American Scientific Research Journal for Engineering, Technology, and Sciences (ASRJETS)
ISSN (Print) 2313-4410, ISSN (Online) 2313-4402

http://asrjetsjournal.org/

Making Servant Leadership Work in South Korea

Peter Daniel Klein*

Gyeongnam National University of Science and Technology, Dongjin-ro 33, Jinju-si 52725, South Korea
Email: pete@peterdklein.net

Abstract

Robert Greenleaf mentioned Asian inspiration in his conception of servant leadership. However, he appears to have developed a model that is best suited for application in the west, since Mittal and Dorfman showed in 2012 that servant leadership might not work well in Asia. Despite the Asian inspiration giving shape to Greenleaf's servant leadership theory, essential eastern elements may have been omitted in the formation of his model, making it less palatable to Asian cultures. This paper hopes to demonstrate that cultural influences on the leadership paradigm in Asia cannot be ignored if servant leadership is to be embraced there.

"Whoever relies on the Tao in governing men doesn't try to force issues or defeat enemies by force of arms. For every force there is a counterforce. Violence, even well intentioned, always rebounds upon oneself. The Master does his job and then stops. He understands that the universe is forever out of control, and that trying to dominate events goes against the current of the Tao. Because he believes in himself, he doesn't try to convince others. Because he is content with himself, he doesn't need others' approval. Because he accepts himself, the whole world accepts him [1]"

Keywords: Cross-cultural leadership applications; Servant Leadership; Servant Leadership in South Korea; Leadership in South Korea.

1. Introduction and background information

I should begin this paper with a short explanation and some background information. I had initially naively conceived of this article as being an all-encompassing paper on the practice of servant leadership regarding the general region of Asia. That idea evolved as I progressed more in-depth into the project.

---

* Corresponding author.

I arranged my first interview with a top administrative Korean monk in the Jogye Order of Zen Buddhism in Seoul, in 2015. Not being Buddhist, Korean, nor even Asian, but a protestant pastor's son who had studied theology formally for a year before deciding it was not my calling, I had grave difficulties understanding some of the concepts. The feeling troubled me since when writing a scholarly paper, I felt it was my duty to dig deeper and let the ideas simmer in my mind. Instead of forcing the project to completion, I pursued sources and further explanation. In August of 2018, after a period of reflection, in hopes of strengthening my data and personal understanding, I arranged interviews with the assistant to his holiness in Cambodia at Wat Ouk Na Lorm. A week later, I interviewed an American monk who had lived in Thailand for 40 years, spoke Thai and Khmer, and had served as assistant to His Holiness at Wat Bowonniwet Vihara. The temple is the official Buddhist home of the King of Thailand and also serves as the national headquarters for the Thammayut monastic sect. I was very fortunate to have spoken with these busy people, who were very difficult to track down, and even more challenging with whom to arrange an audience. Thank God for friends who helped set up the meetings and for the kind monks who each granted me several hours from their busy schedules. After speaking with them at great length, I began to realize that there were similar but distinctly unique views and ideas outlined in Korea and the two affiliated Thai and Cambodian temples. I knew at that time that I had much more learning ahead of me, but also realized that my parameters were too broad, needing focus on specific cultures instead. Since that was the case, I decided to dedicate this paper to the practice of Korean Servant leadership and to attempt a second paper at a later date, when my understanding of the Thai and Cambodian brands of Buddhism have improved. While some might consider a five-year delay in the pursuit of completing what I had begun excessive, I take heart in the words of the Dalai Lama, who praises "…the complete qualities of hearing—which means study, contemplating, thinking on the teachings—and of meditation." As well as the "…qualities of being learned, disciplined, and having a good heart [2]." I delayed for those good reasons, give or take a few, plus some career complications that I will mention as we go along. They are pertinent since they are directly related to authoritarianism, which is prevalent in Korea and is a direct impediment to the adoption of better, more productive leadership models [3].

1.1. Methods, personal experience, and rationalizations

Having cleared that up, another few essential points to note are that this paper will be written in a conversational style since much of the information I have gathered came via an interview. The rest is a result of following up on what was offered verbally in sacred writings, which were passed from generation to generation via oral tradition for centuries [4]. Therefore, as is already apparent, writing in the third person is absent. My justification for this tone is as follows. Since history formed this way, it feels perfectly logical to present it in a way more resembling a verbally transmitted style. Furthermore, an informal style seems justified because I have lived in this culture, making my interpretation of all of the academic research directly linked to my experience living and working among Koreans in their institutions. As I just mentioned, I have lived and worked in Korea for almost 14 years. I am here with my son, who is a Korean citizen. The difference between cultures is never more visible than in our relationship in which my poor son apprehensively watches me clumsily navigate the culture like a bull in an antique shop. At the same time, he precariously tries to balance his behavior between two worlds, which are nearly the antithesis of each other. He further struggles with the fact that he was born a Korean citizen through a naturalized mother. He speaks Korean like a native because he

was brought up in a Korean daycare since he was ten months old. He attended Korean public schools and youth centers where he learned to behave and feel Korean, even though genetically, he is not Korean at all. He is a Korean citizen who is half Philippine, a quarter German, and another quarter Norwegian. Korea is a very homogenous society, so there are many daily, even hourly repercussions just because of his genes and appearance. By his speech and behavior, he would otherwise be indistinguishable from a full-blooded Korean boy. Our personal life is not the only place where cultural differences crop up. It is an element in every aspect of our lives, all day, endlessly. This balancing act taught us the importance of tact and awareness, most of the time, in this culture. Due to my son's appearance and my immigrant status, I have learned as much as I can about Korea to survive better. Through it all, it has become quite apparent that ideas and beliefs which we, in what I believe is our universal tendency toward ethnocentrism, deem universal are often in conflict with those of the people with whom we live our lives. Sometimes, ideology has little to do with it, or any factor other than that our very physical presence is abhorrent merely because our race is not Korean. There is very little we can do to alter that variable, nor should we be concerned with trying to do anything but oppose such attitudes and behavior.

1.2. The influence of hypernorms on my process and conclusions

What I am saying is this. Certain practices like slavery, racial discrimination, exploitation, fraud, lying, refusal to honor legal agreements, sexual abuse, excessive hours, starvation wages, strict authoritarianism, and cruelty are universally wrong. Such practices should be relegated to antiquity since they are demeaning or harmful and are never morally correct in an enlightened, modern world. In essence, such practices are wrong even if a particular culture condones them, or knowingly winks at such behavior, thereby passively condoning it, or quietly turns its head to look the other way. Ethics Professor Craig Johnson of George Fox University calls the prohibition of the practices mentioned above hypernorms, a term that he borrowed from other research [5]. According to the research he cites, certain humanitarian ethics supersede regional or cultural laws and standards. These are morals that should be universal to all cultures, as Professor Swidler of Temple University, who is a proponent of this research, argues. According to him, they are globally negotiated ethics, which should be agreed upon and enforced by an international governing body such as the United Nations [6]. Even though my son and I strive to understand the culture, which sometimes hosts us benevolently, and at other times excludes us prejudicially, we do not always consent to comply, especially to a breach of a hypernorm. For instance, I spent four years appealing blatant racial discrimination against me by my National University and the Korean Ministry of Education. The matter made it to the Korean Supreme Court, but could not be addressed as such. My lawyer had to litigate under the premise of contractual breaches, which were also a grievous abrogation, only because there is no law in Korea condemning bigotry or discrimination against any targeted group, despite the Korean Constitution guaranteeing equality to all. In that case, Korean lawyers who have studied years but have achieved no enlightenment argue along with academic leaders that equality is only available for Koreans. In my court case, I won each step of the way except on the real issues of racial prejudice and discrimination, which would have been blatantly obvious to any other court in a developed nation. Even the contractual issues were never truly resolved, but only repeated time and again because while the judges agreed that the university president broke contracts and laws, they offered no remediation because I was considered an unwelcome outsider. I settled the lawsuit only to face the same type of thinly veiled issues, such as the Ministry of

Education calculating rules to forbid me from being assigned classes to teach. Then the university closed my department, of which I was the sole member. I previously shared the department with another foreign professor who was expelled when I initially brought the case to law, but who refused to defend himself for fear of being blacklisted. I am quite certain that entering into a settlement agreement without the intent to honor it would cause courts in most countries to rule that it was a bad-faith agreement. The ministry even tacitly included the illegal impromptu tenure evaluation into my new settlement contract, which took place without precedent or warning in year two instead of year five, as the law stated. So, therefore, a second tenure evaluation was mandated after three more years resulting in three tenure evaluations in ten years, instead of only two, which placed me in triple instead of double jeopardy. Those abuses of the tenure requirements did not take into consideration the flagrant disregard for the special foreign-professor tenure guidelines that the previous university president used to recruit me. The Dean of Academic Affairs personally trained the foreign professors, the first civil servants of our kind, using those legal guidelines. He gave them to me in writing at the time I signed my contract. All these things were changed numerous times on a whim and without warning. The president who committed all of these egregious acts and who solicited the cooperation of others, walked away from his term as president without cost or consequence, even after attempting to do away with presidential elections so that he might install himself in the position permanently. Still, in my experience, my government employers persist in their violations, knowing that we would have to face untold hardships, expense, and another four years in court fruitlessly because even with favorable rulings on the basic contractual level, no one enforces them. After all, it is legal to discriminate, and even the court saw us as less than equal under Korean law. But, that is not even the half of it. We legally face denial of housing, denial of service, bigoted comments from individuals who believe we cannot understand the language, lower salaries, and blatant outright claims that we are inferior to Koreans. So, for us, learning the intricacies and effects of Korean culture is not a vicariously acquired academic exercise. My son and I are well-versed in the positives and negatives of Korean culture through the direct joys and tribulations of personal experience. We have developed an intuition about what will work or fail in this social climate gained from hard lessons.

1.3. The necessity and value of change

Even if we are not battling an ethical breach, but are advancing a positive philosophy with a potential benefit for Koreans over current conditions, people still vigorously resist, partially based on culture and partially based on the dynamics of change. Edgar Schein, an expert on change theory, explains that resistance to new ideas is the norm, but that change is an unstoppable reality that we must learn to plan and manage. He recommends a three-step process of planned change. But, before devising a plan, he recommends ‘process consultation’ to observe the target of change in the most minimally invasive way possible to assess how the system works. After that, it is possible to diagnose a planned change that can be affected in a way that all stakeholders feel ‘joint ownership’ in the change process [7]. So, while reading this paper, consider my observations those of an unofficial ‘process consultant’ with a vested interest in the best outcome for Koreans and its immigrants, since this country is now my home. Regardless of whether we are opposing injustice or offering a beneficial change to all subjects who partake of Korean culture, sometimes my son and I uncomfortably stretch to grow. Other times, we strive for justice, with the hope that the philosophy governing the prevailing culture will adapt and evolve appropriately to accommodate its newest unique inhabitants. We hope that in the process, we might relieve native Koreans who

may also suffer at the hands of leaders and powerbrokers in their own culture [8].

1.4. Inequality among native Koreans and the value of change for them

Koreans suffer legal and social disparities among themselves too. Even though Korea is one of the most racially homogenous populations in the world, Confucianism bred social classes similar to the Indian caste system. In fact, Korea is more Confucian than any other culture even though the philosophy originated in China. Under the Joseon Dynasty, it became even more dominant and potent because the royals and nobles felt that it protected their status. "Beneath the king and the royal family, Korean society was formalized and stratified into discrete classes, with the yangban, representing the ruling class and the societal elite at the very top, followed by, in descending order, joong-in (literally, "middle people"), sang-in (the commoner class), and chun-min (literally, the "'low-born' or 'inferior people'"). Membership in all these status groups was ascribed by birth rather than acquired by achievement, and the law as well as social custom guarded against infringement of social boundaries [9]." According to the previous article in the Boston College International Comparative Law Review, Korea's five thousand year history of social castes, monarchs, authoritarian leaders, particularism, collectivism, Confucianism, and regional factionalism still forcefully hampers the practice of equality and equal justice under the rule of law in a Korean democratic society that is a mere 30 years old. So, to this day, there is discrimination among Koreans based on social class [9]. I would like to assert from my personal experience that in the Korean mind, the foreigner falls somewhere below the chun-min outcast class, making us even more repulsive to Koreans than what they view as the lowest of the low within Korean society. I believe this because of my personal experience over the years, as well as the fact that a Korean woman once told me that if she were to marry a white man, she would be disowned by her family, and considered lower than a prostitute. This profession is actually ascribed the title of chunmin. If we consider how westerners regard sex workers, it would be unlikely that most of us would ever seek such a person's advice (even though Jesus spoke kindly and inclusively to prostitutes). Well then, asking advice from someone considered lower than that social class would be nearly inconceivable, and that is how I believe foreigners are regarded deep beneath the fresh veneer of modernity and ritual.

