

A Remarkable Agricultural Work In Afghanistan: A Case Study Of Dr. Steven Kwon's Educational Leadership

Jeong-mun Guk¹ , Jun-ki Chung^{2*}

¹ Doctoral candidate of Fuller Theological Seminary, USA; Researcher at Institute for Pietatis Theologia, Kwangshin University, South Korea

² D. Min., Ph.D. Head Researcher at Institute for Pietatis Theologia, Kwangshin University, South Korea

Abstract

Afghans are suffering indescribably in one of the world's poorest countries. In Afghanistan, long-lasting political and social instability have caused poverty as a result of foreign occupation and civil wars among Afghani populations. Most Afghans are farmers, but ironically there is never enough food, so many of them die of malnutrition. A large number of widows and orphans born during long civil wars have no way to support themselves. In response to this tragic reality, a Korean-American, Dr. Steven Kwon, entered Afghanistan and started a "miraculous agriculture revolution." His ministry of soybean cultivation is solving a large part of Afghanistan's hunger crisis. It is the goal of this study to demonstrate that Dr. Kwon's educational leadership is responsible for his fruitful work.

Keywords: Afghanistan, soybean, educational leadership, Dr. Kwon

Introduction

Afghanistan is at the crossroads of Eastern and Western cultures, bordering Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and China to the north; It is also bordered by Pakistan to the east and south and Iran to the west. Soviet Union and British commanders fought in this country for a century of dominance in the 19th century, and after Britain withdrew, the Soviet Union effectively ruled until 1989. Taking over from the Soviet Union after its collapse in 1996, the Taliban established Afghanistan as a fundamentalist Islamic state. Films, music, and other artistic and cultural activities were banned by the Taliban. A number of ancient cultural assets, including Buddha statues, were destroyed and alcohol was banned. Women were also subjected to repressive laws and oppressive restrictions. A transitional government was established in Afghanistan after the United States attacked the Taliban forces and drove them out in 2001. US government officials, fed up with the incompetence and corruption of this government, signed a ceasefire with the Taliban in 2018 and left Afghanistan in 2021 (Park, 2022). Currently, Afghanistan is ruled by the Taliban and is suffering from extreme political, social, and religious turmoil, including a relentless persecution of its people by Islamic fundamentalists and the widespread use of illegal drugs.

Despite the fact that a majority of the population is engaged in agriculture, crop yields continue to be below expectations. Maternal mortality rates in Afghanistan are among the highest in the world. The poorest part of northeastern Afghanistan suffers one death from childbirth for every six women. This led Afghan women to be wary of getting pregnant. Because too often they saw malnourished mothers bleeding and dying slowly.

The mothers bleed because their pelvises become narrow and unable to pass their children through the birth canal.

Korean-American Dr. Steven Kwon decided to help them in 2003 by planting soybeans to solve their malnutrition and livelihood problems. Nearly all foreign businessmen have left Afghanistan since the Taliban took power, but he remains and works hard, and the Afghans love and respect him. The goal of this paper is to illustrate how Dr. Kwon is making such a significant contribution to agricultural development in Afghanistan and resolving the fundamental problem of malnutrition there. This study will demonstrate that he has played a crucial role in establishing a fruitful ministry through his educational leadership.

Background Of Dr. Kwon's Decision To Go To Afghanistan

Steven Soon-young Kwon was born in Korea and graduated from Korea University with a BS in Food and Nutrition in 1972. Having obtained his Ph.D. in the United States, he joined the Nestlé Company in 1985 as a Director of Technical Services. While Kwon was living a comfortable life in the US, he received a call from a friend who visited Afghanistan in 2002: "Afghans are dying of malnutrition. It's time for your talents, he said" (Kim, 2010). Those words had an irresistible power to make Kwon's heart ache, like a 'calling' from God. He was too afraid to go to Afghanistan because it had one of the worst security systems in the world. Nevertheless, he decided to take a vacation to Afghanistan in May 2003. The situation he saw was tragic, helpless, and dark. There were many people suffering from malnutrition. Their lack of protein was caused by not eating enough food. Dr. Kwon's motive for going to Afghanistan was briefly summarized in several South Korean newspapers and broadcast media. Nonetheless, in an English-language source, the reason for his trip to Afghanistan is explained as follows:

Dr. Kwon [worked] with Nestlé as a principal Nutrition Scientist and Director of Technical Services where he was responsible for the innovation and development of medical nutrition products. In 2003, Dr. Kwon was invited to give a lecture for Balkh University's School of Medicine faculty. During his visit, professors and other community leaders requested Dr. Kwon's assistance to develop a health and nutrition program that would address the widespread malnutrition afflicting Afghan women and children (NEI, 2022).

