

# The Argus

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Since 1954

## Seeds Have Become Bullets

A War Without Gunshots Has Already Started  
We Must Recognize the Importance of Native Seeds



The Argus Investigates How Korea Is Preparing for Seed War

# The Argus

ESTABLISHED 1954

Published monthly except on school holidays by and for the students of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, The Argus, the oldest campus English magazine in Korea, pursues the highest standard of campus journalism and academism.

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## Editorial

# To Face the Transition

There must be a “turning point” in life for everyone. It also existed for me, too. The turning point in my college life was The Argus. In the first semester of 2021, when I joined The Argus as the 107th cub reporter, analyzing articles was so much fun and enjoyable. In the second semester of 2021, I became a staff reporter of The Argus and wrote articles as much as I could as a member of the Theory & Critique Section. Of course, there were times when I was upset because of my unsatisfactory performances in my articles, which also made who I am. In the first semester of 2022, surprisingly, I had a chance to serve as editor-in-chief. There were many difficulties waiting for me, going from a regular staff to an editor. I was not quick and was more comfortable receiving instructions rather than giving them. Now, looking back when I’d just taken over the editor’s job, I was not sure whether my attachment to The Argus was deep enough to lead the organization. I was standing in the middle of a situation, specifically that nothing was clear due to the still ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The former editor-in-chief Nam Gyeong-eun was still a great help. Thanks to her, I was able to adjust myself to the editor’s position and organize The Argus. She is one of the few people who helped me, so I feel extremely grateful toward her. Also, I am very grateful to our editing team, who gave me a big help reviewing all the articles.

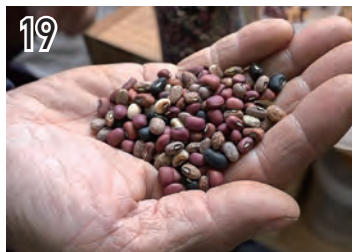
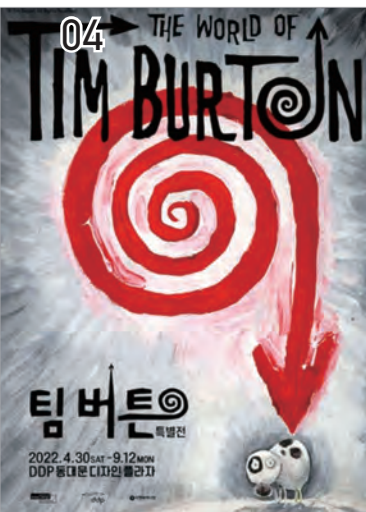
There are others I also need to thank. Associate Editor Lim Se-jin is a keen person who always asks penetrating questions. She finished her apprenticeship as a cub reporter with me, worked in the same Theory & Critique Section in the second semester and was a big help by my side in 2022. She cheers up and inspires everyone: she was The Argus’ mood maker and vitamin. Associate Editor Shin Jun-seo is a very socially inept person and cares about others. He is always interested in the vulnerable and wants to clearly identify the cause of social problems, having warm and fair gaze toward all social issues. Yet, he is like the eternal youngest of The Argus. Staff Reporter Kim Ye-ji always seems to silently do her job properly. At the same time, she has a humble and considerate personality, so when I talk with her, I can feel the warmth and kindness of a human being. Staff Reporter Yang Yu-min has always been a reliable problem solver that The Argus depends on. Reporter Yang always helps me with unexpected difficulties, so I really relied on her a lot. Staff Reporter Cho Eun and Kim Jin-seo are reaction masters who always smile and applaud at every word I say.

It would be a lie if I say, “the editor was not hard at all.” It was hard, but it was priceless. This is not to say that it has become easier to act quickly or to give instructions. However, I came to realize that the weight of my words and the responsibility of a leader is heavy. The higher my position became, the more people I impacted with my words. Sometimes it was scary and uncomfortable, but I feel that I have grown a lot. As a leader, I found out that I was still young, but such self-awareness motivated me to step forward. 

박건하

By Park Kun-ha  
Editor-in-Chief





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## Cover Story

>> The three factors that are vital for human life are food, clothing, and shelter. Some might say food is the most important because it is directly connected to survival. According to the Yonhap News, unfortunately, many experts are saying that in the modern era, a food crisis is underway because of climate change. Events like war are worsening this food crisis. In this vein, the importance of seeds, which are the source of our food is increasing. Yet Korea had once lost in the so-called seed war and its seed sovereignty at risk. The Argus will show how Korea is recovering from this loss and preparing for our future food tables.

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## The Third EU Youth Forum Held in June

©HUFS



▲ The third EU Youth Forum will be held on June 30, hosted by the Institute of European Studies and The Korean Society of Contemporary European Studies.

The Institute of European Studies in HUFS and The Korean Society of Contemporary European Studies will hold the third EU Youth Forum on June 30, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The due date for applying was May 20. HUFSSans, including undergraduates and graduate students, can participate in the forum, presenting their views and debating with one another. Each team would present within 15 minutes, with any form of materials including PPT files or text files. The topic of the third EU Youth Forum is free, as long as it is about European regions and the EU. Participants will receive 100,000 won (\$80) and a certificate of participation. The second EU Youth Forum was held on April 22 with the Jean Monnet EU Centre of Excellence, and 15 undergraduates and 4 graduate students discussed on the topic of “The Present and Future of European Studies.” Kim Bong-Chul, the head of The Institute of European Studies in HUFS, encouraged the students who were present at the forum and promised he would open the door to discussions on European studies and nations. If students have any matters for inquiry, they can contact The Institute of European Studies. 


By Kim Ye-ji

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## HUFS Press Center Wins Order for Second AI Learning Data Construction Project

In 2022, HUFS Press Center won an order for the “Second AI Learning Data Construction Project” of the National Information Society Agency (NIA), in collaboration with Professor Han Seung-hee, a Senior Researcher at HUFS Data Center. As a result, HUFS Press Center won the second new project worth US \$1,947,040.50 following the first project and achieved a valuable result that has grown nearly three times compared to last year.

HUFS Press Center won an order for task 10 of the project, “multilingual interpretation and translation reading data,” which aims to build a large-capacity corpus used for a total of 3,000 hours of Korean-English and Korean-multilingual interpretation and translation training and evaluation. The data is a large-capacity corpus for upgrading the voice recognizer, and it will be stored at the HUFS Press Center and HUFS Data Center later to be used in the development of HUFS’s own voice recognizer.

Koh Yun-seong, head of the HUFS Press Center, said, “From last year, the HUFS Press Center and HUFS Data Center have worked closely together to develop convergence capabilities that take advantage of the linguistic characteristics of HUFS, and this seems to have paid off well this year. Through collaboration with the HUFS Data Center, we will strive to build a large-scale business model that leads to harmony between language and IT.” As such, The Argus wants HUFS to become a more prosperous educational institution by combining language and science technology. 



©Ministry of Science and ICT


▲ AI Learning Data Construction Project is a government-led digital new deal project that is being promoted to create large-scale jobs and foster the national AI industry.

By Yang Yu-min

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## The Special Lecture on Learning Method Held

The application and study period for the learning method lecture ends June 24. Students can apply for the program on the HUFSAbility website, and the lecture will be available through the e-class system. It can take up to two days for lectures to be updated in the applicant's e-class account.

The lecture consists of four different topics from different professors across different universities. The first course is given by Professor Kim Yang-soo, of Kyung Hee University. The lecture is about understanding design thinking, its models, and successful cases. The second topic is given by Professor Choo Hyun-jae, of Sahmyook Health University, about how to raise self-esteem, tips for online class studying, and enhancing integrated thinking ability. The third subject is about raising creativity, given by Professor Kim Hyun-woo, of Jesus University. His lecture consists of understanding, improving techniques, and everyday examples of creativity. The last lecture is by Lee Hyun-min, a researcher at Hanyang Cyber University, about report writing and presentation skills. Roh Seong-bin, from the Department of Chinese Language and Culture '18, said, "It was hard to write reports and prepare presentations for some classes; and I think these special lectures, especially the fourth lecture will help a lot." The program will give students diverse tips on how to deal with homework and studying and provide students with a broader perspective. 



▲ HUFSAbility holds the special lecture.

By Cho Eun


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## HUFS Holds Conversations with the President



▲ HUFS holds the conversation with President Park Jeong-Woon at Cyber Hall on May 11, 2022.

On May 11, 2022, HUFS held the conversation with President Park Jeong-Woon at Cyber Building of HUFS Seoul Campus. The Student Council of HUFS Seoul Campus made six main requests for the president. The requests consist of a. Revising the standards by re-discussing the evaluation method, b. Keeping reasonable the burden of tuition fees, c. Providing more opportunities for supporting employment and startup businesses, d. Renovating old school facilities, e. Guaranteeing that students can participate in the reformation of the academic system, f. Promising to fulfill the student's demands in the form of a regular agreement between the president and students. The student council based these requests on feedback collected from students previously via online submissions. Moreover, based upon those six requests, the students who were in the Cyber Building could freely ask the president questions.

Pyo Ye-jin, a student from the Department of English Linguistics and Language Technology, who participated in the event, said, "It was great to be able to directly communicate with the president about various topics." President Park said, "I am happy to have the opportunity to interact with students in person." The event was on broadcast live on the official YouTube channel of HUFS. Students who were watching the YouTube livestream wrote and submitted their questions via the online platform's townhall function. 

By Kim Jin-seo

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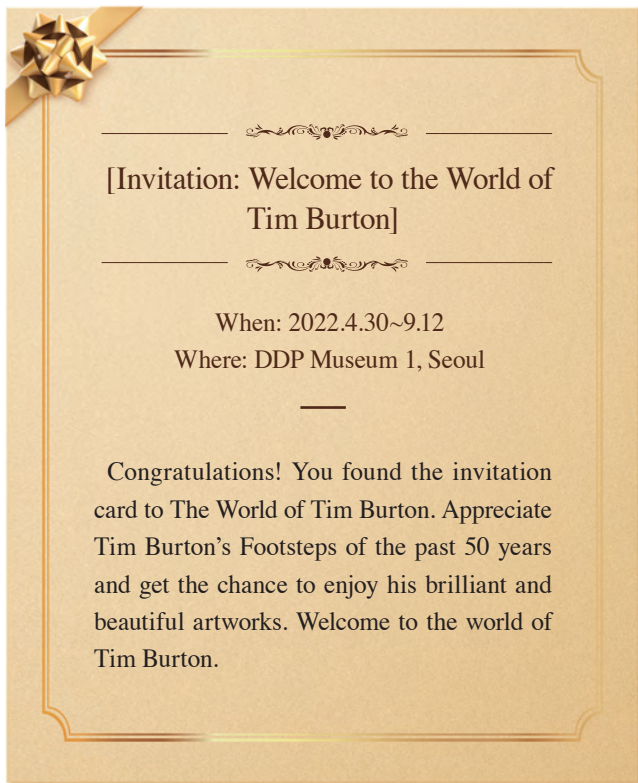
# Welcome to the world of Tim Burton



By Kim Ye-ji

Staff Reporter of Culture Section

“Find the Golden Tickets hidden in random Wonka chocolate bars!” The world’s largest chocolate factory, Willy Wonka’s Chocolate Factory, hosts a special event. Inside Wonka’s chocolate bars, there is a hidden Golden Ticket and anyone who finds it obtains entry to Willy Wonka’s chocolate factory to get a chance to see the secrets of Willy Wonka’s attractive products in real life, such as chocolate ice cream that never melts even in hot weather, or bubble gum that turns into candy when the bubble pops. This is the plot of the film “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” directed by American filmmaker Tim Burton. Tim Burton is known for directing popular films such as “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory” as well as “Alice in Wonderland” and “Edward Scissorhands.” This summer, the world-famous film director Tim Burton invites the Korean public to his art world. The Argus will take readers to Tim Burton’s small world, stretching readers’ imagination, uniqueness, and sensitivity, which have been shrinking throughout the semester through the mundanity of everyday routine.



## [Before Reading: How to get there]

Coming out of Exit 1 of DDP Station and going straight, readers will be able to find a building which is called “Museum 1.” Right in front of the building, a large balloon-shaped sculpture catches the eyes of passers-by. It is Tim Burton’s signature character



▲ The boy appearing in Tim Burton’s movie “Vincent” shows wierd and grotesque imagination.

“Balloon Boy,” which was specially created at 8.5 meters high for this exhibition. Moving past the balloon boy who is gazing at visitors and going inside, a terrifying shadow of a monster repeats on-again off-again on the white wall. The Argus hopes the readers won’t forget these two important photo spots that they must go through before enjoying the exhibition.



## [The World of Tim Burton]

Tim Burton's exhibition has returned to Seoul after 10 years, since the exhibition of Tim Burton which was jointly organized with the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, was held in Seoul in 2012. The World of Tim Burton consists of nine sections, starting with Tim Burton's earliest works, showing the identity of Tim Burton, introducing all films directed by Tim Burton, and the personal space that Tim Burton occupies. Then, let's enter Tim Burton's world, which is sometimes mysterious and sometimes bizarre.

## [The Childhood of Tim Burton]: Influences and Holidays

### Influences

The exhibition begins with the section named "Influences," which displays Tim Burton's earliest works and ideas. "I was not a verbal communicator growing up, so drawing was a form of communication for me." As Tim Burton felt more relaxed when expressing his artistic inspiration through painting, this section is full of sketches. The reason why this section got the name "Influences" is that Tim Burton's earliest works were heavily influenced by cartoonists and illustrators such as Edward Gorey,\* Charles Addams,\* and Theodor Geisel.\* Visitors can also check out Tim Burton's note pads full of sketches he made by hand when he was studying at California Institute of Arts, majoring in animation. Going further, a black-and-white video stands out. This is a short stop motion\* video directed by Tim Burton and was created under the considerable influences of stop motion animation masters Georges Méliès,\* Ray Harryhausen,\* and Vincent Price.\*

In addition, this section shows Tim Burton's affection for "monsters." "I've always loved monsters and monster movies. I was never terrified of them; every kid responds to some fairy tale image, and I felt most monsters were basically misperceived. They usually had much more heartfelt souls than the human characters around them." Unlike most children, Tim Burton, who was not afraid of monsters, frequently featured strange but lovely monsters in his works. Among them, Tim Burton's extraordinary affection for the monster is revealed in the painting "Saucer and Aliens," which depicts a large UFO, aliens, and a bunch of people watching it.

\* Edward Gorey: He is an American author and illustrator. Edward Gorey wrote novels such as "The Hapless Child" and "The Willowdale Handcar."

\* Charles Addams: He is an American playwright who gained popularity for his dark but and humorous stories, such as the sitcom series "The Addams Family."

\* Theodor Geisel: He was an American author and cartoonist. Theodore Geisel worked under the pen name "Dr. Seuss," writing works such as "Green Eggs and Ham" and "The Cat in the Hat."

\* Stop motion: Stop motion is an animated filmmaking technique in which objects are physically manipulated in small increments between individually photographed frames so that they will appear to exhibit independent motion or change when the series of frames is played back.

\* Georges Méliès: He was a French magician and filmmaker who was considered as a pioneer in early filmmaking technology and genre development. His representative work is "A Trip to the Moon" released in 1902.

\* Ray Harryhausen: He is an American visual effects producer, writer, and filmmaker who established a form of stop motion animation. Representative works include "The 7th Voyage of Sinbad" and "Clash of The Titans."

\* Vincent Price: He is an American actor who gained popularity for his performance in horror movies. He appeared in the films of "House of Wax" and "Edward Scissorhands."



▲ This is a picture of Tim Burton and his inspiration Vincent Price, an American actor who appeared in many horror movies.



▲ Tim Burton has a special affection to monsters, and it is expressed in many of his drawings.