1.5. The value of cultural interchange

After offering all of this background, I would like to offer my thoughts on culture. I have lived in three distinctly different cultures, and I have come to believe that culture is, in its most basic sense, a widely held philosophy of how to live correctly, practiced by a like-minded group of individuals, with or without genetic, nationalistic, or religious affinity. I guess that is not too different from the Cambridge Dictionary's definition, which is "the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time… [10]." As I see our differing cultures meet in Korea, where we reside, there is a tremendous amount of social friction. But as I see it, this can be advantageous. It is my common-sense assertion that no one is right one hundred percent of the time. Therefore, logically, our cultures can learn to improve by borrowing the best ideas from one another. The conclusions that I just mentioned are very similar to the ideas that G.W.F. Hegel proposed in *The Phenomenology of Spirit.* He argued that there are some instances in which truth and falsity are verifiably proven or disproven by the similarity or disparity between the substance and what is known, disparity

proving falsity and similarity, truth. Hegel identified philosophy as an exception to this process, being that complex philosophies aren't wholly provable or disprovable. Any given philosophy may contain elements of truth that are not entirely diminished by its occasional faults. So, as one philosophy, the thesis, finds itself in conflict with another, the antithesis, neither ceases to exist. Instead, the philosophies merge to form a synthesis, a more perfected, combined version which can contain the best elements of both [11]. Evil minds have misused Hegel's ideas in an attempt to subjugate cultures and obliterate races, but he never intended them for such purposes. His work was an effort to create a scientific method that would not only apply to the physical sciences but philosophy as well [11]. So, drawing on Hegel's philosophy, I believe that cultural interchange can be very valuable. It can serve to establish hypernorms to protect people from an injustice that rises in the name of race and culture. In the case of leadership studies, it can introduce humanely, evolved management styles that benefit Koreans and all those who come in contact with their culture. We may be uncovering a practice that is already historically part of the philosophies, which gave rise to Korean culture. That is one goal of this paper.

1.6. Servant Leadership in Asia

Therefore, one such exchange might be the modern practice of servant leadership in the civic and corporate spheres rather than only in the realm of personal spiritual development. The problem comes in the cultural application. The findings of two professors, Rakesh Mittal and Peter Dorfman, show that the practice of servant leadership must be culturally specific for successful international application. The professors submitted questionnaires worldwide to gauge the acceptance of leadership qualities, which are essential to its implementation. The study found the lowest receptiveness to the qualities and practices to be in Asia. The professors did quantitative research on cross-cultural applications of Servant Leadership as attributes defined in its western form, then correlated them to five cultural dimensions: egalitarianism, moral integrity, empowering and developing others, empathy, and humility, which they have determined most servant leaders have in common. They also investigate the concept of creating value for the community. Mittal and Dorfman sent standardized survey instruments to leaders and subordinates in cultures worldwide to measure the prevalence of the attributes and attitudes toward them. In their findings, they explicitly state the importance culture plays in instituting management and business practices. They state that, because of cultural incompatibilities, practicing servant leadership as it is known in the west may be futile in Asia [12].

1.7. An anecdotal Korean response to servant leadership

This point reminds me of a recent conversation that I had with a colleague, which was relevant to the study, as mentioned above. Our discussion confirmed the reliability of that research in my mind, at least anecdotally. My colleague had recently been elected by the faculty to head a department at our university. Our conversation drifted into leadership styles since we both had an educational background in that discipline. He asked me which style I preferred. He said that he favored transformational leadership. I told him that I thought that leadership styles change depending on what we are trying to accomplish, with whom, and where, but that I liked the overarching premise of servant leadership no matter what other styles we engage in at any given moment, for whatever purpose. He answered by asking if that was the method used by religious leaders. I met that question by saying, perhaps in the past, but presently, not only there. It was a practice proposed by a well-

placed executive at AT&T for use by all institutions. I told him that I understood why he might think that given the fact that I had had a similar reaction when first introduced to the approach. However, I slowly became convinced of its effectiveness the more I learned about it, and the more I watched leaders who badly needed to adhere to the practice, especially the president who had recently governed our university like a tyrant, almost to its demise. My colleague felt the need to defend his position. He said: "The servant is the servant. How can he be the leader? That is impossible. He has no position or power." I think that his objection might be quite common in the Christianized west too, where churches teach members to be servant leaders as Jesus taught. But there is usually the implicit understanding imparted that it is an impractical ideal unfit for any application outside the church since even there it is also a place where power politics supersede its practice. My father was a pastor for 40 years. I had seen it play out time and again. However difficult it might be to practice this form of leadership in the west, there are different pertinent reasons why my colleague's frame of mind might be hard to overcome when attempting to convince him, or any other Korean, of its benefits. I believe that the roadblock is just as my colleague clearly stated, the prevailing view that only raw power can get things done.

1.8. The Korean tendency to value the exercise of raw power in leadership

Democracy and other more liberating modern ideas are restrained in this culture because people believe that the only way to get things done is via raw power. In an essay on understanding Korean politics, professors Kil and Moon tell us that the leadership structure rests upon four legacies drawn from a long history. I believe politicians set the bar for other leaders to emulate in all Korean institutions. I will enumerate and summarize the points that the authors set out.

1.) A narrow ideological spectrum, limiting viable options due to legacy number two.
2.) Authoritarianism flowing either from monarchs who forced conformity under Confucian ideals, foreign occupiers who ruled with an iron fist, or authoritarian leaders who dominated the second half of the 20th century.
3.) A bureaucratic state in which executive power dominates the other branches, which has been fed by authoritarianism and corporate domination.
4.) Finally, the mythical illusion of 'revolution from above' which prevents most Koreans from employing the institutions and tactics that might improve their lives [8].

There has been progress in Korean politics and institutions since that essay was written. However, as a witness who views life in Korea daily, I can say that these legacies still wield substantial influence in this society. Professor Kirn echoes the conclusions in the article by Ilhyun Lee, cited previously, by stating that the priority given to pure bloodlines and social stratification, which in the past resembled the Indian caste system, has since been translated into a modern variant based on education, wealth, and position. The result is a social preference that skews toward authoritarian values, conformity, blind compliance with authority, and acceptance of hierarchical social order. The Professor also unequivocally states that there is a tendency toward xenophobic nationalism, which impedes globalism, which therefore shuns outside influences [3]. That lends credence to my assertion that foreigners fall outside the traditional Korean caste system. Hierarchical social stratification is even so entrenched in the language that it makes democratic, progressive, or egalitarian ideals difficult to

conceive and implement [13].

1.9. The possibility that Asian philosophy influenced the founder of the modern servant leadership movement

These factors do not bode well for the introduction and survival of new, progressive ideas, or ancient egalitarian philosophies which resemble servant leadership, that even predate Jesus and have been influential in Korea for two millennia. I will soon attempt to systematically justify this claim, in addition to demonstrating that certain Asian concepts partially inspired Robert Greenleaf's modern conception of servant leadership. One thing is evident, as we can ascertain from Lao-tzu's own words in the opening quotation, that some influential ancient thinkers were not supportive of the concept of wielding raw power to get results because there are negative consequences. This observation is significant because Zen Buddhism is the predominant form of that religion that is practiced in Korea and is a marriage of Taoist (Lao-tzu and his disciple Chuang Tzu) and Buddhist thought. I believe those consequences are even farther-reaching than the most apparent repercussions of using authoritarian measures, as one might imagine from Lao Tzu's admonition. I recently read a new book on the effects of Nazi authoritarianism on artistic and cultural development in Germany, which is interesting, and somewhat related, since Korean leadership preference skews toward authoritarianism. In that era and place, the severe effects of sheer force lowered creativity, reduced artistic output, and impeded new ideas and much-needed criticism. The use of brute force also hindered innovation, reduced quality, stunted morale, and lowered production [14]. I don't believe that this was only the case in Nazi Germany, but almost everywhere that oppression thrives. It is only logical that under oppressive conditions, people are desperate to find the most immediate workable solution to avoid the imminent threat of punishment or death, rather than fully contemplating the brightest, most creative solutions. That is why I think the sincerity, empathy, openness, and respect that grows between a servant leader and his colleagues result in better outcomes as well as a happier, more vibrant existence for all of society's members.

2. What is modern servant leadership?

So, let me start by briefly analyzing the origin of Servant Leadership in its modern form, a concept proposed by Robert Greenleaf in a book by the same name, as an altruistic form of management, which he developed to address what he perceived as a leadership crisis in the world [15]. Instead of trying to summarize the concept myself, it is better to allow Greenleaf to do so himself. "And what does it mean to serve? …In "The Servant as Leader," the definition was: "Do those being served grow as persons: do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will she or he benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?" I would now add one further stipulation: "No one will knowingly be hurt by the action, directly or indirectly." Thus the servant would reject the "utilitarian" position, which would accept a very large gain in, say, justice at the cost of a small but real hurt to some… The servant would reject the rapid accomplishment of any desirable social goal by coercion in favor of the slower process of persuasion. …The servant (in my view) is generally a "gradualist." …persuasion…stands in sharp contrast to coercion (the use, or threat of use, of covert or overt sanctions or penalties, the exploitation of weaknesses or sentiments, or any application of pressure). Persuasion also stands in sharp contrast to manipulation (guiding people into beliefs or actions that they do not fully understand).

…untrammeled by coercion or manipulative stratagems. Both leader and follower respect the integrity and allow the autonomy of the other; and each encourages the other to find her or his own intuitive confirmation of the rightness of the belief or action. [16] ." In the Afterward, James P. Shannon elaborated on Greenleaf's own description. "…according to Greenleaf, …true leadership ultimately depends on the legitimacy of one's appointment, election, or promotion to a position of authority and on one's subsequent ability to validate or confirm this role by the quality of one's performance, called "the authority of service." The authority of service is that additional level of legitimacy or validation that is earned after one is elected mayor, appointed chief of police, or elevated to the rank of bishop. These two levels of authority can exist separately; but ideally they co-exist, with each level giving added legitimacy to the other. The authority of service is that added distinction that good parents, good teachers, and good pastors enjoy by reason of their dependable performance over time, and which beginners in any career envy and covet. This kind of authority is built slowly and depends on one's ability to do one's homework, to treat others fairly, to meet one's deadlines, to get the job done right, and to tell the truth habitually. Leaders who see their strength only in their alleged "power" are understandably reluctant to share that strength. Leaders who see their strength in the quality of their performance are eager to share it, and, in so doing, to multiply it. In Herman Hesse's novel Journey to the East, the servant Leo is the person who has the greatest legitimacy as a leader because he has earned the authority of service by his performance. Reading this novel helped Greenleaf crystallize his own thinking that true leadership is always a result of performance. In the Greenleaf economy, power shared is power multiplied, not lessened. This kind of generous participation in the workplace turns followers into peers and peers into new leaders and builds new levels of trust among persons mutually committed to the pursuit of desirable shared objectives. Management consultants who diagnose corporate strengths and weaknesses typically focus their studies on customers, products, or shareholders. Robert Greenleaf opted to focus his analyses on employees, the persons he considered the neglected stakeholders, the persons whose goodwill, energy, and loyalty are too often taken for granted. In his view, if employees received the care, training, and attention they deserve, shareholder and customer satisfaction would inevitably follow [16]."Greenleaf qualifies his statements by adding that he recognizes that some instances may necessitate the government's use of raw power to punish criminals or to enforce justice. Still, he contends that the servant leader should be nearby to mediate or moderate its use. He also mentions the importance of leading by example to win loyal followers, as James Shannon mentioned in the previous quotation.

