Gendering Discourses of Time in South Korean Self-help Books:

The normalisation of a masculine long hours work culture

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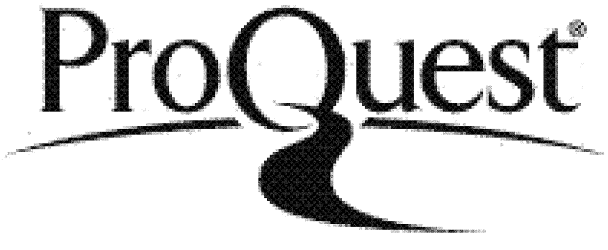
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Abstract

This thesis is based on a three-fold project analysing, firstly, the discursive configuration of popular Korean time management texts, secondly, the parameters of their production and political economy, and, finally, their audience reception. Three time management self-help books that encourage using time outside of regular working hours for self-development were selected and analysed for this thesis. To explore the audience's reception of these texts, this was complemented by examining a number of book reviews from the three biggest online booksellers' websites in Korea and one-to-one, face-to-face or online interviews were conducted with readers of these self-help texts. I highlight how the three time management books examined in this thesis fail to address significant issues related to gender and class difference amongst employees. This is particular marked with regard to female workers who often have greater domestic responsibilities than most men but who are still expected to do the same job at work. The advice in these books may also be problematic for many men too. This is because they are expected to fulfil the ideal of a neo-liberalist worker who pursues his lifelong 'career' by devoting even more of his time often with the aim of simply maintaining his current job. Thus, such texts rule out the possibility of achieving at work/life balance for both women and men.

I place my findings in the broader socio-economic context. The issue of time management has become a complex one in South Korea partly as a result of the Asian Debt Crisis of 1997. The crisis brought about a wide-range of economic, social and cultural changes. Self-motivational literature, which had not been familiar to most Koreans until the post-crisis period, has deeply influenced Korean society. The spread of self-help products and services has been promoted by the self-help industry and by corporate managers who want to deliver their managerial ideology in an unobtrusive way. Finding shows it is not entirely true that most self-help readers are desperately looking for solutions to time management problems and are thus eager to accept self-help advice. Rather, many keep an ideological distance from these texts and will criticise them for a failure to acknowledge the gap between the advice they offer and the realities of everyday life. For many ordinary employees, self-help reading is a passive way of

self-management they can afford and about which they made to feel more secure because these books enable a feeling of not being left behind by the social demand for self-development. Despite reader criticism, self-help books are still regarded as important, primarily because an increasing number of people appear to be willingly consuming them. Whether or not they strongly believe in the message of self-help in these texts, a growing number of readers consume and reproduce the capitalist work ethic, which underlies their advice. The thesis concludes that even though the individual self-help texts have not been well received by white-collar readers, the widely accepted imperative of self-development could be still powerful. The prevailing culture of self-help reading also plays an important role not only in what we read but also in how we read. I conclude that the popularity of the self-help book as a genre reflects the fact that individualistic bourgeois ideology and that the emphasis on material success has gained narrative power over ordinary workers.

Chapter 1: Introduction

When I came to Cardiff to do my PhD in 2003, it was the very first time I had been to a 'Western' country. Despite my worries about the probable culture shock, thanks to worldwide free trade and globalised (or more precisely, westernised) culture, not many items from local supermarkets or shops were unfamiliar to me and the customs were not that different at a glance. But I soon found there were certain aspects of life that my mother country, South Korea (hereafter referred to throughout this thesis as Korea), did not share with Britain. To begin with, in Cardiff, most high street shops close some time between 5 and 6 pm and some other services, including banks and post offices, close even earlier than that. Moreover, generally services were much slower than in Korea. From my experience, many students from outside of the UK have been unpleasantly surprised by the early closing and slow service. What we did not realise was that late opening hours [related to how long we work] and speedy services [how fast therefore intensive we work] that we were well accustomed were not something to take for granted. The idea behind assuming the early closing and slow service are 'problems' and that they did not coincide with the image of Britain as an 'advanced country', perhaps can be explained by our unreflexive acceptance of a specific time regime that is based on a long hours working culture and an intensity of labour.

The reason I have begun this thesis by revisiting some of my personal experiences of 'culture shock' is because my recognition of the different time politics between Britain and Korea was the point at which I initially became interested in the conception of time as a complex social system. Questioning the meaning of the routine in everyday life has been a central interest of cultural studies that examines mainstream culture and dominant ideology from a distance and raises questions about what has been taken for granted. In other words, opening hours and speed of service are outcomes of a complex and highly institutionalised system in which many other factors and interests are involved, and this is what I mean by 'time politics', the central concept of this project. At approximately the same moment that I became interested in time politics, certain news stories from

the Korean news media attracted my attention. These stories were about the 'morning person' vogue that was initiated by a self-help book called *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* (2003). This book was published in October 2003 and attracted a great deal of attention mostly in 2004 onwards. This book was written by a little known Japanese medical doctor and published by a brand-new small publishing house that had been in business for only three months at the time of publication of the book. However, it went on to be ranked as one of the bestselling books of 2004 in Korea, selling millions of copies. Taking inspiration from the book, internet based book groups and support groups were set up and the popular media featured this new lifestyle as an important phenomenon, which further raised the profile of the book. The phenomenal success of this publication encouraged other publishers to release similar titles and Korean bookstores became overwhelmed by comparable types of time-management self-help books, as well as various other success manuals and texts giving career guidance. Observing the 'morning person' discourse represented by the popular media and the social impact this book brought about, I found this phenomenon thought-provoking in terms of its implications in relation to time politics in 'post-crisis Korea'. This was not only because the 'morning person' book was the first book to make a huge hit in the self-help genre in the Korean trade book market, but also because the unexpected popularity of this single self-help book is a reflection of the dominant time-politics in Korea: wage workers who toil long working hours are attracted by the idea of becoming 'morning people'.

Regarding the unprecedented popularity of the genre, the popular media and publishing professionals in Korea have quickly pinpointed the economic recession which began at the end of 1997 and the wide range of outcomes of this recession as a major cause of the popularity of business and management self-help books. Even some cultural commentators have expressed the belief that the appeal of such books is the direct result of readers being desperate to find ways to survive in what has become an increasingly competitive labour market in a time of economic recession. However, it seems that this picture of self-help readers, who are desperately looking for a solution to the problems in their lives from the book and are eager to accept it, is oversimplified. Firstly, this explanation fails to encapsulate the myriad of reasons why people chose to read a 'morning person'

book over all of the other 'how-to' books published in the past five years. Secondly, as a country where agricultural tradition still continues to form a central part of the cultural identity, at least among the older generations, getting up early has long been seen as a virtue or even just the 'right thing to do' in Korea. Therefore, in order to fully understand the background that underpins the popularity of the idea of the 'morning person', it is critical to get the picture of the Korean working culture in relation to time politics.

Korean working culture is characterised by a long-hours culture, or presenteeism. This is the exact opposite of absenteeism and means staying late at work or attending after work socials as a way of showing one's commitment to work. The economic downturn since 1997, known as the Asian Financial Crisis, reinforced the existing working culture. Moreover, the recent neo-liberal economic restructuring of Korean society imposes an imperative of self-development onto individual workers, and away from traditional forms of collective development and teamwork. Today, many workers feel compelled to continue to toil when they are formally 'off the clock' both to show commitment but also because the mass layoffs in recent years have considerably increased the workloads of the remaining workers. When they come to work many simply do not know when they can go home and call it a day.

A number of my friends who are employed by private companies have indicated to me that participating in after work leisure and educational programs is almost impossible because they cannot predict the time when they can leave the office. Therefore, the only point in which one might have some sort of control over their time is between getting up and going to work (I will return to the Korean corporate culture in the following part of this chapter). Considering time politics in the Korean working culture, it is possible to argue that the 'morning person' is simply following the old-fashioned Korean virtue of early rising. However, I would suggest instead that the idea of a 'morning person' is about how work-bound wage workers can use the early morning (i.e., their only-free-time) to develop their competitive edge. Therefore, the 'morning person' is associated with positive values, such as potential, hope, possibility and self-discipline (concepts which frequently appear in readers' online reviews of this book). In addition, it is also important to investigate how power works through various agents in creating

and encouraging wider public interest in self-management guidance. The publications and self-development industry and also the Korean popular media and Korean companies act as key agents in the fast growing self-management culture. This thesis is therefore about the relationship between three seemingly unrelated subjects: firstly, link between the Korean time regime in the post-crisis period and the idea of a 'morning person'; secondly, the development of the Korean publishing industry, and, finally audiences for popular self-development texts. Starting from this problematic, I expand my interest in the 'morning person' phenomenon to other books with a similar theme: you can succeed in your professional life by investing your time outside of regular working hours, such as early in the morning, after work, during commuting time and at weekends. My key question about those books was how they justify or explain the impact on our personal and family life, in particular in relation to contemporary social and economic hardship. Therefore, inspired by my experience of a culture shock on arrival in Britain and the texts regarding the 'morning person' concept from my own country, this project provides a cultural analysis investigating the implications of time management self-help books in the context of the current Korean economy and society within the framework of time politics.

By investigating popular time management self-help literature from the perspectives of the texts, reception and production, this research argues that the dominant time management discourse is pro-capitalist in terms of justifying the present social inequalities in Korea. Specifically, my interest is primarily 'naturalising' the unpaid labour time that is undertaken by (married and unmarried) women, as well as emphasising individual responsibility within the whole of the individual's life project, including time management that is based on masculine models of time. Additionally, I investigate how the audience negotiates their reality amid the dominant discourse on time management.

Thus, this study takes popular Korean time management self-help literature as the research subject, regarding it as an important arena for contextualizing the new subject of neo-liberalism responsible for managing his/her own human capital to maximum effect. Criticizing the idea that 24 hours a day are given to everyone 'equally', I suggest that this notion is gender-blind as well as class blind. This thesis undertakes a textual analysis of the discursive production of selected

books on time management, uses interview materials and also utilises participant observation methods with web-based reading/self-help groups to ascertain how certain members of the Korean public make sense of these texts. This research, ultimately, seeks to contribute to mapping out discursive and ideological aspects of existing and continuing gender discrimination in the workplace. In particular, it emphasises how existing dominant time and/or management discourses tend to alienate and individualise women from the realities of their everyday lives and responsibilities and reinforce biased ideas that women are less capable workers than men. This, in turn, reinforces gender discrimination in the workplace.

The remainder of this chapter provides an overview of some of the important cultural, social and economic characteristics of Korea. I attempt to, firstly, elaborate on how social ethos has changed over the economic crisis. It is crucial to understand this because of the dominant time politics of Korean society, in particular its relation to gender, by discussing some examples highlighting time politics in Korea. This is critical to my project because my argument is based on the recognition and questioning of the current time politics. In the next section of this chapter, I will firstly attempt to position my experiences within the wider social context in order to demonstrate time politics of Korean society. Although this is not a comparative piece of research, I will also draw on my privileged position of experiencing two very different societies in person by juxtaposing different time politics between Korean and British society. This will enable me to challenge assumptions that I would otherwise have taken for granted. A close observation of Korean work/life balance is critical to understanding time politics and gender in Korea, because female workers are more likely to be disadvantaged when there is a poor work/family balance. In order to achieve this, Korean corporate culture is investigated in terms of its long hours culture and presenteeism. By introducing the way the major working time regulations have been put into practice in Korean society, this chapter attempts to emphasise how the social ethos and prominent ideology dominate the system. This highlights the significance of culture and ideology and these are the major domains of cultural studies. This chapter concludes by mapping out how the thesis will proceed by detailing the areas of inquiry that constitute this project and how they will be addressed.

Social Context: Neoliberal Restructuring after the IMF Crisis

It is critical to understand the undercurrent psychology that relates to our working life by investigating what may have shaped the ethos. I think the following aspects of Korean society, which are closely interrelated, have enormous influences on the shaping the politics of time as it is now. These aspects are: the neoliberal restructuring program had begun in 1990s but reinforced further by the 'IMF Crisis'; 'productive welfare'; and the discourse of knowledge economy. In this section I will overview these developments, which I will elaborate further later parts of this thesis in order to see how such social forces and changes accommodate the two seemingly contradictory ideas: work is important and work should be fun. It is also important to acknowledge the coexistence of the residual ethos from the Confucian work ethics (work/job = identity) with that of the neo-liberalist ethos (career rather than a job).

It is useful to put the appearance of this new factual genre into some kind of historical context. Korean public interest in time management self help books can be traced back to the 'International Monetary Fund (IMF) crisis'[1] the effects of which have been felt since the Asian stock market crash in 1997. 'IMF crisis' is a Korean shorthand describing the period of economic hardship following the stock market crash, after which Korea was obliged to abide by deep-reaching IMF-imposed policies that created further economic and societal upheaval. As a number of commentators commented, out of all the countries affected, Korea was one of the hardest-hit countries in the Asian financial crisis.

As a result of critical reflection on the compressed modernisation and the focus on economy, there was a movement that convinced people that 'a different life is

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[1] Terminology always provides an interesting perspective as itself. 'IMF crisis' suggests that Koreans blame IMF for the stock market crash itself and actually IMF's policies were criticised as 'overdoing in South Asia' and in particular in Korea (Feldstein 1998). Although this is usually referred to in the West as 'the East Asian financial crisis' or 'the Asian stock market crash of 1997', I prefer to use 'IMF crisis' not just because this is more familiar to me, but also because I feel that this term captures the nature of the mishap better. It seems to me that the 'IMF crisis' suggests that the financial crisis was not a single event that happened in 1997 but that it has affected Korean society on both a personal and social level since then. In order to emphasise this, some scholars use the term 'post-crisis period' to refer to the period since 1997.

possible' in Korea. A project to build a different and alternative society such as '*kulturgesellschaft* (a society organised around cultural and humanistic values)' (Gorz 1988) and the sub-title of Gorz's *Reclaiming Work*: 'beyond wage-based society' (Gorz 1999), which has been advocated by the Left in Europe since the 1970s, was introduced to Korean society in the 1990s. A social reconstruction project was proposed by progressive Korean intellectuals (Kang, S.-D. 1999), in particular by the first generation of Korean cultural studies scholars. Younger generations, whose advantages are from economic affluence and liberalisation of society and therefore priorities are more in tune with the west's version of what life is for — family, fun and friends — are widely embracing the changes. However, after the 'IMF Crisis' this alternative seemed to lose its ground because without the support of a social safety net, only a small number of the economically privileged class could afford this alternative lifestyle. This was also partly because the social foundation of civil society was not solid enough to resist the backlash.

On the contrary, these changes were facilitated by the pro-capitalist government that had attempted throughout the 1990s to encourage more 'flexibility' in the labour market and finally railroaded a notorious revised bill of labour laws through the National Assembly on Christmas Day in 1996. 'The new labour laws were designed to give more power and flexibility to employers in laying off workers and hiring temporary workers or strike replacements, while disallowing the formation of multiple unions for another few years' (Koo 2002: 199). The repercussions of economic policies that the IMF imposed on Korea during this economic crisis in the following year have made a new market economy seemingly irresistible.

Since the landmark democratisation movement in June 1987, however, Korea has undergone a 'double transition' to both democracy and neoliberalism. No sooner had the independent labour movement built its first national-level solidarity organisations than the Korean political and economic elite enthusiastically embraced neoliberal principles as the new paradigm for policy making. This tendency towards neoliberal principles was consolidated through the economic and financial crisis in 1997, the ensuing IMF bailout, and concomitant neoliberal conditionalities. The contradictory nature of this double transition to neoliberalism and democratic politics is apparent. Whilst neoliberal restructuring

has had particularly harmful effects on the livelihood of the Korean working class, there also have been increased opportunities for labour to participate in the institutions of the new liberal democracy (Gray 2006: 1). Accordingly, the incoming President-elect in 1998, Kim Dae-Jung, at the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU)'s request, established a social agreement to make forum known as the Tripartite Commission for the purposes of achieving the agreement of government, business and labour. After three weeks of negotiations, the First Tripartite Accord was signed on the 6th of February 1998. Essentially, the Accord represented the legal recognition of the independent labour movement, and also included promises to expand social welfare in exchange for reform of labour laws to facilitate a neoliberal programme of restructuring based on layoffs and the flexibilisation of the labour force. The First Tripartite Accord represented a *quid pro quo* that was deemed necessary by all parties to overcome the economic and financial crisis, i.e. legal recognition of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU)[2] and social welfare reforms in exchange for the flexiblisation of the labour market. Thirty-five of the ninety individual agreements that went to make up the First Tripartite Accord were related to social welfare (Shim 2004: 14).

What reinforced long hours culture was the economic downturn, which brought about a sort of nation-wide panic. An unstable job market makes office workers 'choose' to stay in the office even after (or arrive before) normal working hours. Often people say that they are afraid that their desks would be taken away while they are taking time-off (which actually happened during the 'IMF Crisis' — people would come back from a holiday and find someone else sitting at their desk and all their belongings in a box, so some employees decided not to take even their annual leave). While the whole nation was devastated by the shock at the 'national bankruptcy' and the ensuing radical economic reforms — including massive layoffs — general social debates and energies have tended to be

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[2] One of the two major trade unions along with Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU) in Korea, officially established on November 11, 1995. The FKTU was the only legal trade union in Korea until the KCTU was finally legally recognised in November 1999. The FKTU, which was formed in 1961 after a military coup of Chung Hee Park (a military dictator who ruled Korean from 1961 to 1979), was placed under the guidance of the military authorities so it was a puppet union rather than a democratic union. The legalisation of KCTU was monumental event in Korean labour movement.

engrossed in how to cope with the 'IMF crisis'. There seemed no time for wide critical reflection in society on what had brought about this economic crisis. Accordingly, popular discourse about the crisis came to be articulated to the individual in the form of 'how to survive' tips, exemplified by a wide range of 'how-to' books target at a wide public.

Reinforced hard working ethos

Aggravating the drive towards longer workdays is the cultural importance of employment and an aversion to seeming unemployed. Many Korean men may not shop during the day not only because they work long hours — another possible reason is they do not want to be mistakenly seen as unemployed even if sometimes they have a day or a half day off. How others see them is important in a homogenous and communitarian society like Korea where work is regarded as the most important measure of social status. Being out of work is an unthinkable disaster to personal dignity and identity. It has become a famous anecdote that during the 'IMF crisis' that fired Korean 'salarymen'[3] pretended to go to work every morning and hung out with other men in the same situation and came back home very late as they did while they were still employed (for example, see Jelinek 1998). It is widely known that Korean parents want their children to get married while they are in employment because this gives them a higher social status. It has been said if you have no job there can be no arrangement for a marriage meeting. What must be noted here is that 'unemployment shock' has had a greater impact on Korean families than it has on their European or American counterparts because:

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[3] The Japanese term 'salaryman' generally includes all white-collar male employees from newly recruited freshman to general managers but does not include Japanese executives and directors. The salarymen and their families make up a sizeable chunk of Japan's 'middle-class' and the Japanese government and its policies is pretty much a reflection of their mood. In fact, an often quoted reason for the popularity of Japan's Prime Minister Koizumi, is that his unpretentious background and mannerisms allows him to relate well to the concerns of the salaryman' (source: a web-document titled 'Japanese business culture' from http://www.venturejapan.com/japan-business-culture-salaryman.htm).

> More Korean households have husbands as the sole income earner and because most Korean families allow children to rely on their parent's financial support until they get married (and even after that). Furthermore, the poor, if not lack of, social safety net is another reason why unemployment is more devastating for Korean families. (Kim 2004: 237)

The model of workfare, or welfare-to-work, was imported from the UK by Kim Dae Jung administration (1998-2002), who came into office right after the Asian Debt Crisis. The ways in which his government shouldered the burden of economic reform while fulfilling the guidance of IMF, shows the way that the Korean government responded to the economic crisis. As Kim (2004: 237) pointed out:

> [B]eing laid off is like a death sentence in Korea. It is not just a deprivation of the means to earn a livelihood, for it means social death, loss of face in a society where one's occupation is more intimately linked to social status than in most other societies—and status means practically everything in Korea. Being laid off is also harsher for Koreans than for the people of most other societies, because the chance of finding employment which is comparable to the former job is severely limited by the practice of the age-based seniority system within the firm.

As (it is said that) work is so important in our life, it is almost identified with our identity: we are what we do. The divorce rate in couples' old age, which is named 'silver divorce', in Japan exemplifies how the work-orientation affects our life even after retirement. 'The number of divorces among couples married for more than 30 years has quadrupled since 1985. The rise is blamed partly on newly retired husbands who are unable to adjust to spending more time at home after decades of devoting almost every waking hour to their jobs' (McCurry, *Guardian* 21 October 2006). However, the work-orientation seems not just to be limited to a cultural attribute of two most hardworking countries — Korea and Japan. According to Bunting (2004) it is one of the characteristics of a post-materialist society.

> In a post-materialist society which places a high premium on self-expression and fulfilment, to have a lot of interesting work is a status symbol. It's not just that you have a job which pays decently; you have a job which is so satisfying and fulfilling that you don't want to stop working (Bunting 2004: 165).

Furthermore, the significance of work leads to a new form of elitism in the labour market: 'work as vocation and work as pleasure' (*ibid*). However, for most waged

workers the primary meaning of work is livelihood. Ironically, the value of employed labour is overly emphasised in the era of mass layoffs and this has reinforced the existing cultural obsession of staying employed even more. As a result of that, there is no room to accommodate social discussion of alternative lifestyles or social reform. For example, alternatives such as the work-sharing schemes that many scholars and activists have suggested (including Gorz 1989), or downsizing to work less and consume less (such as, Reich 2000) that once had been actively discussed before the 'IMF crisis' has lost its explanatory power. On the contrary, it is common to hear those success stories of people who manage to work until their 70s or even beyond that. These stories seem to promote the idea that the ultimate goal in our life in the ageing society is working as long as possible. For example, a renowned Korean behavioural-ecologist published *Harvest Your Life Twice: A Super-Ageing Society in 2020 that a Biologist Predicts* in 2005 as a title in the series called Research Essays of Samsung Economic Research Institute Research. As the book title suggests, it is a biological approach to the global problem of an ageing society. The solution of this problem is promoting the social environment in a way that most people can work not only during the reproductive period and but also in the post-reproductive period.[4] Since the publication of the book, the phrase 'harvest your life twice', which I think the author coined, has become part of media discourse. In the same year, another Korean publishing house published a series of books under the series title of *The Age of Economic Life Expectancy 2050*.[5] In the title, '2050' stands for 'working for 50 years from one's 20s' and this series is composed of five books: one for general issues and the other four books are targeted at people in their 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s respectively. I will not go into the details of the contents of each book but will instead provide the translation of such self-explanatory titles of the books. I believe that will be enough to make the point about how this series emphasises working life in every stage of life. Each book's titles are as follows:

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4 Its main suggestions include: opening the country to foreign workforces; improving the conditions for childcare so people to be encouraged to get married and have children whey they are young; enabling all of us can have a job even after the first half of our life (or the author called in the post-reproductive period); encouraging individuals to take care of one's health (Choe 2005: 172-3).

5 'Economic Life Expectancy Upgrade Program': speakers are the authors of the five book series.

How Long is Your Economic Life Expectancy?
(For those in their) 20s: Madly Want to Work
(For those in their) 30s: Must Fight to the Finish
(For those in their) 40s: Overcome Your Anxiety to the Best of Your Ability
(For those in their) 50s: The Age You Can Work 20 More Years

I do not have any objection to the idea that we should be able to work if we want; however, this series accurately reflects the popular anxiety: 'what else can we can do apart from work?' The prologue (Kwon 2005: 7-14) of the first book in a five book series addresses the potential readers of this book as: 'those people who want to work to the end of life' (2005: 7); and '(this book is written for) all of us who live in modern times when time flies like an arrow.' Popular self-help books, which are saturated with work-driven discourses, do not give a chance to readers to raise important questions such as 'Do we want to work throughout our lifetime?' But rather these books presumed that it is natural for people never want to retire.

Changes in social ethos and the arrival of self-help books in Korea

It is important to understand the changed social ethos in Korea as it provides a greater sense of the context of self-help book reading and the way the genre is received. This social ethos has gained wide explanatory power from various social actors, particularly in white-collar wage workers. The Korean elite — a constellation of capitalist, military, and political interests — has flowered in the late 20th century from roots struck in the colonial period (1905-1945). This group is awkward replacements for the landed Confucian nobility who were politically dispossessed under Japanese rule, then saw the land reform (1945-1950) that followed liberation complete the erosion of their economic dominance in the countryside. Eckert describes how early Korean capitalists of the colonial period found it necessary to construct an image of the businessman as a moral paragon to circumvent the old-Confucian contempt for commerce (Eckert 1991: 225, cited in Kendall 1996b: 520). The absence of a self-justifying ideology for the new capitalist class is resolved, in part, by traditionalist assertions of familism and education, a claiming of the moral high ground to which the newly minted middle class might also aspire. At the same time, old school ties and family connections are mustered as an instrumental means of advancing elite interests while

preserving a monopoly of privileged access to information and power. But the new elite has not successfully appropriated the respect once accorded scholar-officials and learned gentry, nor are they likely to in the wake of the corruption scandals that exploded at the end of 1995. Portrayals of the lifestyles of monopolist families in the popular press and in television soap operas convey a double-edges image of wealth and power, at once celebratory and critical (Kendall 1996b: 520).

Since I will argue that certain books with similar themes become particularly popular in the response to the social and economic circumstances and the book market, it is important to track the brief but eventful history of self-help books in Korea. The first million-seller non-fiction book in Korea was the autobiography of Woo-jung Kim, the founder and the former Chief Executive Officer of the Daewoo Group. Kim's autobiography, titled *The World is Big and There's Lots to Do* (1989),[6] is a significant piece of work not just because of the fact that it became a best-seller within a very short period of time (only four months after publication) but also because it was the first popular book written by a successful businessman. Since Kim's autobiography went to the top of the bestseller list, several more books written by CEOs or owner-managers of big companies have also topped the bestseller list. This, I would argue, demonstrates that certain Korean readers have begun to be more interested in questions surrounding the economy and business management than they were in the past (Booh 2002). Even so, success manuals only became mainstream in the late 1990s when this genre started to attract attention from more general Korean readers.

Since the early years of popularity of this genre until the present day, a certain subject shift can be observed. In order to account for the conditions/context that has led to the ascendancy of this relatively new genre in such a short period of time, it is first necessary to analyse the shift. This shift is, I argue, from '*Je*-tech' to '*Si*-tech.' In Korean '*Je*' stands for property and '*Si*' means time and these two words combined with 'tech', which means technology and both words are widely

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[6] Kim also published his autobiography in English under the title of *Every Street is Paved with Gold* (New York: William Morrow, 1992).

used and enlisted in updated Korean dictionaries. The first group of books launched in the self-help book market emerged to offer advice for making money independent of organizations. The early books were the testimonials of moderately successful people who devised strategies for making fortunes through investment. The representative book of this subject area is the worldwide best selling book *Rich Dad, Poor Dad: What the Rich Teach Their Kids About Money — That the Poor and Middle Class Do Not!* written by Robert Kiyosaki and Sharon Lechter in 1998. This title whose its first edition was published in February 2000 in Korean was ranked among bestsellers in 2000 and 2001.

Mass dismissal or early retirement by official suggestion has become common in the private sector in Korea regardless of the type of business and occupation since the onset of the economic depression in the end of the 1990s under the name of the rationalising management. In line with this sharp economic downturn, self-help books emerged and created a boom in the publishing industry (Park 2004). Personal finance guidance books ['*Je*-tech'] are obviously targeting people who have just, or are about to, lose their job and forced to start a business were one of them. Those books variously focused on how to manage property, retirement pay or savings. Advised strategies range from making money in stocks to investing in real estate, which is known as the easiest and fastest way to increase property. Run your own business (entrepreneurial scheme). A representative example is called the 'Make a Hundred Million Won'[7] project/syndrome. An investigative journalism television program featured this syndrome in October 2004. Many interviewees testify that they earned their motivation from Kiyosaki's *Rich Dad, Poor Dad* (1998). These timely publications resulted in huge success in short period of time with Korean readers but soon the self-help market shifted to other subjects such as those that offered advice about how to be successful in real estate investment. However, as the economic depression stabilised, potential readers of this type of book evaporated. Because contrary to the rosy promise of these books

[7] A hundred million won is about fifty million pound in current exchange rate but regarding the buying value it is equivalent to ten million pound. What does mean to have a hundred million won in Korea? 'A hundred million won is criteria of the rich.' (*Economy 21*, 7 September 2003). Also it is an amount of money you can buy an apartment for a family in Seoul, educate your children and guarantee affluent life after retirement.

— all started with relatively little money or expertise but and thus anybody could become rich — there were a limited number of potential readers because most common salaried people do not have enough money to invest and this therefore means that there are a limited number of readers to be attracted by this subject area.

When the self-investment book market became saturated, publishers moved to time management books which could attract a wider audience. Another big change in the business self-help book market has been the extension of the target audience. While popular time management self-help books are primarily written by and for men, women are reading them too. This is interesting as the gendered nature of the discourses of time management in these books does not take into account women's specific position in Korean culture. Pursuing a better life and success through improved time management is hardly a new idea, however, we have witnessed that the scope of time management manuals published in Korea in recent years has greatly expanded. In other words, controlling time is now considered to be a central feature of business and self-management. If 'self-help literature mirrors society since these books reflect contemporary norms and values and give an insight to the problems people are struggling with' (Larsson and Sanne 2005: 218), what does this tell us about Korean society and its current dominant time politics? Time politics is the dynamics of various discourses surrounding time, and this includes public policies on working time and also non-working time. Time management is a subject anybody easily relate to because we believe that the only thing we unconditionally possess equally is time, a point with which I strongly disagree. Moreover, as the pace of life is accelerated in spite of (or because of) all the aids of technology, many people feel like they need better time management. This is also an important and popular subject in the area of career management or self-management. In addition to the general importance of time management in contemporary society that many people suffer from time shortage in spite of advance in technology and communication tools, time management becomes an even more complex issue when it comes to the case of Korea.

Although the government declared in the late 1990s that 'Korea had completely overcome the foreign exchange crisis and the mass media celebrated the quick

improvement of profitability in enterprises' 'the IMF intervention with neo-liberal programmes, including liberalization, deregulation, privatization and flexibilisation' was not withdrawn (Kang 2000: 393, 406). It is said that the quick economic recovery could be attributed to the increasing individual spending by using credit cards. One of the major credit card companies advertised their credit card at the beginning of the year 2002 using the copy 'I wish you could all become rich' which was a kind of a new year's wishing remark and it was big hit and well-known to everybody. This was quite shocking because in Korean culture we never publicise the wish to be rich, even though that is what many people have wished for. It was an ironic statement when we reminded that many households risked bankruptcy because of the government's personal/household loan policy and credit card debts which were the most popular means of loan.

Song (2006) argues that Korean neoliberalism needs to be regarded as a 'social ethos of economic-moral value' prevailing in the talk and activities of those in various segments of government and civilian society (2006: 55). Korean Psychologist Sang-Min Whang (2003) maintains that growing economic reason-oriented ethos in response to the bankruptcy of 'the Corporation of the Republic of Korea', has brought about a new social ethos (also see Lee & Han 2006). I have, on many occasions, heard different people saying that they have come to believe that if the government cannot secure their future, they must rely on their own resources. Therefore, they have looked at self-management as a mantra in the age of crisis. It seems to me that this ethos of self-reliance is widely accepted by the Korean public who have witnessed unemployment, resulting in enormous social problems including suicides, family breakdowns and an increasing number of homeless people. Koreans came to realise that they do not have a strong social safety net. It was during that time that the self-help genre started to attract ordinary readers' attention and this is not likely to be a coincidence. In particular, as Biggart argues 'how to succeed' books are 'a useful barometer of changing trends in the popularly-approved routes to meaning and success' (Biggart 1983: 298). The idea of self-help is closely related to the idea of taking individual responsibility. I would argue that the growing recognition and readership of the self-help genre is resonant with the growing social mentality triggered by economic changes and unexpected economic depression. One of the most significant changes is a change in the way people view being rich or being

successful. This is a meaningful change because it has become the basis for the enthusiastic reception of self-development discourse [related to education, value system]. In order to understand the changes in Korea's value system, research on the modern history of Korean capitalism is essential.

In the dramatic history of the modern Korea, making a great fortune (or *chibu* in Korean) was often associated with corruption, unlawfulness and bribery. It was only natural that '*chibu*' had negative connotations because in the modern history of Korean capitalism the only way that an individual could make big money in a short period of time was by speculating in areas such as real estate or the stock market. Some people among those who suddenly became hugely rich were the object of mockery because of their lack of social, cultural, and educational capital. The desire for power and authority was regarded as a more important value than economic capital because power also means money.

Before I move on to the literature review, I shall clarify some key concepts. One of the most crucial concepts in this project is 'self-help' by which I mean popular self-help publication genre. More specifically speaking, the representative sub-themes of this genre that this project focuses on include success manuals, popular business and management guidance and so-called motivational and practical self-help texts (excluding religious theme). Since the concept of 'self-help' reading is still settling down in Korean society, how Korean readers perceive the idea of self-help is also an interesting issue to investigate. In Korean *ja-jo* is the exact equivalent to self-help but instead of naming self-help texts as *ja-jo do-sur*, Korean readers and the mass media prefer to use the term *sil-yong-sur*, which its literal meaning is 'practical books'. This is comprehensive term and technically refers to all kinds of non-literary genres but at the moment it is widely known as referring to self-help genre. This Korean naming is not very useful in terms of clarity, practicality commentators from publication businesses have raised the necessity of setting up a universal and less confused book classification system (Koh 2002). This confusion partly arises from the short history of this genre.

Both the definition of self-help culture and self-development texts need to be spelt out because these are ambiguous and embryonic. Therefore the same terms could mean very different things and also there are multiple angles to approach to this subject. In the last few decades the meaning of these concepts has been

spotlighted. The self-help genres I will focus on are: success manuals, popular business and management guidance and so-called motivational and practical self-help texts (excluding religious theme). Therefore, in my project, some other prominent sub-genres such as relationship advice (see Crawford 2004; Zimmerman, Holm and Haddock, 2001) or religion and spirituality genre are excluded (see Miller and McHoul 1998).

In terms of reader studies, this project focused on white-collar workers, in particular those below senior level, as they are more likely to relate to self-management imperatives than blue-collar workers. White-collar workers tend to work in a competitive working environment and, more importantly, the nature of their work demands constant self-development to keep up with up-to-date information. The demand for self-development has been reinforced since the discourse of 'knowledge worker' has become dominant by management. That is also the reason why they are primarily targeted by the self-help industry. However, readers from outside of these social and demographic categories are also considered, for example women who used to participate in paid work but who have now become stay-at-home-parents or have been taking time-off after having a baby. Even though women in this group may come from various age ranges, economic and educational backgrounds, they share their concern for work/family balance.

A number of studies have been conducted to illuminate the social and economic changes that Korean society has undergone since the 'IMF Crisis.' The majority of post-crisis period research has focused on changes in the labour market. How the economic crisis has influenced the gender divide in the labour market has only recently become a focus of research. Most labour market projects are focused on official statistical data and these trials are meaningful because analysing existing data from a different perspective can draw new interpretation. However, since the nature of gender discrimination is becoming more indirect and more invisible, more qualitative research needs to be conducted.

Moreover, a relatively small part of the research on the post-crisis period has paid attention to how the 'IMF Crisis' has changed Koreans' everyday life and there is even less research relating the popularity of the self-help genre to the economic and social changes that have resulted from the economic crisis. In particular,

since the internet has become the centre of attention for the academic world as well as for business, not much attention has been paid to studies of books and reading in Korea, let alone focused research on the popular self-help genre. Now I will move on the next chapter that I examine primarily three areas in order to set theoretical and analytical frameworks.

Time Politics in Korea and Its Implications for Gender

Since 1980s, a number of Korean feminist scholars have actively examined rapid modernisation from the perspective of gender politics that have been neglected not only in the areas of public sphere but also in the academic world.

Convenience of 24-hour society and its hidden cost

In terms of time politics, what defines most Koreans' life today are speed and long hours. Koreans are not used to waiting for the installation of services such as the telephone, television and internet and other services such as plumbing, electricity, post or door-to-door delivery service — speed is of the essence because of the growing expectation and competition in business.

For example, small independent chemists cannot compete with chain supermarkets so they extend business hours. In the increasingly competitive business environment, every online retailer guarantees express delivery, even within the same day. Many short-term foreign visitors tend to be astonished by the dynamics of the country never sleeping but the life of its citizens is tiring. It is not only tiring but also problematic because of the complete lack of time politics in everyday life. When we live in a society where 24 hour convenience stores are literally everywhere (this is true at least in Seoul) and same day delivery service is taken for granted, it is hard to keep the distance from the social meaning of the existence of those shops and service. It is even harder to question: how they will influence our daily life? What price do we pay for the 'convenience' and 'speed'? Do they actually make our lives significantly 'convenient'? What is convenience anyway? And how is the overworking culture facilitated by the 24-hour business?

There is no questioning of quality of life and its relation to the pace of everyday life. But even convenience and slowness are not necessary conflicting concepts. It seems that there is only instant and shallow thought: the faster, the better.

Convenience coincides with the two most important attributes of time: length and speed. In the physical world, these two are contradictory but it seems that Korean people experience both at the same time: people work intensively *and* work for long hours. Therefore, the convenience that people take for granted never comes without a cost for someone. We tend to think that this does not affect the quality of our life unless we are running the kind of business in which speed is of the essence. However, it has an enormous effect on the every day life of every member of the society. During the weekend, downtowns are packed with people because that is the only time we are free. Non-profit organisations and voluntary work typically attract low participation partly because everyone works such a long hours in paid labour. Ironically, even those people who complain about 'slow' (which is a relative concept) work processes really appreciate the slowness of everyday life in Britain. Even though the UK is the country with the longest working hours in Europe, it is an ideal country in terms of working hours, compared to Korea. What many Koreans who have experienced living in the UK are impressed by is the slow pace of life and how much difference that can make in their daily life. For example, most drivers of public transportation in the UK wait until all passengers get off their buses before they drive off. In a supermarket, nobody hurries you to pay or gives you a look even if you are taking too much time by paying with pennies. This shows how small and trivial parts of our everyday lives are related to time politics. The different ways of life are then easily superficially associated with nationality or national characteristics; for example we used to say that Koreans are hot-tempered and they are hasty; however, I think there is no such thing as innate national personality.

In Korea, all sorts of 24-hour services are flourishing and this is why Korean society gives the impression of a country that never sleeps. Convenience stores are located on every corner in big towns. Public saunas are commonly situated in the back streets of business areas and are popular places where white-collar workers take a brief rest after working for long hours or for a hangover cure. This makes more sense if you are familiar with Korean corporate culture. Social

gatherings after work are still important and social drinking is a crucial ritual in business. When you walk down the streets in Korea, it is impossible to miss the numbers of food delivery outlets and their motorcycles delivering packed lunches or dinners or even breakfasts to office workers who toil from dawn to dusk and would rather not leave the office for meals to save time. The prosperity of 24-hour business results from the fact that people work 24 hours a day (and 7 days a week), but at the same time those 24 hour services encourage 24 hour working. As the fact that most late-night corner shops and local fast-food outlets are run by immigrants in Britain shows, what support the 24 hour economy are people who sustain a 24 hour working day, or more precisely those people who cannot make a living unless they work long hours.

The use of communication technologies is also heavily affected by the social context in which they are used. Many people have welcomed e-mails, instant messaging and mobile phones since they seem to increase the flexibility of work time and space. But the modern conveniences have become a curse: they make us work until midnight at home, during weekends and even when we are away on a vacation. Setting up an email absence message can be a convenient way to automatically inform anyone trying to contact you that you are out of the office. But since in the working culture you are expected to prioritise your work over anything else, some employees seem to feel that they need to provide their mobile phone number. Someone may even add a kind message saying, like one of my friends working for Microsoft Korea does, 'I'm off today but feel free to call me at my mobile phone', thus making himself or herself available even on a day-off.

When inflexible working hours meet a deep-rooted corporate culture

The flexibility in our working life can encompass completely different meanings. It can mean flexibility in working hours (and in working space as well) but it may also mean the flexibility in hiring and firing. In the same way, flexible working hours can facilitate balancing work and life but from the employer's perspective it means capability to work anytime and for any length of time at short notice. It seems to me that in the struggle between the two flexibilities in Korea, the flexibility of employer's side outweighs that of the employee. The consequences of

an emphasis on 'flexibility' are, as aptly described by Bunting, 'The harder people work in a non-standardised 24/7 working week, the more difficult it is to find your free time overlapping with that of your friends' (Bunting 2004: 202). In other words, 'As the more of people's time is absorbed by paid work, the more difficulty each person will have in scheduling and match their own leisure time' (Jenkins and Osberg 2003: 7). This has serious consequences both for individual satisfaction and for society as a whole and more importantly 'it has reduced the value of non-work time for individuals' (Bunting 2004: 203).

I found the scene of male shoppers pushing prams with or without their partners on the UK high streets during the daytime on weekdays was rather unfamiliar, even given that the unemployment rate is relatively high and a large number of people walking down the high streets are not economically active population, this was new to me. I sometimes asked myself 'Do these people ever work? Are they all unemployed? How can they afford to shop if they do not work during the day?' Without being aware, at that time, I thought there were only two ways of life: working from dawn till dusk or being out of work, but no in-between. The country I have grown up is where people would not shop in the daytime on weekdays with their family once they get a full-time job. Being employed in a long-hours culture means the end of employees' personal life, no career breaks and no long-term leave. Just like riding on a train with no break, once you get on the train you cannot get off unless you are ready to take the consequences: i.e. failure. It is almost impossible to have career breaks in Korea unless you are in a high-profile position or highly skilled. Therefore, the stories of people who are brave enough to quit their jobs and sell their houses and then for example travel around the world is rare so it sometimes regarded as worth publishing as articles or a book.

My experience of working for one university department part-time gave me opportunities to observe British working culture. What I found was that one of the greatest differences between the British working culture and Korea's was that office workers 'actually' adopting flexible working hours to balance between work and family. British workers normally take more time-off and do it more often than their Korean counterparts. This inflexible working culture seems to me to explain the reason why the idea of managing time outside of regular work hours is so popular in Korea, in particular among white-collar workers. I realised that the

term of the 'five-day working week system' is not as widely used in English-speaking countries or other European countries as it is in Korea. This term has been centre to the discussion in Korea since the issue of working hour reduction was raised as a means of work sharing after the 'IMF crisis'. I suspect the reason why this term is preferred to '40-hour working week' in Korea is partly because of the way the reduction of working hours has developed. In 2000, the Tripartite Commission (Trade Unions-Management-Government) agreed to reduce the existing 44 hours per week to 40 hours and introduced the annual leave to meet the international standard. However, in reality, the significance of the reduction of working hours has been diluted as taking days off on Saturdays became the centre of the public attention. Moreover, management misled the public perception that identifying the five-day working week with the reduction of working hours. Management got labour flexibility at the cost of introducing the 5-day working system, which they unwillingly agreed to. Instead of hiring more employees, management squeezed a 6-day workload into 5-days and a number of opinion polls showed that individual worker felt the intensity of work has been increased since the five-day working week system introduced. From the employees' viewpoint, I suspect, the public shares the suspicion that the reduction of 'legal' working hours could change the deep-rooted managerial practice that takes (even unpaid) overtime work for granted. Instead, being able to take days off on Saturdays could be a substantial change in the quality of life. However, some other issues were raised on this newly introduced system, such as the lack of the public leisure facility infrastructure needed to help people spend their weekends at minimum expense and the extra cost that each household may have to spend as a result.

The 'five-day workweek system' is a characteristic example of the dominant time politics of Korea. In July 2004, the five-day workweek or 40-hours workweek system became effective nationally in Korea after long-running dispute between labour and management. This system has been central to the discussion of working hours in Korea since the issue of working hour reduction was raised as a means of work-sharing after the 'IMF crisis.' I suspect the reason why this term is preferred to '40-hour working week' in Korea is closely related to the way the reduction of working hours has developed. In 2000, the Tripartite Commission agreed to reduce the existing 44 hours per week to 40 hours, which was instituted

in 1940 in the USA, and extend the annual leave to meet the international standard.[8] However, in reality, the significance of the reduction of working hours has been diluted as taking days off on Saturdays became the centre of the public attention. Moreover, management nurtured the public misperception of a linkage between the five-day working week and the reduction of working hours. After a long-running dispute between labour and capital over working hours, the 5-day working week was introduced. However, in the process of negotiations the government granted the management more flexibility in hiring and firing the labour force in exchange for introducing the 5-day working week system, which they unwillingly agreed to on economic grounds. Management — and other institutions including right-wing newspapers who support the liberal 'market economy' — were strongly opposed to the bill on the grounds of increased labour costs and decreased production rates in manufacturing industry (for more information about the work time debates, see Korean Labour Institute 2002). Instead of hiring and allocating more employees, as it was expected as the result of the new working hour system, the management squeezed 6-days workload into 5-days and a number of opinion polls showed that individual worker felt the intensity of work had increased since the five-day working week system was introduced. From the employees' viewpoint, I suspect, the working public shares the disbelief that the reduction of 'legal' working hours could change the deep-rooted managerial practice that takes (even unpaid) overtime work for granted. Instead, being able to take days off on Saturdays could be a substantial change in the quality of life. This does not only apply to Korean situation. British labour historian Chris Nyland (1989) has suggested, for example, that historical reductions in working time have involved a gradual rise in the intensity of work. For each reduction in the length of the workweek, he argues, there were concomitant increases in worker productivity. If so, many late-twentieth- and early twenty-first-century workers would find it impossible to work the way they do following a nineteenth-century schedule... Many modern jobs are mentally

[8] Working hours in Korea is 48 hours to 44 hours in 1989 and 40 hours in 2004. However, the actual working hours is 47.5 hours in 2000. According to the latest survey, 35% of workers work more than 54 hours per week (Korean National Statistical Office 2007) and Korea is the longest working country among OECD countries — works yearly two thousand and 354 hours.

demanding, rather than physically draining. Nyland also suggests that increased productivity explains why briefer workweeks have failed to bolster employment (Nyland 1989, cited in Jacobs and Gerson 2004: 81).

While I was conducting this project, I realised that the term the 'five-day working week' is not as widely used in English-speaking countries or other European countries as in Korea. It is partly because this change came about gradually, from working Monday to Saturday morning and then Monday to Friday. As long ago as 1919-20, a five-day week had become common in the UK (McCormick 1959). Also, irregular working hours have become common and for part-timers or someone who does two jobs, the five-day working week means little. After all, what determines how technologies and working time regulations are actually applied by the society is unlikely to be the system itself. This also demonstrates that culture can be more important than the system. In the same vein, as the reduction of working hour debate in Korea demonstrates, the point is not that Korea does not have necessary regulatory system or policies supporting a work/life balance. Of course, the working culture is not the outcome of a single factor. It is closely related to the history of the society and its value system. Rather, this is about what values the society prioritises. It is not just a matter of the traditional values but also how they interact with the newly adopted values.

As Song argues in her research of the Korean welfare measures during the economic crisis and responses from various actors to them, the ideology of 'normal' family was reinforced throughout the period of crisis and so was 'moralistic maternalism' (2006: 50-51). As a result, the female homemaker who maintains domestic cohesion through her responsible motherhood was celebrated. Furthermore, the new ideal of the neo-liberal 'wife' and femininity devaluates not only women's market labour (because they are less capable to work more than full-time) but also reproductive labour (because the value of paid work is overvalued). As a consequence, this is problematic situation to many women either they are full-time housewives (who feel that they are wrongly represented as lazy and even useless — 'What do you do all day?') or working full-time/par-time (also wrongly represented as cold-blooded and social success-driven selfish mom or also wrongly mystified as 'super moms'). I regard this non-productive working culture as a passive form of work slow-down or deliberate

idleness., as the 'culture' side, with which I sympathise more, argues, individual employees have no choice but 'to compete with each other to see who can do the most unpaid overtime per month.' This is more likely to be the case when lifetime employment is no longer guaranteed and the safety net is weak.