The first of these two sources displays a strong personal testimony by Dr. Kwon in which he explains his opinion to South Koreans in Korean. In the latter's case, a concise official position has been expressed in a language that everyone, regardless of nationality, can understand. In the official document, his personal and desperate 'calling,' namely a transcendental dimension, are rarely revealed. We can now better understand what was the decisive reason for his devotion to Afghanistan from our first description.

Dr Kwon's Agricultural Ministry In Afghanistan

Dr Kwon knew that meat, milk and eggs, which are protein chunks, are the main foods to solve the malnutrition of Afghans. The poor Afghans were unable to easily access these products, since they were so expensive. He had to come up with other options to overcome this limitation. He believed soybeans were the best option. Protein makes up 34% of soybeans. He concluded that since 95% of Afghanistan is made up of farmlands, and if soybean cultivation is successful, the hunger issue can be resolved. After two years of searching for a cultivation method suitable for the climate and land, he finally succeeded in cultivating soybeans in Afghanistan in 2005.

An Afghan local who worked with him attests to this fact as follows:

Every year, we lose more fertile land to drought and land degradation. This makes people in rural places even more vulnerable to starvation and malnutrition as they will be unable to grow as much

food. However, soybean may be a solution to this food insecurity, as it provides essential nutrients and complete protein and takes fewer resources than meat. [We] are currently developing soybean varieties that are more drought-tolerant as a sustainable answer to these issues (Rahimi, 2019).

Initially, Dr. Kwon took five weeks of vacation a year to serve in Afghanistan. Although he had so much to do, he gave up his stable and lucrative US job position to work on Afghan projects in 2008 (Kwon, 2022a). He also founded a non-profit volunteer organization called Nutrition and Education International (NEI) to further structure his work. The NEI facilitates the distribution of soybeans in Afghanistan by receiving donations from various countries, including South Korea and the United States. He persuaded the Afghan government to produce 1,000 tons of soybeans in 2006-2007 and 800 tons in 2008, when drought was severe. Despite his best efforts, the poverty problem in Afghanistan could not be solved on his own. The issue is ultimately one that must be resolved by the people of this country. Dr. Kwon began teaching them problem-solving techniques. They were educated on the nutritional value of soybeans as well as why they should be grown. Furthermore, he promoted the processing of soymilk as a raw material, and promoted the distribution of soybean powder to areas where soybeans could not be grown. They can grow 40 sacks of soybeans from 1 sack of soybean seeds, for example. One of them will be purchased by NEI in cash. As a result of this collection of soybeans, NEI produces soymilk or sweets free of charge and distributes them to people in need. In addition, if there are leftover soybeans after consumption, the NEI purchases them, to encourage and assist Afghan farmers. NEI focuses on nutrition, especially for pregnant and lactating women. Approximately three months following the initiation of this kind of food service, people who were previously skinny were overflowing with vitality. It is worth noting that bread with 10% soy flour has over twice as much protein content as 100% wheat bread. Afghan's food culture is undergoing a revolution facilitated by him and NEI:

In 2012, NEI worked with over 7,000 farmers and harvested approximately 1,600 metric tons of soybeans. The harvest will be consumed directly by farmers' families, stored for the upcoming planting season, or processed and distributed through our Supplementary Soy Feeding Program during the winter months when people are the most vulnerable to malnutrition-based illnesses. NEI estimates that if 300,000 tons of soybeans can be produced and consumed in Afghanistan, it will supply enough protein to potentially eradicate protein-based malnutrition in Afghanistan (NEI, 2019).

In particular, Dr. Kwon and NEI have achieved considerable success by thoroughly educating young people who are destined to become future leaders of Afghanistan:

NEI's Seeds of Hope (SOH) program started rural clubs for Afghan youth to teach them leadership, vocational, and social skills. The talented youth in our SOH clubs have developed business ideas that have both generated income and benefited their communities. These projects have given the youth club members opportunities to come together and use their local resources for their own empowerment, creating handicrafts, poultry, and restaurants . . . [SOH] youth club members have formed over 3 million eggs and started 122 independent enterprise. With these brilliant and hardworking youth, Afghanistan's future is looking brighter than ever! (NEI, 2019).