2.1. The similarity of dominant Asian social and religious philosophies to modern servant leadership

Greenleaf's ideas are curiously similar to those of Lao-tzu in this paper's opening quote. There are further similarities in both Confucius and Lao-tzu and Lao's disciple Chuang-tzu. The similarity of Greenleaf's ideas may not be the result of a conscious effort to emulate those philosophers, but that they were kindred spirits since many idealists have prized these character traits throughout history. That is my interpretation. But, as we will soon see, it is a fact that the source of his inspiration was steeped in Asian thought, a point that will be verified and discussed in greater detail subsequently. Before doing that, let us first examine several Taoist and Confucian philosophical snippets. They reinforce the leadership traits of humility, dispassionate empathy, human-kindness, sincerity, honesty, fairness, justice, leading by example, showing mutual respect, developing others while subduing selfishness, pride, ambition, and harmful profit-motive. I mention these because they are

the things which we observed in Greenleaf's summary of his philosophy and general equivalents of traits mentioned in Mittal and Dorfman's study, which claimed that servant leadership was nearly impossible to practice in Asia. As the matrix below demonstrates, Greenleaf, Lao Tzu, and Confucius all appear to have like minds in that leaders should be tolerant, virtuous people who serve, support, and develop others. That is surprising considering that Taoism openly challenges the harshly rigid formality of Confucianism. Resultantly, some scholars view them as competing philosophies. Thomas Merton sees them through different eyes. He explains that they are balancing opposites, the yin and yang of achieving the same goal. Confucius was too aggressive and traditionally masculine, so Lao Tzu sought to temper his harshness with gentler, more traditionally feminine traits. Merton proposes that they both embrace the same ideals while pointing to the other's excesses and oversights. In his analogy, Taoism is to Confucianism what the Epistles to the Galatians and Romans are to the Torah. One is a rigid approach toward the same ideal, while the other rejects the formalism in pursuit of its attainment [2].

2.2. The history and influence of Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism in Korea

Table 1

Taoism (Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu)	Confucianism (K'ung fu Tzu)
"All streams flow to the sea because it is lower than they are. Humility gives it its power. If you want to govern the people, you must place yourself below them. If you want to lead the people, you must learn how to follow them. The Master is above the people, and no one feels oppressed. She goes ahead of the people, and no one feels manipulated. The whole world is grateful to her. Because she competes with no one, no one can compete with her." "When the Master governs, the people are hardly aware that he exists. Next best is a leader who is loved. Next, one who is feared. The worst is one who is despised. If you don't trust the people, you make them untrustworthy. The Master doesn't talk, he acts. When his work is done, the people say, "Amazing: we did it, all by ourselves!"' "For governing a country well there is nothing better than moderation. The mark of a moderate man is freedom from his own ideas. Tolerant like the sky, all-pervading like sunlight, firm like a mountain, supple like a tree in the wind, he has no destination in view and makes use of anything life happens to bring his way. Nothing is impossible for him. Because he has let go, he can care for the people's welfare as a mother cares for her child." "As it acts in the world, the Tao is like the bending of a bow. The top is bent downward; the bottom is bent up. It adjusts excess and deficiency so that there is perfect balance. It takes from what is too much and gives to what isn't enough. Those who try to control, who use force to protect their power, go against the	"The Master said: 'The nobler type of man is broad-minded and not prejudiced. The inferior man is prejudiced and not broad-minded." "'Suppose the case of a man extensively conferring benefits on the people, and able to assist all, what would you say of him? Might he be called perfectly virtuous?' The Master said, 'Why speak only of virtue in connexion with him? Must he not have the qualities of a sage? Even Yao and Shun were still solicitous about this. 'Now the man of perfect virtue, wishing to be established himself, seeks also to establish others; wishing to be enlarged himself, he seeks also to enlarge others. 'To be able to judge of others by what is nigh in ourselves;—this may be called the art of virtue.'" "The Master said: 'If a ruler is himself upright, his people will do their duty without orders; but if he himself be not upright, although he may order they will not obey.'" "'Now the man of distinction is solid and straightforward, and loves righteousness. He examines people's words, and looks at their countenances. He is anxious to humble himself to others. Such a man will be distinguished in the country; he will be distinguished in his clan." "Tsze-lu asked what constituted a COMPLETE man. The Master said, 'Suppose a man with the knowledge of Tsang Wu-chung, the freedom from covetousness of Kung-ch'o, the bravery of Chwang of Pien, and the varied talents of Zan Ch'iu; add to

direction of the Tao. They take from those who don't have enough and give to those who have far too much. The Master can keep giving because there is no end to her wealth. She acts without expectation, succeeds without taking credit, and doesn't think that she is better than anyone else [18]."

"Tao is obscured when men understand only one of a pair of opposites, or concentrate only on a partial aspect of being. Then clear expression also becomes muddled by mere wordplay, affirming this one aspect and denying all the rest. Hence the wrangling of Confucians and Mohists; each denies what the other affirms, and affirms what the other denies. What use is this struggle to set up "No" against "Yes," and "Yes" against "No"? Better to abandon this hopeless effort and seek true light! There is nothing that cannot be seen from the standpoint of the "Not-I." And there is nothing which cannot be seen from the standpoint of the "I." If I begin by looking at anything from the viewpoint of the "Not-I," then I do not really see it, since it is "not I" that sees it. If I begin from where I am and see it as I see it, then it may also become possible for me to see it as another sees it. Hence the theory of reversal that opposites produce each other, depend on each other, and complement each other. However this may be, life is followed by death; death is followed by life. The possible becomes impossible; the impossible becomes possible. Right turns into wrong and wrong into right—the flow of life alters circumstances and thus things themselves are altered in their turn. But disputants continue to affirm and to deny the same things they have always affirmed and denied, ignoring the new aspects of reality presented by the change in conditions. The wise man therefore, instead of trying to prove this or that point by logical disputation, sees all things in the light of direct intuition. He is not imprisoned by the limitations of the "I," for the viewpoint of direct intuition is that of both "I" and "Not-I." Hence he sees that on both sides of every argument there is both right and wrong. He also sees that in the end they are reducible to the same thing, once they are related to the pivot of Tao. When the wise man grasps this pivot, he is in the center of the circle, and there he stands while "Yes" and "No" pursue each other around the circumference. The pivot of Tao passes through the center where all affirmations and denials converge. He who grasps the pivot is at the still-point from which all movements and oppositions can be seen in their right relationship. Hence he sees the limitless possibilities of both "Yes" and "No." Abandoning all thought of imposing a limit or taking sides, he rests in direct intuition. Therefore I said: "Better to abandon disputation and seek the true light!" [2]."

these the accomplishments of the rules of propriety and music:—such a one might be reckoned a COMPLETE man.' 2. He then added, 'But what is the necessity for a complete man of the present day to have all these things? The man, who in the view of gain, thinks of righteousness; who in the view of danger is prepared to give up his life; and who does not forget an old agreement however far back it extends:—such a man may be reckoned a COMPLETE man.'"

"The Master said, 'A minister, in serving his prince, reverently discharges his duties, and makes his emolument a secondary consideration.'"

"'The object of the superior man is truth. Food is not his object. There is plowing;—even in that there is sometimes want. So with learning;—emolument may be found in it. The superior man is anxious lest he should not get truth; he is not anxious lest poverty should come upon him.'"

"Tz Chang asked Confucius the meaning of virtue, to which Confucius replied: 'To be able everywhere one goes to carry five things into practice constitutes Virtue.' On begging to know what they were, he was told: 'They are courtesy, magnanimity, sincerity, earnestness, and kindness. With courtesy you will avoid insult, with magnanimity you will win all, with sincerity men will trust you, with earnestness you will have success, and with kindness you will be well fitted to command others.'"

"'The noble man takes the Right as his foundation principle, reduces it to practice with all courtesy, carries it out with modesty, and renders it perfect with sincerity. Such is the noble man.'"

"As for the man who meets with general esteem, he is natural, upright, and a lover of justice; he weighs what men say and observes their expression, and his anxiety is to be more lowly than others; and so he ensures esteem abroad, as he ensures it also at home."

"When Tz Chang asked how to succeed with others, the Master made answer: 'If you are sincere and truthful in what you say, and trustworthy and circumspect in what you do, then although you be in the land of the barbarians you will succeed with them. But if you are not sincere and truthful in what you say, and untrustworthy and not circumspect in what you do, are you likely to succeed even in your own country? When standing, see these principles there in front of you. When in your carriage, see them resting on the yoke. Then you will succeed everywhere.'"

"When Tz Lu asked what should be the character of a man of the nobler order, the Master replied: 'He

	should cultivate himself unfailingly to respect others.' 'Will it suffice to be like this?' asked Tz Lu. 'He should cultivate himself so as to ease the lot of others,' was the reply. 'And is this sufficient?' asked Tz Lu. 'He should cultivate himself so as to ease the lot of the people... [19]'"

This merging of philosophies is not unlike Koreans, who accepted Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. Korea was a place that valued the diversity of philosophies handed down from China, some by way of east and southeast Asia passing through China, but especially since the reign of King T'aejo of the Koryo kingdom. He concluded that Buddhism cultivated the mind, which leads to personal spiritual development, while Confucianism was essential for governing interpersonal relations and the state. The dualism is very similar to Luther's Doctrine of Two Kingdoms in my Christian mind. T'aejo and later Koryo kings adopted the view that while Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism appeared to be very different and at times in conflict, all of them had their origin in benevolence and filial piety, which are the foundation of all virtue. We still find a hodgepodge of these philosophies in modern Korean thought [17]. I believe that makes them very relevant to applying any leadership method in Korea, perhaps even critical in accomplishing anything at all in any field. I also believe this bifurcation of personal spiritual development and leadership of the state created a duality that left both pursuits at perfect odds with one another to this very day. It is challenging to practice servant leadership anywhere, but no wonder it is so difficult to practice it in Asia and specifically South Korea.

2.3. The Asian influence on Robert Greenleaf's servant leadership theory

Now that we have established some similarities that the three philosophies held on leadership qualities, it should not be a surprise that Greenleaf's ideas touch on what appear to be Asian cultural and philosophical concepts. As I mentioned earlier, this is not an accident because Greenleaf consulted these men and their ideas. He directly quotes Confucius in his essay [15, p. 62]. Furthermore, he clearly stated that he formulated the concept after reading a novel written by German author Hermann Hesse, *Journey to the East* [15, p. 32]. We must understand that Hesse, the man whose story inspired Greenleaf's essay, spent his life devoted to living and understanding Taoist, Buddhist, and Confucian concepts [20]. Everything he wrote overflowed with notions of balance, harmony (unity), cooperation, empathy, reciprocity, and self-sacrifice to attain a common good, which is central to all three Asian religions that we have already begun to encounter in this paper [21]. Greenleaf states the origin of his philosophy clearly. "I mention Hesse and Journey to the East for two reasons. First, I want to acknowledge the source of the idea of a servant as leader. Then I want to use this reference as an introduction to a brief discussion of prophecy [15, p. 32]." With this simple sentence, Greenleaf leaves no doubt as to the source of his ideas. When read in conjunction with an introduction to a recent biography of Robert Greenleaf, Peter Senge of MIT's Sloan School of Business and a professional familiar with him through mutual friends, makes reference to the origin of those ideas in Hesse and goes on to draw further parallels to the life and philosophical thought of Greenleaf by using quotes from Confucius, Lao-tzu, and by making references to Taoism. He develops his introduction by analyzing Greenleaf's selflessness (his lack of desire to promote his individualism in an individualistic culture), human empathy, and awareness of group dynamics, which we have

already established were essential Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist thought. Senge also pointedly discusses a distinct spiritual/religious quality in Greenleaf's work and his tendency to draw on ideas from other faiths and philosophies [22]. From this, we can conclude with reasonable certainty that servant leadership was at least in part inspired by ideals that were indigenous to East Asia. But if this were true, why then did research show that it is futile to practice it in the very region that inspired it? Why do my own personal experiences show it? Why do statements by Korean political scientists who live in the most Confucian culture in the world say it [23]? Why does Korean culture reinforce Mittal and Dorfman's research that it is a futile practice in Asia when it is also heavily influenced by Zen Buddhism? It is a mixture of Buddhism and Taoism, which both stress propriety, righteousness, education, and filial piety in service to fellow humankind? Why then, finally, is there a decided preference for authoritarianism?