Gender implications of time politics in Korea: a conceptual framework

> Changes in the nature of gender-based division of labour: in the form of employment instead of occupation or level, esp. aftermath of economic crisis — contemporary mothers who are expected to practice 'intensive mothering' even as they chart paths outside the home, it is clear that expectations for fathers have increased as well. The 'good father' is no longer a benevolent but absent breadwinner, but is instead expected to be intimately involved with all aspects of his children's lives... not all fathers meet these standards, but they have nevertheless taken root (Jacobs and Gerson 2004: 82).

This research takes guidance from those approaches that developed sociological and feminist perspectives on time (Adam 1990, 1995; Zerubavel 1987, 1991). This research also agrees with the point of view on time which defines *the use of time as being a patriarchal strategy*. This strategy segregates and disadvantages women within the labour market and labour process, in particular in the changing world (Buswell and Jenkins 1994; Simpson 1998; Rutherford 2001; Everingham 2002). Most time management in career guidance books encourage the importance of workplace flexibility, which is difficult for women to achieve. However, 'Discrimination in employment is often legitimized by reference to women's propensity to quit the labour market, to take time off for domestic crises and to be unavailable for extra or unpredictable time (Rubery, Smith and Fagan 1998: 72).' The social divide often puts an emphasis on class and the divide between full-time and part-time employment, not just in terms of payment but also other opportunities such as training, pension, insurance.

In the course of compressed modernisation, Korean society has been transformed. In particular the structure of family ties have been changing for a long time and working life has changed in the last ten years. Since new values are present in a society before the older values completely have gone, often conflicting values

coexist and they can be double burdens, in particular to some members of the society. In terms of values in the working culture, two values are in conflict: a labour-market ethic of individual achievement and effort versus older ethics of the dignity of dependence on the company and the fulfilment of selflessness. For example, even though the conventional role of men as the breadwinners is becoming increasingly insecure in this high unemployment society, women's economic contributions are no help to women reaching the status of social labourer (Kim 2001: 58). It is still believed that paid work is just a means of self-realisation for women while it is essentially a matter of survival for men.

Korea is one of the lowest birth rates in the world. It seems that wide-ranging social debates on this 'problem' are related to other key issues such as work/life balance. The falling birth rate has been linked to more women opting for a career and work pressures. The Ministry of Health and Welfare announced the expansion of childbirth incentives from 2007 at the earliest (*Korea Times* 14 July 2006) and some Korean private banks have decided to offer higher interest rates for depositors who gave birth to a baby (*Korea Times* 12 July 2006). These solutions are limited because they ignore time politics. A low birth rate cannot be improved only by financial solutions (such as tax benefits, various kinds of incentives and increases in levels of payment for part-time work), which all recently have been suggested or already adopted by various institutions and companies. Childcare is not all about money. As Ahn (2002) pointed out 'speeding up' our work and family life at the cost of mostly, especially in Korea, women's social and unsocial labour and the consequences are obvious enough: 'the care deficit' (Bunting 2004) and shrinking of leisure [free] time, not to mention death from overwork.

When I argue that female workers are more likely to face difficulties in their professional life because of their domestic responsibilities, this may seem to suggest I believe in securing equal opportunities to work for men and women: for example, by expanding childcare facilities. This seems to be a more popular idea among employers and policy makers and this is not surprising as it is in their best interest to encourage both men and women to focus on work without being distracted by matters outside of working life. From that point of view, the corporate culture of Google, the popular search engine company, looks like a

solution.

> Meals of all kinds, painstakingly prepared by company chefs, are free at the company's headquarters in Mountain View, Calif., a modern corporate campus known as the Googleplex. Other amenities there include children's day care, doctors, dry cleaning, laundry, a gym, and basketball and volleyball courts. Maternity or paternity leave is 12 weeks at 75 percent of full pay. There is also up to $500 available for takeout meals for the entire family after a newborn arrives, courtesy of Google. Shuttle buses (with wireless Internet access for working while commuting) ferry employees to the Googleplex from throughout the Bay area. (Lohr, *New York Times* 5 December 2005)

However, my point is the opposite: I argue that both men and women should be able to carry on their working life without sacrificing their personal/family life and without relying on *someone else's time*. That is the reason why Google's working culture is not the best one. The fact that the company takes over laundry and dry cleaning can be a short term solution for time-famine but in the long run these practices could justify the long hours culture both for employers and employees. Moreover, what is neglected in the ideal workplace of Google is employees' personal life which the company should not take over. Changes start to become possible only by acknowledging the current gender-blind time politics. Furthermore, as *Guardian* columnist, Madeleine Bunting (2004: 262) pointed out in her book *Willing Slaves: How the Overwork Culture Is Ruling Our Lives*, work-life balance issues were once seen as women's problem, but no longer.

> Men have taken on new responsibilities at home while at the same time being expected to work as hard as, and often harder than, their fathers. They have protected their employers from the new demands of their lives at home. Trying to meet expectations both at home and at work exacts a toll, and many men now find themselves in a similar position to women — with a sense of overstretch, and of personal inadequacy either on their work front or at home, or both.

My argument is that it is about admitting that we may not necessarily be able to 'have it all', the key mantra of self-help discourse. Because having it all may have a price. Until recently the price was paid by women mostly but men paid the price too by being excluded from their own families. However, we cannot afford this anymore as has been proven by the rocketing divorce and low childbirth rates. This is the reason why giving women jobs (as if they have not 'worked' before) is not the answer and changing policies is not sufficient to solve the 'problems' (setting aside the question of whether this is a 'problem' or whose 'problem' it is).

Neoliberal 'we can have it all' ideology and a lack of political awareness of time politics are the major barriers to any alternative model of a good society. The role of cultural studies is to investigate the ideology and that is the reason why this project directs its attention to popular self-help books.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter sets out to examine theoretical and analytical studies largely on three subjects. It is inevitable that this project draws its theoretical and critical framework from multiple disciplines including not only media and cultural studies and women's studies, but also sociology of work and time and critical management studies. Because it is important to understand the fast changing contemporary workplace itself and debates on that along side with investigation of its discursive level. Therefore, this project attempts to interweave various areas of enquiry. One of the most important areas in this project is feminist time studies. It has become an increasingly prominent area of interdisciplinary studies. Regarding theoretical and empirical research of sociology of time, I am indebted to interdisciplinary extensive research found in the journal *Time & Society*. The second area I elaborate in this chapter is media and cultural studies. Studies on mediated everyday culture in particular self-help culture are also critical in this study. The last, but not least, major discipline I draw on in this chapter is critical management studies, which is definitely not the most popular subject with media and cultural studies academics. However, these disciplines are closely related to each other in many ways. The intellectual traditions critical management academics invoke from social science range widely including cultural studies as well as neo-Marxism (labour process theory, Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, Gramscian 'hegemony theory'), post-structuralism, deconstructionism, literary criticism, feminism, psychoanalysis, environmentalism (Fournier and Grey 2000). Cultural studies also has paid attention to managerial practices and corporate culture (for instance, Brown 2003) as well.

The self-help genre is one of the subject areas that cultural studies and critical management studies overlapped. It involves organisational communication, managerial discourse studies and studies of workplace culture. It helps to locate this project within the contemporary debates on management and everyday life. Its recent research products are particularly important to acknowledge that the managerial practices and our everyday life is more and more inseparable when we are constantly told that we are 'managers' of our life and stay-at-home mothers

are named as 'family CEOs' (Medved and Kirby 2005). Managerial discourses become more and more important and influential not only in our working life but also in our non-working life. Therefore, cultural studies should make a close scrutiny into management practices and discourses, in particular, in the popular media. Such critical analyses of work organizations and their management have raised broad questions concerning the management of subjectivity and the scope of organizational power relations to shape social identity and the lived experience of organizational life (Hancock and Tyler 2004: 620).

Moreover, this changing discourse of career is closely related to the growing importance of continuously practicing self-management in everyday life. The focal point here is not the changes of policies and management styles, rather the construction and reception of discourse/textual representations. Therefore, in this chapter I do not want to dwell on the economic changes too much (I will provide key works in relevant parts) but instead I focus on how the recent changes are represented through various textual forms. By examining previous studies on these three focal points, I expect this literature review to serve two ends. On the one hand, the feminist sociology of time research will provide the thesis with a theoretical framework to revaluate the value system upon which current notions of time and time management in Korea are based. Through literatures articulating the long hours culture and workplace flexibility with the wider social and economic context I intend to investigate the gendered implication of so-called 'new economy', in other words, neo-liberal economy in some depth. This new economy is associated with Korean social and economic changes since the 'IMF crisis'. On the other hand, reviewing research on the discourse of new subjectivities under the 'new economy' from various disciplines allow this project to locate the time management discourse in the wide context.

Besides these three subject areas, I draw on studies from so called Korean Studies and social psychology, in order to contextualise my argument in the wider context. In the rest of this chapter, I explore following three areas in the order of logical flow of my inquiries I aim to undertake I draw throughout this thesis and that is: How 1) the changing discourses of working life has 2) the politics of time in our everyday life and how the consequent time squeeze and demand of constant self-development are related to 3) the popular self-development reading culture.

Gender and the Politics of Time: 'Money Poor, Time Poor'

In the previous section, I argue that how the managerial imperatives and practices are pervasive in our daily life as well as in working life. Drawing on feminist cultural and sociological studies, in particular sociology of time, this section interrogates the gendered consequences of neo-liberal social changes. In the following sections I explore discourses on the changing working-time arrangement and its impact on gender. The gender-blind concept of time is most readily recognisable within the genre of self-management literature and in particular among those focusing on managing time for a purpose of self-management. This is because this project analyses time management self-help texts.

Time as heavily gendered and socialised formation

In the philosophical, historical, social, and especially the natural sciences, the topic of time is usually treated as a universal and non-gendered phenomenon. However, as Karen Davies (1990) argued:

> Even though the sociology of time has long conceived time as a social construct, still the gender-specific implications of this construct remain unexamined', things have at least changed in academic thinking about time. Feminist theory is providing a new way of conceptualising time, one that speaks not only *about* women, but also *for* women, that is an approach that points to a different conception of the relationship between life and time for both women and men. The women's movement, based as it is on a dynamic personal and social vision of time calls into question the representation of time in capitalist society (as cited in Leccardi 1996).

> ... the anomalies and incompatibilities of women's working times in relation to the dominant time economy of the clock, their analyses are not immune from the theoretical problems dogging mainstream approaches to social time in general and work time in particular (Adam 1995: 97).

I aim to expose the dominant time politics (which I argue that consequently results in 'time-poor, money-poor') to feminist criticism, arguing that this time politics is founded on the assumption of the naturalisation of the full-time male-breadwinner concept of time and consequently disadvantages women's time and also naturalise paid-work oriented and therefore male-centred value system. In

popular time management literatures, it is presumed that time is a resource given to everybody —regardless their gender and class — 'equally' and (and, preferably, should be) entirely 'controllable' by individual agents. Gendered nature of time politics has not been the subject of scrutiny until recently as the concept of time politics has been taken for granted as non-problematic and gender neutral/blind. Recognition that time is gendered does not lead to the argument that women should be favoured over men in the workplace, nor does it demand that women simply fit into existing, patriarchal rhythms of work. Instead, such recognition might act as a brake to the accelerated rhythms of work in Korean society that are already exacting personal costs of in terms of work/life balance as well as highlighting the problematic value system which is based on a hierarchical sexual division of time (one which more highly values paid working time over unpaid reproductive time).

Moreover, a number of theoretical and empirical studies have now been conducted to explore discourse of time by different disciplines including feminist management and organisational studies as well as cultural studies, which I briefly outline below. 'The exchange relations between the public use of time, that is spent with — paid-work, and the private, mainly unpaid use, are distributed extremely unequally in society' (Nowotny 1994: 104). Feminist social scientists have provided the most coherent and wide-ranging accounts of 'shadows of economic time' and they revaluated women's time as an exemplar for times lived, given and generated in the shadow of the hegemony of universal clock time (Adam 1995: 94). Says Adam (*ibid.* 94):

> Reading about studies on women's time, we have to bear in mind that much of what is identified in this research applies not just to women but to all those outside the time economy of employment relations, and we have to further appreciate that it does not apply to *all* women but *all* times of their lives.

In the literature on time, 'masculine' time has been described as linear, easily broken into its component units, of single usage, dimension and direction, fitting well with the rational working practices of the Weberian bureaucracy (Ramsey and Parker 1992) — even if paradoxically this contrasts with the character of time for those at the top. On the contrary, 'process' time, denoted as 'feminine', is characterized as 'relational, continuous... and cyclical... quite unlike the abstract

and decontextualized notion of time that that is readily measured, commodified and controlled. Mediated through significant others, feminine time is shared rather than personal, and relational rather than linear' (Knights and Odih 1995: 213-4). This conception of time as a simple gendered dichotomy is flawed, however, and this dualism cannot adequately express the complexity of time (Adam 1995: 37). Such conceptions of circular vs. linear, feminine vs. masculine time rely on an unproblematic mapping of masculine and feminine time onto the already problematic dichotomy of linear and cyclical or process time, polarities which do not capture everyday life (Odih 1999).

This research takes guidance from those approaches that developed sociological and feminist perspectives on time and agrees with point of view on time which defines *the use of time as being a patriarchal strategy* to segregate and disadvantage women within the labour market and labour process in particular in changing world (Buswell and Jenkins 1994; Simpson 1998; Rutherford 2001; Everingham 2002) because most time management advice in career guidance books encourage adaptability and workplace flexibility. As Mellor (1991) states: 'men are speeding up our institutional processes by using the fuel of women's time and that society is now rushing along at the pace of the fastest man — the one who has the most human and natural resources', which 'Hochschild describes it as 'backstage wealth' (1989: 254) where the richest is the high-level executive with an unwaged wife and a secretary; the poorest is the single mother who works full-time and rears her children with no help from anyone' (in Buswell and Jenkins 1994: 90).

Moreover, as Janet Finch's book title *Married to the job: Wives Incorporation in Men's Work* (1983) suggests, wives still expected to support their husbands' career, whether they are housewives or not. This support, which is known as *ne-jo* in Korea, is regarded as critical in the successful career of the head of household.[9] Grey's (1994: 493) interviews with senior employees from a British accounting

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[9] *Ne* means 'inside' and also wife and *jo* stands for support or help, in other words it means a wife's support for her husband's success. One of the courses run by the lifelong education centre of a Korean private college in 2005 was '*ne-jo* management: how to help your husband to be successful.'

firm demonstrate the expectation for *ne-jo* is not just Korean thing. One of the partners of the firm interviewed admitted, 'It's important to have a *well-packaged wife*. It would be very hard to do this job if you were single...' (emphasis is added). The attributes of the 'well packaged wife' were seen to be:

> It helps if she is a professional, because you [i.e. she] have to get on with other partners and clients. For instance [my wife] is a merchant banker, so obviously that's going to be more useful than if someone just works [long pause] in a shop or something. Having said that, most partners' wives are housewives, but that's okay if they're sociable.

This interview presents 'how the pursuit of career pervades even the most intimate forms of social relations' (Grey 1994: 493) and more importantly, the roles of wives not just has been added but also regarded important as before.

Drives of long hours culture in general

Based on the 1992 and 1997 Changing Workforce surveys in the USA, Jacobs and Gerson (2004) explains how work spills over into life as follows:

> Many Americans may feel torn between work and family not just because their households increasingly juggling competing responsibilities, but also because job expectations and parenting standards have become more demanding (2004: 80).

Although more and more women participate in the labour market and a number of women have been breaking through the traditional glass ceiling, female workers are still in a disadvantaged position. One of the barriers in their working life is masculine working culture that I think closely related to the gender-blind time politics. Long working hours culture and consequent poor work/life balance is more likely to be problematic to women. 'The highly time pressured are disadvantaged not only in terms of their wellbeing but with respect to their access to a highly valued and valuable resource–time' (Roxburgh 2002: 124). What drives us to work long hours and how does it effect to women's working condition? As a starting point of discussing how to achieve better work/life balance, it is essential to answer the question that 'why we work long hours?' There are a number of explanatory answers for that. The reasons given in an

Institute for Employment Studies report (Kodz et al. 1998: 21-38) for the long hours worked by respondents were:

- Work pressure and increasingly demanding customers, greater competition, fewer staff and tighter budgets;

- Cultural attitudes which see long hours as demonstrating commitment;

- Enjoyment and commitment to work and/or desire to enhance career prospects;

- Work pressure: arising from heavier workloads, increasingly demanding customers (in particular increased expectation of 24 hours-a-day service), greater competition, fewer staff and tighter budgets;

- Work organisation: although few respondents felt they would be able to reduce their working hours if they were better at managing their time, in some organisations there are clearly issues with prioritisation, individual inefficiencies and work organisation;

- Long hour cultures: whereby long hours are interpreted as demonstrating commitment, the example set by managers working long hours and peer pressure can generate such cultures. Job insecurity and individuals feeling the need to prove their indispensability is also an issue for some employees;

- A strong commitment amongst individuals towards their work, their colleagues and customers or clients. In some cases this is because they enjoy work and take a personal pride in it. In others, this commitment arises out of a desire to enhance career prospects; and,

- A need to improve take-home pay, either through overtime payments where available, commission, or performance related pay.

Helen Jarvis (2002) provides a multifaceted explanation of long hours culture. Based on other research in this area, Jarvis identified eight drivers of long working hours across three economic spheres, which are 'new economy', 'established professional' and 'modern.' The first driver is *tight deadlines* generated through firms competing to be the first to enter the market with a news product or to successfully tender for time-critical projects. The second consists of *demand-led* services that is one of the characteristics of the new economy. *Portfolio worker survival* is the third driver wherein workers employed in rapidly changing industries, often on short-term contracts, put in long hours as a means by which to continually strengthen and update their skills track record, to gain competitive edge in the labour market. The fourth driver identified is an *enthusiasm for the work* that describes 'can-do' culture of youthful, dynamic,

hands-on management. *Presenteeism*, the fifth driver, is motivated by fears of redundancy. The sixth entails of a sense of *moral obligation* that represents loyalty to beleaguered colleagues and commitment to providing an essential service. *Financial incentives* represent the fifth driver, aimed at encouraging employees to work overtime in the case where hours worked over the usual contracted amount attract additional earning. The eighth and final driver is that of *'macho' goal-oriented* motives[10] (Jarvis 2002: 344-7). However, regarding that a number of companies do not pay for 'unofficial' overtime what can be factors that drive workers to work beyond regular working hours? In other words, what are the motives of long hours other than economic rewards?

Simpson (1998) discusses the gendered impact of organisational change and the implications for workloads and working hours based on questionnaires and semi-structured interviews of male and female managers. These results suggest that restructuring leads to increased workloads and that the pressure of long working hours is typically associated with male-dominated organisations. Restructuring is also associated with 'presenteeism' (the tendency to stay at work beyond the time needed for effective performance of the job) as fear of redundancy and uncertainty over promotion opportunities lead to a need to demonstrate visible commitment. Such presenteeism was found to be gendered: 'it is associated with a competitive masculine culture, it is seen by women as a form of 'male resistance' to their presence a mangers and it imposes heavy costs on women as they attempt to meet the conflicting demands of work and home' (Simpson 1998: S37).

In particular, considering the circumstances of mass employee dismissals since in 1997, which is well-known as the 'IMF crisis', many Korean workers have been left not just with enormous insecurity but also intensified workloads and extended working hours. All of this justifies the 'more than full-time' discourses around employment in the early 21st century. As Burchell (2002) points out, job

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[10] Not only do women have to put up with entrenched male attitudes devaluing their abilities, they also have to cope with the macho long hours culture that is so prevalent in many businesses today. This unfortunately conflicts more with career women who have families than it does with men, as socially we still see women as having primary responsibility for a family, which inevitably prevents them occupying the top positions.

insecurity is more serious than just the objective risk or the actual event of job loss; it includes the subjective fear of both job loss and loss of valued job features through organizational and occupational restructuring and work intensification. Some researchers have labelled it as 'survivor syndrome' (Brockner *et al.*, 1993) include heightened anxiety, decreased morale and fear of being next in line for redundancy, which drives its victims to work harder than necessary and to be seen at work long periods of time. Drawing on research projects and a nationwide survey in Korea that focus on the social-psychological impact of downsizing on layoff survivors, Wang-Bae Kim (2003) argues that layoff survivors' syndrome 'because of declining job satisfaction and job commitment caused by layoffs, the productivity may in fact decline' (461).

Reflecting upon those probable motives of working for long hours, some factors make much more sense in the Korean corporate culture than others and presenteeism is one of them. It might sound absurd and even difficult to generalise to different occupations and different levels in the organisation but it is true that some Korean employees 'cannot' go home after work. This difference requires extra explanation. At the time of writing this chapter, there is no academic work which attempts to locate Korean long hours culture in the wider social and cultural context — I assume that Korean society has not been sensitive to this issue — but based on various kinds of resources and own experience I revisited the notion of presenteeism in Korean context. For example, the long hours working culture is so bad that a message board on 'how to leave work on time' set up in many websites. I encountered an interesting non-synchronous conversation between a blogger and commentators about the same topic on a weblog run by a man who is working in the Korean IT industry, which is particularly notorious for long hours culture. According to one participant in the debate, there are two types of overtime work — one is voluntary overtime to meet deadlines and the other is 'showing-off' overtime — and they are related to increased workload and competitiveness and presenteeism. But there are other reasons why people think they do not/cannot leave work on time. And this is the culturally specific meaning of presenteeism in Korean corporate culture. One commented 'I cannot leave the office when others still stay at work' but this was not because of peer pressure or competing against each other. Instead it was because of a connection with colleagues on a humane or moral level as part of a

team, in other words it was an expression of '*jung*', which means a mixed sentiment of affection and pity in Korean. Many of the commentators complained that their boss gave them more work after they had managed to finish required tasks within office hours, thus not allowing them to leave for home at a reasonable hour. As a form of resistance (or passive strategy at least), some employees slow down the pace of their work so they can finish an allocated workload by the time they leave the office. In order to do this, they do not finish it within regular working hours and undertake more work during the accustomed extra hours. This is the reason why some workers do not feel too much guilt about doing non-work related activities such as web-surfing and online shopping during office hours.

As I explained in the introductory chapter, this is what foreign colleagues do not understand about Korean working culture and often indicate as the most serious problem. I came across online message boards run by *Japan Today*, the Japanese English-language news media. The message boards were composed of readers' comments on two articles respectively titled '28% of Japan workers toil longer than half a day: poll' (date unspecified, November 2006) and 'Over 18,000 companies fail to pay overtime allowances' (date unspecified, June 2004). I was surprised how Korean and Japanese societies have had exactly the same debate. Even though no one argues that work/life balance is not important, there are conflicting ideas about the cause of the world famous long hours working culture. To simplify readers' comments posted on the two articles, they can be divided into two depending on what they emphasise, i.e. 'personal choice' or the 'corporate culture.' The 'personal choice' side argues that 'I think Japanese workers *can* go home at the end of the day but they *choose* not to because they feel they have to stay. Even if staying just slows things down anyway. That's where I work anyway. Nothing keeps them there except the idea that 'there is still work', but nothing that could not be continued the next day.'

> At about 6:30pm, the evening bentos [boxed Japanese meal] arrive, and then they think it's okay to sit there being paid to eat dinner. But if the blue-eyed gaijin gets up after 8 hours and bids everyone a pleasant evening, they give him that stupid smug lazy foreigner look which I used to detest so much. I learned to say 'If you eat that any slower it'll go mouldy' in Japanese once, but no one understood the joke. Japan, a country where drinking beer and eating hamburgers counts as work (from an online posting: *Japan Today*, 2006).

What the gaijin, or foreigner in Japan, missed when he or she pointed out 'even getting drunk counts as work' in Japan as a criticism is the fact that getting drunk is actually regarded as a part of work in Japanese culture. The importance of after-work networking and socializing is applied to other parts of the world, in particular the highly competitive business world. Furthermore, when the corporate culture values long working hours as a proof of commitment, efficiency is out of the question because finishing on time or even earlier will not be rewarded. The presenteesim become more problematic when a conflicting value is added to the existing one, for example, the so-called 'Americanisation of working culture': i.e. result-orientation. Japanese management, just like their Korean counterpart, now wants their employees to become more efficient — but also still work for long hours. This demonstrates the way in which employees cope with deep rooted long hours working culture and the extreme 'presenteeism', the feeling that one needs to work extra hours even if one has no extra work to do. Therefore, even though full support from technologies and policies have made alternative forms of working possible, such as telecommuting, the lack of physical presence and reduced opportunities of networking might make people hesitate to take that option. Presenteeism is still strong among employees: as a Japanese IBM teleworker said 'I used to overdo it a bit to prove I wasn't a slacker who was idling away hours at home' (Fitzpatrick, *Guardian* 12 May 2007).

Of course, what employers expect of their employees is more than just completing tasks within office hours. They also expect employees to do extra work when they manage to finish initial tasks on time. This demand is limitless and sometimes even gets competitive and confers the sense of psychological obligation. Often female workers are blamed for their lack of sense of membership and commitment that judged by not only the time they spend in the office but also attending formal and informal socials. And for this reason, showing commitment by spending more time at work could be much more difficult barriers to women to overcome than any other gender stereotype and discrimination.

Gendered consequences of long hours culture

The next question to be asked is what are the gendered personal and social consequences of the long hours culture. Are women more likely to be disadvantaged by long hours working and if so why? According to the British Household Panel Survey conducted by the Institute for Employment Studies, 'partnered women who work long hours still carry the burden for the main household tasks of cleaning and cooking. Such a situation is rare for partnered men working long hours. This may be part of the explanation why women are more likely than men to be dissatisfied with long hours working' (Kodz *et al.* 2003: 17).

> In an increasingly competitive environment, time can be seen as a resource to be drawn on in order to progress in an organization in particular among high-technology workers and organizations may exploit this competitiveness and harness it to extract maximum work output from employees (Rutherford 2001: 260).
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> However, 'unfortunately for those women who were also mothers (as well as for their partners committed to co-parenting), saying yes to that extra project at the office, teaching that uncompensated course at the local college as a way of promoting one's business, or working on that self-promotional project would be likely to lead to child neglect, additional childcare costs, or both. While the 'family man' was once the standard of reliable employee (as he as assisted by the labors of a homemaking spouse yet held captive to his employer by the raw vulnerability of his dependents' needs)' (McGee 2005: 135).

In their North of England-based research on the interconnections between equal opportunities policies, women's employment and patriarchy, Buswell and Jenkins (1994) point out the denial of inequality and control through time as two widespread and common public patriarchal strategies. '

> It is apparent that the use of time is used to segregate women in the labour market and equal opportunities policies may give legitimation to this strategy by emphasizing individual effort and 'commitment.' 'Time' is a different commodity for women and for men. Women working part-time have a plethora of timetables which to juggle, shifts and unpredictable (but expected-to-do) overtime sometimes means the difference between being able to do the job or not' (1994: 88).

Consequently, even after shattering the glass ceiling many female managers still juggle the demands of a family with also growing expectation of career.

Lyon and Woodward's (2004) Belgium-based study, where state support for the domestic sphere is high but women's advance in management and politics have been relatively slow. This appears to beg the question 'why good and affordable childcare is not enough to solve the mystery of the woman at the top?' The reality that both work and family become 'greedy institutions' could be an answer for that because, as Lyon and Woodward argue:

> The very contradiction in top people's time is that time autonomy is coupled with time constraint: leaders have power over time and yet are caught in time. A paradox of high-level positions is that while leaders are said to have it all in terms of autonomy and self-determination, they are in many ways subject to significant temporal constraints (2004: 208).

Unsurprisingly, then, Wood and Newton (2006) have found that the proportion of women in management without children is quite striking. This Australian study, based on interviewing both male and female managers concludes that,

> For many of these women in management the choice appears, in contrast, to be contextually generated, with the recognition that the culture of long working hours does not support appropriate parenting. Furthermore, in spite of egalitarian marriage ideals and an enlightened discourse of equality, notions of women's primary duties on the domestic and childrearing fronts, as part of a maternalist discourse, persist (2006: 355).

When it comes to Korea, where long hours culture has long been taken-for-granted, 'Women are often discriminated against since most employers prefer men. Male employers tend to justify their discrimination again women in terms of 'preserving and protecting feminine qualities' (Chang and Chang 1994: 25). 'Women cannot be sent to foreign countries training or superintendence because it is not proper for women to be abroad on their own; women cannot be placed in managerial positions because they have to work like men until late at night, which is "not feminine"' (Kim 2005: 34)

In Korean corporate culture drinking socials play an important part. This requirement is serious enough to trigger amazement from outsiders. For example, one Canadian interviewee who had been living in Korean for only three months at the time of the interview with *Korea Times* awed how drinking culture trespass family time.

> I wonder why such an important part of the work culture involves drinking (and getting drunk) on a regular basis with co-workers, clients, associates, etc. There seems to be an unwritten rule that this type of drinking is expected and it's not acceptable to say no. The cost to society of this deep-rooted tradition—including health care and lost production as well as intangibles such as loss of family time—must be staggering ('How Foreigners See Koreans', *Korea Times* 30 October 2006).

> A major problem was relative female inactiveness in management positions in Korea, with less than seven per cent of managers or general managers being women. This situation was created, and underpinned, by inter-linked and self-reinforcing social and statistical discrimination. Some of this was rooted in perceptions of female employment-related performance grounded in statistics and organizational culture, with inputs from paternalism and Confucian traditions. Therefore, the attitude of most men has not changed because they cannot even recognize what is wrong. Yet, there is no other rapid or effective method to increase awareness in the short term. Gender discriminating employment practice is a social problem that men and women have to try to inform each other about by continuous small changes. Only then will Korean women face a better and more equitable future in management positions (Kang and Rowley 2005: 227).

There can be other ways to increase the numbers of women in management. Various methods have been examined over the past three decades in industrialised countries: first, the 'assimilation approach', where women try to accept the demands of male-oriented organizations, and tried to 'fit in'; second, the 'accommodation approach', which provides various benefits (for example, maternity leave, flexitime) and policies (such as mentoring) to support women. Thirdly, some businesses operate what might be called a 'celebration approach' that makes aggressive use of female characteristics, stressing differential specialties to those of men. [what are these 'female characteristics' and how are the different from those offered by men?] These approaches have had an effect on women's advancement into management, although they were limited to reducing discrimination and failed to destroy deeper causes (Meyerson and Fletcher 2000).

There are limitations to these approaches as basic gender stereotypes remain. Primary responsibility for the family still firmly rests with women, even after the recent introduction of 'family-friendly' policies. Also, feminine characteristics have not been highly valued in the Korean workplace, for example drinking culture. Furthermore, discrimination has been deeply rooted in employment practices within organizations. So, there is a need for a new, fourth approach. Noting that discrimination has deep roots, there needs to be gradual change

achieved by a continuous campaign (Meyerson and Fletcher 2000). Recognizing problems of gender inequality can be the start of this new approach. Yet, Korean work culture has practices of gender discrimination deeply embedded within everyday organizational structures. For instance, why cannot employees go home after work, why are meeting schedules always flexible, why does a drinking/entertainment culture with clients remain (Kang and Rowley 2005: 228-9)?

There are a number of theoretical and empirical studies arguing that current time discourses are gender blind. Sabelis (2001), for example, criticizes the current time discourse in terms of its gender blindness.

> Over the last few decades, rational time principles have been applied without reflection about their effectiveness in areas such as health care and other services. Care, like household management, cannot be caught in time frames; care tasks cannot be divided up in pieces and juggled accordingly... It is impossible to subjugate them (= activities which are considered time-consuming) to the fixed temporal pattern that is needed in order to impose a temporal structure and to follow the time = money principle underlying the efficiency rules. (Sabelis 2001: 396)

As the result of the principle,

> This process of *discrimination between plannable and unplannable types of work* goes hand in hand with changing views of work-related status. The concrete change largely follows gendered patterns as women usually do the time-consuming and less plannable work. Efficiency and cure have a higher, and masculine, status compared with affectivity and care, which are *traditionally linked to femininity* (Sabelis 2001: 396, emphasis added).

When women work outside the home, as we do in increasing numbers, we need not fear that we will lose our hold on the domestic reins. The sphere is ours regardless of other demands. Studies have shown, only too clearly, that when a woman assumes the added obligation of a paid job, thereby increasing her work load by up to forty hours a week, her male partner's contribution to the organization of the household remains that of a reluctant 'helper.' We know only too well that women's employment earns us sixty percent of men's. Accordingly, in the world where time is money, and where money can mean time, women have little of either (Forman 1989: 3).

'Job insecurity... leads many workers to stockpile their holidays and work longer and longer hours...Much of this 'overwork' is compulsory and often unpaid, being less likely to be structured, planned and *predictable*' which most of mothers cannot afford. However 'the home is becoming *less* flexible, as working mothers need to organize their schedules more tightly to generate their own time for work, and cut back on their involvement with family, kin and local community. Even mothers employed in casual work find their working hours now less predictable, and may often be called in to work without the opportunity to plan and make adequate preparation for their children's needs ahead of time' (Everingham 2002: 346).

> Sometimes the need for time management is related to the assumed acceleration in our society. Technological and economic developments, with their fast recycling of products on markets, seem to enhance the feeling that we are collectively speeding up... We accept acceleration as a phenomenon of modern life and are forced to reflect on our use of time (Sabelis 2001: 390).

So it seems to be obvious that we all are in need of better management skill for career and for better time-use and it is not surprising that the self-help genre becomes popular ever before. In the next section, I examine previous research on the self-help genre and in particular career guidance.

Managerialist Colonisation of the Everyday Life World

In this section I will review some of the literature which investigates how economic rationality and the idea of self-realisation by means of work and enterprise have become dominant in everyday life. These changes, I argue, naturalise the demand of employers to be flexible and to work long hours and also trigger the imperative of self-management, including time management. This thesis identifies the long hours culture and increasing demand of flexibility as the focal point of the current time-politics and investigates how these two key labour imperatives are articulated with guidance from the popular management self-help genre and also how they are corresponding to the enterprise culture. This changing demand in labour market had changed not only the contents of managerial messages but also the tool and mode of communication. 'As

companies grew, the old oral channels of communication became increasingly attenuated. Moreover, word-of-mouth management did not provide the control and efficiency desired by a new breed of systematic managers. They developed a series of formal vehicles for communicating down the hierarchy, including circular letters, manuals, and individual instructions. A final genre of downward communication, the in-house magazine, developed later to build the worker loyalty that executives learned was necessary for cooperation and efficiency' (Yates 1989: 65).

Through corporate consultation, communication and symbolic mechanisms, micro-corporationism promotes a competitive enterprise culture among employees. There are a number of theoretical and empirical studies focusing on how discourses of change in working life and working conditions are constructed. Because this study aims to investigate the ways in which dominant managerial strategies are justified and normalised rather than to evaluate the actual adequateness of the strategies in the given situation through reviewing previous research, I focused on the discursive formation the struggle for meaning, dynamics and process of production of meaning and 'manufacturing consent' (Herman and Chomsky 1988).

Pervasive managerial imperatives convey by corporate culturalism. Many aspects of new management practices could be regarded as positive move such as empowering individual employees, for example by being granted decision-making authority. At the same time, however, contrary to the promise, participative management could be a trap for workers when employment is unstable and competitive. Evidently, corporate discourses delivered by cultural institution such as mass and narrow media (e.g. the latter referring to corporate communication tools like newsletters, on/offline bulletin boards, in-house magazine and narrow-casting, speeches, introductory/educational video etc.) and media including professional or popular management literature. To this end various formal and informal communication channels are used, such as in-house magazines, newsletters, and videos, as well as other organisationally sanctioned channels such as memoranda, letters, and electronic and computerised channels. Informal communication challenges include such interpersonal processes as face-to-face and telephone conversations and the organisational grapevine... (Cameron and

McCollum 1993: 221). This would provide the background and context where the career management discourse comes from and enable to see a broader cultural phenomenon. New ethos of work under the (name of) rapid changing global economy related to construction of economic subject in the 'enterprise culture'. But, ironically, because work is so important in our lives, it becomes more important to be able to enjoy doing our job.

Ezzy (2001) [based on the Casey (1995)'s work] describes the cultural and social consequences of the new forms of work organisation as engineered workplace culture, flexibilisation, teamwork, employee involvement, quality circles and post-Fordism. The new forms of normative control result in a process of colonisation of the self and engineered culture encourages a narcissistic private individualism facilitated by the instability of social relationships outside of the corporation. The problem is these new norms are not coherent each other, for instance, 'the rhetoric and practice of family and team contradicts with the corporate promise of high individual reward for high individual performance' (2001: 637). Even though companies impose participation in management and the ethos, which seems to support the notion of the autonomy of individual, on employees, they do not reliably keep their promises of security and safety.

> C. Wright Mills worried in the 1950s that white-collar workers sold not just their time and energy, but also their personalities to their employer; he believed that work took up too much of people's time, and shaped them in such a way as to destroy meaningful life outside work. The overwork culture today would seem to confirm that his fears are now as relevant as they were fifty years ago. Such critiques of mid-twentieth-century corporate America were often scornful of how the individual, the 'organisation man', entrusted so much of his life (it was usually 'his') to the company in exchange for security. Fifty-odd years later, the terms of that Faustian bargain, when stripped of the seductive rhetoric of self-development and autonomy, have become much harsher—more is expected, and less is given back in terms of security (Bunting 2005: 206-7).

As Maurizio Lazzarato states, 'Far from eliminating the antagonism between hierarchy and cooperation, between autonomy and command, actually re-poses the antagonism at a higher level, because it both mobilizes and clashes with the very personality of the individual worker' (1996: 135). Moreover, the management mandate to 'become subjects of communication' threatens to be even more totalitarian than the earlier rigid division between mental and manual labor (ideas and execution), because capitalism seeks to involve even the worker's

personality and subjectivity within the production of value. Capital wants a situation where command resides within the subject him- or herself, and within the communicative process. The worker is to be responsible for his or her own control and motivation within the work group without a foreman needing to intervene, and the foreman's role is redefined into that of a facilitator. In fact, employers are extremely worried by the double problem this creates: on one hand, they are forced to recognize the autonomy and freedom of labor as the only possible form of cooperation in production, but on the other hand, at the same time, they are obliged (a life-and-death necessity for the capitalist) not to 'redistribute' the power that the new quality of labor and its organization imply. Today's management thinking takes workers' subjectivity into consideration only in order to codify it in line with the requirements of production. And once again this phase of transformation succeeds in concealing the fact that the individual and collective interests of workers and those of the company are not identical' (ibid.: 136).

According to Nicholas Rose,

> Over the past decade the most powerful images of the economic functions of the citizen in western societies have decisively altered... the old economic system which produced the 'Protestant work ethic' had proclaimed a set of values for the worker in which hard work was a moral, personal, and social good, where dedication to labour was to be maintained and gratification deferred, and where a stable pattern of expectations over a working life was ensured by the reasonable certainty of continued employment in a single industry, rising wages, and a predictable life cycle... But such an ethic is out of kilter with the obligations that are now accorded to the citizen in social life and work (Rose 1990: 103).

The image of the citizen as a choosing self — mostly by exercising our freedom to choose what to buy in a market — entails a new image of the productive subject.

'The enterprising self will make a venture of its life, project itself a future and seek to shape itself in order to become that which it wishes to be. The enterprising self is thus a calculation self, a self that calculates *about* itself and that works *upon* itself in order to better itself' (Rose 1992: 146). That is to say 'we can become enterprising, take control of our careers, transform ourselves into high fliers, achieve excellence and fulfil ourselves not *in spite of* work but *by means of* work' (*ibid.*: 151) and 'the conduct of commercial enterprises is presented as a (indeed *the*) primary field of activity in which enterprising qualities are displayed. And

given that these qualities are themselves regarded as intrinsically desirable... this serves to valorize engagement in such activities, and hence, more generally, the working of a free market economy. One the other hand, however, it is also claimed that in order to maximize the benefits of this economic system, commercial enterprises and their participants must themselves be encouraged to *be* enterprising, i.e. to act in ways that fully express these qualities. In other words, it seems to be acknowledged that 'enterprises are not inherently enterprising', and enterprising qualities are thus given an instrumental value in relation to the optimal performance of a market economy' (Keat and Abercombie 1990: 3-4).

Howell and Ingham (2001) analyse the ways in which the concept of 'lifestyle' has been mobilised in the debate over healthcare in the last decade, arguing that: Lifestyle and self-discipline as a fusion or right-thinking common sense and dominant sense became the affective and ideological resolution to the crisis of capital and the welfare state. Self-sufficiency, independence, self-improvement, voluntarism, as selectively recruited from the American tradition of liberal freedom, would be used to blur the contradictions of capitalism' (2001: 331). And this 'resolution' has a lot in common with current dominant career discourse that I discuss in the next section.

Discourses of career as a 'project of self' and its implications

For Fournier, the new career discourse constitutes individuals as entrepreneurs and consumers. Fournier (1996) believed by fabricating the appraisals as aids self as an entrepreneur and consumer, the Fournier (1996) self becomes an object to be known, for those who have assessed and calculated upon in light of new career achieving the desired career, lifestyle and future return on one's investment. Choosing the right career thus enables lifestyle choices to be fulfilled. Fournier argued the new career discourse seduces subjects by providing images of what we be through offering endless opportunities to realise ourselves by re-inventing ourselves. The new career is presented as boundaryless' and unrestrained by old bureaucratic rules, therefore our career is what we make of it, and in this sense career becomes a vehicle to transform ourselves into a desirable other (Fournier

1996). How the language of career is used for normalising the changes in management and global economy and how this emphasise the individual responsibility.

As Adamson, Doherty and Viney (1998) pointed out in their article 'The Meanings of Career Revisited: Implications for Theory and Practice', one of the three principles which might serve to underpin our 'new' definitions of career is:

> The career fundamentally *belongs* to the individual. It is not something which is, indeed could be, 'owned' by organizations. Neither is it something which organizations necessarily have the right to 'manage' (emphasis is original) (257).

I agree with Grey's argument 'the discursive and non-discursive practices of 'career' should be treated as an aspect of this contemporary project of self-management' (Grey 1994: 479). 'What is at issue is how career, as part of the project of the self, can constitute labour process discipline and surveillance in certain, and, supposedly benevolent ways' (*ibid.*: 481). 'In the light of widespread organizational restructuring and economic uncertainty since the late 1980s, many of the taken-for-granted assumptions which have underpinned traditional notions of career, and in particular the organizational career, no longer seem valid' (Adamson, Doherty and Viney 1998: 251). Traditional notions of career include hierarchical progression; that is, a sequence of work positions of increasing responsibility and seniority over time (Arthur, Hall and Lawrence 1989). Instead the organisational hierarchies are flattening. 'In many cases, senior managers are stating that their organizations no longer offer careers at all, but rather (given the apparently increasing emphasis on organizational learning and portfolio working) 'opportunities for development', and that the responsibility for this development now rests more fully with the individual' (Adamson, Doherty and Viney 1998: 251-2).

Contemporary career theorists advise new forms of career are now available that may involve (limited) upward movement, job change, job enlargement, job rotation and movement between organisations. For them, these new career forms offer more realistic and exciting options for individuals who adequately plan their careers to fit a turbulent environment where organisations no longer guarantee upward mobility or job security. Benefits are said to accrue to individuals,

organisations and wider society through 'proper' career planning (Greenhaus and Callanan 1994). Individuals may plan their careers to match their own aspirations, values and lifestyle needs. Organisations gain through better fit between employees and job requirements. Wider society benefits through productivity gains and a citizenship engaged in meaningful work that fits their life paths' (Dyer and Humphries 2002: 3).

'Do what you love, the money will follow', which is also the title of a vocational advice book written by Marsha Sinetar (1987), represents, I argue, the new career discourse accurately. Advice given in this book resembles that which is given in many other success stories testimonies by celebrity businesspersons, who often also bestselling authors, including Warren Buffett who said 'I do what I like to do all year round. I just do what I like to do with people who I like. If you choose the job which you like then the success will follow' (Buffett and Gates 1999). Once the Virgin Group CEO Richard Branson also said, 'Some 80% of your life is spent working. You want to have fun at home; why shouldn't you have fun at work?' 'A business has to be involving, it has to be fun, and it has to exercise your creative instincts'. It might be true that compared to previous generations (i.e. post-war generations in both industrialised countries and Korea) new generations are more likely to choose our job based on what we are actually enjoying rather than what we are getting from that job. This could be true and could be encouraging but it also could be manipulative. Bill Gates might be able to do whatever he likes to do because he is already successful, not the other way around.

As some sociological research has analysed texts of job descriptions and job advertisements pointed out, employment requirements have become more demanding over the years. This is an interesting way of looking at the ways in which identity is constructed through work and discourses of 'career'. However, what is more significant relates to this project is the reinforced job requirements (could) blur the boundary between work and non-work. In other words, identity would be championed by management and the way in which we construct our identity collaborates with the blurring boundaries between work and leisure. The concept of productive leisure, which is defined as human capital enhancing activities during non-market time, is one of the examples that show how working life invades rest of our life.

Questions to evaluate this human capital increasing characteristic can be of the form: Would I mention a specific activity as an interest or hobby in my CV? Would I tell a supposed future employer during a job interview that I like to do a specific activity during my leisure time? Could you imagine earning money with the qualification achieved during the leisure activity if you have to?... (Fahr 2005). Processes of both construction and realisation of subjectivity can begin as early as in the job recruitment stage. Du Gay (1991) notes how companies and corporate organizations are seeking to cultivate enterprising subjects that are autonomous, self-regulating, and productive individuals. Here, enterprise refers to that plethora of 'rules of conduct' for everyday life, energy, initiative, self-reliance and personal responsibility. He points out that the notion of the entrepreneur not only describes those who set up in some business initiative alone, but extends into the 'ideal employee' of larger corporations. For example, according to *Career Management* (2004) written by Greenhaus and Callanan, selection decisions for the 'right' person 'ought to be based on the 'total person', 'fitting' the organisational culture and job requirements, and ensuring a match between individual career aspirations and organisational career opportunities. They argued this 'fit' might be determined by measuring recruits' knowledge, skills and abilities; matching their personal values with corporate values; and matching individuals with the organisational culture (in Dyer and Humphries 2002: 6-7). '(T)he governance of the employee's soul becomes a more central element in corporate strategies for gaining competitive advantage' (Willmott 1993: 517). However, the dilemma of contemporary workplaces has confronted is loyalty to a company and sense of community are deteriorating since employers cannot guarantee job security. It is more salient in workplaces where the corporate culture has been strong.

Using British newspaper situations vacant columns over a 130 years period as empirical data, Cremin (2003) speculates on the significance of an apparent increase in the use of personality language in job advertisements. Corporations have appropriated a language of personality, and have contributed in transforming personality traits into virtual commodities whose value is determined according to which characteristics are in greatest demand: 'The "marketisation" of self' (110) the 'corporatised personality' (114) the personality culture in employment.

In Korea, the 'more-than-full-time ethos' (Lyon and Woodward 2004: 208), which has been characteristic of some professions, is prevailing in not just the 'greedy institutions' (Coser and Coser 1974). This ethos is applied in many other working places without guaranteeing financial compensation such as overtime pay, not to mention security of employment. Regarding the instability of employment in different parts of the industrialised world, many academics make a similar diagnosis. That is to say, most agree that increasing global competition has contributed to the emergence of the 'long hours culture.' However, their arguments and approach to the effects of the unstable employment vary. Social and economic changes called various names accordingly:

> On the one hand, there has arguably been a transformation of organizational structures towards a greater flexibility which has been dubbed 'post-bureaucratic' (Heckscher and Donnellon 1994), 'networked' (Powell 1990), 'virtual' (Davidow and Malone 1993) or even 'postmodern' (Clegg 1990). This transformation demands new management. On the other hand, there has been an accompanying stress on the techniques of 'new wave management' (Wood 1989) under which general heading we may include culture management, total quality management, human resource management, business process re-engineering, organizational learning and the innumerable paeans to creativity and entrepreneurship which have been a feature of both academic and popular management writing over the last 15 years (Grey 1999: 569).

