

**THE CULTURAL DIMENSION IN A CONTEXTUAL HERMENEUTICS OF  
SUFFERING**

by

**CHUL-MIN SON**

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## Declaration

Student number: 3274-573-7

**I declare that THE CULTURAL DIMENSION IN A CONTEXTUAL HERMENEUTICS OF SUFFERING is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledge by means of complete references.**

손진민

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**SIGNATURE**

(Rev C M Son)

15. 08. 02

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**DATE**

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## Summary

Most current studies of suffering are based upon an existential approach which focuses on suffering itself. Theodicy has mainly been concerned with people's attitudes and communication within themselves and with others about religious symbols and ideas. Particularly, this study examines the Korean attitude to suffering using its cultural dimension in a contextual hermeneutics. The researcher was interested in two notions: personal identity in its cultural dimension and the hermeneutics of suffering.

The research questions addressed were as follows.

- a) How to define Korean personhood?
- b) What is cultural identity?
- c) How do people create personal identity?
- d) How does a person cope with suffering?

The chief findings were as follows.

- a) A study of Korean self-understanding can be accomplished by exploring their lifeworld to describe and understand this people's language for daily communication, popular cultural myths, and spirituality.
- b) Cultural identity in this thesis means indigenous Korean self-understanding using the socio-cultural framework in its own terms and ideas. This self-knowledge mediates history, culture, and language.
- c) Personal identity is constructed by a narrative identity.
- d) Suffering can be coped with by communication with and through oneself, others, and God.

## Key words

**Practical theological study**

**Contextual hermeneutics**

**Social representations**

**Cultural identity**

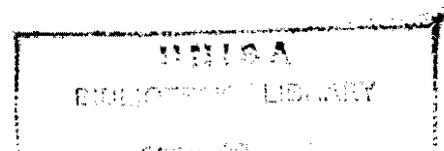
**Korean studies**

**Grounded theory**

**Theodicy**

**Ricoeur's narrative theory**

**Hermeneutical model of suffering**



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# **Introduction**

## **1. Motive**

Everyone knows that suffering exists. Given our consensus on some of the more conspicuous forms of suffering, a number of corollary questions come to the fore. The question is 'Can we identify those most at risk of great suffering?' Suffering is a common problem for all human beings. Suffering is not a single dimension such as our physical condition, but multi-dimensional, embracing our psychological, social, cultural, psychiatric, political, ecological, and religious conditions as well. Thus it is implicated, intertwined, embedded, interwoven with a great many other things.

Suffering is the greatest challenge to one's belief and meaning in the pastoral context, which deals with creation and the possibility of salvation and emancipation. In Christian tradition, this issue has focused on the theology of the cross. The issue of suffering is closely related to the idea of evil in Western Christian tradition. The issue of evil has been studied over a long period from theological and philosophical perspectives. Theodicy is the whole subject comprising the problem of evil and its attempted resolution. An understanding and interpretation of evil affects one's attitude to and thought concerning suffering.

## **2. Problem**

The problem of suffering is one of the oldest issues in theology, but one of the least satisfactory areas of the theological enterprise. Theodicy becomes suspect as a theory of legitimation; Leibniz's rational theodicy, Hegel's theodicy of history were criticized by Nietzsche and Marx. Rational theodicy presented a universal law or

logic of history within the legitimation's categories by means of metaphysical and abstract concepts. In the field of theology, some theological approaches followed a rational legitimation of theodicy. God's will is bound by the rational laws of non-contradiction and of compossibility. Hence God is always justified. Suffering in the best possible world is always justified by the ultimate goodness of the whole. In this view, theodicy, as an all-encompassing concept of meaning, does not succeed in the pastoral context by offering comfort to the whole person.

Nietzsche emphasizes a desire for life which makes a vital contextual interpretation, and radically opts for an interpretation which is to be personally constructed. Luther's theology of the cross resulted in the notion of a crucified God, in which is to be perceived a growing consensus about divine suffering. Jürgen Moltmann, in *The crucified God* (1974), stated that the theme of the suffering God has become a clear indication of new movements of thought. Kazoh Kitamori, in *Theology of the pain of God* (1966), also takes a new interest in divine suffering. Against rational theodicy, the issue of suffering is justified by the interpretation which these thinkers themselves give to it. It is a shift from theodicy to anthropodicy.

\* The problem of suffering requires meaning to be sought within the highly tense contexts of anxiety, threat and insecurity. Finding meaning in suffering is not a logical system of explanation. It should leave one empowered within the intellectual-moral system in which one lives.

\* Theodicy, as a theory or rational explanatory principle, does not offer a true perspective or comfort. By using a deductive thought model, people attempt to reach God logically. This God, the end product of human logic, is declared just, which does not leave one's sense of reality intact.

\* In secular society, theodicy not only demands a positive attitude towards religion, but also demands that an individual has developed a religious frame of reference. By making people familiar with major Christian symbols regarding the problem of evil, we develop a religious frame of reference, which is a prerequisite for religious coping behaviour.

In this view, this issue does not possess just a rational cognitive dimension, but also an existential dimension such as based on cultural facts. It means that the issue of suffering is related to a person's lifeworld by the route of questions and doubts about its many dimensions.

### **3. Hypothesis**

In this thesis, our research goal is to define the sufferer's identity in the Korean cultural situation. Identity is shared within any culture which is a certain form of narrative, which in turn is established through an interpretation of who acts in the narrative. The narrative is then heavily conditioned by cultural products such as language, myths, customs, and spirituality. Therefore, we will explore in order to understand, people's language for daily communication, popular cultural myths as guides to their lives, and spirituality as their relation to God.

This research also explores the indigenous self or identity concept in the Korean cultural context. It is indispensable here to approach the collective rather than the individual. To get to the heart of the self concept of the Koreans, one needs to look at the self of the Koreans as told in its own terms. Our question then is "Who am I to/for the others?" Or alternatively "Who am I in We-ness?" rather than "Who am I?" We thus need to examine the nature of Korean collective representations in Korean culture. The indigenous understanding of the Korean personality is an

essential theoretical concept for practical theology in Korea and it is the key concept of this thesis.

Firstly, we define the Korean cultural character by providing a history of what is being understood. One's self-understanding, in terms of Gadamer, is linked to a historical horizon and an effective history which is reproducing culture and keeping tradition alive. One's historical self-awareness comes from one's own preconceptions in cultural traditions. Therefore, to make a personal narrative or to develop one's self-understanding is to presuppose the embeddedness of a tradition of textual representation. It requires the building of a conceptual framework by a thick description of culture, in Geertz's term.

Secondly, we need to build a communication model for social integration or the coordination of the plans of different actors in social interaction. This communication model underlies action that is aimed at mutual understanding. Self-emancipation in terms of Habermas identifies self-knowledge or self-reflection. A broader sense of an understanding of meaning is made possible by linguistic communication. Such a communication model should be integrated with the lifeworld that comprises three structural components corresponding to culture, society and personality.

Thirdly, we aim to examine a narrative identity which reflects the human reality. One's self-emancipation by means of a narrative identity is by way of narrative. Self-reflection involves the way one's history and biography is expressed by storytelling.

However, we cannot deny that this research is all based on the linguistic paradigm, which maintains an understanding of communicative action and narrative. We

recognize that epistemology has to do with the relationship between language and reality. The research goal of each chapter is as follows:

Chapter 1: We need a theoretical paradigm that is established for the whole thesis. It is a practical theological approach toward an empirical theology and contextual hermeneutics for Korea.

Chapter 2: As the cultural dimension is a paramount subject in the whole research process, it requires a theory of methodology for qualitative research. It aims to build a theoretical framework within the Korean cultural context. The researcher investigated a theory of social representations which links a subject to an object as a form of knowledge. Especially, grounded theory is found to be the proper method in order to build a corrective representation of Korea.

Chapter 3: We aim to define the nature of suffering through noting the transition from theodicy to anthropodicy. Han, as an or the indigenous form of lamentation in Korean, expresses the collective representation that is based on an empirical approach. Thus, we have the model of Han which consists of three parts.

Chapter 4: We examine narrative theory and narrative theology for a model of personal identity, and formulate a hermeneutical model of suffering.