©Kim Ye-jin/The Argus

©Kim Ye-jin/The Argus

## Holidays

Yang Hee-young, a 24-year-old woman, said in an interview with The Argus, “The ‘Holidays’ section designed with snow on a red background was outstandingly beautiful. I could feel that Tim Burton interpreted Christmas from a different perspective than ordinary people.” Like Yang Hee-young’s noted, the “Holidays” section, which consists of large snowflakes on a bright red background, catches the eyes of visitors. Tim Burton spent his childhood in his hometown of Burbank, California. Burbank is a small and quiet rural town located next to LA. Usually, it was a boring place where finding artistic inspiration was almost impossible, but when the end of the year approached, all of the houses in the town were decorated colorfully, inspiring the young Tim Burton. Visitors can enjoy a variety of works from Tim Burton’s perspective on Christmas festivals, including Christmas trees, monsters eating Christmas trees, a short video from the movie “Tim Burton’s The Nightmare Before Christmas,”\* which is one of Tim Burton’s representative works, and a witch walking through a tree-filled forest. The holiday theme has become a subject that frequently appears in Tim Burton’s later works.

\* Tim Burton’s The Nightmare Before Christmas: It is a stop motion animation that was directed by Tim Burton in 1993, covering the story between Halloween villagers who live for the Halloween festival and Christmas villagers who live for Christmas.



▲ The exhibition’s second section, “Holidays” is displayed on a red background with snowflakes, and shows Tim Burton’s unique interpretation toward Christmas.



▲ “Tim Burton’s The Nightmare Before Christmas” is one of his representative works, which features the story of Halloween and Christmas villagers. This is a scene out of the movie.

## [The Identity of Tim Burton]: Carnavalesque, Formative Works, and Misunderstood Outcasts

### Carnavalesque

The third section is called “Carnavalesque.” which means the combination of the opposite concepts of humor and fear at the same time. In this section, the characters of clowns who give humor to visitors but are somewhat scary at the same time often appear, such as clowns with twisted tongues and protruding eyes. Among the numerous clowns staring at museum goers, “Untitled (Three-Eyed Clown)” and “Untitled (Blue Clown)” attract the viewer’s attention with their terrifying looks. Carnavalesque became an important subject for Tim Burton, who was intrigued by the contradiction that the word carnival originated from the carnival festival that proudly celebrates luxury and entertainment, while the term carnival meant to draw humor through puns in a serious situation.



▲ “Untitled (Blue Clown)” shows an odd-looking clown which represents the identity of Tim Burton- Carnavalesque.

### Formative Works: Men, Women, or Creatures?

The fourth section of the exhibition shows Tim Burton’s unique imagination, with reality interpreted in his own way. The chaotic but beautiful paintings, which show a mixture of humans, animals, and mythical characters, seem to reflect Tim Burton’s extraordinary spiritual world. “Girls,” which are usually described as pure and lovely beings, are also expressed as horrifying



creatures in Tim Burton's world. His paintings of girls, called the "Girl Series," feature a girl smiling ear to ear with her hair untied, and an old and impoverished woman of which it is hard to tell if she is a grandmother or a young girl. After appreciating Tim Burton's unusual view of girls, a series of paintings named "Creature Series" appear, which also feature some strange creatures. Visitors can once again identify the director's art world by appreciating the creatures with large mouths like a deep-sea monkfish and a whistle on their foreheads with angry faces.

### Misunderstood Outcasts

"Misunderstood Outcasts" is the most popular theme in Tim Burton's films. In one of his representative works, "Edward Scissorhands," there appears a man with a pale face and sharp scissors for hands. He falls in love with the heroine in the film but is falsely accused of being a thief due to her boyfriend's jealousy and neighbors' prejudices. The movie "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," which presented children's imagination and dreams, also features "Willy Wonka," an isolated character in the world after being betrayed by a subordinate who secretly leaked a chocolate production recipe. Imaginative characters such as a man with scissors for hands and wizard Willie Wonka who makes chocolate that never melts while being falsely accused and shunned by society, can be said to represent Tim Burton's identity. In this section, you can meet mysterious but also sympathetic characters and appreciate character sketches and drawings of works such as "Corpse Bride," "Edward Scissorhands," "Tim Burton's The Nightmare Before Christmas" and "Frankenweenie." "There's always been something about balloons. You see them deflated, and you see them floating. There's something quite beautiful and tragic and sad and buoyant and happy, all at the same time." What readers can see from Tim Burton is that his trademark is finding tragic aspects in fantastic and imaginative characters.

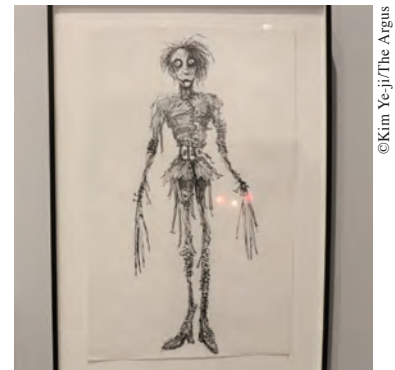
## [The Career of Tim Burton]: Film Characters and The Artist's Studio

### Film Characters

In this section, visitors can see how all the works born at Tim Burton's fingertips started, from Tim Burton's debut film "Pee-wee's Big Adventure"\* to his most recent work "Dumbo."\* Visitors can enjoy all the concept drawings, paintings, scripts, and storyboards of Tim Burton movies, and you can see briefly how Tim Burton's imaginary ideas unfold on the screen. The first thing that stands out is a figure from Tim Burton's movie "Mars Attacks!" and its storyline, "Mars sneak up to see a grandmother sitting helplessly in a rocking chair with headphones on and tries to shoot and blow her up for fun," next to the concept drawing. After walking past the mischievous aliens, there is a figure of the "Oompa-Loompa," which left as much impact as the main character in "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." The Oompa-Loompa, a dwarf working in a chocolate factory, is described as being only half as tall as an adult male and can be met as a realistic doll in the exhibition.



▲ Even girls are expressed horrible and bizarre in Tim Burton's art world. The "Girl Series" shows his extraordinary perspective to people.



▲ The hero of the movie "Edward Scissorhands" is the typical character representing "misunderstood outcast," who has a strange appearance and is falsely accused of being a thief.



▲ The section "film characters" shows all of the movies of Tim Burton to satisfy the needs of his enthusiastic fans who enjoy his films.

In addition, Tim Burton's works, which have been praised for their unique dark and strange stories and visual beauty, such as "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street," "Dark Shadows" and "Corpse Bride" are on display. This section delivers a unique sense of vitality to the audience, displaying each character in the movie into a doll. At the end of this section, visitors can also briefly watch "Vincent," a six-minute short film produced by Tim Burton in 1982. The short animation, which tells Tim Burton's autobiographical story, features a young boy named "Vincent," who represents Tim Burton himself. Vincent acts like a good child on the outside, but he has all kinds of terrifying fantasies, including turning his dog into a zombie and killing his aunt by putting her in wax. As Vincent, who eventually mistook the story of the murderer in the horror novel for his own story, the audience falls into Tim Burton's unique inner world. After visitors leave the small theater, movies that have not been released are also introduced. The characters from Tim Burton's 1980 story "Pirates" are made into a human-sized sculptures that occupy a space on one side of the exhibition attracting the attention of museum goers.

\* Pee-wee's Big Adventure: It was a film directed by Tim Burton in 1985, which tells the story of cheerful adult "Pee-wee" venturing to regain his precious bicycle when it was stolen.

\* Dumbo: A live-action movie made in 2019 based on the Disney animation "Dumbo," which deals with episodes of baby elephant Dumbo, who has always been teased because of his big ears while performing in a circus.

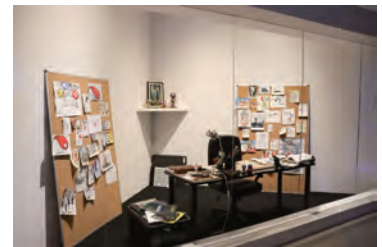
### The Artist's Studio

In the final section of the exhibition, visitors can get a glimpse of Tim Burton's studio. The walls and desks that are heavily cluttered with numerous sketches and conceptual drawings show his passion for artistic activities. Tim Burton drew pictures with a pen regardless of space, and when he had inspiration while eating at a restaurant, he scribbled ideas on a napkin. Looking back in admiration of his passion, a video showing a quote from Tim Burton marks the end of the exhibition. "Movies are like an expensive form of therapy for me. Every story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Not necessarily in that order." Impressed by the quote that seems to have condensed his whole life, visitors can leave with a lingering feeling of wonder.



▲ There are also live-action figures which bring back the film characters to real life. This is the figure of character "Oompa-Loompa," who appears in the movie "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory."

©Kim Ye-ji/The Argus



▲ Visitors can appreciate Tim Burton's passion toward art work, looking around his studio.

©Kim Ye-ji/The Argus

### Conclusion

"A fairy who eternally wanders on the verge of reality and imagination." This is how Tim Burton was described in the movie magazine Cine 21. If readers look at Tim Burton's footsteps over the past 50 years through the exhibition, they will realize that it is not unreasonable to describe him like this. Tim Burton said at a press conference held at DDP in Seoul on Apr. 29, the day before the exhibition's opening, "I came back to Seoul after 10 years, and it feels like I'm home." That would be the reason why Tim Burton loves Korea and why Koreans love Tim Burton so much, as Koreans have the desire to let go of reality and wander around a fantasy world if only for a moment. Now that the first half of 2022 is coming to an end, The Argus recommends readers escape reality for a while and visit the fantasy world built by Tim Burton. Welcome to The World of Tim Burton! 🎬

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# No Country for Old Men

By Cho Eun

*Staff Reporter of Culture Section*

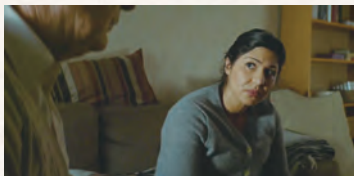
“Musicians don’t retire. They stop when there is no more music in them. Well, I still have music in me, absolutely positive about that.” At 70-year-old man Ben, the protagonist of the movie “The Intern,” said in his application video for the intern program. As he claimed, seniors can also feel the value of life and can live every single day full of vitality. They may be the ones who can start a life they truly want, as they have established their identity by experiencing various hardships in life. However, it seems like today’s society views the elderly only as weak, boring, useless, and difficult to communicate with. The reality in Korea, where the poverty ratio of the elderly is three times higher than the OECD average in 2022, shows that the social and institutional isolation that the elderly are facing is reaching mental cruelty. As average life expectancy increases and the aging society gets heavy globally, authentic comprehension and communication with the elderly are needed at this point. With the upcoming “World Elder Abuse Awareness Day” on June 15, The Argus hopes for readers to contribute to making a society that allows for living together with the elderly, by raising understanding of old age through comparing two different movies showing conflicting views of aging: “A Man Called Ove” and “The Intern.”



## 1. Summary



▲ Ove misses his late wife Sonja and visits her grave often.



▲ Parvaneh asks for help and listens to Ove.



▲ Ove communicates with the neighbors.

©IMDb

### 1-1. "A Man Called Ove"

A stubborn and strung old man, Ove was dismissed unexpectedly from his job, which he worked at for his whole life, and so he decided to end his life to follow his late wife Sonja who had died half a year before. At the moment he was about to hang himself on a rope tied to the ceiling, he heard a car engine sound from outside. Parvaneh, an Iranian woman who was a new neighbor, has broken the village's no-traffic rule that Ove has kept sacredly. Ove gets mad at his neighbor who broke the rule and puts off his death to restore order. Parvaneh keeps asking for help with things such as borrowing a ladder, driving to the hospital, and babysitting every time Ove tries to commit suicide. Ove, who has to finish all endeavors effectively and correctly, postpones his death until the problem is solved. In this way, Ove helps Parvaneh and other neighbors and starts to communicate with his neighbors, from whom he was once isolated, and finds joy in life. Later at Ove's funeral, unlike Ove's will suggesting a small funeral, many people come to honor him.

### 1-2. "The Intern"

Ben, who retired from managing a phone book company, was bored every day repeating his lonely life and misses belonging to a group and being useful to others. Wanting a life back as a salaryman, Ben gets work as a secretary for Jules Ostin, a young CEO of an e-commerce fashion startup, via an intern program for the elderly. Jules feels pressure dealing with Ben, who is much older than she, and does not give work to Ben. However, Ben does not give up and finds what he can do with his long-time experience: cleaning up a cluttered desk, which Jules hated, and helping her arrive on time for an urgent meeting. Jules has a conversation with Ben, working after hours, and gets to know that her company is located where the phone book company that Ben worked at for 40 years used to be. She hears how he lived and why he applied for the internship program. Jules dispenses with her repulsion for Ben and places her trust in him and his experiences. She confesses her worries about the company and her family, counting on Ben and accepting his advice. The old intern communicates with his co-workers, dates a new girlfriend through work-life, and feels the vitality of life by being useful to the society he is a part of.

©IMDb



▲ Ben drives Jules on behalf of the drunken driver.



▲ Jules talks with Ben and gets to trust him.



▲ Ben dates a new girlfriend met from the work place.

## 2. Difference: The Different Views of Elderly Personality and Life

### 2-1. The Personality: Cold as Ice, Warm as Fire

The movies "The Man Called Ove" and "The Intern" illustrate the characteristics of the elderly differently. While Ove appears as a haggard man of principle, Ben is a sociable and warm grandpa. Scary and cold Ove says harsh words without hesitation, saying "Butt out, mind your own business" to a young neighbor just saying hello. The neighbors avoid Ove calling him a "dotard." In contrast, Ben socializes well in the company full of young people and hears others say of him that he is "Mr. Congeniality. He's a very big hit. Everybody loves him." Ben becomes a reliable father or uncle



©IMDb



▲ Ove shouts to other neighbors often and neighbors avoid him.



▲ Ben communicates well with his coworkers and everybody relies on him.

from Girls Generation in 2021. Elderly people with warm hearts also appear in the movie “Canola,” and the novel “My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She’s Sorry.” Various works depict seniors as reliable characters that never change and contribute to a homey feeling. What is the reason for the conflicting perception of the “elderly?”

The depressed and impulsive, sometimes even threatening figure of an old man seen in Ove, is a character experiencing a personality change in senescence. Kim Jeong-eun, a professor in the Department of Nursing and Welfare at Soongsil Cyber University, said, “Cognitive decline from physical aging intensifies self-defense, alertness, and doubts.” She explained that these are the reasons many pieces illustrate the elderly as having a sharp-tempered nature. Not only the physical loss but also financial and social loss caused by retirement and the death of people around them have negative effects on the elderly’s mental health, resulting in personality changes. The main transitions are the increase in depression, introversion, stiffness, and attachment to objects. Ove in “The Man Called Ove,” Asner in “Up,” and Henri in “The Student and Mister Henri” are all obsessed with objects that help them recall their memories, and they show enraged reactions about them. In contrast, a warm and kind-hearted senior is a reflection of many grandparents waiting for their grandchild with a bunch of food. There are many movies based on the story of the author or director’s grandparents and their childhood telling the story of grandparents’ love. Movies like “Five Days Without Nora” by director Mariana Chenillo and “Minari” by director Chung Issac are such examples.

## 2-2. The Life: Rising Sun or Falling Sun?

These two different movies, “The Man Called Ove” and “The Intern,” also have different views of life and the role of the elderly. “The Man Called Ove” depicts the old man’s life as preparing for death as the major plot device: Ove’s decision to die, preparing before death, and death itself. It paints seniors as people who need others’ help through the scene where Ove eats warm food and gets to know how to communicate with others through neighbor Parvaneh. On the other hand, “The Intern” represents elderly life as a second life of learning new things and making new relationships, via Ben who was the same as the other seniors being hired to the internship program. Ben’s boss Jules and co-workers trust Ben’s advice and ask for help often. As Ben gives heartfelt advice, “The Intern” shows a senior as a teacher of life and a mentor.

There are various works that look at seniors’ lives and roles differently. The movie “Minari,” which has a similar take on the elderly as “The Man Called Ove,” shows an old woman getting physically and psychologically weak and heading to the end of her life in need of her family’s help, through the grandmother Sunja played by actress Youn Yuh-jung. In contrast, Dumbledore in “Harry Potter” and the novel “The Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared” depicts the elderly as wise and living every single day with ambition.

The established perception of viewing old age as a wrap-up period of life like in “The Man Called Ove” is changing because of the development of medical technology and the increase in the average life expectancy, which was 62.3 in 1917 and increased to 83.5 in 2020, resulting in more than 30 years of life on average after the average retirement age, 49.3-year-old. Lim Ki-woung, a professor of the Graduate School of East-west Medical Science Kyung Hee University, said, “As life expectancy increases,

in the hard world, giving warm and benevolent advice to Jules and other colleagues.