On 7 February, 2020, Dr. Kwon evaluated the NEI project as follows:

Today, people throughout Afghanistan look to soybeans as a practical, affordable and delicious complete protein source. In fact, due to our joint efforts, we can proudly share that more rural families are now consuming soy dishes at home especially to nourish their growing children. The Grassroots Backbone of NEI's Soy Program: The village farmers of Guzara district in Herat province happily share their successful soybean production stories during the break of a field day organized by NEI's extension agronomist Sebgatullah Navini (October 2019). I met most of them before through several trips taken to Herat to encourage them An exciting new development is on the

horizon. Several countries, including the Philippines, Sierra Leone and Tanzania, have recognized NEI's accomplishments in Afghanistan and are interested in partnering with us to replicate our soy program in their own countries. They too want to help their people overcome malnutrition, hunger and poverty. We have met with key representatives from these countries and expect to begin feasibility discussions soon. If we decide to pursue these opportunities, we will go with our NEI-trained Afghan experts who have built a sustainable soy industry from ground zero to a national scope (Kwon, 2020).

As a result of reviewing all the above references, we can summarize Dr. Kwon's ministry in Afghanistan into three categories: " 1. Soybeans are capable of growing in Afghanistan. 2. The Afghan people enjoy soybeans and are integrating soybeans into their [daily] diet. 3. Malnourished women and children are regaining their health through the consumption of soy foods" (Kwon, 2022b).

Dr.Kwon's Educational Leadership

Human Dignity and Values are at the Center of his Leadership

Humans are described in Genesis, the first book of the Old Testament, as made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-28). In this sense, humans are not God, but they possess all the divine attributes and powers that God possesses. Because humans are by no means savage animals, they revere the eternal truth that transcends them. Humans can coexist peacefully in love, peace, and justice by forming a community of cooperation. In spite of the Afghans' poverty and difficult living conditions, they do not lose their dignity, or value as human beings. Once Dr. Kwon arrived in Afghanistan in 2003, he discovered that the Afghans were very proud of themselves and did not want foreign assistance. So he has treated them like his own family, saying "I always respect and value the precious Afghan people" (Kwon, 2009). Dr. Kwon's words, "respect and value," deserve a deeper examination. This is more than just a language game to please the Afghans. Despite their holy images of God as human beings, their lives have been filled with despair and frustration because there is political unrest in their own country and long afflictions by foreign powers. Who would have wanted to live as a colony of the Soviet Union or Britain? The actual situation, however, was not as they had expected and they were ruled by strong nations for centuries, resulting in constant civil wars in their country. They tragically endured a daily separation between their ideal life and miserable historical reality. It has become a source of deep despair for those affected by this tragedy. A feeling of despair can lead to self-deprecation, anger, mistrust, and low self-esteem, making it difficult for a person to truly love themselves. When Dr. Kwon says that he accepts them as his family, he agrees with the concept of the family, which most scholars have addressed: "Viewing families as overlapping networks that extend across multiple households, with each network having at its nucleus a reference person, might yield new insights, especially in an era when families are becoming more complex and difficult to classify" (Amato, 2014).

This concept with a more Korean-American cultural approach seems to have been accepted by Dr. Kwon. Growing up, humans are assimilated into their surrounding cultures. As a result of growing up in Korea's traditional extended family-oriented society and living in the United States after spending his youth in Korea, he was familiar with both Korean and American cultures. Afghanistan still largely operates as a family-centered economy based around agriculture. In the Korean tradition, family is understood to be a living organism, so Dr. Kwon seems to be referring to them as his family in that sense. Considering these circumstances, the family Dr. Kwon refers to is the smallest unit of society where family members live together and share the functions of emotional exchange, education, and socialization (Holstein & Gubrium, 1999; Levin, 1999). When this smallest unit multiplies, the result is a community known as a state or society. Despite the fact that the family is the smallest unit of society, members of the family enjoy a close and deep fellowship due to this very minimal attribute. It is at home that children learn the fundamentals of life rather

than at school or in society. The reason that the habits of a one-year-old child lasts until he becomes an old man is because he unconsciously learns about the most basic manners between his parents and his brothers and sisters and about the knowledge that he should have in society. The members of a family are an emotional group that supports one another when things are difficult and rejoices when things are going well. Members of families learn how to treat each other by living together. Kwon now resides in the world of above mentioned tragic suffering as a member of the Afghan family, and is fighting against this dark force with them.