#### **4. Methodology**

This research is basically focused on a practical theological approach and contextual hermeneutics. Practical theological methodology is concerned with the theory-praxis relationship. It describes a bipolar relationship between theological theory in suffering and religious praxis in lifeworld. However, contextual hermeneutics explores the reality of human suffering. It is focused on people's self-understanding by means of their language for daily communication, cultural myths, and spirituality. The study of hermeneutics employs eminent philosophers such as Gadamer,

Habermas, and Ricoeur.

This dissertation opts for research methods from three domains of knowledge: firstly, grounded theory is based upon empirical investigation and builds a systemic theory from data. The object domain of the empirical-analytic science is based on objectification of reality in daily life. Secondly, theory of social representations and narrative theory is based on hermeneutic methods in which interpretation and understanding are attained through intersubjectivity of mutual understanding. Thirdly, self-emancipation or self-reflection is accomplished in methods of critical theory; Self-knowledge is gained by self-emancipation through reflection, leading to a transformed consciousness or perspective transformation.

In chapter 1, the researcher redefined a new theological paradigm toward an empirical theology for Korean churches. The normative-deductive approach is not adopted in this research into practical theology, because it is felt that practical theology must follow the example of the modern operational sciences and adopt an empirical method. Thus, we wish to do away with the dichotomous relationship between church and society. Contextual hermeneutics has developed a cultural dimension to describe the nature of the human being. It is concerned with Gadamer's hermeneutics, Habermas's communicative action, and Ricoeur's narrative identity. It aims at furthering the sufferer's self-understanding or self-reflection.

In chapter 2, the researcher examines the cultural characters which reflect human nature by means of theory of social representation. It is a way to construct a conceptual framework in daily life, and also to build its cultural propositions. Korean studies attempt to generate a grounded theory that is based on the systemic generating of theory from data. Grounded theory makes sense of some major areas of Korean discourse such as 'we-ness' and 'Cheong.'

Qualitative research can do real world observations, study theoretical traditions and carry out the attendant empirical research. It is based on methods of data generation which are flexible and sensitive to the social contexts in which data are produced. Qualitative research employs the methods of analysis and explanation building which involve understandings of complexity, detail and context.

The best form of research methodology in this chapter is grounded theory, because it fits the realities of qualitative research and the complexities of social phenomena during the research process. Grounded theory seeks not only to uncover relevant conditions, but also to determine how actors respond to changing conditions and to the consequences of their actions. Research procedure and criteria depend on the actual research project and also to the extent that circumstances permit.

In chapter 3, an approach to Korean studies based on qualitative research is attempted. The concept of Han is an indigenous form of lamentation in Korea. On the one hand, this research defines the nature of suffering by means of a literature review. On the other hand, we carry out an empirical test of Han by use of grounded theory. Thus we arrive at an indigenous concept of Han and a model.

In chapter 4, we deal with narrative theory. We focus on the narrative identity to formulate a personal identity. Specifically, Ricoeur's narrative theory and hermeneutics form the central ideas in this chapter.

## **5. Outline**

This dissertation consists of five chapters besides the introduction. Its outline is as follows:

**Introduction**

**Chapter 1: Practical theological approach and Contextual hermeneutics**

**Chapter 2: Cultural identity and Korean studies**

**Chapter 3: Han as an indigenous form of lamentation in Korea**

**Chapter 4: Narrative identity and narrative theology**

**Chapter 5. Conclusion and recommendations**

# **Chapter 1 Practical theological approach and contextual hermeneutics**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Korean society has been radically altered, since 1970's economic developing, creating the possibility of a more open, democratic, and pluralistic society. In this process of transformation, Koreans have experienced the fading of past traditions and emergence of new possibilities in the realm of social structure, the value system, political awareness and the religious consciousness.

However, the Korean churches have suddenly found their identities at risk and in crisis. According to religious socialists such as Kim, B.S (1989:328), Yi, W.G (1987:13) and Park, Y.S (1987:354-358), they see "the irrelevance of the church's presence and style in society" as the primary cause. All these diagnoses offer one primary message: in spite of its growth, the Korean church has lost touch with the ordinary people, with society, and perhaps with history at large. The church is no longer as attractive to deprived people, especially those who were spiritually deprived. This raises the question whether it is possible for the Korean church to transform Korean society by itself (Kim1989: 273). The Christian gospel in Korean culture is not the "ultimate interest" of all cultural life.

However, there are two additional factors beyond the sociological phenomena pointed to above. One has to do with revolutionary changes in the structure of human consciousness (Park 1990:369). Korea, like other developing countries over the past thirty years, has begun to glorify and even deify the myths of "capitalism" under the auspices of modernity. The structure of human consciousness has been shifted from the moral, the humane, and the religious to the conditional, the

impersonal, and the unethical. A second factor of importance contributing to the crisis situation of the Korean churches has to do with the loss of connectedness and cohesion within the Christian community (Chung 1993:20). Korean churches are characterized by a range of divisions – between spirituality and professionalism, between theological education and parish ministry, between conservative theology and liberal/progressive theology, between theoretical theology and practical theology, and between the clergy and the laity.

Accordingly, the Korean churches are required by this new theological paradigm to make important changes in their practices. This would involve both a critical theological interpretation of historical events and a commitment to the witness and service of God's Kingdom in history. These are precisely the issues which the discipline of practical theology is best equipped to address. Korean churches must take seriously the role of practical theology as an academic discipline, concerned with fundamental matters of theology, with rich intradisciplinary analyses of historical and social contexts, and with the guidance of the concrete practice of actual church communities. Thus, this research needs an examining of practical theology as a science. A new practical theological paradigm for the Korean church will be discussed. Especially a social scientific perspective urgently demands of the Korean church a proper transformation.

## **1.2 Practical theological approaches**

A problem of the Korean church can be described briefly as follows: there are changes in the structure of human consciousness in modern society and also a loss of connectedness and cohesion within the Christian community. There is a large gap between the church and social, cultural reality. The Korean church reveals a lack of Christian practice in the praxis of modern society: the image of God is lacking in

Korean society and culture, so to speak. In this situation, we need a vision or new paradigm of practical theology for the future.

Since the first missions 100 years ago, the Korean church has not recognized Korean cultural traditions. The Korean church has not met Korean cultural reality and is disconnected from the organism of Korean culture because it has a cultural transcendent status which is the fear of changing the gospel itself. The Korean church is not independent from the frame of western culture imported by Christianity and has not understood the character inherent in Korean culture. This issue is related to the paradigm of church practice for transforming the social, cultural dimension. Therefore our task is to find a practical theology for the present and future Korean church.

#### 1.2.1 Practical theology as a critical theological operational science

Theologians proceed to examine a proper understanding of the practical nature of practical theology. Practical theologians such as Dingemans, G.D.J(1996:82), Firet, J(1986:4), Pieterse, H.J.C(1987:2, 1990:7, 1995:56), Van der Ven, J.A(1993:33, 1998: 29), and Heitink, G(1993:6), assert that practical theology is an academic discipline which is generally described as an empirical-analytical discipline and as a hermeneutical enterprise.

##### 1.2.1.1 Practical theology as a scientific discipline

Practical theology as a theological discipline makes use of social science research methods just as other theological disciplines do; exegesis uses linguistic research methods and church history uses historical methods (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:68). Practical theology is understood now as a theological science of action. It is the

primary task of investigation of Christian practice itself rather than the application of biblical data and statements of faith. J.A. van der Ven, who understands practical theology in this way, calls it “empirical theology”(1993:8). Empirical theology uses empirical methods and techniques to describe, analyse and evaluate directly theological terms and concepts. Empirical theology mainly addresses the outward appearances of human actions through questionnaires and quantitative methods. But an empirical approach does not pay sufficient attention to manifestations of thoughts, perceptions, interpretations, values, and assessments that lie behind these acts. These realities, such as religious reality, can be opened up in a more appropriate way within the framework of language (Habermas 1998:215). For this reason we seek support from hermeneutical approaches. Van der Ven, in his later works, put empirical research in practical theology within a hermeneutical framework. Hermeneutic work implies the decoding of the historical meaning of the text in question, from the text in its context. Gadamer believes that “any understanding or interpretation is in itself application” (Bernstein 1985:272). All interpretation of texts from the past is implicitly aimed at their application to the present.