The two characters, Ove and Ben, typify the way the elderly are depicted in various works. A scary and sharp-tempered old man also appears in the famous animated movie “Up” and the play “The Student and Mister Henri,” which attracted attention when starring Park So-dam and Yuri



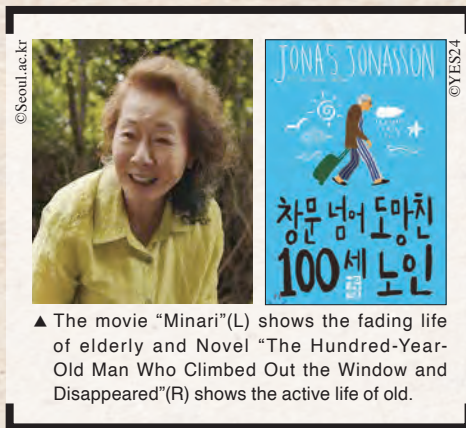
▲ The movie “The Man Called Ove” illustrates the old’s life as a time for preparing death.



▲ The movies “The Intern” shows the new life of seniors.

©IMDb





▲ The movie “Minari”(L) shows the fading life of elderly and Novel “The Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared”(R) shows the active life of old.



▲ “Korean Grandma”(L) and “Millanonna”(R) are senior YouTubers.

people aim to be financially independent after retirement for a happier post-retirement life, and this has resulted in a new perspective of viewing old age as the second stage of life.” Many retirees are dreaming and challenging themselves with a second career and life, giving birth to the word “active senior.” Elderly YouTubers like “Korea Grandma,” with 1.36 million subscribers, and “Millanonna,” with 820,000

subscribers are starting their life as creators, making videos about travel, recipes, and advice. There are diverse examples like a senior model, barista, and cultural assets explainer for the elderly who are moving on to the second stage of life.

### 3. Commonality: What the Elderly Need, Belongings and Usefulness

#### 3-1. Where do “I” Belong? The First Step, Communication

Both movies show the importance of communication and the difficulty to find a place to connect with the elderly, through the story of Ove and Ben regaining energy in life through communication. Ove, who rarely smiles throughout the movie, laughs and makes jokes with Parvaneh in the latter part of the movie and even says what his father used to say, “This is what life is like,” which he never had understood, driving with Parvaneh’s daughter and feeling the happiness of life. Similarly, Ben used to go to Starbucks at a crowded time on purpose to talk and feel connected before he applied for the internship program. Working as an intern, he communicates with his colleagues and Jules’ family and regains vigor from work. The communication revived meaning in Ove and Ben’s lives.

There are many studies that confirm that seniors’ communication correlates with their self-esteem, cognitive ability, and dementia prevention. According to “The Effects of Digital Literacy and the Frequency of Contact with Children or Grandchildren via Information and Communication Technology on the Cognitive Function of the Elderly,” a paper from the Korean Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics, the higher the digital literacy,\* the greater the cognitive function and contact frequency with grandchildren. The increase in contact via digital literacy played a big role in preserving old people’s cognitive ability. Lee Eun-ju, a professor in the Division of Geriatrics at Asan Medical Center, mentioned in her interview with the Medical Observer that “social decrepitude,” those elderly who have no access to the social community and have decreased communication with others, had quadruple the risk of depression and it was highly related with the old man syndrome.\*

Apart from this necessity, it is hard for the elderly to make a new community and social relationships. “Citizen Life Quality 2020,” a paper about the alteration in life quality of society, published by the National Statistics Office, shows that social isolation\* was the highest in those above sixty, and 25.5 percent of them said they have no one to help when they need someone to talk to. Kim said, “For the old, communication is about survival and securing safety, not about relationships and ways to solve loneliness.” She also claimed that communicating with seniors to assure their safety and survival is necessary.



▲ Ove and Ben feel happiness of life by communicating with people.

\*Digital Literacy: The ability to overcome the digital divide through new technology like smartphones and computers  
 \*The old man syndrome: A multifactorial physical condition of old people who have lost homeostasis, occurring with obstacles from various organs  
 \*Social Isolation: Having no one to help in a state of physical or psychological crisis



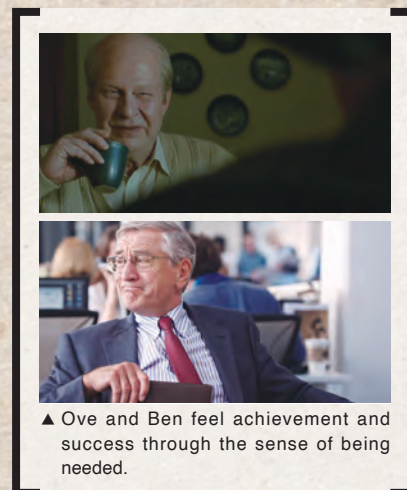
Kim mentioned a representative example of Japan which has various voluntary and local community programs to communicate with and check on old people's conditions under the pretext of providing lunch boxes and helping with garbage disposal. The elderly who have physical difficulties do not have anyone to talk to and are so isolated that it is hard to find them when they die.

### 3-2. Am "I" Needed in Society? Elderly in the Workplace

The day Ove, who had lost his wife Sonja and had lived every day lonely, determined to kill himself was the day he was dismissed from the job he worked for his entire life. The job was his only reason to live. Both movies show the importance of a job or the sense of being needed and illustrate that seniors can give good solutions to diverse problems via their experiences. Ove seems like he is annoyed by Parvaneh's repeated requests, but he helps her more than anyone and solves various problems in the town. Ben from "The Intern" also applied for the internship program expecting there might be someone who needs him. He helps Jules and his colleagues with his analytical ability and experience, so they rely on Ben and his advice. The social role and the respect that they receive as someone who is needed motivates them and makes them a teacher on diverse tasks.

As the movies show, the elderly are not an intractable burden, but leaders with insight and knowledge based on vast experiences. There is even an African proverb that states, "The death of an old man is like a fire in a library" because of the experience and knowledge the elderly possess. Many studies show that having a job after retirement and having a job that is like the pre-retirement job affects mental health and satisfaction for seniors. Having a life similar to past experiences positively affects the elderly, improving their ego-integrity and self-efficacy. As the baby boomers born from 1955 to 1974 enter senescence, continuous policies regarding elderly employment are needed.

However, apart from movies, reality shows society viewing the elderly as useless individuals who get left behind. The "Social Breakdown Syndrome," a mental condition referring to feeling powerless and dependent due to aging, is also because of the widespread negative perception of the elderly. The ratio of elderly employment and poverty also shows a negative view and alienation of seniors. The situation in Korea does not look good unlike that in the United States, where an appropriate job or vocational education is offered to those elderly who want a job; also in Japan, they rehire retirees. This is because institutions mainly aim to achieve a statistical goal and only provide jobs that do not require skills for elderly employment. Kim said, "Korea's employment rate for the elderly is at its highest level, but that is counting welfare as employment," and claimed that it is hard to see minimum wage part-time employment provided as welfare as a true employment solution for the elderly. The fundamental problem of elderly poverty is unsolved, and the satisfaction of life is decreasing. Only 25 percent of seniors responded that they are satisfied with their life, according to "2020 Senior Statistics" from the National Statistics Office. The negative view of seniors is driving the elderly to an extreme situation, causing social, economic, and political isolation.



▲ Ove and Ben feel achievement and success through the sense of being needed.

©IMDb

"Experience never gets old. Experience never goes out of fashion." As Ben said, seniors are forerunners and leaders in life. Unfortunately, it seems like today's society is rejecting their elders' advice and losing respect for them. The fact that slang terms like "ggondae" and "fuddy-duddy" that degrade the aged are widely used by the young generation shows how negatively they see the elderly. Nobody can avoid aging. The life of the elderly, which everyone will face, does not look happy, and it is becoming a period where seniors face social and financial hardship. The truth is that these difficulties old people face are started by humans and can be solved by humans, and we should remember them. Rather than having negative and prejudiced thoughts about old people, who can be cold and scary at first but warmer than anyone inside, why don't we understand and communicate with them, dreaming of a happy society co-existing with the elderly? 🐼

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# *Love Signal: Encyclopedia of Love*

**By Lim Se-jin**

*Associate Editor of Theory & Critique Section*

**K**orean dating reality shows for an ordinary person, including “*Heart Signal*,” “*Single’s Inferno*,” “*Transit Love*,” and “*Divorced Singles*” are the talk of the town. Existing dating reality shows were a prerequisite for the first meeting and new love, but now bold and diverse attempts are also continuing, such as targeting ex-lovers and divorced men and women. Thanks to this popularity, MBC Every1 said that the first love couples will gather again to face real love. The exciting romance reality show “*First Love Again*” will be aired in June this year. The nation’s first surfing dating show “*Somefing*” also heralded an unconventional romance that will hit this summer with men and women with a common interest in surfing. Similarly, other series of dating reality shows will issue excitement warnings to viewers when announcing their broadcast lineups and viewers’ interest is exploding. Thanks to this social trend, The Argus will explore the various psychological relationship theories with readers by introducing the “*Heart Signal*” series, an ordinary person’s dating reality program which has returned to its peak after it dipped in popularity for a while, and “*Single’s Inferno*,” a Netflix original which received the most love last year.



● Before Reading ●

1. *Heart Signal* is a South Korea dating reality television show. The reality show follows eight people living together for one month as they get to know each other and go on dates. Every night, each cast member sends an anonymous text message to another cast member to show their romantic interest. However, they are not allowed to directly confess their love. Meanwhile, a panel of celebrities and experts watch the show, analyzing the cast members' actions and trying to predict who will text who.
2. *Single's Inferno* is a Korean reality show released by Netflix last year. In "*Single's Inferno*," 12 attractive singles travel to a remote island called "Inferno" in search of romance. Successful pairings are able to enjoy a night's stay in "Paradise," a lavish hotel where they can enjoy a luxurious date and reveal more personal details such as their ages and occupations. On the other hand, individuals who fail to become couples must remain in "Inferno" and live a self-sufficient life.

©Nanuwiki



▲ Season 1 of the show aired in 2017, followed by season 2 in 2018 and season 3 in 2020.

©Netflix



▲ Korean reality dating show "*Single's Inferno*" is the latest in K-entertainment to catch the eye of viewers all over the world, with it recently becoming the first-ever Korean reality series to make Netflix's global top 10.



## Heart Signal



### Is It Fear or Love? Suspension Bridge Effect

Two cast members, one male and one female, who are still awkward around each other go on a virtual reality (VR) experience for their first date. Experiencing VR, both people feel scared because VR makes them feel like they are on a ride. So, the two naturally touch each other in the process of finding and relying on each other and develop a good feeling for each other. As a result, the two chose different partners before the date, but after the date, they send signals to each other and choose each other when they make their final choice.

How could a single date change the choice? A psychological theory suggests that the "Suspension Bridge Effect" was in effect between the two. According to this theory, the likeability of the opposite sex meeting on a swaying bridge rises more than when meeting on a stable bridge. Experiments were conducted to verify this effect in 1947 by Canadian psychologists Donald Dutton and

Arthur Aron. The first bridge was a severely swaying bridge and the second was a strong, stable bridge. The experiment was conducted with male participants between the ages of 18 and 35 crossing these two bridges and a female experimental assistant questioning them in the middle of the bridge. After the survey, she gave them her phone number. As a result of the experiment, more than 50 percent of the men surveyed on the swaying bridge called. On the other hand, only 12.5 percent of the men surveyed on the stable bridge called.

When a person feels anxiety and fear, his or her breathing and heart rate accelerate together, which is the same as the palpitations he or she feels when he or she is

©Chanel A



▲ A male and female cast members are getting closer through VR experiences.

©Wikidok



▲ Due to the Suspension Bridge Effect, amusement parks and ghost houses have become popular as dating courses.



in love, causing the brain to be mistaken. In this regard, Lim Myung-ho, a professor at the Dankook University's Department of Psychology and psychotherapy explained, "The sympathetic nerve\* of a person's body does not know whether the heart beats when excited because he or she is afraid of swaying bridges or because he or she likes the person they are with." Therefore, if readers want to get closer to someone they like or love now, it is recommended to do exciting activities that make the heart beat faster.

\*Sympathetic nerve: It is essential for preparing a person for emergencies. If people have ever been scared and anxious, attacked or threatened, they have basically experienced activation of their sympathetic nerve.

### ♥ Love Cannot Be Hidden: Mirroring Effect

A man and woman sitting side by side touch their own foreheads at the same time. Like a mirror, they are doing the same thing without knowing it. In fact, the two showed good feelings for each other from the first meeting. Likewise, unknowingly mimicking the other person's behavior is called the "Mirroring Effect." This is possible only when mirror neurons operate with careful observation of one's opposite. Lee Seo-young, a specialist at Dongyang University's communication, persuasion and media explained, "Since there is a special area in the human brain that imitates other people's behavior, it can



◀ Copying the other person's behavior is unconsciously expressing favor with the other person.



▲ A macaque monkey is mimicking a human expression.

learn by imitating others and understand the other person. Mirror neurons act when performing certain movements or when observing specific movements of other objects."

This neuron was discovered in 1996 through an experiment by a team led by neuroscientist, Professor Giacomo Rizzolatti of the University of Parma in Italy. The research team found that some of the neurons activated when a monkey saw humans pick up food just the same as when the monkey picked up food. In this process, mirror neurons could be found to respond "seeing" and "doing" in the same way.

Then, how should mirror neurons be used to gain the other person's heart? Professor Lee emphasized that using the Mirroring Effect, people can get acquainted in a short time, saying, "The advantage of the Mirroring Effect is that it is possible to form a consensus while imparting a sense of homogeneity to the other party." Observation is essential to imitate the other person's behavior. If someone is currently interested, why don't we try to observe that person and become a mirror of that person?

### ♥ The Most Honest Signal: Belly Button Rule

While playing jackstones, the man's body sitting between the two women faces in one direction. He only turns his head to talk to the woman sitting on the right. But when he talks to the woman on his left, his belly button turns to face in her direction unconsciously. Accordingly, "Belly Button Rule" suggests that the direction in which the belly button is directed indicates the direction of a feeling. In fact, the man and the woman sitting on the left chose each other at the end, became the final couple, and continued meeting even after the end of the show.

The Belly Button Rule was discovered in the 1930s by W. T. James, an American psychologist. He revealed that the direction of the trunk is a key factor in determining the degree of interest of a person. He separated belly button directionality into four key groups: approach (interest), withdrawal (disinterest), expansion (heightened interest and confidence), and contraction (nervousness and slightly reduced interest). About 30 years later, Dr. Albert Mehrabian further refined James's studies, noting



▲ According to the Belly Button Rule, it can be seen that the man's belly button is directed to the woman he likes.



▲ The Belly Button Rule is a way of measuring a person's interest and intentions.

that belly button direction was the most important aspect of reading a person's intention. According to this rule, if the other person's belly button turns toward the door or exit during a conversation, he or she unconsciously signals that he or she wants to escape the conversation and avoid contact. In addition, if the gaze and the belly button are directed at different people, there is a higher probability that he or she is interested in the person facing the belly button rather than the gaze. As such, our bodies unconsciously show a lot of things, which can be a decisive clue to reveal our sincerity. Therefore, if the readers understand the direction of their favorite person's belly button and their belly button, they will be able to know the other person and what's in his or her heart.



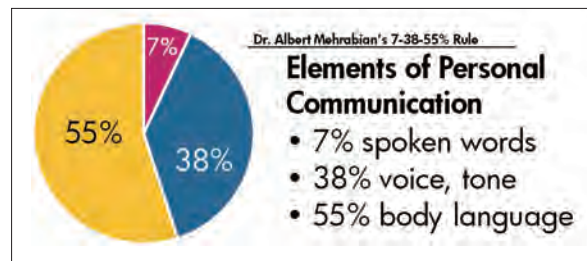
### Single's Inferno



#### The Importance of the First Impression: Primacy Effect

How important is a first impression in romance? A male cast member takes the lead in cooking on the first day and receives a message from a woman saying, "It was nice to see you working hard when you cooked and enjoying your delicious meal today." This is the result of the "Primacy Effect," a phenomenon in which the information first encountered has a stronger effect than the information later learned.