With those questions in mind, let's try to illuminate the differences in the practice of servant leadership between Asian and typically western cultures, assuming for the sake of argument that an Asian form historically predated Greenleaf's. The idea is not such a stretch considering Greenleaf's own words coupled with the writings of Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, Confucius, and as we will soon see, the writings of Hesse, Fricke, and Senge. So, I set out on a quest to interview Buddhist masters in Korea, Thailand, and Cambodia to learn more about whether or not there is a foundation for my hypothesis that there is a tradition that teaches servant leadership in Asia. Having said that, let's look a bit more at Greenleaf's inspiration by eastern philosophical thought via his muse, Hesse, and then Hesse's muse before we jump into the interview.

2.4. The influence of Hermann Hesse

Christoph Gellner has written an excellent article that addresses the Asian religious and philosophical influences which shaped the ideas and literature of Hermann Hesse. Hesse was Greenleaf's inspiration for the conception of servant leadership [15]. Hesse spent his entire life running away from a demeaning and demanding German pietist background. He traveled to India and Asia, where he found solace in eastern thought, notably Buddhism, but absorbed a wide range of eastern ideas. His interest was not merely an academic pursuit for Hesse. His books were semi-autobiographical, meaning that every text was close to his heart, with a foundation in research and practice. The author points out that all of Hesse's novels have a foundation in well-conceived eastern motifs of balance, harmony, unity, and self-sacrifice [20]. In *The Journey to the East*, Hesse tells a story. It is semi-autobiographical in that it represents his own search for truth. Hesse talks of a lost and ancient philosophy from the East, some of which he attributes to Siddhartha, who is better known as the Buddha. Hesse speaks of the Asian ideals of selflessness, unity, the common good, and a shared destiny among humanity [24, pp. 3-5]. Greenleaf himself gives an excellent synopsis of the book and what he took from it. "The idea of the servant as leader came out of reading Hermann Hesse's *Journey to the East*. In this story we see a band of men on a mythical journey, probably also Hesse's own journey. The central figure of the story is Leo, who accompanies the party as the servant who does their menial chores, but who also sustains them with his spirit and his song. He is a person of extraordinary presence. All goes well until Leo disappears. Then the group falls into disarray and the journey is abandoned. They cannot make it without the servant Leo. The narrator, one of the party, after some years of wandering, finds Leo and is taken into the Order that had sponsored the journey. There he discovers that Leo, whom he had known first as *servant*, was in fact the titular head of the Order, its guiding

spirit, a great and noble *leader*. One can muse on what Hesse was trying to say when he wrote this story. We know that most of his fiction was autobiographical, that he led a tortured life, and that *Journey to the East* suggests a turn toward the serenity he achieved in his old age. There has been much speculation by critics on Hesse's life and work, some of it centering on the story which they find the most puzzling. But to me, the story clearly says that *the great leader is seen as servant first*, and the simple fact is the key to his greatness. Leo was actually the leader all of the time, but he was servant first because that was what he was, *deep down inside*. Leadership was bestowed upon a person who was by nature a servant. It was something given, or assumed, that could be taken away. His servant nature was the real man, not bestowed, not assumed, and not to be taken away. He was servant first [15, p. 32]." Here is a key quotation from Hesse's novel, which gives the essence of servant leadership. The introductory portions are essential to illustrating how leaders blend in rather than stand out, just as Greenleaf was known to do as a manager and a proponent of servant leadership. Greenleaf also refers to a recurrence of this quote later in Hesse's novel [15, p. 65]. I asked the servant Leo why it was that artists sometimes appeared to be only half-alive, while their creations seemed so irrefutably alive. Leo looked at me, surprised at my question. Then he released the poodle he was holding in his arms and said: "It is just the same with mothers. When they have borne their children and given them their milk and beauty and strength, they themselves become invisible, and no one asks about them anymore." "But that is sad," I said, without really thinking very much about it. "I do not think it is sadder than all other things," said Leo. "Perhaps it is sad and yet also beautiful. The law ordains that it shall be so." "The law?" I asked curiously, "What law is that, Leo?" "The law of service. He who wishes to live long must serve, but he who wishes to rule does not live long." "Then why do so many strive to rule?" "Because they do not understand. There are few who are born to be masters; they remain happy and healthy. But all the others who have only become masters through endeavor, end in nothing." "In what nothing, Leo?" "For example, in the sanitoria. I understood little about it and yet the words remained in my memory and left me with a feeling that this Leo knew all kinds of things that he perhaps knew more than us, who were ostensibly his masters [24, p. 16]. Hesse also makes reference to Siddartha, the Buddha, as I previously mentioned [24, p. 3]. He speaks of the ideals of unity and a common goal. He mentions the tendency of society to forget the past, that the "…whole of world history often seems to me nothing more than a picture book which portrays humanity's most powerful and senseless desire—the desire to forget. Does not each generation, by means of suppression, concealment and ridicule, efface what the previous generation considered most important [24, p. 4]?" Hesse was speaking of rediscovering the exploits of his group, but also of the loss and rediscovery of the ancient eastern religious concepts of selflessness that drive his book [24, p. 5].

2.5. Siddhartha Gautama, the original servant leader?

Since Hesse has mentioned the magic name Siddhartha in his novel, his inspiration for Leo's servant leadership, let's find out who he was. Was he a servant leader and one who proposed that we all become servants to our fellow humankind? Well interestingly enough, Karen Armstrong, a former nun, and theologian performed unbiased, exhaustive, scholarly research about a man who lived a selfless life and was concerned about finding a solution, a way of living, to solve the problem of human suffering. He was a brilliant product of the axial age, a time when Chinese, Iranian, Indian, Jewish, and Greek cultures, all prodded by some unknown but likely common current of thought, began a similar philosophical search for truth and solutions to the problems faced

by humanity [25]. The man, Siddhartha Gautama, brought his unique genius to bear on the problems faced by humanity and produced a result which was wholly unlike what developed in the nations surrounding him, a rational religion relying on human effort and logic to relieve humankind of suffering, rather than depending on the power of Gods. He lived in Nepal in the 5th century B.C., the son of a King. He led a sheltered, wealthy, privileged life. He had never been allowed to see or be amongst the common people of his father's kingdom. One day in his late twenties, he was allowed to walk amongst his father's subjects. He couldn't bear the suffering and disparity he saw. He went back to the palace in despair and went into a deep depression. He couldn't reconcile the fact that his life was so good, and the average person's life was so filled with horrible suffering and poverty. He renounced his wealth and all his possessions. He left the palace determined to find a way to end human suffering and to make life better for all people by finding a way of living and serving one another that would end the cycle of suffering and abuse of power so prevalent in his day. His philosophy on how to live a kind, gentle life of moderation, dedicated to loving other people and living morally and rationally grew from this. His teachings were memorized and transmitted via oral tradition from generation to generation. The teachings, or Sutras (also spelled as Sutta depending on whether translating from the Pali or the Sanskrit, same with the names Gautama and Gôtama), were eventually published by his many disciples in the form of dharma and sutra, were then spread throughout East Asia. He was the founder of Buddhism and is also known as the Buddha, which literally means the enlightened one [25, pp. 11-14, 31-35]. …Buddha…is presented as a type rather than as an individual. In his discourses we find none of the sudden quips, thrusts and witticisms that delight us in the speech of Jesus or Socrates. He speaks as the Indian philosophical tradition demands: solemnly, formally and impersonally. After his enlightenment, we get no sense of his likes and dislikes, his hopes and fears, moments of desperation, elation or intense striving. What remains is an impression of a transhuman serenity, self-control, a nobility that has gone beyond the superficiality of personal preference, and a profound equanimity. …The Buddha was trying to find a new way of being human. In the West, we prize individualism and self-expression, but this can easily degenerate into mere self-promotion. What we find in Gôtama is a complete and breathtaking self-abandonment. …Those who have become weary of the intolerance of some forms of institutional religiosity will also welcome the Buddha's emphasis on compassion and loving-kindness. But the Buddha is also a challenge, because he is more radical than most of us. There is a creeping new orthodoxy in modern society that is sometimes called "positive-thinking." At its worst, this habit of optimism allows us to bury our heads in the sand. …The Buddha would have had little time for this. In his view, the spiritual life cannot begin until people allow themselves to be invaded by the reality of suffering, realize how fully it permeates our whole experience, and feel the pain of all other beings, even those whom we do not find congenial. …most of us are not prepared for the degree of the Buddha's self-abandonment. We all know that egotism is a bad thing; we know that all the great world traditions—not just Buddhism—urge us to transcend our selfishness. But…a good deal of religion is often designed to prop up and endorse the ego that the founders of the faith told us to abandon. We assume that a person like the Buddha, who has, apparently, and after a great struggle, vanquished all selfishness, will become inhuman, humorless and grim. Yet this does not seem to have been true of the Buddha…the state he achieved inspired an extraordinary emotion in all who met him. The constant, even relentless degree of gentleness, fairness, equanimity, impartiality and serenity acquired by the Buddha touch a chord and resonate with some of our deepest yearnings. …[People] were drawn to the Buddha and flocked to him. When people committed themselves to the regimen that he prescribed for suffering

humanity, they said that they "took refuge" with the Buddha. He was a haven of peace in a violent world of clamorous egotism [25, pp. xxiv-xxviii]. According to Hesse and Armstrong, it would seem that the Buddha was an archetypical or prototypical servant leader. His teachings and his influence were persecuted in Nepal and India. His disciples found their foothold in China and Southeast Asia. It was there that his teachings and sanghas (monastic order of monks) flourished [4]. Since the thread led me back to Siddhartha Gautama, who seemed to be a one-of-kind servant leader who originated in Asia, I thought that the practice of Greenleaf's corporate and civic forms of servant leadership could be aided in Korea by having a conversation with the modern-day leaders of the Buddhist order. It is an attempt to bridge the Korean duality of Buddhism for personal spiritual development and Confucianism particularism for leadership and governance. I thought it would be a fitting place where I could measure the similarities and differences between an actual Buddhist servant leader and the concepts that certain proponents of servant leadership are espousing in the west. To accomplish this, I arranged to speak with an administrative Buddhist monk at *****sa in Seoul, which is an integral part of the Zen Buddhist order. For legal and ethical reasons, I have redacted the name of the monk and the temple, though I believe that he has regularly appeared in the media and would have no objections to being named. 'Sa' means temple and is the suffix at the end of every temple's name in Korea, so I am not exposing any details. As I mentioned at the beginning of the article, I had planned to interview monks from different Asian cultures on the subject of servant leadership. For the sake of continuity, I devised a list of the same questions to ask each monk. I provided the questions in advance so that each monk could carefully contemplate and prepare prior to our meeting. I hope to write an article on servant leadership in Thailand and Cambodia soon. We are about to begin the interview portion of this article. I think it is crucial beforehand to note that Greenleaf's suggestions were philosophical essays, not empirical studies. He gave little in the way of a specific application. That nebulous quality has caused many researchers in the west to engage in empirical studies that would reveal steps, qualities, or formulas to achieve a productive, measurable application of his method. A notable example would be the work of Sipe and Frick, who have enumerated the qualities of a servant Leader [26], and Mittal and Dorfman, who have defined specific servant leadership qualities and have done cross-cultural studies on their effective application [12]. However, the general vagueness of Greenleaf's ideas could be advantageous in that the same empirical processes can be carried out to determine how best to implement servant leadership in portions of Asia. What the proponents of servant leadership, mentioned above, try to point out is that leaders need to understand that any proposed philosophy must match the culture where it will be put into practice. Sipe and Frick made this point in presenting their diagram of the seven pillars of servant leadership, which we will soon look at in comparison to everything else [26, p. 23]. They may have intended to refer to organizational culture in the west rather than international culture, but the statement translates well in a broader sense. The studies done by Mittal and Dorfman, which state that the practice of servant leadership in Asia may be futile [12], make it more and more apparent that Greenleaf, in his ethnocentrism, cast his Asian concepts to fit western society and its conventions, such as: focusing on the individual within the organization rather than the collective [15, p. 38]; favoring a more egalitarian hierarchy rather than respecting social order; concentrating on the greater good instead of the common good [15, p. 19]; and by favoring predicting the future [15, pp. 43-45], the prophecy he spoke of in the previous quote [15, p. 32], rather than concentrating on the present. Many of these differences and a few more will be addressed as the interview section unfolds, but let us deliberately examine one here. In regard to foreseeing the future, Greenleaf instructs us to focus on forecasting,