H.J.C. Pieterse insists that “practical theology is the critical theory of gospel-oriented communicative acts” (1990: 223). In this discipline the key concept, communication, is a reciprocal relationship or encounter between God and human beings, between members of a congregation, as well as between them and society through the faith. A theory of communication is suitable for practical theology that has the ideal of guiding scientific work, as well as providing practical guidelines. Therefore, practical theology is a scientific discipline because it has its own field of study, develops its own practical theological theories and applies its own scientific methods.

#### 1.2.1.2 Practical theology and theory and praxis

The heart of the concept of practical theology is the theory-praxis relationship. Every practical action as a religious action is based on theory. The relationship of theory and praxis is then a bipolar tension that should neither totally separate nor identify them (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:31). In this relationship, the structure of practical theology indeed is in a vital dynamic process. These two dynamic concepts on the continuum are open to mutual criticism. Theory modified to be effective depends on their practical applicability and new theories need to be continually tested in practice. The results of that relationship can produce criteria for theory formation.

In this viewpoint, that relationship concretises practical theological theory for its transformation into ecclesiastic praxis or religious praxis. The focus of transformation is not only on people but also on society as a whole (Heitink 1993:119). Hence, transformation takes place within congregations and churches in the context of the praxis of society viewed as an intersubjective event. We need a close investigation of the concept of theory and praxis for this further study. This concept will be a foundation of a cultural theory for a Korean practical theology. It will be provided by doing research into hermeneutics and social theory.

#### 1.2.1.3 Practical theology as a theological operational science

Practical theology is a theological operational science (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:38). Because practical theology is concerned with praxis, that is people's religious actions which mediate God's coming to this world, it is concerned with the encounter between God and human beings. Especially, people's religious actions could be regarded as operations performed in operational fields which are also inseparably linked with religious praxis. For Firet, practical theology is directly translatable in terms of sciences with the help of which its fundamental insights are

derived or its experience to serve church praxis is gained (Fietz 1986:10). Focusing on praxis, Van der Ven (1998:29) considers that theology as a whole can be identified as a practical discipline. He identifies practical theology as an empirical theology.

#### 1.2.1.4 Practical theology and empirical methodology

Practical theology is concerned with people's religious praxis, that react to their experience of God by communicating it to others. Practical theology is mainly concerned with communicative actions to promote the gospel in people's life-world. Empirical methodology views the first step as the analysis of practice itself through the input of various kinds of social studies (sociology, psychology, cultural anthropology, historical approach, ideology criticism, and linguistic analysis). The practical theological methodology requires that theology itself becomes empirical in its description of the practice or analysis of the situation. It should have a critical awareness of the interests that are involved and of theological and social preference. Heyns and Pieterse assert that communicative actions in our time can only be studied by means of empirical methodology. Therefore practical theology seeks to fathom the factors, processes and structures that determine and facilitate communicative actions in present-day ecclesiastic and religious praxis (1990:69). This empirical methodology is thus a distinctive feature of all operational sciences and also of practical theology.

#### 1.2.1.5 Practical theology in Korea

Korean society has radically changed from an agricultural to an industrial society. After the 1960's, the Koreans' main task was to overcome poverty. This political and economical ideology to "make a good living" dominated all of Korean society.

Korean society has changed from a traditional consciousness to a new consciousness, therefore the Korean church has two kinds of churches; conservative, representing an orthodox theology (Yejang) and liberal / progressive, representing a liberal theology (Kijang). According to a survey by Kwon in 1995, the number of Christians who belonged to the four representative Presbyterian churches and other representative Protestant churches in Korea was as reported below (Kwon 1998:15). Roughly estimated, two-thirds of the total number of Christians in Korea belong to the Presbyterian churches, and most of the Presbyterian churches are conservative in outlook.

**Figure 1. Korean church denominations**

Denominations			Number of Christians
Presbyterian (Jesus Presbyterian Churches)  KiJang (Christ Presbyterian Churches)	Yejang	Hapdong	2,158,908
		Tonghap	2,103,295
		Koshin	373,498
		Hanshin	334,473
Methodist Episcopal			1,294,330
Assembly of God			1,266,569

From now on, this present researcher defines the trend of practical theology with reference to both the conservative and liberal churches. Park, Y.K insists that the Korean church was divided into denominations by means of their biblical perspective. “Scripture” was the norm most often appealed to by both sides for laying down operational guidelines.

a) The confessional approach

The group of conservative churches undoubtedly followed the theological line of Park Hyung-Ryong and Park Yun-Sun. H.R. Park as a systematic theologian, wrote a seven volume series which was based on Louis Berkhof's work along the lines of Calvinistic and Reformed theological tradition. Y.S. Park wrote a commentary on the 66 books of the Bible that is well known for his Calvinistic interpretation of the Bible. The mainline Protestant thought in Korea is still characterized by the theology of these two leaders of conservative churches. Their theological character is the use of the scriptural norm which is largely applied deductively to various contexts. Particularly in terms of their political viewpoint, conservative churches employ a principle of separation between government and church. In the scriptural norm, practical theology applied God's word to the church in the world (Chung 1980:27). This explains the focus on church ministry and church growth. Thus, practical theology as an applied theology defines that God's word applies to our concrete life-world (Chung 1980:307). As a methodology, this is not an inductive approach, but a deductive approach that was applied by the principle of the scriptural norm. S.H. Kim defined that criteria of practical theology in a pastoral context deal with technical support for church praxis (1995:48). Consequently, it cannot be denied that the mainline of conservative churches in Korea is still using a confessional approach such applied practical theology.

#### b) The contextual approach

Contrary to H.R. Park, Kim Jae-Joon was a representative of theological liberalism. He was educated at Princeton and Western theological Seminary from 1929 to 1932. J.J. Kim's theological views were already formed while he was in Japan, where theological liberalism was prevalent. As a result of the two theologians' acute theological confrontation, the Korean Presbyterian Church divided into two different camps in 1953. The reason why Kim is called the father of liberal theologians in

Korea is that he had an open mind to social dimensions in the gospel, and by extension, to the line of conservative-liberal confrontation in America. J.J. Kim confronts orthodox theology by supporting a current mainline theologian such as Barth and Brunner. J.J. Kim actively promotes social participation and Minjung theology, while on the other hand H.R. Park and the conservative church developed faith in personal salvation and the future life after death. J.J. Kim is to an extent the father of liberal theology and social participation or transformation by means of an existential approach. Some schools (Hanshin, Kamshin) who followed Kim's line of thought have been rapidly developing their thinking on social issues and Minjung theology.

However, this researcher defines practical theology by means of Minjung theology which represents a more active social participation by the church in current Korean society. "Minjung" is a Korean word. Its literal meaning is, "the mass of people." But Korean Minjung theologians define "Minjung" as follows: a) Minjung generally refers to the lower classes who are alienated socially, or who are exploited economically, or who are oppressed politically, and so on. b) Minjung is the subject of the history and the substance of the society. c) God takes the side of Minjung. d) The nation in which Minjung is the subject, is a nation of justice, equality, liberty, and peace (Chang 1993:60).

Therefore, we can state that practical theology as a Minjung theology aims toward a social transformation by means of a historical and political liberation in the concrete Korean political situation. It is a political and global theology rather than a church theology, a community liberation rather than a personal liberation, and a political and historical salvation rather than a spiritual and soul salvation. Minjung theology is a theological consequence resulting from of the historical production, of the Korean political situation.

### 1.2.2 Conclusion

This research is concerned with the question of how we can define human suffering. Human suffering, understood from a theoretical and practical perspective, rests on the presupposition of practical theology. The paradigm of practical theology directly affects this study. Accordingly our task must be to define a practical theology for a specific contextual situation.