The reason for the Primacy Effect is that the human brain, which has to process a lot of information, tries to process information as efficiently as possible. Therefore, the first information forms an overall impression, and the later information is interpreted accordingly. To find



▲ Professor Mehrabian quantified this tendency: words, tones of voice, and body language respectively account for 7 percent, 38 percent, and 55 percent of personal communication.



◀ On the first day, a male cast member is leading the cooking.

out the Primacy Effect, Solomon Asch conducted an experiment using sentences with adjectives in reversed order to describe a person. In the study using two groups, a character was described as either "envious, stubborn, critical, impulsive, industrious, and intelligent" or "intelligent, industrious, impulsive, critical, stubborn, and envious." The results showed that the second description led to the person being rated more highly. The two groups only changed the order, and the contents were all the same, but their favorability changed depending on what information was provided first. Likewise, the memory of the first time is very intense. Therefore, we need to pay more attention to make a good first impression when we meet someone for the first time.



#### The Appearance of a New Cast Member: Catfish Effect

In *Single's Inferno*, there are late cast members. They are nicknamed "catfish." This comes from the "Catfish Effect," which suggests that when a new competitor appears, existing characters are more intense and active. Among them, a new male cast member received enthusiastic support from female cast members as soon as he appeared on *Single's Inferno*. In particular, the most

©HRKatha



▲ When the relationship between two people tends to be flat, the appearance of the third person will stimulate the two in love, intensify the emotional changes between each other, and maintain vitality for the relationship.

popular female cast member said he was closest to her ideal type, expressing her good feeling.

The Catfish Effect is a term derived from releasing catfish into a fishery to keep sardines alive. Most of sardines caught in the sea die while

arriving at the harbor. The Catfish Effect was created when the secret of a Norwegian fisherman, the only one with the technology to transport sardines in a live state, was known. His secret method was very simple: putting catfish in an aquarium. The sardines became more active to avoid being eaten by the catfish, which helped improved the taste of the sardines and led to them being sold for a higher price. In fact, after the appearance of new members in the broadcast, the existing members expressed their emotions more actively and competed for love fiercely.

### From Unfavorable to Favorable: Eiffel Tower Effect

A male cast member expressed his feelings to a female cast member after the second round, but he was rejected.

However, he remained constant in expressing his feelings toward her, and eventually, she accepted him and they had a happy ending. This illustrates the psychological effect of turning the unfavorable response into a favorable one, which is called the “Eiffel Tower Effect.”

Professor Lim explained, “The Eiffel Tower Effect originated from the Eiffel Tower, the French landmark, which is a representative symbol of Paris; but it was not loved at first.” At the time of its proposal, Parisians opposed the construction of the Eiffel Tower, calling it a hideous and shallow lump of iron made of steel alone. However, the structure, which received finger-pointing throughout its construction, quickly became a beloved attraction and now remains a special highlight of Paris. This is because the image of the Eiffel Tower, which was initially unfavorable, has gradually changed to favorable as it has been continuously exposed to people. Accordingly, as the exposure continues to be repeated, good feelings increase. Therefore, if readers want to move the heart of the person they like, why don’t they show their face often? Maybe this little change will get the other’s favor.



©Daums

▲ A male cast member never gave up on a female cast member. In the finale, they chose each other.

“A woman and a man meet and fall in love.” It seems simple, but in fact, it is not easy to get someone’s affection. Therefore, in order to gain the other person’s favor, it is necessary to use psychology. Only then, it is possible to win the other person’s heart and lead the relationship in the desired direction.

So far, we have looked at psychological theories used in dating and how to use them. Now readers know everything they need to attract that special someone. However, as with all human relationships, the most important thing is sincerity. If we rely too much on psychological theory, we can lose our identity and become a calculating person in everything. Therefore, psychological theory should only be used as a reference tool. When it comes to dating, let’s be honest and confident. Since our hearts are bound to work, and we are already complete and perfect, we can expect good results. The Argus cheers all forms of love that readers will meet in the future. 📺

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# A WAR WITHOUT GUNSHOTS: SEED WAR

By Shin Jun-seo

Associate Editor of Social Section

What makes the Christmas mood? It will definitely be a Christmas tree with colorful decorations. The size of the Christmas tree market is about 500 billion won (\$39.10 million) in the U.S. alone, but the seed of this Christmas tree originally came from Korea. Ernest Wilson, an American botanist, took the seeds of a Korean fir, which is native to Mt. Halla on Jeju Island, in the early 20th century, and registered them in the United States after improving them. Now Korea needs to pay for the seed of the Korean fir.

More than 80 percent of onions, carrots, and tomatoes grown in Korea, and more than half of radishes, cabbages, and peppers are owned by foreign companies, and 90 percent of flowers and fruits are foreign species. It is absurd that the seeds of what we consider to be “domestic” produce are often foreign. Seed royalties stood at only three billion won (\$2.34 million) in 2000 but have increased significantly to 14 billion won (\$10.94 million) recently. While the seed industry is expanding beyond just being a means of crop cultivation to a high value-added business, is Korea establishing a proper survival strategy in the era of seed war? The Argus intends to examine the phenomenon, causes, and prospects of Korea’s poor seed sovereignty.



▲ Seed of Christmas tree originally comes from Korea.

©ndtvkorea

## Before Reading



**Seed Sovereignty:** Seed Sovereignty is the intellectual property rights of seed developers. When new seeds or plants are created and grown, they are legally protected for a certain period of time, like patents. It is a right guaranteed by the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV).



## Phenomenon

### Native Seeds Expelled by Foreign Seeds: Onions

Muan county is the main producer of Korean onions. The region accounts for 17 percent of the nation's onion cultivation area with a cultivation area of 3,647 hectares (ha). It is a place where a lot of onions grow, and the onion cultivation area accounts for one-tenth of Muan country, which is about 40,000 ha. However, unfortunately, most of the seeds of onions produced in Muan County are not native to Korea, but improved species imported from other countries such as Japan. Onions began to be grown in Muan County in 1932, when Japanese seeds were mainly used because of the Japanese occupation of Korea. Even now, many Japanese seeds, including the seeds of the Japanese seed company Daki, are used for onion cultivation in Korea. This phenomenon is not limited to Muan county. Onion seeds in Korea are not native to Korea but are 90 percent Japanese.

As most of the onion seeds are imported, seed priced are also high. The price of Japanese onion seeds ranges from 70,000 won (\$54.75) to 100,000 won (\$78.21) per 200 ml can, which is higher than other seeds such as radish and cabbage, which are about 30,000 won (\$23.46). However, there has been some effort to expand the variety of Korean seeds. In some areas, such as Muan county, Korean seeds were planted to maintain and expand domestic varieties, but the quality of onions produced was low and was shunned by onion farmers and consumers. In the end, Korean onion seeds are on

the verge of disappearing. According to an interview with an onion farmer Park in the Mudeung Ilbo, a daily newspaper dealing with news from Jeollanam-do, "Even if we try to use Korean seeds, most farmers do not use them because they cannot sell them due to their low quality," stating the reality of having to use foreign seeds.

### Korea Having to Pay Seed Royalties Overseas: Cheongyang Red Pepper



▲ Monsanto, the world's largest seed company is acquired by German group Bayer.

In 2009, the Rural Development Administration observed how native varieties growing in Korea changed. According to this observation, native varieties of pepper, sorghum, and millet were no longer cultivated, and only 26 percent of the various crops surveyed were native. The KBS special "*Seeds, Dominate the World*," which aired in 2014, diagnosed this as "Losing 74 percent of the seeds that have been cultivated in Korea for hundreds or thousands of years." Currently, Cheongyang red pepper seeds were owned by Monsanto, which was the world's largest seed company until it was acquired by German chemical and pharmaceutical group Bayer in 2018. So



now, the seeds of the Cheongyang red pepper, which was developed and grown in Korea, are owned by Bayer, a German pharmaceutical company.

Multinational seed companies such as Bayer and Monsanto, dominate the domestic seed market and food grown from their seeds is on the consumers' tables all around the world. In fact, 10 multinational companies control 70 percent of the world's seed industry. The leading companies in the seed industry even developed the so-called "terminator seed." They made "sterile seeds" through genetic technology so that even if the seeds obtained from the companies are sprayed again, they do not sprout. Kim Eun-jin, a professor at the Graduate School of Law at Wonkwang University, said, "Since there are many sterile seeds in the next generation, it is impossible to get seeds again and use them every year. Companies are using it commercially like this." Therefore, farmers must pay royalties to foreign companies by purchasing new seeds every year. According to Ahn Wan-sik's book, *"Our Seeds Received by My Hand,"* which aims to inform the public of the disappearance of Korean native seeds, many of the crops planted in Korea today are not grown from native seeds. However, most of the newly selected seeds, instead of native ones, are terminator seeds which were selected due to the promotion of multinational seed companies. The farmers paid seed royalties and bought seeds that had no future.

### Damage Caused by Defective Foreign Seeds: Oriental Melon

In 2008, green spots were found on oriental melon stems and leaves that were being cultivated in Korea. These spots gradually spread and appeared in oriental melons. This phenomenon took place on more than 1,500 melon farms, and the yield fell to one-tenth of the previous year. The melon farmers determined that this was genetically caused by the seeds. All the oriental melons in question appeared on farms which used seeds from Syngenta, a Swiss seed company. They purchased oriental melon seed from India and sold it to other countries. In fact, because of the farmers' request to the National Institute



©nongminnews

▲ The cucumber green mottle mosaic virus is detected in melon seeds, fruits, and leaves.

of Agricultural Science and Technology for a thorough examination, the cucumber green mottle mosaic virus (CGMMV) was detected in melon seeds, fruits, and leaves.

According to the IKPnews, six cases of CGMMV and three cases of Kyuri Green Mottle Mosaic Virus (KGMMV)\* were reported in 2006 in Seongju city, located in North Gyeongsang Province, of the troubled "Manidara" oriental melon seed. CGMMV is a highly contagious virus that is widely distributed around the world and is transmitted by various causes such as soil, contact, seeds, and ambient temperature. If infection occurs, it leads to a decrease in production and commercial value. All these cases and problems are due to the current situation in which farmers are entirely dependent on seeds of foreign patent owners. Regarding damage by foreign seeds, Professor Kim said, "There have been many seed accidents so far, but few have been properly compensated for. Compensation for seed accidents is often rejected, because seeds can produce different results depending on the conditions under which they grow." In order to reduce the damage caused by defective seeds, it is necessary to grow and cultivate domestic seeds in Korea and develop seeds suitable for the environment of Korea.

\*KGMMV: An important pathogen infecting cucurbit plants in natural conditions.





## Cause

### Insufficient Growth of the Seed Market

One of the reasons why Korea has moved away from seed sovereignty is that seed companies and markets have not grown properly. It can be said that the support of the government such as funding for research for native seeds was insufficient. Until the Lee Myung-bak government promoted the “2020 Seed Industry Promotion Measures” in 2009, the government's role in the seed industry were more regulations than support. The reason why the domestic seed was limited to develop in the vegetable seed market was that the government exclusively sold and managed food seeds such as rice seeds.

As the seed industry did not develop properly, the quality of domestic seed deteriorated and foreign seeds were preferred. In the case of native seeds, many are sold with inaccurate documentation. According to an interview with the Landscape Times by Jang Jae-hak, the manager of a native seed school, numerous kinds of indigenous or native seeds are being sold indiscriminately through seedbeds, seed companies, or the Internet. In addition, the preference for seeds from overseas has become stronger as the high-end image of foreign varieties introduced due to the low quality of domestic varieties in the past is imprinted on consumers. In order to expand the current market, where domestic varieties can become better than foreign varieties, an implementation strategy is needed to improve the image of domestic varieties; but the Korean government is still slow to respond to domestic seed problems. There are also successful cases of improving strawberry seeds such as snow and plum scent, but the localization rate of seeds of major crops is still low. It is time to reduce dependence on foreign seeds through domestic seed development.

### Weakening of Seed Companies Due to the IMF Currency Crisis

The seed industry has been in a slump since the shock of the 1997 IMF (International Monetary Fund) currency

crisis, in which many companies went bankrupt. At the time of the so-called “IMF crisis,” the seed companies that were taken over and merged by multinational companies were Cheongwon, Heungnong, Seoul, and Jungang seed companies, which were Korea's representative native seed companies at that time. Starting with the undertaking of Cheongwon by Japanese seed company Sakata in March 1997, Swiss chemical company Novartis took over Seoul seed company in 1997, and United States seed company Seminis acquired Heungnong in 1998 and Jungyang afterwards. However, at the time, these acquisitions did not attract attention because large companies such as Daewoo, one of the four largest companies in Korea, and Hanbo Group, which rose to 14th place in the financial world by construction and manufacturing, collapsed one after another.

Park Ki-hwan, a researcher at the Korea Rural Economic Institute, said, “Korea's seed companies continued to grow as top companies in Asia in the past, but after the IMF management system, they faced a crisis because of M&A (Merger and Acquisition) with global seed companies. At that time, the government, industry, and consumers did not regard seeds as important, and when problems occurred, they perceived that importing seeds or grains would solve them; and the concept of seed sovereignty was weak back then.” As multinational companies took the lead in the seed market, domestic companies' positions became narrow. As the seed industry requires long-term investment in securing useful genetic resources and breeding R&D (Research and Development), large multinational corporations with capital and research capabilities are intensifying monopolization, and Korea's seed sovereignty is still threatened 25 years after the financial crisis.

### The Disappearance of Native Seeds Due to the Rapid Development of Agriculture

Seeds that have acquired unique characteristics through adaptation and naturalization through natural crossing\* in the climate of a specific region are called native species. Native seeds are seeds that have already been verified at the local level. Native seeds fit well with local soil and can be easily grown by anyone. In addition,

it is possible to use smaller quantities of agricultural pesticides and fertilizers, and they have the advantage of being able to adapt over long periods and to withstand environmental changes. The native seed is the sustainable seed of the region. However, Korea quickly changed from an agricultural society to an industrial society in the process of compressed economic growth, which showed economic growth of up to six percent during the period from the Korean War to the IMF currency crisis. In the process, native seeds quickly disappeared with the spread of industrial agriculture, the importance of farming efficiency, and the expansion of commercialized seeds. Professor Kim explained the background of farmers' using improved seeds instead of native seeds by saying "Korea supported commercialized agriculture through economic growth policies in the 1960s and the New Village Movement in the 1970s, making farmers unable to have their own seeds by making them plant only government-supplied seeds or seeds sold by companies."

As such, F1 hybrid seeds,\* which were improved artificially, appeared along with rapid changes in the production environment; and the position of native varieties weakened. In line with this, farmers used commercialized seeds from seed companies since they

promoted them as excellent, optimized only for certain types of pesticides, fertilizers, and diseases. However, in the case of F1 hybrid seeds that have passed through human hands, there is a disadvantage in that their properties are not transmitted to offspring such as F2 and F3; and in some cases, there are no descendants at all. As a result, crops artificially improved to increase yield have no self-sustaining power and deteriorate over generations. The phenomenon of F1 hybrid seeds, which are created by extreme natural crossing, deteriorate rapidly from the second generation, and the fact that F1 hybrid seeds with these problems replaced native seeds due to the promotion of companies had a great impact on the disappearance of native seeds.

\* Natural crossing: Individuals belonging to different genera, species, subspecies, varieties, crossbreeds in a natural state to form crossbreed hybrids.

\* F1 hybrid seeds: The F stands for filial generation. Seeds produced through artificial manipulation. Crossed by those with different traits of the same species and crossing with other species is all F1 hybrid seeds.