possibly even using the supernatural to predict [15, pp. 32-34, 43-45], while the East Asian approach is more pragmatic. According to the Buddhist master with whom I held an interview, if a person wants to know his past, he must look at himself in the present. What he is presently is a direct result of his past. If a person wants to know the future, he should pay attention to what he is currently doing, because all his present efforts will result in the future. The monk advised not to try to see the future but to focus on the present because it is all we have control over [27]. These are just a sampling of the differences which might seem inconsequential but may make a tremendous difference to the Asian mind in the acceptance of certain practices. It is safe to say that Greenleaf was not alone in his ethnocentrism. All people have ethnocentric tendencies, but awareness can help them overcome that problem. That will be the primary purpose of this study. The effort is essential. If servant leadership is to work in eastern countries, in this case, Korea, which is highly unique to other Asian countries, alterations will need to be made to match the culture and to take into account the language that shapes it. If not, society and the language themselves will need to change before it can be put into practice [13].

3. Interview with a well-known Buddhist Administrator

3.1. Question One: I asked the monk to introduce himself and to describe his qualifications with me. Here is what I learned

He told me that his name was **ng-**n. He is the director of administration for a large group of monks. He told me that he is a leader with many years of experience in dealing with daily operations of facilities, finances, making and executing plans, and working with monks and laity. He told me that from its inception in China, for well over one thousand years, it has been the tradition of Zen Buddhism to train monks through a master/disciple relationship. The monks do not marry, living a simple life dedicated to service. He said his training did not focus on dharma (doctrine) and sutra (teachings) only. The training he received was a practical application: hands-on meditation and ministry, during which both parties, master, and disciple, commit to one another for a lifetime. After graduating from Dong-gook University (동국대학교) with a degree in Buddhist philosophy, **ng-**n spent 23 years learning how to put knowledge into practice from his master and grandmaster. I must say, he demonstrated many of the principles he shared with me during the interview. He was kind, pleasant, and patient with me as an English speaker and novice. He worked together with me to arrive at some conclusions. Despite being a very busy man, he was generous with his time. He spent nearly two hours discussing the concept of servant leadership as he saw it. He and the temple staff made substantial efforts to show their kindness and love. The office manager came out of the administrative building to find me before the interview. He had taken great pains to arrange the visit. He made it a point to ask for my parking ticket and validated it without my requesting it. The administrative assistant gave me a box of homemade sesame and peanut candies as I left. **ng-**n gave me an English version of dharma lectures written by his master Ch** **m, free of charge. One of the most meaningful gestures he made was to walk me to the door. He went outside in the cold without a coat, and bowed deeply and graciously to me as I left, for many people to witness. His act was an exceptional gesture considering that he is a man of status, and immigrants are poorly regarded in Korea.

3.2. Question two: How do you see Servant Leadership in your modern personal view? How was it passed down to you from Buddha historically?

After the introduction, we dug into the topics. I had provided **ng-**n with a few questions before the meeting. He had prepared some responses prior to my arrival, so in essence, he spent longer than 2 hours for my benefit. In the following pages, I will present the questions exactly as they were given to him. Because of the difficulty switching between English, Korean, and pantomime, I will give my summarization and the literary references of his correlating responses beneath each question. The first thing that **ng-**n did was to produce the questions which I had sent him in advance via email. He had attempted to find some English sources to aid in my understanding. The very first statement he gave me was a quote from the Diamond Sutra, one of Buddhism's most ancient and sacred texts and the bible, as it were, of the Zen Buddhist sect, as he told me. It is, in fact, the world's oldest printed book, dated 868 A.D. Hand copied Chinese manuscripts can be traced to 402 A.D. when the teaching was translated and introduced to China from India [28]. He told me that the teaching comes from The Buddha himself. "Furthermore Subhuti, what I have attained in total Enlightenment is the same as what all others have attained. It is undifferentiated, regarded neither as a high state, nor a low state. It is wholly independent of any definite or arbitrary conceptions of an individual self, other selves, living beings, or a universal self." "Subhuti, when someone is selflessly charitable, they should also practice being ethical by remembering that there is no distinction between one's self and the selfhood of others. Thus one practices charity by giving not only gifts, but through kindness and sympathy. Practice kindness and charity without attachment and you can become fully enlightened." "Subhuti, what I just said about kindness does not mean that when someone is being charitable they should hold onto arbitrary conceptions about kindness, for kindness is, after all, only a word and charity needs to be spontaneous and selfless, done without regard for appearances [29]." –The Diamond Sutra The English translation **ng-**n used was a loose dynamic equivalency version he found on the internet. I'm sure he used that for my benefit since it was the only readily available translation he could find at the time. After the meeting, I traced a modern translation from a commentary on the Diamond Sutra by celebrated, Princeton educated monk, Thich Nhat Hanh, since it is a more authoritative academic source. Truthfully, there is very little difference between his source and the one I have used. As **ng-**n told me, the ancient sutra tells us how to serve and respect one another, which should be practiced by all people, regardless of social position or rank. Here, Gautama instructs us to be selfless, ethical, kind, charitable, and egalitarian…to a degree. I seemed to sense a bit of the Confucian tendency toward respecting predefined social order, despite the exhortation to disregard rank or social position. I asked him to expand on his modern views of servant leadership, and afterward, we could address their ancient roots. He was quick to say that there is only the ancient way, which has been passed down from master to disciple over the centuries. He continued by saying that leaders should follow the example of Buddha and respect other people. He said that kindness, charity, and sympathy (empathy) were of the utmost importance in leadership and all aspects of living. He said that we all have our positions, duties, and obligations, but we must understand that fundamentally we are all the same, only the surface appearance is different. He talked a bit in metaphysical terms about illusion and absolute reality, which is the basis for these beliefs. In the question I posed, I mentioned Greenleaf drawing on Buddhist ideas. I also brought up that idea that we had just discussed were somewhat similar to Plato's theory of 'perfect forms' in The Republic [30]. I pointed out that I saw similarities with the Aristotelean idea of the 'golden mean'

from his Nicomachean Ethics [31]. He said that was a good sign, since the more an idea recurs in different sources, the more likely it is to be the truth. He added that the same could be said of Buddhist compassion and Christian charity. During this exchange, he clearly mentioned two common traits that are often ascribed to servant leaders: kindness/charity, and empathy. Through his comments, he drew allusions to a third, humility. He went on to talk about balance. He said that Buddhism was rooted in a middle way. He said that in all things, there are opposites. He mentioned that without one another, there would be no such things as leader or follower. He pointed out that it was unbalanced to talk about leadership without including the follower. He then stated that the relationship was natural (Table 1). It was balanced. In Korean culture, people often talk about the Gap (leader), and the Eul (servant). The words are used to express the power dynamic between people. The Gap has more power, while the Eul has less. The concept has been used extensively in legal settings. It is also used to discuss all sorts of inequitable relationships: boss/subordinate, women/men, adult/child, etc. He says this is balanced and natural. He said we all have roles to play, but that attitude was the essential element, not a role or position. He said seemingly unequal relationships could be carried out with compassion and loyalty. He said that it was essential for leaders and followers to have Buddha's mind of compassion. He called it bool-sung (불성), which means attaining enlightenment in the same fashion as Buddha, which aids us in learning the real universal truth.

Table 2

갑 (Gap) Leader/을 (Eul)Servant 관계 (Gwangye) Relationship
갑이다/을이다 'Gap/Eul' are Korean words used to express inequality in a power-dynamic relationship between two people of a group. 'Gap' represents the person with more power, and 'Eul' is the subjugated. It originally comes from Korean legal terminology, but is now used to talk about any relationship which traditionally exhibits inequality, such as boss/subordinate, women/men, adult/child, etc. [32]

3.3. Question three: What qualities do you believe a servant leader should develop?

ng-n mentioned that there were four essential attitudes that all people should have, including leaders. It is incumbent upon all of us to follow and develop these traits if we are to be successful servants and servant leaders. It is drawn from a source that took considerable effort to trace, especially in sensible English. In a Korean Buddhist sutra, these instructions are given for daily living and echo the teachings of Gautama [27]. It is also presented as poetry for beauty, profoundness, and ease of memorization. In Korean, the final words rhyme in each line but the last. It is interesting to note that there is a focus on communication, which Sipe and Frick list as a pillar of servant leadership [26].

Table 3

중아함 9 권 40 경 (수장자경) **Joong-ah-ham, 9 gwon, 40 gyung (Soo-Jang Ja-Gyung)**
"첫째는 은혜를 베풀고 First, be merciful/benevolent, and be giving/charitable (**ng-**n added the word 'bless.')
둘째는 부드럽고 고운 말을 쓰며, Second, render your words softly and kindly,
셋째는 사람들에게 이익이 되도록 하며, Third, act in ways that benefit other people (humanity),
넷째는 모든 일을 같이 하도록 하는 것입니다. Fourth, all efforts should be done together in whatever you do (**ng-**n added the words 'in harmony or unity' though they are not in the original language)."

ng-n made it clear when he answered the remainder of this question that there must be a balance in the servant/leader relationship. Extremes should be avoided. The middle way is preferable. He repeated that we all have duties to fulfill. To make his point, he drew on another sutra that is attributed directly to Buddha. In this particular sutra, Buddha lectured a young householder (leader) on what his responsibilities were in all his relationships (Buddha termed these relationships the six directions). Buddha, who believed in balance and a middle way, saw that there were reciprocal responsibilities owed to the householder by the people in his employ. He was to serve and provide well for them, and they, in turn, were to serve him loyally (table 2). The idea is that we must all be servants to one another in all our personal and professional relationships [33].

Table 4

Buddha's idea of balance in leadership (Leadership cannot be practiced unilaterally) (It is also similar to the idea of relationships and reciprocity in Confucian philosophy [33]**.**	
Leader's responsibilities	***Worker's responsibilities***
In five ways, young house-lord, slaves and hired workers [employees and charges] as the directed below [the nadir], should be ministered to by the master [the employer], thus:	The slaves and workers [employees and charges], young house-lord, as the direction below, having been ministered thus by the master, show him their compassion in these five ways:
(a) By allocating work according to the strength of the worker. (b) By providing them with food and wages. (c) By attending to their medical and health needs. (d) By sharing excellent tastes [food, etc.] with them. (e) By giving them timely breaks (leave time).	(f) They rise before him. (g) They retire after him. (h) They take only what is given (no stealing). (i) They do their work well. (j) They spread about his good name and praise (loyalty, allegiance).