The above indicates that the practical theology of the Korean church is broadly divided into two poles. In the dogmatic / confessional approach, practical theology focuses on only the study of the Bible, which is a source of knowledge and norm for the subject. In the contextual approach or Minjung theology, on the contrary, for practical theology the context plays a dominant role and it has the intention of changing a situation or society. These two poles are at opposite extremes where there is no communication or reciprocal relationship.

In the crisis of the Korean church's irrelevance to society, models of practical theology that favours the correlative approach is needed (Wolfaardt 1985:7). It is a critical, contextual theology of a transformative nature that works with a communicative theory of action based on a critical hermeneutical framework (Pieterse 1998:176). It approaches the concrete practical situation with a theological perspective and is empirically oriented. It can overcome the one-sidedness that develops the correlative relationship between churches and society toward an interactive practice.

### **1.3. Contextual hermeneutics**

This research examines the cultural dimension in a contextual hermeneutics of suffering. The issue of people suffering has been studied over the long term in philosophy and theology. As previously mentioned, Theodicy is the whole subject comprising the problem of evil and its attempted resolution. Theodicy is the theory of a sufferer's self-understanding through God's justification. But, theodicy as a theory or rational explanatory principle, does not offer a true perspective or comfort. In terms of hermeneutics, there is need of an understanding of the relation between text and context. This understanding refers not only to the meaning of the text but also requires a broader sense or context. However, the heart of this study is a contextual hermeneutics. We believe that a contextual hermeneutics concerns the sufferer's self-understanding.

So in this chapter we consider, how does one identify with suffering in a contextual situation? It is a hermeneutical problem that any interpretation takes place in a context where one must be prepared to revise both one's self-understanding and one's sense of responsibility to the world. We must reach the identity of the sufferer by means of understanding his/her lifeworld. In this research, lifeworld is described as understanding a people's language for daily communication, popular cultural myths as guides to their lives, and spirituality which is their relation to God. Hence, the researcher explores a paradigm of contextual hermeneutics for cultural identity. It is necessary to closely examine the hermeneutics of tradition and the critique of ideology and narrative identity. Jeanrond (1991:64-77) observes that Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur, along with Jurgen Habermas, are eminent philosophers who have reflected on hermeneutics in our time.

#### **1.3.1 The fusion of horizons as a contextual hermeneutics (Gadamer H-G)**

The present researcher believes that Gadamer's hermeneutics of tradition supports a theoretical foundation for contextual hermeneutics. It may be that Gadamer's understanding of historicity can also develop the cultural dimension of the Korean identity.

Hans-Georg Gadamer's major work "*Wahrheit und Methode*", English: *Truth and Method* (1975), appeared in 1960. Most importantly, Gadamer has made it abundantly clear that, to him, hermeneutics is not a method for understanding but an attempt "to clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place" (Gadamer 1975: 263). Among these conditions are, crucially, prejudices and fore-meanings in the mind of the interpreter. Understanding is always interpretation, and this means to use one's own preconceptions so that the meaning of the object can really be made to speak to us (Gadamer 1975: 358). Understanding is thus not a merely reproductive but a very productive process, and interpretations will always keep changing during the reception history of what is being understood.

One of the main problems Gadamer is faced with is how to distinguish 'true prejudices', by which we understand, from the 'false' ones, by which we misunderstand. He suggests as a solution that one should develop a 'historical' self-awareness which makes conscious one's own prejudices and allows one to isolate and evaluate an object on its own. Gadamer argues that these limits can be transcended through exposure to others' discourse and linguistically encoded cultural traditions because their horizons convey views and values that place one's own horizons in relief. For Gadamer, understanding is bound and embedded in history because understanding deploys the knower's effective history, personal experience and cultural traditions, to assimilate new experiences (1975:267). Thus, the initial structure of an effective history constrains the range of possible interpretations, excluding some possibilities and calling forth others.

Gadamer argues that the 'true' historical object is a relationship which comprises both the reality of history and the reality of historical understanding. An essential part of the 'hermeneutical situation' in which we find ourselves understanding is the 'horizon' which limits our very possibility of hermeneutical vision, or understanding. Gadamer denotes this boundedness to the contemporary hermeneutical situation by the much-quoted expression of the 'fusion of horizons':

"The projecting of the historical horizon, then, is only a phase in the process of understanding, and does not become solidified into the self-alienation of a past consciousness, but is overtaken by our own present horizon of understanding. In the process of understanding there takes place a real fusing of horizons, which means that as the historical horizon is projected, it is simultaneously removed." (Gadamer 1975: 273)

The prejudices and fore-meanings in the mind of the interpreter which make understanding possible, are not at the free disposal of the interpreter, but are linked to a 'horizon' and an 'effective history'.

'Understanding is not to be thought of so much as an action of one's subjectivity, but as the placing of oneself within a process of tradition, in which past and present are constantly fused.' (Gadamer 1975: 258)

Gadamer analyses human understanding by using the example of text-interpretation which employs the effective-historical consciousness of tradition (Jeanrond 1991:66). For Gadamer the aim of hermeneutical understanding is to open ourselves to what texts and tradition say to us, to open ourselves to their meaning and the claim to truth that they make upon us. The structure of this effective-historical consciousness is language. The give and take of understanding of a text occurs in the medium of language. But the medium of language is not so different from the matrix of conversation in which the speakers exist. Language is the middle ground in which understanding and agreement concerning the object take place between two people.

The true essence of language appears in the process of communication. For Gadamer, language is the primary place for disclosure of truth.

The fundamental structures of our linguistic understanding are not entirely independent of the "text" we are attempting to understand, and, being historically and culturally constituted, our understanding is not just an act of our subjectivity, but is more like an ingression or intrusion into the process of tradition in which the past and present are continuously mediated. And this matrix, i.e. tradition or community of understanding and mutuality, is itself in constant formation and transformation. We cannot anticipate finality to any understanding, but hold up this *telos* as an ideal, or vice versa (Gadamer 1975:99-102).

The walls of a traditional framework need not keep the world closed off from hermeneutical access, in understanding and in reflection. This is what Gadamer calls "the happening of tradition" which admits to a kind of hermeneutic self-reflection on the part of language in dialogue with (the authority) of tradition. And here one will notice that the horizons of language and tradition are seen to converge, the world of the reader and the world of the text merge into one another.

For adequate understanding and self-understanding, the embeddedness of a tradition of textual representation in presuppositions, pre-judgments and prejudices, is what actually enables and is constitutive of understanding. Prejudices are made transparent for what they are, and their limitations are thereby undermined. That prejudice is a suspicion in Ricoeur and a critique of ideology in Habermas.

Another important condition in which understanding takes place is temporal distance. For Gadamer, past and present are firmly connected and the past is not something that has to be painfully regained in each present:

‘Time is no longer primarily a gulf to be bridged, because it separates, but it is

actually the supportive ground of process in which the present is rooted. Hence temporal distance is not something that must be overcome. This was, rather, the naive assumption of historicism, namely that we must set ourselves within the spirit of the age, and think with its ideas and its thoughts, not with our own, and thus advance towards historical objectivity. In fact the important thing is to recognise the distance in time as a positive and productive possibility of understanding. It is not a yawning abyss, but is filled with the continuity of custom and tradition, in the light of which all that is handed down presents itself to us.' (Gadamer 1975: 264f.)

Meanwhile, according to Gadamer, hermeneutics requires a distinction between three elements of the interpretive process: understanding, interpretation and application (1975:274). An application is also a new interpretation, a new construction of the tradition. Gadamer claims that philosophical hermeneutics holds that all understanding involves not only interpretation, but also application (1975:274). This is an elucidating of the sense in which all understanding involves application. Such application is an integral part of the hermeneutical act as an understanding and interpretation. The task of hermeneutics is then not simply to produce what is said by an act of translating, but to express what is said in a real situation.

Gadamer does not deny the importance of either scientific understanding or critical interpretation, a form of interpretation that introspectively questions assumptions unreflectively inherited from cultural traditions. His focus on the human context of knowledge emphasizes the need for repeated attempts at critical understanding, through which people can gain the insight needed to correct their prejudices.