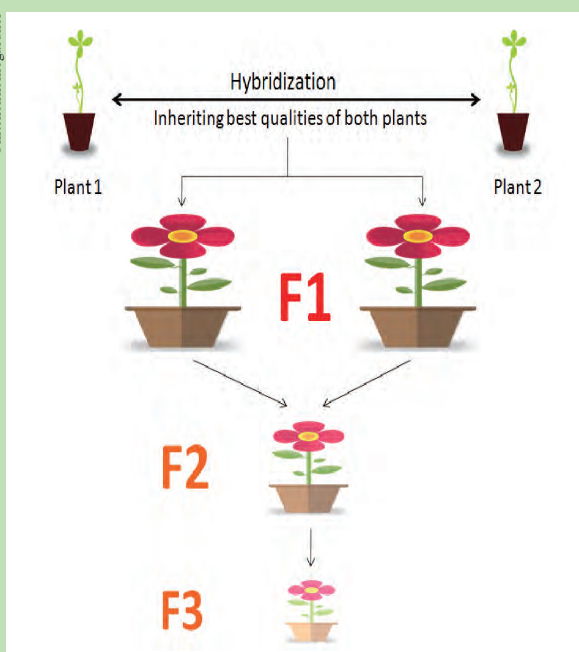


## Prospect

### Increasing Responses of Government and Corporate

The size of Korea's seed market is very small, accounting for only about one percent of the world's seed market. Considering that the market share of multinational companies such as Monsanto and DuPont was 47 percent as of 2016, the matter is serious. Currently, there are no domestic seed companies which are internationally competitive. However, after overcoming the IMF currency crisis, Monsanto Korea, which took over the Heungnong and Jungang seed companies, was itself taken over by Farmhannong, a Korean company. In 2016, LG Chemical took over and merged Farmhannong again. In addition, Korean companies are laying the groundwork for the development of the domestic seed industry, with the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation acquiring Nongwoo Bio with CJ Group starting to enter the seed industry.

©kitchenhomegardner



▲ There is a disadvantage in F1 hybrid seeds that have passed through human hands.

Recognizing the importance of fostering the seed industry, Korea's Lee Myung-bak government also launched the Golden Seed Project (GSP) in 2012 to foster it as a future growth industry. The project is to develop strategic seeds by forming five business groups, including vegetables, horticulture, marine products, and breeding stock, in order to discover, research and develop seeds which are more expensive than gold. Researcher Park said, "The government enacted the Seed Industry Act and established a five-year plan to foster the seed industry every five years to prepare policy support measures; and is operating a support system to train professionals to develop new varieties. In addition, we have brought a significant effect by promoting the GSP project."

President Yoon Suk-yeol, who has been leading the new government since May 2022, made clear the importance of food self-sufficiency by saying, "We will increase the stockpile of basic food such as rice, wheat, barley, and beans." The road to seed sovereignty, one of the essential elements of food self-sufficiency, is bright.

### Korean Seed Industry Starting to Recover



▲ Domestic seed companies such as Nongwoo Bio grow rapidly.

Korean seed companies are overcoming the damage caused by the IMF currency crisis and other crises one by one. In 2020, Nongwoo Bio, a seed company, ranked first with 27 percent of the domestic seed market share, recording 55.5 billion won

(\$43.40 million) in sales. It also achieved \$13.6 million in exports by securing 5,000 genetic resources. In addition, Farmhannong seems to be running toward the figures of former seed companies which collapsed during the IMF currency crisis, with the takeover of some of Monsanto Korea's vegetable divisions. Researcher Park emphasized, "Domestic seed companies such as Nongwoo Bio are growing rapidly, and the domestic seed industry is recovering due to the participation of large companies such as Dongbu and LG."

According to the Korea Seed & Variety Service, there were 2,466 seed companies in 2018, as they were divided into small, medium-sized, private seed companies with continuous restructuring after multinational companies took over and merged top domestic seed companies of Korea. The prospects for these Korean seed companies are bright. In the case of the global commercial seed market, seeds for grain and feed are leading the market, while Korean seed companies are specialized in vegetable seeds; they are also competitive in the export market due to their distinctiveness. The global commercial seed market value is about 60 trillion won (\$46.92 billion) as of 2013, with 56 percent of grains and 18 percent of oil crops, accounting for about 3/4, and 13 percent is of vegetable and flower seeds.

According to the results of the 2020 Seed Industry Survey conducted by the Korea Seed & Variety Service due to the Seed Industry Act and the Statistics Act of Dec. 31, 2020, among 1,652 seed companies in operation, 89 public institutions, including the National Seed Resources and City Agricultural Technology Center, domestic seed sales have continued to grow since 2015. It recorded 500.8 billion won (\$391.68 million) in 2015, 540.8 billion won (\$422.97 million) in 2016, and 591.9 billion won (\$462.94 million) in 2017. Among the seed sales, Korean sales amounted to 562.1 billion won (\$439.63 million), accounting for 86.4 percent showing steady growth since 2015.

### Korea is Also Dedicated to Breeding Stock and Fishery Seeds Development

The seed category does not include only plant seeds. Researcher Park said, "The seed category includes agricultural, forestry, livestock, and fishery seeds. The GSP project was also studied and developed by dividing it into five categories: vegetable seeds, horticultural seeds, food seeds, breeding stock, and fishery seeds." He emphasized that Korea's seed development is not limited to plant seeds. In the case of breeding stock, the government has invested 491.1 billion won (\$384.10 million) in a total of 20 items, including a breeding pig



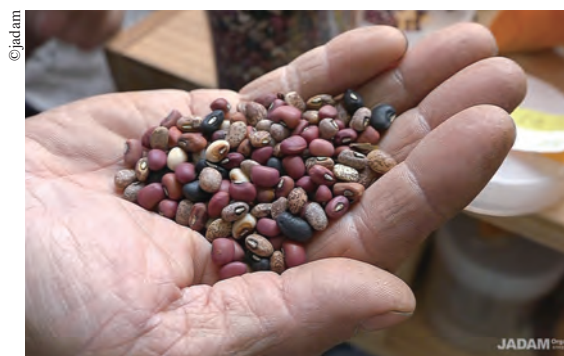


and breeding chicken, to promote the GSP project for the 10th consecutive year since 2012. In 2019, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs decided that the global competitiveness of the domestic seed industry and the foundation for sustainable future growth were still insufficient, suggesting further breeding stock development by pushing for the second GSP project.


It is even more important in the case of fishery seeds. This is because the global demand for marine products is increasing, while the catch is decreasing. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United

Nations (FAO) data, two-thirds of seafood production is expected to be accounted for by sea culture products in 2030. Fishery seeds are the basis for this sea culture industry. Securing excellent seeds could soon determine the global seafood production and consumption market.

Overseas exports of fishery seeds are very difficult. Unlike agricultural and livestock seeds, there are many restrictions on the fishery seed business, where research and technology development are carried out in an aquatic environment. In particular, excellent seeds developed by Korea can be used for future production, so more sophisticated seed preservation and development technology is needed rather than other types of seeds. In this situation, the record of 2018, when exports reached \$3.6 million, can be seen as a worthwhile achievement. As a result of the promotion of the GSP fisheries seed project in 2018, exports of four strategic items such as halibut, abalone, jewfish, and seaweed recorded \$3.6 million. As such, the seed war is no longer limited to plants, and it is affecting the fisheries sector, including the breeding stock and sea culture industries; and Korea is thoroughly preparing for it.



▲ The sovereignty of seeds is a matter directly related to the sovereignty of the country.

other countries, Korea may have to import all of its food and seeds from abroad to put food on the table. In the long run, the sovereignty of seeds is a matter directly related to the sovereignty of the country and is a precious right that we must protect. 

In Jeong Yak-yong's "Lee Dam Sokchan," which contains various sayings from China and Korea, there is an old saying: "Farmers sleep with seeds even if they die." Even if a farmer dies of hunger, he does not eat seeds to be sown in spring, which means that seeds are a necessity to preserve until the end because they are as important as life itself. As such, seeds can be seen as very important since they are the source of the food we eat every day. However, as seeds are so important, the possibility of weaponization should always be kept in mind. If Korea lags behind in the process of protecting native seeds from the multinational corporations of

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# Where Should Refugees Go?

**By Yang Yu-min**

*Staff Reporter of Social Section*

In 2015, a baby in a red T-shirt and blue shorts was found dead off the coast of Bodrum, Moula, in southwestern Turkey. The child was only three years old, a refugee from Iran, who was in an accident where a boat capsized while leaving Syria to Greece with his family to escape terrorism and war. The death of a small child became an opportunity to inform the world of the seriousness of the refugee crisis, and the need to find a solution for it has been raised. As such, the refugee crisis has emerged as a global problem that cannot be ignored by any country on the planet.

In 1991, Korea had already ratified the United Nations Convention relating to the status of Refugees, which prioritizes the protection of refugees' human rights, and in 2012 enacted the "Refugee Act" to improve the status and treatment of refugees for the first time in Asia. However, 10 years after the enactment of the law, Korea not only has the second-lowest refugee recognition rate among the G20 but also has not solved the problems regarding refugees. The Argus, on the occasion of World Refugee Day on June 20, illuminates the Korean refugee administration and social discrimination, encouraging Korea to be a truly "advanced country" that exerts influence on the international arena.



## Before Reading

**Refugee:** Refugee means a foreigner who is unable or does not desire to receive protection from the nation of his/her nationality in well-grounded fear that he/she is likely to be persecuted based on race, religion, nationality, the status as a member of a specific social group, or political opinion, or a stateless foreigner who is unable or does not desire to return to the nation in which he/she resided before entering the Republic of Korea because of such fear.

**Recognized refugee:** Recognized refugee means a foreigner recognized as a refugee under the Refugee Act. According to Article 31 of the Refugee Act, recognized refugees have the right to the same level of social security as Korean citizens.

**Humanitarian sojourner:** Humanitarian sojourner means a foreigner granted a stay permit from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) as prescribed by presidential decree as a person who has rational grounds for recognizing that his/her life, personal liberty, etc. is very likely to be infringed by torture, other inhumane treatment or punishment, or other events.

## PROBLEM

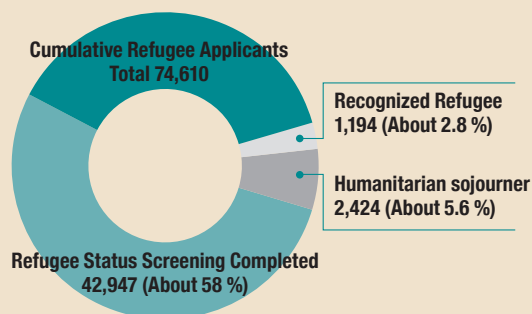
## Is South Korea a Refugee Paradise?

“South Korea is a refugee paradise.” These are words from a statement issued by a member of the National Assembly of South Korea on August 25, 2021. It is claimed that Korea is a country that is tolerant of refugees; But does it mean that Korea is a good country? According to the “Status of Refugees in Korea” released by the NANCEN Refugee Rights Center on March 9, 2021, as of December 31, 2020, out of a total of 6,684 refugee applications, a total of 52 were recognized as refugees. From 1994, when refugee applications were first received, to April 2022, the cumulative number of refugee applicants totaled 74,610. Among them, about 58 percent have completed refugee status screening, and the number of recognized refugees is a cumulative 1,194, and the refugee recognition rate is only about 2.8 percent.

recognition rate from 2010 to 2020 shows a steady decline. Excluding a slight rebound in 2017 and 2018, it declined more than 12 percentage points from 2010 to 2020. As of 2020, the number of refugees worldwide registered with the UNHCR was 20,362,288, and the EU has a 32 percent refugee recognition rate, accepting 6,673,149 refugees, about a third of all refugees. Compared with the EU, the Korean refugee recognition rate of 2.8 percent is a remarkably low number. In an interview with Yonhap News on August 26, 2021, UNHCR Korea’s representative said, “Korea was ranked 139th in the ‘Refugee Acceptance Capacity and Contribution Index’ of 174 countries surveyed at the end of 2020. It seems that the low refugee recognition rate has been reflected in the evaluation.” Overall, Korea has the second lowest refugee recognition rate among the G20, an international organization that has 20 major countries as members.

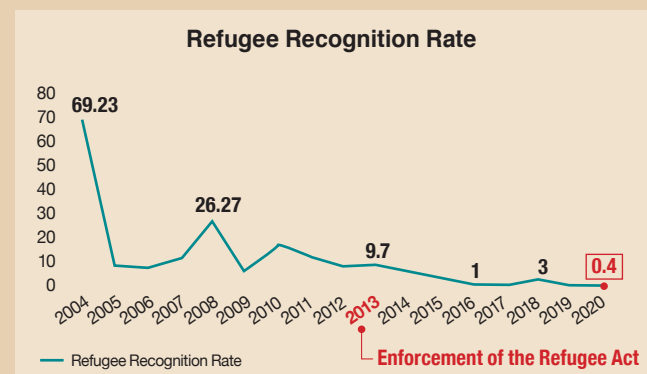
©MOJ

## Statistics of Refugee from 1994 to April of 2022



▲ According to the statistics, only about one out of 20 refugee applicants has status of residence in Korea.

According to data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), South Korea’s refugee



▲ Very few refugee applicants are recognized as refugees in Korea.

## The Public’s Hatred of Refugees Is “Fake”

A total of 378 locals and their families who helped the Korean government in Afghanistan set foot in Korea as

©NANCEN Refugee Rights Center

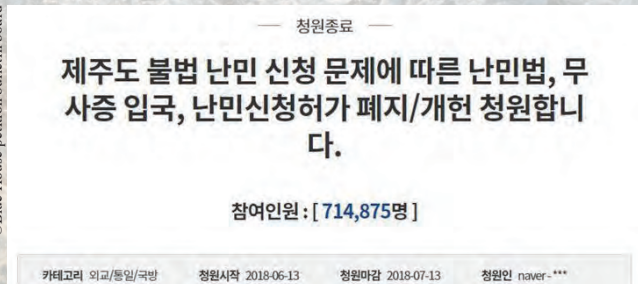




▲ Local employees and their families who had helped the Korean government in Afghanistan arrived at Incheon International Airport on the afternoon of the August 27, 2021, by a South Korean military transport plane and left the arrival hall.

“special contributors” on August 26, 2021. This was the result of the South Korean government actively evacuating those after the Taliban’s re-occupation of Afghanistan.\* However, although those are considered refugees under the Refugee Act, the government granted them the status of “special contributors” rather than refugees and allowed them to enter the country. In response, the Refugee Human Rights Network said at a press conference at the Zelkova Hall of the People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy on January 13, 2022, “The Korean government tried to manage political opinion by naming Afghan refugees as ‘special contributors,’ placing the refugees who have ‘the rights to request the protection from the Korea government’ in a position ‘to be grateful for a gift,’ a position ‘where nothing can be asked for.’” Then what is the reason for the government labeling refugees as “special contributors” despite criticism? This is because the so-called “refugee hatred” sentiment that treats refugees as “terrorists” and “criminals” is widespread in South Korea. In fact, in Korea in 2018, about 540 Yemenis applied for refugee status on Jeju Island, 455 km away from Seoul, to escape the civil war in their country. At that time, fake news such as “They will rape Korean women,” “They are fake refugees,”\* and “They came here for terrorism” spread in Korea. These ideas instilled a negative perception of refugees in the public, and more than 700,000 voted in favor of the petition that the refugee application permit should be abolished in a Blue House national petition. In addition, in Seoul and Jeju, rallies were held calling for the revision of the Refugee Act and a visa-free system.\* However, experts are of the opinion that it is unlikely that Yemeni refugees came for the purpose of simple employment. In addition, no crime involving Yemeni refugees

©Blue House petition bulletin board



▲ Petitions about abolition and revision of Refugee Act got a consent of a lot of people. In addition, petitions related to Yemeni refugees exceeded 5,500 in 2018.

occurred in Jeju until 2021, three years after the controversy in 2018. In other words, the public’s anti-refugee sentiment was not based on facts.

\* Taliban’s re-occupation of Afghanistan: Afghanistan was controlled by the Taliban in the past. After the invasion of the United States in 2001, a democratic government was established in Afghanistan. However, with the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan in 2021, the Taliban regained control of Afghanistan.

\* Visa-free system: This is a system that allows foreigners of nationalities other than countries that support terrorism to stay in Korea for one month without a visa.

\* Fake refugees: This refers to undocumented immigrant workers who come to Korea for the purpose of employment, and who intend to stay in Korea for two to three years while undergoing refugee status screening and litigation.