3.4. Question four: What methods do Buddhists recommend for achieving those leadership qualities?

Here the answers were brief. There should be constant meditation on, and practice of, the principles set forth. Reflection and conscience are essential. Mentoring is critical to this development.

3.5. Question five: Greenleaf has made foresight one of the most important aspects of his philosophy of servant leadership. He believes that by using intuition, spirituality, God, and one's powers of perception, one can learn to know or anticipate the future. Does Buddhism teach something similar?

This question, I did not supply in advance. **ng-**n answered it spontaneously. Upon reading it, he sat back and grinned at me. He said, "Do you believe this? If so, I think you are wasting your time [27]." He said I must have been thinking about the 'six powers,' but I had no idea what the six powers were until I researched them after the interview (They are legend). He elaborated. He told me that it is impossible to know the future. He paraphrased Buddha on the matter. According to Buddha and Sung-jin, it is impossible to know, past, present, and future minds. If a person wants to know his past, he must look at himself in the present. What he is presently is a direct result of his past. If a person wants to know the future, he should pay attention to what he is currently doing, because all of his present efforts will result in the future. He advised not to try to see the future but to focus on the now because it is all we have control over. We cannot change the past, and we cannot predict the future. I will directly quote Sung-jin. "Foresight comes from handling one's mind in the present, not from God. Past makes present. Present makes future. If you want to change the world, change your mind first [27]." I asked him if Buddhists believe in God. He informed me that Buddhism is a religion of logic and rationality. He said that he doesn't believe there is one creator, God, which is a Hebrew concept. He said that there are many gods. He did not give details beyond that. I wanted to ask for an expanded explanation, but I thought it was beyond the scope of the interview.

3.6. Question six: Greenleaf has made individualism focused on the greater good the cornerstone of his leadership philosophy. He believes that we should make people and their individual development the cornerstone of all leadership efforts. Is the Buddhist perspective as individualistic, or is it more concerned with humanity as a whole? Is the Buddhist perspective more collectivist?

He sighed. He said that the push to elevate the individual troubles him. In his opinion, it destroys harmony. He answered the question with two metaphors. He said that a large rock is made up of millions of atoms, and a cloud of smoke is a collection of small particles of dust. He said the answer is unity and harmony. He told me that everyone has their duty to fulfill, but we must help one another despite our individual positions. Everyone should work in harmony for the common good, not the greater good. He said the highest good is to work for the common good, to benefit all humanity. There is a benefit for the individual, but that only comes when everyone else benefits. I believe this is the element of self-sacrifice at work.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

In the interest of comparing our modern versions of Servant Leadership and the philosophies and practices of East Asia, I have compiled a chart drawing on three sets of research and the Buddhist information given to me by **ng-**n. The western concepts are singular and relatively self-explanatory. These Asian concepts are complex. Each single-word description can carry a paragraph worth of connotations and libraries full of learned commentaries. As the conclusion progresses, please note that the sources discussed are cited in [Table 5]. While I did discuss Confucianism in relation to the other prominent Asian philosophies, in Korea, it is the most

dominant force. Earlier, I mentioned that Korea is the most Confucian culture in the world, so I am going to put a particular emphasis on it for a moment. While it is not wholly incompatible with Buddhist thought, Confucianism does differ from Buddhism in that it retains a disparate, highly stratified social order. People are taught to embrace their roles and serve with purpose and to honor and respect the roles of others, especially leaders who are revered and are rarely questioned. The words of the Buddhist monk during the interview mirrored this Confucian quality, which I believe is a trend that I noticed as I spoke to the monks in Thailand and Cambodia. It is also evident in Christianity and other religions. The hosting culture's form of government, type of economy, and daily culture invariably percolate into the doctrine and beliefs of the religion, which are ultimately expressed in its practice. I ran across some research which was wise enough to recognize this trend. To be honest, the article is several decades old, but in my estimation still very relevant, even if to a slightly lessened degree. Professor Yum lists several themes common to the practice of Confucianism and the futility of mixing it with western leadership methods without tempering it to fit the prevailing culture. She has some sage advice for crossing those barriers, which I will attempt to pass along [13].

Table 5

Comparison and Contrast of Western and Asian Concepts of Leadership All of these different concepts must be built on culture and strategy (I have preserved the original order of presentation of each theory to preserve any inherent or implied priority of elements.)			
Sipe & Frick's Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership [26]	Mittal and Dorfman's Five Aspects of Servant Leadership [12]	Four Attitudes of Buddhism to be applied universally by all adherents to society regardless of position [27]	Confucian Principles to be applied universally to society (Kings and aristocrats highly favored this over Buddhism because it favors social status.) [34]
1. Person of Character	Egalitarian	**布施 - 보시 (boshee):** literal synonyms are Charity, benevolence, generosity, sharing. It was presented to me in this context. Share your happiness.	**仁, (Ren or Jen depending on dialect), Humaneness:** Warm feelings between all humanity. These are natural human feelings toward other people adjusted according to one's relation to them (boss, father, neighbor, brother, etc.) This humanism translates into character. "It is a compassionate and devoted love, charged with deep empathy and sincerity, that enables one to identify with the troubles and joys of others as if they were one's own. This compassion is called Jen and is sometimes translated "human heartedness [2]."'
2. Puts People First	Moral Integrity	**愛語 - 애어 (ay-o):** It is not a Korean word; it is two Chinese words transliterated into Korean literally meaning 'speak love,' which would be synonymous with encourage, build up. It was presented to me in this context.	**恕, (Shu), Leniency, Mercy, Forgive, Pardon, Reciprocity, Empathy, Generosity, Magnanimity:** Know how it feels to be the other person. It is Confucius' golden rule which found its way into the teachings of Jesus. Do not do unto others what you would not have them do unto you. Something to which leaders should resort by default.

		Speak warmly and in a friendly manner.	
3. Skilled Communicator	Empowering	**利行 – 이행 (eeheng):** it literally means: To make all people of the world happy because of our kind actions or self-sacrifice. . It was presented to me in this context. Sacrifice yourself for the good of others.	**义, (Yi), Faithfulness, loyalty, justice:** Look beyond immediate profit. Working for the collective good. Obligations related to long term reciprocally profitable relationships (Quid pro quo or mutually beneficial). Justice as it applies situationally. (Situational Ethics: There is no concept of absolute justice as in western philosophy). "East Asians differently grade and regulate relationships according to the status of the persons involved and the particular context [13]." "The…sense of justice, responsibility, duty, obligation to others, which is called Yi. It must be observed that Ju philosophy insists that both Jen and Yi are completely disinterested. The mark of the "Noble Minded Man" is that he does not do things simply because they are pleasing or profitable to himself, but because they flow from an unconditional moral imperative [2]."
4. Compassionate Collaborator	Empathetic	**同事 - 동사 (dongsa):** These are also two Chinese words transliterated into Korean. They literally mean 'same work.' The idea, as it was explained to me, means much more than the words alone let on. 'Same' takes on a connotation of sharing in happiness and sorrow together in unity and harmony. The word 'work' intimates working with a unified destiny in mind. We can take this to mean a kind of empathy, incorporating elements of loyalty and commitment. It was presented to me in this context. 'Step into the other person's shoes.'	**礼 (Li), Propriety, rite, respect for social forms, and social order, deference to others, especially those who hold higher social authority:** but this should be done with consideration for others. Practice it with humanity. "It is the ability to make use of ritual forms to give full outward expression to love and obligation by which one is bound to others…the acting out of veneration and love, not only for one's sovereign, for one's people, but also for heaven and earth. It is the liturgical contemplation of the religious and metaphysical structure of the person, the family, society, and the cosmos itself [2]."
5. Has Foresight 6. Systems thinker 7. Leads with Moral Authority	Humble		**智, (Chih), Wisdom, liberal education:** This is not merely acquired knowledge. It is part learning, part thinking on what one has learned via critical thought. It is knowledge earned by experience. It is not static. Instead, it is continuously evolving as we age, sometimes a complete turnaround in what we had once believed. "Finally, there is wisdom that embraces all the other virtues in a mature and religious understanding which orients them to their living fulfillment. This perfect understanding of the "way of Heaven" finally enables a man of maturity and long experience to follow all the inmost desires of his heart without disobeying heaven. It is Augustine's "Love and do what you will! [2]"'

Her research clearly shows that Korea is a collectivist culture. It embraces the common good. Ethics and

justice related to the common good are determined situationally and are not fixed ideals. It is a land where long-term, often lifelong, flexible, reciprocal relationships are prized. Personal relationships govern business. Contractual agreements are eschewed. Relationships that create unity, harmony, and preserve the social order are preferred. This social order is nearly impossible to untangle from business, personal relationships, and home life. Confucianism and the social order is so inherent in the language, that every communication references age, profession, and familial relationships. Just a simple greeting is comprised of as many as two hundred variables and requires knowing every person's social standing and the speaker's position in relation to it. A person can accidentally seriously offend someone if careless about how they address and treat people. It is essential for anyone who wants to work in Korea to learn this information so that there will be less chance of offense and relationships start on the right foot. Yum goes on to say that life in her homeland Korea is uniquely different from the rest of the world. She says that western management styles will not work there, and vice versa. Culture, manners, hierarchy, education, and so much more must be incorporated into any imported organizational practice. "If one looks under the surface…one will realize that they [the management practices] are derived from a thousand-year old Confucian legacy, and that similar human relationship patterns are found outside of large organizations. Consequently, attempts to transplant such a management style to North America with its philosophical and cultural orientation of individualism cannot be entirely satisfactory. The culture itself would have to be modified first [13]." Furthermore, she states that social ecology is not only damaged by war, genocide, and political repression, but also by destroying the subtle ties (the collective nature of humankind) that bind human beings together. She concludes that the people of East Asia are feeling tremendous pressure in a socially mobile, industrialized world to abandon tradition and embrace western individualist practices. She recommends finding ways to help people cope and adapt without destroying culture [13]. In the practice of East Asian servant leadership, everyone should be an active participant, and everyone should benefit while maintaining critical etiquette and social order. The focus must be on balance and harmony. The spotlight should not be on the leader alone. It also must focus on the follower as related to the leader, and to everyone else with whom they are connected. In that way, followers can enjoy their culture while learning to become servants and, in turn, servant leaders too. It occurs through the process of masters mentoring disciples, just as Greenleaf mentioned in an earlier quotation.