### 1.3.2 Communicative action as a contextual hermeneutics (Habermas, J)

In the *Theory of Communicative Action*(1984, 1987), Habermas claims that this theory fundamentally rests on a distinction between two concepts of rationality that

shape knowledge so as to guide action (Habermas 1984:8-22, 168-85). These two concepts of rationality are cognitive instrumental rationality and communicative rationality. On the one hand, cognitive instrumental rationality conducts action that aims at the successful realization of privately defined goals. On the other hand, communicative rationality underlies action that is aimed at mutual understanding, conceived as a process of reaching agreement between speaking subjects in order to harmonize their interpretations of the world. Habermas maintains that communicative action is expressed only through language, under conditions of rational argumentation, that social actors can coordinate their actions in terms of an orientation to mutual understanding.

A broader sense of an understanding of meaning is made possible by linguistic communication. He insists that the *telos* of understanding intrinsic to language can be fulfilled only through a consensus. Habermas seeks a continuation of the modernist project through an analysis of the emancipatory potential of communicative speech. For him, epistemology is concerned with the relationship between language and reality, while hermeneutics deals simultaneously with the relationship between an expression of a speaker's intention, and the interpersonal relationship between speaker and hearer, and an expression about something in the world (Habermas 1990:24). Speakers and hearers come to an understanding, from out of their common lifeworld, about something in the objective, social, or subjective worlds. Viewed from this perspective, language serves three functions:

“(a) that of reproducing culture and keeping tradition alive (this is the perspective from which Gadamer develops his philosophical hermeneutics), (b) that of social integration or the coordination of the plans of different actors in social interaction (my theory of communicative action was developed from this perspective), and (c) that of socialization or the cultural interpretation of needs (this was the perspective from which G. H. Mead developed his social

developed his social psychology)” (Habermas 1990:25).

Habermas’ linguistic paradigm maintains that communicative, as opposed to instrumental or strategic, forms of language use are primary and somehow emancipatory. Hence, Habermas’s philosophy of language is articulated as a theory of rationality with which he then engages the questions of emancipation presented by theories of rationalization and rationality at the level of language.

On the basis of this theory of argumentation, Habermas develops the two-level approach of lifeworld and system (Habermas 1987:119-52). The lifeworld offers the commonly accepted background knowledge within which action can be coordinated. Habermas’s concept of the lifeworld comprises three structural components corresponding to these functions: culture, society and personality.

At the level of culture, cultural reproduction relates to the transmission of interpretation schemes consensually shared by the members of a lifeworld. Community rests, to be sure, on consensual knowledge, on a cultural stock of knowledge that members share (Habermas 1987:131). Thus our understanding is dependent upon and changes along with a cultural stock of knowledge that can be used in defining situations and can be exposed to tests in communicative action.

At the level of social interaction, social integration refers to the legitimate ordering of interpersonal relations through the coordination of actions via intersubjectively shared norms. He claims that the rational condition or norms can be grounded by people in the context of their lifeworlds. Only those norms can claim to be valid that meet with the approval of all affected in their capacity as participants in a practical discourse (Habermas 1990:66). Therefore, normative validity claims play a part in the communicative practice of everyday life.

Finally, at the level of personality, socialization processes seek to ensure that personalities with interactive capabilities are formed. In the communicative practice of everyday life, persons not only encounter one another in the attitude of participants but also give narrative presentations of events that take place in the context of their lifeworld (Habermas 1987:136). Narrative practice services that mutual understanding among members who are trying to coordinate their common tasks and has a function in the self-understanding of the person. The socialization processes are increasingly detached from the content of cultural knowledge with which they were integrated in concrete thinking (Habermas 1987:146).

Therefore, communicative action takes place within the horizon-forming contexts of culture, society and personality (Habermas 1987:137). They act as resources of possibilities from which participants in communicative action can transmit and renew cultural knowledge, establish solidarity and build social identity.

**Figure 2. Habermas' Three Domains of Knowledge**

<b>Type of Human interest</b>	<b>Kind of knowledge</b>	<b>Research methods</b>
Technical (prediction)	<b>Instrumental</b> (causal explanation)	Positivistic sciences (empirical analytic methods)
Practical (interpretation and understanding)	<b>Practical</b> (understanding)	Interpretive research (hermeneutic methods)
Emancipatory (criticism and liberation)	<b>Emancipation</b> (reflection)	Critical social sciences (critical theory methods)

(Roest 1998:42)

The scheme in figure 2 illustrates those three domains of knowledge. According to Habermas, work broadly refers to the way one controls and manipulates one's environment. This is commonly known as instrumental action; knowledge is based upon empirical investigation and governed by technical rules (Habermas 1979:148).

The criterion of effective control of reality directs what is or is not appropriate action. The empirical-analytic sciences using hypothetical-deductive theories characterize this domain. Much of what we consider the scientific research domain is classified by Habermas as belonging to the domain of work. The object domains of the empirical-analytic and of the hermeneutic sciences are based on these objectifications of reality, which we undertake daily, always from the viewpoint of intersubjective communication.

Habermas sees that the Practical domain is identified with human social interaction or communicative action (1987: 121-127). Social knowledge is governed by binding consensual norms, which define reciprocal expectations about behaviour between individuals. Social norms can be related to empirical or analytical propositions, but their validity is grounded only in the intersubjectivity of the mutual understanding of intentions (Habermas 1990:141). The criterion of clarification of conditions for communication and intersubjectivity as the understanding of meaning rather than causality, is used to determine what is appropriate action (Habermas 1990:58). Many of the historical-hermeneutic disciplines -- descriptive social science, history, aesthetics, legal, ethnographic, literary and so forth -- are classified by Habermas as belonging to the domain of the Practical.

The Emancipator domain identifies self-knowledge or self-reflection (Dews 1999:57-8, Habermas 1971:15). This involves an interest in the way one's history and biography has expressed itself in the way one sees oneself, one's roles and social expectations. Emancipation is from libidinal, institutional or environmental forces which limit our options and rational control over our lives, but have been taken for granted as beyond human control. Insights gained through critical self-awareness are emancipatory in the sense that at least one can recognize the correct reasons for his or her problems. Knowledge is gained by self-emancipation through reflection

leading to a transformed consciousness or perspective transformation. Examples of critical sciences include feminist theory, psychoanalysis and the critique of ideology, according to Habermas.

Consequently, we can specify the functions that communicative action takes on in the reproduction of the lifeworld as; cultural reproduction, social integration, and socialization with one another. The reproduction of lifeworld is saddled upon the interpretative accomplishments of the actors themselves through processes of their mutual understanding. We can attribute them to the medium of language, through which the structures of the lifeworld are reproduced. Such a lifeworld would gain by empirically motivated attitudes and rationally motivated attitudes. Because actions are socially coordinated via communication, communicative action is based on such assumptions rationality. The lifeworld provides the symbolic horizon in the light of which specific issues concerning the cultural, social or subjective world can be addressed. Accordingly the lifeworld is supposed to designate the cultural space wherein socio-historical interpretative schemes are located.

### 3.3 Narrative identity as a contextual hermeneutics (Ricoeur, P.) ♦

Ricoeur's view of hermeneutics grew from his philosophical quest for human freedom and human nature. In this quest, Ricoeur provides us with a perceptive analysis of narrative that led to his magisterial book '*Time and Narrative*' (1984, 1985, 1988). According to Ricoeur, narrative is the most central level of discourse that structures human identity. Who are we? What is the nature of our identity? These are questions originally posed by narrative theory, but which now stand as prime issues within this research.

For Ricoeur, the study of narrative concatenates throughout the humanities and the

philosophy, and the problems raised by such analyses for our conception of history, along with the historical consciousness of the individual, are profound. The initial focus, then, is on narrative as a linguistic phenomenon which typically embraces spoken or written text. For purposes of the present analysis we shall consign narrative to the domain of discourse. In this sense, narrative accounting in the present era gains its character from long-standing traditions of story telling, oral history, accounts of personal memory, and a variety of literary genres.

There have been many attempts to identify the characteristics of the well-formed narrative. Narrative approaches to the study of identity and self focus upon questions such as: Do individuals comprise one or more selves? Under what circumstances do people change? How do people come to self-knowledge? Can we, in fact, know who we are? To what extent do people adapt their personal stories to conform to culturally-derived types of personality? How is culture integrated into or constitutive of an individual's self?