## Children of Recognized Refugees Are Hidden from the World

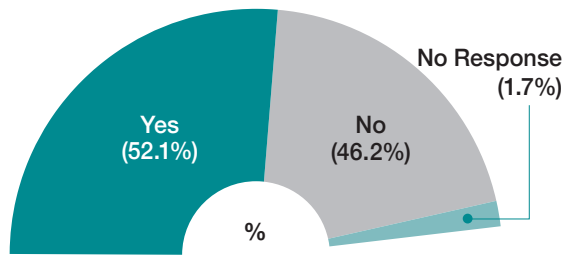
“Even if I am granted refugee status in Korea, I cannot prove my identity. There is also no place to prove that she is my daughter.” These are the words of a refugee opened to the public by the NANCEN Refugee Rights Center. In order for a person to exercise their rights or to be guaranteed various activities in society, it is necessary to constantly prove when and where they were born, who is in the family, when they got married or divorced, and whether they have educational or technical certificates. However, as recognized refugees have no choice but to cut off relations with their home countries, they face a situation where they cannot seek the cooperation of the authorities about these administrative measures.

As it is impossible to prove the family relationship of a recognized refugee, children who do not have nationality live like a shadow in South Korea. Even if the parents obtained the status of residence as a recognized refugee, their children born in Korea cannot be documented. As a result, their children live without nationality and experience limitations in various ways. Currently, undocumented children can receive education up to high school through the MOJ’s “Supporting the Education Right of Undocumented Immigrant Children.” However,

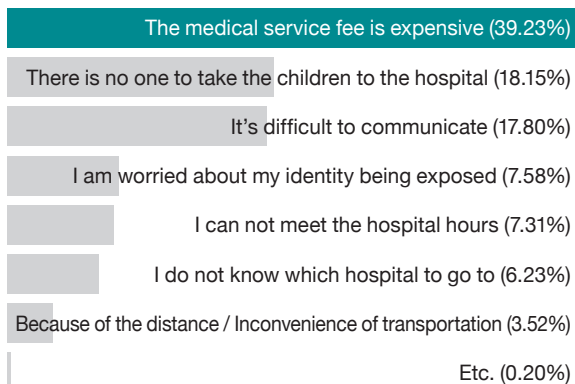


since the principal of the school has the right to refuse admission of the child, it is difficult to say that their right to education is completely guaranteed. Also, as there is no way to confirm their identity, such as via resident registration number or foreign registration number, they are not eligible for educational expenses or scholarships. In addition, they cannot get health insurance and have to bear expensive hospital fees. In this way, even if parents who are recognized refugees set foot in Korea after going through a refugee screening process, the children they give birth to are unacknowledged by the world.

### 1. Have you ever been unable to take your child to the hospital when your child was sick?



### 2. Why couldn't you go to the hospital?



▲ Unlike domestically registered children, children of recognized refugee cannot join health insurance, so they have to bear expensive hospital fees every time they receive treatment at a hospital.

## CAUSE

### Lack of Transparency and Fairness in the Refugee Guidelines and Screening

The low refugee recognition rate is a problem because

the refugee guidelines, which stipulates refugee treatment, screening, sojourn, and are the most essential part of refugee administration, were not disclosed. In response, in 2020, the NANCEN Refugee Rights Center filed a request for disclosure of refugee guidelines against the MOJ, and on March 30, 2022, the Seoul High Court ordered the MOJ to disclose all refugee guidelines except for “Measures for Counterfeit Passport Holders and Smugglers” and “Residence Permit and Criminal Examination for Smugglers.” However, the MOJ partially disclosed the refugee sojourn guidelines of April 2020 on April 27, 2022, saying disclosure of all other guidelines could significantly infringe upon the country’s interests in immigration administration and undermine the fairness of refugee status screening.



▲ On March 30, 2022, the Court of Appeal accepted the administrative lawsuit filed by the NANCEN Refugee Rights Center against the MOJ for the disclosure of administrative guidelines for refugee status screening.

Problems in refugee status screening are another cause of the low refugee recognition rate. First of all, to determine whether a person is a “refugee” is ambiguous. It is difficult for South Korea to determine the legitimacy of a refugee applicant, whether an incident has actually occurred, and whether it is related to religious or political persecution to be recognized as a refugee. For this reason, the interview process with the refugee applicant takes a very important position during the screening. However, if there is an error in the interpretation during the interview, the veracity of the applicant’s statement is unreasonably questioned. Regarding this, Ko Ji-woon, a lawyer of the Immigrant Support Public Interest Center Gamdong, said, “Most refugee applicants have no evidence that they have been persecuted. Therefore, the interview report will be used as evidence when the court decides whether or not to recognize them as refugees. However, if there are any errors or false statements in the report, and if the statement of the refugee applicant in court and the contents of the interview



report are different, the refugee applicant will be disqualified from the refugee status screening without any fault.” As a result, South Korea fails to secure fairness in the refugee guidelines and screening process.

©National Human Rights Commission of Korea



▲ The authenticity of the refugee applicant's statement is questioned if the interpretation is in error or fails to convey its meaning completely.

## Refugee Hatred, Followed by the Media

It is the media that has influenced the formation of the public's negative perception of refugees. At the “Meeting for Media Role to Improve Refugee Human Rights” held on August 31, 2018, Refugee Network activist Byun Su-hyun said, “When the media reported on the Yemen situation, most of them didn't make a clear explanation about the background of the Yemeni civil war and the dangers of refugees returning to their home countries,” saying that they focused on reporting the conflict by using provocative language such as ‘occupation of Islamic refugee,’ ‘refugee shock,’ and ‘hot potato.’ Also, activist Byun pointed out, “The lack of understanding of Arab culture and cultural absolutism was reflected in the article, which had the effect of spreading negative perceptions about refugees in addition to unconfirmed rumors.”

In addition, the human rights discriminatory portrayal of Yemeni refugees as homeless and socially maladjusted in the media also had an impact on developing negative perceptions of refugees. On July 20, 2018, the JoongAng Daily published an article titled “Jeju ‘Yemen refugees’ began to sit on the road” on the front page. The article used expressions such as “attempt to homelessness” and “concern about conflicts with residents” by listing photos of Yemeni refugees who had gathered to participate in a job briefing held by the Jeju

Immigration and Foreign Affairs Office on June 18, 2018. Regarding this, activist Byun said, “Many articles, which focused on ‘conflict about employment,’ ‘homelessness,’ and ‘social unrest’ while dealing with the refugee acceptance issue, are likely to further incite hatred for refugees,” warning that this situation will have a lasting impact on public perceptions and policies on refugees. In conclusion, negative media coverage of refugees has had an impact on public perception.



©JoongAng Daily

▲ On July 20, 2018, the JoongAng Daily published an article titled “Jeju ‘Yemen refugees’ began to sit on the road” on the front page, listing photos of Yemeni refugees who had gathered to participate in a job briefing.

## Poor Identification Measures

The current “Act on Registration of Family Relations” stipulates only matters related to the registration and proof of the occurrence and change of family relationships, such as birth, marriage, and death of Korean citizens. As a result, recognized refugees cannot be subject to issuance of a family relationship certificate. In addition, according to Article 46 of the Act on Registration of Family Relations, birth registration is allowed only to parents who are Korean nationals, so that it is virtually impossible to register and prove the birth of a child of parents who are not Korean. The Korean government has only adhered to the position that children of foreigners born in Korea can register their births at the diplomatic missions\* of their parents' nationalities. However, for refugees unable to return to their country of origin due to fear of being persecuted, it is impossible to visit the diplomatic missions of their country. Therefore, their children born in Korea cannot be documented anywhere, and there is a very high possibility that they will become stateless in effect.

Undocumented children who are not Korea citizens are



not subject to compulsory education because the current “Framework Act on Education” stipulates that the subject of compulsory education is all “nationals.” The current Refugee Act guarantees recognized refugees and their children to receive the same elementary and secondary education as citizens. However, since they are not subject to compulsory education, no school enrollment notice is issued to children of recognized refugees, and no measures are taken to encourage school attendance. In other words, children who wish to enter elementary or middle school can only apply for admission to the principal of the school in accordance with the “Enforcement Decree of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.” In addition, even if the principal of a school refuses admission of the children, it is difficult to deal with it legally as there is no separate article prohibiting the refusal of admission in the relevant law.

\* Diplomatic missions: These are institutions established overseas to carry out diplomatic protection and guidance of overseas citizens.



▲ Children of recognized refugee can attend elementary and middle school regardless of their status, just like Koreans. However, they are not subject to compulsory education.

## SOLUTION

### Improving the Fairness of Refugee Guidelines and Screening Process

Refugee guidelines, which are the basis of all administrative procedures related to refugees, should be fully disclosed. Currently, the NANCEN Refugee Rights Center is working to help the refugee applicants by translating and distributing the refugee sojourn guidelines partially disclosed by the MOJ on April 27, 2022. However, Kim Yeon-ju, an activist at the

NANCEN Refugee Rights Center, said, “The refugee sojourn guidelines change every year. Not disclosing the latest refugee sojourn guidelines does not help to improve fairness,” arguing that the MOJ should show a more active attitude.

Improving interpretation of the refugee applicant interview is also considered another solution, and the MOJ has come up with several countermeasures so far. In April 2019, HUFS Research Affairs/R&DB Foundation conducted research on “Verification on Professional Refugee Interpreter Qualification and Quality Management Plan for Refugee Interpretation” as a research service for the MOJ. According to the research result, in October 2019, a meeting was held to discuss effective management methods for each competency of refugee interpreters. In response, activist Kim said, “The MOJ needs to start by increasing the absolute number of interpreters by raising a sufficient budget, and to put in interpreters with a high understanding of foreign cultures without any political or religious prejudices,” emphasizing that more effort is needed. In addition, activist Kim said, “The refugee interview process is a moment where a person’s life is determined. I hope that HUFS, which discovers talents for interpretation in various minority languages, will do its best as an educational institution.” Ultimately, in the refugee guidelines and screening, steady efforts should be made so that refugee applicants can be judged fairly and transparently.

### Keeping Media Objective and Enhancement of Global Awareness

How the news portrays social reality affects the public’s view of it. Regarding this, activist Byun said, “If there are conflicting views in grasping social reality, I hope that the case should be presented with the same weight without being biased toward either side as much as possible.”

In order to restore the objectivity of the media, it is necessary to change the structure of society as a whole, not just the media. Lee Hyo-bok, a researcher at the Media and Communication Research Institute at HUFS, said, “The media that spreads fake news must be improved, but Korean public’s awareness of refugees must also be reborn by mature global citizens,” criticizing it as another cause of provocation. Researcher Lee also said, “Korea is required to be involved in international affairs as an advanced country, but Korean society does not have a mature sense of citizenship,” saying



that the public should make efforts to acquire a mature awareness of the international community and a broad view without prejudice.

As the media developed, not only the government but also the public using media such as social media became the subject of diplomacy. However, the appearance of conflicts due to the lack of understanding and appropriate communication between cultures raises questions about whether Korea is fulfilling its role as an advanced country. The way to become a truly “advanced country” is for the Korean media to deliver accurate information shared at various levels around the world, and for the public to have a mature global citizenship.

### Transition to Universal Birth Registration

Birth registration is the starting point for children’s rights. Accordingly, the international community guarantees the right of children to be registered through the 1991 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its guidelines. In addition, the international community is urging States Parties to the Convention to introduce a universal birth registration\* that guarantees all children’s birth registration. In Korea, where there is no system to publicly record all children except children of Korean citizens, the transition to a universal birth registration is very important. Lee Jun-il, a professor at the Graduate School of Law at Korea University, said “At least, the facts about when a child was born, who the parents are, and name should be registered.” Professor Lee also said, “Since 97 percent

of domestic children are being born in hospitals, the universal birth registration is very important.” Through the universal birth registration, national attention should be paid to ensure that children do not become invisible people.

In addition, to guarantee the education and health rights of children, support through the revision of the Child Care Act or the Refugee Act is needed, not through the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, which have no legal basis. In addition, it is also necessary to ensure elementary and secondary education at the same level as nationals guaranteed by the Refugee Act, by including children of recognized refugees in the subject of compulsory education. In order for children to enjoy basic rights and live without discrimination in South Korea, serious social consideration should continue on what policies put the interests of children first.

\* Universal birth registration: This guarantees that all children are notified of accurate information about the birth to a public institution immediately after birth by the relevant medical institution, or by doctors or midwives involved in childbirth.



▲ Universal Birth Registration (UBR)  
Korea runs the “I’m sorry” campaign urging the introduction of a universal birth registration.

©UBR Korea

“Upholding the cause of the Provisional Republic of Korea Government,” is the content of the preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea. During the Japanese colonial period, independence activists established the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea in Shanghai, China to escape persecution from Japanese imperialism. In other words, the Republic of Korea is a country established by political refugees. In the 21st century, Korea achieved rapid economic growth and leaped forward as an advanced country, but Korea was a country with many refugees in the past.

In the era of globalization, as an advanced country, Korea’s responsibility for international human rights issues is increasing. At a time when Korea needs to seriously consider what role it should play as an advanced country in the international community, The Argus wants HUFs students who learn the cultures and languages of various countries to develop mature global citizenship and take an interest in refugee issues. [A](#)

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# No More Seoul Centralization: Resolve the Regional Imbalance

By Kim Jin-seo

Staff Reporter of Social Section

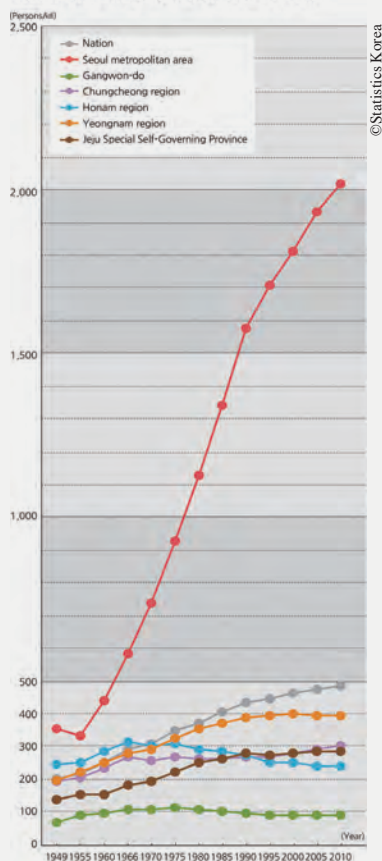
If you randomly grab a high school student in Korea and ask, “Where is your target university?”, 9 out of 10 would answer, “Universities located in Seoul.” “In-Seoul university” is a neologism that refers to major universities located in Seoul. This terminology of going to universities located in Seoul is no longer limited to universities. The concentration of the Seoul Capital Area, the metropolitan area of Seoul, Incheon, and Gyeonggi Province, is accelerating in various fields such as education, residence, and employment. Due to this acceleration, various problems such as saturation and overpopulation have arisen.

It is common for the capital city to become the center of the country. But in Korea, more than 50 percent of the population resides in the Seoul capital area. Even the population of Greater London, the UK’s metropolitan area, and Ile-de-France, the metropolitan area of France, which are considered to be heavily concentrated metropolitan areas in Europe, account for 13.4 percent and 18 percent of the country’s total population, respectively. This shows that Korea’s population density in the Seoul capital area is seriously high compared to the other metropolitan areas in the world. Due to extreme concentration in the Seoul capital area, in various fields of public services such as housing, transportation, environment, and culture, the Seoul capital area is facing the problem of overpopulation and the rural areas are facing the problem of depopulation. The Argus intends to analyze the background, phenomenon, and the causes of the extinction of rural areas and the centralization of the Seoul capital area based on opinions of experts.



▲ A public service advertising represents the seriousness of the centralization of Seoul and the regional imbalance in Korea.

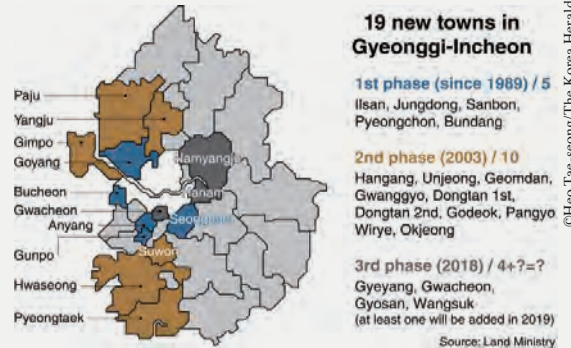
Population Density by Region (1949-2010)



▲ For the first time in the history of South Korea, the population of the Seoul capital area has exceeded 50% of the country's total population in 2020.