In order to demonstrate how career relates to workplace surveillance and self-discipline, Grey (1994) conducted semi-structured interviews in a British accounting firm and studied personnel files, which included documentation of recruitment, training, appraisal and promotion. He noted, successful applicants in his study tended to be 'homogeneous in that they are overwhelmingly white, male, middle class and young (21 and 22 years)', and possessed the 'right personality' and 'cultural knowledge' (485).

As a consequence of the changing discourses of career and models of the ideal employee, the boundary between work (as an 'opportunities for development' or realisation of project called self) and non-work/outside of work is blurring. Working overtime or long hours (often without compensation), which was once seen to be exploitation, might be less likely to be problematic to both individual and organisation today because it is said that 'we are all managers (or even CEOs)' and we are loving what we do (otherwise you are less likely to be successful).

Today, the individual is seen to be responsible for their own self-development while they struggle to keep the current job by working hard and showing commitment. Career management now seems to rest more fully with the individual's ability to manage their time rather than being told how to manage it (or having it structured for them).

Then, how are changes in the workplace related to changed time regimes in general and in Korea more specifically? The politics of time and gender is the central framework in this study therefore, second part of the literature review is devoted to examine the current time politics and how this influence our working life as well as family and personal life. This includes studies on gendered time use in particular focusing on the married working women's time-deficit and through I like to argue that women are more likely to be the lower class in terms of time: time-poor and money-poor.

Self-help readers

Studying previous research on the self-help genre is critical in this project in two ways. On the one hand, this genre itself is closely related to the imperative of new-liberal subjectivity. On the other hand, there is no better genre than self-help to show how the culture is shaped by marketing strategies. In the following finding chapters, I will argue that self-help reading in particular in Korea is fabricated/encouraged by various interests. Rather than Korean readers entirely volunteer to read them but the necessity is constructed. As Philip Cushman (1995) argues,

> If we psychologize and medicalize every human action by ridding it of any significant cause, we condemn ourselves to denying the effects of the macro structures of our society. Therefore we will leave those structures intact while we blame the only positions in our cultural clearing that show up as responsible, culpable entities: the individual and the dyad. If we cannot entertain the realistic possibility that political structures can be the cause of personal, psychological distress, then we cannot notice their impact, we cannot study them, we cannot face their consequences, we cannot mobilize to make structural changes, as well will have few ideas about what changes to make. We will become politically incompetent' (1995: 337).

Although David Harvey (1989) describes the same transformations in modern

culture as Giddens, he emphasizes the potentially disabling consequences of late modernity's obsession with self-elaboration. For Harvey, the relative prosperity of the postwar decades allowed the therapeutic elaboration of selves through consumption to become a national preoccupation. Alongside the rise of suburbs came an intensification of the therapeutic imperative to become self-reliant and autonomous, resulting in an increasingly isolated — and politically disengages — nuclear family (in Cloud 1998: 49).

Social implication of self-help culture

The popularity of self-help book seems to be unquestionable. According to Amazon, the online retailer, sales of self-help books have risen by 40 per cent in the past year, which is not only astonishing, but also shows just how prepared people are to help themselves, even at the risk of being caught and asked to turn out their pockets (*The Independent* 19 January 2005). The growing prominence of self-help advice is more broadly based on societal factors and therefore needs to be located in the wider context. Garsten and Grey (1997) argue that although a collapse of certainty in postmodern society has promoted the role of expertise, for many people, access to experts is discontinuous and even marginal to their everyday life experiences. Rather, they suggest, '(for many people) more continuous are exposures to expertise via media' and representative examples are: lifestyle magazines, 'therapeutic TV chat shows and the 'How To' texts (1997: 215). Lifestyle media's recent rapid expansion on television schedules and their dominance at the top of publishing's bestseller lists has been matched by recently increasing academic scrutiny (for instance, Blackman 2004; Garsten and Grey 1997).

The self-help movement has received stimulus more recently from the values of the 1960s, namely 'the concern for personal autonomy, participation, quality of life, human potential, customer rights, deprofessionalisation and decentralisation' (Adams 1990: 22). Self-help may be seen as a response to widespread alienation in society and as fulfilling many of people's affiliation and identity needs. Arlie Hochschild (1994) argues that advice books perform work in

encouraging women to accept a concept of equality in their intimate relations through their remaking as selves who can get by with relatively little support.

Taking lifestyle magazines as an example, David Gauntlett (2002) argues that 'psychology loves the status quo' (37). Because it separates out the 'psychology of women' rather than 'psychology of gender' and it allows some traditional cultural ideas to pass unchallenged (such as traditional gender role). Lisa Blackman (2004) suggests collaborative works between the critical psychology and media and cultural studies. Self-help is the logical extension of a psychologistically oriented culture in which psychology enjoys cultural authority as a form of expert knowledge. For example, consumer culture has witnessed a growth of psychocentric self-help media towards the end of the twentieth century. Internet communities, magazines spouting advice and television chat-shows are just some of the cultural vehicles through which counselling on self-improvement is offered (Rimke 2000: 63, 74).

Self-help books have inspired sociological criticism for good reason: the books tell people how to change their personal lives through largely individual effort. They are an all too popular distraction from a good sociological imagination. More and more, public issues became defined as personal troubles and problems of lifestyles. Self-discipline was the means to the good life in all of its connotations. Self-help was preferable to government handouts and entitlements, and cutbacks in provision were morally correct in order to get the malingerers to do something for themselves (Howell and Ingham 2001: 331). As Biggart (1983) has pointed out, best selling success manuals has pro-middle class obliqueness and they are 'both an indication of what workers, primarily middle-class men, perceive as their opportunities for fulfilment, and evidence of the techniques by which they believe occupational success may be achieved' (298).

Self-help literature as a tool of construction of economic subject

The medium of books deserves much more attention than it receives now. Books are long lasting compared to newspapers or broadcasting. Therefore books are a good social index that reflects long-term trends. In particular, the self-help genre

shows what people struggle with most and what is valued most: a book is more costly than a magazine or newspaper, is more of an investment, and thus a better indication of the reader's true interest in the subject. In terms of how audiences receive different media, this is one form that allows audience control and autonomy. In most cases, individual readers choose which book they want to read and they have autonomy in when to start, pause and stop reading. Also the activity of reading demands the readers a close attention: it is not easy to wash-up while you are reading a book unless you have the form of audio book. Therefore reading is the purest experience of media consumption.

Biggart (1983) 'How to succeed' books, focus on American idea of success Four categories: success-through-striving, entrepreneurial schemes, manipulation manuals, and displacement books. 'The first three categories are descendants of success ideals articulated in earlier periods; the fourth, displacement books, seems to represent a new cultural phenomenon. The rise of psychology discourse has been the subject of considerable academic attention, but one of its most popular and visible forms, the self-help book, has received comparatively little attention. Most of academic attention tends to focus on self-help psychology books or psychological approach on the literature (Rieff 1987; Lerner 1990; Grodon 1991; Lasch 1991; Lichterman 1992; Rimke 2000; Hazleden 2003). Garsten and Grey (1997) argued that 'self-help' and 'how-to' books offer guidance on how to relieve anxiety in the post-modern era, an era characterised by organisational restructuring and the resulting labour flexibility practices. Similar to 'live' experts, they noted 'self-help' books offer advice, techniques and strategies to come to know oneself and how to change this 'self' to become more effective in an ever-changing world. Embedded in self-help books is a claim that individuals can control themselves and to some degree, their environment. However, they note that such books typically ignore the restraining contextual environment within which people live their lives. As such, they argued that self-help books not only guide individuals to manage their soul in terms of Rose's (1990) analysis.

Many critics have asserted that the rise of psychology has had depoliticizing effects. However, since in the middle of the 1990s, a number of feminist critics have objected to the content of self-help books. Most feminist authors have

criticised the way in which self-help defines problems therapeutically – that is, as exclusively personal, rather than political and cultural (Lerner 1990; Sidel 1990 in Grodin 1991: 406; Katz 1993). Even when a woman's problems are given a social and cultural basis, the 'cure' rarely focuses on political and social change. According to feminist psychologist and self-help book author Harriet Lerner (1990), most self-help books are relentlessly trying to perfect or improve women, teaching them to 'privatize, individualize, and pathologize' their problems rather than to understand them as natural outgrowth of inequality' (Lerner 1990: 15 cited in Grodin 1991: 406). Cloud (1998) argues that the depoliticizing effects of therapy and self-help are used as a political strategy by contemporary capitalism to serve the purposes of powerful economic interests (in Hazleden 2003: 414).

What are the consequences when social and political activism is replaced by pursuit of personal, psychological change? In *Control and Consolation in American Culture and Politics* based on wide-ranging US based case studies, Dana Cloud (1998) points out: 'how this rhetorical strategy offering therapeutic consolation as a substitute for political and economic compensation has become a commonplace diversion from political engagement in contemporary American society' (1998: xi). 'The therapeutic refers to a set of political and cultural discourses that have adopted psychotherapy's lexicon –the conservative language of healing, coping, adaptation, and restoration of a previously existing order – but in context of sociopolitical conflict' (1998: xiv).

This rhetoric is defined as a pervasive cultural discourse that applies psychotherapy's lexicon the conservative language of healing, coping, adaptation, and restoration of a previously existing order to social and political conflict. The purpose of this therapeutic discourse is to encourage people to focus on themselves and their private lives rather than to attempt to reform flawed systems of social and political power. Cloud focuses on the therapeutic discourse that emerged after the Vietnam War and links its rise to specific political and economic interests. The critical case studies describe in detail not only what the therapeutic style looks like, but how and why therapeutic discourses are persuasive. Cloud concludes with a chapter urging resistance to the therapeutic persuasion she describes envisioning in its place engaged public politics.

Arlie Hochschild (1994) argues that the rise in advice books addressing the intimate lives of (mainly) women is exemplary of the ways in which feminism has been transposed to address the concerns of the individualized (feminine) self. Her argument revolves around the assumption that what were once traditionally recognized as masculine 'feeling rules' now frame the kinds of injunctions that invite and incite women to be more emotionally detached and 'cooler' in relationships. Within this argument, feminism is one of the conditions of possibility for the translation of male feeling rules to create new feminine desires and expectations. She analyses the content of self-help manuals (bestselling advice books for women), and finds them to be part of the 'hijacking' of the women's movement by capitalist and instrumentalist values.

While some commentators in particular feminist researchers are concerned the depoliticising effect of self-help, Gauntlett argues that 'the desire for inner healing' and 'the quest for bigger changes in society' are not 'mutually exclusive, but can go hand-in-hand' (2002b: 22). His optimistic point of view (2002b: 23) on self-help discourses continues:

> The [self-help] books generally ignore social constraints — they do not tell readers that they will most likely not get on well in life because of sexism, racism, or other forms of discrimination and oppression — which makes them bad as social analyses; but they are not intended as sociological studies, they are meant to encourage and empower individuals to believe in themselves regardless of their social category or background, so the books cannot really be criticised on that basis.

There are few academic studies focused on the audience reception of the self-help genre and not surprisingly, studies on the contents of the self-help genre are mostly related to psychology it is the same in self-help audience studies. What is the social and cultural meaning of reading self-help literature? Giddens believes that therapy is 'emancipatory', being both a product and a cause of increased reflexivity. He claims self-help books are part of the 'democratization of daily life' (Giddens 1992: 64, 156). Similarly, many feminists have lauded best-selling self-help books that since the 1970s have focused on helping women become more independent (Lerner 1990 in Grodin 1991: 406). In her psychological self-help audience study, Debra Grodon (1991) supports self-help books for two reasons: empowerment and provision of community.

> First, although the genre has been criticized for its recipe format, readers use self-help books in complex, and often empowering ways. Readers often read for the purpose of extricating themselves from patriarchal authority and establishing personal autonomy. Yet, they simultaneously construct an experience with the texts which helps them establish a sense of what is culturally shared among a community of readers. This 'abstract' community of others provides a sense of what constitutes shared cultural knowledge, something which readers are unable to glean from their everyday interpersonal interaction. Second, self-help book reading is a relatively private act that therapeutically focuses on changing the self, but it paradoxically offers contact with a community of others who are not easily accessed in everyday discourse (Grodon 1991: 404-5).

Lichterman (1992) states that the self-help readers in his study read 'believingly but loosely,' sometimes experiencing problems trying to remember particular messages, but showing a willingness to entertain psychological interpretations of personal troubles and assuming that with self-help books, 'the categories and analyses themselves are legitimate' (427-432).

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this chapter I present the methodological framework and the methods through which I have collected and analysed data in an effort to explore the growing self-help reading culture in Korea. Empirical research in cultural studies is structured by an interest in the interplay between lived experience, texts or discourses and the social context in which the experience, texts or discourses take place. Certain research projects focus solely on an aspect of the research subject but apply to more than one method. This thesis attempts to adhere to two key principles. The one is context-bound cultural studies (i.e., localised and historicised enquiries). The other principle is applying a multi-perspectival approach to a research subject. Two methodological principles in this project are local/historical and context-bound cultural studies and multiple approaches. Taking inspiration from Griswold's 'Cultural Diamond' (1987b; 2004), I use a multidimensional approach in order to understand how the neo-liberalist subjectivity is embodied in the dominant time management self-help texts. In addition to the textual analysis of key popular time management books, exploring audience's reception and the extensive process of manufacturing and advocating self-help discourses by various social agents are key to this project. The nature of my enquiry is explorative and critical rather than explanatory.

I employ different research methods at the same time. In the course of fieldwork, I found that some subjects relevant to my PhD had not been covered in many previous studies. These include the readership of the self-help genre and the meaning of the genre to the self-help readers in Korean society. So I needed to be imaginative and creative because I was a newcomer in many relevant areas of my inquiry; for examples, in relation to the publishing industry and theories of the labour market and time management. Along with textual analysis and interviews, I also consulted various forms of public media discourse. These include newspapers, as well as vignettes from public events (e.g., self-development programs, book signings) and anything that might offer insights into the connection or discrepancy between public/official discourses and ordinary readers' daily experience, messages I have received in various forms and sources

such as observing the way bookshops display books, promotion banners and flyers in brick and mortar bookshops as well as online stores. E-mail newsletters from the Korean self-help authors and speakers such as Byung-ho Gong, mailing lists from web-based reading groups, personal bloggers' postings relevant to the famous books I was interested in, postings about famous authors and comments on various events or scandals were also useful. I prefer to read news articles from major Korean portal sites that serve as a feeder or news items cross a number of news outlets. This is not just because of convenience but also because comments on each news items were much greater than individual website's of news outlets. In many cases, I was provided with such greater insights from readers' comments than any other source. Of course, there are problems in taking those sources too seriously such as lack of credibility, enormous amounts of writing where quality of facts is not always guaranteed, difficulties in following up because it is hard to know who wrote them and so on.

Incidental encounters such as personal conversations were also useful. For example, in the early stage of my fieldwork, I became aware of 'reading management' from newspaper articles and while I was interviewing a publisher, I found out the fact that some Korean top executives ordered certain self-help titles in bulk to give them to their employees or their clients. I also found that those copies are printed exclusively for the corporate client, which means they are not available as mass market hard-/paperbacks, and they often contain special forwards generally written by one of the company's top managers. I obtained copies of the special forward to see why the companies ordered those books in bulk and how they associate their managerial value with the book. That was also the point that I realised top-tier managers encourage their middle managers to use self-help management texts not only for staff training but also for wider uses such as workplace reading groups. That is why I eventually decided to include the managerial interests on the self-help genre in the chapter that looks at the diffusion of the popular self-help genre in Korea. So in many cases my enquiry was combination of these various approaches and used wide range of different sources. There are a number of methodological issues that were raised in the course of undertaking the study and those issues are also discussed in this chapter.

The Cultural Diamond in the Pursuit of Korean Cultural Studies

US cultural and media studies scholar Douglas Kellner has emphasised the importance of combined approaches in cultural studies. He claims,

> At its strongest, cultural studies contains a three-fold project of analyzing the production and political economy of culture, cultural texts, and the audience reception of those texts and their effects. This comprehensive approach avoids too narrowly focusing on one dimension of the project to the exclusion of others. To avoid such limitations, I would thus propose a multi-perspectival approach that (a) discusses production and political economy, (b) engages in textual analysis, and (c) studies the reception and use of cultural texts (Kellner 1997).

Cultural studies insists that culture must be studied within the social relations and system through which culture is produced and consumed, and that thus study of culture is intimately bound up with the study of society, politics, and economics. Cultural studies show how media culture articulates the dominant values, political ideologies, and social developments and novelties of the era (Kellner 1995).

Griswold explains the creation and longevity of cultural meaning with this diagram, the four corners of which are the 'audience', the 'creators', the 'cultural object', and the 'social world.' According to Griswold, no account of a cultural phenomenon is complete without a consideration of all four corners of the diamond and of the connections between them (1986). But these categories of analysis are not easily separable from each other; for instance, the audience and the social world both work to 'create' cultural object, and the social world really incorporate all three other points of the diamond. Thinking of Griswold's cultural diamond as continually in flux will allow us to shift our view from one corner ('rounded' by motion) to another, and ultimately to gain a holistic — and perhaps frustratingly circular — consideration of self-help culture. These four corners are all related in a complex web of interaction.

Since this project takes Korean society as a case study, it is critically important to local/historical and context-bound cultural studies. Korean media and cultural studies scholar Myungkoo Kang ascribes the underdevelopment of the field of Korean cultural studies to Korean cultural studies itself. He criticise that no 'Korea' exists in many studies and consequently and attributes this to what he

calls 'the colonial structure of knowledge production' (2004: 264). Further elaborating on this point, he argues that: Local/historical and context-bound cultural studies start with local and historical reality and consider Western theories to be a secondary reference. This type of study tries to locate and elucidate problems within a particular Korean situation without adapting Western theories. Practitioners of this kind of study find their research questions within their own society. When this Western theories and concepts are appropriated, they are used only as supplementary references within the study (Kang 2004: 263).

For example, the localised investigation raises a number of significant questions that I elaborated in the final chapter of the dissertation. I do not have answer for some of questions in the thesis. Nevertheless, acknowledging those questions are crucial for future studies because asking the right questions is a good start for critical inquiry. Even though a single study cannot solve the all questions relevant to the original enquiry, I believe that, instead of taking 'western explanations' for granted, raising apt questions posed never before contributes to the existing knowledge world. In the following sections, I will explain two major research methods I employed, which are interviews and text analysis. Finally, I examine the strengths and weaknesses of my research methods primarily concerning my reliance on web as a research tool and as a resource of research material. But before that, let me address some significant issues mainly related to translating research material from Korean, my first language, into English.

Some issues concerning translation

My project has involved a good deal of translation since most empirical data upon which I was drawing was originally written in Korean and translated into English afterwards. This includes three Korean self-help books, transcriptions of interviews with self-help readers and publishers, book reviews posted online bookstores and other documents. This section includes a self-reflection of my experience as a bilingual researcher focusing on how I coped with the dilemma of prioritising meaning over expression/expressing the meaning clearly in English. In addition, I discuss characteristics of the Korean language because they could

be a key in analysis/which are significant in analysing Korean text. In the course of facing challenges in translation, there were benefits of working in English: I was able to keep a distance from my mother language that enabled me to make more objective observation and develop sensitivity in my own language. In addition to the linguistic sensitivity, I could possess better awareness of the underlying cultural traits of Korean society in the course of explaining them, which I could easily take for granted.

As anthropologist Hannah Bradby said 'The idea that a comprehension of a people's social and physical universe is not only a matter of gaining linguistic competence, but involves also understanding the associations and resonance of words and phrases, became a touchstone of anthropology' (Bradby 2002: 843). However, as Temple (2006) argues 'many researchers working across languages still do not address the possible effects of language difference within their research and there has been very little written about the *effects of being bilingual* on research' (2006: 2). Some scholars have started to pay attention to the language-related issues that researchers need to consider in the course of field work and afterwards. These include the effect of working with bilingual researchers (Temple 2006) and the hybrid use of language in the research that conducted with multilingual communities (Bradby 2002).

Over the course of this PhD project I experienced some changes in myself which made me see the connection between my separate roles (i.e., a translator and a researcher). At first, I misinterpreted negotiations in the course of translation as a choice between two things: i.e. either using Korean terminology without explanation by taking them for granted and consequently not locating them into the wider (Korean) context; or quickly replacing it with a non-contextual/set expression. It is true that perfect translation does not exist so negotiations in the process of translation are inevitable, i.e. the meaning and the expression do not always match. When some expressions have a certain connotation that I lost when I put it in good English, I prioritised the meaning over correct expression. That does not mean I did not pay full attention to making my writing as readable as possible.

One of the big challenges in cross-language research is how to translate without compromising the authenticity in the voices of people. This is not an issue only

for researchers who are involved in translation in their research because every research projects are associated with negotiation and they are taking risk of changing raw data to some degree by editing or paraphrasing. But when the voice is represented after the process of translation sometimes it is even hard to say that I managed to retain the voice along with the content of what the author was saying. At the beginning I tried to translate as direct as possible. For example the translation of book titles I mentioned in this thesis has changed as many as several times. I realised word-by-word translation is limited because that does not simply make sense in English or need clarification/addition (mostly Korean/Japanese titles are composed of noun clauses).

I strived to deliver the sense of the local language because the way of naming can be political. For instance, I was advised to change the term 'IMF crisis' to the 'Asian Debt Crisis' as it is known in Western world: in my personal view, it is rather unfamiliar and distant name. The 'IMF' has been a spectre haunting Korea since 1998 and often it is not referring to the actual international organisation but a kind of immaterial something that suggests a negative sentiment with a sense of impending/ongoing crisis. Thus it was a milestone in the modern history of Korea [before IMF, after IMF, IMF generation]. I think 'IMF' is a single term (that is) the most frequently mentioned in the public and private life of Korean people.

Understanding attributes of the Korean language and taking them into account is the key to translating and analysing Korean readers' book reviews and interview material as well as Korean (self-help) texts effectively. The most relevant characteristics of the Korean language, in the relation to analysing unisex self-help texts, which involves pretence, and unanimous reader's reviews, are: firstly, the lack of grammatical gender; secondly, honorifics language, which is the way of using language to reflect differences in age and social status etc.

Unlike most European languages, Korean does not have specific masculine or feminine pronouns such as 'he' or 'she and the pronoun 'he' is used generically. The linguistic unisexness of Korean language makes it even more difficult to criticise some self-help texts based on their gender-biased contents. However, it is not completely impossible to point out which gender the author is referring to because often sex-suggesting words are used wearing shirts and other descriptions more likely to imply one sex than the other. For instance, when an

author mentions 'my wife' in his text that suggests the author is a man and when an author takes most examples from people who are assumed to have a 'wife' that can be interpreted that men to be targeting men rather than women. Additionally, some words are gender-specific particularly in the Korean context, for example 'the head of the household' in Korea would be understood as 'the *male* (often the eldest among economically active male members of the family) and the primary breadwinner (whether or not he has other co-earners in his household or even whether or not he is an actual breadwinner).

When I conducted one-to-one online interviews I was concerned with how to adjust from an intimate relationship to a researcher-respondent relationship. This is not because I agree with critics of the qualitative approach: i.e. that the closeness between the interviewer and interviewee implies that the method is inevitably a subjective one that lacks scientific rigour. My main concern was to avoid blurring the boundaries between personal conversation and a research scenario. No matter how close I was to my interviewees, I wanted them to be fully aware that I was interviewing them with a specific intention and I might use what they told me. This was more likely to happen because of the method of interviews: conversation using instant messaging software, which is normally used for personal chats between the author and interviewees. I tried to maintain a level of formality in interviews, for example first introducing myself and my project and asking consents to use their comments in my research. Also, I used honorific language. This attribute of Korean language raised a further point for discussion. For example, women tend to (or are supposed to) speak in a more polite style of language to their husband while the reverse is not true. When *The X-Files*, science fiction television series, aired on a Korean cable channel with voiceover, the female FBI agent Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson stared) spoke honorific language and spoke in a respectful manner to the male agent Fox Mulder (David Duchovny stared) while he did not, even though they were depicted as colleagues in the drama. This reflects the fact that a rigid gender hierarchy predominates in Korea as opposed to one where those of equal social status use the same social hierarchy uses same level of speech. Similarly, although age is one of the most important criteria of social relations in Korean society, in a romantic heterosexual relationship, men tend to speak non-honorific language even if they are younger than their female partner once they agree to be in the relationship; however the

opposite is rare. The circumstances of speech (i.e. public and private) also determine the way of addressing an audience and the way of speaking. For example, addressing colleagues by their first name (which is a very intimate way of addressing people in Korea) instead of their (job) title or at least full-name is inappropriate in public. This formality also benefited my research because when I clarified the intention of interviews I felt that my interviewees were focused on the conversation and felt responsibility about what they said. They took the interview seriously, more than I expected, and they were excited about the possibility of contributing to my research.

Analysing text: selection of subject texts and analytical framework

In order to examine popular time management discourses in career management, discourses that have been growing in importance amid the fast changing corporate environment and social ethos of individual responsibility, I have searched the literature on time management. Three books were selected for analysis — all of them were written by male authors this was unintended, however, represent the male dominance in self-help market. Two of the books were initially written by Japanese authors and then translated into Korean, and the third was originally written and published in Korean. All three books are not the most significant or most popular titles among other self-help books but they were published around a similar time. More importantly, they have a similar, and rather problematic, theme: that is, each suggests that the secret of success comes down to the idea that the more time you devote to your work the more likely you are successful. This might sound like such a cliché or common sense, but what is does is discursively normalise a long hours culture. Generalisation was not my intention with this analysis. Rather, I wanted to centre for analysis the shared theme of these books. As I discussed in the Introduction chapter, this is a subject that needs to be explored further. However, I argue that the recent appearance and popularity of this genre in Korea reflect decline of its strong communal tradition and raising the idea of self-help. This 'morning person' syndrome that was triggered by the book and overwhelmed Korean society in 2003, provided one of the impetuses for this study. In order to define subject texts to analysis, I

started by scanning newspaper articles that had mentioned this book during the previous two years.

As a result of reviewing these secondary documents, I noticed that there are some books with commonality in their key motive which is rather problematic: the advice often focused on making more time for self-development by finding out and appreciating niche time zones. For instance, before going to work (*How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time*); after work (*3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time*); while travelling (*What Can We Do for One Hour while Commuting*); and even during weekends (*Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends*). Before compiling my list of potential books to analyse I went to the YES24.com, the biggest online book retailer in Korea, and entered these book titles and used the 'explore similar items' function and searched with the keyword 'time management' to avoid leaving out any popular books have similar strategy of time management. This was for ascertaining whether there are any books providing a piece of time management advising to make time by handling outside of working hours better. In addition, I was particularly conscious that there were few business and management self-help books for women, let alone time management books. So I double checked that before affirming to the fact that self-help books are targeted for male readers (even though many books pretend to be unisex).

What most of the time management literature suggests is how to 'make time' by using time more efficiently or how to organise your life systematically (including the famous 'first thing first' principle or skill-up taking memo). In many cases those books deal with the time in work and supposedly relevant to the work/life balance issue. However, what this research is interested in is those books that actually start from talking about how to 'make time' rather than how to 'spend time' efficiently. This is more significant because the idea of 'making time' is indispensably associated with the ideas that identify certain time as available and unavailable. For instance, what is mainly suggested by the books I analyse is to find 'spare time' which has not been appreciated up to now: such as early morning, a few hours after leaving one's office, the time taken for commuting and weekends. However, obviously different people have different ideas about what is 'spare time' and when they are 'on call' and this also depends on the

circumstances people are faced with. As this research problematises the changing labour disciplines, which are longer hours and flexibility, those three books that reflect those disciplines are finalised as key text to be analysed (two from originally Japan but translated into Korean and one from Korea).

Various options were considered in order to find an apt analytical framework for analysing the self-help texts concerned, from content analysis to critical discourse analysis. Content analysis is a widely used quantitative research method in particular in media studies (Silverman 2004). Content analysis as a method enables the researcher to include large amounts of textual information and identify systematically its properties, e.g. the frequencies of most used keywords by detecting the more important structures of its communication content. Yet such large amounts of textual information must be categorised according to a certain theoretical framework, which will inform the data analysis, providing at the end a meaningful reading of content under scrutiny. This method is particularly useful when the volume of analysis material is large and when the researchers are aware what they are looking for and when they have a fairly clear idea what kinds of keywords will appear. Content analysis has also a number of significant disadvantages, particularly in relation to the features of the text that I shall analyse. Content analysis is inherently reductive, particularly when dealing with complex texts and tends too often simply consist of word counts.

I also considered the possibility to apply Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to my textual analysis. As a means of unpacking some of the ideological processes which underpin – and help promote – particular genres of writing and representation, CDA usefully directs attention not only to the text themselves, but also to the broader contexts of discourse practice (i.e., the situational, institutional and cultural contexts) (See Fairclough 1995). In particular, CDA is concerned with revealing how language and, more broadly, discourse are socially constitutive of identities, social relationships, and systems of belief – either reproducing and maintaining them through existing conventions, or challenging and transforming them through more creative practices (Fairclough 1995: 55). It was challenging for me because like other typical self-help texts, the three books I chose were in many ways unconventional. Typical features of self-help text include: lack of consistency, lack of depth in content, lack of logical flow and often repetitive in

writing.

As the result, firstly, the main message of each book along with each author's background and relevant background information was identified. Secondly, an analysis of the rhetoric used in the books was conducted. Issues outside main content were also investigated including book cover format, design, an advertisement strip and so on. Similarities and differences between texts were identified in particular focusing on their assumption on time and work/life balance. Based on the above analysis, hidden agenda were identified and elaborated. By entering the text and analysing its content and rhetoric one can see what is built into it, i.e. the hidden agenda (Latour 1987: 55). In doing so, one also enters the context where it is produced, or in Latour's words, they 'sneak into the places where the papers are written and [to] follow the construction of facts in their most intimate details' (*ibid.* 63). By doing so we can study the motives, considerations, and social forces surrounding the production and diffusion of managerial texts.

As a part of my study of self-help texts I conducted both visual analysis as well as textual analysis. The subject of this visual analysis was the covers of the books themselves (back as well as front). My analysis of the book covers included the front and back flaps of the dust jacket as well as the 'belly bands', which play an important part in Korean, and Japanese book design and are integral features of the final book design. The focus of visual analysis here is not so much from the aesthetic point of view but is rather an attempt to understand the publishers' point of view. In other words, analysing both the written and visual narratives which are written on these book covers can shed light on often complex editorial decisions such as, where the publisher wants to fit their book in the context of the market, and how the publisher wants to reflect the content of the book. In particular, as two out of three books I selected for analysis are translations from Japanese originals as part of any analysis which compares the Korean translation and its Japanese original it was of vital importance to compare and contrast the covers of the Japanese original and the Korean translation to see where lay the differences and similarities.

Studying Audience Online

Using the web to conduct research provide great benefits. Researchers might be able to find out trivia by searching websites or interesting antidotes or personal statements from personal blogs. For example, I became curious that why so many publications dealing with 'sleep management' are being published in Japan in recent years. I also wondered if the idea of a 'morning person' was well received by Japanese readers as it did in Korea. However, I realised my personal sources in Japan were not good interviewees on this matter. Since I cannot speak or read Japanese, using search engines I found couple of postings written by Korean bloggers about the time-management issues in Japan were interesting and needed to investigate further. So I emailed the bloggers with questions (as a form of e-mail interview) and in my surprise the bloggers who received my email was almost flattered that I read and show an interest on their postings.

For example, Deborah Lupton's (1996) project investigated people's food preferences 'because food and eating practices are at the centre of concern in Western societies about the body, self-control, health, consumption, and the construction of identity' (from the back cover). This is one of the good examples to focus on the 'lived experience' and she used 'three methods of eliciting people's responses to, and experiences of, food and eating to collect the data.' Those methods include: the technique asking participants to write down memories about food; individual semi-structured interview about food preferences; and semi-structured focus group discussions on diet and health (Lupton 1996: 156-9). In audience studies, in particular, I also applied combined research methods: interviews and text analysis in order to obtain audience lived experience and each method allows different perspectives that were paralleled and interlocked afterwards.

In order to grasp lived experiences of self-help readers (and also non-readers) and publishers I found that online interviews were particularly useful. In the following section, I discuss a number of methodological issues that arise and are I will introduce and justify the use of each method of analysis, determining their appropriateness for application to an online setting. In my case, my greatest concern was the possibility that participants might say what they think I wanted to hear rather than what they actually thought. For example, reading books are

regarded as a desirable activity in Korea therefore when I ask participants 'how many self-help books have you read' they could overstate the truth in order to impress me. This is more likely to happen in a society which has a strong communal norm, like Korea: people tend to say what they (think they) are expected to rather then what they really think or do. This cannot be completely prevented in face-to-face interviews either, however the overstatement is more likely to happen when participants do not have face-to-face interaction. In the same vein, the weakest point in email interviews is the lack of spontaneous and immediate responses which make subtle interpretation possible. Of course, the pros and cons of a research method depend on what researchers want to achieve from interviews, i.e. seeking for factual information or personal opinions on a controversial issue.

In the audience study undertaken for this thesis, I aimed to investigate audiences' various interpretations of popular Korean time management self-help books. In addition, I explored the perception of the genre and how the wider social context of self-help reading — such as Korean corporate culture including well-known long hours culture — interplays with the various interpretations. There are questions a study of self-help readers can begin to answer. This audience study addresses questions such as: How and why are readers attracted by the genre in the first place? Why do some readers find the genre to be useful and helpful while others do not? How much power do these discourses have in everyday life of ordinary Korean self-help readers in the relation to the current time-politics? How do Korean readers perceive this recently introduced popular genre and on what grounds the public judges self-help books? How do these perceptions and judgement affect in the way that this genre is consumed?

My audience study relied on a large number of book reviews downloaded from the three biggest and bestselling online booksellers' websites and one to one interviews with fourteen individuals (seven male and seven female) (see Appendix 2). As book reviews were written pseudonymously (with their user name of the website[11]) and therefore mostly lack demographic clues of each writer,

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[11] I identified each quotation from online reviews by the user name of the reviewer, the

I make no claims regarding distinctive interpretations based on sex, age, education, marital status, and social and economic statues of self-help readers. Instead, by juxtaposing book reviews that are rich in their amount and diversity of viewpoints with my own interview materials, which provide social context of consuming this genre, I aimed to accomplish an in-depth explanation the way of self-help time management genre is consumed in Korean society.

I approached audience with two different routes. One exploratory route was interviewing people either face-to-face or online sometimes both (face to face first and then online follow ups) to ask about their experiences in reading self-help books in relation to the peer/organisational pressure and time-use. The other route was to analyse audience responses from websites of online bookshops and online book clubs' message boards. Using the insight acquired from interviews, I analysed the second-hand data to examine the context of consumption of the self-help genre with broader audience group.

The choice of interview method usually depends upon the research question itself, or upon the qualitative approach that informs the overall research design. Working online, semi-structured interviews with individuals are usually conducted by e-mail, or by 'chatting' one-to-one using real-time software (Mann and Stewart 2000: 75), which I used both in interviewing. When you interview people who you have already known might be aware of the research questions you have or overly sympathetic toward your hypothetical argument. So researchers need to be aware of the way they present their research and questions to their participants.

Regarding the conduct of audience studies, as I had a hard time to get people talk, this research raised the question of how to encourage participants to talk more and in-depth. In the course of interviews with self-help readers, I became aware that having a conversation with people is not that difficult compared to leading them to participate in a talk, instead of just answering my questions. This was partly because some of them found that my questions were difficult to answer

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name of bookseller and the date of posting.

since they had never thought about those questions before. And sometimes I felt my interviewees' answers were often naïve and shallow. I even thought 'maybe should I have lowered my enthusiasm to balance it to my participants'? Empowering participants' voices and experiences and encouraging them to identify their feelings and opinions within a wider social context as well as their whole life in a meaningful way. It might be a good idea to apply indirect methods such as life story or reading diary (this is a subject that participants are willing to make a high degree of commitment to do so). This allows researchers to not assume that the represented experience and idea of participants are fixed and instead allows them to observe changes in each individual and the society.

It is argued as appropriate to revisit the methods of studying here, so that their intellectual parameters and basic assumptions can capture the possible wide-reaching consequences in the way they operates and how audiences engage with it. For instance, my one-to-one interview experiences led to me some reflexive questions on the application of this research method. Without exception, all my interviewees were concerned that they were not the right person to give the 'right' answers to my questions. Alternatively, they thought their answers were 'not good enough' for such research. I cannot be sure if the way I asked questions made them feel that way (for example, the language might have been too 'scholarly' or questions were too focused on my own research interest), though it could equally have been because Korean people are more likely to feel bound to social norms. Some Koreans tend to think that there is a correct or desirable answer and they have to be able to provide 'the' answer even if they do not actually think it. This tendency can be problematic when using questionnaires, in particular those including judgemental questions. For instance, it is a classic example in audience opinion polls in Korea that participants of polls tend to answer that they prefer informational programs and they want more of them rather then entertainment programs. However, the ratings always show that news and current affair programs are rated much lower than other entertainment programs. This is the reason why questionnaires have to be designed skilfully in order to draw more honest responses and avoid the more conventional answers. For example, asking two separate questions on the same subject saying, 'What do you think people should watch more?' and 'What kind of programs do you *actually* watch most?' could help respondents to recognise the gap between social norms and their

actual television viewing.

Recently there has been a growth in the literature on the use of the web as a primary tool for conduction research.

> As social life becomes more saturated with Internet-based media for communication, researchers will be able to creatively design projects that utilize these media to observe culture, interact with participants, or collect artifacts (Annette N. Markham 2004: 120).

Researching online is becoming more and more significant in media and cultural studies in both ways: researching various phenomena concerning online as well as researching using online tools such as instant messaging, e-mail and web-based questionnaire as so on. In particular, studying audience online provides a great deal of freedom from restriction of distance and time and it is economic and effective way to collect substantial material of audience responses. This method is particularly useful when the researcher looks for audience response to specific television programs, films or books but hard to get them otherwise. The advantage of working with natural data on the internet is that researchers affect the data minimally.

Due to the possible international dispersion of the respondents, who could be distanced through both physicality and spoken language, it was necessary to conduct interviews and questionnaires online, most of which arrived within a week except one interviewee who said it was difficult to find time to answer the questionnaire. She was a working mom and juggling between work and home so online conversation via an instant messaging was the only way I could get hold of her. Participants were asked to respond to fifteen questions which were purposely compiled in order to offer potential follow up intensive interview questions concerning specific answers, if the respondent's replies and comments displayed the need for clarification or further development. Intensive interviews are usually based on a small sample framework in order to assess with detail why interviewees have given specific answers to questions. As such, they allow the researcher to collate significant detailed information with regard to the perspective, experience and beliefs of the respondent (Charmaz 2006: 25, Forsyth and Lessler 1991, Fowler 1995).

There has been some concern expressed in regard to the reliability of interviews

conducted with participants online. As Sherry Turkle observes: 'virtual reality poses a new methodological challenge for the researcher: what to make of online interviews and indeed, whether and how to use them' (1995: 324, see also Campbell 2004: 44, Wilson and Peterson 2002, Madanmohan and Navelkar 2004, Hamman 2004, Taylor 1999). Since my interviewees were from my personal contact or someone who I was introduced by my personal contact, this concern was far from my case. However, I do not agree that assuming online setting alone will poster deceit and dishonest. The key is rather how deep your source's experience and opinion. It is rather contrary because, it was also envisaged that undertaking this procedure within the field setting itself would foster a sense of security that would encourage the respondent to divulge information that may otherwise not be forthcoming:

> [C]omputer interviews, like electronic mail, create a feeling of privacy. This sense of safety makes interviewees somewhat more willing to disclose information than they are willing to disclose in face-to-face interviews or on paper-and-pencil questionnaires (Sproull and Kiesler 1991:45).

Likewise, Gauntlett (2002) argues people are no more likely to waste their time lying in an email interview that in a face-to-face interview. Moreover, the more determinant factor than the setting of interview is whether the interview or the posting is linked to self-interest. Therefore, it should be considered that commercial interest can influence the way in which consumers express their opinions. I contacted some bloggers who have posted interesting stories which upon I judge that they might be interested in answering my questions. The responses from some bloggers were almost prompt and sincere and they seem to be grateful for my interest and attention to their personal website. As Gauntlett claims, 'for interviewing fans or users of a particular media artist or artefact the internet is extremely valuable' and they are often 'happy to share their thoughts about the object of their interests' (2002: 15). Therefore, this raises the following methodological question:

> [M]ost traditional methods of data collection assume... some kind of consistency in the presentations of self over time and across places. If we rely on symbols on a screen as a representation of the person, does this have consequences for the relationships inherent in doing interviews or participant observation?' (Lyman and Wakeford 1999: 363).

Jacobson believes so, as he argues: 'we cannot know with any certainty who is at

the keyboard and therefore there will always be doubt, if online research is not supplemented by off-line research, about precisely who is sending an e-mail message or occupying a character in a virtual reality' (1999: 133). Therefore, Turkle's solution to her research challenge involved interviewing online only those individuals she had also met and verified in an offline setting. In response to this action, Lyman and Wakeford contemplate 'how much do we need to know about nonvirtual manifestations ('the real') to interpret the data that we collect online ('the virtual')?' (1999: 363). However, I will reiterate Taylor's argument that this debate around reliability can also be applied to an off-line setting. He questions, 'Can we ever verify the subjective experience of an interviewee?' and concludes that if this verification is not absolutely achievable then, 'the argument that the off-line interview poses a clearer path to a more true set of responses is not entirely convincing' (1999: 8). Slater also maintains this viewpoint in terms of the ethnographic process as a whole, declaring that 'it is obvious that physical presence is no guarantee of truth, nor is mediated presence necessarily untrue, especially if that is what one is actually studying' (2002: 542). Likewise, there are declared advantages of using online interviews in that they 'can overcome difficulties of face-to-face interviewing: for example, in face-to-face situations people can make judgments about you on the basis of age, gender or race that may influence the discussion' (Bucker and Dolowitz 2005: 87) .

About the strengths of e-mail interviews Mann and Stewart (2000) argue as follows:

> The asynchronous nature of most e-mail interaction allows participants great flexibility in terms of the frequency and length of their responses; access to a computer in a personal environment can offer both privacy and familiarity; and, in areas where e-mail use is ubiquitous, techniques such as 'snowballing' (finding one participant through another) can locate additional interviewees with the minimum of time and energy. So, in online environment, there are fewer of the constraints associated with conventional research as many of the difficulties of accessing multiple, and geographically disparate, real-life sites disappear (2000: 79).

However, there are a number of weaknesses of conducting interviews online. First of all, even though email interviews can save considerable amount of time administering emails can be time consuming. Moreover, it is possible to have misunderstanding the intent of the questions and it is hard to seek immediate clarification. Distractions and disturbances of everyday life led to responses not

being as focused as in a face-to-face interview. Because these weaknesses I conduct online interviews using both email and synchronised messaging service.

Gauntlett argues that authors of online postings do not represent the 'general audience' because they are a 'self-selected group interested in reviewing thing on websites' (2002: 15). This could be compared to Simonds (1992)'s research that used letters anonymous readers wrote to self-help authors Betty Friedan (*The Feminine Mystique* 1963) and Robin Norwood (*Women Who Love Too Much* 1985). Simonds argued 'Readers' letters show what direct, immediate responses to self-help books can be like, and reinforce participants' assertions that reading self-help can have a strong impact on women's lives' (1992: 18). I realised it was not so simple to find out a good number of readers otherwise. It is a perfect substitute in digital age is online reviews. My intention was to hear from readers who had read one of the three books I analyse. Gauntlett claims: 'quotes from these sites are useful for fleshing out an idea or illustrating a point, and they do represent the spontaneously-offered views of people who are actually interested in the media product in question' (2002: 15). I thought it would not be necessary to recruit interviewees who actually have read one of the books I analysed as my intention was to see the wider context of consumption rather than responses to specific books. Fortunately, however, online bookshop's websites were excellent resources contain rich material for audience research regarding its volume[12] and its richness and diversity in content (in terms of depth, length, style and theme of writing), in particular in the case *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time*. The number of reviews reflects the popularity of the book.

This is the reason why I decided to apply this uncommon approach to audience research. Online postings from message boards of online book groups were analysed with a different focus. In order to see how the audience actually makes sense of messages from those self-help books, I found sample to interview based on what self-help book publishers said and what the purchase statistics showed. The interviews provided me with some ideas including how people felt about the

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[12] Reviews were often duplicated and uploaded to more than one bookshop – which increased my suspicion that some reviews are systematically supplied by third party's.

appearance of the genre and how this genre was received by themselves and their colleagues. However, I found not many of my interviewees had read self-help time management books so I needed to recruit the respondents who had actually read one of those books to see how they responded to it. In the meantime, I realised that I could use anonymous readers' reviews posted on the websites of book retailers. And internet-based self-help book reading groups were another possible alternative, which I excluded later because of the lack of original content.

Websites of book retailers are becoming more and more important channel not only as an importance tool to promote products but also as a prominent market place nowadays (for more on the rapid growth of online trading in the publishing industry, see Chapter 6). What makes online bookshops preferable to offline ones is they provide information outside of official sources like press releases by publishers or newspaper reviews. And what is called customer reviews is one of the unique traits of the online bookshop. They are solid research material for investigating the complexity of interpretation of the genre and of reading behaviours. The major weakness of this material is each of review does not necessarily contain demographic information of the reviewer even though some reviewers reveal some clues or definite information about their gender, occupation or what age groups they belong. But what I aim to do by analysing those reviews is far from obtaining statistics. Preferably, first I collected readers' reviews on the same books which I had decided to analyse but I also looked at readers' responses to other books that have similarities regarding their main themes and messages. I limited the items of review from the time the first review to be written then until the end of 2005. The number of reviews reflected the popularity of the book and *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* has the biggest number of reviews among four books.

There are some noteworthy facts about 'customer reviews.' The boards of customer reviews are asynchronous, meaning that individuals post messages at different times. Their postings do not appear online until editors of online bookstores select them. Editors play the role of gatekeepers. Once reviews are posted on the review section of each relevant book, they may receive several, multiple or no responses and other users rate their reviews. What makes online bookshops preferable to offline ones is they provide information outside of

official sources like press releases by publishers or newspaper reviews. And what is called customer reviews is one of the unique traits of the online bookshop. In my case, online book reviews are solid research material for investigating the complexity of interpretation of the genre and of reading behaviours. Online bookstores are becoming more and more important not only as a prominent market place but also an important channel to promote products. What makes online bookshops preferable to offline ones is they provide information outside of official sources like press releases by publishers or newspaper reviews. And what is called customer reviews is one of the unique traits of the online bookshop.

Discussion

My personal experience as a book lover and a person who supports the revival of independent bookshops has also provided a valuable insight in this research. Until the stage of writing up, I did not realise that my personal experience was closely related to my project in many ways although I was completely unaware of this. I have spent a good deal of time in bookstores, like most academics, throughout my life. In particular, from the mid 1990s to 2003, while I was at university, I was actively involved in a campaign supporting an independent bookshop, which was near my university campus. This bookshop dealt in academic books, mostly humanities and social science. It was the first and the best place to access new academic books and non-popular literary titles since big chain bookshops did not prioritise non-popular titles. However, it faced a serious financial deficit from the mid 1990s and the ups and downs of this small bookshop are closely related to the changes in Korean society. One of the major causes of the deficit was the fact that online bookstores started to open in 1998 in Korea with YES24 at the head of the list. However, financial difficulty was foreseen even before the appearance of online book retailing.