Leaders like him are Historically Educative, inspiring Dreams and Visions

Korean history helps Kwon understand the suffering of Afghan citizens. Afghanistan is currently suffering from a similar history to Korea in which there have been wars between great powers in the past. In his many speeches to the people of Afghanistan, Dr. Kwon has explained how many Koreans perished in the Korean Civil War (1950-1953), in which he learned so many die naked and starved. Having gained this knowledge, he decided to see what he could do with the Afghans. As a result, they have relaxed their vigilance towards Dr. Kwon (Kwon, 2009). Dr. Kwon's understanding in the Korean War was part of Korea's history of suffering (Seok et al., 2021). Throughout Korea's 5000-year history, it has been constantly attacked by powerful neighboring powers. In the 16th century, Korea was invaded by Japan; the Sino-Japanese War in 1894-1895 and the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-1905 took place on the Korean Peninsula (Seok et al., 2020). Japan and Russia fought on Korean soil to dominate Korea, but the Koreans were the ones who suffered the most. Korea lost its country to Japan in 1910-1945. Under Japanese imperialism, the Koreans suffered the greatest level of shame as their homeland Korea, where they had lived with pride for thousands of years, disappeared (Jeong et al., 2021; Seo et al., 2021). The country is still divided into North and South Korea, and many separated families have shed tears of blood. Korean Peninsula was ravaged during the Korean War, especially because people who spoke the same language and shared the same culture were at war with each other (Jeong & Chung, 2022). Until the 1960s, Koreans were so poor that they could not eat three meals a day properly. But Korea has risen again like a phoenix (Seon & Chung, 2021). Today, South Korea has achieved democratization and has become a global economic and military powerhouse, leading what is known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Hallyu or Korean wave is a popular culture that is making people go crazy around the world through K-movies, K-musics, and K-dramas. The current state of Afghanistan is very similar to that of Korea in the 1950s. Kwon, who is well aware of the history of Korea, shares his experience as a Korean and believes Afghans have the potential to build a great culture just as the Koreans did. Despite being smart and capable of working like Koreans, Afghans have not focused on developing those skills to date. Kwon affirms that Afghans can join the ranks of prosperity like South Korea if they enhance their capabilities with new dreams and visions.

By blocking 'cultural imperialism' from the beginning, his leadership obviates the problem that normally occurs when foreigners transmit their culture to a new one. The master-servant relationship that occurs when transferring the culture of developed countries to a country like Afghanistan is rejected, in favor of a 'friendship relationship' of mutual respect (Go et al., 2021). His role as an educator is often one of mentorship but he makes it clear that it is more of a suggestive horizontal relationship rather than a vertical commanding one.

Dr. Kwon: a Leader based on Professional Knowledge

The aforementioned explanation of leadership reflects the Korean proverb, "Before you become a leader or pastor, you must become a person" (Lee, 2020). Consequently, a person involved in a political society or a religious priesthood must have a sufficient level of character. In order to exhibit this character, one must have a heart that boils, a grateful attitude towards one's neighbor, and a sense of humility. However, this

alone does not make a person a great leader. If a person wishes to become a leader, he or she must possess sober knowledge, therefore his or her hot heart will do the right thing. Is Dr. Kwon qualified to start a revolution in Afghanistan's agriculture? The answers to those questions can be found in his education and experience:

Education: Ohio State University, Ph.D. in Food Biochemistry; University of California, MS. in Food Science; Korea University, BS. in Agriculture.

Patents: Balanced food powder composition (2004, US 6716466); Soy hydroslysate based nutritional formulations (2003, US6808736); Protein hydrolysis (2001, US 6214585); Cheese flavor (2000, US 6054151).

Experiences: President and CEO of NEI (2003-present); Director of Technical Services & Principal Nutrition Scientist at Nestle (1998-2008); Section leader of Bio-ingredients and Bio-flavor Development Section at Nestle R & D Center (1989-1998).