## Background Information

As the old saying goes, “When people are born, send them to Seoul. As for the horses, send them to Jeju Island.” The preference for the Seoul capital area has existed since ancient times. Seoul has been the center of the politics, economy, and culture of Korea since becoming the capital of the Joseon Dynasty. From the 1960s to the 1990s, residents of rural areas who left their hometowns under government-led economic development flocked to the Seoul capital area which offered them more workplaces. Even after that, unlike the manufacturing-oriented regions, the service-oriented metropolitan area continued to drive economic development and urban development such as 1st phase new town\* development. After democratization in 1987, interest in local autonomy, decentralization, and balanced regional development was discussed and various policies were implemented. However, the phenomenon of centralization in the Seoul capital area continued. According to resident registration population statistics released by the Ministry of Public Administration and Security in 2020, the proportion of the population in the Seoul capital area, which was at 20.8 percent in 1960, soared to 35.5 percent in 1980 and 42.8 percent in 1990. In the rural areas, population outflowing to Seoul is still taking place today.



▲ There are currently 19 new towns in Gyeonggi and Incheon, which are part of the Seoul capital area.

\* 1st phase new town: A new town built near Seoul by the Roh Tae-woo government, which served from 1988 to 1993, to stabilize house prices and solve the housing shortage. Five new towns are included in the 1st phase: Bundang in Seongnam, Ilisan in Goyang, Sanbon in Gunpo, Jungdong in Bucheon, and Pyeongchon in Anyang, Gyeonggi Province.

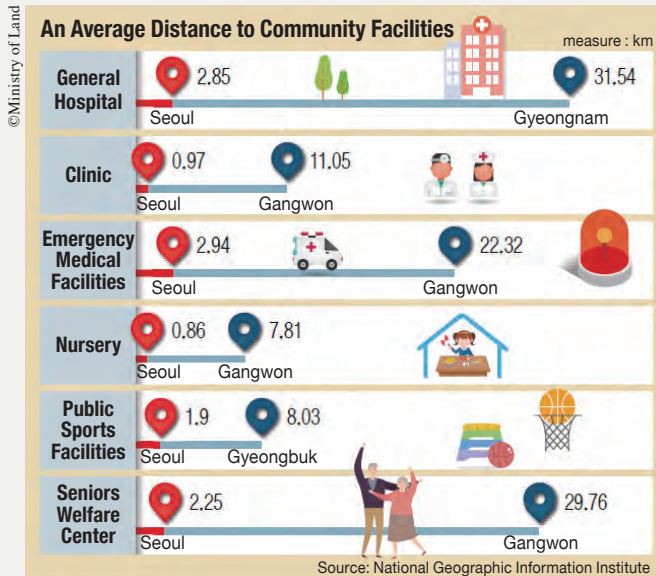
## Phenomenon

The decrease of population in rural areas due to the expansion of the Seoul capital area is a serious problem in that the declining rural areas become a black hole that sucks the government budget. Professor Ma Gang-rae of the Department of Urban Planning and Real Estate at Chung-Ang University said, “Small and medium-sized cities in non-metropolitan areas gradually decline as the population moves out, but as long as people live there, the government has no choice but to carry out the regeneration project, putting more and more of the budget into it.” When the population decreases, the efficiency of infrastructures such as sewage systems and cultural facilities also decreases. In addition, there is the problem that the social maintenance cost borne by individuals increases as the population using the facility decreases. Professor Ma explained,

“The metropolitan area with a large population also requires a large budget to meet the demand for infrastructure.” He added, “If this trend continues, by 2040, 30 percent of the basic local governments in Korea will reach bankruptcy.”

Despite such a large government budget, people in rural areas complain about the low level of social infrastructure compared to metropolitan areas. According to the “Land Monitoring Report 2020” published by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport, the average distance from residence to a general hospital in Seoul was 2.85 km, while Gyeongnam, a province in the Southern part of the Korean peninsula, was the furthest at 31.54 km. In addition, the proportion of the vulnerable population without a general hospital within a 15 km radius of their residence was only 0.01 percent in Seoul, but 37.5 percent in Gyeongnam. In the transportation field, the six routes of Korea Train Express





▲ The graphic indicates the gap of average distance to reach the living facilities between rural and urban areas.

(KTX), are mainly constructed in consideration of connecting Seoul and the regions; so, the direct connection between rural areas is low. Moreover, private performance halls related to culture and art, special exhibitions or concerts of celebrities are also concentrated in the Seoul capital area. “When I was in Busan, concerts of celebrities and artwork exhibitions were held only in Seoul, so there were many cases where I gave up watching,” said Nam Sang-jin, a student at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies Department of Spanish, who is from Busan, a city located in the southeast part of the Korean peninsula. Neologisms such as “The Republic of Seoul” are coined to satirically refer to the excessive concentration of infrastructure and capabilities in various fields such as economics, politics, society, and culture in the Seoul capital area.

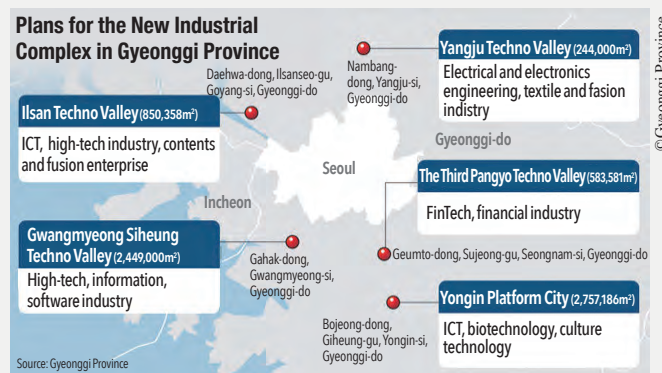
## Cause

### Seoul-centered economic development and changing industrial structure

Korea’s unprecedented expansion in the Seoul capital area, is the result of a state-led, input-oriented growth strategy. For the past 40 years, the Korean government has implemented economic policies centered on the Seoul capital area under the economic plans led by the government. The Seoul-centered economic policy of the Park Chung-hee government, which was in office from 1961 to 1979, led to high economic growth

in a short period, but soon caused a huge cost burden and imbalanced development. The larger the economic scale of Seoul, the wider the gap between the Seoul capital area and the rural areas. Behind the rapid industrialization and the concentration of population in large cities, new social problems such as rural alienation, labor, and urban overpopulation emerged. However, successive administrations ignored these social problems and continued the economic policy centered on the Seoul capital area which resulted in the government not being able to balance the pace of development in the Seoul capital area and the rural areas. Due to the wage and job gap between Seoul and rural areas, many people are now leaving their hometowns in search of decent jobs.

The changing industrial structure is also contributing to the concentration of Seoul. Under government-led development, local cities developed the light, heavy and chemical industries, while the Seoul capital area developed centered on service and high-tech industries. In the past, industries such as steel and shipbuilding largely drove the Korean economy, and industrial cities located in Ulsan and Geoje grew together. However, many young people leave their hometowns and migrate to the Seoul capital area because of the diminishing economies in rural areas. For instance, the Pangyo Techno Valley, which is in the Seoul capital area, is leading the information and communication technology industry in Korea as a representative high-tech industrial complex near Seoul. According to the results of the 2021 1st and 2nd Pangyo Techno Valley General Survey Results announced by Gyeonggi Province, the sales of companies in Pangyo Techno Valley in 2020 were about 109.99 trillion won (US \$ 88.78 billion), which is higher than Hyundai Motor’s 103.9 trillion won (US \$ 83.86 billion), in sales in the same year. The number of operating companies is 1,697 and the number of full-time



▲ A number of new high tech industrial complex will be created in Gyeonggi Province, part of Seoul capital area.

## Poirot's Deduction

workers is 71,967, which is more than the total population of Gwacheon-si, Gyeonggi-do at 69,910. With the success of Pangyo Techno Valley, Gyeonggi Province announced that it would promote additional new techno valleys in areas such as Gwanggyo, Yongin, Ilsan, Gwangmyeong, Siheung, Hanam, Dongtan, Gimpo, and Anyang. Knowledge-based industries with high added value, such as information and communication technology, are concentrated in the Seoul capital area, while manufacturing is based in the rural areas. For instance, Hanjin Heavy Industries, a shipbuilder that once represented Busan, could not withstand the aftermath of the global recession and was at a loss. It sold its shipyard to a consortium\* led by Dongbu Construction. The spread of the techno valley in the Seoul capital area and the decline of local cities, on the contrary, show that the job gap between the provinces and the metropolitan area is deepening due to the development of information and communication technology and changes in the industrial structure.

\* Consortium: An association of several business companies for a common purpose.

### Concentration of various facilities in Seoul

The wide gap between the Seoul capital area and rural areas can be seen as the biggest cause of centralization, including educational institutes such as universities, workplaces, cultural spaces, transportation, and even food, clothing, shelter, and medical facilities. In fact, Seoul National University, Yonsei University, Korea University, and Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, so-called prestigious universities highly preferred by students, are concentrated in Seoul. In the past period of economic development, national universities based in regions with relatively low tuition fees and long traditions were also quite competitive. According to the education company Jongno Academy Haneul Education, in 2021, all nine national universities in regional areas recorded less than 100 percent enrollment rate for new students. In addition, among the 200 four-year universities nationwide, there were more than 30 local universities with more than 100 students not enrolled in the academic year of 2021, including Daegu University in Gyeongsan-si, Gyeongsangbuk-do, Wonkwang University in Iksan-si, Jeollabuk-do, Sangji University in Wonju-si, Gangwon-do, and Catholic Kwandong University in Gangneung-si, Gangwon-do. This shows the actual situation of students in rural areas and the disappearance of local

universities due to the decrease in the school-age population and the preference for universities located in Seoul. In addition to this blind “In Seoul” phenomenon, local universities are in danger of disappearing due to population extinction caused by the low birth rate and aging population.

Regarding jobs, most companies have their headquarters located in Seoul, and mid-sized companies that were in some regional areas are also moving their headquarters to the Seoul capital area. Of the top 100 companies by market capitalization in 2022, 86 companies have their headquarters located in the Seoul capital area. There is a clear difference between the Seoul capital area and the rural areas not only related to the location of corporate headquarters, but also in the quantity and quality of jobs. According to Job Korea, Korea's representative job offer site, as of May 5, 2022, 124,883 jobs were found in Seoul, 82,365 jobs in Gyeonggi province, and 18,166 jobs in Incheon. There was a total of 154,414 job announcements in the Seoul capital area, a huge difference from 63,483 jobs in non-Seoul capital areas. There were no places with more than 10,000 job postings in local cities or provinces. Even if we simply compare the absolute number of jobs, we can confirm that the Seoul capital area has far more jobs than non-metropolitan areas.

As it is difficult to find a job in rural areas, many young people are moving to the Seoul capital area. Professor Kim Kyung-hoe of the Department of Education at Sungshin Women's University said, “The social and cultural infrastructure are all concentrated in Seoul, so most people want to live in Seoul. There are no fascinating jobs in rural areas,” he said. In conclusion, the problems of education and workplaces are exacerbating the expansion of the Seoul capital area.

### Policy failures of government

The government recognized the problems of expansion in the Seoul capital area and implemented several policies starting from the 1970s to resolve them. The idea that local governments should be encouraged to promote investment and development by granting various benefits such as a regional quota system and a regional balanced selection system is being consistently pursued despite the successive changes of administration. The government has been promoting gradual improvement by implementing the “Relocation of 115 Public Institutions to Local Areas” and the “Construction of 10 Innovative Cities” projects, the construction of Sejong Special Self-Governing





▲ Members of labor union from local universities held a press conference in front of Busan City Hall to demand measures against the collapse of local universities.

City, and the relocation of public institutions to local areas. However, these government policies did not have much effect. According to an interview with Choi Jun-young, an expert at the law firm Yulchon, conducted by Sisa Journal, he said, “A city is not a simple sum of individual elements.” According to the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, as of the end of June 2017, of the 33,212 employees of 115 public institutions relocated to 10 innovative cities nationwide, 12,567, 37.8 percent moved alone without their families. The number of employees who moved to innovative cities with their families was 10,800, 32.5 percent of the total. This means that 7 out of 10 families still live in other areas, especially in the Seoul capital area. Some critics say that such a policy causes families to live apart and increases the economic burden. “I only see my father on weekends,” said Kim Gyu-gun, a student in the Department of Political Science and International Studies, Yonsei University, whose father works in an innovative city in a rural area. This reality shows that the innovative city policy is not fundamentally solving the centralization of the Seoul capital area. Regarding this, Professor Lee Min-won of the Department of Accounting and Taxation at Gwangju University

said, “The expected regional dispersion effect will be realized when related private companies, major government institutions, and educational institutions move together rather than just moving public institutions.”

In some cases, government policies are inconsistent. A significant portion of the government’s balanced development budget used to prevent local extinction and alleviate the phenomenon of expansion in the Seoul capital area has received substantial funding. Of the 3.3 trillion won (US \$ 2.66 billion) construction cost of the New Ansan Line connecting Gojan New Town in Ansan and Yeouido in Seoul, 580 billion won (US \$ 468.13 billion) has been invested in the balanced development budget so far. The balanced development budget for 69 projects related to the expansion of the metropolitan area’s transportation network, such as the GTX construction and the expansion of the Shinbundang Line, amounted to 6.9 trillion won (US \$ 5.57 billion). This is 30 percent of the total 23.2 trillion won (US \$ 18.73 billion) of the balanced development budget allocated to the transportation and logistics sectors. Apartment prices in areas where these lines pass have doubled in a year. The budget that should be used to prevent the expansion in the Seoul capital area has fueled the expansion in the Seoul metropolitan area.

Professor Kim Ho-kyun of the Department of Business Information at Myongji University said, “The development of new towns in the Seoul capital area is a policy that goes against the regional balanced development. Even the simple fact that new town development is an important factor in the concentration of the metropolitan area is not reflected in the current government policy or balanced development strategy. It doesn't seem to be taken into account.” A more fundamental solution is needed to prevent centralization in the Seoul capital area and achieve balanced regional development.

In a cramped country with the third-highest population density, over half of the population lives on 11.8 percent of the country’s land. Expansion in the Seoul capital area is a time bomb that undermines Korea’s competitiveness, along with social chaos caused by skyrocketing housing prices, transportation problems, air pollution, and overpopulation. However, now that the population of the Seoul capital area has become the majority of the entire population of Korea, politicians who have no choice but to be conscious of votes are not actively speaking out to resolve the problems. The centralized structure in the capital area can be effective on the level of a middle-income country, but there is a limit to further development for an advanced country. In fact, developed countries such as the United States, France, and Germany have around 10 percent of their population in their capital city metropolitan area. Now that Korea has become an advanced country, it is necessary to resolve inefficient imbalances through balanced development and awaken the potential of local regions. 🇰🇷

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# How Convenience Can Lead Us down a Dangerous Path

 Georgiana Mihaela Moga

Every aspect of our lives is dictated by technology. We use our phones as alarms when we wake up, check our social media as soon as we open our eyes in the morning, and stare at our screens as we walk down the street. Technology has made our lives easier. Entertainment is more readily available, and friends and family can be reached twenty-four hours a day. Technology has created a fast-paced, convenient society where everybody is connected at all times, never missing out, and always included somehow.

Nevertheless, a downside of technology permeating our lives is the fact that we spend every moment focusing on something that does not belong to us. We watch videos of strangers online, read their tweets and posts, and are consistently seeking entertainment, thrills, and shock, as if constantly driven by a dopamine addiction. We have forgotten how to be alone with our thoughts, how to focus on one thing at a time, and how to be patient. Our world leaders feed into the narrative of digital transformation to make our lives easier, simpler, and devoid of hassles. New technology is patented almost daily. New TVs, phones, and computers are released every day, each bringing us closer to a more technological future. As our screens get larger, our attention span diminishes. As the width of our devices shrinks, so does our perception.

In the last few years, we have seen technology take over our lives at an alarmingly fast pace, more so during the pandemic. For our sake and safety, contact tracing, QR-codes, and vaccine passports were implemented. Unfortunately, governments are notoriously known throughout history to take advantage of crises to implement a more authoritarian grasp on their population. What is seemingly a tool to aid



collective health could become an authoritarian tool used against the population at any time; as Yuval Noah Harari puts it, we must pay attention to how our data is used, for what purpose, and how it is stored (*Coronavirus surveillance risks creating authoritarian regimes*, 2020).