I like to argue that researchers who would like to make full use of online as a research subject or research methods should keep ask themselves 'What kinds of data I am dealing with?' and open to various and unexpected possibilities. And we should be very cautious to take research materials out of the context. In the first plenary session, Professor Robbins emphasized the importance of contextualizing

out research in personal, disciplinary and institutional context. And if I reflect my audience research in disciplinary context I should be able to provide some explanation of the relationship between the media (which are web-pages of online bookstores) and the contents (audiences' response) and also how this has been changing.

Chapter 4: How Self-help Texts Make Sense of Time-management

Drawing on the framework of gendered time politics that I have explored in the Chapter 2, this chapter will set out an in-depth analysis of three time-management books. Time management discourses are necessarily involved in a number of critical issues. How individuals, for example, and a society prioritise different values in life (i.e. worldly success or work/family balance) becomes clear by investigating what they prioritise in time use. As I have explained in the introductory chapter, in the growing popularity of self-development books, time management has been structurally established as one of the most popular sub-themes. I selected three books that focus on how to spend time outside of regular working hours for self-development for my thesis, from a wide array of time management self-help books. This series of self-help titles emphasises the importance of making time available for a self-improvement activity which is closely related to social circumstances. During the economic downturn wage workers experienced not only an increased intensity of labour but also long working hours, while the imperative of constant self-improvement has ever been growing. This situation seems to promote the idea of using time outside of working hours. This is mostly unpaid time but essential time for other activities which are essential for sustaining ourselves. Each book places particular emphasis respectively but not exclusively on before, and after regular working hours and weekends.

In my analysis, I will focus on identifying the ideological assumptions that underpin these books. These include how long hours working culture is normalised and how work/life balance is (not) valued. The social context and the text are discursively inseparable. In the case of self-help literature, we can see that in the Korean context, discourses of self-help and time management were very closely linked to what was happening in the economy and culture of the late 1990s. In the course of analysing time management texts I will try to weave this social context into these books because even the same text could be read in completely different ways in different cultural and economic contexts. In other

words, why exactly might those books which contain the central themes identified above attract so many ordinary Korean readers (in particular those in the paid working population) and why specifically in the post-crisis period? This chapter attempts to find some possible answers to these questions from the texts under scrutiny and from the social context in which they were published and read before turning to the studies of audiences' perception and experiences of reading those books. I will argue that self-management advice is problematic because even when it deals with time outside of working hours, non-working life is ignored and devalued in the increasing importance of 'employability.' I will also argue that the culture of working long hours is more problematic for female workers and for those from a working class background. This is because the ideology of over work assumes that the reader is in the position to take others' time (e.g. the famous 'if you have too much to do, delegate tasks to others' advice), which is very unlikely to be available for women and low function male and female employees. In addition, since two books are translations from Japanese books and one book is initially written in Korean by a Korean author, differences between the original and the translation title will be observed.

The outline of the following sections is as follows: each of the three books will be introduced including its cover designs, author's background and the overall contents. I will then identify the key issues and the rhetoric that three books share. Finally, based on this analysis I will deconstruct the texts in the search for a hidden agenda: the valorisation of masculine time and justification of taking more time from women in order to get ahead in the 'market-directed success' (Reich 2002: 156). Before commencing textual analysis, in the following sections, I will briefly outline some noteworthy editing features of the popular Korean self-help books which I will need to refer to in the analysis.

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Presentation Matters

What composes a book is not only the content but also the way in which that content is presented. This can include: the size of a book, cover designs, and advertisements and in particular those which are attached loosely to each copy. The majority of Korean trade books are published in a trade paperback format

that is bound with a paper or heavy stock cover, usually with a larger trim size than that of a mass-market paperback.[13] One distinguishable feature of popular Korean books is their cover. Regardless of the size of the book most trade books (both paperback and hardback) have dust jackets with front and back flaps that are used to attach the dust jacket to the book. These flaps are valuable spaces where promotional statements frequently appear. A front flap is normally given to the introduction of the author (in the case of translation a little on the translator) such as biographical introduction, a list of other works and contact details. Sometimes the book's point-of-purchase appeal to the potential buyers appears alongside these but it is also common that this promotional appeal is printed on the back cover. A back flap is generally used for listing other books published by the same publisher or other books from in the same series. It is quite common that favourable quotes from other writers, celebrities, or experts in a book's subject area appear on back cover not only in Korean publications but in other countries also.

It seems that the front cover design is emphasised a great deal in Korea. Publishers do their best to attract the attention of readers at a glance and the design of the cover is inevitably the first image that readers see. In order to accomplish this, cover designs that show a photo of the author (or even the translator/commentator if he/she is famous) are a widely used style in Korea. For instance, the two most well-known self-help authors and motivational speakers, Bon-Hyung Goo and Byoung-ho Gong, often have their photos appearing in their publications. This is the same in other translated titles written by world famous management consultants or economists, including bestselling authors Peter Drucker and Steven Covey.

[13] In Korea, the mass-market paperback, which is smaller, less expensive version of a book that is usually printed well after the hardcover and trade paperback versions have been made available, was popular in mid-1950s, from mid-1970s to the early 1980s in Korea. However, from the late 1980s the popularity of this cheap format was dramatically waned. The decline in popularity can be attributed to various reasons including: limitation to literacy classics of the books published in this format; no reading culture that favours particular this handy format; and guarantees no good profit to both publishers and retailer because of the low price (Pyo 2001).

An advert strip known as a 'belly band' is used for similar reasons — additional eye-catching phrases to attract the attention of the reader. Bellybands are advertising strips that are wrapped around with and then folded inside the book's cover, much like a secondary dust cover. This small strip of paper is used to provide both decorative and distinctive cover packages or, more importantly, to showcase important marketing messages and reviews. Bellybands are a widely used marketing tool in both Korea and Japan but are occasionally used in the U.K. as well. It is known that it began to be used in Korea from 1990s and this strip often refers to the fact that the book has won, or has at least been nominated for, a book award. Now it is a very widely used marketing device. We can find the majority of trade books and fashion magazines are displayed with a belly-band advertising its content in Korean bookshops. For publishers it is a forefront that they can appeal to customers but for many readers it is a waste and annoying. This band is normally no larger than one-third of the size of the book but alterations such as size/vertical belly-band are often made.

Often the presentation of a book is a result of the elaborate design of the book. For example, on the very first page of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time*, opposite to the inside front cover, a quotation of American industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie[14] is printed on the top of the page. It says, 'The time we sleep in the morning is the biggest waste in our lives.'[15] Since I did not have a Japanese copy, I was not sure the first page was from the original or added by the publisher. An interview with the publisher revealed that putting in Carnegie's quote was the publisher's idea. The publisher said the quote not only successfully summarised the key message of the book but also was used as a sound bite for their marketing campaigns. In fact, this quote was often mentioned in the reader's book reviews that were posted on online bookshop websites many times. This shows the discretion and intervention of a publisher can have an influence on the final product even in a translated title.

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[14] This is often attributed to Andrew Carnegie but not found in his writings.
[15] I suspect it was translated from English into Korean, though I have been unable to locate an original. The close equivalent quote might be 'Lose an hour in the morning, and you will be all day hunting for it' (Richard Whately).

The edition of book cover is also important issue in presenting the book in the market. Publishers' decisions on the cover type depend on the length of the book and its subject matter. The lengthier the book is and the more serious subject the book deals with — the more likely it is to be published in hardback. Compared to a paperback, a hardcover costs an extra 1,000 Korean won[16] per copy in Korea. However, regarding the retail price, the difference of a copy ranges from 1,000 to 5,000 won (which is 5-20% of the average retail price). Therefore, readers' discontent with the hard cover format that publishers decide to publish certain marketable titles in hardbacks for more profit even though some of them do not deserve hardback is not groundless. This is because publishing a book in hardback could bring better profit to the publisher than in paperback, as long as the book sells well. In the Korean publishing market, publishing dual hardback and paperback editions, at least within a six months period or so, seems not as common as in other countries so new books either go straight to paperback or hardback. Moreover, Hans Media's decision to publish their first two 'morning person' titles in hardback was made based on their target market. They wanted to 'appeal to readers with a highbrow image of the book' according to the head of the business and management team at Hans Media (an interview with me). Hardback has long been a sign of serious content not only in Korea but also across the culture.[17]

The remainder of this chapter will analyse the three books I have chosen for textual analysis. Firstly, I will introduce the author and the contents of each book since they are not published in English and not well known in Britain. Based on the introduction of each of them, I will identify the main messages and then shared themes of the three books in the following section.

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[16] The face value of 1,000 Korean won is approximately 50 pence but its market value is more or less one British pound.

[17] In November 2007, Picador announced that they would not publish their book in hardback from next year unless the book guarantees good sales. The decision of Picador, one of the leading British imprints, made controversy at least with in the British publishing circle. *Guardian* columnist Robert Booth explains the reasons why hardcover binding has enjoyed primacy, particularly in the literary world. Firstly, libraries and book clubs ordered hardbacks in decent quantities; secondly, literary editors thought that only hardbacks deserved reviews; and thirdly, authors felt hardback editions gave them prestige (Booth, *Guardian* 17 November 2007).

Before Hours — Taking Control of Your Life from the Early Morning

The first book to be analysed here is *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time*. As the title suggests this is time management guidance focusing on how to use time before regular working hours and what the benefits are that we may enjoy by becoming a morning person. This is a significant text in a number of ways. It was published in October 2003 by a young and independent publishing house called Hans Media and it was this publisher's first publication. This was a Korean translation of a Japanese book titled *Secrets of a 'Morning Person': How to Revolutionise Your Time before You Go to Work in 100 Days* [my translation] written by Japanese author Hiroshi Saisho. The Korean translation is taken from Saisho's 2000 Japanese edition, although the book was originally published in 1991. Both 1991 and 2000 editions are published by Kodansha, the largest Japanese publisher of literature and Japanese cartoon (also known as manga). According to the publisher ('CEO's Greetings', the publisher's website), the Korean translation achieved ten times more sales than that of the Japanese original — regarding the size of population of two countries the success in Korea was enormous.[18] The success of this book was enormous in terms of both sales and its influence over not only the publishing world but also in Korean society, beyond even the publisher's anticipation. In this chapter, I will focus on the textual analysis but I will come back to its significance in the Korean book market and its social implications in the following two chapters.

The background of the text

The author of this book Hiroshi Saisho is a doctor even though there is no clear information about which area of medicine he practises. According to the author's profile provided by both the publisher and Amazon.co.jp, Saisho, who was born

[18] Japan's population is currently around 127 million, making it the world's tenth largest country whereas the population of South Korea's at around 49 million makes it the twenty-fourth largest country by population in the world (both figures were estimated by the CIA in 2007). The literacy rate of both countries is very high. Japan's literacy stands at 99% and South Korea is 97.9%. (Central Intelligence Agency, <https://www.cia.gov> accessed on 24 January 2008)

in 1951, learnt both Eastern and Western medical sciences. This fact allows him to establish an approach in the book that claimed to help readers to experience a 'Saisho-style of keeping sound mind and body' [inside front cover]. Based on the other books he has written, it seems that Saisho has a deep interest in and knowledge of the science of sleep, in particular a negative relationship between getting up early in the morning and depression. Both the author and publisher have let the author's occupation be known and this according to a number of reviews of this book is well received by readers. This helps establishing a relationship of trust between the author and the book's readers. In particular, according to reader's reviews of this book, some give an extra credit to the fact that this 'morning person' project has continued for two generations, with Saisho and his father before him. For that reason, some of the Japanese readers have named him the 'master of morning' in their blog postings and in their reviews posted on online bookstores' websites (Amazon.co.jp). In the preface of the book, Saisho explains how he became interested in this subject as follows: 'Taking over the work of my late father, who was also a doctor, I have started to conduct research on morning people and have consulted morning people.'[19] Throughout the book, Saisho often uses his medical knowledge to convince readers to trust his argument, in particular when he advises practising yoga (187-190) and gives tips on how to stimulate the brain using 'self-finger-pressure therapy' (191-7).

The book is published only in hardcover. In the e-mail interview with me, the head of the business and management team at Hans Media said they decided to go hardcover from the first edition because they wanted 'appeal to readers with a highbrow image' [Mo, M., "[Re] This is Hans Media" Email to the author, 6 November 2007] for their first book ever published. When I started to interview Korean publishers in 2005, however, some publishers had a suspicion that this book originally had been published in paperback in its first edition but upon its enormous popularity, Hans Media, the publisher, later decided to change it to a

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[19] The quotations from the three books I have quoted most in this chapter are all my translation from Korean. Sometimes I had to translate quotations from Korean even though they were originally written in English, for instance some quotes in Gong's (2004) book. My priority in translation was translating as directly as possible so the original nuance or cultural differences do not fade away (The principles of translation and other related issues are discussed in the methodology chapter).

hard cover. I suspect that other publishers who had informed me about the unconfirmed suspicion had tried to make sense of this book's unprecedented and unexpected commercial success. In that process, such a commercial strategy seemed to be plausible.

How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time's front cover design (see Figure 1 in Appendix 1) is simple: the background on the front and back is a painted image of blue sky and clouds. The title of the book is printed in three lines: 'Can Double Your Time' is on the top in red and 'Morning Person' is followed in two lines in black and large font, about four times bigger than the font of the first line.[20] The name of the author and translator are underneath the book title on the same line in a small font size. The book has an advert strip of paper bound around it. On the book advert strip of this book, it says:

> 'The book that has changed mornings of the Japan Isles!'
>
> Just by changing mornings, amazing changes will occur in your life. If one book can change your life, this book will be the one.

The first line of the copy, 'The book that has changed mornings of the Japan Isles!' is printed particularly in a large font. It seems to suggest that the influence of the book in Japan is a selling point of this book. The discursive strategy claiming that 'it has worked in Japan' (or any other 'developed countries') is not that peculiar considering that Japan has been a country that Korea has modelled itself upon for a long time. Generally, the inside front cover is used for introduction of an author and translator. Above a brief introduction of the author Hiroshi Saisho and very brief introduction of the translator, there is a list of definitions of a 'morning person' along with brief description on each definition, which is not quite clear who has written it. If I translate the headings, a 'morning person' is:

> Someone who lives in [means, adopts] the rhythm of nature
> Someone who controls a day
> Someone who governs one's life

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[20] The structure of a sentence in Korean is very different from English so a literal translation of the three lines of the title is not the same as the complete title.

Someone who achieves goals of one's life
Someone who enjoys perfect health and true happiness

The line of 'Someone who governs one's life' is followed by '(a 'morning person' is) one who keeps the balance between work and family, and leisure and who live a healthy life physically and psychologically'. Also, 'Someone who enjoys perfect health and true happiness' is followed by 'someone who spends time with family, however short'. These are the only part that the work/life balance issues addressed by the author in this book. However, in its contents, there are no specific explanations on how exactly we can achieve the balance and how to make time to spend with family. All he suggests is becoming a 'morning family' (198). The 14th week's action plan out of 14 weeks 'morning person project' is to 'make all your family participate (in the project).' He claims that, based on his experience, having every member of the family become morning people is a means of making an ideal home/family. The author's family spent 'morning time together for having precious conversations', and therefore, they could wisely cope with many difficulties in their family (203).

In the course of conducting research on this book, I became curious as to the reason why a book was being translated after having been published more than 10 years previously. Given that publishers hunt foreign titles for immediate translation and publishing nowadays, it is quite rare for them to do this. In particular, the self-help genre is more likely to respond to social trends than other literary genres. The original Japanese title is out of print and may have been for some time. Re-publication is still undecided as of 2008, while its Korean translation is still selling well and new reviews are continually appearing in Korea. What does make these differences? It seems that the social context in which the 'morning person' is placed in is rather different in Japan.

On the original advert strip of the Japanese 'morning person' book (1991, 2000), it says: 'When you go back to the cycle of nature, your work and your life will change!!' in a large point size (see Figure 2). This copy is followed by more promises in a smaller font: 'Improving health, using time properly, developing one's potential: (these all can be accomplished by) learning practical methods of 'masters of morning.' By this part, it seems that Japanese and Korean editions are similar in the way they pick up the sound bites. And then on the left-hand side of

the advert strip, 'A book you can read in 60 minutes in the morning on the way to work' is printed in bold black in a circle. This suggests that the average time people spend commuting is more or less an hour each way in Japan and Saisho (2003) has confirmed this in his book. Compared to the U.S. where the average commute time is 25 minutes, it is rather extreme.[21]

In an e-mail interview with me, a Korean 'salaryman' who lives in Tokyo explained the idea of becoming a 'morning person' might be related to the severe traffic jam and notoriously long hours people spending on commuting [Choi, B., "Dear Choon Key Chekar" Email to the author, 20 Mar 2007]. People have voluntarily become morning people largely in order to lessen tiredness caused by the hassles of commuting rather than because they have a big ambition to succeed in the way the 'morning person' discourse suggests. I undertook other interviews with Tokyo-residents and they responded in exactly the same way [Kim, C., "[Re] Your Morning Person Questions" Email to the author, 28 Mar 2007]. This could be one reason why such a large number (and with a great variety) of time management self-help books, including 'morning person' books and sleep guidance, were constantly being published in Japan. Given that the discourse of a 'morning person' was closely associated with success in Korea, this shows how the same text can be interpreted in a completely different way in a different social context. On top of that, one interviewee pointed out how developed and how specified the Japanese publications are. He said in Japan there is every type of book he could think of, from the basic level to the most sophisticated. The fact that a number of time management guidance and 'morning person' books have been published in Japan may not necessarily prove that Japanese society is particularly concerned about this issue.

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[21] According to a study by the Transportation Research, Americans are increasingly working outside their county of residence. 'The study reports 'extreme' commutes of 60 minutes climbing by 50 percent between 1990 and 2000. More Americans are leaving for work between 5 a.m. and 6:30 a.m. and are commuting for longer periods of time. Commuters talk about more time spent on the road, as we continue our series: America at 300 million' (National Public Radio 18 October 2006). According to a survey conducted June 2007 in Korea, average commuting time of 2,100 respondents was 1 hour and 13 minutes (6 June 2007, *Yonhap News*).

It is natural for a publisher that would want to publish the second series or a similar book after enjoying significant success with a book. Encouraged by the unexpected success of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* (2003), Hans Media published the second series of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* subtitled 'How-to-Use Time Guide' in 2004. Its Japanese original title was *How to Effectively Use Time in the 'Morning' for Promising People: 2 Hours before 9 that Will Change Your Life* [my translation] (2003), written by Japanese author Yasumasa Kurokawa (see Figure 4). Given that the first 'morning person' book was such a huge hit, it might be regarded as unpredicted that the publisher chose this book for its second 'morning person' title instead of one of the Saisho's other books. It would appear to be the case that Hans Media chose another author's book because the name of Japanese authors is not that important in the Korean book market, apart from for a small number of Japanese self-help genre fans. In any case, Hans Media held a dominant position by publishing the first book using the term 'morning person' for the book title. As though the publisher is aware of discontent of some readers with the advice from the first 'Morning Person' book — because they found it was impossible to get up as early as five or six in the morning when their toil off the clock — the lead copy printed on the belly band of the second 'Morning Person' book reads as follows:

> "(You) Can earn time without reducing your sleeping!"
>
> The 'length' of time is same to everyone; however the 'depth' of it is different. The powerful time use guide for those who try to be morning people!

However, by comparing the table of contents between the Japanese original and the Korean translation of the second 'morning person' book, it becomes clear that the publisher was desperate to make the book relevant to the first book. In the original Japanese title, the word 'morning person' does not appear. The translation of the original table of contents is as follows:

> Chapter 1: 'Morning hours' superpower
> Life-altering 'morning hours' that increase productivity
>
> Chapter 2: How to make 'time in the morning'
> Changing lifestyle to make time without reducing sleeping hours
> Best sleeping technique using sleeping time

Reinforced sleeping techniques

Chapter 3: How to work in the 'morning hours'
The prioritising skills improving; efficiency dramatically
Working skills that prioritize your work and dramatically improve efficiency
'80/20 working skill', the secret to increasing efficiency and reducing labour
Information technology skills that can speed up your input and output in the morning
Creating another office using your commuting time

In Korean translation, 'morning hours' are replaced by 'morning person'. As a little known new publisher at that time, Hans Media tried to take advantage of the success of their first 'morning person' by keeping the exact same cover design (the only difference was colour, see Figure 5) and layout in their second 'morning person' book.

But this was not the choice of the publisher at all. In fact, at the time of the publication of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time*, another Korean publication house called Book21 had the ownership of copyright of Saisho's latest 'morning person' book at that time which was originally titled, *The Birth of a 'Morning Person' by Getting up Early once a Week!!* [my translation] which was only published in Japan in April 2003. This book was published in Korean under the title of *Success Stories of Morning People* at the end of November 2003, only about two months after the publication of the Hans Media's 'morning person' book. An anecdote from the publishers told me a behind story related to the publication of several other 'morning person' books in interviews with me. The president of Hans Media, who once had worked for Book21, published *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* in a hurry as he knew that a Japanese 'morning person' book translated by Byong-Ho Gong, a celebrated self-help author, was about to be published. The head of the business and management team at Hans Media said they initially planned to publish the second book in the 'morning person' series based on the Korean situation with examples for Korean readers. However, the writing of the second book took longer time than expected while many other publishers published similar books one after another. Within six months time of the publication of the first 'morning person' book, fifteen books that include the 'morning person' in their title were published. Hans Media changed their plan to write a new book

from scratch and decided to find among existing books that could be the second book. After every member of staff in the company was devoted to find a book they could bring out as the second 'morning person' book. Hans Media found a book from one of the Japanese books and published it which was some six months after of the first book.[22] This anecdote shows how the influence of certain people who have huge influence on the process of production affects not only the market but also the product itself (in this case the famous self-help author Byong-Ho Gong's participation as a translator). Conditions of the market are sometimes beyond publisher's control and publishers have to cope effectively with the situation. Unfortunately for Hans Media, their decision to translate another Japanese book written by a different author was criticised by some readers who found that this strategy was only for overly commercial interest.

It is interesting to note that for the first impression of *Success Stories of Morning People* the publisher designed and used two different covers (see Figure 7). Recently I was able to speak to one of the ex-editors who worked for Book21 when the book was published and she told me that at the time publishing a book with two different covers was a new experiment. After the first edition the publisher decided to keep just one of the designs (the one on the right side in Figure 7). The publisher I interviewed did not give much explanation about this decision and the public response to it. I can only imagine that the publisher must have needed a special device to present this book in the market, probably because they must have faced a huge pressure to publish a successful book after the rival runaway success of Saisho's first 'morning person' book. When publicising and marketing their own 'morning person' book Book21 must have faced a dilemma. Indeed it is hard not to relate their book to the rival Hans Media's *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* which was published only one month before — the blurb of one cover says, 'The latest book in 2004 from the author of the *Morning Person*' which is used as a promotional tag appeared on the first line (above the title of the book). The risk they faced was that they could easily be perceived as an

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[22] The book the publisher had wished to publish as the second in the series was published after one year under the title *7 Habits of Successful Koreans* (2006). In an interview with me, a publisher from Hans Media said this book received a good response in terms of sales.

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imitator. Book21's marketing strategy to avoid this perception of imitation was to emphasise Byung-ho Gong's participation as a translator. The front flap of this book was used to introduce both the author and the translator of the book; however, the introduction of the translator (Gong) comes before that of Saisho himself and is twice as long as the author's own introduction.

The book cover of the Japanese original (see Figure 6) emphasised 'Getting up Early Once a Week' most in its title by using the biggest point size. Whereas the Korean translation emphasised 'Success Stories' using a font twice as large for this phrase compared to 'Morning People' in the title layout of the front cover. It seems that the publisher intended to emphasis that this was a 'morning person' book but at the same time tried to distinguish this book with *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* by emphasising 'Success Stories'. The Japanese cover shows an illustration of a man in his pyjamas stretching suggesting he has just got up. In contrast, the Korean cover design, which was dropped, shows a pictorial image of sunrise above a mountain on the background of the book cover suggesting the break of a new dawn. The other Korean cover, which has remained in use, has more resemblance with the Japanese original in terms of using similar colours (orange and blue) and a similar illustration.

Following the huge success of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time*, many more Japanese time management books have been translated into Korean and or some Korean authors have written books with similar titles or using similar concepts. Some books have even just changed the title regardless of the relevance of content to include the phrase 'morning person'. For example, a book originally published under the title *Super High-speed Study Technique* (Ohsami 2003) was translated into Korean in 2004 under the title of *Super High-Speed Study Technique for a Morning Person*. This translation is out of print at the point of writing this thesis and in 2006, another Korean publisher Aifield republished this book under the different title: *There is No Loyal Road to Study but There are Techniques*. It seems to me that the reason why the publisher changed the title of the book is that the keyword of the 'morning person' was not regarded as powerful any more in the book market in 2006. While most 'morning person' books were Japanese translations, Arnold Bennett's *How to Live on 24*

Hours a Day (1910; 2000) was also retranslated under the title of *How Morning People Spend 24 Hours a Day* in 2004.[23]

Here is another example that is worth examining because it shows how exactly the same title can be treated/framed differently by the intention of the publisher. Books offering advice, such as 'how to change your sleep habits and become a morning person,' were published including *How to Have 4 Hours Good Sleep to Become a Morning Person: The Techniques for Sleep of Successful People* (Gobayasi and Yuichi 2004). Originally published in Japan in 2003, the original title was, if I translate as directly as possible: *For a Promising Person, Sleep is Different!: The Epoch-making '24 Hour Revolution' which Makes Life Successful.* The most distinctive difference between the Japanese and Korean titles is that a 'morning person' replaced a 'promising person' in the Korean translation. According to the introduction from Amazon.co.jp, this book argues that 4 hours sleep is enough but there is no particular reference to a 'morning person'.

The cover of the Japanese title (see Figure 8) shows simply the title of the book (white background with black print): the main title occupies the top to two thirds from the bottom of the cover in two lines, so the main title alone occupies half of the whole cover page. Below the first line of the main title are the two co-authors' names in the one-third of the size of the title. Its subtitle, 'The epoch-making '24 hour revolution' that makes life successful', is printed in much smaller font inside a pink bar and it is placed in-between the 2 lines of the title. Underneath the bar are the words 'TIME MANAGEMENT' in English in a shade pale colour. The Korean counterpart is more colourful. The cover of the Korean translation (see Figure 9) is divided into two parts. The upper half is the title of the book. The subtitle 'The technique for sleep of successful people' on the top in very small print and then 'to Become a Morning Person' in the next line in bigger print and underneath is 'How to have 4 Hours Good Sleep' in large print, in particular the number '4' is print the twice size of other words in the title. The other half is advertisements of the content and promises. The background is a slightly blurred

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[23] Including this translation, *How to Live On 24 Hours a Day* has been translated by 8 different publishers since 1995 under different titles.

image of windows and we can see a green forest through them and in front of them, there are two cushions and tea-tray, which is an image easily associated with relaxation. The words 'You, too, can get up early tomorrow morning!' are in the centre of the image in bold red. Underneath this caption are more promising words in smaller size and black reads:

> The secret of sound sleep revealed by a worldwide 'sleep expert'. The very book that has been introduced in a Japanese TV program Special Mission and in the [newspaper] *Mainichi Daily News* and which has led the Japan Isles to vogue of pursuing sound sleep.

The main issues: 'early rising is a key to successes'

The key message of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* can be summarised that early rising guarantees success. The grounds of this promise are two fold: if you become a morning person you ought to become healthier and also you will be more positive. The 'four changes' that the author Saisho (2003: 13-4) promises by becoming a 'morning person' as follows:

> Firstly, you could have a day in which your mind and body experience a harmony and a day full of energy... Secondly, you could remain cool, calm and collected while accomplish your goals.... Thirdly, your attitudes about the world and your life will change... People who stay awake until late at night are relatively emotional, pessimistic and often uneasy. In contrast people who use lots of time early in the morning tend to have a rational, positive and stable attitude toward life... Fourthly, you could enjoy good health and live a long life....

The rest of the book, which is divided into three chapters, is basically invested to extend the points he made above. In the first chapter, 'People who have lost their mornings', Saisho begins with providing anecdotes of a white-collar worker and a college student. They had carried on a 'nocturnal lifestyle' and eventually ruined their life as a consequence: both of them have damaged their spirit and health because they did not realise how important it is to spend time properly in the morning. Using his medical knowledge, the author explains the physical and psychological benefits of being a 'morning person.' For example, he insists on the benefits of having a sleep between 11 to 5 and simply by getting up at 5 you can 'earn 4 hours' (63). Until the author turns his focus to success stories in the

Chapter 2, this book seems to easily fit into a health and fitness category. Most contents of the first chapter address various health issues such as how to get sound sleep and how to keep the healthy lifestyle. In the second chapter, which is adequately titled 'A morning person is bound to succeed', Saisho builds up the correlation between the lifestyle as a 'morning person' and success. Moreover, throughout the book, the author suggests that becoming a 'morning person' would make you not just become better at work but also become a better person by enabling you to develop a better personality.

Furthermore, giving the example of a Japanese company, the author argues that the more morning people the organisation has the better the organisation becomes (89-91). Influenced by one of the executive members the company has become a 'morning company' and the best company in its area as a consequence (90). The company has weekly English and Chinese classes at 7:30 a.m. and arranges every important meeting in the early morning. By having meetings in the morning, people come up with better ideas as they are less likely to be interrupted by phone calls and visitors and accordingly, the time they spend on meetings is considerably reduced. I suspect that the organisational benefits suggested by the author may impress the Korean upper-managers and owner-managers. This book may encourage them not only to recommend reading this book to their subordinates but also introduce similar measures in their team or company. When the 'morning person syndrome' was at its peak in 2004 some Korean companies tried to take advantage of the popularity of the 'morning person' in their management strategies by, for instance, arranging early morning meetings or establishing an earlier start to the working day.

To summarise the flow of ideas of this book, it starts with the relationship between health and the 'morning person' lifestyle and this lifestyle is shown to be closely related to personal productivity, which is eventually an important element of the organisational productivity. I suspect that this is more likely to make sense in a society where a collectivist tradition remains valid. A dilemma that many white-collar workers are facing is that under the new management system individual competence and performance have become more important than ever before while the importance of performance as a team is also emphasised. In interviews and personal conversations many Korean white-collar workers said it

was still difficult or even unacceptable to leave their office when their colleagues, not to mention their superiors, were still at work. Finally, the third part of the book, which occupies half of its volume, is a 'how to be a morning person' guide (Chapter 3), which the author titles '100 days (14 weeks) project.' It suggests a week-by-week action plan to become a 'morning person.' In the closing remarks, the author reassures the reader how important time management is by saying, 'Nature gives us no more than 24 hours a day. Moreover, this applies to everyone equally. Time is the only resource that is given to everyone equally' (205). As the title suggests, the biggest promise of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* (2003) is that you can get more out of life and lead a productive life simply by becoming a 'morning person.' In addition, the author promises this by suggesting you can become a 'morning person' by reducing the hours you sleep, and when you become a 'morning person' your personality changes, that way leading to greater success. In other words, 'double your time' means doubling 'working' life at the cost of sleeping hours and earning success in exchange. This message becomes clear by analysing two of the most distinctive ideas that underpin the author's argument. They are firstly, sleep can be controlled and economised and secondly early rising assures 'positive thinking' which will eventually lead you to success.

According to the book becoming a morning person involves two practices: advancing the time you get up (and also the time you go to bed) and controlling the length of your sleep (in other words, reducing hours you sleep). This book talks about not only how to get up early but also how to control the length of sleep by improving the quality of sleep. This measure is not so unthinkable when we consider how people cope with time famine: we try to make more time by sleeping less. As Bunting points out, 'We sleep, on average, one and a half fewer hours per night than our ancestors at the turn of the century, which is around five hundred hours a year less than we need' (2004: 200). Saisho argues that by rearranging our daily timetable, as 'science' has proved, we can actually increase the quality of sleep and can thus shorten sleeping hours. What some time management books, including Saisho's book, suggest is that one ought to find when is the best time of the day or night for them to sleep as well as how long to sleep since both are important elements in increasing personal efficiency. Moreover, in the age of cutting-edge science and technology, we are more likely

to be convinced by the language of 'science' (in Saisho's case, a medical science), in particular when the resource of time is so precious. When an experienced medical expert says that the less you sleep (than you normally do), the more likely you are to be successful, there is no more attractive promise than this to most people who spend much of their time at work.

Another distinctive feature of the message is associating the morning with 'positive thinking' and success. The benefits of being a 'morning person' are many, including light traffic or less crowded public transportation amongst many other fringe benefits that might not be immediately apparent. However, these benefits are minor compared to what the author promises in his book. The 'morning person' lifestyle, the author maintains, will result in one staying healthy and efficient at work and, accordingly, 'morning people are bound to succeed' (also, the title of the second chapter of the book), which this book repeatedly emphasises. In order to support his argument, Saisho (2003) assumes, like many other self-help books, a very simple and almost naïve binary dichotomy between (early) morning and the rest of the day; and between a 'morning person' and those who do not fit into the category of a 'morning person'. Originally, the term 'morning person' was used to refer to someone who is much more productive and able to do his or her best work earlier in the day.

The author keeps putting emphasis on the word 'morning', which can mean many things and imply many different things. This is where the author tries to make the argument that a 'morning person' and 'positive thinking' have a natural relationship. The author's ideological association between morning, positive thinking and success is revealed in this part. Accordingly, emphasis is often placed upon individual responsibility. As Woodstock (2005) has pointed out, 'this belief in power of thought holds that individuals can change their lives, their relationships, their jobs, and their personalities by thinking differently, through the power of thought alone' (156). Furthermore, 'positive thinking claims that people can become healthy and happy by thinking positive thoughts, thereby implying that individuals in isolation can accomplish the restorative healing regularly attributed to social interaction' (2005: 155). Even though being a 'morning person' or a 'night person' cannot be good or bad as it is from the beginning of the text the author attempts to associate morning with a number of

positive values and benefits that ultimately leads to success. This is one reason why it is not likely to be resisted by anybody. While many other benefits of being a 'morning person' that are suggested by the author mostly relate to health, the author repeatedly argues throughout the book that the virtue lies not in health but elsewhere (i.e. the personality).' In order to make his point he compares two hypothetical white-collar workers — 'your colleague' and 'you' — who have two contrary lifestyles: your colleague is a 'morning person' while you are not. For example, the author argues in the preface (2003: 9-10):

> What makes the difference between you and your colleague? You might come up with different excuses such as your work is too far from your home; your wife's support is not good enough; your team members are not competent; the conservative management style of your company doesn't motivate you; you have so many appointments after work because you're a people person; you have to work overtime due to your heavy workload... None of those excuses can justify your problem. In fact, your only problem is your 'mornings'.

Taking an example from different responses to the notoriously long commuting time, once more Saisho (2003: 96-97) emphasises the 'beneficial' personality of a morning person in terms of 'attitude' toward everyday life as follows:

> Commuting time is more likely to get longer and longer. Many people criticise the government for its neglect and lack of measures to solve this problem... In my view, the critics are more likely to be night people. I do not mean that criticism is all bad... While you are complaining, however, your life does not improve or even becomes worse and worse... We need to actively find solutions by ourselves rather than just blame others or circumstances... In every moment, under the same circumstance, someone may regard the underground as a wonderful place to read a book while others think it of as a place that makes you tired first things in the morning.

The author argues that trying to change yourself (or change your thinking) is much faster and easier than changing the social system, which is a typical approach to problems in self-help books. He adds that making criticisms should not be a priority and the effort to change the situation should come first (2003: 97). To sum up, the idea of 'morning person' is closely related to the ideology of self-responsibility and social conformism. A 'morning person' is equated with someone who is self-motivated, a responsible individual who is adaptive rather than critical of the social, political and economic systems in which she/he is situated and does not demand changes in society. In this context, personality is judged by the standard of productivity. Positive thinking is valued because it is

more likely to be productive and while you are complaining your competitors will precede you so you cannot afford to make criticism. The 'morning person' discourse goes far beyond the benefits in health or a lifestyle, or sleeping habits. It is about the attitude toward society and ultimately, it is about productivity. This is reason why this book is categorised as a success manual rather than a health and fitness guidebook. For example, in an endorsement of this book, which is appeared on the back cover, a company executive insists on the connection between early rising and success as follows:

> The proposition that 'the person who controls mornings is bound to succeed' is widely agreed upon by businesspersons. The proof is that various breakfast meetings are well attended and in the US, it has been observed that the earlier an employee comes to work, the better car he or she will drive. (Kum-ryong Lee, CEO of Inicis Inc.)

Claming that the earlier you come to work, the more likely you are to own a better car, which is the metaphor for success in this context, may sound absurd. However, this suggests how the 'morning person' was positioned in Korean society. The 'morning person theory' is often supported by bald 'statistics' produced by some news outlets and frequently reproduced as straight news or a part of feature coverage by other mass media. For instance, the Korean popular media have highlighted survey results such as 67 Korean executive members out of 70 answering, 'I'm a morning person' and that of 63 respondents saying they normally get up before 6 in the morning (*JoongAng Ilbo*, 14 June 2004). Similar surveys and interview articles occasionally appear in the popular media. The latest 'morning person' survey says 59.2% out of 200 Korean executive members get up between 5 to 6 in the morning and 8.3% 'before 5' (*Economist*,[24] 10 April 2007). However, as far as I am aware, there has not been a single mention of the kind of jobs where one has no choice but to be a 'morning person', for example menial jobs like street cleaners done by the underprivileged (who often start work very early indeed). There is no explanation why some people cannot accomplish social success even if they are not only a 'morning person' but also work hard for

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[24] To avoid the confusion, this is a weekly magazine published by the Korean daily newspaper *JoongAng Ilbo* not The Economist which is an English-language weekly news and international affairs publication owned by 'The Economist Newspaper Ltd' and edited in London.

long hours. The promise that anybody can accomplish success if he or she becomes a morning person is in fact the mere belief that could apply to those who are from middle class.

After-hours — The Magic of 3 Hours after Work

The next book I will analyse suggests that the idea of using time outside of regular working hours is not limited to before hours. It seems to approach to time management in very different ways; however, it shares its idea and ideology with the 'morning person' book a great deal.

The background of the text

This after-hours guidebook written by Japanese author Akira Nishimura was originally published in 1998 in Japan under the title *New Way of Thinking on 3 Hours after Work: Self-reformation Plan Using 60 Hours a Month* [my translation]. The Japanese original title is out of print at the point of writing this thesis. The author: Born in 1965, Akira Nishimura worked for NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation), a Japanese public broadcaster, and has worked for TV TOKYO since 1992. He has produced economy and business programs. Nishimura's vocational experience as a presenter and producer is represented in many parts of *3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time*. He writes personal anecdotes about how he manages to make time to collect information for his programs and make new plans for new programs. In addition, his interest and knowledge in the economy allows him to confidently use economic terms that may not be familiar to all readers: for instance, 'required expenses versus invested expenses in time' (2003: 30). Moreover, I suspect that his unique suggestion that one should regard every 15 minutes as a unit in one's timetable seems to come from the nature of broadcasting in which the unit of time is more segmented and precise. In the book, he claims that he has been able to author a number of books thanks to his 'after work time management': he has published more than 60 self-help titles since 1990.

However, like many other Japanese self-help authors, Nishimura is very little known to a wider Korean audience even though his 13 books have been published in Korean since 1997. This is one of the largest numbers for a Japanese author who had his/her books translated into Korean. It seems that the main reason is language. It is difficult for non-English authors to build an internationally acknowledged reputation because they are more likely to have bigger market and easy to cross borders of English speaking countries. On the other hand, American blockbuster authors, such as Jack Welch, Warren Buffett and Tom Peters, who sometimes have their own section in major Korean on/off-line bookshops, have a more advantageous position compared to their Japanese counterparts because their books are more easily accessible to wider audiences. Nishimura has written many books on business/marketing strategies, targeting a wider range of readers rather than just professionals or academics, but most of his Korean translations are about organisation of skills such as utilising Post-its tips that were received well by Korean readers.

A small independent publisher called Haebaragi publishes its Korean translation. In December 2003, when the idea of 'morning person' was becoming more and more popular, Haebaragi advertised *3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time* as time management guidance for a 'night person'. However, it is hard to say that this book is particularly related to either a morning or nothing to do with a night person. The author has not referred to a morning person or night person in his book. This advertising strategy was related to the exceptional success of the 'morning person' by copying '~ person' formula, the publisher hoped to appeal to the people who liked the idea of making time for self-management by becoming a 'morning person' but could not adapt to the lifestyle of a 'morning person' because of their personal circumstances such as their occupation, preferences and old habits. This targeting seemed to work because some readers said they were attracted to the idea that they could make time for self-development without making efforts to be a 'morning person.'

The book was published in soft cover. Even though it was edited with wide margin it was only 158 page-long, which is quite small for a hardback. As I explained earlier, the lengthier the volume is, the more it is likely to be published in hard cover. The Japanese original is also published in paperback. The front

cover design (see Figure 10) is composed of the main title 'New Way of Thinking on 3 Hours after Work' in black, the subtitle 'Self-reformation Plan Using 60 Hours a Month' in red along with, the authors name and an image of a briefcase wide open and full of cloth and documents. In the main title the number 3 is particularly emphasised just like the Korean translation. It is wrapped around with a belly-band and the lead copy [if I translate as direct as possible]: Come on, let's dig out this buried 'time resource' in our daily life! 'Dig out' can be interpreted as 'find out' and 'buried' as 'hidden' etc. Meanwhile, in the Korean title, the whole cover page (see Figure 11) is orange and prints on covers are black and white. On the top of the front cover, the title of the book appears: 'finding new time' on the top in a small font and in the next line, 'after work' and '3 hours' placed. The number 3 in '3 hours' appears particularly a large size and white. The name of author and translator follow on the same line in a small print. In the middle of the front cover, there is an illustration showing a scene of a city at night: all the buildings are lit. Extracts from the book fill the both front and back cover, and are even inside the front cover. For example, one paragraph, which also appears in the very last part of the book and is printed on the front cover says:

> Companies and salarymen are desperate to survive. We are living in an era when we cannot survive if we are ordinary. Therefore, I would like to suggest securing your own 3 hours after work aiming to reconstruct you life by turning a crisis into an opportunity. Now, we have to discover more time outside of the regular working hours that restrict us, and use it for self-development.

On the blue belly-band, two lines of blurb are printed. The main line says: 'A book for a "night person"' and the 'night person' is printed as big as the size of the book title on the front cover. The blurb continues as follows: 'Win the battle of securing 3 hours of your own. After-hours determine your future!' The inside back cover contains adverts for the three books along with the front cover and brief introduction of each book. Or course it is the same publisher which publishes them, and they are all written by Japanese authors. They are, if I translate their titles as directly as possible: *Techniques of Making Memorandum* (Kenji Sakato 2005), *Think like Beginner, Act like Professional* (Dakeo Ganade 2003), and *Techniques of Sleeping: The Primary Condition of Success* (Mitzo Sasaki 2003).

The main issue: the importance of becoming a '24 hour-person'

The key message of *3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time* is if you spend three hours after work for self-development you will succeed. In the preface to *3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time*, Nishimura starts with comparing a salaried man to someone 'embracing a time bomb', because his job is not secure. The pessimistic scenario continues:

> [He] does not know when his company might go bankrupt or when he may get fired. Bonuses might stop, in which case he would no longer be able to pay his mortgage. No matter how big company you are hired is, you cannot feel assured [about your future] (2003: 5).

Taken that the phrase above also appears on the top of the back cover, it seems to be emphasised by the publisher. In the preface (5-9), the author defines his book as a 'strategic time management doctrine of after-hours' and he says it is particularly necessary in the era of economic depression and insecure employment. Like many other self-help books this book starts with what are problems, discusses the problems, and then finishes with solutions. The first chapter ('Why 3 hours after work [are important]?') is persuading that it is necessary to invest time outside of working hours for self-development. It is important to use three hours after work 'properly' because:

> We should become a manager of our time... A salaryman works 9 hour a day on average. The manager of your company lays responsibility on you — as an employee — only 9 hours everyday, however, the time you have responsibility on yourself — as the manager of your life — is 24 hours a day. As an employee, you need to work only 9 hours but as the manager of your life you have to work through the 24 hours [a day]. Among 24 hours a day, you spend 9 hours at work and idle away the remaining 15 hours without being aware that what you have done. If you think you are the person who is managing your life you can hardly think that [after work] just return home and drink some beer and then go to bed (2003: 28, emphasis is added).

According to this statement, it seems that there are only two realms in our life — (paid) work and non-(paid) work. This binary opposition can easily be identified in many work-oriented career guidance books such as Gong's (2004). Even though this book was not particularly popular amongst the public it remains a meaningful text because it offers comprehensive advice on how to manage 'free time.' It provides various time-use tips for most of the occasions you can think of; not only how to use time outside of regular hours such as before and after work

and during the weekends but also how to make the most of time when you commute and when you are on a business trip. The book *60 Minutes during Commuting* (Contemporary Information Engineering Institute, 2005) is an example of a book that provides advice on how to make commuting time useful and even enjoyable (yet still in a productive way). I had originally selected this book for in-depth textual analysis but later excluded it as its content significantly overlapped with *3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time* — a book which proved to be more open to textual analysis. It advises workers to invest in their commuting time by reading books or learning foreign languages to 'improve your performance at work'.

Through the second chapter ('Finding 3 new hours') and third chapter ('Life-changing 3 hours after work'), the book introduces a wide range of ideas about how to gain three extra work hours a day. The fourth chapter ('What to do to reach the goals') suggests what to do with the time that becomes available. The suggestions are something you can find in any other career guidance, for example: study to survive, invest for the future, produce new ideas, read newspapers and books, secure and extend human networks, do things for self-development, set up clear goals, enjoy your hobbies and do what is fun for you. In particular, in chapter 5, the author talks about how to spend weekends: '3 hours during weekends.' The final part of the book (Chapter 6) introduces '21-success-strategies aimed at using 3 hours after work.' Here the strategies include:

- Setting a major goal and then setting up smaller targets
- Planning flexibly
- Not letting yourself do something against your will but doing what you enjoy
- Not letting your 3 hours after work become confused with working overtime
- Seeking understanding and cooperation from your family

Finally, in the postscript (2003: 157-9), which Nishimura titles 'A crisis is an opportunity', he argues that society has become performance-oriented rather than controlled by all sorts of 'connections.' Therefore, the opportunities of promotion and success are open to anyone as long as he or she has 'ability' and it is impossible to develop the ability within the regular working hours. That is the reason why the author argues that we should become '24 hour-people' who are ready to use all available time for self-development.

Based on the awareness of this economically insecure reality, Nishimura (2003) emphasises the importance of a mental switchover from 'company man' to 'self-made man' or 'intrapreneur (entrepreneur within company)', which means adopting a responsibility for one's own destiny. The starting point is to invest your time in self-development. Slogans contained within *3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time* include: 'Win a victory over the war of securing your own 3 hours! Your future depends on how you spend time after work!' Key advice includes, 'If you did not manage to make three hours — because of business trips or social gatherings after work — the next day you have to compensate for this by getting up early in the next morning as a 'punishment' (2003: 61-70). The author here appeals to public anxiety and threatens them that they cannot survive in the competitive world without investing every possible time to self-development. However, Nishimura's advice is not restricted to after hours or just 3 hours a day. What he actually suggests is that one needs to be both a morning person and an evening person. In other words, for real success, one should become a '24 hours person.' His final object of time management is weekends, 'Weekends are the extension of 'the 3 hours after work project' (104-5). His idea is the main content of Byeong-Ho Gong's celebrated Korean self-help book, which I will analyse next.