Honors & Awards: City of Pasadena Humanitarian Commission Award, USA, April 2016; Certificate of Appreciation, Afghanistan Government Ministries of Agriculture, Public Health, and Education, and Afghanistan Parliament, January 2016; Korean Medal of Honor (국민훈장석류장) South Korea, December 2013. CAN Humanitarian Award, American College of Nutrition, September 2005 (Kwon, 2022a)

Dr. Kwon: an Expert in Organizing his Work

An expert in a particular field is a leader. An effective leader encourages workers to work so that the institution or organization to which they belong is properly and effectively reaping its benefits (Evetts, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2012). Furthermore, the leader educates them based on rational and scientific knowledge (Brint, 2001; Freidson, 2001). The leader is able to work with a team of experts he has trained, rather than working alone.

Kwon has convinced Afghan government agencies that soybean cultivation is the fastest and most effective solution to Afghanistan's food crisis and malnutrition problems. He took more than five seeds and eventually found viable seeds for the barren Afghanistan after several trials on 30 acres (about 37,000 pyeong) leased for 99 years from the Afghan government. Finally, in 2004, he successfully tested soybeans in one state to five acres, and in 2005 planted soybeans in 12 states. Currently, 30 out of 34 states in Afghanistan are planting soybeans. Kwon succeeded in cultivating seeds by selecting seeds that were appropriate for Afghanistan's climate and soil despite the fact that growing plants in Afghanistan, which has many deserts, was not an easy task. Kwon received strong opposition from local residents when he tried to grow soybeans. Many Afghan farmers grow poppies to make drugs (Kim, 2012). These drugs are sold at high prices and trafficked to neighboring countries. It was those who believed that planting beans instead of poppies would not result in such a large profit that opposed Kwon. Nevertheless, after Kwon convinced them that drugs could not fundamentally solve the malnutrition of Afghans, they also began to grow soybeans. It was Kwon's insight that long-term profits could be greater from growing soybeans than from selling drugs that motivated their hearts. When young children with damaged bones started eating soybean foods, their cheeks began to grow, and the number of mothers who died during childbirth due to malnutrition sharply declined. Malnutrition is largely caused by a lack of protein, as soy is almost 40% protein, much more than beef (25%), chicken (22%), and eggs (13%), malnourished people can realize the benefits of soy quickly. Using soybeans to make tofu, Dr. Kwon offers it to the people. He then uses leftover tofu, known as 'Biji' in Korea, to distribute to the Afghans.

Furthermore, since he cannot carry out this enormous project alone, he has established NEI, a non-profit charitable organization, which is operated in the United States and Afghanistan, centering on South Korea, so that his ministry can bear fruit. Regarding the purpose and goals of the NEI, he says:

I am the founder and president of Nutrition & Education International (NEI), currently working to address nationwide Protein-Energy Malnutrition (PEM) especially among the women and children in rural Afghanistan through developing a full soy value chain as a practical solution . . . Since 2003, I have been leading the overall direction of the organization in Afghanistan, Korea, and the United States. I am sensitive to misfortunes being experienced by the innocent and poor people due to ongoing military conflicts in war-torn countries. NEI advocates for the empowerment of local staff and beneficiaries of Afghanistan to solve their poverty and food insecurity in a self-sustainable manner. I am inspired by NEI's motto: "Can we help even one more Afghan family grow soybeans to fight malnutrition?" (Kwon, 2022a).

Dr. Kwon provides soybean seeds to Afghans with the support of NEI. He also teaches them how to grow and cook the beans. NEI buys 25% of the soybeans they harvest and converts them into soy milk or sweets for orphans, widows, and the needy (Lee, 2013). To encourage Afghan farmers to work, earn money, and become self-reliant, NEI purchases part of the harvest in cash. Korea NEI Director Chi-ho Shin is working hard to provide machinery to Afghanistan in order to support soymilk and soybean powder production facilities. There is enough soymilk to feed 3,000 people in one day with just one machine. As a result, soybean powder is suited for long-term storage and can be distributed to remote regions in Afghanistan. Gil-sang Gang, NEI's Afghan Director, is calling on NEI Afghan members to educate Afghan bakers to bake 'Nan', a traditional Afghan meal, with soy flour (Kwon, 2009). Mixing Sweet Nan with soybean powder makes it more popular than 100% regular wheat flour because of its higher nutritional value. Yeong-su Byun oversees soymilk production in Afghanistan and assists Dr. Kwon.