4.1. Recommendations regarding the pursuit of justice in Korea

I would like to explore two common problems that are extremely troublesome for leaders everywhere in the world. I will propose two solutions, which I believe a servant leader could use to great advantage in Korea. I will begin with the issue of the application of law and justice and then end with the problem of affecting change in the Korean culture. I would first like to present you with a few quotes from one of Korea's most distinguished legal scholars through the sixties and seventies of the last century. "A litigious man is a warlike man to the Koreans. He threatens harmony and peace. He is a man to be detested. If a man cannot achieve reconciliation through mediation and compromise, he cannot be considered an acceptable member of the collectivity [35]." "Koreans have abhorred the black-and-white designation of one party to a dispute as right and his opponent as wrong. Assigning all blame to one for the sake of rendering a judgment has been repugnant to the fundamental valuation of harmony, because such a judgment has retarded swift restoration of broken harmony. The ultimate ideal has been a complete absence of dispute and conflict. But if discord could not be

avoided, society demanded the quickest restoration of broken concord [36]." Living in the West, people have a specific idea of justice. In our view, some people are right. Some people are wrong. An arbiter sometimes decides for us when we cannot agree. In Korea, the idea of the western concept of law is confrontational and unharmonious. The idea of a rigid contract that binds both parties to an agreement which ensures that both sides will carry out their enumerated duties unless both agree to a change in terms seems intolerably restrictive. It also threatens the dominance of the upper class who, in particularist fashion, believe it is their right to cultural and societal advantages bestowed upon them by position, power, and wealth. Let me give an example of the difference between Korean and U.S. police patrols and enforcement of traffic violations according to my observations over the years. In the USA, it is common to see the police as a visible force. They stand guard at malls and shops. The walk up and down the street among people observing. They are often reasonably visible, patrolling the streets and neighborhoods by a squad car. Police feel no compunction about stopping and confronting someone for a perceived infraction. Without hesitation, the officer will issue a ticket and a summons to court, delivering it directly to the transgressor by hand. Under the rule of law, the penalty is relatively predictable. If the speed limit is 80 kph, and you are going 85, you will likely get a citation. In Korea, one rarely sees a police car or a patrolman. That is confrontational. Police patrols occasionally pass with lights flashing, but they rarely stop individuals. There are, however, cameras above darting every which way, operated by officers remotely. They, of course, write and mail many tickets, but without the confrontation. On the expressway, the police engage in something called speed averaging. Each camera that a car passes sends the information to the main computer, which will only send a ticket if your combined speeds exceed the limit. As I have observed in my time here, these are examples that directly correlate with what Professor Hahm has said. For the most part, people will suffer great pains to avoid confrontation, even the authorities, who will impose penalties without direct interaction [37]. The quotes above by Professor Hahm give us a certain sense of how to conduct ourselves in Korean culture. They also give us a sense of how Koreans might value and behave in contractual situations. More than fifty years have passed since he wrote those words, and granted, there have been immeasurable amounts of change in culture since then, but this tendency is still present because the generation who initially felt this way is still present. They have taught their children their values since early childhood. There is rigorous enculturation of children through daycare and youth center programs financed by the Korean government and granted as a benefit to the children of all parents. It is truly an educational headstart but, in my opinion, even more of an indoctrination. For instance, speaking from personal experience, my son began Korean daycare at ten months of age. He was at school from 8 am to 7 pm every day for years, because the immense cost of living requires that both parents work. In the Confucian tradition of society as family, students became brothers and sisters, and the preschool teachers acted like surrogate parents. In this environment, students are grilled with Korean culture and norms, taught to be thoughtful, cooperative, empathetic. There is another fruitful aspect to this type of instruction. My son could read and write both Korean and English at the age of four. He also had learned Chinese root ideograms called Hanja. He could add, subtract, and knew all of his geometric shapes. He built some relationships that will last a lifetime. However, the other, more dubious aspects are an almost absolute conformity in attitudes, racial stereotypes, bigotry, and promotion of a harmony that is sometimes a smokescreen for propagating injustice. My son sometimes came home, saying the most ironic things that were on the order of the paradoxes present in Dave Chappelle's sketch '*The black, white supremacist*' [38]. I believe that hypernorms govern racism. A servant leader should never

allow anyone to engage in this abuse. At this point, the leader must strive to change culture through a planned process, but there should be immediate penalties to prevent its occurrence. For all other conflicts, mediation, compromise, and reconciliation are ideals to be sought and practiced in place of confrontation and dissonance. Flexibility and cooperation within reason should be the norm in Korea. There is nothing wrong with desiring perfect harmony until it becomes an excuse to breach contractual agreements and deny justice to the less powerful. That transforms harmony to travesty. I recommend that any person who is a servant leader in Korea, must promote the ideals that bring true harmony, but, if there is an occasion where harmony promotes injustice, then this is a hypernorm that cannot be ignored. If mediation and compromise do not produce results, then a servant leader should not blink or hesitate. She or he must support and facilitate a speedy process of justice, but it should be tempered with the fair, unbiased heart, head, and hands of a caring servant.

4.2. How should servant-leaders in Korea approach change?

As was established under the first subheading, Greenleaf stressed the importance of foresight and the need for constructive change when applying servant leadership. I believe that at the rate that technology changes every few months, planned and managed change is the greatest challenge that leaders face. The only challenge that eclipses it is choosing what changes to make. I agree with Burke, who states that, without leadership and strategy, change is impossible [39]. And I will add that this has never been more true than in Korea. Even when implementing the most necessary, beneficial change, it is essential to work for harmony and cooperation by educating people on the need for change. Burke emphasizes that it is wise to consult stakeholders about potential changes to gather suggestions and to get agreement so that they will buy into change. I would like to interject that this type of stakeholder consultation is an enormously appreciated and useful concept that is already in use by some Korean leaders. The best leaders with whom I have ever worked have been consensus builders [37]. They did not constitute a majority, even in the least sense. They do not isolate themselves and bark orders based on their perceived power, because to be honest, good leaders realize that the only power they possess is what their employees allow them. Nor would it be wise to make and enforce policy without consulting the people who actually do the work. Since a leader's detachment separates him or her from the actual workability of a directive, asking their expert advice is the only sensible thing to do. If we enforce untenable directives, it costs everyone dearly, even the customer. Instead, Good Asian leaders call meetings and have dialogues about what people need for them to buy into a specific program of change. After gathering and evaluating initial suggestions, usually, there is a new round of meetings held with stakeholder groups to gauge their willingness to bend a little. Then a modified plan of change is rolled out. I have seen the resolve and vigor that people who have been consulted in this way respond to change. It would not be accurate to predict that everyone will buy into the plan. There are always pockets of resistance, but it is nothing like a change that is forced on people without consultation or discussion. Such a thing is often the Korean ‘raw power’ approach, therefore, the type of change planning I recommend here would be very welcome in Korean culture. It reduces confrontation and promotes harmonious change that yields results without waste. At least that is what a few experts report. Let us consult their research-based recommendations. Burke’s planned change process is very similar to the practice of consensus building since he also recommends including people in the change implementation so their involvement will translate into cooperation. If they are engaged and included in the process, they are less likely to resist. He tells us that change always naturally generates resistance. Unplanned

change without inclusion measures and consultation of stakeholders increases the amount of resistance exponentially, which can doom the change process to failure. He warns that imposing forced change requires a tremendous expenditure of energy to sustain because the change has not been re-frozen, which is the critical step in Lewin's change theory [7]. Burke subscribes to Lewin's theory and advises that even after a planned change has occurred, it is prudent to include follow up measures to gauge stakeholder opinions and attitudes. He recommends revisiting change by training recipients again and again until the behavior is voluntary, self-sustaining, and can be refrozen. Burke also informs us that the culture of an organization derives from artifacts (that which we can visibly see when examining an organization), espoused beliefs and values (what the organization claims as its undergirding philosophy and vision), and basic underlying assumptions (the actual performance and behavior as compared to espoused beliefs and values). Sometimes these things are not in perfect alignment as they should be. In what seems contrary to the sum of those parts, but just as I recommended with penalizing racial discrimination to prevent its practice, he emphasizes that the essential attribute in any change campaign is altering behavior first, not the attitudes and vision, which one would logically assume are the source of behavior. Burke claims that we must find a way to alter behavior first in an effort to get the desired attitude and vision. Changes in attitudes and vision come later, possibly as a result of cognitive dissonance.

4.3. What are the difficulties Korean servant leaders face when making a change, and what are the steps they should follow?

Burke's ideas closely match Edgar Schein's, who is well respected in the field of organizational development and change. Both of them subscribe to Kurt Lewin's Change Theory of unfreezing, changing, and refreezing. I believe that this process would be ideal for a Korean cultural application. Schein views change as a process that engages people as learners rather than objects of change. His expanded explanation of Lewin's theory reveals the inner psychological processes involved in the change process, making the concept much easier to understand and apply. I have enumerated the steps in a visual format (Table 6). After explaining the theory, he advises that the process should be carried out from a lowly, discreet, empathetic, people-centered orientation instead of a conspicuous, ivory tower approach, and change efforts should engage the change subject in the process for the best results [7].

Table 6

<table>
<tr><th>Unfreezing</th><th colspan="2">Changing (Learning)</th><th>Re-freezing</th></tr>
<tr><td>1.) Disconfirmation</td><td colspan="2">4.) Cognitive Redefinition</td><td>7.) Personal and Relational Refreezing</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">2.) Induction of Guilt or Survival Anxiety

3.) Creation of Psychological Safety or Overcoming of Learning Anxiety</td><td></td><td>a.) Semantic redefinition</td><td rowspan="4"></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>b.) Cognitive broadening</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>c.) New Standards of Judgment or evaluation</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">5). Imitation and Positive or Defensive Identification with a Role Model</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">6.) Scanning: Insight or Trial and Error Learning.</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

This sequence resembles a process that I observed while working with an experienced principal at a Korean public elementary school, which he deftly carried out. He invited people to a fun, comfortable atmosphere, perhaps an activity such as sports in which people were already feeling the spirit of fun and cooperation, or maybe coffee at a comfortable café, or a nice dinner at a fine restaurant. He then went around to enjoy pleasant meetings with groups as they gathered in like-minded cliques, which was a natural yet unthreatening way to expose divisions and centers of influence, then to find solutions that suited people. He laughed and joked with them. He asked them questions and truly listened to their opinions and took note of them without being openly critical. I was surprised because even though I was a foreign employee who would otherwise be disregarded as unimportant by most administrators, he also invited and included me. He included everyone, even the maintenance staff, the cafeteria staff, no person was left out. He was a master at carrying out this sort of soft power change process, and the power and the ideas came from the people, not him. He just coordinated them artfully and caringly. The success was evidenced when his small rural school that once was at the bottom of the budgetary and performance heap rose to the best in the district. It was on top every year he was there. The success was driven by employees, cutting edge technology, and grants which the government was thrilled to provide because of the superior results his team always produced. By working this way, he weakened the barriers and resistance to change, which Lewin goes on to address in the change process. When referenced superficially, Lewin's process of unfreezing, changing (learning), and refreezing is overly simplistic, making it seem like an easy process. Nothing could be further from the truth. To highlight the difficulty, Schein explains the nature of human resistance to change and the difficulty of unfreezing thoughts and behavior by giving the analogy of a force field. He maintains that psychologically human beings operate under a shield of quasi-stationary equilibria supported by a force field of restraining forces being assailed by driving forces for change. He says that any driving force to change will activate a counterforce and be repelled to maintain equilibrium. Interestingly, this counterforce sounds comparable to Lao Tzu's admonition in this paper's opening quote. Driving forces are more easily dismissed when pitted against defense mechanisms (counterforces) made up of group norms that comprise organizational and societal culture. The process of unfreezing can only succeed when those defenses have been removed [7]. The consensus-building Korean servant-leader, such as our example the principal, skillfully eliminated the threatening perception of driving force and therefore diminished defense mechanisms. The process for removing defenses (unfreezing) occurs in 3 stages. First, a person must feel disconfirmation or dissatisfaction with the status quo. This nagging discontent urges a person to consider change, but this alone is not sufficient, because it is easily dismissed through the process of denial, attribution to fate, or by placing blame on another party. The second step to unfreezing requires a feeling of guilt, inadequacy, or fault, making the person changing believe that he or she must enter a learning stage to correct the shortcoming. This state causes defensive feelings called learning anxiety, which serves as a further defense mechanism. To overcome the resulting defense mechanism in the learning process, there must be a third stage. A change agent needs to construct a psychological safety net, a way for the person facing change to admit fault or shortcoming while still saving face. This final step is crucial to the change process, especially in Korea, where, as we have established that harmony and social order are such a delicate structure. Over the last few years, I have gathered statistics on students' perceptions of making errors because they are so reticent and reserved. I have gathered data from several hundred students at two average Korean universities. Students believe that they are viewed as incapable or even bad people if they make a mistake publicly. I am in the