Weekends — the Extension of Five Working Days

The third and final book I examine in detail is *Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends* (2004). This book is a particularly significant text in many ways. Firstly, it was written by a celebrated Korean self-development 'evangelist' Byeong-Ho Gong and was written the most recently of the three books. It is more current, more 'Korean' and therefore more relevant: the content directly relates to conditions of Korean society and examples and anecdotes are also Korean. Compared to two Japanese authors of the old school, Gong seems to be very well aware that some readers may criticise books if they do not address issues from different aspects including those issues that women are more likely to have. At a glance this book seems to deserve to claim that it is useful for both men and women and both white- and blue-collar workers. Gong tries to cover the stories of different people in different circumstances and situations. However, his argument does not go beyond perfunctory balance.

The background of the text

Because of the rapid growth in the self-development market in Korea over the last ten years, the number of people who have become involved in this sector has mushroomed. However, Byeong-Ho Gong was a pioneer in the Korean self-help industry even before that genre became so popular in Korea and he is one of the few authors of this genre who has established a privileged position. Born in 1960, Gong obtained a doctoral degree in economics at Rice University, USA in 1987. He served as the first director of the 'Center for Free Enterprise', the think-tank institution that has advocated the free market economy, between 1997 and 2000. After briefly serving as a CEO of two venture capital companies, in 2001 he suddenly announced that he would work as a freelancer. In his writings, Gong often makes mention of his own experience at the time when he switched from being an 'employee' (if a director of an organisation or a senior executive is an employee) to a self-employed person or a 'one-person company' named the Gong Byeong-Ho Institute. For that reason, he is often addressed either as Dr. Gong or Director Gong in media coverage and in the publicity for his publications. Within the ten years since 1997, he has published more than ninety-six titles of self-help and business books (seventy titles are on sale at the moment) and in particular 60 percent of them have been written since 2001 when he opened the Gong Byeong-Ho Institute. In his website his publications are categorised into six groups including: the 'reading notes' series; the self-management series; management skills; the 'leadership series for pre-teens'; a series for teenagers. His first trade book, *Gong Byeong-Ho's Self-management Notes* (2001) became a bestseller for Kyobo Book and on Yes24.com. Other representative publications include: *The World in 10 Years' Time* (2005); *Korea in 10 Years' Time* (2004), in which he dealt with the preparation for the future of Korea in changing world.

Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends (2004) is published only in hardback. Taking the fact that the publisher Hainaim also published Gong's other book *Life is Economics: Gong Byeong-Ho's New Economics* (2006) in hardcover, they seem to believe that Gong can sell in the pricy format because he is so-called a 'brand name author', whose books are sold by its name/because of the author's name. Gong does not exclusively publish his book with one publisher: in fact, most of Gong's books are published in paperback. It is clear that the author's

name is emphasised here and there in the book but in particular on its cover (see Figure 12). Compared to the other two books, the name of author is printed in a large font and placed in a vertical circle highlighted with a colour. A bust shot of the author is appears both on the book advert strip of orange colour and on the front flap: Gong wears white shirt and tie and is smiling. On the promotion belly-band, it says:

> [Do you think] weekends are a time for taking a day-off? Yes, you might have a day off at work. However, your life never stops — The strategies suggested by Gong Byeong-Ho for successful weekend management!

His other books also highlight his name, for example, by putting his name in the title such as the book *Gong Byeong-Ho's Self-management Notes*. Sometimes, his picture appears, on their book advert strip or some other pages, even in books that he had not authored.

The main issue: family doesn't come first because family is important?

Having 'how to manage weekend that is one-third of our lifetime' as a promotion tag of the book, Gong begins his books with explaining why the weekend is so important (Chapter 1 'We Should Not Waste Our Weekend Anymore') and explains what is wrong with the way ordinary people spend their weekend (Chapter 2 'Now, How is Your Weekend?'). In the next chapter, he focuses on his own experience of 'weekend management' (Chapter 3 'Gong Byeong-Ho's Success Story of Weekend Management') and then finishes with tips on how to spend weekends (Chapter 4 'Success Strategies for Improving Competitive Power Using Weekends'). According to Gong, we are likely to waste and even ruin weekends (and the following weekdays as a consequence) because we have wrong ideas, or as the author called 'stereotypes', of how to spend a weekend. The first stereotype is to regard each weekend as 'compensation for the past five weekdays (of hardworking)' (31); the second one is to unconditionally regard weekends as 'the time for relaxation and doing nothing' (33); the last stereotype is that 'we should serve our family in the weekend' (36). Accordingly, his advice centres on how to beat those 'stereotypes' and how to use this precious time for self-development.

Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends was published in February 2004 just a few months before the five-day workweek system or a 40-hours workweek became effective in Korea from July in the same year following a long-running dispute between labour and management. As I explained in the introductory chapter, the labour expected this major change in the working time regulation would improve work/family balance and the quality of life. However, Gong's main argument is rather contrary to the social trend: success at work is more important for the happiness of your family in the long term than spending time with your family. Here is an extract from the Gong's book showing the author's point of view on the reduction of working hours:

> As the era of lifetime employment is over now and the legal working hours have been reduced [from 6 day to 5 day working week from July 2004], what has been introduced into the workplace is an unspoken contract between an employer and employees. The more we have the right to use disposable time, the more we seem to be seen as being responsible for our own future and value of ourselves (as an employee). Whether to welcome this change or not is a secondary matter (26).

'The merit of time over the weekends is that (you can) use (it) as (you) decide and as you wish (to do) and (you can) choose.' What the author suggests as examples of how much autonomy you have are 'either sleep as much as (you) likes or drink all night or play golf or meet up with friends, or read books, or *devote* all (your) time to (your) children' (emphasis added). Ultimately, however, as many other self-help authors, Gong argues that the changes are given and we do not have any choice but to accept them. It is not very surprising regarding that the ultimate goal of self-help texts is to tell readers how to adapt and cope with changes rather than criticising those changes. Furthermore, Gong reveals his pro-capitalist disposition by suggesting that even though working hours have been reduced, individual labourer's time belongs to the employer. Gong's measure against the 'unavoidable trend' of unstable employment is to use weekend time productively; however, one of his suggestions is particularly problematic. Gong argues that the secret of success is 'liberating yourself from the stereotype that weekends should be devoted to serve your family' (30). The notion of 'serving one's family' does not translate well directly into English — 'spending time with the family' probably makes more sense to an English speaking audience (see methodology chapter for reflection on such translation issues).

Compared to the previous two books, Gong's book surely is aware of family life. However, this awareness does not necessarily mean that he values it. From the translated extract above, what the author thinks of the ways to spend weekend is nothing much to do with housework, it is simply beyond his consideration. He mentions 'devote time to children' but what he means by that is not clear at all: could be a part of childcare such as helping homework, playing with children. However, the difficulty in translating this idea from Korean to English provides an interesting insight into a key difference between Korean and many English-speaking cultures. Having a sense of obligation that we (read 'male-breadwinners') should spend time with family during the weekend suggests the absence of the head of household from 'family' life most of the time during the week. For them to spend time with the family is a (special) 'service' which is not included in the 'job description', of most Korean male-breadwinners.

However, who is more likely to have these stereotypes on the weekend? For example, who would expect that weekends are relaxed and duty free? Is he referring to working mothers who juggle between a demanding job and housework? The stereotypes the author demands readers break from are actually those which more closely relate to many male-breadwinners (in both single-income and dual-income families[25]) rather than to female members in a family. In Korea, family values come before anything else and ironically, the family has become more central to Korean society as the nuclear family has become more prevalent since industrialisation in the 1970s. It might be explained by the fact that the transformation from the extended family to nuclear family is not just a matter of size. Rather, it means that a family unit is separated not just from its extended family but also from its regional community and more importantly, from the strong tradition of communitarian culture. In spite of the domesticity of Korean family, ironically, Koreans, as far as I have observed, spend very little time with family. One of my British friends has told me after spending a few

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[25] A number of studies show that not only full-time homemakers but also women who work full-time outside the home carry out the majority of housework. Additionally, there is little difference between them in the time spent on housework (Sung and Cha 2001; National Statistical Office 2005) and only 8% of population share homework equally (*Hankyoreh* 30 March 2003).

weeks in Seoul and other cities in Korea on holiday how surprised she was to see how little time Korean families spent together. She visited a few (middle class, based on what she described) families while she was there and she found that they hardly see each other let alone spend time together simply because they work so hard and, as she put it, 'ridiculously long hours.'

About the role of head of household (which means primary breadwinner) Gong asks: 'Is there any thing more important than taking responsibility for the security of family in these uncertain times?' (36) His personal experience follows:

> In my case, I have prioritised my own self-development project. I even put housework after that and my wife agreed my decision. I do not intend to claim that my decision was right but the important thing is I applied my own perspective to service for my family rather than be bound to stereotypes and I had a mutual agreement with my family (37).

However, he does not explain how he and his wife reached this agreement. Or it seems that he did not even need to because:

> It was very fortunate that my wife had a same idea on this [= how to spend time during the weekend]. If it's not necessary for me to go or if it is not something I have to do, my wife was willing to take care of it on her own. I do not know what she really feels, but I can imagine that she thought investing that time in other things would have served our family much better (37).

Although he seems to highly respect his wife's understanding and contribution to his career, his wife seems totally absent from powerful roles in decision making. He stresses the importance of reaching mutual agreement but in his personal life he did not even have to ask to his wife for understanding because she granted it voluntarily. The understanding that he is grateful is as a matter of fact never agreed or voiced but generally granted by his 'understanding' wife and Gong claims that he was lucky. This reminds me of one of the traditional values of Buddhist philosophy: understanding each other without the use of language.

Different from the two books I have analysed in the previous sections, Gong quotes from a wide range of books in order to support his points. Drawing upon David Brooks's book *Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There*, he (2004: 27) asserts: 'I am sure that the 'Bourgeois Bohemian' ought to be the model for most knowledge workers.' He adds *'unless (you) decide to*

work less and live poor, every knowledge worker has no choice but to make ceaseless efforts to upgrade their life' (emphasis added). In his argument, downsizing and living poor are dubiously paired as a cause and effect. The concept of downsizing is regarded an absurd or unthinkable life choice rather than an option to him but and as if he is saying 'nobody seriously wants downsizing, right?' Followed by hasty assumptions about downsizing, in order to augment his argument, he ironically quotes Robert B. Reich from *The Future of Success: Working and Living in the New Economy* (2000) at length whose ultimate argument is downsizing and whose book was translated in Korean under the suggestive title *Rich Slaves* (2001). This quotation comes from a chapter titled 'The Lure of hard work — Yes, a problem' and Reich claims:

> As paid work pushes on the rest of life, other things, inevitably, are compressed, or pushed out. Substantial public attention has been focused on the dwindling time parents give to their children. According to the White House Council of Economic Advisers, American parents now spend, on average, twenty-two fewer hours each week with their children than did parents thirty years ago. Other aspects of life are being pushed out as well—friends, spouses and partners, voluntary work in the community, housework, one's 'calling,' tasks that are enjoyable as well as those that aren't, unpaid activities that are deeply fulfilling as well as those that are regarded as mere duties.
> Because of the press of paid work, everything else has to be more regimented: children bustled from activity to activity according to ever more precise schedules; weekend calendars crammed with errands, events, drop-bys, fleeting meetings; upcoming vacations planned far in advance with contingency plans in case something goes awry, And all the while, there are continuing preoccupations—work yet undone, clients not yet pursued, deadlines looming—that distract attention from the rest of life even when you're trying to live it, like noisy traffic just outside the living room window. (2000: 119)

In fact, what Reich describes in this quotation is how time famine, which means across a society, a lack of free or leisure time, is getting worse in modern life in both the family and the work place. And, in consequence, how non-paid activities such as voluntary work and socialising are given much less priority. However, in *Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends* (2004) Gong uses this quote completely out of context to strengthen his 'weekend management' gospel: we are all suffering from time shortage so there is not time to be wasted even during weekends. Right after the quotation from Reich, Gong argues: 'the reality that Reich describes is the reason why we should not spend Sundays holding the remote control and wandering between channels.' Gong adds, 'this phenomenon

has been rapidly spreading to the American middle class... In the case of Korea, this is what the leading group strongly feels' (28-9). The style of lengthy quotation is uncommon in the self-help genre but Gong quotes from many other books. I think it is partly because of his background as an academic (he has a PhD in Economics) but also he has tried to emphasise his wide-range of reading that is stressed in this book and in other writings. By quoting a famous figure like Robert B. Reich, he can rely on the 'authority' of such a source and if readers are familiar with Reich's background as a secretary of labour under President Bill Clinton's administration this would help to give his argument fairness and balance.

This book is also tapped into various forms of 'common sense'[26] or anxieties that ordinary people are deeply rooted in Korean society: that is something Koreans do not feel particularly proud of but certainly exist. This banality of Gong's message seems to me the secret of Gong's popularity as a self-help author. He appeals to ordinary readers by writing about what people already know of, or desire, rather than what people should think or what is right and wrong. For example, one of the anxieties that ordinary Koreans have is to ensure their wealth is passed on to their offspring. Although this has caused many consequent social problems (e.g. hard-working, corruption, and family centeredness among many others), the author takes this for granted and even sympathises with it. The author himself is also free from any moral judgement. In the book he even says: 'In my case, I have prioritised self-development (above any other things). Even I put housework after that (= self-development) and my wife agreed on my decision. *I do not intend to claim that my decision was right* but the point is I applied my own perspective to service for family and my family had a mutual agreement' (36-7, emphasis added). This is closely related to the author's ideological stance: he is a social libertarian and individual choice is most important in his ideology. In the following sections, I will continue the analysis of

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[26] As Faircolugh (1989: 92) pointes out 'common sense' contributes to sustaining existing power relations. He says: 'Naturalization is the royal road to common sense. Ideologies come to be ideological common sense to the extent that the discourse types which embody them become naturalized. This depends on the power of the social groupings whose ideologies and whose discourse types are at issue. In this sense, common sense in its ideological dimension is itself an *effect of power*. What comes to be common sense is thus in large measure determined by who exercises power and domination in a society or a social institution.'

the books based on the main issues and the rhetoric that they have in common.

Shared Themes

In this section, I will examine the shared messages of all three books, including those which focus on three issues that are relevant to time politics. Firstly, all three attribute the current problems, or even the crisis as a whole, to uncertain social and economic circumstances. Although the current social situation is often portrayed as beyond one's control (including the historic economic downturn and consequent instability in the labour market), the authors argue that as individuals we can manage to get these circumstances completely under control. The solution that they all offer is time management. By framing time as something under one's control and as equally given to everyone, it follows that social problems become the responsibility of the individual as the management of time is framed as being an inherently personal issue. This is the point, the first proposition leads to the second proposition. These books suggest that as only you can be in charge of your future and (or but) you can do whatever you want as long as you manage your time strategically, you need to achieve a revolutionary identity transformation — from 'organisation man' to brand 'you'. This proposition is deeply problematic because the sale of the self makes relentless demands on one's life which result in the third point — 'find more time for more work'. Yet this transformation is impossible to achieve without changing the fixed idea that you are working for your job. As you are now working for brand 'you' not for your company or your boss, time for your work could be more enjoyable.

'You're on your own, but you can have it all'

The imperative of time management originates from the threat of job insecurity, and one of the qualities required to survive is flexibility. As Ulrich Beck (2000) spelled out in *The Brave New World of Work*:

> 'Labour market flexibility' has become a political mantra... Calls are made everywhere for greater 'flexibility' — or, in other words, that employers

> should be able to fire employees with less difficulty. Flexibility also means a redistribution of risks away from the state and the economy towards the individual. The jobs on offer become short-term and easily terminable (i.e. 'renewable')... And finally, flexibility means: 'Cheer up, your skills and knowledge are obsolete, and no one can say what you must learn in order to be needed in the future' (Beck 2000: 3).

Insecurity in employment is even celebrated in this new labour market, as if the strong determination to succeed of individuals will definitely bring ultimate positive changes. In many cases this somewhat harsh situation of life transformation is self-dependent on the following logic, which has two contradictory discursive effects: 'You're on your own, but you can have it all.' We are living in a society where no one can secure his or her lifetime job anymore. As Dyer and Humphries point out (2002: 3):

> Individuals are invited to plan their career within a wider context of economic change, job insecurity, decreased wages and conditions, and erosion of social safety nets. [However,] [w]e are not invited, for example, to challenge the appropriateness of current structures. Thus contemporary career discourse may be viewed as an extension of disciplinary techniques designed to normalise behaviour and attitudes to accept uncritically the wider political and economic changes resulting from globalisation and flexibility strategies as natural and inevitable.
>
> All (potential) problems seem to come from this basic insecurity in employment but at the same time this new era is seen to be welcomed by many because now we can be whatever we want as long as we put in enough and constant effort together with a strong will and the proper guidance. From this perspective, the mantra defining this new labour market is 'crisis becomes opportunity.' 'Turning a misfortune into a blessing' is old wisdom and almost reflects philosophical optimism. However, in the peak of capitalist era this is a profoundly class-bound statement — crisis is opportunity only for those people who have enough wealth.

Transformation from 'salaryman' to 'Me Inc.'

As Beck notes 'More and more individuals are encouraged to perform as a 'Me & Co.', selling themselves on the marketplace' (2000: 3). In *Workplaces of the future,* Thompson and Warhurst (1998) point out the changing ideal of employees:

> As the millennium approaches popular discourse is deluged with futurist babble. When work is not ending, it is beginning anew, transformed by

> fresh challenges and visions: smart, flexible, committed employees replacing the sullen, disengaged factory hands and office drudges of industrial society (1998: Preface).

Popular time management books encourage a career-centred life. They constantly say that the more focused on work and career the individual is then the more likely it will be that success will follow. The 'healthy lifestyle' that is suggested by self-help books often minimalises non-productive activities such as sleeping and family life. In other words, the preferred way of life that is espoused by self-help books is one that centres on individual survival within a competitive society.

What is most emphasised is that all individuals have a certain range of possibilities and should consequently aspire to be a tool for using them and so take control over one's life. In this way, they confirm the idea of the manageability of life in our society. In time management literature, however, these reinforced time management imperatives are represented as a matter of personal rather than of forced choice because of systemic social problems. Time management books promote the idea that self-development is for a long-term 'career' and not merely for a current 'job'. As Gong proudly said in *Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends,* your career is where your heart is and something you can enjoy. Therefore, you do not even have to draw a line between the time you spend for your career and the time you spend for other than your career.

> At the weekends, I have focused on collecting new information and building new knowledge relevant to my work in an empty office during the weekends. I suppose that I enjoyed thinking 'I am doing what I like to do' rather than thinking '(I am) doing work.' If you separate the ideas of work and play then the outcome of your work is very likely to be not so great. And in the case of knowledge labour the gap of productivity between those who separate work and play and those who do not is huge (2004: 34).

By making a clear distinction between long-term career and uncertainty in a current job the present problems related to one's job (such as a culture of working long hours for little or no pay) are belittled while investing time for career development is encouraged. In the same vein, in *3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time,* Nishimura (2003) repeatedly suggests that we can spend weekends in a more meaningful way by enjoying what we would like to do and at the same time making extra income from it. He even suggests that having a second-job or

part-time job after work or at the weekend can serve a double purpose — a means both of self-development and extra money (2003: 110). The distinction between leisure, paid work, and self-development are mixed in this statement.

'Find' time for... more work?

The three self-help time management books under examination in this thesis are distinctive from other time management books. Time management books generally focus on how to make the most of the time you have and often refer to time spent during regular office hours. Their suggestions vary from pieces of advice about being better organised, to streamlining tasks, or as with the more principle-oriented books such as the famous 'first things first' principle (from Steven Covey's book with the same title) or more tactic-oriented ones that introduce certain skills that are claimed to help you to be more organised: such as how to keep a diary, to write memoranda or use post-it notes. On the contrary, the three books I have analysed put emphasis on time outside regular working hours because working hard during office hours is not enough. The authors argue that regular office hours are to be devoted to your current 'job' but the growth of your 'career' depends on how much effort you make outside of working hours (particularly in Nishimura 2003: 8, 20, 75-7; Gong 104-5). Therefore, the key to success is 'finding new time' (also the subtitle of *3 Hours after Work*) so that one can use that for self-development. And then those tips that other time-management books offer are also added as an after-thought. It is only natural that the idea of 'making more time' may be welcomed by most ordinary employed people because that seems to be the only available solution to time shortages which most of them have struggled with to different degrees.

Normally the idea of making more time could be easily associated with promises of a more relaxed and hassle-free life. However, 'making time' can be an ambivalent idea since it could aim for completely different goals. It could mean either/both making more time for oneself by simplifying one's life and/or making time to be able to do more work. So the idea 'making time' only becomes relevant by making clear for what you are making time. That is to say, the ultimate purpose of making more time is to invest in self-development as a must-have self-

protection strategy against unexpected unemployment. Each book has a slightly different emphasis when discussing this issue, but the contents of the three books overlap to a considerable degree. What they advise is quite similar to what 'happy workaholics'[27] do: think about their work a lot of the time outside the office even when they are not actually working. The concept of productive leisure is useful to define what three time use guidance texts suggest.

One first candidate for these activities is all those job-related activities which are done after work-time. In addition there all those training activities for your job which are not paid for (otherwise would the activities add to work-time) but which enhance your market value and are therefore *productive*. Another self-evident candidate is those activities which count among formal education: Schooling education, visiting university courses or further education college courses. A third group of productive leisure activities consists of those which can be summarised as informal education. These activities raise questions about what to include in productive leisure. To give examples and become more concrete: chores are not a productive leisure activity, because you would not mention doing them in your CV. Participating in sports does not count as productive leisure, because it is difficult to imagine earning money from sport on a normal ability level (Fahr 2005). What Fahr fails to consider is even non-work related hobbies and activities also can be counted as a measure of personnel evaluation and a part of desirable attribute. For example, being able to play golf is, in Korea, regarded as a 'useful' hobby in the business world in particular, if you have an ambition to join executive members. Drinking well *and* being sociable is ideal for people works in sales business. Gradually more and more aspects of our lives are becoming colonised by usefulness. One of the extreme examples of colonisation of everyday life for usefulness is the concept of 'productive leisure'.

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[27] I came up with this phrase as I analysed the three books and other relevant media discourse that associate work with happiness instead of responsibility and obligation. In fact, 'happy workaholics' was coined by Stewart Friedman, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, and Sharon Lobel of Seattle University in 2003 and this term is for people who value work over other activities and invest their time and energy accordingly (Friedman & Lobel 2003). Since then, this phrase has been used in a number of various writings in a way of criticising the culture that mystify workaholism.

We are asked to use before hours, after-hours, office hours, and the in-between hours such as those at the weekends and 'windshield time' — work-related time spent in a car, including commuting time. In other words, making time for work for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week becomes an over-riding imperative to survive in an age of insecure employment, particularly in contemporary Korean society. This goes against the trend frequently found in many European countries of seeking to reduce working hours in order to balance work, personal life and family. Furthermore, while there is no such thing as 'finding' time, the idea underpinning this notion is that one needs to exploit better those hours for work when they are supposed to be used for rest and doing something other than paid work. The frequently used rhetoric of 'finding' time is hiding the fact that we are taking more from someone else's labour and time (I will expand this point in the next section).

The image of the ideal worker is constantly changing: he or she is supposed to be 'potentially' available for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In addition, they ought to be able to work for longer hours and willing to devote time outside of working hours for self-development (*Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends*) or for planning better (*3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time*) to survive in the competitive working environment. When setting limits at work means carrying the risk of becoming less popular among managers and colleagues and harming career development, employees might hesitate to set limits. This is particularly likely to be true when job security is low. The advice given by a book like *Leave the Office Earlier: The Productivity Pro Shows You How to Do More in Less Time... and Feel Great about It* (Stack 2004) is hardly realistic let alone terribly persuasive in Korea. It is even more so within a Korean society that still has an authoritarian organisational culture. This means that such an approach to work is even harder to take than in many other societies. As one of my interviewees said 'Most young employees are well aware that working longer and later is proof of inability but most people who evaluate our ability are in their forties or older than forties' (Interview with Lee1). This suggests that a clash between two contradictory values exists in the performance evaluation. This reality seems to make Korean readers attracted to the guidance on how to utilise time outside regular working hours rather than how to optimise working time because using working time effectively is not good enough.

The rhetoric used in the books

The messages which I have elaborated so far are conveyed more efficiently and more plausibly through certain rhetorical devices which are employed by these authors. There are specifically two prominent rhetorical features in these books. Firstly, the authors compulsively rely on anecdotal evidence to prove their points. Secondly, narrative time is treated almost as if it were a physical object rather than a social and political entity. In the following section, I will examine these two rhetorical devices and also the value that is invested in them.

Quantification and decontextualisation of time

In popular time-management books time is more likely to be quantified and therefore the social feature of time is often neglected. The most frequently used rhetoric in the three self-help books under examination here centres around treating time as a set of segments which easily could be separated, accumulated, and quantifiable (i.e. make a 'time diary' or 'time account book' (Gong 2004: 136). Metaphors for presenting the quantitative feature of time prevail in the text. I include here expressions like 'earn' time, 'save' time, and 'maximise' time. Since time is quantifiable time could also be physicalised and materialised. It follows then that time is to be 'found' (or even to be 'dug out') because it is 'hidden.' Time is also a 'resource.' The promotion tag of *Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends* (Gong 2004) is, and I quote here exactly as it is written on the cover page alongside the title of the book, 'the management technique of weekends — one-third of our lifetime.' One of the most important assumptions of the book *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* is, 'one hour in the morning is equivalent to 3 hours of day time' (2003: 92). *3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time* deals with, 'how to make an extra 60 hours every month' (2003: 52).

Consequently, every aspect of life should be assessed against the yardstick of its financial reward so that it can be controlled by its use value. Even what traditionally might be regarded as hobbies or 'pastimes' now should belong to the realm of usefulness and are hence work-related. For example, it is said that if you

have the chance to visit other cities on business do drop into 24-hour convenience stores so that you can learn something about local economic realities (Nishimura 2003: 37). You can do so by observing displayed commodities and customers' behaviour. When you travel to work, do not pass time by just sitting or standing in the tube. Instead, you should learn about the society by analysing advertisements posted in the tube carriage (*ibid.* 33). Not a moment of our life should be wasted. Our time ought primarily to be devoted to some kind of activity related to our job and working life. Apart from getting more tired because of this imperative, we are asked to restructure our life to be centred on work. This specific approach to time which denies time sovereignty is also based on particularly problematic politics of time where there is an unspoken assumption that male-breadwinners have 'full-time (i.e. unemployed) wives.' Consequently, this male-dominated conception of time leads to the paid working time orientation and to the alienation of unpaid domestic working time.

However, the nature of time is not always like that. As people are overtaken by production imperatives what is most sacrificed is that feminine time which is concerned with reproduction. When it comes to the continuing phenomenon of the feminisation of irregular employment, as detailed time studies show, 'much of the recorded free time consists of time slots left over between activities and therefore difficult to use in a meaningful way' (Larsson and Sanne 2005: 216). However, women are more likely to deal with less calculable and less predictable tasks. For example, children's needs do not always operate on a fixed schedule. And women are more likely to be involved in the household, often performing tasks in non-continuous ways. This very attribute of women's work contributes to the way it is undervalued within Korean society. It is because time is valued only by its substantial or potential economic value.

Sometimes economic terms are mobilised in a metaphorical way. For example; 'there are also required expenses versus invested expenses in time' (Nishimura 2003: 30); and 'management' and 'investment' of weekends (Gong 2004: 19). As Adam observes, the assumption of time as currency still persists in the contemporary attitude to time in the way we speak about time, 'we spend it, waste it, invest it, budget it and save it' (1995: 89). In other words, we equate time with money. For example, in *3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time* (2003: 27) the

author converts time to money in order to emphasise the importance of time management:

> Let's suppose here is a man who earns 2 million won monthly . . . this is the reward for working 176 hours that makes hourly pay about 15thousand won. Therefore, three hours secured after work is worth about 50 thousand won. Would you earn 50 thousand won or waste it?

According to this system of calculation the value of one's time is estimated by the amount of income but this is based on the wrong initial assumption that pay is reward for the amount of time one works. By quantifying time, time is decontextualised. Time-management authors are able to efficiently convey the fallacy that we are in control of time and it's your choice to choose what to do. The three books I have analysed share the assumption that time is never to be interrupted as long as you do not idle your time away flicking through television channels. You can even demand to be left alone from your family; or to be more precise, from your wife and children.

The linearity of time that underpins time management texts is, as corroborated by a number of theories on the sociology of time, 'masculine' time. It is easily broken into its component units, of single usage, dimension and direction, fitting well with the rational working practices of the Weberian bureaucracy (Ramsey and Parker 1992). On the contrary, 'process' time, denoted as 'feminine', is characterized as follows:

> [R]elational, continuous . . . and cyclical . . . quite unlike the abstract and decontextualized notion of time that that is readily measured, commodified and controlled. Mediated through significant others feminine time is shared rather than personal, and relational rather than linear (Knights and Odih 1995: 213-4).

In the self-help texts, time is treated as something that stands alone, isolated, and independent. However, time is relational (when working time is fragmented people cannot find time to be together) so you do not 'make time' but you just take someone else's time no matter whether you pay for that time or not. Time is equal to everyone only when we subtract the physical quantity from it and when we deprive the quality from it. However, the rich can afford time. For example, if you are rich enough to own a private jet that allows you more liberty but also saves your time by speeding up your travel. Ironically, you have to be rich to enjoy

slowness: for example 'slow travel.' Often low-wage and low-tier employees cannot afford long holidays, not so much because of the cost but because they cannot get enough time off. In other words, the wealthier you are the more likely you are to have control over time. One hour without interruption is very different to the ten minutes' discontinuous six slots that a mom of a newborn is more than likely to experience. However, popular time management books do not recognise the diversity of time, the inequality of time. Instead, the ideologies of self-help discourse promotes the fallacy that we are all in with the same chance of achieving success because time is given equally to everyone.

Let anecdotal examples speak themselves

With regard to the dimensions of content, Starker (1989) identifies some pairs of binary opposition: anecdotal versus informational, prescriptive versus descriptive, and closed versus open system.

> Some works are heavily infused with interesting, amusing, or biographical incidents, using these as the primary means of support for their arguments and advice. Others are far more dependent upon empirical data, that is, well-established and public facts, to support their perspectives and directives. While self-help books frequently incorporate both types of content, one can usually characterize a given work as tending in one or another direction, and a few fall clearly at the extremes. A book on making friends, becoming creative, pleasing lovers, or expressing anger, for example, is more likely to be heavily anecdotal... (Starker 1989: 9)

Gong dexterously avoids possible criticism by emphasising that his 'personal' opinion comes from his personal experience that may differ from others. Gong's rhetorical device is also a response of his ideological stance as a believer in the free-market: all individuals should be free to choose and to be responsible for their own lives. He is very cautious of making general statements by restricting his argument himself: for example, saying 'in my case' a number of times; being reserved by saying 'I do not intend to claim that my decision' (37); and admitting that 'some of you might think my decision is wrong' (142). Nevertheless, he attempts to achieve the strength of his statements by juxtaposing other anecdotes. One example is when Gong explains one of his 'weekend management success strategies' among many and that is 'sort out your priorities in your life', which is a

typical advice provided in time management books. Gong tells his readers what he has prioritised in his life as follows:

> My number one priority is 'myself.' I prioritise myself over my children or my family because I think their happiness and well-being of my children and my family greatly depend on my future after all. *Some of you might think my decision is wrong* but I may say well that I have always given priority to self-investment project when I allocate time during the weekend (142, emphasis added).

He is aware of that his message may not well received and he is seemly open-minded. But Gong's statement is juxtaposed by a story about a man called K who is a family-oriented guy but in Gong's eyes definitely not desirable figure.

> K is a salaryman in his 40s. He prioritises his kids and pleasure in life (over his work). By ordinary standards, he is very family-minded person. He spends lots of time with his children... No wonder his is popular with his kids.... At present, he seems to be happy because he lives based on his values, which are that life should be enjoyable and pleasurable. However, no one can be sure K would be able to cope with downsizing 10 years from now or later (143).

In the presentation of the K's story, Gong's voice is clearly concerned if not scolding. By comparing self-motivated he with K who is family-oriented but unprepared for uncertain future, Gong suggests there is no compromise between family life (or happiness at present) and a secure future. We have not choice but choose one of them. By letting his anecdotes speak for themselves he could hide behind them and avoid a judgement. However, his anecdotal examples can be critiqued on the basis of the high degree of selectivity. For example, Gong seems to be more gender-balanced and aware of the different situations of different individuals particularly compared to other two rather old-fashioned authors. Nonetheless Gong's female figures are given voices only if they are either 'problems' or more driven than their husbands. He mentions dual income households as well as single income families but treats a husband and a wife as being in a similar situation; however, he fails to recognise the case of single income households.

Taking examples from one American and one Swedish management books, *In Search of Excellence* and *Service Management* respectively), Furusten (1999) identified rhetorical features that both books share. One of the rhetorical features used is the argumentation is personal. 'The authors frequently argue in terms of

'We found', 'I saw', 'He said', 'Let us look at', etc. In this respect they present the findings as if they, or someone well known to them (a colleague or a friend) were involved. In other words they present data and observations in a personal way based on their own experiences' (1999: 81). To summarise, in this section, using a deconstructive strategy, I studied the hidden agenda (Latour 1987) to determine the assumptions on which the arguments in the texts rest. Based on the textual analysis of time management self-help books focusing on time outside of working hours, I drew the following points. The way self-help books try to persuade readers about the importance of managing time is often through appealing to public anxieties about insecure employment and about an uncertain future. This section aims to examine the time management discourse in terms of gender. By doing so, I would like to explore the gender implication of the paid work-dominated time management discourse.

Discussion: A Hidden Agenda and Gender Politics in Korea

In this chapter, I have analysed time politics in the three books that share a common theme: 'make time' for self-improvement. They also share the same ideas about how to make time: by appreciating the time you have not fully made best of before and the time is happen to be outside of regular working hours in all three books. The premise is problematic from the start in two ways. Firstly, the authors claim that time often is not being used properly but that this is only true for those people who do not take any responsibility outside of paid work. Secondly, in this premise, time is valued only if it is used for 'productive' activities: the time for those activities that are not necessary productive is regarded as waste of time. In other words, time is valued in direct correlation to its use. From the texts analysed so far, it is clear that these three time management books are structured upon the outdated male-breadwinner/full-time female house maker model. This is problematic not only because it ignores the value of unpaid work, but also because it deprives women's right to choose paid-work.

The popular time-management discourse from the three books normalises the concept of full-time male wage earners. Moreover, working life which spills over

into family life is normalised. But there is a hidden agenda upon which this idea is predicated, that is the ideal of the 'normal family' that composed of male-breadwinner/full-time house maker. There is a common theme in that no mention is made of a life outside that of the working life. Family life, personal life and housework are all reduced to a null value even though those three books are mostly dealing with time outside office hours. Apart from a very small number of books that focus on specified reader groups (such as books for children, teenagers and women) most claim that their message can apply to anybody. This drive to universalise their appeal I believe is done mostly because the 'one-size-fits-all' strategy is good for their book sales. However, as Micki McGee argues in her feminist critique of the self-help book genre in *Self-help, Inc.: Makeover Culture in American Life*:

> Among the most striking features of the 'unisex' literature of self-improvement is the poverty of the solutions offered to women in their quests for self-made success. Although mainstream self-improvement authors suggest that their advice is applicable irrespective of gender or race, the picture is considerably complicated (2005: 79).

For example, Robert J. Ringer (an American bestselling self-help author) claims, 'There is no male/female distinction in my philosophy. Therefore, where a specific gender is used, you may assume that the opposite gender is automatically interchangeable' (Ringer 1977: X cited in McGee 2005: 79). McGee has pointed out, however, in the more than 320 pages of the hardcover version of *Looking Out for Number One* [written by Ringer in 1977] that, 'there are few instances where women are described as anything other than objects of male desire or overbearing, cheating wives' (2005: 79). The self-help texts I have sampled for this thesis are little better than McGee's examples of the supposed gender neutral nature of the literature of self-improvement. The authors of the three books I have analysed obviously have certain reader groups in mind in their writing. Whether they made deliberate decision based on the market of the genre or just speak what they think without realising that they only address the male-breadwinner is a different question. We can assume who they are aiming to talk to by looking at both what they are talking about as well as perhaps more importantly what they are 'not' talking about. This discourse demonstrates the conception of family excluding the male-breadwinner.

There are a few instances where their advice on better time management refers specifically to the 'family' and these examples that reveal these authors' perspective on the role of male breadwinner in family life. One of the tips among 21-success-strategies aimed at using 3 hours after work in *3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time* is, 'seek for understanding and cooperation from your family.' The author advises readers to let their 'wives' and 'children' know their 'study plan [for self-development]' and the goal of the day so they can secure an (uninterrupted) three hours at home (2003: 151) without being interrupted by their family. Furthermore, Gong assures that spending time for self-development after work even has an educational effect on children because:

> I am sure that the figure of a father who comes home and strives for self-development would be a positive influence over his children. This is a better role model for children compared to a father who watches a sport drinking some beer after work and then falls asleep (2003: 152).

In this context, the presumed subject is directed to ask understanding from his family. Here it is assumed that he is a male-breadwinner. Advising him to prioritise work over family does not consider housework or childcare. For example, there is not a single activity related to housework in *3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time*, neither in the description of how the author normally spends his days-off (2003: 105) nor in his weekly timetable (48-9), apart from 'shopping with the family' on Saturdays. There is no acknowledgement of domestic responsibilities at all. It seems that housework or childcare do not exist in the author's world. Unlike his Japanese counterpart, Byung-ho Gong, the author of *Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends*, is careful to attribute his success in time management to the understanding and help of his wife.

Neither of the two Japanese books among these three texts includes a single example of women. Compared to them, Gong's book, which has been published most recently among the three, seems to be more gender-balanced and aware of the different situations of different individuals. However, what is more important is what kind of stories he has selected with what kind of intention, rather than how many times the author has mentioned women's cases or stories. For instance, emphasising the importance of getting up early in the morning during the weekends, Gong quotes from Mary Kay as follows:

> A few years ago, I heard that we can earn an extra day per week if we get up two and half an hours earlier for just three days a week. I was raising my three children at that time and I was almost overwhelmed by a mountain of work that I couldn't get done within a week. So I determined to wake up earlier six days a week *to make use of a week as if it had nine days*. Starting to work from five in the morning, without being interrupted by phone calls or something like that, made it possible to work productively (emphasis is added) (Kay 1996: no page specified, quoted in Gong 2004: 161).[28]

The quotation is taken from Mary Kay's the autobiography titled *Mary Kay: You Can Have it All - Practical Advice for Doing Well by Doing Good.* After the quotation, Gong says: 'do not justify to yourself that you are too many things to find time to do self-development'. It is not difficult to presume what the author intends to achieve by quoting this specific part from the autobiography of this legendary successful businesswoman who proudly said she put family before her career but still 'You can have it all'.[29] By quoting one of the successful married working women with children, Gong seems to make an argument that we can have both career and family once you change the weekend routine: getting up early instead of oversleeping. However, throughout the book, he has insisted, as I analysed in the previous section, that family needs to be sacrificed for the long-term happiness (i.e. financial stability). He also argues that working hard even during the weekend is the 'true' service for one's own family. Now in this rare quotation from this working mom, which is the *only* female figure quoted in the Gong's book, he seems to change his standpoint. He introduces Mary Kay who highly valued 'balance between her children, her husband, homemaking and her work' (161). Gong's male figures in his anecdotes presumably could not value their children, their wives, homemaking *and* their work as Mary Kay did. It is

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[28] I have retranslated this part from a Korean translation of the English. My translation may differ from the original but is sourced from the Korean edition which I am specifically analysing here.

[29] Mary Kay Ash is a U.S. businesswoman and the founder of Mary Kay Cosmetics, Inc. Her slogan 'God first, family second, career third' expresses her insistence that the women in her company keep their lives in balance. Mary Kay authored three books, all of which became best-sellers. Her autobiography, Mary Kay, has sold more than one million copies and appears in several languages. Her business philosophy, Mary Kay on People Management, continues to be a great source of wisdom. Mary Kay Ash's third book, *You Can Have It All*, was launched in August 1995 and, remarkably, achieved 'best-seller' status within days of its introduction' Available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Kay_Ash [accessed 10 December 2005]. All her three books are translated and published in Korean.

clear that Gong has used his anecdotes in different contexts depending on gender. However, Gong does not acknowledge the gender difference in his examples. I would want to know if Mary Kay asked for help. She cut down her sleep instead of sharing her duty or she did it all by herself or ask her family's understanding. In Korean society, women are still expected to prioritise family before their career as their mother did. However, what Korean society demands working moms do is to, 'make use of a week as if though it is composed of nine days' as Mary Kay did so they can do both home and career. When we consider the fact that 'time is usually made available to men by women's labour' (Rutherford 2001: 262) working moms do not have a backup. She still says she is not special. This is even more unfair to women because, as Bunting argues:

> We assume it is still possible for someone to do the same job without a traditional wife as with; men and women are expected to devote even more of their time than ever to the single-minded pursuit of the job, free of all domestic responsibilities' (*ibid.*: 218).

That is probably what many working mothers do whenever they juggle between work and family. Either try to do everything on their own or feel bad about being unable to do everything. This lifestyle may be many among (high profile) businesspeople (the author of this book is a particularly high profile professional). However, it is perceived as old-fashioned. It is problematic if this kind of lifestyle is praised and normalised among dual-earner families and among single-earner families who want to achieve a work and life balance. It also alienates the male-breadwinner from family life and justifies his complete ignorance of domestic work. Overall, it seems to be presumed that the readers live on someone else's housework, apparently carried by their mothers, sisters, and wives or paid (female) house workers. The general model of workers assumed in the labour market is the full-time male worker who is working regular working hours, i.e. 9 to 6, and who does not have to undertake reproductive labour such as childcare and housework because they have someone (mostly female) to do it. The culture of working long hours has been maintained with little questioning because of the hidden contract that, 'The employer using male labour was basically getting two for one — along with every man came a woman at no extra cost who ensured that his time and energy were fully available for his work, and free from any distractions' (Bunting 2005: 217).

The history of naming a ministry in Korea provides a meaningful insight into how women and family are considered as inseparable and how they are linked. The Presidential Commission on Women's Affairs was established in 1998 as an election promise of Dae-jung Kim who was a presidential candidate at the time. This commission was raised to the status of ministry as the Ministry of Gender Equality in 2001 and its main responsibility was 'planning/compilation of women's policies and prevention and relief of gender discrimination' (MOGEF 2006). Then it changed its name again to the 'Ministry of Gender Equality and Family' in 2005 and it set out to deal with 'women, family, and infant care duties' (*ibid.*). In English the only change is the fact that 'family' is added to the name of the ministry but when it comes to its Korean name a very different perspective is revealed. Korean name has been changed from, if I translate literally, the 'Ministry of Women' to the 'Ministry of Women and Family.' In the new name women and family are paired suggesting they are closely associated; however, what has been left out of this completely picture are the men. In other words this name reflects the idea that it is normal for men not to be responsible for housework, caring, and child rearing. So, even though it is significant that a change of a government ministry has been established which is in charge of gender issues, the way that this ministry was named shows that the Korean society is still tied to traditional notions of gender roles.

Before I move on to the next chapter, here is another anecdote that suggests that the traditional gender role is still solid in Korean culture. I came across an advert of a theme park in Seoul from a popular weekly magazine while I was in Korea in the summer of 2005 for my PhD fieldwork. The advert was designed to advertise its late opening during the summer time. The leading copy of this full-page advertisement reads 'The Happiest Night Work in the World', and it follows:

> A father heads to the Lotte World [a theme park in Seoul] at 6 pm, right after work, because he has decided to do *night work for family* at least once a week. It wouldn't be tiring to do *night work* with family even if [he] does it everyday, would it?' (my translation and emphasis is added).

Along with the copy above, a photo appeared on the page showing (presumably) one family enjoying riding a merry-go-round with big smiles: a man in formal shirt and tie, a little girl, and a woman wearing a pink cardigan. This image and the copy suggest the man is a salaried person and his wife is not. A 'typical'

nuclear family is represented here as the one that is composed of male breadwinner, female housewife, and a child. Although this advert seems to encourage spending time with family after work, the premise that this advert is based on is rather opposite. For men, 9 to 6 regular paid work is the only responsibility, therefore beyond that responsibility as a breadwinner is extra 'work' or an 'option' he may take generously. It seems to me that is the only possible explanation why going to a park with family for fun, which is not even one of the endless domestic chores, is labelled as a 'work.' However, to whom is this advert intended to appeal? Good-hearted fathers who are willing to 'sacrifice' their precious time after work, or their grateful wives? The advert only will make sense in the society where spending time with family is regarded as 'service' as Gong argues.

In this chapter I have argued that popular time-management discourses are dominated by masculine time conception and this masculine ideology of time is based on the traditional gender division in labour. Furthermore, this ideology normalises long hours culture by ignoring the fact that the full-time male wage labourers' time devoted to their work is taken from women. Now, in the next chapter I will investigate how self-help texts are published, marketed and diffused in the Korean book market.

Chapter 5: How Self-help Management Books Are Become Popular

In this chapter I will analyse the production and political economy of the popular self-help book genre in Korea. Adding this analytical technique to that of my other two methodologies, as discussed earlier, is of critical importance to my project because one of my aims is to challenge the oversimplified correlation between the 'IMF crisis' and the increasing popularity of the self-development genre. At first, it seems to be plausible to simply relate the growing popularity of these how-to guides to the economic crisis of the late 1990s, especially when given that the most popular self-help titles are those which provide readers with advice on how to cope with or even how to take financial advantage from, economic hardship. The explanation goes like this, the unprecedented popularity of the self-help genre is simply a reaction of a panicked public and the self-help books just happened to be there to fulfil demand. In other words, the publishing industry is controlled absolutely by the demands of their consumers. However, as Victoria Neel (1988) points out, the book selection process is not a free interaction between a skilled reader and the reading matter. Moreover, even from this 'consumer sovereignty' ideology angle (Miller 2006: 67), significant questions remain. These include: Who influences the growth of the self-help genre in Korean society? How? Who takes most advantage from this self-help epidemic? Does demand create supply or supply create demand?

Readers are consumers of popular culture and are therefore subject to the factors that determine consumption patterns within this broader context. By expanding the definition of its popularity beyond mere sales figures, to include elements such as increased awareness and accessibility of the genre, it is possible to argue that self-help texts are not simply chosen by readers but that these books are actively given to readers. For example, since the 'IMF crisis' of the late 1990s newspaper articles in Korea have related almost every aspect of everyday life with the 'economy' and economic values. Consequently the number of such articles and economic television and radio programs has doubled. This is the reason why it is important to analyse cultural artefacts within their system of production and

distribution. As I elaborated earlier, cultural analysis must include 'the intentions of creative agents' (Griswold 1987: 1) in order to be complete and persuasive. Keller stresses, 'Inserting texts into the system of culture within which they are produced and distributed can help elucidate features and effects of the texts that textual analysis alone might miss or downplay' (Keller 2003: 12). Griswold explains that the 'intention' means 'the social agent's purpose in light of the constraint imposed on him or her in the production and social incorporation of cultural objects' (Griswold 1987: 5).

In this thesis, by the same token, it is crucial to examine the roles and interests of various agents that play key roles in the growing popularity of the self-help genre in Korea. The definition of production and distribution of the self-help genre is extended in this matter by including not only the direct agents who are involved with production and distribution such as publishers and book retailers, but also other social forces that share their interests, commercial or otherwise, in the popular consumption of the self-help genre. In this regard, I have identified four commercial institutions as the agents that have a great interest in the self-help culture, and therefore help to drive self-help reading in Korea. The first of these major agents is, needless to say, the book industry itself that has been undergoing a severe downturn and massive restructuring since the crisis of 1997 (if not before). Since self-help books have become one of the few potentially profitable genres, the publishing industry has concentrated on this area. The dominance of the self-help genre in the Korean book market also results from the growing power of the internet that is overtaking conventional ways of book selling and marketing. The mushrooming self-development industry that works side by side with the publishing industry is also an important agent in the promotion and consumption of this genre. As Furusten emphasises, 'production and diffusion of managerial manifestations do not occur in isolation' (1999: 132).