NEI is also receiving national support. The governments of South Korea, the United States and Japan provided financial support. A long-term cooperative program between South Korea and NEI to combat malnutrition in Afghanistan is being implemented, as well as the provision of agricultural equipment such as threshers (Lee, 2013). The United States supported the construction of container-type soybean flour mills in each Afghan state through the Agency for International Development (USAID). Before the Taliban government, NEI exchanged memorandums of understanding with central Afghan ministries such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Women's Welfare, and the Ministry of Education, and promoted the development of the soybean industry as a national project. Since the Taliban government has begun to take control of Afghan society after the withdrawal of US troops, NEI will also have to come up with new measures. However, since the Taliban government also has an urgent need to solve the hunger problem, it is expected that NEI will continue to pursue the same project without major changes.

Social Implications Of Dr. Kwon's Ministry

Shows an Exemplary Leadership

Dr. Kwon exemplifies the character, ability, and physical strength that a leader must possess. Afghans are experiencing a new life with a sense of self-worth that a leader instils in them by awakening their potential in a healthy sense of self-esteem. Along with his beautiful personality, he has successfully grown soybeans, which seemed impossible to plant, using his academic skills and wisdom gained from a lifetime of experience. This huge project is not being handled by him alone; he has established a non-profit organization which supports him internationally. As an example of leadership, he has requested and sometimes persuaded the Afghan government as well as Korean and US government agencies. It is obvious that his relentless

commitment to working for the Afghans shows the realm of 'faith' that accepts this project as a 'calling' from above. His leadership is a model for all politicians, religious leaders and business people to learn today. Such leadership is the result of a willingness to endure any adversity or tribulation in a 'public philosophy' that places more importance on the public interest of society than on one's own personal interests.

A Good Way to Solve the World's Food Problem

In addition to Afghanistan, countless other countries suffer from food insecurity. According to the report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2021, "10.9 million people, or 42.4% of the total North Korean population, were estimated to be undernourished between 2018 and 2020. The proportion of the undernourished population in North Korea is significantly higher than the global average of 8.9% or 8.2% in Asia, as well as the average of 19.0% in African countries" (Kim, 2021b). Therefore, Dr. Kwon's approach and success story will spread to countries like North Korea, South Sudan, Laos, and Bangladesh, and become a viable alternative to solving practical problems with food. In particular, we would like to see soybean cultivation and the development of various foods related to it in North Korea. According to history, the origin of soybeans can be traced to Korea, and during Korea's long history, the country has steadily developed soybean cultivation techniques and foods related to soybeans (Hong, 2016). The Koreans eat soybean paste soup, soybean tofu, soybean sprouts, and soybean biji as part of their daily diets. North Korea lacks Korea's longstanding soybean business, which has a long history.

Significant Help in Resolving Refugee Problem

If the human eating issue is solved, the possibility of becoming a refugee fleeing to neighboring countries may decrease. Eating is a basic human instinct. In order to survive, a person will do whatever it takes to find food if this instinct is not met in the area in which he or she lives. Afghans face this problem as do people in any country in the world. The refugee issue is a more vivid representation of this phenomenon. Providing institutional arrangements to prevent refugees from occurring in a society or state in which refugees reside would have a great effect. A major contribution to reducing the refugee problem can be expected through Dr. Kwon's bean ministry.

One Way to Solve the Afghan Opium Problem

Poppies grown by farmers in Afghanistan are a major source of the global illicit opium supply (Parenti, 2015). Poppies are used as a drug that gives instant pleasure, but eventually leads to death. The Afghan poppy cultivation area is about 224,000 ha (2240 km²), accounting for 34% of the total land area (Kim, 2021a). This area is almost the same size as the Korean Peninsula. The new variety of red poppies in Kandahar and Helmand does not require much water in the growing process, and the growth rate is only 3 to 4 months. Opium is made by drying the white sap that emerges when the poppy flower stalk is cut. Basically, farmers grow poppies because they can not resist the temptation to make quick and easy money. In response to these social evils, Dr. Kwon persuades farmers to plant soybean instead of poppy, and is carrying out a major reform. The reforms he has introduced in Afghanistan may not go as far as banning the cultivation of poppy completely, but at least he is conducting a campaign to save the people by planting soybeans instead of poppies.