We must first consider that narrative identity is to carry out the dialectic of sameness and selfhood (1992:140). Sameness (*idem*) refers to those aspects of identity that are defined by objective criteria that can be replicated. Selfhood (*ipse*) refers to responses of a more existential nature that have developmental connotations. Both terms, however, overlap with reference to notions of permanence in time. Understood in dialectic terms, identity can be defined as discordant concordance, characteristic of all narrative composition, by the notion of the synthesis of the heterogeneous (1992:141).

However, we also find that certain forms of narrative are broadly shared within any culture. Identity is established through an interpretation of who acts in the narrative. Ricoeur has claimed that the identity of a community is constituted in a manner

similar to that of an individual (1988:247). The identity of a community is drawn from the history of culture, just as that of an individual is drawn from the sphere of the most thorough going individual subjectivity. Now we might extend this to the collective level by saying that in social interaction we recognize our stories in the stories of others. Thus, we can comprehend the notion of collective identity by building upon the concept of belonging. In belonging, my identity as actor and sufferer becomes my identity in relation to particular social others or given social conditions.

As Ricoeur points out, such socialization is possible because narrative discourse is a form of thinking and speaking that is pre-given through cultural tradition (1981:287). The presence of a culture of narration was evident in the accounts of the members of any group. This provides the basis for conventions of discourse so that stories and histories are fundamentally communicable. That is, the languages of description do not reflect or mirror what is the case, rather the languages function to indicate a state of affairs for all practical purposes within a given community. Thus, language is typically treated as representational as capable of verisimilitude with respect to its relation to the world (Ricoeur 1988:152-153). His view has virtually succumbed in recent years to a spate of criticisms from all branches of the humanities and social sciences. Such work has obvious relevance to the possibility of narratives as conveyances for truth.

Ricoeur extends the sociological concepts of action by reminding us that the other side of action is suffering (1989:96-7). Because narrative is that form of discourse that represents human action in relation to given problematic situations, narrative discourse thus provides the communicative basis for connecting agency with identity. Narrative provides identity to one as an actor, and as a sufferer, in these terms. Therefore, we must necessarily view narrative as discourse, in terms of its social

functions.

It is important, however, to underscore the extent to which narratives function both to reflect and to create cultural values. Value is placed on certain goals, certain individuals, and particular modes of description. The culture's ontology and sense of values is affirmed and sustained.

Consequently, for Ricoeur, human reality has narrative features. There are significant ways in which identity is fashioned through narrative. This identity is first of all a discursive achievement. To be identified as a person, to be the object of various attributes, and to be self-referential is to be realized in language. Self-referential identity is something beyond discourse, but what there is makes its way into the practices of cultural life largely through linguistic interpretation. One can observe that individuals play out their lives within culturally specific forms of narrative. Narrative structures serve as major resources available to persons in detailing their lives to others. Therefore personal identity is socially designated and is to participate in a cultural tradition and to be lodged within the realm of relations.

#### **4 Theological reflection on contextual hermeneutics**

We are concerned with the problem of suffering with the sufferer's self-understanding in a concrete situation and in his or her lifeworld rather than as a theory or rational explanatory principle. This can be wide, made possible through a contextual hermeneutics. Without understanding of the contextual situation, finding meaning in suffering is merely theoretically explanatory within a logical system. So the hermeneutic process starts in the existential situation of people.

In the above, according to Gadamer and Ricoeur, understanding is given a communicative and dialogical character through language, in the ongoing human dialogue with tradition and contemporary experience and culture. In addition to this, in terms of Gadamer, the fusion horizon which forms the contexts of culture, society and personality is integrated with a historical consciousness. Hermeneutic self-reflection through a historical consciousness recognizes one's prejudice and fore-meaning in historical tradition. Therefore, one's self-reflection or self-understanding is the placing of oneself within a process of tradition in which there is the fusion horizon.

Meanwhile, Habermas has brought a critical element into hermeneutics that has a practical intent and is governed by an emancipatory cognitive interest. It is true that our understanding is dependent upon a cultural stock of knowledge that is exposed in communicative action. Understanding occurs not only through communicative practice conceived as a process of reaching agreement, but narrative practice is also a function in the self-understanding of the person. In a linguistic paradigm, one can have a self-knowledge or self-reflection that is gained by self-emancipation.

In the field of theology, hermeneutics should help to clarify our human condition and our mode of approaching the living tradition of faith in God. It also takes the biblical message seriously, but theologises critically as well, in terms of praxis, if we are aware that practical theology is based on the new hermeneutical paradigm. A contextual hermeneutic seeks not only to shape a knowledge which describes our reality but also to build a communication with God. That is to say, it works with a critical correlation between contemporary, contextual religious experience and the Christian tradition. A contextual hermeneutic also performs in different communities, times and linguistic and cultural contexts.

However, one's self-emancipation by means of a narrative identity is by way of narrative. That is why story-telling is an important aspect of life, because a person's life should be seen as a continuous process of interpreting and ordering the world in images or stories. The experiences and events of our lives and world do not have a narrative structure, but as soon as experience is put into order, fragments of life are structured into a meaningful framework of interpretations. In this way, it is possible that certain events can be interpreted and given a place in a narrative system. In this process of interpreting, every individual develops a narrative identity (Ricoeur 1992:140-61).

This research is not an individual approach, because the Korean context has a relational structure that may be termed collectivism. For every individual there is a range of relationships within the personal, social, cultural and spiritual context. In this view, the personal narrative of one touches the narratives of others. This interpretational process requires a multi-dimensional fusion horizon, formed act of personal, social, cultural and spiritual dimensions.

Employing contextual hermeneutics, we can create a narrative identity within Korean collectivism. This model is a fundamental frame of research that is addressing the problem of suffering. Crisis situations are the turning points where the story-line of the personal narrative has to be changed in order to arrive at meaningful interpretation. New meaning and interpretations are at these points being sought and incorporated within the personal narrative. More than this, we do not have just a personal narrative, we have a narrative identity. The personal narrative is connected to the social and religious narratives that are significant to the individual.

After deciding on an empirical-hermeneutical approach in practical theology, the next question to be asked is what methods and strategies are most appropriate for

effective application.

The first step is to take our own situation and experience its reality existentially. In the case of Koreans, they experience their own socio-cultural situation and present it in their own language. Using the methodology of empirical theology can aid this. The interpretation and description of personhood is usually dominated by Western psychological concepts, but for Koreans personhood can be understood as a collective representation through language, cultural myth, and spirituality. It should be kept in mind that this collective representation is typically under-determined by the empirical data as it is studied later in this thesis.

The second step is to evaluate cultural notions critically, with what is termed ideological suspicion, on the basis of a Korean's self-understanding. In terms of this, knowledge of God and personal identity is the outcome of experiencing oneself, others, and God in terms of one's concrete, social, and historical existence, because this relationship must be an actual experience that is contained in the story or narrative of that event. This experience of God and the other occurs in the existential actuality of life as suffering. The process of interpreting culture involves defining a narrative identity that produces myths, customs and values.

The third step is to approach the biblical narrative, because this narrative also guides a person's actions in his or her lifeworld. How can a person's life stories and dogmatic religious traditions that affirm them be brought into the narrative process? I sense a lack of clarity as to how the functional truths of the Christian faith contained in Scripture and tradition are actually communicated in the Korean pastoral situation. According to Ricoeur, he suggests a hermeneutical circle of narrative that analyses the change or transition of spoken language to written language and the further transition to the interpretation of the text (Ricoeur 1984:76-77). Human reality has a narrative figure which is characterized by action.

Every text is preceded by prefiguration. It is the encounter between a text and its readers. When we find a story in a text, it derives from reality in which the action occurs that provides narrative material. The world of action provides the material for the creation of a text, which Ricoeur calls configuration. That story is actualised by being read. Finally, when people read the story, refiguration occurs. They perform a reading act and shape their own story through their reading of the text.