There are two other indirect factors that are significantly influential not as such in the processes of book making and marketing but instead in the distribution of popular books: in other words, make the genre more popular and visible. One factor is the series of managerial decisions made by some senior executives of prestigious Korean companies that are very influential in a number of ways in Korean society. These companies try to use self-help titles not only for staff

training but also to deliver their management philosophy. One way or the other this may be impossible to prove. Compared to publication and self-help industries, the mass media and companies operate in an indirect and unobtrusive way by using self-development titles for their management. Therefore, more thorough and systematic research is needed. The other factor to be interrogated is the influence of the Korean popular media, in particular newspapers. Mainstream newspapers have a relationship with conglomerates for good reason: they are an important source of information and they are also the biggest advertisers. Newspapers also maintain a close relationship to the publishing industry in order to emphasise their highbrow image. These two interests come across in newspaper articles about popular book and book reviews. However, I will not cover these two factors as thoroughly as the publishing industry. This is partly because the significance of the industry is greater than others and also because early in my research I made the decision to include them in the latter stage of my project. I only focus on them here in relation to the publishing industry in order to emphasise their influence on the market and particularly on the self-help genre.

To summarise, the main aim of this chapter is to investigate the individual and collaborative activities of these four agents, which I have named the 'Korean self-help complex.' By naming it a 'complex', I do not intend to suggest that these four agents operate under an orchestrated plan. Rather, each agent shares common interests in the growth of self-help culture with different motives and yet they work very closely each other. The research questions that this chapter attempts to answer are as follows:

- Firstly, regarding the book industry: How does the changing book business environment influence the publication of self-help genre? Who are the potential target reader groups of the self-help genre that the publishing industry has identified? How does such targeting affect the planning and marketing of the genre?

- Secondly: How does the self-development industry use and promote popular management texts? What are their roles in the development and promotion of this genre? How is this newborn industry related to the publishing industry?

- Thirdly: Why and how are some Korean private and public enterprises so eager to use the business and management self-help genre in their management techniques?

- Fourthly: Why and how do the popular media participate in the popularisation of self-help books in Korean society?

- Finally: How are these four different agents interrelated and how are certain meanings and values of book reading constructed by them?

In the following section, I will investigate the individual parts of this 'Korean self-help complex' one by one to see how the complex matrix of commercial interests surrounding the self-help genre is interwoven. In this instance, I argue not only that economic hardship but also social power and its associated institutions are actively involved in the growing popularity of the self-help genre.

The Book Industry: Commercialisation of Publishing and Book Selling

Popular publications, like any other popular cultural community, are bound to respond to readers' changing (or existing) tastes, interests and demands. Popular books are also heavily influenced by social and economic conditions in that society. This is why bestselling books are regarded as a mirror of society. At the same time, however, it is also true that publishers sometimes use their expertise to grasp what the public want at the given time and this enables them to lead the public. *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* triggered the 'morning person' vogue in Korea and is a good example of how publishers read what readers want at any particular moment. It made a huge hit against all the odds: it was the first book published ever by a small independent publishing house. Considering that time management self-help books are one of the most popular sub-themes around January (for a New Year's resolution),[30] this book

[30] Boosting sales of self-help titles in January is a common phenomenon in Britain as well (*The Bookseller* 26 January 2006).

was not even published at the right time. How could a small publishing house make a massive hit in Korea with its first publication? Is the success of the book 'the outcome of the careful planning and marketing targeted at Korean readers' ('Company history', publisher's website), as the publisher claims? How does the huge success and wide influence of a single book affect other books published afterwards? Textual analysis could answer some aspects of these questions. As I examined in an earlier analysis chapter, this shows how the current market situation influences not only the way in which publishers run their business but also the contents of the final product itself. The whole process of planning, translating and marketing of this book and the series of similar publications provides ample material to look at the Korean publishing business from many angles. In this chapter, I will put more emphasis on the bigger picture including the structure of the book market and various other factors that influence the final publication other than market forces. Ultimately, this analysis attempts to extend my point that I made earlier by investigating how the political economy of the publishing industry (its structure and the intention of profit making) influences the way in which this genre is framed by publishers and booksellers and delivered to its audience. Firstly, in the following section I will briefly overview the history of Korean book industry from the 1990s to the present time to see how this highbrow business has become more populist. And then I will move on to the growing internet book market to see how this change influences their business models.

The Korean book industry: from state censorship to market censorship

The Korean publishing industry has undergone a number of changes both technologically and institutionally, during the last few decades. The most outstanding change is that the overall publishing world has given up its prestigious status as a major actor of social movement and instead commercial interest has become a more and more important factor in their decision-making. The Korean publishing industry's vulnerability and instability as a business has been pointed out from both inside and outside the publishing world for a long time. The scale of the business began to enlarge from the 1970s but the majority

of publishers were small scale: by 1990, 62 per cent of all publishing houses employed less than 10 people (Lee and Kim 1990: 202). In fact, the publishing industry had never been a profitable business, with a few exceptions such as textbooks and study books until the self-development genre became the source of considerable profits. There are several reasons for the under-development of the Korean book publishing industry and these are largely related to Korea's historical and cultural background. The publishing circle has maintained a unique status in Korea as in many other countries. As Schiffrin observed, 'In Europe and in America, publishing has a long tradition as an intellectually and politically engaged profession. Publishers have always prided themselves on their ability to balance the imperative of making money with that of issuing worthwhile books' (Schiffrin 2000: 5). This is more so in Korea since the Korean publishing world was one of the major backbone actors in democratisation movements under the authoritarian regimes, in particular from the 1970s to the early 1990s. This was possible because of the unique circumstances that Korean society experienced throughout that time. A number of journalists and intellectuals went into the publishing world after being laid off from mainstream news outlets and universities because of their left-wing stance. Under the strict state censorship of military regimes Korean publishers, which were mostly small sized and independent, published those books prohibited by the government. Some of them had to take a risk of having their registration being cancelled so even had to go underground to continue to publish prohibited books. Therefore, making money was not their primary reason for publishing. Miller distinguishes publishing from profit-centred ventures of mass culture, and often publishing was not only 'a true labour of love' (1997: 113) but also it was an outcome of political beliefs in Korea at that time. Similarly, bookstores, particularly small sized independent ones, that were located nearby universities' campuses served as a nucleus for anti-government movements. By the same token, making a profit was not the purpose of running bookshops but rather it was regarded as a part of a social movement (Cho 1998). However, this special establishment of the modern Korean publishing industry is also widely assumed to be a source of various problems that the Korean publishing world still has. These include: a 'speed-before-quality' policy in translation; insensitivity to pirate publications and illegal copies; and old-fashioned management style (long working hours but low salary, and even the hierarchical organisational culture).

Since the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and the Eastern block in the 1990s, the readership in social science has decreased, naturally resulting in fewer publications. This has worsened since 1997, because the economic recession has brought hardship to the book business. It is widely believed that book selling is a barometer of a country's economic situation: books are one of the commodities that consumers cut down on first when the economy declines. Sales have dropped heavily and many small publishers and bookshops, which comprised the majority of the market, have had to close down (Baek 1999). Small sized publishing houses and book retailers went bankrupt in the chain reaction of bankruptcies that followed the economic crisis in 1997. Mergers and acquisitions between publishers and retailers meant less staff and more workload due to the shortened publishing cycle (Han 2002). In addition, high levels of competition have tended to result in a deterioration of in quality of output. In the meantime, surviving publishers and retailers, and newcomers, including leading online retailers, have taken aggressive management strategies. Some of the publishers have done this and as a result the market share of giant book chains and on-line booksellers has been boosted. Among many other factors, I highlight key elements of the current Korean book industry in relation to self-help book publishing and I demonstrate how these are responsible for the commercialisation of the Korean publishing industry. The publishing world was radically altered by commercialisation and concentration, partly because only publishers and retailers that had a commercial orientation/support survived. Publishing houses that have survived bankruptcy have prioritised marketability so their publications tend to concentrate on either translations of foreign titles or likely-to-be-bestseller manuscripts. Among foreign titles a book is considered for publication only when it proves its marketability either by winning a prestigious book award, is written by celebrity authors, or is on the best-seller list of the *New York Times* or Amazon.com. These 'achievements' are often used as a promotion tag in marketing campaigns.

The first noticeable change in the book industry is the growth of the popular book about business and management. Since the 'IMF crisis' shook the length and breadth of Korean society, the percentage of self-help titles among the total number of books published has increased (Kyobo Book 2006). The self-development genre has come to be seen as the goose that lays the golden egg because this area is the only one that makes considerable profits while the overall

domestic publishing market has been slack since the economic depression of 1997 (Booh 2002). Moreover as the book business had experienced a slump even before the 1997 economic crisis, publishers were more likely to be easily motivated by commercial interest in publishing the self-help genre. It was usual for even non-self-help specialty publishers occasionally to take part in publishing self-help books to keep their business going. In my interviews some publishers openly said that they publish the self-help genre to fund other less marketable titles, particularly in 'serious' genres such as society and politics issues.

For example, the publishing house Hainaim, established in 1983, which published Gong's two books and many other titles in the self-improvement genre, has only begun to publish non-literary genres since 2000. However, the publisher had built its reputation by publishing fictions which have become modern Korean classics including the saga (also known as *roman-fleuves*)[31] of Jung-rae Cho, one the most celebrated Korean novelists. The first book that Hainaim published in the genre was the translation of *Play Like a Man Win Like a Woman: What Men Know About Success That Women Need to Learn* (Evans 2000). Considering male dominance of the self-management/success manual genre in the Korean book market, this was a pioneering decision to translate and publish that dealt with working women's side of the story. Interestingly, the publisher listed their representative fictions in the company history in their official website but after their literary-period *Play Like a Man Win Like a Woman* is the only book that appeared on the list, which was discontinued in 2002. It is impossible to know the reason why the publisher does not revise its company history when other content is updated. It seems to me that the publisher regards publishing a number of self-help books as not as remarkable as publishing several series of saga.

Not surprisingly, since 2000 business and management self-help books have begun to dominate the national bestseller list. For instance, according to statistics

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[31] Series of novels, each one complete in itself, that deals with one central character, an era of national life, or successive generations of a family (*Britannica Online Encyclopaedia*, accessed from http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9083812/roman-fleuve).

from Kyobo Book, the biggest Korean book retailer, 11 of the top 50-bestselling books of 2003 belonged to the self-help genre. In the first half of 2006, the best selling genre (excluding children's books) was that of business and management which took 9.3 per cent of the market share. In second place was fiction (8.4%), which has long been the best selling genre in Korea (Kyobo Book 2006). The fact that publishers are keen to publish the self-help genre and that more and more readers are turning to it shows in part how deep the crisis in humanities disciplines is, such as philosophy and literary criticism. 'The academy of humanities is in a crisis' in recent decades this has been a phrase that has been repeated so often that it has become a cliché.

Ironically, one of the most popular practices used by trade publishers to do this is not going out to the street to meet people or hold focus groups. But instead they keep their eyes on the Japanese and North American book markets, for instance via Amazon.com and Amazon.co.jp. This practice reflects the fact that the Korean book market is overly reliant on translated titles particularly in the self-help genre and there is too great a focus on Japanese and North American titles. Another problematic issue is once a book becomes popular, several other publishers publish books with similar themes, concepts or styles, and a good example of this practice is the series of 'morning person' books. Those books often succeed in being included in bestseller lists as the result of carefully crafted marketing plans. Moreover, the growing importance of the internet in the Korean book business has intensified the domination of the self-help genre. In the next section, I will argue that the nature of the online book market ultimately meant the concentration of the Korean market intensified around the 'marketable genres'.

The growing role of online market and its effects

Among many other recent changes in the business environment of the Korean publishing industry, the most remarkable and influential change is that the internet as a marketplace as well as a marketing tool and space has become more and more important. How the internet has affected existing production and distribution in existing cultural industries has been one of the most important

questions that media studies has tried to answer in recent years. Colin Sparks (2004) has provided the reason why changes that internet has brought have been interpreted as democratisation, decentralisation or empowerment of the consumer or citizen at the expense of business or government.

> The Internet lowers entry barriers because distribution costs are lower. Businesses; governmental organisations and other news sources can establish direct relations with audiences via their own websites; the Internet provides opportunities for selective consumption — you do not have to buy the whole newspaper, you can just read the articles you want to; the Internet is dialogic, interactive and allows, in principle, much greater audience participation in the production of media artefacts that before (blogging and podcasting are the most notable and hyped recent examples of such phenomena. (cited in Hesmondhalgh 2004: 248)

By the same token, it has been expected that the internet will bring about positive changes in the Korean book market, which has been underdeveloped in terms of market transparency (faked bestselling list — publishers buying bulk copies of the books they release). It has been expected that web-based transparency in best-seller potential and the diversification of marketing strategies would become possible when the book business went online. On the contrary, the internet has instead reinforced the commercialisation of the book industry in the process of book making and selling. The following section will investigate how the internet influences the process.

The biggest Korean retailer Kyobo Book opened the first internet bookshop in 1997; however, online bookselling has grown drastically in Korea since YES24.com, the first online only bookstore, was established in 1999. Internet bookstores increased their annual turnover twenty times within three years of their business commencement in 2002. According to the national survey on reading conducted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Korean Publication Institution in 2004, 22.4% of respondents are using internet bookstores and this is a 10% increase on the year 2002. By 2005, Internet booksellers occupied about 15% of total book sales in Korea and these numbers continue to grow. According to the *2006 Korean Publication Yearbook* (Korean Publishers Association 2006), internet bookstores produced an annual turnover of over 449,700,000,000 won (equivalent to about £243,916,000) as the first half year of 2006, which made up 16.7% of the total domestic turnover (up 0.8% from the previous year). By the end of 2006, there were 39 internet bookstores in

total and the total sales increased to 572,700,000,000 won, and will reach as much as 700,000,000 won or close to 30% of the total domestic book market.

A number of internet portal site-based[32] or portal-affiliated shopping malls began to jump into book sales and 'Bookpark' was established as early as 1999. As a result, competition between online book retailers as well as between on and off-line retailers has increased. Many internet user surveys in Korea have proved that the first item people buy online is very likely to be a book or a CD. Therefore, for those shopping malls, books may not be the most profitable item; however, books could be a good item to attract a wider range of e-buyers. This remarkable growth is primarily attributable to 'aggressive marketing' strategies including discounting practices, free delivery, and free gifts. In particular, the discounting practices brought about disputes between online retailers and off-line ones. As the fixed price system, which was implemented in March 2003, disallows the internet bookstores bargain sales, customers who used to enjoy an average of 30% discount on their purchase of new books now find that limited to 10%, the same as the walk-in bookstores. Until this was implemented 70% of the total internet bookstore income was produced by new book sales. However, the implementation of the fixed price system coupled with recent economic stagnation has reduced this number to less than 35%.[33] They also contributed to publication market promotion, promoting new books, provision of other publication

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[32] Commonly referred to as simply a portal, a web site or web service that offers a broad array of resources and services, such as e-mail, forums, search engines, and on-line shopping malls. Portal is a term, generally synonymous with gateway, for a World Wide Web site that is or proposes to be a major starting site for users when they get connected to the Web or that users tend to visit as an anchor site. There are general portals and specialized or niche portals. The first Web portals were online services, such as AOL, that provided access to the Web, but by now most of the traditional search engines have transformed themselves into Web portals to attract and keep a larger audience. Companies with portal sites have attracted much stock market investor interest because portals are viewed as able to command large audiences and numbers of advertising viewers. Typical services offered by portal sites include a directory of Web sites, a facility to search for other sites, news, weather information, e-mail, stock quotes, phone and map information, and sometimes a community forum (from http://www. webopedia.com and WhatIs.com). The populist five Korean internet portal sites are, in order, Daum (daum.net), Naver (naver.com), Yahoo Korea (yahoo.co.kr), Dreamwiz (dreamwiz.com) and Nate (nate.com) by 2003 (KoreanClick 2003).

[33] About the Korean publication policy see Booh 2003 (a historic review on publication policies); Lee 2006 (focusing on the First Period of Developing Plan for Publishing and Printing Industries (2003-2007).

information/data, and improved customer services to handicapped people or people living in remote isolated areas who cannot easily access regular bookstores. Even though online bookstores have many potential advantages, in reality online retailers are facing some problems. Their marketing strategy is primarily focused on promoting newly published titles (in 2006, the number of new titles and number of copies increased by 23.2% and 9.8% respectively comparing to the previous year) and best selling titles rather than providing balanced information on various books. Based on interviews with people in charge of marketing of leading online and off-line book retailers, Lim (2003) argued that even though internet bookstores have a database of 300,000 to 500,000 books, 70 to 80% of sales are limited to the books that are ranked in the top 100,000.

Increasing importance of customers' reviews

Before the internet age, the power of newspaper book reviews was so enormous that 'to most people in publishing (authors, editors, agents, publishers, booksellers and readers alike) if a book hasn't been reviewed in the *New York Times* (and especially in the Times Sunday Book Review section) it doesn't exist' (Shaw 1985). However, the biggest problem of newspaper book reviews is that only a small number of books get review attention therefore sometimes readers cannot find reviews of those books they want. In particular, Korean newspaper book reviews have long been criticised for their lack of diversity. Primarily, these criticisms have taken two main themes. Firstly, the selection of titles for reviews: different daily newspapers review the same titles which are very likely to be new publications that are published by major publishing houses. Secondly, newspaper book reviews are often mockingly compared to 'wedding ceremony speeches' because they are full of words of praise and completely lack of criticism.

Now it seems that the influence newspaper book reviews used to exercise has been taken over by internet booksellers or, more precisely, ordinary readers who are supported by the online technologies that booksellers are willing to offer. Online bookstores take over not only those services that bricks-and-mortar bookshops are thought to be good at, for example tracking down out-of-print copies, or providing recommendations e.g. 'if you like this, you might also like'

lists. However they also take over what conventional media used to do: providing opinion and information about books, not by professional reviewers (who are likely to have a 'relationship' with authors or publishers of the books they review), but by fellow customers. Publishers and their directors of publicity who used to need 'quotable phrases or sentences that can be used as blurbs on the jacket of a book or in advertising' and sought out major reviewers and authors 'in quest of favourable reviews to provide such quotes' (Coser, Kadushin and Powell 1982: 314) now turn instead to readers. Nowadays, publishers do not wait for favourable reviews to appear on the bookshop website: they hunt for them by providing free copies in exchange for reviews or holding review competitions.

This power shift from conventional media to User Created Content (UCC) may improve the diversity and democracy of the book market. Online Word of Mouth Marketing (WOMM) is regarded as an alternative to improve polarisation between large and small sized publishing houses and a solution to the problem of a market primarily centred on bestselling books. More books get attention and more reader's voices are heard through the internet. In this section, I investigate how both publishers and book retailers in South Korea attempt to employ WOMM and the implications of this. This section focuses particularly on the efforts made by industry to amplify WOM by encouraging more UCC. In this section, the representative online WOMM strategies that are utilised by both the Korean publishers and book retailers will be investigated. The focus here will be the social implications of marketing practices. I will introduce some examples from Korean book marketing campaigns. South Korea is an interesting example of web-based marketing campaigns on many grounds. Influence of web-based communities (in particular, specialised user groups) in terms of marketing is outstanding in Korea, which has the world's highest number of broadband services per capita (by early 2007, around 29% of the population, or 90% of households, were broadband subscribers).

Reading other customers' reviews uploaded onto online bookshops' websites before making a purchase is a great benefit for not only online book buyers but also offline buyers. People want to hear about the book they are interested in, but from other ordinary readers like themselves, not from publishers or professional reviewers, who might be influenced by commercial and professional interest.

However, according to American sociologist Laura Miller (2006: 80), who conducted extensive research on the book business in America, it is a naïve assumption.

> Enthusiasts of online bookstores often praise this feature as evidence that the Internet has democratized recommendation. However, such reviews are not as representative of the nation's readers as customers might assume. A small number of people have become such popular and prolific reviewers, contributing hundreds or thousands of reviews to Amazon that they are courted by authors and publishers who send them free advance copies much like what professional review outlets receive. Furthermore, the option of submitting a review anonymously has opened the door to authors, and their friends and relations, lavishing praise on their own books in the guise of disinterested readers.

By the same token, it is important that amateur reviewers are aware that the free give-aways are part of marketing campaigns. A free copy of a book does not seem to be a huge favour and there is no proof that reviews written by people who have been given free copy from publishers will be favourable to the book. However, many customers could be insensitive about the possibility that their innocent pastime could be subverted by industry, since we are living in a society saturated with promotional messages. For instance, parts of their writing could be used as promotional blurbs. Bloggers and amateur reviews should understand that their reviews can be used as a marketing tool.

Miller argues that 'customer reviews do appear to have some impact on sales' (2006: 80), even though she does not give hard evidence for her argument. Even though it is very difficult to prove the impact of customer reviews on sales in Korea, Korean online book retailers seem to believe that there is a strong positive correlation between them. The evidence for the claim is that many internet bookstores have introduced a number of measures to convince their visitors and customers to go online and give their opinion on books (and CDs, DVDs and even cosmetic products). This includes substantial and non-substantial rewards in compensation for posting reviews, such as discount vouchers or cyber money that is only valid in the website. In November 2004 a Korean online bookstore called Aladdin introduced a system that gives 1% of the price of each item to the

reviewer when other customers buy the item as a result of reading the review.[34] Customers' reviews are one of many benefits that online bookstores can facilitate. 'Although the title base upon which they are drawing is broad, they tend to steer customers to those books that are most frequently purchased' (Miller 2006: 81).

> While customers may be flattered by the seemingly personal attention and deference to their tastes and desires, the effect of automated recommendations is to replace idiosyncratic bookseller passion with a dispassionate polling of the like-minded, and to increase sales of those books already in the public eye. (Miller 2006: 81)

Now, the internet book retailers have taken over even some of the services and functions that offline bookshops are thought to be good at tracing down out-of-print copies for example. When people needed to get an out-of-print book, they turned to small specialist independent bookshops because they had a better network among other such shops and were willing to take the trouble to track down even one copy. Some online bookstores such as Barnes & Noble, the largest American retailer, and Aladdin, one of the largest Korean online booksellers have absorbed that function as well. A technology called 'collaborative filtering' is another example. With an optimistic hope that the 'Information Age could blow away the blockbuster' in the book business, Malcolm Gladwell (1999) suggests that collaborative filtering can be an alternative to create sleeper hits. A novel written by an unknown author and published by the press had no money for publicity but reached the best-seller list two years after the book was published. This made possible through the support of the woman who runs an independent bookshop. She recommended the book specifically to some of her customers who, she thought, might like that book. Now, online bookshops can do an even better job than offline bookshops,[35] with statistics and all the information we have given

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[34] This scheme is called 'Thanks to Bloggers' and offers book API (application program interface) to bloggers so they can easily use information about they book they like to write and post a review in their blogs. The Aladdin also gives 1% of the book's retail price (as a form of cyber money) to the blogger when customers specify that the specific blogger's review was helpful when they decide to make a purchase of the book.

[35] Amazon.com is even trying to act as an agent of finding new talent in literary writing. For example, it Amazon.com said that they are proud to announce that 'it is now accepting applications for the Amazon.com Nonprofit Innovation Award [which set up in 2005], which recognizes and rewards nonprofit organizations whose innovative approaches most effectively improve their communities or the world at large.'

them unwillingly and unconsciously while we buy books or just browse websites. Another important function of online retailers, Miller (2006) argues, is the recommendations generated by the online booksellers themselves under the title of 'if you like this, you might also like' list or 'customers who bought this item also bought' list. These recommendations tend to be for those titles with the publisher's publicity machine behind them, and they are thus equivalent to the physical bookstore's display of books anticipated to generate high sales. Other recommendations are more targeted. At Amazon, for instance, repeat customers are immediately greeted with message 'Hello [Your Name Here], we have recommendations for you.' As Miller (2006: 18) describes:

> One set of recommendations is a customised list based on analyses of prior sales to the user; this list displays titles in a similar vein or by the same author as previous purchases. Other recommendations are also based on the customer's prior purchases, but using a technology called collaborative filtering, the recommended list is derived from books purchased by other customers with similar buying histories.

This reflects the increasing power of booksellers in selecting books for the reader to choose. Now it seems that the influence that newspaper book reviews used to exercise as the prominent information provider which guides readers towards what to read and which book is a must-read has been taken over by internet booksellers. When certain books fail to appear on the first page of search results, if not on the top of them, it is hard to draw customers' attention. As soon as customers log into websites of bookshop, they are overwhelmed by the information vying for their attention. Promotional banners for various reading lists or promotional events often overload front pages of bookshops. Free gifts or free draws are popular promotional tools that are used by online bookshops and these can lead to impulse buys. Just like every small details of offline bookshops such as the arrangement of book shelves, display of books, and promotional banners are likely to be outcomes of complicated planning, online bookshops' ones are no less complex. However, for online bookshop goer it seems to be not

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facilitating Customer Discussions 3) Amazon.com, Penguin Group (USA), and Hewlett-Packard launch the First Amazon Breakthrough Novel Award Online retailer's inaugural international writing contest searches for the next great novel; winning novel to be published by Penguin Group (USA).

always easy to acknowledge the invisible hands behind the scene and it is easy to take them for granted. Now I will move on to the changes that the internet also brings which affect how publishers in the way they publish and promote their books.

Changes in book marketing

As online book sales have grown a critical issue in the book industry is how to spread WOM using various online platforms. According to the publishing venture iuniverse.com the definition of the WOM in the publishing world is, 'Free advertising for a book after its release through satisfied readers who recommend the book to others. The consumer base creates a buzz that in turn creates publicity' (http://www. iuniverse.com/how-we-work/terms.htm). The Word of Mouth Marketing Association suggests eleven types of common WOMM (WOMMA 2006) and most marketing campaigns use more than one type of strategy at the same time. These are not completely new because some of them have been in use for a long time, for example, 'buzz marketing' which is a classic means of using high-profile entertainment or news to get people to talk about the brand. However, some WOMM strategies are enabled by means of communication technologies. Online book retailers attempt to create WOM by encouraging exchanges between customers, as well as between bookshop and customers. One of the most valuable and attractive features of online bookshops is book reviews posted by customers (Moon 2003). The book reviews trigger more interaction such as other readers' comments on book reviews and other form of activities such as votes (whether readers like the review or not) and clipping reviews written by other 'customer reviewers' to their blog. In this section I will introduce two popular ways that publishers and book retailers collect book reviews. For publishers, giving away free copies upon new publication of their books to those people who are likely to be interested in them is one option. In this case bookclub members are ideal because they are happy to be reviewers. For book retailers, accommodating diverse and rich information about books and other items they sell is crucial to the business, so most book sellers encourage their customers to set up a blog on their websites. One bookshop even offers to share their own profits with blogging customers.

As internet selling has increased it has become as important for publishers to secure space for new books in online bookstores as placing their books on display stands in walk-in bookstores. It is said that if a book is displayed on the front page of an internet bookstore it will make ten times more sales compared to other books that are posted on the other pages. The condition of uploading is offering the book 5% cheaper than the normal trade price. One editor of an internet bookstore admitted that it was true that they are more likely to upload books that have a higher discount rate and special offers, even though they also considered the quality of those books (*Hankyoreh 21* 15 March 2005). Furthermore, as the online market tends to lead the offline market, there is increasing competition between publishing companies to expose their books in the limited space by offering promotions (Sang-in Park, Manager of Marketing & Sales Team, Random House Joogang, Interview, 21 October 2005). As the cycle of publishing new books and bestsellers is getting shorter and shorter owing to the nature of the internet and because of the new book-orientation, the importance of promotion has been increased. As Korean book industry veteran Ki-ho Han (2005: page is not specified), the head of Korean Publication Marketing Institution, says:

> In a system like the internet, the distribution of cultural commodities, including books, depends on the scale of early marketing. It is because the internet has made it possible to achieve sales of a huge number of copies in a very short period of time. In this system, those books that fail to enter the book market in the early stage are bound to be rapidly buried in the market. [My translation]

The internet provides new marketing channels to publishers, for example, so-called 'blog-marketing' is one way, which is becoming popular: this involves setting up a book-blog online to promote the book before its publication and distribution. Publishers can expose small parts of contents from the book they are about to publish or promote along with other relevant materials like an interview article with the author. Through book-blogs, publishers can also gather reactions from visitors: the potential readers and potential promoters. News about a book spreads 'by scrapping[36] of bloggers', which is the online equivalent to 'by word of

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[36] Koreanised English expression means clip and collect. Direct copy of postings from other blogs to my blog, which is widely-known as 'scrap' among Korean internet users and

mouth.' Using corporate blogs as a communication channel with customers as well as for a place of publicity and marketing has become widespread among large and small companies (Wright 2005). Online retailer Amazon launched a blog called Amazon Daily on the 19th of May 2006 that contains posts by Amazon's own editors. However, the flow of communication is still from sellers to buyers even though users of Amazon.com are encouraged to interact with Amazon Daily. In contrast, blogs that most Korean online bookshops offer for free, which are often called 'booklogs' (short for book blogs) to distinguish from other blogs, are much more customer-centred. Customers can set up their own blog in the bookshop website and it does not have to be exclusively about books or other items sold in the store. The concept of the booklog is offering a space for a personalised virtual library or a virtual reading journal for each customer. The interface of booklogs also facilitates interaction between bloggers.

If some bloggers leave comments or reviews on a book or a CD then other customers can read them and leave comments. If they find the posting or comment written by the blogger is interesting and relevant to them, they can bookmark the blog or become a 'neighbour blogger'. The purposes that book retailers attempt to accomplish through this blog service are multiple. By encouraging customers to write reviews and comments on other reviewer's postings, visitors of the online bookshop can accommodate rich information they cannot find from any other source. In this sense, the rich UCC could attract other customers including those who used to go to the other competing bookshops. Providing blogs also entices customers stay on the website longer and therefore become exposed to more products that could lead to purchase. Readers can vote on whether they liked that post and leave feedback.

Aladdin.com, one of the largest Korean online book retailers takes one step forward with the introduction of the profit-sharing affiliate scheme. This scheme, called 'Thanks to Bloggers', offers book API (application program interface) to bloggers so they can easily use information about their favourite books in order to write and post a review of in their blogs. The Aladdin also gives 1% of the book's

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the most outstanding attribute of blogs.

retail price (as a form of cyber money) to the blogger when customers identify that the specific blogger's review was helpful when they decide to make a purchase of the book. In South Korea UCC is identified with Web 2.0 and praised as the best solution for both individual users who crave for the space and enablers who want to constantly provide visitors with unique and various contents. However, compared to the exaggerated optimism there are few attempts to raise critical questions such as who profits from UCC and in particular how the commercialisation of UCC might influence the consuming and producing experience of UCC? Do commercial interests hijack the fruit of participatory culture or can they motivate the participation? What is the reaction of the Aladdin-goers to the program? Are the participants of the program aware of the consequence of his/her activity in the wider context? How will this rewarding scheme influence the individual content's creating and sharing experience?

Web-based communities that often share information and opinion about certain products and services could be a great platform of free marketing for sellers and service providers but also could be a threat. For example, online reading groups that are particularly interested in popular business and management genres, and consist of a large number of young white-collar workers are a good target market for publishers that specialise in those genres. In this case, the ideas of 'community marketing', 'influencer marketing' and 'evangelist marketing' (WOMMA 2006) are combined. Publishers approach online communities that have a large number of enthusiastic members and provide free copies and requests for reviews. Most marketing campaigns through communities are conducted within a month of the publication of new books; however some publishers begin 'community marketing' even before publication. For example, an online book club called Bizbook (http://bizbook.cyworld.com), which has nearly seven thousand registered members, holds an average of ten competitions each month. The members are informed about the competitions either through a notice board on the club website or the personal messaging system within 'cyworld.com', one of the biggest Korean social networking sites. On average, thirty to fifty members enter the competition for twenty free give-away copies and each posting usually gets more than two hundred hits. As only the club members, who are likely to have a great interest in the genre, can access these postings, targeting the community could be an effective and efficient marketing method.

However, in contrast to such optimistic assumptions the reality is quite different. More and more well-known and well-linked portal sites make some bloggers pay when their blogs are involved in any commercial endeavour and the cost is skyrocketing. In addition, some people are concerned that outcomes of bloggers' activities of pure enthusiasm and sense of sharing between bloggers can be unintentionally used as advertising without their full awareness and agreement.

Desperately seeking corporate sales

There are two kinds of self-development books. One kind is likely to be attractive to executives, which is likely to be about leadership in business (for their own use). However, for a bulk sale the most possible theme is about 'passion' (by which means how to motivate employees) or in other words: job or work, the importance of hope, possibility, and potential. The other kind is targeted at ordinary readers and focused on specific work-related skills such as IT or presentation skills. Based on interviews with Korean publishers, it is most likely that they have two key target reader groups in mind. One is defined by its age group, gender and position in the organization and most importantly how competitive are the companies they are working for. With slight differences, the image of the target reader group that publishers I interviewed (Gim, Park and 2005) have in mind was:

> A thirty to forty-something male white-collar worker who has been working for one of the leading companies for between five and ten years, and likely to be someone who is at the stage of life where he is preparing his life-long plan. He is ambitious but under huge pressure in work so has a very strong need to avoid time shortages.

Individual readers who are most likely to fall into the ideal target group are not the only target publishers are after. The other key target group is executive members of companies. As the idea of 'corporate reading for self-development', which I elaborate in detail in the following section, has become popular on not only a personal level but also an organisational level, some companies encourage their employees to read certain kinds of books, which are mostly self-development titles. Therefore, this group is important not only because they are an opinion-leading group but also because they have the potential to become big

clients for publishers. It is natural that publishers try to impress their potential high profile customers like private companies, public institutions or government divisions. Large orders from big companies mean more than the number of copies they sell. The fact that the book was purchased by leading companies can be a good selling point for further marketing and advertising: for example, the phrase 'the book recommended by the CEO of ...' 'the book that ... Group uses for new employees' training' could be a 'hook' for many potential customers. That is why it is even said that, among publishers, one big deal with a big company is the litmus paper of the success or failure of a book even though the number does not include into the bestseller estimation (interview with Se-won Gim, Gerum Publication 2005).

The extra pages, generally, are filled with forewords written by the CEO of the company or other representatives of the organisation. A publisher said that in their forewords CEOs are less likely to expose their management vision and philosophy clearly. Instead, they try to thank their staff or sometimes clients (Sang-in Park, Random House JoongAng). Surprisingly, while I was fascinated when I learnt about this hidden practice the publishers I interviewed did not think that this was at all significant. This could be because this practice happens so often that they take it for granted. By adding these pages, I argue, they are incorporating their value in the book. For instance, the following examples demonstrate how the same book could be interpreted in different ways and are located in different contexts. CEOs of Hana Bank and Seah Steel published two limited version copies of the same book, *A Grocery Run by Bachelors*. The book is based on an ordinary person's experience of financial achievement. It is the story of young men who have successfully run a grocery store. CEOs wrote the foreword for the first and second editions. This case illustrates how each foreword brought a unique angle to the same book. The foreword written by the CEO of Hana Bank, one of the biggest banks in Korea, is dedicated to their major clients and this book is positioned as a 'useful guidance for your management as this success story covers essential elements of management.' A leading Korean steel company called Seah Steel selected this book for their employees and its foreword is more message-driven. In his foreword, the CEO of Seah Steel attributes the success of the small grocery shop to '3PSP', which stands for:

> The *people* who are positive and passionate in everything and sell *products* in the best taste and condition (freshness) by going through the fun *process* as if they are giving a feast and providing *profits* to everyone by providing after-*service*. (from the foreword, my translation)

Therefore, one of the factors taken into account by publishers is the possibility of their books being chosen by CEOs who will then encourage their employees to read the book, at least among those publishers I interviewed. However, as the company to company trading market is thin and extremely competitive they cannot rely on bulk deals, as Sung-in Park[37] discussed with me. In order to reach potential CEO clients, publishing companies apply targeted marketing. Some publishers use their 'top-tier executives' database to advertise their books directly.

> When we publish a new book, we wrap the book with special care for our potential high profile clients such as executive members and famous self-help authors and speakers. It is also important for us how and by whom to deliver the book in an impressive way. (Sung-in Park, Random House JoongAng)

However, marketing has been taken over by book agencies. Moreover, one publisher told me that such companies have all sorts of sources for information about books they look for so they do not really need a pitch for books. Therefore, each publisher does not need to try direct contacts to their potential clients as much as they used to do (interview with Sung-in Park). In addition, as the key target reader groups I defined are already skewed in terms of gender and class, it is possible to claim that this genre of books makes better sense to that small number of the privileged readers. They are more likely to be able to afford to invest their resources such as time and money and also have the potential to benefit from self-help titles and who can transform 'the crisis into an opportunity', the elitist mantra. That means there is great potential that books representing managerial voices or the employee who is working for the top few big companies are published rather than what the ordinary people really want to read or that represent their opinions and perspectives. As some of those books become popular and are introduced by newspaper, social discourse dominated by the privileged nevertheless it is said that those self-help books are for everyone and if

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[37] Manager of Marketing & Sales Team, Random House JoongAng.

you want you can be anybody you want to be.

The Self-development Industry: Fast-growing Business

The self-development industry is closely allied with self-help publishing and it is a fast-growing sector in Korea. As the domestic self-development market has rapidly expanded over the last ten-odd years the number of people involved in this industry has mushroomed. In his book, which is the first and the only one on the history of the 'science of success' in Korea, Hae-yun Jung (2004) traces back the origin of the self-development industry to the beginning of corporate education among leading Korean companies. When Samsung, the biggest Korean conglomerate, started its corporate education program in 1977, other big companies followed Samsung's pioneering example and soon after established their own in-service training institutes. In the beginning people from academia conducted corporate education but only on a theoretical level without offering practical training. This gave rise to the first generation of professional educators and speakers. However, there were very limited opportunities for a wider audience access to this program until the 1990s. Network marketing, mostly from America, established itself in Korea during the 1990s. The introduction of network marketing, Jung (2004) argues, contributed to the formation and the growth of self-development market. This was also the time when Dale Carnegie and Steven Covey's programs were introduced in Korea. While Korean society went through the financial crisis of the late 1990s, network marketing was growing fast as a number of people, including homemakers, jumped into the business to support their families. Network marketing might be one of the few businesses that open to women who had little working experience or skills. However, even though network marketing largely influenced the growth of the self-help market in Korea it was not until less than ten years ago that the ordinary people got used to the idea of self-help genre, self-management, and self-development.

Korean self-help authors and motivational speakers

Often self-help authors are also popular speakers, with their books being based on their lectures and vice versa. The popularisation of self-development discourse is attributable, in part, to Bon-Hyung Goo and Byoung-ho Gong who are the two iconic figures of the Korean self-development industry. They were the first nationally well-known self-help gurus. Authoring self-help books can be an ideal gateway to the self-help industry for many people and Goo and Gong are good example. They became famous first for their books. They then started to hold public talks at book launches and then developed their own education programs and research institutes. Some self-development speakers the order is the other way around — they become well-know for their seminars and then publish their books based on them. Some other people edit columns that had been published serially in a newspaper or a magazine into a book. In this case, the name of the newspaper or the magazine they publish their writings in grants great credit to the book.

In particular, Byeong-ho Gong is one of the few figures who has managed to establish himself as a powerful brand name. The secret of maintaining his status is publishing constantly. His books are highlighted in the market and publicised extensively because of the name value of the author and, at the same time, what keeps his profile high is his books. His profile is also advantageous when he is involved in other authors' work, for example, translation, writing a preface or commentary, writing a review. In any case, his name and even his photo appear in the cover page. Gong's strategy of keeping his status as an A-list speaker and author is to constantly publish and this is what makes him famous. For him, publishing books as well as columns and book reviews serves to publicise his name. The following extract from *Improving Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends* suggests how the ex-senior executive of dot-com companies (which eventually he had to step away from) became the most celebrated self-help author and motivational speaker in Korea.

> In order to build the brand of 'Gong Byung-ho', I have invested much time during weekends in writing for newspapers and magazines. I tried hard to take the opportunities of publishing writings that I could take credit for. I also was poring over foreign special/technical books. Regardless my speciality, I read every book from any field that came my way in order to

> add depth to my knowledge. By doing so, I came up with one of my brands: 'Gong Byung-ho style' book reviews. Writing book reviews helps reading and is also a good field for marketing oneself. (2004: 105)

As Gong was clearly aware, making his name appear in the mass media as frequently as possible was an efficient way of making his name, or in his words, the 'brand'. Also, the value of book reviews is outstanding because authors like Gong benefit most from 'book reading campaign' and 'self-development by reading' ethos. One of his books features a photo of Gong reading a book on the cover. Promoting the idea of book reading as a tool of self-improvement is important to him and this is why he values writing book reviews and contribute book reviews to economic newspapers on a regular basis. Gong has established his status and positions himself as a success coach armed with economic knowledge. Compliments often read: 'Gong has analysed economic trends with thorough analytical thinking and clear-cut logics and he spread strategies of successful life' (Introduction of Gong, from the website of Hainaim).

From the readers' perspective, those books that are authored by someone they have heard of are likely to be regarded as trustworthy. Furthermore, making a name through prestigious national newspapers is particularly valued in Korea. In this respect, Gong is the perfect and most outstanding example of brand marketing in the Korean publishing industry. Taking an example from John Grey's *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*, Buzzard (2002) suggests that the success of the long-running international blockbuster can be explained with the concept of brand marketing. She argues that the publisher tends to stay within an 'acceptable' and 'tested' formula to avoid risks when the market has been established (or softened) (2002: 90). Since Gong's name alone guarantees good sales publishers highlight his name in their publicity. This includes his direct participation in publishing such as authoring, translating, and writing the preface or commentary. However, indirect involvement like being reviewed or recommended by him is also taken into account in the publicity. Those books in which Gong has been involved are also privileged in the book market. They are more likely to be a part of promotional events run by major book retailers because they think bestselling authors' books have a better chance to sell well. Gong is one of the highest-paid Korean motivational speakers in Korea. He gives on average 20 lectures per month (*Chosun Ilbo* 2 February 2003) including in

Samsung Electronics, Samsung Life Insurance, Hyundai Motor, LG Electronics, and business schools (according to Gong's website). And his reputation as a speaker in these prestigious companies and organisations brings him even more recognition. In other words, he 'becomes famous for being famous' (Buzzard 2002: 98). In addition to the corporate/organisational program, Gong began a one-day program called 'Gong Byoung-ho's Self-Management Course' for individuals. He named his motivational program an 'academy' and this academy targets at salaried people but also adolescents (from high school students to as young as primary school students). The registration fee for one-day-eight-hours program is around 250 British Pounds for an adult. Comments on the program written by participants are posted on Gong's website are full of enthusiasm and appreciation of his lecture.

However, his self-admitted 'quantity rather than quality' strategy is sometimes heavily criticised by some readers. Gong openly said that he did not fear criticism because otherwise he would not be able to finish a single book (*Hankyoreh* 27 October 2006). As one reader pointed out, 'he seems to manufacture books instead of authoring them' (ID: phlipismine from Aladin.com, 12 December 2004). Both Goo and Gong send newsletter on a regular basis — mostly composed of his notes, book reviews, and extracts from his new and previous books.

The Management: One Book, One Company reading program?[38]

As I explained before, after experiencing the economic and social turmoil that the economic crisis of 1997 has brought about the popularity of self-development is ever increasing among white-collar workers. A number of prestigious Korean companies have claimed that their executive members seek managerial wisdom

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[38] This is parody of the 'One Book, One Community' reading program that Nancy Pearl has initiated in Seattle Washington in 1998. This city-wide book club program has aimed 'to boost community bonding and a love of literature' by encouraging citizens of one town, city, state, or nation to read and discuss the same work of literary fiction (American Library Association 2003).

by reading self-help books. Furthermore, they have advocated that their employees should do likewise by employing direct and indirect measures to encourage book reading. This includes from circulating recommended reading lists (which are mostly managerial self-help books) and setting up workplace reading groups, to demanding book reviews, and using them as a part of performance evaluation or even in promotion.

Since its first appearance in a national newspaper in 1995 the unfamiliar combination of familiar ideas (if I translate as direct as possible), 'reading management', known as *docsur kyungyung* in Korean has become a buzzword among a number of Korean companies. However, it is not until 2000 that more and more companies, not only private enterprises but also public enterprises and local governments, have claimed that they are committed to the 'reading management.' Despite its ambiguity and variation of the definition of this unprecedented practice, based on the representations of the popular media, it could be defined as managerial attempts not only to find their managerial wisdom by keeping up with up-to-date business/management self-help texts but also to encourage their employees to read more and to read what they think worthy in terms of their managerial ideology and usefulness. With regard to Korea's historically poor reading culture this business-initiated reading campaign may deserve a welcome and encouragement from society and surely it has. However, there is very little, if any, investigation on what this managerial participation in building reading culture tells us about the relation between managerial interest and popular book reading. Also, the way in which reading popular business/management texts is encouraged by management and how this influences the world outside of business needs to be investigated. The 'reading management' is not only influential in deciding what kind of books are valued most but also in the way we value reading for purpose over the reading for pleasure.

Therefore, my focus here is not so much about the procedure or the managerial results of this practice. Rather, the focus is how the idea of the reading for purpose has been emphasised by prominent Korean private and public enterprises that intend to use this corporate reading campaign to build positive reputations inside and outside of the organisation. Furthermore, I attempt to

explain why this practice has received full support from the popular media and how employees respond to the managerial attempts.

I analysed newspaper articles containing the keywords 'reading management' focusing on how the managerial attempt is defined and rationalised by management and what kinds of books compose the recommended reading lists. I also analysed two books introducing the practice of 'reading management.' Both books are published within a year or so of each other and may provide detailed explanations of 'reading management.' In order to find out the responses from the employees I interviewed low-profile employees who work for the companies known for employing the 'reading' management policy focusing on the lived experience of management and also interviewed publishers. As a response to this sudden vogue, there has been constant and increasing newspaper coverage including self-help business/management book reviews and recommended reading lists of self-help titles. Among the coverage, are recommended by popular news media and in-house media and trade journals. means 'management tactics utilising books' that are praising the managerial trials to practise as an effort of 'cultural management.'

Contrary to the claim that this managerial invention is unprecedented before the Korean experience and hence unique in Korea, Korea is not alone in this organisational effort to encourage their employees read more. For example, in the UK there is Orange Talks Books at Work that launched as part of the Government's National Year of Reading and is this year's education initiative from the Orange Prize for Fiction. It is a unique programme that builds on the previous success of the Orange Reading Groups by encouraging companies to establish reading groups at work (*PR Newswire*, 2 June 1999). Another example is to be found from Mexico police (Tuckman, *Guardian* October 2006). With an interview with *Guardian* Mr Sanchez the leftwing mayor of Nezahualcoyotl said, 'We believe reading will improve their vocabulary and their writing skills, help them express themselves, order their ideas and communicate with the public, 'Reading will make them better police officers and better people' (*Guardian*, 8

March 2005).[39] While Orange's commitment is more about facilitating workplace reading groups and Mexico police's case is about literacy, the Korean case is more ... Love of literature rather than self-development per se. It is possible to assume from interviews and press lease that management does not exclude the possibility that this reading can lead to more serious and vocational reading. The fundamental difference is that literature is a very small part of Korean 'must reads' given by companies. Those companies are big conglomerates in most cases and try to make full use of certain categories of books to make sense of their managerial strategies and their vision of enterprise. These various business-led reading campaigns are problematic in two ways.

Firstly, popular management texts are a means of delivering managerial ideology and improve the image of companies. Many companies encourage their employees to develop themselves constantly and one of the most popular and 'affordable' (in terms of time and cost) ways is reading books. Increasing managerial interests among Korean leading companies to use management books for the publicity and as a tool of corporate communication gives rise to the new concept of management — 'reading-management.' Secondly, The importance of reading is emphasised as the means of self-development from low-level employees right up to CEOs and in particular for some managers it is regarded as a cheap however powerful tool of new-management or cultural management.

