questioned God's vocational calling and faithfulness upon her life while taking care of three children as a full-time mother.[91] Another churchwoman experienced shame when she had to fight against racial bias and gender discrimination as an Asian woman in her church not to mention in Western society.[92] Still, another clergywoman encountered shame when the church refused to be accessible to the poor and the needy.[93]

Research shows that many Korean Christian women and Korean female missionaries or clergy women still suffer from a sense of not being good enough and shame feelings. In the case of Korean female missionaries, if they fail the mission that they are called to do, they feel condemned and useless. This is also relevant in my case. Growing up in Korean Christian home,

[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Kim, "A Constructive Analysis of Christian Women in a Confucian Culture," 105-107.
[91] Grace Ji-Sun Kim, *Here I am: Faith Stories of Korean American Clergywomen* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2015), 37.
[92] Kim, *Here I am,* 51.
[93] Ibid., 96.

I was influenced by Christian teachings which taught me a biblical shame that I am a sinner who needs God's forgiveness of sins and his saving grace. This healthy shame led me to depend on God's grace. However, I was also influenced by the bleak side of shame that existed in my Christian home, as well as in Confucian ethics which I absorbed during my upbringing in Korea. As a result, I had to carry the considerable sense of shame of never being good enough and a sense of inadequacy all my life. This shame was perpetuated even in my mission life, leading me to self-doubt and low self-esteem. I felt a sense of failure when my discipleship ministry did not go well. This sense of insufficiency involved the defectiveness of my whole being. And I did not know how to cope with my shame. This helpless feeling caused more shame in me with an increased feeling of worthlessness of my value as a human being.

Dealing with Shame from a Pastoral Perspective

Korean Christian women need to be delivered from their inferiority complex and worthlessness.[94] How can Korean Christian women's harmful shame be transformed into a healthy one? From a pastoral perspective, shame can be healed only by God's unconditional grace and acceptance. Grace is the best antidote to the pain of shame.[95] Grace and acceptance go hand in hand. Grace is acceptance because "the road to acceptance does not bypass sound judgment."[96] Foster quotes Smedes: "Accepting grace is the answer to shame."[97] Albers claims, "Grace is the active expression of God's love. God's love is the root of grace."[98] God accepts all human beings in his unconditional love. Just as shame is contagious, so the grace of acceptance

[94] Yi, "Christian Mission and the Liberation of Korean Women," 101.
[95] John Arnold Forrester, *Grace for Shame: The Forgotten Gospel* (Toronto: Pastor's Attic Press, 2010), 117.
[96] Forrester, *Grace for Shame*, 27.
[97] Ibid., 182.
[98] Albers, "Shame and the Conspiracy of Silence," 64.

is communicable.[99] While shame is the fear of rejection, God's grace of acceptance leads one to the healing from shame.

The next important step is to embrace imperfection. Shame comes from the fear of not being good enough. Shame is the fear of one's weaknesses being exposed. From a biblical perspective, all human beings are imperfect, for all have fallen from the glory of God due to sin. However, God delights in each person who is created in his image. Therefore, we are all adequate and good enough in the sight of God. Albers states, "God does not make junk!"[100] In breaking the shame cycle, he suggests "acceptance of finitude," which means acknowledging powerlessness and imperfection and being content about it.[101] Brown also conveys the same idea of embracing one's self however imperfect it may be.[102]

Morrison introduces several stages of breaking the cycle of shame. First, it involves identifying "the presence of shame."[103] This includes honest confrontation with one's shameful past and present. In a similar vein, Albers emphasizes the importance of confronting shame and embracing its pain.[104] In her shame resilience method, the first step that Brene Brown suggests is to acknowledge shame and realize its triggers.[105]

Second, breaking the cycle of shame involves taking the danger of exposing one's self, which means "taking the chance of revealing feelings, thoughts, needs, fears, self-doubts to…one who accepts rather than ridicules."[106] Shame loves secret keeping; thus, revealing one's

[99] Forrester, *Grace for Shame*, 185.
[100] Albers, "Shame and the Conspiracy of Silence," 62.
[101] Ibid., 63.
[102] Brown, *Daring Greatly*, 67.
[103] Morrison, *The Culture of Shame*, 120.
[104] Albers, "Shame and the Conspiracy of Silence," 61.
[105] Brown, *Daring Greatly*, 75.
[106] Morrison, *The Culture of Shame*, 120.