The present research will follow a qualitative approach. In the course of research, some quantitative aspects will also appear. In this study a major working problem is the identity of the personality in the midst of suffering. First of all this study requires an exploration of the cultural character in the Korean context. It makes it clear that the issue of suffering will come from the cultural situation. Some concept of collective representation will be present in the cultural identity. The heart of this thesis is the concept of Korean suffering. It is a necessary empirical test of this hypothesis. Finally, this study will build a theory or model for a Korean contextual hermeneutic of suffering.

## **Chapter 2. Cultural identity and Korean studies**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Koreans have 5000 years of historical tradition that has a unique and rich cultural heritage. I believe that the Korean cultural heritage still influences current society in its social organization and form of narrative. Accumulation of cultural tradition continually takes over the present society by means of customs, myths, religion and arts. This culture is closely connected to personal identity within the cultural identity. Thus, the present researcher is interested in indigenous definitions of culture and reconstitution of the theoretical category of culture for cultural identity. We investigate the historical origins of what are now often considered the traditional cultural identity of the Korean people. This has brought us to the heart of the question of public or social representations and identity formation.

According to Gadamer as discussed in chapter 1, any historical production is immanent to a particular cultural tradition. Understanding of the Korean, as an indicated term of Gadamer's hermeneutics, is best done from the Korean's historical consciousness. It comes from their immanent historical consciousness such as prejudices, fore-meaning and preconceptions within the cultural tradition. Gadamer's hermeneutics develop that historical consciousness in reproducing culture and keeping tradition alive. Habermas investigates cultural production as changing along with the cultural stock of knowledge in the daily lifeworld. Our current culture is connected to knowledge of traditional culture. Hence culture composes a fusion horizon of many-dimensions. The Christian faith or lifestyle also exists in that cultural horizon.

However, the Korean Christianity neglects cultural aspects because they want to

sustain the genuine gospel. Most churches are only concerned with a personal, spiritual and soul salvation, not a social, political and economical liberation or transformation. In this study, we try to connect church and society by the use of indigenous perspectives, which will overcome the dichotomy which is dividing Christian life and social life. We are aiming for a more dynamic communication between churches and society.

Regarding the historical development of Korean cultural traditions, we inevitably have to explore the Korean cultural character through the current social reality. In defining social reality, it has been explored by 'social representation' in terms of Durkheim or 'public spheres' in terms of Habermas. These two concepts have provided sites of cultural production and identity formation. According to Moscovici, social reality must transform to a kind of representation within society of images, ideas, and languages that make communication and action feasible (Moscovici 1984: 962-67), because we cannot directly recognize the social reality by information, but only in its meaning system or symbols. Social representations generally come into being during transformations of this kind of customs, myths, ideas, and languages. In the process of transformation, words or ideas endow representation with a kind of reality.

We are confronted with a great variety of specialized knowledge on the part of the group to which Koreans belong. The Korean issue examines, then, the social-cultural framework in his or her own language and ideas. This is connected to Korean studies which explore collective representations and build some concepts which can reflect a social reality. Thus, we will examine the characteristics of culture to reflect human nature by means of social representation. For this, our task is to present a social representation that is a bottom-up approach using data collection. It is a way of creating a conceptual framework of daily life, and it is also concerned with the social

world which is interpreted, understood, experienced or produced.

Korean studies have described some Korean concepts in the Korean collective representation, such as Cheong, Woori, Che-Myon, and Noon-Chi. These concepts are investigated by means of qualitative research, which has designed a grounded theory. These concepts can then reflect the Korean personal character, and also develop a conceptual frame for this communication model.

Essentially, this study explores a communication model for the Korean churches, which is possible through a cultural integration into the current of Korean culture. Communication occurs as a dialogue with the encounter between God and human beings, churches and world. For a more effective communication, we should not only have knowledge of God and church, but also of the Korean personality and cultural character.

This study necessarily explores an indigenous socio-cultural perspective to identify the problem of suffering. Suffering occurs from social interrelationships and arises in a specific historical community. The approach to suffering is through the socio-cultural situation rather than via grand theory or dogmatic ideas. Suffering is not a single problem, simply one aspect, but an interweaving between personal, social, cultural and spiritual/ religious aspects. Therefore we will aim to define the cultural character that is immanent within the lifeworld.

Consequently, the aims of this chapter are to develop indigenous cultural concepts through their social representation in the lifeworld and to discuss the application of cultural identity by means of the construction of Korean personality.

## 2.2 Cultural identity

We suppose that Korean counselling is a more culturally viable approach than Western psychological concepts such as the self or identity. Korean pastoral counselling is also strongly influenced by psychological concepts, which adopted the individual as basic unit of analysis, affirming the individualistic bias. But especially Non-Western thought has come to realize that there is no real, deep understanding of the concepts and theories which Western psychology proposed. We have also realized that many of the Western concepts and theories, e.g. self, identity crisis, jealousy, cognitive dissonance, ego, etc., were ill-fitted to the Koreans' psychological daily experiences. We need to construct the Korean self-understanding in their daily lifeworld, worldview, and language.

Our first question is 'How to define personhood?' The present researcher presupposes that the notion of the person refers to general cultural ideas, customs, myths, and beliefs, and then that the Western notion of the person differs fundamentally from that of the Orient. The self or identity constructed by western social-cultural frames fused cultural traditions, ideology, worldview and the emotional system. The Oriental personality is also governed by the contextual requirement dictated by its culture. Therefore, this researcher presuppose that the notion of the person determines the context of socio-cultural premises, which is an indispensable part of the Koreans' very existence. It is the community, and its social-cultural conditions, that define the legitimate social reality.

From this perspective, the notion of the person is generated by a cultural artifact rather than natural object. The precise meaning of 'apple' necessarily requires information on contextual conditions in which the people are engaged in a certain form of cultural character. Harre states that individual minds are social rather than

natural products determined by cognitive attributes (Harre 1984: 927). This indicates the influence of social situations on the minds of individual human actors. Moscovici believes that cultural experiences are specific phenomenal experiences which are related to a particular mode of understanding and of communicating (Moscovici 1984: 19). One cannot understand a person without possessing some historical background of their cultural traditions. Therefore, the main kind of cognitive entity is assigned to social representation.

Some psychologists (Choi 2000, Kim & Berry 1993, Triandis 1995, Kim, Triandis, Kagitcibasi, Choi, Yoon 1994) insist on a shift from the natural sciences paradigm to a cultural sciences orientation in psychology. They point to the limitations of the individualistic approach by experimental method and have pointed out that thinking is heavily conditioned by language, customs and myths, which are the primary areas for socio-cultural influences in psychology. Characteristic of social reality is then a cultural system historically elaborated and regulated by historically defined norms of judgment (Geertz 1983:78). They also criticize the cognitive reductionism in the natural sciences paradigm.

Secondly, we now ask the questions: 'How is a discourse system related to cultural identity at all?' and 'What does it mean to possess and employ the discourse systems of cultural identity?'

Social representations have communication and action as their main functions. Human beings generate representations by a process of communicating with and acting upon others or the world. Communicative action is first represented before it can be understood or become effective. We are then coming closer to linking representations and communication. The term 'representation' should be reserved for a special category of knowledge and beliefs, namely, those that arise in ordinary

communication and whose structure corresponds to this form of communication (Moscovici 1984: 952). It is not formulating a description of observed facts, but turning its knowledge to the defence of a belief which one has learnt, not directly from nature. This representation is not the outcome of long accumulated results of science and philosophy, but the level of ontological reconstitution of identities and cultures.

Because social representations occur in the lifeworld, it means that scientific information must be treated as an indigenous one or in cultures, because everyday knowledge is socially regulated. Social representations inform the construction of social reality as shown by the daily lifeworld of phenomena. Its underpinnings are found in language, collective values, morals, customs, as well as religious and social conceptions of humankind that are specific to a given social group or cultural entity. It bears the marks of social communication by which it is spread. It has social functions such as verbal and behavioural interaction with others and the mastering of social and personal life. It is linked to the elaboration and expression of social identity and membership, and it depends on group links.