Nowadays, it's noticeable how some of our human values, such as compassion, empathy, and sympathy, have given way to fear, cold logic, most often manipulated by so-called trusted sources, and black and white views. This behavior is evident in the "cancel culture" so popular in our present times. We either behave the way the majority wants us to, or we are canceled, shunned from online communities, or sometimes even society as a whole.

Additionally, famous billionaires like Elon Musk are constantly working on developing new technology intended for human use, not merely wearable devices, but nanotechnology that can be inserted into our bodies. For example, Musk's Neuralink brain chip claims to help paraplegics walk again, help us save memories as photos, and allow our brains to communicate wirelessly with a computer. It all sounds like something out of a sci-fi movie, which might be exciting for some people, but extremely worrying if we think about it deeply enough and consider the consequences.

Cybersecurity is extremely fragile nowadays; we witness cyberattacks and data leaks regularly. If even governmental websites can be hacked, how can we trust a device inserted into our bodies to be secure enough? This might sound far-fetched but vaccine passports are a clear example of this. Blockchain technology is being used to secure the data in most of the apps used for this purpose, which makes cheating the system and hacking into it highly difficult. Nonetheless, our data might not be as secure as we think. The data can be accessed by any governmental branch with little to no further approval from the user. For example, the "Green Pass" and "Super Green pass" used in Italy to regulate citizens' lives and rights to work based on their vaccine records can be easily accessed by the Agenzia Delle Entrate, Italy's IRS. The government has allowed the IRS, through an emergency decree, to access the vaccine records and cross the data with the tax records of all citizens aged fifty and above, to fine them if unvaccinated, and ultimately ban them from working.

Such freedom to use our data for purposes other than those we knowingly or unknowingly agreed to is what has the potential to transform tools marketed as convenient and beneficial to all into tools of authoritarian control. What might today be used as contact tracing technology because COVID can set the foundation or a precedent for governments to try and have more information and control over their citizens' rights. It is well known that the European Union is working on a digital ID system for its citizens as part of the 2030 Agenda with regard to digital transformation. The European Commission aims to provide citizens with a digital wallet where all their records can be stored, ranging from their medical records, diplomas, bank information, and contracts. Everything would be easily accessible and ready for use. Its main goal is to ensure that the right service is delivered to the person who is really entitled to it (*Electronic Identification*, 2022). Such a function could be useful to protect our identity, but it could also erase important boundaries. What and who determines whether we are entitled to a service or not?

Ultimately, we should all be more mindful of what we agree to, to whom we allow access to our data, and for what purpose. Technological advancement can be beneficial, but not when only the logical mind prevails. In a society upheld by many different individuals, compassion and equity should be the pillars upholding our progress. Sometimes convenience can be used as a disguise for something inconspicuous, which might end up not having our best interest in mind.



# Peace: More than a Ceasefire

 Song Eui-jun

Not long ago on April 5th, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's emotionally-charged speech took place at a UN Security Council meeting. The speech came a day after Zelensky's visit to the newly liberated Kyiv suburb of Bucha, where mass Ukrainian civilian deaths had occurred. In the speech, Zelensky called upon UNSC to act for peace, saying, "Ukraine needs peace. We need peace. Europe needs peace. The world needs peace." Zelensky's impassioned appeal for peace resonated with numerous parts of the world. Korea, of course, was no exception. Many Koreans extended their heartfelt support to Ukraine, stating that the Russia-Ukraine war reminded them of the tragedy of the Korean War. What was interesting about this support, however, was that it was formed on the premise that Korea is currently at peace, unlike Ukraine. However, what these people overlook is that the term 'peace' is rather ambiguous, and therefore, it is difficult to determine whether Korea is currently enjoying peace or not. Indeed, there is no clear-cut definition for peace, and depending on how one defines the term, the conditions required to 'be at peace' can greatly vary.

To begin with, in many cases peace refers to an absence of physical or direct violence such as war. This relatively narrow definition of peace is most intuitive and widely used among people. Often referred to as 'passive peace' or 'negative peace' by irenologists, this form of peace is achieved when physical violence is no longer observed. The peace Zelensky called for in his speech could be deemed as an example of passive peace. If a ceasefire between Ukraine and Russia becomes enacted, passive peace will ensue in Ukraine as the country will no longer be in a state of war. Passive peace in this respect is closely related to national security. Without resolution of national security problems, it is impossible to establish passive peace. As passive peace directly correlates with the very survival and existence of nations, it should



be considered as the bare minimum of peace. Therefore, it is crucial that countries obligatorily make the utmost effort to safeguard it. Institutions such as the UNSC exist to help nations guarantee and maintain passive peace. Article 1 of the UN Charter emphasizes that the purpose of the UN is to “take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace.” As Zelensky has criticized, it is questionable whether the UN is in fact taking “effective collective measures” for peace. Yet, the Charter is a good demonstration of the world’s concern toward passive peace.

Additionally, while it is true that peace usually relates to the issue of direct violence, what one must not neglect is the fact that other forms of violence also exist. The absence of such other forms of violence, or indirect violence is referred to as ‘active peace.’ This concept of active peace suggests that a crime-free, nonbelligerent nation could also be unpeaceful. An example that represents indirect violence is structural violence. Structural violence is a type of violence caused by inequitable structures that harm certain groups of people. Since it is caused by a social structure, it is particular in that the offender cannot be strictly identified. An example of structural violence can be observed in the recent protest by a disability rights group in Korea. The Solidarity against Disability Discrimination group has been holding subway protests since last year, calling for the procurement of the government budget to guarantee the mobility rights of the disabled. The group argued that due to the infringement on mobility rights, disabled people are simultaneously suffering from limited access to education and social participation. While such violation of minorities’ rights does not involve physical violence and the offender is unclear, victims do exist and conflicts emerge from them. Therefore, for a society to be deemed perfectly peaceful, it is necessary that indirect violence be resolved.

Lastly, even if both direct and indirect violence is gone, it is important to note that an individual may still not feel at peace. For an individual to feel ultimately at peace, one should be fully capable of controlling his or her mind and tackling stress and anxiety that arise from within. If fundamentally this ‘individual peace’ is not achieved, no matter how tranquil or serene the world around us, it seems pretentious and hypocritical. This could provide an explanation for why the concepts of ‘inner peace’ and ‘peace of mind’ gained popularity over the recent years despite the 21st century being generally regarded as one of the most peaceful periods in human history. Further proof that shows the significance of individual peace can be found in Korea’s mental health rate. According to the Institute of Economics & Peace’s Global Peace Index, in 2020, Korea was among relatively peaceful countries, ranking 48th out of 163 countries. However, in the same year, Korea showed the highest depression prevalence rate and suicide rate among OECD countries. This difference in numbers clearly signifies that although there may be certain correlations between social and individual peace, there is no strict causal relationship between the two. Therefore, to accurately account for a nation’s peace level, individual peace elements should also be factored in.

To conclude, as there is no set definition for peace, there may be differing opinions on whether a nation is truly at peace or not. Generally, the term peace refers to passive peace, which signifies a state that is absent of any physical or direct violence. Nevertheless, if we define peace more broadly, peace can be interpreted as active peace, which requires the absence of not only direct violence but also indirect violence. Furthermore, the word peace can also represent individual peace, which contributes to the well-being of individuals. Therefore, before feeling relieved that our nation is currently at peace since we are not at war, one must always keep in mind that various improvements can be made for a nation to become even more peaceful. Only then can we approach undisputed peace.



# What is “Peace”?

 **Tomiris Caesar**

Throughout generations, humanity has put peace on a pedestal. From the inclusion of the word in the bidding of farewells, like the Korean “안녕히가세요” (annyeonghi gaseyo: go with peace) and the Arabic greeting “عليكم السلام” (asalaam alaykum: peace be upon you), where ‘peace’ has been so deeply entrenched into those simple phrases that no longer do the native speakers recognise the word’s essential meaning; to the glorification of peace in antique mythology, embodied by the Roman Goddess - Pax and her Greek counterpart - Irene, peace has always made its presence evident in all cultures. But what is the essence of peace and how does it manifest itself in the world around us and, of course, within ourselves? For such a ubiquitous concept it certainly presents itself differently in almost every culture. It is hence easiest to start with defining it by what it is not - it is not conflict, unrest, or violence. But peace is not simply the opposite of a sum of its antonyms. It goes beyond that. At its very core - peace is something individually defined by a feeling, state, or lifestyle. An abstract noun that emerged from its very antithesis - war. By the principle of Wilde’s “to define is to limit,” I will only attempt to make an outline of peace’s many meanings, drawing from various philosophies and religions, and will conclude with my very own.

It is most intuitive to start defining peace within the framework of the most fundamental human instincts. Is humanity, as a holistic entity, meant for peace? Are individuals born with the preconceived notions of peace or, akin to many other things, is it simply a social construct? For the western eye, peace can be indicated by an absence of dissension; whereas the East would most likely view peace as serenity and harmony internally, meaning within oneself, and externally, within the world.



Eastern societies, especially ones rooted in Confucianism, put great importance on the philosophical belief of “harmony without uniformity,” or in other words: a righteous man will find an equilibrium and maintain it, in a world brimming with dispute and disagreement, to achieve harmony. It seems that for the East the concept of peace is not something one is born with; it is not a default human state to be ‘at peace.’ It is instead a lifelong goal to attain. Most of us are born into conflict - from our very conception there are conflicts between having to - and wanting to, possibility - impossibility, spiritual - carnal, momentary, transient desires - and eternal aspirations; the world in and of itself is a perpetual conflict of interests, ideas, and beliefs.

Similarly, western philosophers would view peace as a counteragent of conflict, but unlike the East, they do not attempt to give it meaning as a separate word. Its definition is viewed through its contrast with war. War is an essential prerequisite for peace, without which the latter will never come about - and both, the eastern and western perspectives seem to agree on that. From the Chinese General Sun Tzu, who advised that “in peace prepare for war, in war prepare for peace” to Aristotle, who stated that “we make war that we may live in peace”; while on the opposite side of the Greek front, the Roman General Vegetius argued that “If you want peace, prepare for war”; it is obvious that in many cultures war and peace are not completely dichotomous concepts. Even in contemporary times it is evident that ‘peace’ more often than not is very interconnected with its opposite. Take, for instance, pacifist movements and ‘peacekeeping’ groups. Conventionally, pacifism is known to be a rejection of war and killing. Ironically, much of the terminology related to pacifism, such as “pacification” and “pacified” are regularly employed in militant groups to justify a violent process of engaging in conflict with another group in order to achieve peace. Even George Orwell, who was much opposed to such euphemistic descriptions of violence, had to agree that war can be a suitable way to bring about peace. Now, what this perspective communicates about the definition of peace is that it (in its most traditional definitions conceptualised by the East and West where the former believes that peace is harmony, and balance of conflict, and the latter conceptualises it in the framework of what it is not) is very vulnerable to human exploitation, and by that very human nature, peace is something not intrinsically familiar to us. It is more of a social concept than anything absolute.

What is, arguably, an axiom, however, is that peace starts within ourselves. Peace, in its most profound yet rudimentary meaning - is nothing more than contentment. Or that is at least according to many religious thinkers like the followers of Buddhism or 19th century philosophers like Albert Camus. A red thread of satisfaction in one’s life and appreciation of it weaves through the polar groups and unites them in that specific definition of peace with oneself and the world. Imagine Sisyphus, who without end pushed a rock uphill, happy - Camus would argue in parallel to the Buddhists accepting the Dukkha (perpetual chase for pleasure and fulfilment) and, thus, achieving inner peace and enlightenment. The sound of your morning alarm, the bitter taste of coffee before class, an hour-long lecture, then food you frequently call ‘bland.’ and finally your Friday night drinks, and it all becomes a blur until you come back to the sound of your morning alarm and it all starts again. The ceaseless cycle of the mundane kills all that was once alive in us. The reason for greed, hedonism, and angst is perhaps our refusal to accept the mundane. But when one feels happy and appreciative of the simplest things - is when one achieves peace in its purest form.

## Epilogue

### Lim Se-jin

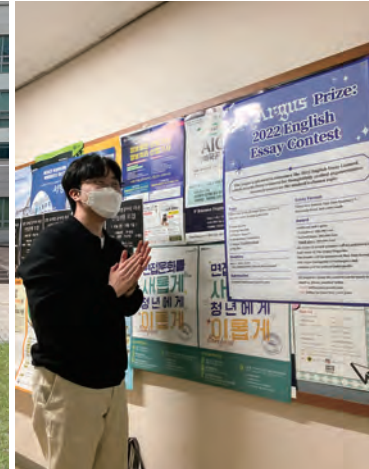
As this semester is my last at The Argus, I have various mixed emotions. In a boring school life, The Argus activities gave me energy. There were many difficulties while working, but I think there were many happy memories also. It is sad to think that the memories made while working become the past, but I think they will be a precious treasure in my life in the future. To The Argus reporters who worked together for a semester, you did a great job. Also, to editor-in-chief, Park Kun-ha, who worked so hard for a semester, thank you for giving me a happy memory. Finally, I would like to thank the readers who have read my articles. I am most grateful to you all.

### Yang Yu-min

While in the Social Section in The Argus, I was able to meet people who work in various parts of society and put their voices in my writing. By writing every month, I was able to learn how to write logically even more so than from lectures, and my depth of reading and thinking was widened. The 21-year-old me has made a lot of progress compared to a year ago. I feel the weight of the title of “reporter” every time I meet people saying that they read my articles well, and I worked hard to be a person who could bear that weight. Looking back on the articles I have written so far, I wanted to include the stories of the socially disadvantaged in my articles, and I will continue to do so in the future. I am grateful to everyone who helped me during the time I cried and laughed with The Argus, and I will never forget this moment even after countless hours pass.

### Kim Ye-ji

For about a year, I worked as a staff reporter of the Culture Section. Looking back on my time with The Argus, it was sometimes academic, sometimes enjoyable with colleagues, sometimes confusing in terms of what to do, and sometimes I was just thankful for all of those who led me through. Now I look back at all the articles I wrote, from the first one about horror movies, an interview with a cartoonist, an introduction about a new-rising fashion and the travel articles that I had prepared after visiting exhibitions in real life. I also remember all of the great articles of my competent colleagues, whom I really admired and whose articles I enjoyed reading. I will never forget the passion and affection I experienced at The Argus and view this experience as a steppingstone to my next chapter. Thank you, The Argus!





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**Cho Eun**

It was a tremendous time working as a reporter for The Argus. The word “reporter” and my press card always made me think of the value and the responsibility it carried. I felt the responsibility of being a journalist, and I was happy and honored to publish my writings in The Argus, which has a long history and fame. In the process of writing articles, I learned so many things. I learned how to write, think, and see the world. Reading other reporters’ articles also made me see a reality I did not know. Finding in-depth content and interviewing experts was a thrilling experience that I could never get anywhere else. Although I struggled a lot, couldn’t sleep, and doubted myself often, the struggles were worth it, and they will last forever in my mind. It was a dreamlike time working with my colleagues. I love these people so much, and I am looking forward to the next semester! See you soon The Argus!

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**Kim Jin-seo**

First and foremost, it was my great honor to be a staff reporter of The Argus. As a reporter in the social section, I have dealt with the fairness of fair trade, the tragedy of the Russo-Ukrainian War, the unique age counting system in Korea, and the adverse effects of the centralization of Seoul capital area. The articles that I wrote were invaluable in that the process of planning and writing the articles required cooperation. I had at least two interviews with professors or experts in related fields and 6 editorial conferences for each article with my colleague reporters. All of my fellow reporters were so kind and helped me so much giving insights and constructive feedback that I couldn’t think of by myself. I have no doubt that becoming a reporter for The Argus is one of the best choices that I made in my university life.

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**Shin Jun-seo**

This is my second semester in The Argus and like last year, The Argus gave me a lot of good memories. Writing articles as an associate editor was new, and also, writing cover stories was another new experience for me. I feel grateful, now realizing that The Argus has changed me not only into a better writer, but also into a better person. There are some reporters leaving, and they are going to be greatly missed. For my part, I will stay with The Argus for some more time, and I believe that parting is not the end. Goodbye, until we meet again!





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