process of completing the first paper on that subject, but I would need controls from other cultures to make definitive comparisons, other than my personal observations. However, because of that study, I can say confidently that Korean people hate to be wrong, I am sure people do everywhere in the world, but here I judge from my currently unpublished results that the distastefulness is amplified exponentially. I have noticed that people also dislike calling someone else wrong or deny something to another person. That is confrontational. It destroys harmony. There are exceptions to this, primarily if a hateful vendetta drives someone, but on the whole, it is true. Let me give a personal example of this avoidance behavior. I often asked for things from other employees, the administration, a waiter at a restaurant, a store clerk. I found that people would either say yes or maybe. I thought 'maybe' meant that they had to consult someone for guidance on the matter. One day, I encountered this while with a Korean friend. I requested something, and the person said maybe, so I asked them to please check with the manager. My friend asked why I did that when she obviously said no. But, I told him she said maybe, which is entirely different than no. He explained to me that she was only sparing my feelings and preserving our friendship. Then there is also the ever-popular, 'just an unfortunate misunderstanding.' The most exceptional example of it that I can recount is in the first committee ruling by the Ministry of Education Faculty Review Committee on my university case, which in subsequent court rulings judged that I had been a victim of illegal contract violations. The committee was cognizant of the university president's ego in relation to a lowly foreigner's challenge and labeled the situation 'an unfortunate misunderstanding' to please return my position and work things out, which of course, he blatantly defied, forcing us to go for the definitive ruling of 'at fault' in court, a hateful eventuality for most Koreans, except those with a racial vendetta. So, in Korea, the effective planned change will only be possible when this safety net against fault and failure is in place. Then the learning process can begin, which is only done well with the involvement of the people undergoing a change. Once the party to change reaches acceptance of the terms, only then can the move to the learning stage begin. That move completes the unfreezing process. The change (learning) stage comes in three steps: cognitive redefinition, imitation, and positive or defensive identification with a role model; and scanning—insight or trial and error learning. The first step in this section of the change (learning) process, and fourth in total, marks a move toward cognitive redefinition or restructuring (also known as breaking or reframing) and comes in three subdivisions: semantic redefinition, when the change subject learns that words can mean something different than original interpretations; cognitive broadening, when the change subject learns to open his or her mind to new possibilities; and finally, when the change subject adopts new standards of judgment, by understanding that previous measurement for understanding is flawed and requires alteration. The fifth overall step, and second in the changing (learning) phase, is imitation and positive or defensive identification with a role model, which is crucial. What should the subject of change learn? If there is no model in place to follow, no knowledge or plan to grasp onto to replace the old mindset, then the subject of change will begin looking for new information to adopt in place of the old, which may produce undesirable results. There is the danger that a new and undesirable behavior might be adopted, defeating the process. However, supplying information that doesn't suit the personality or culture of the change subject will produce temporary results that cannot be refrozen or stabilized. If this step is not dealt with properly, or if it is ignored, the subject of change will revert to the old behavior. For the best results, the change agent and the change subject must work together to arrive at something acceptable and correct. The final step in the change (learning) phase is scanning, insight, or trial and error learning. If the change subject has not been provided with a reasonable, fitting solution, then he, or she,

will scan (search) for solutions. Once a suitable solution has been found, or if the one which has been provided by the change agent is accepted, the change subject will begin testing it with new behavior. The testing either reinforces the process of change or, because the new concept fails, begins a new cycle of change starting from square one. It is important to note that if a suitable solution or role model is available, then the subject of change will most likely utilize it. However, it is better, and results are more likely to last if the change subject is involved in devising the solution. The solution must jibe with the culture, or the results will not last. For instance, if a manager is trained to empower employees and then is placed back into an autocratic corporate culture, then the learning will not stick. If the individual's behavior is a group behavior, then it is necessary to retrain the entire group for the refreezing to be a success. Finally, if all the previous steps have concluded well, then the final stage of refreezing will take place. The results will last. I believe that this inclusive, non-confrontational, non-threatening, highly structured method of change is a superior option for a caring servant leader to use in shaping people and their organization.

4.4. Conclusion

This interview touched on a culture that has combined several different philosophies that have melded into a single sum. As human beings, especially academics, this trespassing of disciplinary barriers is troubling. We hope for a perfectly encapsulated isolated solution that makes logical sense. The truth is that disciplinary boundaries are artificial constructs that sometimes obstruct the actual truth from coming to light. 'Perfect sense' is comforting, but often just relative to our comfort zone or vantage point. We have to open our minds to accept the reality that everything in the universe endlessly overlaps, which is the troubling reality in which I strive to survive. We all should. It is not a perfect, logical, neat, and tidy sense of reality, but it is a better one that will produce a more reliable truth. As we looked at each of these philosophies within their artificial boundaries, surprisingly, the underlying ideals of servant leadership were present to a degree in all of them. If we meld servant leadership into the Korean cultural hodgepodge, it makes more sense and is much more malleable for our intended use. The original Buddhist version of servant leadership, a term **ng**n accepted as an accurate description of his tradition, certainly has its differences than the collected hodgepodge. However, as we observed, even though he claims that there is only a singular original 'servant leadership' in Buddhist history, we discovered distinct elements of Confucianism that he culturally appropriated. In that context, it does not elevate or empower the individual as much as it promotes the collective. It does not attempt to be egalitarian in the least. Still, leaders serve with the same traits prized in the western iteration of servant leadership. As the monk spoke, he mentioned love, kindness, empathy, compassion, humility, integrity, and listening. All of these traits were inherent in each of the philosophies that we have covered to this point. If the result is the same regardless of the method, and the methods are ethical, causing no harm, then there is no harm in altering our approach to use them as necessary. The thing to note that was the most fascinating, was that leaders were not instructed to exalt or enrich themselves or make themselves lords in an ivory tower as they often do, but that self-sacrifice was made a cornerstone of servanthood instead. I think that is the central attitude that a servant leader must have in any culture. It is the immutable ingredient. Being a leader is not about the person leading at all. It is about his or her realization that the welfare, development, and happiness of the people entrusted to his or her care are the ultimate focus. The health and success of an institution, its products, and customers depend more on how well its employees are treated and developed than any other factor. If they are mistreated, the

leader may be left with nothing to preside over, or perhaps be left with only a shadow of what could have been far more successful. The most significant point learned in all of this is that we all must be kind, loving servants to each other reciprocally, regardless of position. I believe that is the most important thing we could learn from **ng-**n along with his insistence on essential balance and the common good because it IS the greater good. For servant leadership to work in Korea, these premises must be taught to all members of an organization and practiced with humility. When leaders become too puffed up with self-importance, they ought to feel humbled by the perspective given by The Buddha in the 6th century B.C. They are beautiful words of wisdom.

"'So I say to you -

This is how to contemplate our conditioned existence in this fleeting world:

Like a tiny drop of dew, or a bubble floating in a stream; Like a flash of lightning in a summer cloud, Or a flickering lamp, an illusion, a phantom, or a dream. So is all conditioned existence to be seen.' Thus spoke Buddha [29]." – Chapter 32, The Diamond Sutra

Acknowledgements

Made possible by a grant from Gyeongnam National University of Science & Technology, 2019-2021

5. Special thanks

I owe a debt of gratitude to my former student, Yi Joong Cheol, for helping me translate the Hanja ideograms in my table of leadership values.

References

[1]. L. Tsu, Tao Te Ching, J. Needleman, Ed., New York: Vintage Books, 2012.
[2]. T. Merton, The Way of Chuang Tzu; preface by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, New York: New Directions, 2010.
[3]. W.-T. Kirn, "Korean Politics: Setting and political culture," in Understanding Korean Politics: An introduction, Albany, State University of New York Press, 2001, pp. 18-40.
[4]. M. A. Muesse, "Religions of the Axial Age: an approach to the world's religions," The Teaching Company, Chantilly, 2007.
[5]. C. E. Johnson, Meeting the Ethical Challenges of Leadership Casting Light or Shadow, 4th ed., Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2012.
[6]. L. Swidler, "Universal Declaration of a Global Ethic," International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture, pp. 159-167, September 2006.
[7]. E. Schein, "Kurt Lewin's change theory in the field and in the classroom: Notes toward a model of managed learning.," Reflections, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 59-74, 1999.
[8]. S. H. Kil and C.-i. Moon, "Introduction: Understanding Korean Politics," in Understanding Korean Politics: An introduction, S. H. Kil and C. Moon, Eds., Albany, State University of New York, 2001,

pp. 11-17.

[9]. I. Lee, "Korean Perception(s) of Equality and Equal Protection," Boston College International and Comparative Law Review, vol. 31, no. 1, pp. 53-84, 2008.

[10]. Cambridge University Press, "Cambridge Dictionary - Culture," 15 6 2020. [Online]. Available: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/culture.

[11]. G. W. F. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Spirit, T. Pinkard, Ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

[12]. R. Mittal and P. Dorfman, "Servant leadership across cultures," Journal of World Business, vol. 47, no. 4, pp. 550-570, October 2012.

[13]. J. Yum, "The Impact of Confucianism on Interpersonal Relationships and Communication Patterns in East Asia," Communication Monographs, vol. 55, pp. 374-388, 1988.

[14]. M. H. Kater, Culture in Nazi Germany, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019.

[15]. R. K. Greenleaf, Servant Leadership: a journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness, L. C. Spears, Ed., Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2002.

[16]. R. K. Greenleaf, The Power of Servant-Leadership, San Franscisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1998.

[17]. J. Kim, "Interactions between Buddhism and Confucianism in Medieval Korea," in Korean Religions in Relation: Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, A. K. Min, Ed., Albany, State University of New York, 2016, pp. 33-64.

[18]. Lao-tzu, Tao Te Ching: A new English version, New York: HarperCollins e-books, 2004.

[19]. Confucius, The Analects, T. Crofts, Ed., New York: Dover Publications, 1995.

[20]. C. Gellner, "Between reverence and revolt: Hesse and the two faces of religion," Zurich.

[21]. J. Ching, Confucianism and Taoism [Audiobook], 2006.

[22]. D. Frick, L. Spears and P. Senge, Robert K. Greenleaf: a life of servant leadership, San Francisco: Berret Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2004.

[23]. E. Y. J. Chung, Korean Confucianism: Tradition and modernity, Seongnam-si: The Academy of Korean Studies Press, 2015.

[24]. H. Hesse, The Journey to the East, New York: Picador, 2003.

[25]. K. Armstrong, Buddha, New York: Penguin, 2004.

[26]. J. W. Sipe and D. M. Frick, Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership: practicing the wisdom of leading by serving, Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2009.

[27]. **ng-**n, Interviewee, Director of the Administration at *****sa Temple. [Interview]. 9 February 2015.

[28]. S. Humanities, "Buddhist Diamond Sutra: finding new meaning in one of the world's oldest books," 2 August 2009. [Online]. Available: http://shc.stanford.edu/news/research/buddhist-diamond-sutra. [Accessed 14 February 2015].

[29]. T. N. Hanh, The Diamond that Cuts through Illusion: Commentaries on the Prajnaparamita Diamond Sutra, Berkeley: Parallax Press, 2010.

[30]. Plato, The Republic, Seattle: Amazon Classics, 2017.

[31]. Aristotle, Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011.

[32]. R. Oh, "Patron-Client Relationship and 'Gap & Eul'," 2019.

[33]. Buddha, In the Buddha's Words: An anthology of discourses from the Pali Canon., B. Bodhi, Ed., Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2012.

[34]. M.-H. Lee, Confucianism: Its roots and global significance, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2017.

[35]. P. C. Hahm, "Religion and Law in Korea," Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers, vol. 41, pp. 8-53, 1969.

[36]. P. C. Hahm, "The decision process in Korea," in Comparative judicial behavior; cross-cultural studies of political decision-making in the East and West, New York, Oxford University Press, 1969, pp. 19-20.

[37]. O. F. von Feigenblatt, "Avoidance and Consensus Building in the Association of Southeast Asian States (ASEAN): The Path Towards a New 'ASEAN Way'," Entelequia: Revista Interdisciplinar, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 121-138, 2011.

[38]. A. Allen, R. Cundieff, B. Goldthwait and P. Lauer, Directors, Chappelle's Show (TV Series). [Film]. United States: Comedy Central, 2003.

[39]. W. Burke, Organization change: Theory and practice, 4th ed., Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2014.

[40]. A. K. Min, "A Relational Approach to the Study of Korean Religions: An overview," in Korean Religions in Relation: Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, A. K. Min, Ed., Albany, State University of New York, 2016, pp. 16-31.

[41]. Buddha, The Numberical Discourses of the Buddha: A translation of the Anguttara Nikaya, Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2012.