As the idea of utilising self-development or management books in management for 'reorientation' of employees is praised by the mass media and becoming popular, some leading companies have started to bulk purchase certain kinds of book which are not strictly necessary but mostly belong to the business book category. They also give those books to their staff occasionally and give them away to clients on special occasions like Christmas, the end and beginning of the year, or anniversaries of the founding of a company. *What is it?* The purpose of

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[39] Their two must-read lists include — for recommended authors, Edgar Allan Poe, Agatha Christie, Arthur Conan Doyle, Paco Ignacio Taibo II; and recommended books are *Aura*, Carlos Fuentes, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, Octavio Paz, *Pedro Páramo*, Juan Rulfo, *100 Years of Solitude*, Gabriel García Márquez, *Don Quixote*, Miguel de Cervantes, *The Little Prince*, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (Jo Tuckman, 'Crime fighters brought to book', *Guardian* 8 March 2005).

this workplace book campaign is encouraging book reading/set up workplace library and reading group/swap a book at work/financial support for book purchase — pay for the books/provide space (and maybe time). I said maybe because I think if reading is work-related then the time employees spend on the reading group is part of work be it if they distribute recommended reading lists regular basis through organisational communication channels/use for job interviews (even those whom fail to get a job in out company, at least they can go away with a book) or write evaluations (book review)

There appear to be several reasons why some companies are eager to make their employees read self-help business books. The importance of self-development is ever growing, not just at a personal level but also with an organisational dimension in the era of the knowledge economy. More specifically, self-help management texts are used as guides for how to survive in competitive and rapidly changing business environments by updating new knowledge and information. They are also used as a source of inspiration for inventing new products and services. Some see their utility in helping employees to become more motivated toward self-development. However, it seems to me, there are also more political aims. For companies, self-help literature can be a substitute for existing practices of influencing their employees: for example, all kinds of meetings where managerial ideas were delivered directly.

An interesting point is that the value of reading is reconstructed by its management quality. Even although a few titles are from outside of the self-help genre, the way in which those books are valued is economically oriented. Western and Chinese classics are re-evaluated to learn lessons about leadership and how to overcome difficulties... Historical and fictional heroic figures are portrayed as great managers and leaders.

From the perspective of companies, another benefit of 'reading management' is positive publicity. Some companies take one step further. Not just satisfied with building a good reputation from their innovative managerial trials, some companies publish their books based on CEO's and high-profile executive's personal success story or the success story of the company. They aim to raise their brand image and to use those books for a means of promoting the company itself and for improving the company image. The company may not design/control the

entire book but it must co-operate in some level by providing materials for the book such as relevant documents and interviews.

Two representative examples are SK and LG. The summer reading lists of each company were published in their in-house magazine and also distributed as a form of press release. Subsequently every single national daily newspaper published the press release with slight alterations, even the headlines were similar. Often, articles start with 'The summer reading lists were published in the in-house magazine attracts attention...' however who are those attention payers and why they pay attention is never clarified.

It is not surprising that mainstream business and economic newspapers advocate the idea of self-development and emphasise the competitive edge and the maintenance of economic value orientation. However, I found that there is an unusual alliance between newspapers and Korean conglomerates. They do not stay in the relationship as news media and news source but are more close allies who exchange human resources and so on. For example, half of company-related books are written by an individual or a group of former or current journalists and oftentimes, published by a publishing house run by the newspaper company. Moreover, the book industry exactly understands what CEO's are trying to achieve by using books, mostly from self-help genre, in their management. A manager of the Marketing & Sales Team of Random House JoongAng, the biggest self-help publisher in Korea said:

> The management demands motivation of ceaseless self-development and enthusiasm to their employees. If the company tries to deliver the messages through meetings or workshops then that could be repeating lectures and all members of the staff should be gather at the same and in the same place. Instead, by giving away a book to the staff, the company the management can accomplish their objects without spending big expenses. In this case, the most frequently appeared keywords are passion, hope, harmony, efficiency in work and cooperation within the company something like that. (Interview, 21 October 2005)

A good example which illustrates what the management wants to deliver to their employees is *Postman Fred* (2004), a translation of *The Fred Factor: How Passion in Your Work and Life Can Turn the Ordinary into the Extraordinary* (Sanborn 2004). This is one of the successful cases of bulk selling. The messages of this book are very similar to what publisher's said CEO's are looking

for, such as recovering passion. In other words, 'the rebirth or restoration of the hard working ethic.' According to the publisher's introduction this book is:

> ... the true story of Fred, the mail carrier who *passionately loves his job* and who genuinely cares about the people he serves. Because of that, he is *constantly going the extra mile handling the mail* ... of the people on his route, treating everyone he meets as a friend. Where others might see delivering mail as monotonous drudgery, Fred sees an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those he serves... Sanborn... reveals the four basic principles that will help us bring *fresh energy and creativity to our life and work*: how to make a real difference everyday, how to become more successful by building strong relationships, how to create real value for others without spending a penny, and how to constantly reinvent yourself. By following these principles, and by learning from and teaching other 'Freds,' you, too, can excel in your career and make your life extraordinary.... (From Amazon.co.uk, emphasis added)

The publishing industry reads current trends and consumer's needs but they also significantly lead the trend. For example, Random House JoongAng is planning to establish 'The Fred Award' in collaboration with *JoongAng Ilbo*, one of the biggest national daily newspapers in Korea and whose parent company is Samsung, parent company of RHJ. Online bookstores (I believe offline bookstores must have a similar strategy) have a specialised section for those various reading lists recommended by big companies.

'Recommended reading lists given by executives, which are filled with business and management books and on the top of that, employees are forced (in various ways) to read them seems to be incomparable to any other country, yet, the Korean (mainstream) society thinks this is really cool idea! It might be good for workers to have accessibility to various books which otherwise many employees would not have a chance to look at; however, in terms of diversity and democracy of choice of book reading is threatened by these practices.

Although management has claimed that one of the benefits of 'reading management' is improving corporate communication, this is less likely to be the case. While British workplace reading groups are encouraged in order to 'help staff get to know each other better, and so work more effectively as a team' (*Literacy Today*), its Korean counterpart pursues a different type of communication. That is to say, top-down communication, not communication 'between' members but executives' communication 'towards' employees.

The Popular Media: A Book Enthusiast

The mass media have made an important contribution to the growing popularity of the self-help genre in Korea. The media have good reasons to give away its space and time to introduce and highlight self-help titles. The defence from the side of book section editors was that there was a lack of time and specialty. Han (2002) analysed the front page of the book section from the top three national daily newspapers (*Dong-A Ilbo*, *JoongAng Ilbo*, and *Chosun Ilbo* — which are traditional right-wingers) for three months in 2002. The result was that 25 books out of 35 books became one of the bestsellers in their relevant categories as soon as those newspapers review them. The research interprets this result as proof that newspapers have an influence on readers' book selection. However, that is a rather over-simplified explanation, if not false causation, when we consider the following two facts: very few books have the chance to be reviewed by those newspapers; and the analysed three newspapers represent mainstream views and readers in particular. Therefore, being introduced by national daily newspapers with a wide circulation means that that a book already has a good chance to be a best-seller, rather than people buying and reading the reviewed book just because of the review. Considering the influence of the mainstream media, a bestseller is, with few exceptions, not made by readers' purchases but already ought to be one at the point of publication.

In addition, as the major book market has shifted from offline to online, online bookshops need content to attract consumers by filling their unlimited space with rich content. Publicity quoting lines from newspaper articles is hardly a new strategy. However, while other international online bookstores such as Amazon.com take lines from not only mainstream news media but also different review journals, their Korean counterparts completely rely on book reviews from newspapers because there is very limited space for book reviews in other media. In addition, unlike daily papers, which last for one day, online postings last as long as the item is not eliminated. Books without media reviews look less believable as reviews add more authority to those books and make the books more accessible. Often, books recommended by the press and broadcasted book programs are highlighted by on/offline bookstores: for example, exclusive virtual selves and sections under special banners and web-pages are set up.

A Korean book columnist explained in an interview with me that there is an important interconnection between books and newspapers. The book section of a newspaper can be compared to a professional sports team and the newspaper to the owner of the team. Even though the book section does not create any direct profit for the newspaper company, the newspaper company can attract a highbrow readership and raise its standards by giving away some space for books, which are a popular form of cultural entertainment but still easily linked to high culture. A book section is an important and influential way to satisfy readers' needs for books. In addition, this cultural commodity exactly coincides with newspapers' strategies that differentiate with other newspapers corresponding with changes in media environment as well as their strategies to draw a highly educated intelligent audience group. In addition, to the book section editors or, more widely speaking, culture section editors, publishers are a key source for reporting and press release materials.

From the perspective of publishers being reviewed in a newspaper in either a book section or other articles is buying advertising space for free. In addition, as I mentioned before, ordinary readers heavily rely on popular news media when they choose books because they trust the selection and judgement of mass media. Therefore, to the publishers, being reviewed by newspapers is an ideal way of gaining publicity. It is natural for publishers to do their best to be selected by book section editors so most publishers schedule publication of their books on Monday or Tuesday because book reviews are published at weekends. This schedule allows some time for editors to review. In particular, for small and independent publishers that cannot afford extensive marketing, being reviewed in newspapers is almost the only way to promote their books nationwide even though being reviewed by a mainstream newspaper is not easy. This is because the more publishers buy advertising space or time, the more they are likely to be reviewed by the newspaper. In that sense, the publicity using mass media is, of course, not completely free.

Discussion: A loose but powerful 'Korean self-help alliance'

In this chapter, I tried to identify what involved in the growing popularity of self-help books in Korea and how the self-help complex operates both separately and collaboratively. I demonstrated that the unprecedented popularity of the business self-help genre in Korean society today results from the interconnected interaction between various interests of social agents involved in the process from publishing, marketing, and beyond. This can be identified as the 'Korean self-help alliance.' In this section, I will summarise research findings and provide possible explanation why this self-help complex obtains the explanatory power in Korean society.

The process of book making is complicated and lengthy, and there are a number of different interests and powers that are related to this. The Korean publishing industry, which used to be regarded as the most important cultural sector that led various social and cultural discourses, has been rapidly commercialised recently by competitively accommodating itself to the changing business environment. What has accelerated the change is the growing importance of the internet as a space of bookselling as well as publicity. The increasing importance of the internet has brought more and more consequences according to the ability to make investment in marketing in the publishing industry. In the current book market blockbuster self-help titles have had a great public exposure. With the collaboration of the Korea self-help alliance, some self-help titles have a better chance to make blockbuster hits through the support of the mainstream media, online communities, and big companies rather than as a result of the decision of the public. Those blockbuster hits are likely to be the books that CEOs like to encourage their employees to read. As the self-help industry itself is a proliferating and profitable business worldwide, it is no wonder that commercial institutions such as the self-help book industry and the self-management industry are deeply involved in this self-help trend. The Korean press is very cordial, positive and generous when they deal with books and book reading. A good example is the newspaper reading campaigns and serial reportages on the Korean publishing industry. Therefore, any messages associated with books and reading is likely to be well received and in a positive way. Daily newspapers, online

bookseller, internet portal sites encourage the public to read but there is not much question about what kinds of books they are talking about and why they are interested in encouraging reading.

What makes the Korean case unique is that other institutions, which are unlikely to have direct interests in the self-help genre, play key roles in encouraging the self-help genre and reading of the genre. From my observations it appears that in the context of Korea this is constantly applied in both public and private life. They do not just seek help from assorted self-help products and services to normalise their ideology in their institution but also, I argue, have a great influence and spread their ideology to the public. These players share similar interests: emphasising individual responsibility, reviving hardworking ethics; promoting and celebrating 'belaboured self.' ideology. They prey on fear, on people being anxious and wanting to know how to survive. By providing a sense of security to an anxious public but at the same time by ceaselessly emphasising the necessity of self-development, they grow and survive. Contemporary Korean society has been overwhelmed by a rather contradictory elitist and capitalist mantra: you can have all if you want to but if you don't get it all then that is your responsibility and failure. This convenient ideology is delivered to the public through the mass media with little possibility of critical reflection just because it is mediated by books, which are mistakenly believed to be the neutral and the most reliable medium.

The most personal and autonomous of activities like reading is colonised by the practicality and managerial ideology and problematically this practice is praised by the popular media without any criticism or for when it comes down to it by anyone. How then has this debatable managerial attempt been received without criticism but welcomed and praised? It is not possible to offer a straightforward answer for this question. However, it seems to me that there are two historical backgrounds to explain the reason why. The one factor behind the bibliophilism is historical. In the pre-modern period, at least until *Hangul*, the native alphabet of the Korean language, was not promulgated until the mid 15th century,[40]

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[40] '*Hangul*... became popular among peasants and military men... and among women,

reading and writing in Korea was only limited to a small number of a privileged elite such as the hereditary aristocratic scholar-official class. The activity of reading was highly valued not only as a means of scholarly achievement but of moral cultivation, while the rest of society retained a traditional oral culture. I believe that this cultural legacy of worshipping books continues nowadays because everyone I interviewed had rather automatic responses that book reading is worthier than any other form of culture, and in particular entertainment. It seems to me that this attitude is almost hypocritical — they value so highly book reading when they do not read much and do not like to read. What needs to be clarified is the definition of reading. In other words, it may be useful to question whether Koreans have a rigid idea of what is counted as 'reading'?

This leads to the second and more recent explanation of unconditional support for reading campaigns. In spite of its rapid economic growth, Korea still keeps the shameful title of one of the least read countries among OECD nations. Nevertheless the popular media (which has long been regarded as the leading actor of enlightening the public) and many other organisations (publishers, writers, and cultural organisations) have been involved in wide-ranging campaigns to encourage more reading and create a culture that promotes reading. Yet, the situation hardly has changed. Notoriously competitive university entrance examinations and an education system oriented to examination are not definitely helpful in this situation either. Therefore, building a nation of readers has long been wished from amongst many Koreans. It is possible to assume that Korea's poor reading culture, which is related to the former factor, ironically grants legitimacy to any attempts to encourage book reading. There is no hard evidence to prove this, but it maybe inferred from these social reactions that Korean society has a positive attitude toward book reading. Again, it draws upon the question of the speed of life. There is no time to read. And even before it has entered the era of a reading culture, Korean culture was quickly absorbed into speedy internet culture. For example, Gong's books are highlighted in bookshop

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who used the new alphabet to communicate with each other through letters or with themselves through diaries. The rapid movable type expanded book publications of all sorts, yielding a vibrant historiography... The [Korean] alphabet did not come into general use until the twentieth century, however, since the literati succeeded in associating any consequential knowledge with Chinese writing...' (Cumings 1997: 14).

websites as well as in bricks and mortar bookstores in many ways. His books are very likely to be on a special offer and are often the 'editor's choice'. By buying one of his books you may enter a competition to win expensive free gifts. Readers read not only read Gong's books but also share Gong's book reading experience and his worldview by reading his book reviews. You will find book reviews of Gong's book in most newspaper book sections. And now I will next attempt to answer the questions that still remain unanswered so far: What do popular time management books mean for Korea readers? Will they be persuaded by the work-driven messages that are propelled by the self-help alliance?

Chapter 6: What Do Popular Time Management Books Mean for Korean Readers?

In the previous two chapters, I argued that the current masculine time discourse that I identified within the three popular self-help books is problematic. Primarily because this is gender blind and therefore gender biased by ignoring the essential gendered character of time. This masculine time-politics is based on the outdated male-breadwinner/female full-time homemaker model even though women's participation in employed labour is increasing. It might be more problematic to double income families but it is also a problem to single income families because the 'more than full-time' ethos excludes the breadwinner from family life. I have also argued that the complex social interests surrounding the self-help genre contribute to the diffusion and normalisation of the imperatives of self-improvement.

However, until an investigation had been undertaken explaining what popular time management books mean for Korean readers, the textual analysis remains inevitably uncompleted. More specifically, how do readers respond to the contradictions, conflicts, and dilemmas that exist between the advice given in self-help literature and the reality of their everyday lives? In addition, I have explored perceptions of the genre and how the wider social context of self-help reading (such as specific corporate culture including long hours culture) interplays with the various interpretations. These are questions a study of self-help readers can begin to answer. This audience study addresses questions such as: How and why are readers attracted by the genre in the first place? Why do some readers find the genre to be useful and helpful while others do not? How much power do these discourses have in everyday life of ordinary Korean self-help readers in the relation to the current time-politics? How do Korean readers perceive this recently introduced popular genre and on what grounds the public judges self-help books? How do these perceptions and judgement affect in the way that this genre is consumed?

Moreover, as employment has become more insecure the importance of making workers re/employable, in other words the imperative of self-development, is

increasing. Being 'flexible' and able to work for long hours becomes essential to keep a job. This reinforced imperative is problematic not just because it ignores times spent outside of paid working time, such as caring time and domestic working time, but also because it conflicts with a work/life balance. In this social environment that 'happy workaholics' are celebrated, idealised, and even normalised female workers' job prospects are always inferior to those of their male counterpart's. Also, the imperative which these books suggests (the more time you manage to devote to self-development, the more you are likely to be successful) is more problematic to female readers; because time spent outside of paid work is devaluated, if not ignored. The time for self-development only becomes available because women give up time. Promoting the idea that more time needs to be invested to more 'productive ways' not only devaluates women's gift of time but also naturalises taking more time away from women. In order to address this point, I will explore the gendered voices that contain alternative or critical perspective to male-centred time-politics in interpreting popular time management text.

My audience study relied on a large number of book reviews downloaded from the three biggest online booksellers' websites and one to one interviews with fourteen individuals (seven male and seven female) (see Appendix 2). Book reviews were written pseudonymously (with their user name of the website)[41] and therefore mostly lack demographic information of each writer. I therefore make no claims from this material regarding distinctive interpretations based on sex, age, education, marital status, and social and economic statues of self-help readers. Instead, by juxtaposing book reviews that are rich in their amount and diversity of viewpoints with my own interview materials, which provide social context of consuming this genre, I aimed to accomplish an in-depth explanation of the way that self-help time management genre is consumed in Korean society. Stuart Hall's (1980) theory of 'encoding/decoding' is a widely applied theory in audience studies in media and cultural studies. However, finding out whether the majority of readers agree with the messages from the self-help literature or not

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[41] I identified each quotation from online reviews by the user name of the reviewer, the name of bookseller, and the date of posting.

was not as interesting to me as to see how readers frame the subject matter of time management and what they think time management is for. Furthermore, the experience of self-help reading is not one-dimensional and readers judge self-help titles with different/multiple aspects. Self-help readers could be very critical about specific messages from a book. They may, however, still like the book because the book is written by their favourite self-help author, or simply because reading the book makes them feel better. Some readers decide to buy and read self-help books simply because of successful publicity or curiosity not necessarily because they have great expectation or trust in the genre or certain specific titles of self-help books. How to make sense of these various and complicate responses of audience? So instead adapting two relevant theories critically (thin culture and interpretive community), I interpreted research material. Alongside analysing readers' reception on the messages, I also investigated *genre* reception that of course does not stand alone. Typicality in the genre characterises the genre and also readers of the genre may expect the typicality when they pick up a book.

Throughout this chapter I will revisit concepts and theories on the mass media audience and seek conceptual and theoretical alternatives to better facilitate explanation of the cultural implication of self-help reading. The activity of self-help reading, like consuming any other forms of cultural products, is deeply involved not only with personal preference and taste but also with wider and complex social contexts.

Capturing Korean Self-Help Readers

The audience is an 'everchanging, fluid concept' (Bird 2003: 4) and 'the conditions and boundaries of audiencehood are inherently unstable' (Moores 1993: 2). But then how about Korean self-help readers? Before I conducted the fieldwork for this project in 2004, I anticipated I would have no problem meeting those self-help enthusiasts. According to the popular media it seemed that self-help books overwhelmed the whole nation. However, it was surprisingly difficult to meet those enthusiasts in person. When told that my PhD is about 'self-help culture' and 'self-help reading', some people responded with a question like 'self what?' Some of my circle of friends even showed strong disgust being asked about

their experience of reading the self-help genre saying 'I know that the self-help genre is quite popular nowadays and many people seem to actually read them but I am not one of them.' That is as if they want to ask 'why do you think I might be into the self-help rubbish.' Even among those who said certain self-help books were useful disapproval was expressed. Self-help genre was maybe useful, however, it was not a legitimate genre like other 'genuine' literary genres or academic books. This reminds me of those people who denied the influence of mass media in Elizabeth Bird's (2003) research project of media anthropology. She said she frequently encountered those comments including: 'I guess what you do is interesting, but of course I never watch TV myself' (2003: 1). As many of us deny the media-saturated reality in our own lives, is this what was happening to Korean readers? Or is media representation on self-help reading cult in Korea exaggerated somehow as I argued in the previous chapter?

In the relatively short history of the self-help genre in South Korea, understanding the perception of the genre helps to explain collective attitudes towards the medium of book. As I explained earlier, the Korean name of self-help genre, 'practical books' reflects the distinction between practical books and the rest. This seems to me to suggest that perception of books in Korean society, books that are not supposed to be practical. Taken from a large number of online book reviews posted by self-help readers, the frequently used words to define self-help genre are: marketability, best selling books and, quick-and-easy to read. It is also important to focus on how readers bring their personal and social circumstance on the selection and interpretation of those self-help titles: 'How does the social, economic, cultural and historical character of Korean society influence self-help reading?' This study investigates two different dimensions of the cultural implication of self-help reading. One is related to the way in which meaning is constructed from the messages in self-help books and the other is concerned with the construction of meaning through the act of reading.

As Hermes said by reading those tips, you are reminded of all sorts of things that you knew already but kind of had forgotten. Modern everyday life is created as doubleness on the one hand of continuity, of trust and certainty, made possible by the norms, rules and routines of everyday life. And, on the other hand, change and a more or less frightening and joyful urge for autonomy (Bech Jørgensen

1990:22). The point is to recognize that the everyday, on the one hand, is the site of the utterly superficial and repetitive that we need to respect for the sense of security it gives and, on the other hand, potentially is the site of major personal and societal change. Both sides to the everyday need to be part of media research (Hermes 1993: 497).

Ambivalent readers

Readers make their own judgements about self-help books based on their experiences in private and professional life. They usually make judgements based on content but they also sometimes on non-content related qualities, for instance, whether the book is hardcover or paperback. The hardcover/paperback distinction matters because of price but also because it is related to how much the audience value a particular book and how much (or how long they think) they want to keep it. Whether a member of the audience thinks a certain title deserves to be published as a hardcover or not is another way to understand how the audience gauges the quality of a book. The criticism of publishing certain titles in hardcover could become more critical when customers have no option but to buy a book in hardcover — such as was the case of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time*. Those different criteria of criticism are contradictory and competing each other and among them I have encountered with paradox in self-help reading.

The first paradox of self-help reading is what readers expect from time management books is contradictory. The following two quotations from online reviews of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* suggest how readers have different ideas on time management.

> Nature doesn't allow us more than 24 hours a day and this is given to anyone equally. That's why only those who can manage time properly can control one's life and achieve success. Is it too banal and common? If you think so then maybe it's time to examine ourselves why we cannot practise this banal and common truth yet. (ID: ohmalove from Kyobobooks.com, 8 June 2004)

The author of the review internalises the voice of Saisho, the author of the book.

The terms including 'nature' and 'control' and the idea of achieving success through time management are key ideas in Shaisho's book. Whereas, the next reviewer has exactly opposite idea:

> If you consider becoming a 'morning person' as a weapon 'to win in the competitive society' I'd like to say you're wrong... I like to interpret this book as a guidebook to how to live life more slowly... A 'morning person's life should be sought to attain a relaxed, creative and healthy life. (ID: walkingman from Aladdin.com, 4 December 2003)

The above review shows oppositional reading. Read the text from a completely different perspective. Most book reviews judge the book from the perspective of how useful the book was in terms of perusing efficiency and productivity of time. On the contrary, this reviewer disapproves of the association between being a morning person and success. This shows that the ambivalence of the 'morning person' idea, or general time-management guidance. The dominant message of popular time management guidance, which is 'efficient time management is a short cut to success', is not taken by the second review at all. Rather, the meaning of time management is interpreted differently. This example demonstrates that the pre-given meaning is not always taken for granted. Even if the desire to have a relaxed life and a determined resolution to make the most and best of time rather than allow them appear to be in conflict with each other, time management self-help readers found these two opposing values contained within the same book. The interpretation could be explained by the specific title, which extends the meaning of time management into the development of a 'healthy lifestyle' (both physically and psychologically) including more positive thinking and better sleep management.

On the surface, they seem to be contradictory aims but it could make better sense if we understand that self-help readers are responding simultaneously to two different kinds of time management tips. One of those tips is about increasing efficiency and productivity and the main contents would be answering the question such as 'How to get more things done within a limited time?' or 'How to get organized to do more work in less time?' — also a title of a time management 'how-to' book. The other tip focuses on downshifting — which is to say, choosing to change from a highly paid but stressful job to one that makes it possible to improve one's quality of life in other respects. When we skim through time

management booklists these two themes often coexist even within a particular book. That is because ordinary people cannot afford to take time-off and fear being presented as not being committed to their job and eventually losing their job.

The three books I selected as the subject of textual analysis are distinctive since they start with emphasising the need for time to be made available before it can be spent and then move to 'how to make the most of the time.' The idea of 'making time' must be welcomed by most ordinary readers who have struggled with time shortage to different degrees and would easily appreciate promises of a relaxed and hassle-free life. Most ordinary readers, who have struggled with time shortage to different degrees and would easily appreciate promises of a relaxed and hassle-free life, must welcome the idea of 'making time.' However, finally, the ultimate message is of the importance of making time to invest in self-development as a must-have self-protection strategy against unexpected unemployment.

The second paradox of self-help reading is related to the way that readers frame time management. Average voices from book reviews are not political in the sense that these voices do not particularly try to make links between their personal experiences and the wider social circumstances of Korean society. Often readers are not discriminating but rather negotiable and they are more likely to reserve judgement rather than make judgement straight. Judging by the online book reviews I have downloaded from the three biggest Korean online booksellers, the majority of self-help readers limit self-help reading to books which deal with personal life — with a focus on lifestyle, personal habits, personality and personal circumstances.[42] These overly positive reviews can be explained better by the fact that the average customer comments posted on a bookseller's website are likely to

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[42] When it comes to the interesting question of why customers make such an effort to provide these reviews it would be worth examining if there is any substantial or non-substantial reward for posting comments. The feature and quality of the rewarding system, if there is any, could influence which customers would be motivated to post their comments and also the way in which customers place their comments. As a result of competition amongst online book retailers the reward system has been introduced or bettered (about effect of word of mouth on sales of online book reviews, see Chevalier and Mayzlin 2006).

be positive rather than negative.

On the contrary, however, some reviewers problematise self-help books for not looking at the larger cultural context that has given rise to various problems, including time shortages in personal and professional life, so they try to place the self-help text into a wider social context. They are aware that the messages from popular self-help books would be closely related to the changing business environment. In his/her review one online reviewer of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* questions that social context.

> It is no exaggeration to say that the lifestyle of a night owl, at least among people who are employed, is attributed to the bloody long hours culture... As long as our awful lives are dominated by ruthless pace of life, it won't change no matter whether we are a night person or a morning person. ('[Asking myself] what is the morning person life for', ID: walkingman from Aladdin.com, 4 December 2003)

This reviewer shows a strong disapproval of the idea that being a morning person will you make you successful and rich. S/he argues that lifestyle change is not the matter of time management or will power. Instead it is sometimes out of our control and strongly context-dependent. Likewise the following reviewer finds the virtue of being a morning person from remaining cool, calm and collected.

> Some people say now society is trying to get involved even in our time in the early morning and is driving us to become more competitive. But my opinion is not that negative, maybe simply because I need more time, in particular I need keenly time on my own. This is a suitable book for motivating those people [who would like to make time for themselves], like me, to have their mind set [on the goal] and start anew. When you wake up early you can take a walk calmly, read books and allow more time to go to work... that makes the day quite pleasant. ('The starting point of my new life', ID: meet96 from Kyobobooks.com, 31 October 2004)

As a review of the Korean author's self-help book *Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends* (Gong 2004) aptly points out, the imperative of an early rising and effective time management to the most rigid discipline in Korean society is:

> Like the author, I also don't want to recommend spending most of the weekend watching television but I do not agree with other advice [on how to spend weekends]. The author does not seems to understand that late rising... means more than just recovering from fatigue for workers who have intense stress of getting to the office on time... As a matter of fact, we

> are living under a system of oppression from middle school days, and particularly for men, school, the military and the workplace are similar. They all have seniors who force us to obey rules and [from those three institutions] we are programmed to the value system of rigid time control and considering relaxation as a sin. ('Analysing Gong Byung-ho', ID: phlipismine from Aladin.com, 12 December 2004)

As the reviewer argues, the pressure from time constraint is not only the matter of efficiency but also relate to the authority and furthermore moral obligation. If you stay in bed late you are supposed to feel bad not only because you have wasted your time when you may have done something useful but also because it is morally wrong.

> Reading these kinds of books is nothing but a kind of self-hypnotism. Because what this book preaches is a truth which is incomparably obvious and commonplace among commonplaces. Even so people read these kinds of book not because they don't know it would be like that but because they just want to affirm the truth all over again...('A mirage is nothing but a mirage', ID: Lahula from Aladin.com, 3 February 2004)

The quotation above implies that some self-help readers do not have strong sense of involvement into a specific self-help title.

> The thing is this preaching works for people and we are willing to accept it. This demonstrates our society is changing rapidly and is becoming more demanding... The good old days are gone. Our generation has to live with much more competition than the previous generation has experienced. (ID: Lahula from Aladin.com, 3 February 2004)

For some readers contents are not very important. Maybe this is why so many copies of self-help books are sold even though they have similar themes and contents. Therefore, although a number of factors including the contents or writing style and originality are taken into account in the judgement on self-help titles like any other genres, readers' final verdicts could be made irrespectively.

> When you read this kind of self-help books in a great deal, you will find that this book is like the other book. Once I even thought I could write a book if I can edit between books. The reason why I keep going back to (self-help books) regardless that is because every time I read them I can collect and recharge myself when I become lazy and loose. I believe that it is worthwhile to pay for the book as long as I can pick a single line that I can apply to my life. ('Why the title is the morning person?,' ID: gableel 29 April 2004)

The review above suggests that readers question the originality of the genre: one

book is no different from another. Even so, their criticism is not necessarily negative. A number of reviewers say that for example: 'All I need is motivation, details of the book don't really matter,'; 'I don't expect this book changes my life completely. Instead what I expect from this book is a stimulus.' Another example is,

> I rarely read self-development genre because I think those books are too banal and just repeating the same messages without changing many words, which we can see everywhere all the time. Nevertheless, when I sometimes feel weak and lazy I pick up self-development books and read them as if I am clutching a straw. ('Emphasising practice is never too much', ID: Jenny910 from Aladin.com, 13 January 2004)

No matter how much they are satisfied with or agree with the message, this type of reader puts much more emphasis on the reader's own will and determination.

A number of time management book readers (in particular, *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time*) suggested that they were annoyed just by the great popularity or advertisements and promotions for the book. This includes active coverage from other popular media such as newspaper articles and televised programs as well as word of mouth. Certain levels of denial or even strong dislike of being one of the mass who blindly follows a current fad are displayed. This is, ironically, mixed with anxiety about falling behind of a social trend.

Oppositional decoding?

On the surface, it would appear that Korean society has been overwhelmed by the 'morning person' fashion. However, this book was not universally well-received. There was also a great deal of criticism, however neglected and trivialised it seemed to be. Firstly, some medical experts, in particular those who practise oriental medicine, raised the counter-discourse to the concept of the 'morning person.' Oriental medicine emphasises the importance of the four different

physical constitutions each of us has.[43] We should treat each constitution differently as it is even believed that this is highly relevant to personality. Their major criticism is that becoming a 'morning person' may be bad for some people's health. This is because whether a lifestyle is beneficial or not depends on which constitution the person has. Similarly, some research suggests that 'each individual has a unique profile' which is also know as the 'body clock' and this makes some people prefer to wake up early whereas others only come alive at night (Tucker 2006). However, considering that this 'morning person' discourse was consumed not as *health* guidance but as an extremely popular *self-development* guide in Korean society, the argument fails to tackle the imperative which the 'morning person' discourse is based on and only touches a small part of the discourse. Nonetheless, this 'scientific' opposition to the Saisho's 'scientific' theory seems to be liberating to some readers. In several book reviews, some readers justified why they had failed to become a 'morning person' with this counter-scientific evidence and emphasised that will power did not entirely control how our body works.

The Uses of Self-help Literature: Sense of Self-governance through Time Management

In the course of reading self-help books and practising some of the tips given by those books, some readers achieve the sense of self-governance. It seems worth quoting a few of those reviews that suggest the empowering side of self-help reading.

> The person who controls time shall control his/her life. (ID 9330 from Yes24, 01 October 2004)

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[43] Sasang Constitutional Medicine (SCM) is a medicine theory which is created by Je-Ma Lee (1837-1900) in Chosun Dynasty of Korea. In SCM, human beings are classified into four constitutions which is originated from four basic principles of the Confucianism – Taeyangin (太陽人) has the strong lungs and the weak liver. Soyangin(少陽人) has the strong spleen and the weak kidneys. Taeumin(太陰人) has the strong liver and the weak lungs. Soeumin(少陰人) has the strong kidneys and the weak spleen (Kim 2003, accessed from http://www.wooree-med.com).

> What has this book enlightened me is to challenge myself constantly. Just like employing force of will in order to wake up early in the morning it has taught me to have a firm purpose in everything in my life ... (from the same website)
>
> Time management is for regaining control of one's life. (same as above)

All of these quotations fit within the concept of time management which can be seen as important personal ability in the enterprise culture in which every individual is expected to be the subject of self-management. A reader who introduced him/herself as a web-planner said as his/her work starts late and thus finishes late at night and so it was hard to be a morning person.

> Each day seems to be extended and I am pleased to be able to manage my days better. And above all it is really pleasant that I don't have sleepless nights, tossing and turning on the bed anymore[44]... [Since I started to get up at six in the morning] I have felt that my life has become happier and more positive. ('The beginning of self-management', ID: hklew from Kyobobooks.com, 2 February 2004) [A sense of self-governance and better sleep management]

However, if we wake up early do we actually have an extended day? Isn't it just an illusion? Ciulla (2000: 176-7) addresses the irony in the acceleration of pace of life as follow:

> The pace of time is related to the number of things we have to do. No only do we spend more time working, but we are more mobile, we have more places to go, more things to buy, and more recreational activities to amuse us. The more activities we try to fit into a pace of time, the faster time seems to go. We may or may not have less time today, but it is certainly true that we feel as if we have less time because we have more to do.

Some non-readers who I interviewed said they are afraid of becoming acquainted with some tips or ideas from self help books which might make them uncomfortable because they are afraid that they are not capable of accepting the new ideas/suggestions and applying them in daily life. Some of my interviewees explained why they are not a fan of the self-help genre by suggesting that they just

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[44] One of the benefits of being a morning person, according to *How being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time*, is having a deep, good night sleep because sleeping between 11pm and 5am (and sleep for an even number of hours), which is the most important principle to be a morning person, is the ideal time for a good sleep with regard to our 'body clock.'

do not want to face the fact that they are not capable of accepting certain personal changes suggested by self-help books.

The 'morning person' became the centre of public interest and also in online communities in 2004. More than one online community[45] was set up in almost every Korean portal site by ordinary web-users and these attracted a huge number of 'wanna-be morning person' people in a short period of time. Some of these communities still survive online. Among one of the web-based 'morning people' communities I found amusing postings such as, 'When I finally managed to wake up very early in the morning I was so proud of myself but I didn't know what to do with all those hours.' Waking up early should be the premise to accomplish a certain goal rather than become an ultimate goal itself. I wondered why people were doing this. Are they simply enjoying challenging themselves? I do not have a definite answer for that yet but I think that exploring this finding might help to explain the appeal of the disciplinary aspect of time management.

Is it that people are craving more personal control over their life, or is it the case that they merely feel that through reading such books that they are in fact doing something to make their life less ordinary? I think that in Korea there is a certain kind of cultural pressure around early rising. Korea used to have a strong rural and agricultural community. There remains a cultural legacy from this historical experience of community that shapes cultural contemporary perceptions about the 'good society.'[46] The Korean substitute of Benjamin Franklin's well-known proverb 'Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise' (from his *Poor Richard's Almanac*) exercises great power. The reason for that is that 'the not only [does] it gives larks a smug sense of superiority, but also reflects the larger trend of society to view sleeping late as a character flaw' (Tucker 2006). Some readers agree with the overall messages from the text which that emphasise

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[45] I did not use online postings in my audience studies because, different from my expectations, even online communities were inspired by a time management self-help book and they became more like support groups (for example, giving a morning call each other) rather than book groups.

[46] As I was growing up, a Korean commercial broadcasting company used to air a kind of announcement at nine sharp everyday just before nine o'clock news program started which said 'It is nine o'clock. Children of *Se-na-ra* [which means 'new country' in Korean] go to bed early and rise early.

individual solutions to survive in a competitive world. Therefore, there is no questioning of social circumstances or social responsibility. The importance of exercising my own will/desperate to have their own time with their own will. Interestingly the way the discourse of a 'morning person' is positioned in Korean society busier and more occupied life, the idea itself is tapped into the Korean readers who have long suffered from long hours and intensified work. For example, on the reason why he was interested in the 'night person' book, one review said he was already a morning person in order not to be late for work – his company was notorious for advancing the time reports for work.

> When the whole nation was overwhelmed by the 'morning person cult' I could not but being indifferent to the cult. What do you want me to do more!!! ('Time is always enough as long as being used properly', ID: neopoca, 11 Aug 2004 from Kyobobook)

To complete the whole picture of self-help reading in Korean society it is important to contextualise this activity in the wider social context. The following quotation came from a magazine article that describes an 'ordinary' office worker's week.

> During the weekday most of her friends work overtime one of two hours even after having evening meal and sometimes even stay in the office until 10 or 11 pm to finish left works. In the weekends, they are busy with socialising but also busy with attending an English course or having a group study meeting. Of course, this is a story of office workers who have a great interest in success and one's future.

That quotation is based on a taken for granted assumption that overwork and self-development will lead us to success. Then what happens to the person who cannot afford the time to carry on daily night overwork and self-development during weekends? What about the quality of life and the work/life balance? This is normalising a culture of long hours and overwork. This is exemplified by how the Korean word '*ya-geun*' is used. Literally, it means night shift but generally it refers to overtime and this reflects a lack of distinction between regular working hours and overtime.[47] One interviewee shared with me her experience of working

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[47] Similarly, in Japan 'service overtime' seems be an equivalent to Korean '*ya-geun*' which Japanese trade union argues that it implies workers are willingly working overtime

for one of the biggest food companies in Korea a few years ago.

> In regular meetings, the executive members including the head of my department used to quote some terms and lines from business self-help books they've read. So even though there were no obvious pressures or compulsions to read those books without reading same books it was impossible to actively participate in the meeting. (Lee, 29, nutritionist working for a hospital)

One of the reviewers of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* expressed strong criticism on the idea of 'morning person' because of the exploitative intention of the idea. That is using your own spare time to develop yourself for your company. The review said:

> Advocating to be a 'morning person' is not for each employee's self-development [as the book argues] but for the company... which forces people to wake up in the early morning, attend foreign language classes and go to work one hour earlier. This could be self-development but is more likely to be self-torture. (ID Jung-gun, from yes24.com reader's review)

One reviewer of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* is aware that the messages could be used to reinforce a problematic reality by justifying existing long working hours. In many cases, criticism comes from the daily contradictions people have to face.

> *According to my informal source,* this book is for owner managers. Here is an example. An office announcement pops up saying 'The chairman [in many cases, in Korea 'the chairman' implies the owner manager] has read a book called *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time was very* impressed by this book. Senior executives are also asked to be sure to read it by the end of this week'... ('According to my informal source...' ID: doroon from Kyobobooks.com, 11 November 2004, emphasis is added)

> The disturbed mood in offices caused by adverse business condition has been getting worse and this may result in companies starting their working

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even though they do not get paid. Therefore, the union promotes more straightforward term instead – *fuharaizangyou* which means not-pay-remaining-work)
In these hard economic times, company workers may be asked to work overtime for no pay. A labor union is promoting this straightforward term, which means in response to the more indirect term sometimes used by companies, サービス残業 (service overtime). The union argues that the latter term implies the workers are willingly working overtime for no pay (from http://www.kanjiclinic.com/2004newwords.htm).'

> days earlier without changing the time employees can leave the office. (ID: doroon from Kyobobooks.com, 11 November 2004)

The following two reviews are of the book *Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends*. Even though both reviewers are critical of the book, they seem to accept the increasingly competitive reality of the Korean workplace is unavoidable.

> I haven't been very attracted to these kinds of books. While in Japan [books of the self-help genre] have not only filled many shelves of bookstores but also fairly many books have been ranked on bestseller lists and now we are seeing these books prevailing in Korea as well... I'm sorry for the fact that it is necessary to read them... ('Worth reading (no more than) once' ID: yahoin from yes24.com, 9 April 2004)

> This book describes why weekends—which we used to think of as a time for taking a rest, having fun and spending with family—are important and points out what's wrong with the way ordinary people spend their weekends. Also, it describes the success strategy to increase weekend competitiveness. It is a pity that we are facing a reality where we would never be able to survive, to let alone succeed, without investing even our weekends in self-development... (ID: yahoin from yes24.com, 9 April 2004)

> Some reviews question who is most advantaged by the development of the 'morning person' boom and thus who might be encouraging more people to read these kinds of books. A book makes already tired people get more tired... This book has a certain whiff of conspiracy of privileged elites. ('A morning person?' ID: jhsongmd from Kyobobooks.com, 27 March 2004)

It is said that the corporate culture is changing because companies are respecting their employees personal life more but still social drinking is an important part of professional life.

> The main argument [of this book] sounds hollow. Do company workers who are bound to overtime and forced to attend after work drinking socials have any other choice [of different lifestyles]? Does this book mean to advise readers to quit their job? (...) 'How to change your night person lifestyle into a morning person lifestyle' is can hardly be a good advice to the majority of workers (...) Moreover these kinds of books are ready to persuade [readers] to become a 'morning person' by exemplifying some senior executives [who are famous for being morning people]. However even though they come to the office early, they can also leave the office early. It is always those below senior management employees who have to deal with works that has been left until late at night. (ID: Sayonara from Aladdin, 7 June 2004)

This reminds us that not everyone can afford to be a 'morning person.' To add

more pressure to become a 'morning person' it is interesting to note that 'morning person' discourse often frames the 'morning person' as having a healthier and more positive 'lifestyle.' Nevertheless, to become a 'morning person' is not just a matter of choice or free will. The book review above suggests that some people can have the lifestyle of a 'morning person' precisely because they are successful and not the other way around, and that this fact is more likely in Korean society than other ones. Another interviewee, Mina Lee, had read *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* even before this book became popular but she said she did not understand why that book was so popular. She was very critical about the message and summed it up as 'live [or work] a day longer' and 'leaving no space in your everyday life.' She said, 'After all isn't the key message 'work harder'? I think those books are only for the 5~10% of people who work for big companies.' With the exception of several major enterprises (including Samsung, SK, LG, and Hyundai and so on) most companies do not guarantee overtime pay and in many cases all the employees get from the company by way of recompense for overtime is a small amount of money to pay for meals.

At a personal level, I also found that some readers picked up some well-known self-help titles because of peer pressure. One of my interviewees said:

> If you don't read those best-selling books, you don't really have anything to say in your lunch breaks while all your similar age colleagues enthusiastically talks about this book. That's a bit embarrassing and sometime I read those books mentioned in conversions just because I don't want to be left alone. (interview with Jung)

From this perspective, the pressure does not only come from organisation but from the peer pressure. I probed one of my interviewees who was particularly negative about self-help books, which he said were all 'rubbish' (interview with Seo). I wanted to find out what made him think the self-help genre is problematic and what was in his alternative reading list, if he had any. As many other book reviewers had pointed out, he was suspicious about self-help books' usefulness because he thought nobody could give the right answer to time management issues tailored specifically for him. Additionally, he did not agree with the main concept of the book that suggests that success at work is the most important goal in his life.

Gender Trouble

As I argued through the textual analysis in the previous chapter, popular time management books tend to be gender-biased by prioritising employed working life and thus ignore the life outside of paid work and claim that their advice is gender-neutral and can thus apply equally to everyone. This message could be problematic not just to women who juggle between work and family but also anyone who values the work/life balance. To gauge audience reactions to these claims, I singled out gendered reading, in other words particular reviews that commented on gender and gender roles in working and family life. In addition, in the second section I highlighted interviews I had with two women to illuminate the time-politics and gender in both in Korean corporate culture and family.

Juggling work and family life

Even though there are a number of studies which illuminate the gendered implication of the long hours culture, it is hard to generalise whether female workers are more critical of time management books which, I argue, justify the long hours culture. It is widely believed that the later they remain at work the more they are committed to work. But it would be possible to say that male employees are more likely to take this culture for granted while female employees do not simply because many cannot afford extra time to show the required commitment. For example, *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* is criticised for being a male-centred. Some women, who have demanding roles as employees in a long hours culture and as a main carer, feel like 'it does not talk to me.' The following two reviews are supposed to be written by the busiest people in the world and who therefore suffered from time shortage — women with a time-demanding job and a family to take care of.

> Most of housewives get up early in the morning and I'm not an exception. I, too, get up at around five every morning. However, it is impossible to spend some time for self-development even though I wake up that early. As soon as I get up I need to prepare breakfast and wake up my child but also prepare myself to go to work and then precious morning time is all gone. After all, I suppose, what counts more is whether you would be able to use a certain amount of time for yourself rather than whether you are a morning person or not. It is an interesting and useful book but it made me feel the

> grief of being a housewife. (ID: Wanna-be-a-millionaire from Aladdin.com, 16 June 2004)

As the reviewer is bitterly aware, becoming a 'morning person' could only make sense to people who are discharged from all housework. In contrast to the above reader, who seems to take her roles for granted rather than try to break her hectic routine or distribute her responsibilities to other members of family, the following reviewer finds a different solution.

> As I work in sales industry, I felt twenty-four hours a day was always insufficient and I felt as if I was the only person who was given less time than anybody else has. On top of that, as I am a mum, everything, including looking after my child and housework, was a struggle against time and I had no time to invest in myself. However, since I wake up at six in the morning I could do housework and still make time for myself. In addition, as I get my family to join me a day becomes really sufficient. ('Changes in the way of thinking', ID: g9yom2 from Aladin.com, 21 March 2004)

In particular, *Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends* (2003) could be the target of criticism such as 'a book asks too much of working women, particularly women with children' (ID: bright02 from yes24, 20 February 2005). This book, written by Byung-ho Gong, the most celebrated self-management guru in Korea, has good reasons to be criticised. For example, one review of Gong's book pointed out that the author completely ignored married working women when he insisted 'Give up the idea that you should be devoted to your family during the weekend!'

> According to the author being devoted to one's family as the head of household (yes, for him married working women are outside of consideration) means to earn money to provide for the family. To do this we should invest in self-development to become more successful in our career rather than idling our time away under the pretence of spending time with the family. He tries to justify this point by exemplifying his own life (in which he has ignored his family and totally committed himself to his work). (ID: phlipismine from Aladin.com, 12 December 2004)

The other review on the same book criticised the text as it normalised the male-dominated viewpoint by overly prioritising financial responsibility and giving an excuse to ignore other roles in the family.