weakness and emotion is the path to the healing of shame. This is the power of vulnerability and courage that Brown stresses in terms of shame resilience.[107]

Third, breaking the shame cycle includes caring for "our inner child's needs."[108] Morrison illustrates that it is an essential step of healing to acknowledge "the presence of that child who felt hurt…who felt small and incompetent" and who still delivers the message of low self-respect and love and to learn to embrace and care for that child.[109] This is where self-compassion or self-love comes to the scene.[110] We need to learn to embrace and love ourselves.

Fourth, breaking the cycle of shame requires "empathy" and acceptance.[111] Ri-wha Hong describes empathy "as a basic source of caring and healing."[112] Brown stresses the importance of practicing self-compassion and empathy as a powerful weapon to break the cycle of shame and blaming.[113] According to Brown, empathy is "to be able to see the world as others see it," "to be nonjudgmental," "to understand another person's feelings," and "to communicate your understanding of that person's feelings."[114] Developing empathy, self-mercy, or unconditional acceptance are all essential steps toward the healing of shame.

Practically, since a shame experience is basically associated with low self-esteem, building up a positive self-image in Korean Christian women is an important initial step.[115] It is very crucial for Korean Christian women to establish "a strong self-identity."[116] For this purpose, it is essential that the church and the Christian community support Korean Christian women.

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[107] Brown, *Daring Greatly*, 61-62.
[108] Morrison, *The Culture of Shame*, 126.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Brown, *Daring Greatly*, 96.
[111] Brené Brown, *I thought It was Just Me (But It Isn't): Telling the Truth about Perfectionism, Inadequacy, and Power* (New York, NY: Gotham Books, 2008), 42.
[112] Hong, "Shame in the Korean *Uri* Culture," 201.
[113] Brown, *I thought It was Just Me (But It Isn't)*, 32.
[114] Brown, *I thought It was Just Me (But It Isn't)*, 37-41.
[115] Park, "Reconsidering Korean Women's Shame," 102.
[116] Kim, "Han and the Context of Theology for Korean North American Women," 52.

Park argues the importance of Christian education for Korean women: "Christian education can motivate Korean women to detach themselves from social discrimination and help them achieve a higher level of self-confidence."[117] Refraining the usage of "any language which justifies social injustice and social discrimination" is another important move.[118] Revisiting shame from a godly viewpoint can bring a healing to Korean Christian women's shame.[119] This means interpreting shame events through the lens of God's greater Sovereignty and purpose, knowing that in everything including shame events, God "works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid., 104.
[119] Ibid., 105.

Conclusion

Shame is an intense feeling of defectiveness and inadequacy within one's whole being. Shame is a painful awareness of unworthiness and deficiency. Shame involves the fear of rejection, the fear of not being good enough, the fear of not belonging, the fear of abandonment, and the fear of disgrace. Shame is a "never enough" feeling. Shame is expressed by embarrassment, mortification, humiliation, and rage. Shame does not want one's critical weakness to be exposed. Shame loves perfectionism.

This paper, first of all, explores shame-related concepts such as the definition of emotions, the relationship between shame and the self, the difference between shame and guilt, the social nature of shame, and the female color of shame. We have examined shame in the contexts of Korean collectivistic, Confucian, hierarchical, patriarchal, face-saving, and communal culture. We have analyzed how shame functions in the amalgam of Korean Confucian and Christian culture from cultural- and societal-anthropological approaches and a Korean indigenous psychological approach. In particular, the negative and positive side of shame in Korean Christian women has been explored on the basis of Korean sociocultural and religious backgrounds. I added my experiences, mission applications, and suggested possible solutions from a pastoral perspective. Further research is necessary to illuminate the relationship between shame and Korean culture and shame and Korean Christian women, as well as the practical solution and guidelines to lead Korean Christian women to healing from shame. God's grace is the antidote of shame. As a result of this research, I would like to see how toxic shame among women in the Korean Christian culture can be effectively transformed into Christian faith in the form of grace.

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