Shows the Core of Hallyu

Dr. Kwon's soybean ministry shows the true nature of Hallyu, or Korean wave. Most people today understand Hallyu as South Korean popular culture. This understanding seems plausible outwardly. The achievements of K-movie, K-drama, and K-dance are attracting global attention beyond South Korea. But at the heart of Hallyu

is not just entertainment. Parasite, a movie created by Joon-ho Bong, who moved the world, calls for Korean society to solve its problems of rich and poor (Kang et al., 2021). In the absence of a solution to this problem, people living in the semi-underground are structurally unable to socialize with the wealthy on earth. The socially marginalized classes suffer even more pain and anguish as a result. Alienation is not just a material phenomenon, but a disease that deepens into the spiritual realm. Therefore, Parasite asks all of us to solve this alienation phenomenon responsibly. The film Minari, directed by Korean-American Isaac Chung, and known around the world, also delivers a message of hope and courage to those living as immigrants in American society. As the movie's title suggests, minari (미나리), that is, water parsley, is the most common plant in Korea. It grows vigorously in the mountains, fields, and rivers all year round, without anyone taking care of it, always giving off a blue color. In Minari, the main characters, Korean immigrants, fail to achieve great success and eventually fall into despair, no matter how hard they try. This despair led them to discover water parsley brought from Korea and planted in a swamp as if it had been thrown away. Characters are touched by the fact that the water parsley, which was not tended to much, spreads and shows its vitality. So they could start life tomorrow again. Minari shows dreams and visions to those in despair, and depicts family harmony and recovery. Dance and singing are not the only things that make people go crazy about BTS. With their gestures and songs, they express sympathy and compassion for the marginalized and suffering of our time. Although the 7 members have different personalities, they are united with each other just like the Korean Bibimbap, Korean traditional food made with various vegetables, eggs, pork or beef and soy sauce. Their cries reach out to people all over the world to help them get out of the swamp of despair. Thus, BTS is offering encouragement and hope to those who are frustrated by the post-modernist era. Taking this into consideration, if we look at Dr. Kwon's 'agricultural revolution', he is also spreading a message of hope and courage to the people of Afghanistan with the same content as Parasite, Minari, and BTS, that is, Hallyu's core idea.

Conclusion

Afghans are persistently persuaded by Dr. Kwon that they can become self-sufficient. He embraces the potential found in Afghan hearts. He educates and motivates them to work hard to develop this ability. He specifically teaches them how to harvest and sell soybeans caringly. This gives them hope to rise on their own and solve problems of poverty that they could not have imagined in the past. The US provided \$144 billion to the incompetent Afghan government, but ultimately failed and withdrew from Afghanistan. The US failed to help the Afghan government stand alone and become self-reliant. Dr. Kwon is playing an excellent role as an educational mentor who encourages Afghans to stand up and live independently. He and his sponsor, NEI, are leading an agricultural revolution in Afghanistan that touches all of us. This agricultural revolution should be practiced more in countries such as North Korea and Bangladesh, that are still suffering from hunger and malnutrition.

Acknowledgement: The original idea of this research was by Jeong-mun Guk. All analytical interpretations and paper writing were done by the two co-authors.

Financial disclosures: None of the authors had any external funders and there are no conflicts of interest to declare.

Declaration of competing/conflicting interests: The authors declare no competing interests in the conduct of this research.

REFERENCES

1. Amato, P. (2014). "What is a Family?" Available at:
<https://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-report/past-issues/summer-2014/what-family>