> The author claims that [one's] self-development is the most important way to serve a family; however, I think spending time with the family is not an option but a right and responsibility. Among many other responsibilities of

> the head of a family fulfilling his children and partner's emotional/psychological wealth is as important as keeping the household economy stable. And this role should be a part of the weekend management. ('Are you desperate to live the life you want?', ID: bright02 from yes24, 20 February 2005)

However, responses related to readers' conventional gender role are not always negative. Some reviewers said they felt restricted in their time use because they have so many things to do but time management tips from self-help books have changed the situation. A reviewer started her contribution by describing her everyday routine in a sarcastic way as if what she normally does is not worthwhile.

> Being half asleep and half awake I send the kids off the school and come back to bed and then wake up again to have brunch, and then clean the house, do the laundry and then help out in the shop [which my husband runs] until the kids come back home. I spend time doing this and that until dinner time and spur the kids to finish their homework and then make them wash and go to bed then suddenly it is ten o'clock. After watching an episode of a soap opera and tidy up the house and washings briefly then suddenly I am overcome with drowsiness though I still have many things to do. ('Me time I've found again,' ID: maum_2004 from kyobobook.com, 17 May 2004)

The reviewer's daily routine demonstrates how many roles she has and how she takes for granted the multiplicity and all-at-onceness of her roles as a full-time career, housewife and part-time shop assistant. The review continued,

> It is still hard [for me] to get up at five in the morning, as the book advised, but I used to wake up at eight am but now I get up at half past six in the morning. It's been two weeks [since I changed the time I get up] and I feel like I have longer day and try not to waste it. I used to think that I had no 'me time'[48] as I was too busy looking after the kids but I guess that's not totally true.

Here is another review written by a woman who has two young children are two

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[48] 'Me time' or 'me-time' means a period when someone relaxes by doing something that they enjoy. 'Me time' is a term which has been popularised by all forms of the media geared towards issues of female interest, in particular women's magazines. The idea is that, amidst the stress of 21st century life, a woman finds it increasingly difficult to spend time that is exclusively for her and is not encroached upon by the non-stop demands of work and family. 'Me time,' then, is a period of time when a woman can put herself first and do something that she particularly enjoys to aid relaxation and revitalisation (http://www.macmillandictionary.com/New-Words/ 030620-me-time.htm, accessed on 23 October 2006).

year old and thirteen-month old baby.

> Usually mums who have babies tend to adjust themselves to the babies' rhythm. Looking after a baby requires enormous energy so it is a kind of unspoken rule that mum should get some sleep when her baby is sleeping. I, too, have stayed in bed until late morning with my babies and had a nap in the afternoon when my babies have a nap (being a mum of two babies born in successive years is more tiring...). However, thanks to this book, I realised that I was addicted to sleep. ('Beating an addiction to sleep', ID: shmoon95, kyobobook.com, 3 February 2004)

From the economic efficiency oriented point of view she might be regarded as if she is wasting her time and even 'addicted' to sleep. Nevertheless, is it not possible to see that she is adjusting herself to the newborns' biological rhythm? At this point, it seems to be worthwhile to quote Christine Everingham's (2002: 336) personal experience of being a new mother to highlight the character of 'feminine' and caring time.

> Overnight, I lost all of my free time. The baby's cries were urgent and insistent. They had to be attended to no matter what the time of day or night. Time was no longer predictable — it could no longer be neatly divided into 'free time' and allocated time, since as a new mother I was 'on call' 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I was linked directly to 'those other human tides', those biological rhythms of the newborn which are a continual reminder to new mothers that infants are actively involved in their own 'social construction'.

As Mellor noted, 'to the extent that women are responsible for biological time, they do not have time, they give time' and 'they create the time and thereby the space in which men and children live' (1991: 259). Not many self-help time management books readers seem to be aware of gendered time-politics.

'Are you going home already?'[49]

Changing the focus to the working life of women and obstacles they are facing in terms of time-politics, I analyze two stories that demonstrate 'preseentism' and the gender blindness of both the world of paid employment and self-help books.

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[49] This is from the title of an article from *Time & Society* (Rutherford 2001).

When I was personally introduced to Yu by one of my friends in Cardiff, Yu (in her late 30s, married with a son) had just quit working for the local bank[50] in which she had worked for the last 10 years. I did not set up any formal interview sessions with her and she did not have much experience of reading self-help books at all. However, my few conversations with her I was fascinated by her experience which vividly demonstrated the reality she had to face with as a full-time working mum.

Her male colleagues used to stay longer in the office than female workers after the bank closed. Male staff tended to spend considerable time in idling away after having evening meals (either have meal outside and come back or have meal sent in) and started to work again later while female staff tried to finish their work as soon as possible. One day when she about to leave the office after finishing her work one of her male colleagues said 'Are you going home already?' in a sarcastic way as usual. She thought she could not take their attitude anymore. So she called a meeting the next day and in the meeting she said 'I have a family I care for and I need to look after.' She made sure nobody made any mocking remarks about other colleagues' leaving the office after finishing their work. But that was, as far she were aware, possible and effective action only because she was the one of the top performing staff in the business including selling financial commodities not just regionally but nationally.

> I have an elder sister who is single. The other day when I dined out with my family, including her, after work she said 'You should not feed your family with non-home-made meals too often. Even working full-time and earning good money would not justify that.' I was so upset to hear that. I used to be told similar things before by my parents and my husband but I was upset more than if any other person had said that. How could she say like that as a highly educated person and as a *woman*!

At the time of our conversations, it had been just a month since she quit her job. She seemed to have a mixed feeling about quitting her job after ten years' of hard work and struggle. She said, on the one hand, she was pleased to be free from her

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[50] In Korea the banking business is notorious for its long working hours and demanding workload. Since the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997, due to the downsizing and competition between domestic banks and from multinational banks, long hours culture has become worse.

job and enjoyed being a full-time housewife and mother. On the other hand, however, she said that she felt like a loser after all because no matter how brilliant she was she was the one who stepped out, not the male colleges who used to annoy her. She had mixed feelings of relief and regret because she was well aware that the value of domestic work never surpasses the one of paid work but at the same time she had known she could not keep juggling home and work like that.

On average, once women have married and especially after they have had children, being successful in their career tends not to be seen as their first priority any more. As one of the married interviewees said:

> When women get married, they spend only 30% of their time (apart from regular working time) for themselves and lots of time is spent on their family and housework while in the case of men the ratio is 50:50. Even though a man and woman share housework in a family, a woman tends to have less time to invest for themselves or for work than a man. Our society accepts this [inequality] but sometimes I feel [because of this inequality] the society draws a limit for female employees... For example even though men come home late frequently it is regarded as normal while when it comes to women, the woman is regarded that she is heartless and too deeply attached to work and neglecting her family. (Lee, female, married, one child)

Those two anecdotes are illustrating demanding roles of working mums and judgment they have to face not just from workplace but also at home. The following quotation came from McKenna's (1997) book titled *When Work Doesn't Work Anymore: Women, Work and Identity* which brilliantly addresses how men and women are judged in paid work in different ways.

> These rules aren't to be found in any employee handbook. If a person wants to succeed, however, it is important to follow the rules to the letter. Rule #1: Work comes first, above all personal or family concerns. Rule #1a: If you're a man and a father, you can break Rule #1 and be a great guy; if you're a woman and you break Rule #1, you're not serious about your future. That said, this rule works best with a little occasional sighing; after all, good women are supposed to want to be home with their kids. Rule #2: Long hours are a requirement. If your boss wants you and you're not there, he or she will learn quickly to want someone else who is. There is no Rule #2a; 'free time' is an equal-opportunity requirement. (McKenna 1997: 5-6)

One interviewee said she voluntarily quit her job to change her career as a nutritionist because of job insecurity. Under the overall downsizing policy as a part of business 'rationalization', hiring a nutritionist in every school and

company is becoming less compulsory and consequently the job security was under threat by irregularisation and by worsening working condition. Therefore, she decided to take a national examination to be a public official.[51] At the time that I interviewed her, she was unemployed. She had been preparing for the examination when her grandmother became severely ill. As a result, she had to give up the examination because she was expected to be a full-time 'unpaid' care giver by family. As she is the only daughter and only granddaughter in her family, this decision was made without any discussion. After her grandmother's death she gave up on the idea of taking the examination and instead found a job similar to her previous one because she thought she could not go through the course of preparing the national examination all over again. So it could be partly true to say, as many publishers said to me, that female reader groups are less interested in the business and management genre than male readers. However, that is not because women are not interested in professional success but because they are much less likely to be oriented to the dominant success discourse/myth since they have less potential to be successful from the beginning in many ways.

Discussion: Heavy Reality and Light Reading

A key to positive responses to time management self-help books is the idea that individuals in the competitive corporate world can achieve success by engaging in the process of self-managed self-improvement. In this instance, time management is important not only as a precondition of self-management but also as a part of self-management, in a reviewer's word 'efficient time management is a short cut to success.' The practice of self-development, including reading the self-help genre is, as one of my interviewees said, 'The one and only way to overcome nebulous fear for the future' and I think his remark summarises well the meaning of self-help reading in Korean society at the moment. Reading the

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[51] Working in the public sector was not regarded as the most desirable occupation because of the relatively low income compared to private companies (the increase of the salary sometimes was not in accordance with inflation because the government prioritised price stabilisation), but since the IMF crisis school teachers, employees of public enterprises and public officials have become preferable jobs because of job stability.

self-help genre is regarded as a meaningful method of self-development that most ordinary people can afford in terms of time and money.

Paradoxically, in spite of the importance of self-help reading, the given meaning of time management is neither always taken nor even regarded as the most important factor in self-help reading. This is not a matter of binary choice between obedience and resistance to the given dominant messages but a much more complicated matter. That is the reason why we need to change the research question. Instead of raising the question of how much power self-help reading engenders in individual readers, we need to ask how is the meaning of self-help reading constructed among members of society, both at an individual and collective level. As one interviewee said, self-help reading is compared to taking vitamin pills — we can survive without taking them but when we do consume them, we feel good about it. The problem is that books in this genre are filled with impossible promises about the ways in which their advice will lead to professional success. That is why I rather would like to compare self-help reading to take an 'emotional sugar-coated pill.'

I would argue that in many cases this genre is regarded by its readers as the source of emotional support in two ways. Firstly, self-help readers think that they are provided with stimulation and motivation from self-help books. Secondly, the activity of reading self-help books gives fulfilment to readers as reading business and management self-help books is regarded as a major and popular self-development effort. Accordingly, we need to take into account the fact that self-help readers are not necessarily fans of the genre as some publishers assume. Through my interviews with self-help publishers, I found that they had a similar image of readers. The public who buy and read self-help books tend to buy these titles repeatedly and continuously without the process of filtering or selection. In one publisher's words, they are 'blind customers who have strong loyalty to the self-help genre and who are likely to buy any self-help titles as soon as a new one is published.' Publishers might like to idealise self-help readers that way but I wonder how accurate is this belief and how many ordinary self-help readers would fit into the description.

Despite the limitations of its messages, time management discourse within self-help books is often adopted by audiences uncritically. Time management tends to

be regarded as a simple and necessary strategy for individuals to negotiate a turbulent economic environment. Self-help reading is, as testified by many self-help book readers in my research, the only or the most accessible way for most ordinary Korean workers who are facing employment insecurity to experience a sense of comfort or security. Even though some readers are aware of the limitations of the messages or of their own ability to make sense of the message in the current economic environment many ordinary, salaried people seem to regard messages about the need for self-development as indisputable. As one reviewer questioned, 'if you can grasp health and success simply getting up early in the morning, who can try not to listen to that?' This is because, in my view, Korean readers tend to perceive this genre as an 'emotional soother' or 'emotional backup' which gives the sense that 'at least I have tried...' or 'I've done something for self-development.' There is another ethos which is suggested by the love/hatred toward best-selling self-help titles and it seems to claim, '(I'm not a snob who is obsessed to the fashion, although) I'm not behind social trend.' This 'jumping on the bandwagon' is regarded as particularly important in a Korean society that is still highly unified and homogenous but at the same time it is a characteristic of the Korean mentality that many Koreans seem to loath. What is more important is the way the text is positioned and interpreted in certain social contexts. As I described before, Korean employees (especially white-collar workers) are surrounded by an environment in which self-help books are widely read and un/officially recommended. The politics of dominant time discourse is powerful in some ways, not because the audience is influenced by the message but rather because the audience is often forced to accept the necessity of the self-development as a tool to cope with a harsh economic reality. The significance of the self-help genre and time management imperatives described within many of them might be over-emphasised if we only talk about the direct influence and how those books drive people to follow their tips. Moreover, perhaps the majority of self-help readers are not serious about what they have read. However, I would like to argue that as soon as readers decide to read one of those books they are voluntarily taking part in the culture and accepting the basic assumption of self-development to a certain extent. It seems to me that this is true even when readers disagree with parts of the book or the way it is marketed by the publishing industry and other mass media.

Chapter 7: Conclusion — It's about Time

The purpose of this thesis has been to disclose the dominance of masculine time concepts in popular culture and everyday life and then challenge them with the theoretical and analytical framework of feminist time-politics. In order to achieve this purpose this thesis analysed popular time management texts whose particular emphasis was on the use of time outside of regular working hours. I deliberately decided to locate these texts in the context of Korean society during the post-crisis period because this was the period when popular self-development texts began to attract public attention. Before then, the self-development genre was a minor consideration in the Korean book market. However, since the 1997 Asian Economic Crisis the importance of this genre has been ever-growing in a society which has become used to enjoying rapid economic growth and long-term employment. Along with an analysis of the discursive construction of the texts, the political economy of the production and diffusion of this popular book genre was investigated, as was a reflection on the audience reception of these texts. This three-fold project also attempted to examine the implications of the new found unprecedented popularity of the self-help genre and especially its influence on how it is read. In other words, this project sought to produce a snapshot of changes in Korean society through the mirror of a popular literature and its reception. This highlights the way in which Korean society has responded to widespread economic hardship — emphasising individual responsibility and rehabilitating hardworking mentality. In this chapter I will conclude largely on two subjects — discursive construction of time regime in Korea and reading for self-development — while also discussing other issues related to methodology and unanswered questions.

Current Time Regime that Advocates to be a Happy Workaholic

This thesis presented a textual analysis of the three time management self-help books that provide advice for success by focusing on how to use time outside of regular working hours for self-development. In the textual analysis I argued that

the ideal of 'happy workaholic' was an ideal wage worker. However, the key messages of popular time management self-help books are hard to make sense of in regard to neither male breadwinner households nor dual-earner households, particularly under the current circumstances of Korean society. The messages also could be more problematic because: a) the books in/directly celebrate a culture of working longer hours; and thus, b) 'could' reinforce illusionary or distorted male breadwinner model and devaluate not only the value of reproductive labour as well as women's social work; and, c) emphasise only the individual will and transformation without questioning problematic corporate culture or system.

This thesis mainly questioned the culture of working long hours and its gender biases. I found the common theme of the three books examined was 'Do not make the excuse that you are too busy to find time for self-development.' This is particularly problematic in terms of gender politics. This tenet not only encourages the extension of the boundaries of the long hours culture but also reinforces traditional Korean gender roles: male-breadwinner, female-homemaker. However, such roles also take no account of women as workers and thereby making gender inequalities in time use even worse. What we should not overlook is the social circumstances that take advantage of ordinary salaried people by exploiting their levels of anxiety. One of the key strategies of time management self-help books is 'finding new time.' This suggestion seems to be contradictory and unrealistic for working women who carry the dual burden of employment and the bulk of the household work (and this is even truer when they are mothers). To cope with the 'time famine' many are already morning and night people at the same time and even their in-between times are occupied with arranging time to pick up children, grocery shopping, housework, and so on. Advice about using weekends for self-development could thus be seen as an unhappy joke for many women. Accordingly, they are likely to find a great deal of conflict in the time management strategies suggested in these books regarding their gendered roles within Korean society. As such, I would suggest that many would find mainstream career/time management discourses lacking in an ability to give any realistic solutions to the problem of juggling the demands of work and home, because popular time management self-help books do not acknowledge that time is gendered. Nevertheless, as Christine Everingham (2002: 340) insists,

'no time is outside the social' and, likewise, no time is irrelevant to gender. For instance, the three time management self-help books analysed here have in common the fact that they provide time management tips on how to use time outside of office time, or so called 'free time.' However, unlike the advocacy of many time management books (we might accomplish a great deal of self-development by spending 'free time' properly) free time has become likely to be available in short bursts rather than in blocks. This is particularly true for women who are more likely to be involved in many things at the same time. However, is this really 'free' time? It is free only because it is not paid in the capitalist system. Furthermore, it can be free time for those who do not have responsibilities apart from working outside the home. For most women, however, it is time when their second shift starts.

Time management guidance that offers advice focused on how to wisely use all possible 'free time' therefore has significant implications in terms of gender. This is exemplified in the three books chosen for close textual analysis for this thesis. These books deal with the time outside of paid working hours, which is time for unpaid but essential domestic labour and childcare mostly undertaken by women, at least in Korea. The popular time management self-help literature is based on certain central themes: the secret of success comes down to the idea that the more time you devote to your work, the more likely you are to be successful and that there is always time for self-development in any circumstances. This claim might sound self-evident, yet I argue it is rather problematic not only because it is likely to discursively normalise a long hours working culture, but also because we might take for granted the model of 'workaholic male-breadwinner' who does not take on any domestic responsibilities. This is the reason why I am particularly interested in the discourse of managing time outside of work, which is of ever-growing importance, yet has had little attention in academic research. Self-help books not only encourage a culture of long hours but also a culture of a long working life. Therefore, it is hard to expect any consideration for a good balance between work and home life. It could be claimed that dealing with domestic life in career guidance books is not necessary or appropriate. However, given that time is usually made available to men by women's labour the 'work longer' ethos worsens women's time famine. Furthermore, the more the idea of working longer

hours is normalised, the less female workers will become favourable in the labour market.

Many time management manuals start from the assumption that we have free hours after finishing work. However, for most working mothers the end of the working day is the start of a 'second shift' (Hochschild 1997). When they get home from the workplace, many face the task of looking after their families. The dominant time management discourses offered by time management or self-help books do not just ignore inherent gendered inequalities in time availability and use, but they simultaneously urge readers to exploit more time from women who are already suffering from 'time poverty' (Hoschschild 1997).

As argued in previous chapters, the popularity of the self-improvement genre, including time management manuals, is not coincidental but an outcome of social and economic circumstances. The new work ethic shifts the responsibility for the consequence of disadvantageous economic changes onto the individual by transforming social issues into private matters, and consequently, the potential solutions are also based on personal responsibility. Although the long hours culture, which was reinforced by both downsizing and insecurity in employment, is a social issue, it has been transformed into a matter of personal management which is suggested to be solved by effectively managing time and then by devoting free time to work. This means the double exploitation of time not only for self-development — or for one's career, so keeping ourselves employable — but also expending time to show high commitment to the job. As Larsson and Sanne (2005: 226) argue, 'Time as such is not scarce. The impression of the scarcity of time arises only from overtaxing of experience by expectations. Experiences and actions need time and can therefore be accommodated in a given span of time only in a limited fashion.' We experience time shortage precisely because of this double expectation.

Based on my analysis of the social discourse of the working and non-working life and time management, therefore, I conclude that social discourse in post-crisis Korea provides an effective opportunity to understand the prevalence of neoliberalism in Korea. Neo-liberalism in Korea is not just an economic doctrine promoted by international financial institutions or state administrations. Rather, the concept is better understood when we reconsider it as a social ethos that has

gained in strength due to its acceptance by various local actors. Kim (2003) argues that Korean neo-liberalism is a 'social ethos of economic-moral value' prevailing in the discourse and activities of those in various segments of government and civilian society. The way the Korean government has responded to the financial crisis and Korea's poor social safety net generated a 'nobody can protect me (and my family)' mentality and a newly emerging concept, the 'happy workaholic.'

In the long term what is argued to matter is the lack of mature social debate as the society's dominant discourses are pervaded by 'economic reason.' This leaves very limited space for social debate and instead allows an overpowering government-led policy-oriented debate (an 'institutionalised discourse' without social consent or at least understanding).

The dominant labour ethic under conditions of insecure employment is to a large extent based on fear. As an interviewee from a Korean documentary program said, the fear comes from the fact that 'neither my company nor the government would be responsible [for my welfare].' This fear leads to a sense of self-responsibility. This ethos is what the state and the management are very likely to want to encourage, but is also what many people actually face in particular when there is no social backup. This fear is more likely to reinforce the pre-eminence of a work-oriented society, indeed, of an overworked society. In Korea, lifetime employment has been replaced by employing oneself. The idea is that as long as we are working for ourselves there is no risk of being fired. The downside of this is that many Korean workers are now working for much harsher and more demanding employers. Consequently, people internalise the interests of management without resistance and the boundaries between paid and unpaid time are now much more blurred.

As Adam (1994: 95) suggests, 'Not all time is money. Not all human relations are exclusively governed by the rationalized time of the clock. Not all times are equal. That is to say, all work relations touched by clock time are tied up with hegemony and power.' The solution to this problem, I would argue, lies in challenging social assumptions that devalue and discriminate against 'women's time.' This might be accomplished by bringing this critique into mainstream politics. Hammonds

(2004) points out that the central myth of the modern workplace is 'with a few compromises, you can have it all'; however, as she argues it's all wrong:

> The global economy is antibalance... You're competing against workers with a lot more to gain than you, who will work harder for less money to get the job done. This is the dark side of the 'happy workaholic'. Some day all of us will have to become workaholics, happy or not, just to get by (2004: para. 3).

As argued in my textual analysis chapter (Chapter 4), business and management self-help books tend to represent an 'executive's fantasy.' Supporting such an idea, the title of a 2005 career guidance book published by a Korean headhunting company, IBK Consulting Group, sums up the ideal workers that companies dream about: *Prepare as if You're Leaving Right Now and Work as if You're Staying Forever: Head-hunters' Advice for Salaried Workers.* All employees have to be enthusiastic about their jobs because they think like managers even if they are actually low-level employees. They also tend to be willing to work long hours without intending to claim overtime pay because they regard working long hours as a part of self-development. In this discourse, as my interviewees said, they do not have a clear distinction between work and self-development; the boundaries between overworking and volunteering for extra work to prove one's commitment to work is blurred. Overtime can be justified on the grounds that such work is improving work-related skills. Additionally, many also devote their free time to self-development that mostly benefits working skills in order to manage to become re-employable or to move on in case they are fired. Unfortunately, there are a very limited number of privileged people who could benefit from taking the 'executive's fantasy' into practice.

Often, self-help books are filled with admonitions insisting that latter-day heroes/heroines are not just hard working but they are truly happy workaholics. For example, Korean national heroes are often portrayed as 'happy workaholics' by the Korean mass media. Granting that achievers are likely to be hard working and seemingly enjoy what they do, such people are often overly and unconditionally praised by the popular media without questioning other neglected responsibilities they might have in their lives. Often their thrifty life (such as travelling in economy class or living in a small apartment) is highlighted in order to stress their genuine love of their jobs. They are not interested in the

financial rewards that their achievements might bring about. For instance, the one time 'national treasure', Professor Woo-suk Hwang, who claimed he and his research team had succeeded in cloning embryonic stem cells first, said in an interview with *Chosun Ilbo*, Korean daily newspaper that he did not know how much is his annual salary because he did not take care of it himself (Kim, 19 February 2004). Korean celebrities often say that they are in love with their acting, music, writing, software programming or whatever their job is. When they are asked about relationships or their plans for marriage, they answer, 'I have been married to my job' — this is a stereotypical answer, used in particular when the celebrity is single. Koreans who used to work so hard for the sake of their family are not told that they cannot be successful unless they are truly in love with their work (like Gong and many other self-help authors). On the one hand this could be seen as inspiring and even liberating, in particular in a society like Korea where choosing a job is a matter of social status rather than where your heart lies. However, the problem is that in many cases the only truly happy workaholics are those who are fulfilled through their work because they are much more likely to come from privileged backgrounds, rather than the other way around. What mainstream work-driven discourse seems to try to take away from Korean workers is not only a couple of hours of unpaid extra work voluntarily conducted in the name of self-development but also the sense of having a reasonable work/life balance. Idealising a workaholic male-breadwinner is underpinned by taking women's unpaid work for granted in exchange for the 'pleasure of work', lifetime career building, and the achievement of 'brand you', which is 'a brand that shouts distinction, commitment, and passion' (Peters 1999: front cover). After all, the main purpose of self-help management texts is to arm waged workers with a more-than-full-time ethos and encourage them to become workaholics voluntarily. The delusive 'pseudo-egalitarian' managerial ideology and naïve universalism that underpin time-management discourse fill the gap. The enormous gap between the privileged classes, whose hard work guarantees economic and social rewards, and ordinary wage workers. In this fallacious discourse, time is an ideal factor to argue over because we tend to focus on the actual amount of time which is indeed given equally to everyone. Instead of advising readers to increase their productivity or alternatively reduce the number of tasks taking up their time, the primary focus of the books analysed here is how to *extend* working time so as to do more work. They give advice on how to stretch

work life by extending the boundaries of working time beyond 9 to 6 and beyond Monday to Friday (even though most Korean employees work longer than that on a regular basis). The books make a case for doing extra work or even just thinking about work after hours. I would argue that this ultimately offers support for the establishment and maintenance of a long working hours culture. It also normalises masculine notions of time over feminine ones and paid work over non-paid work. Ultimately, it celebrates and advocates a 'happy workaholic' culture. Nevertheless, 'working hard is not enough and having to love one's job' is not the acknowledged mantra alone in Korea, where working hard has long been a virtue; it is also popular globally. In the following section I will focus on the implications of this genre in relation to popular reading culture.

The Genre Changes the Koreans' Reading Culture

In terms of reading, the research asked how the changing social ethos has influenced the artefacts of popular culture but also changed the way we consume them. As I explored in the Chapter 5, in light of market dominance of the self-help genre, we are more likely to read what senior executives read, or to be more accurate those books that executives want their employees to read and read them through the eyes of executive members. Consequently, we are under certain amount of influence not only in the decision of reading what kinds of books, but also why we want to read those books and how.

The recent trend for self-help books in Korean society is the result of a complex combination of various interests. Korean management is seeking an effective and efficient way to communicate their management philosophy or vision of the company to the employee. Employees are desperate to find out how to survive in this competitive labour market. But they are also looking for some consolation from self-help books since just reading one of those books is regarded as practising self-development. For most ordinary employees who lack resources, including time to prepare for a possible future of unemployment, reading self-help books could be the best (and only) investment for their self-management or securing a sense of security.

Genres in literature, in particularly fiction and essays, have been bestsellers throughout the contemporary history of Korean publication. This could be explained by the lack of diversity in Korean publications but also the low popularity of the self-help genre. Until recently, the concept of 'self-help' has not been as popular in Korea as it has been in Western societies. However, over the last few years, business-related books have become popular and career guidance, success manuals, wide range of how-to books in business and time management self-help have become enormously popular with Korean readers. It might be a natural consequence that this new genre of books became popular as Korean society became developed and sophisticated. The appearance of self-help business books in the Korean publishing world dates back to the early 1990s but they were still a relatively minor genre until the late 1990s. The additional financial hardships brought about by the IMF's requirements, following the stock market crash of 1997, or the 'IMF crisis', led to wide and intense social and cultural changes in Korea. Forced massive layoffs under the name of 'downsizing' and achieving 'flexibility' in labour brought not only financial difficulties but also a collapse of the dream of life-long employment. Instability in employment concomitantly created a social mentality of self-development to cope with the crisis, rather than choosing more radical social alliances and to resistances.

Until recently, Korean readers tended to prefer reading fiction. Business and management self-help books were written for a limited number of readers, mostly those working as managers and professionals in the business world. Today, the business self-help book market has become one of the most promising, and also competitive, book markets in Korea. It is also getting increasingly bigger and more diversified. Over fifteen years time the public who used to have prejudiced views on such 'practical books' seems to have fallen in love with this genre. As explained earlier, the Korean name for the self-help genre, 'practical books', reflects the distinction between practical books and the all rest. This seems to me to suggest a prior perception of books in Korean society that is books were not supposed to be practical. Taken from a large number of online book reviews posted by self-help readers the frequently used words to define self-help genre are: marketability, best selling books, and quick-and-easy to read. In the interviews with me, some readers showed strong disgust toward the self-help genre claiming 'I am not that kind of person (who is into 'self-help rubbish').'

Even amongst those who said certain self-help books were useful disapproval was expressed that the self-help genre may be a useful but not a legitimate genre like other 'genuine' literary genres or academic books.

The general popularity of the business self-help genre started with 'how to get rich quick' books, such as those that gave advice on how to invest in stocks or real estate or how to start a business. Until very recently, the self-help genre was dominated by moneymaking skills books (this advice is still very popular). Irrespective of whether they possess enough money to apply these investment skills or not, it is clear that ordinary readers were attracted by the idea of becoming rich in a short time with small amounts of seed money, despite the overall negative economic climate. The overwhelming popularity of 'how to make money' books, however, did not last long and has been replaced by 'how to manage time' books. Even if we can argue that we do not have anything to invest, none of us can deny the truism that we each have exactly the same amount of time and the person who can change our life is ourselves because success (it is argued) in our life depends on the way we manage our time.

As this genre was introduced over a short period and became increasingly popular it was argued as worthwhile investigating the way Korean readers consume the genre. According to audience reviews, Korean readers became interested in this innately individualist genre in a collectivist way. Additionally, it was found that many readers were well aware of the social and organisational pressures affecting these texts. Therefore, even though it would be possible to assume that the majority of readers' reviews are likely to be written by people who are no older than their 30s (i.e., young enough to act on the advice), no claim is made here that the sample is representative of self-help readers across Korea. Instead, the results serve as an indication or snapshot of opinions found in a non-random sample. Regarding organisational practices among a number of Korean big companies that promote self-management titles and utilise.

While conducting this project it became apparent that significant aspects related to my thesis were not getting much attention, if any, in the Korean academic world. Firstly, while research into the implications of the newly arrived self-help genre and its popularity has just started, there are few academic works on the sociological and cultural meaning of popular reading. Yet it is argued as vitally

necessary to investigate the changing social ethos in the relationship between economic change and changes in social norms and the value system. Therefore, paying close attention to popular literature is pertinent. Several issues closely related to this thesis currently remain unanswered. In order to be able to investigate the meaning of the self-help genre in Korean society it is necessary to understand the meaning of self-help to individuals and to society at large. Due to the lack of academic attention and lack of established works I had to develop my argument from a relatively weak starting point. I find it is always challenging to try neither to exaggerate the differences between cultures nor to apply any binary opposition and yet still be able to acknowledge them. Is it good news that Koreans have started to consume self-help products? Whatever the answer, it may be simply too early to say. But before making any judgement, taking into account cultural attributes, it is critical to observe closely the way in which Korean readers receive the self-help genre and how the society uses the genre. To do so, the role of media and cultural studies is critical. This brings about the need for cross-cultural studies not only for grasping better understanding of self-help reading in Korean society but also for expanding the understanding of the self-help genre and how it could be received in different ways in a collectivist society rather than an individualist society.

For example, the reception of the self-help genre in Korean society needs to be investigated in the wider context. The meanings of self-help in a society like Korea's can be very different from those developed elsewhere. This is largely because the legacy of communitarianism is still strong, but at the same time the traditional and post-traditional values are actively competing, such as the individualist and collectivist features of society. Other symptomatic evidence of a growing 'self-help culture' is the increasingly mediated discourse of popular psychology; examples of which include advice columns published in newspapers and lifestyle magazines, television and radio talk shows, as well as the popularity of books written by celebrity psychologists. The mass media thus provide both time and space to contemplate/explore/discuss various problems, including marriage and family life, all of which used to be regarded as deeply private and personal issues. The voices from these popular psychology discourses range from traditional Confucianism to feminist discourses. However, even given that the self-help culture has become closely related to the popularity of psychotherapy

and the growing authority of psychiatry, the Korean society is one which is least influenced by the 'culture of recovery' (Rapping 1996). People are more likely to turn to those they know well and believe they can rely on, or sometimes they turn to fortune-tellers and even shamans, but much less likely to go to see psychotherapists.

What then is the meaning of self-help in a society where the idea of mutual reliance is stronger than self-help? The reception of the self-help genre in Korean society needs to be investigated in a wider context because the meanings of self-help can vary widely. This is because the legacy of communitarianism is still strong but at the same time traditional and post-traditional values are actively competing, for example individualist and collectivist features of society. 'The individual is not an independent individual in the Confucian thought — the individual is like a single knot in a long thread of ancestors and future descendants, and one's role and responsibility in life is like that of a knot in a continuous line' (Keum 2000: 14). It might be interesting if there is any comparison. Then what is the meaning of self-help in a society where the idea of mutual reliance is stronger than self-help? As the authors of *Suicide of the West* observed, 'even cultures permeated by Western ideas and Western business practice, such as those of Japan, Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong, have not become individualistic in the Western way' (Koch and Smith 2006: 136). However, the considerable influence of the Confucian values that coexist with imported values and norms is a distinctive feature of Korean society. Problems come from the conflicts and cause various social problems, from various feminist issues to the generation gap.

Likewise, it is critical, when applying qualitative research methods, to understand the nature of participants and make efforts to improve the way one approaches them. It is particularly important for the researcher to boost the confidence of his or her interviewees and to enable them to have a chance of self-reflection. Furthermore, how one can lead participants to value what they may feel are their fragmented and trivialised experiences and make meaning of their experiences needs to be considered. How does a researcher deal with interviewees saying that 'I haven't thought about that', which reflects a significant lack of self-reflection on everyday life, is also an issue. Therefore, creative methods are requires to

investigate questions such as; 'Why do people read books?'; 'Why do people read certain kinds of book instead of others?', and 'Why are certain people attracted by certain books while others are attracted by other types of books?' In particular, if the research focuses on a certain trend, collecting recalled short-term experience or memory may be not enough. For example, life-stories based on memory and experiences of reading or asking readers to write reading diaries can both be rewarding alternatives. Oftentimes, it is hardly a matter of what one should do in particular when it comes to social changes. Rather, it is a matter of why one does not or cannot do what one should do. Finding out various answers to these questions is what cultural studies should do. For example, downsizing or telecommuting can be solutions to archiving work/family balance, but as yet not many people are willing to adopt such alternatives. This could be a moment when the old and new academic frameworks amongst the different disciplines that have studied television collide because of the requirement to rethink and rework established paradigms to fit in with the intricacies of a transformed medium that they cannot fully explain with traditional assumptions.

This project raised a number of significant research questions such as how to investigate and theorise book reading experiences and a reading culture in the context of Asian history and culture. However, there are few academic works on the sociological and cultural meaning of this in our everyday life. Several issues closely related to this thesis remain unanswered. In order to be able to investigate the meaning of the self-help genre in Korean society, it is necessary to understand the meaning of self-help to individuals and to society. I want to address the question of how to contribute to the globalisation of cultural studies by adding to the body of knowledge on the under-represented Korean culture and society and without falling into any of three discouraging examples I have encountered from previous Korean studies. One example is what Kang (2004) has criticised as 'Korean cultural studies without Korea', in other words, those studies that just apply Western cultural theories to Korean film or media contents without scrutinising Korean issues within it. The third examples are, in many Korean gender studies, the concept of the Confucian patriarchy has been 'the' only answer that can explain most cases and phenomena and (maybe therefore) unfortunately the subtle changes over the years and complicity have been overlooked.

The medium of books deserves much more attention than it does currently. Books are long-lasting when compared to newspapers or broadcasting. Therefore books are a good social index that reflects long-term social trends. In particular, the self-help genre shows what people struggle with most and what is valued most. In terms of how audiences receive different media, this is one form that allows a degree of audience control and autonomy. In most cases, individual readers choose which book they want to read and they have autonomy in that action, like when to start, pause or stop reading. Therefore reading is the purest experience of media consumption. Also the activity of reading demands the readers' close attention. (It is not easy to wash-up while you are reading a book unless you listen to an audio book.) It is ironic that there is little in-depth research on the consumption of popular literature, or the reading public in general, when encouraging reading among Korean people has been a long-cherished ambition of the government and other relevant organisations including Citizen Action for Reading Culture. Promoting a book reading culture should go beyond encouraging the public to read more but beginning from understanding. There is also an urgent need to conduct cross-cultural studies on the consumption of the self-help genre among those countries that were affected by the collapse of the 'tiger economies' in the 1990s.

Closing remarks

Kim, Woo Jung (also, known as Kim, Woo Choong) who, 'during his 40-year reign, transformed Daewoo Motor into Korea's third-largest carmaker and a heavy lifter in the national economy' was once a hero of ordinary 'salarymen.'

> Instead of working the conventional 9 to 5 we worked from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. ... Since I started to work I've never taken a day off... I gave up the joys of close-knit family life for the company. And I always have to live with the fact that I have never taken my kids on vacation ('Kim Woo Choong, a Korean businessman' *Independent* 26 August 1990).

More than 10 years after the downfall of the workaholic hero, the model of Korean heroes does not seem to change that much over the years. For instance, Ki-moon Ban, the Korean U.N. Secretary General, is acknowledged as being a workaholic by others, as well by himself, in interviews with Korean and

international news media. His dedication to his job is well-known, and he has often publicly said he puts his job ahead of his private affairs. Once Ban said 'I'm sorry for my family, but even if I can't take care of my home, I have to do my job first' (*International Herald Tribune* 2 October 2006). In the 33 months that he has been foreign minister, 'he has taken only a couple of days off, for his youngest daughter's wedding' (Lee, *Global 21* December 2006). Although he is hardly a good role model in terms of work/family balance, his success stories are published and have sold well without criticism. I began the introductory chapter of this thesis with my personal experience of the culture shock caused by different time-politics. In reverse, I am sure I will have to undergo another cultural shock when I go back to Korea: the shock that comes from the transition from slowness to speed. This project does not aim to provide advice to policymakers but it seems pertinent to close this thesis with the picture of a Korean society with 'better' (judgementally) time-politics. It is a society that challenges the mentality: 'it's okay to be a workaholic if you succeed in your professional life' (in other words, 'if you want to be successful, you have to sacrifice your family and personal life'). It is a society that is able to question, instead of praising, the 'Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday-Friday-Friday-Friday' (as Woo-suk Hwang, once proudly remarked that he and his team's weekly work schedule consists of) working culture, no matter how great their scientific and economic achievements are. Likewise, what we need more of, in particular for overworked Korean people, are those books advising on how to balance a work and family so we can lead a balanced, 'multidimensional life.' This instead of those books falsely promising success in exchange for family and personal life and encouraging a tiring 'doubling working life.' Korean readers need to be given reading lists that are full of wisdom and an alternative way of life, instead of those must-read lists that their top-tier managers recommend. And we need more reading for fun, and less reading for purpose, and more 'slow reading' and less 'strategic reading' — reading as a pastime, not for self-improvement.

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Appendix 1: Front Covers of Reviewed Self-help Books



Figure 1: Front cover of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time* (2003)



Figure 2: Front cover of *Secrets of a 'Morning Person': How to Revolutionise Your Time before You Go to Work in 100 Days* (1991, 2000)



Figure 3: Front cover of *How to Become a 'Morning Person' in 100 Days* (2001)

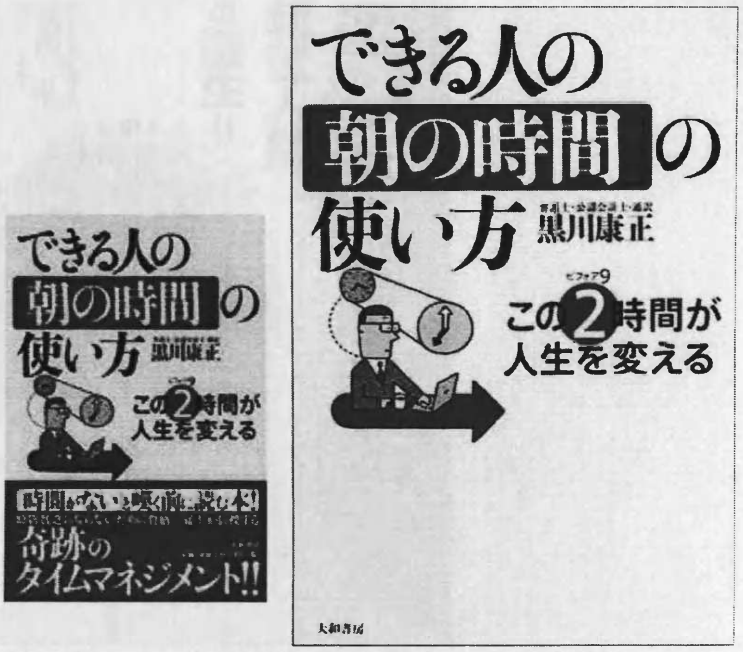


Figure 4: Front cover of *How to Effectively Use Time in the 'Morning' for Promising People: 2 Hours before 9 that Will Change Your Life* (2003)



Figure 5: Front cover of *How Being a Morning Person Can Double Your Time 2* (2004)



Figure 6: Front cover of *The Birth of a 'Morning Person' by Getting up Early once a Week!!* (2003)

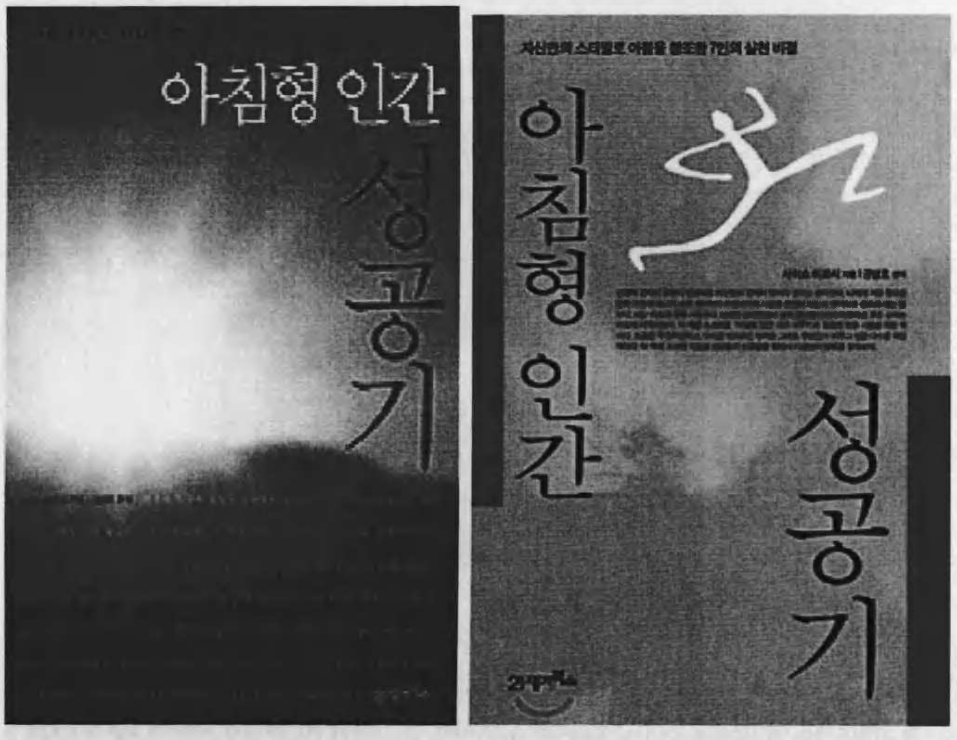


Figure 7: The original two front covers of *Success Stories of Morning People* (2003) (The one to the right was used in following re-prints.)

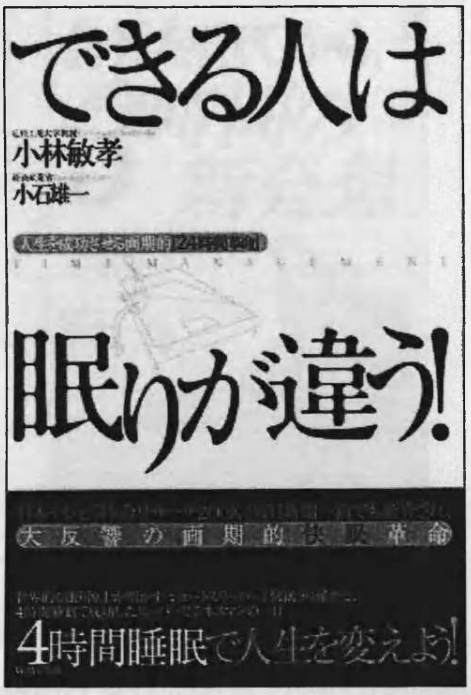


Figure 8: Front cover of *For a Promising Person, Sleep is Different!: The Epoch-making '24 Hour Revolution' which Makes Life Successful* (2003)

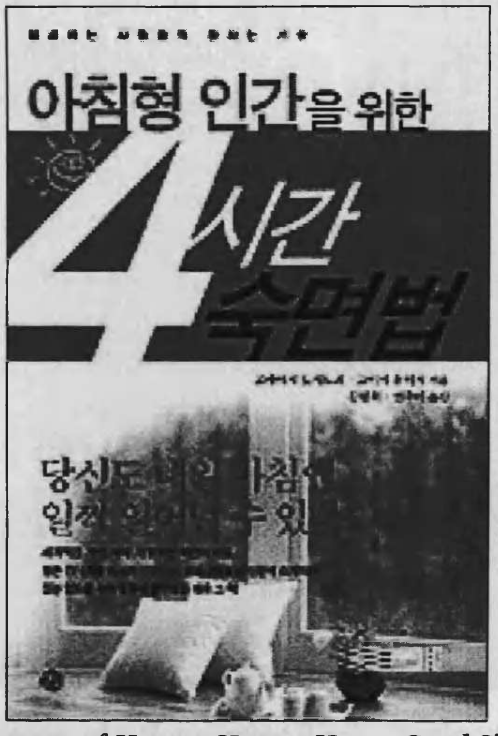


Figure 9: Front cover of *How to Have 4 Hours Good Sleep to Become a Morning Person: The Techniques for Sleep of Successful People* (2004)



Figure 10: Front cover of *New Way of Thinking on 3 Hours after Work: Self-reformation Plan Using 60 Hours a Month* (1998)



Figure 11: Front cover of *3 Hours after Work: Finding New Time* (2003)



Figure 12: Front cover of *Improve Your Competitive Edge Using Weekends* (2004)

Jae-chun Choe (2005) [*Harvest Your Life Twice: A Super-Aging Society in 2020 that a Biologist Predicts*] 당신의 인생을 이모작하라: 생물학자가 진단하는 2020년 초고령 사회 (in Korean), Seoul: Samsung Economic Research Institute.

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Dosinori Gobayasi & Goisi Yuichi (2003) [*For a Promising Person, Sleep is Different!: The Epoch-making '24 Hour Revolution' which Makes Life Successful*] できる人は眠りが違う! — 人生を成功させる画期的「24時間革命」 (in Japanese), translated by Kim and Yeon (2004) [*How to Have 4 Hours Good Sleep to Become a Morning Person: The Techniques for Sleep of Successful People*] 아침형 인간을 위한 4시간 숙면법: 성공하는 사람들의 잠자는 기술 (in Korean), Seoul: Yeomun.

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Kim	Editor, national daily newspaper	Male/Single
Park1	Journalist, international news agency	Female/Married wit one child
Park2	Office worker, human resource management	Female/Single
Park3	Journalist	Male/Single
Seo	Researcher, private company	Male/Married
Shim	Office worker, recruiting company	Female/ Married
Lee1	Teacher, private after-school institution	Male/Single
Lee2	Engineer	Male/Single
Lee3	Hospital in-house nutritionist	Female/Single
Lee4	Technician, mobile company	Male/Married with c child
Lee5	Freelancer web-planner/editor	Female/Married wit one child
Lim	Office worker, public corporation	Male/Single
Cho1	Freelancer writer	Female/Single
Cho2	Office worker, private company	Male/Single
Cho3	Office worker, private company	Male/Single
Hwang	Web-planner	Male/Married
Jung	Office worker, PR company	Female/Single