2. Brint, S. (2001). "Professions and the knowledge economy: Rethinking the theory of post-industrial society." *Current Sociology*, 49 (4): 101–132.
3. Evetts, J. (2004). "Organizational or occupational professionalism: Centralized regulation or occupational trust." Paper presented at ISA RC52 Interim Conference, Versailles, France, 22–24 September.
4. Evetts, J. (2005). "Organizational and occupational professionalism: The legacies of Weber and Durkheim for knowledge society." Paper presented at ISA Executive Committee International Symposium, Cultural Change, Social Problems and Knowledge Society, Zaragoza, Spain, 7–11 March.
5. Evetts, J. (2006). "Short note: The sociology of professional groups: new directions." *Current Sociology*, 54(1): 133–143.
6. Evetts, J. (2012). "Professionalism: Value and ideology." *Sociopedia. isa*, Available at: DOI: 10.1177/205684601231
7. Freidson, E. (2001). *Professionalism: The Third Logic*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
8. Go, S., Kang, M., Shin, C., Rheem, S., Han, W., Chung, J. (2021). "The American Southern Presbyterian Missionaries in Modern Korea: A Question of Cultural Imperialism." *Psychology and Education I*, 58(2): 5172-5183.
9. Holstein, J., Gubrium, J. (1999). "What is family? Further thoughts on a social constructionist approach." *Marriage and Family Review*, 28: 3-20.
10. Hong, I. (2016). "Do you know that the country of origin of soybeans is Korea?" *Chosun Media*, 27 January.
11. Levin, I. (1999). "What phenomenon is family?" *Marriage & Family Review*, 28: 93-104.
12. Jeong, M., Chung, J. (2022). "A Fruitful Leadership of Raymond and Mariella Provost." *PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION*, 59(1): 159-167.
13. Kang, M., Lee, J., Han, W., Rheem, S., Seok, J., Chung, J. (2021). "Hallyu in Mongolia: Its Meaning and Socio-Political Implications." *PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION (2021)* 58(3): 789-801
14. Kim, H. (2012). "Dr. Soon-young Kwon's Bean Story for 99% of Afghanistan." Available at:
15. Handong [University] Newspaper, 20 March.
16. Kim, J. (2010). "Dr. Soon-Young Kwon planting Beans of Hope in Afghanistan" **[네슬레 임원 박차고 아프간서희망의콩심기:권순영박사]** Available at: <https://www.joongang.co.kr/article/4532241#home>
17. Kim, J. (2021a). "The area of Afghan poppies is 3.7 times that of Seoul." [아프간양귀비면적, 서울면적의 3.7 배]. Available at: https://news.sbs.co.kr/news/endPage.do?news_id=N1006443797&plink=COPYPASTE&cooper=SBSNEWS&WSEND
18. Kim, K. (2021b). "42% of North Koreans are undernourished: the level of the poorest countries in the world." Available at: https://news.sbs.co.kr/news/endPage.do?news_id=N1006523823
19. Kwon, S. (2009). "[Conversation between Dr. Kwon and Na Do-yeon]: Dr. Kwon and the Miracle Beanstalk" [권박사와기적의콩나무]. Available at: <https://blog.daum.net/sss2115/17044007>

20. Kwon, S. (2020). "2020 New Year Message from the NEI President." Available at:
<https://mailchi.mp/.../new-year-message-from-the-nei>
21. Kwon, S. (2022a). "Steven Kwon—President and CEO—Nutrition and Education." Available at:
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/steven-kwon-0090bb25>
22. Kwon, S. (2022b). "Message from Our President." Available at:
<https://www.neifoundation.org/message-from-our-president>
23. Lee, D. (2020). "Before becoming a pastor, be a person" [목사가되기 전에 사람이 되라]. Available at:
<https://blog.daum.net/d3726532630/67>
24. Lee, P. (2013). "Dr. Soon-Young Kwon, leading the fight against malnutrition in Afghanistan" [아프간영양실조퇴치앞장, 권순영박사]. Available at:
http://www.neikorea.kr/ab-1018-66?PB_1439878953=4
25. NEI, (2019). "World Youth Skills Day." Available at: Afghanistan #NEI #WYSD2019,
<https://m.facebook.com/NEIfoundation/>
26. NEI, (2022). "Founder's Story." Available at: <https://www.neifoundation.org/founders-story>
27. Parenti, C. (2015). "Flower of War." *The SAIS Review of International Affairs*, 35 (1),183-200. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27000986>
28. Park, H. (2022). "The Graveyard of the Great Powers, Afghanistan." (2022). Available at:
<https://enevcording.tistory.com/50>
29. Rahimi, N. (2019). "World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought." Available at:
<https://m.facebook.com/NEIfoundation/>
30. Seon, S., Chung, J. (2021). *Missionary Sarah Barry*. Seoul: CLC, 35-37.
31. Seo, I., Shin, C., Guk, J., Jeong, M., Chung, J. (2021). "A Prophetic "Saint," Geoduri Bo-han Lee (1872-1931)." *Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*. 18(10): 1549-1562.
32. Seok, J., Jeong, M., Seon, S., Chung, J. (2020). "MISSIONARY JOHN VAN NESTE TALMAGE: RESPONSE TO THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION IN KOREA (1910-1945)." *ASTRA Salvensis, Supplement*, 1: 167-191.
33. Seok, J., Jeong, M., Seon, S., Chung, J. (2021). "Sarah Barry: A Spiritual Beacon in Modern Korea." *Foundations of Science*. Available at: doi: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10699-021-09805-1>