This claim and its implications have a twofold consequence for this study. First, it is necessary to take into account the social content as well as the context of this kind of knowledge, which is practical and deeply rooted in social life. Second, this claim also necessitates a conceptual framework for coping with aspects related to the construction, circulation, and use of the everyday lifeworld. Such a model is proposed by the *Social representations* (Farr & Moscovici 1984) approach. This approach allows us to study different indigenous social systems from the perspective of a common framework. In this view, we explore the indigenous cultural concepts through their social representation in a lifeworld.

### 2.2.1 Social representations

Social scientists use representations of social reality to explain who they are and what they are doing. There are traditional questions about knowing and telling in science, but such scientists go beyond them to include problems more traditionally associated with the art and with the analysis of everyday life. People in a variety of scholarly disciplines and artistic fields think they know something about society worth telling to others, and they use a variety of forms, media, and means to communicate their ideas and findings. Members of more differentiated worlds share some basic knowledge, despite the differences in their actual work. Our understanding depends on what gets made, communicated, and understood, which vary among some typical settings.

The form and content of representations vary because social organization shapes not only what is made, but also what people want the representation to do, and what standards they will use to judge it. Any representation of social reality, then, is necessarily partial. Therefore, we note that collective representation is the mode of the present research.

We are supposing that cultural forms should be considered as unique universes of discourse (Geertz 1973: 12). Culture is creating new linguistic, artistic, and religious symbols in an uninterrupted stream. In sociology, the notion of 'person' comes from a cultural artifact rather than natural products. The understanding of the nature of knowledge involves the imposition of a formal and synthetic unity upon the manifold phenomena supplied by perception. It means that the understanding of knowledge requires an analysis of the form of knowledge itself. The forms of thought cannot be derived from objects; the most general forms of thought are based upon normative structures that exist *a priori* to experience. Such an understanding should analyse the way in which the objective world as expressed in the sciences, arts, myths, languages,

is conditioned by the application of various symbolic forms.

Thus, phenomenologists emphasize the priority of meaning structures to the objects of experience. The objects of experience become real only when they are meaning structured, in a mental act. Durkheim made social facts the basis of sociology, so that the change to representations had mental constructs as its basis (Pickering 2000: 2). He attempts to derive a sociological theory of knowledge from a conception of collective consciousness or collective representations (Thompson 1984:96). Durkheim's concept of society holds that society is an objective reality which determines, but is determined only by, its own being. One attempts to understand the orientation and the building of representations and beliefs in which art, myth, and religion have their being. The symbolic form of myths, art, and religion are characterized by fusion of the representation that is as valid a form of expression as the symbolic form of commonsense language, or of science.

Hence, we need an understanding of the human phenomenon in his or her socio-cultural environment as well as of the individual character. This is because the individual, whose thinking is anchored in social representations, partakes of cultural traditions. Social phenomena are no longer accounted for in terms of the properties of individual actors when interacting individuals constitute a reality. The determining cause of a social fact should be sought among the social facts preceding it and not among the states of the individual consciousness. Therefore, we are required to explore the various aspects of social life. We cannot avoid a sociological perspective in examining the notion of a person.

Human societies have different ways of living in customs and practices. Modern differences in culture are offered in explanation of the perceptible fact in reality that peoples of the world differ from one another in their ways of life. Culture refers to

the whole social practice of meaningful action, and more specially to the meaning dimension of such action – the beliefs, values, and orienting symbols that suffuse a whole way of life.

Thus, the anthropological notion of culture can be profitably employed in theology. As it does in other theological disciplines of the academy, an anthropological notion of culture sets new questions and directions for theological research. Such a notion has connected how we understand such topics as the nature of Christian identity and communal traditions, i.e. the relation between social practice on the one hand, and Christian beliefs and symbols on the other hand.

Accordingly, our task is to discuss ways of knowing the characteristics of social reality, which occur in everyday life during interpersonal communications. Knowledge is no longer seen as the imprint of the data of the external world upon a passive subject but rather as the product of an active consciousness. The form of consciousness cannot be derived from the direct object of experience. The perception of succession has to be the product of a mental act on the part of the subject of perception. Thus, it is indispensable that a distinction be made between the social representations and social facts. We will investigate the concept of social representation here.

### 2.2.2 Emile Durkheim

Durkheim contributes a truly scientific mentality to the study of human nature. He holds that science bestows autonomy and it imparts the way to recognize the nature of things and to understand them (Pickering 2000: 11). Durkheim expounded a rigorous application of systemic logic and empirical evidence toward understanding human phenomena. It means that collective representations are by definition social,

and therefore observable and empirical. The main thrust of Durkheim's overall doctrine is his insistence that the study of society must eschew reductionism and consider social phenomena *sui generis*. Durkheim focused attention on the social-structural determinants of the human being's social problems. He saw that social facts are objective realities. Social phenomena are 'social facts' and these are the subject matter of sociology. A social fact can hence be defined as 'every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint' (Durkheim 1938: 3). For him, social fact is to be recognized by the power of the external coercion which it exercises over the individual.

Durkheim sees representations performing in the pursuit of knowledge. He holds that the world cannot be known as a thing-in-itself but only through representation (Pickering 2000: 3). He had basic ideas about society as a system of representations and about sociology as ultimately a scientific study of representations. Because representations exist in the minds of individuals, though they may not be consciously realized as such, he therefore assumes that knowledge can only be established through representations. In concrete terms, they exist and live in us in the form of the representation expressing them. Durkheim attempted a sociological explanation of all fundamental categories of human thought; one, categories as principles of reason which may be universal; two, concrete representations of categories which may be culturally variable.

In *The Division of Labour* (1933), he was mainly concerned with the relationship between the individual personality and social solidarity. He was concerned with the social implications of increased specialization. As specialization increases, Durkheim argued, people are increasingly separated, values and interests become different, norms are varied, and subcultures (both work-related and socially-related) are formed. He recognized that, in reality, the division of labour gave rise to a

distinct type of social order, or solidarity: *organic solidarity*. Organic solidarity is a social order built on the interdependence of people in society (Thompson 1985: 47). Because people are forced to perform distinct, separate, and specialized tasks, they come to rely on others for their very survival. He made great use of the concept of the 'collective conscience' that is those ideas, norms, and social expectations held as important in the minds of all members of a society (Lukes 1985: 5). It is a group of principles *sui generis*, within which representations and acts of volition involving the collectivity are worked out, although they are not the product of the collectivity (Thompson 1982: 153). In short, since the division of labour becomes the chief source of social solidarity, it becomes, at the same time, the foundation of the moral order (1933, p. 400-401).

In *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1915), Durkheim concludes that religion is something eminently social and is rich in social elements. He would argue that collective representations originated in religion, with its fundamental notions of gods and spirits (Pickering 2000: 14). For him it is clear that religion should be an eminently collective thing. Religious representations are collective representations which express collective realities, and in reality are taken from social life (Thompson 1985:118-9). His more immediate goal was to investigate the origins and functions of religious representations. Durkheim set out to do two things, establish his theory that religion was not divinely or supernaturally inspired and was in fact a product of society, and he sought to identify the common things that religion placed an emphasis upon, as well as what effects those religious beliefs had on the lives of all within a society.

Religion provided a meaning to life, it provided authority figures, and most importantly for Durkheim, it reinforced the morals and social norms held collectively by all within a society. Religion provides social control, cohesion, and purpose for

people, as well as another means of communication and gathering for individuals to interact and reaffirm social norms. He demonstrated that collective representations transcend and constrain the particular thoughts of individuals.

In summary, it is obvious that the concept of social representations has come to us from Durkheim. Durkheim was concerned with the characteristics of groups and structures rather than with individual attributes. Collective representations come into existence through fusion or synthesis of individual representations. Just as important is the fact that collective representations are a means of expressing the feelings of individuals by symbolizing them externally to the person. Through such means people communicate with one another and so create a sense of unity with one another. Thus, he states that essentially social life is made up of representations. His sociology theory examines the social origin and the social reference, as well as the social functions, of the forms of cognitive thought. Accordingly, the concept of collective representations is socially generated and it refers to, and is in some sense, about society. Collective representations also have an existence external to the individuals who embrace them. The social representations are ways of knowing the characteristics of the social reality, of which the language and ideas are social in origin and related to the collective representations.

### 2.2.3 Theory and method in social representations

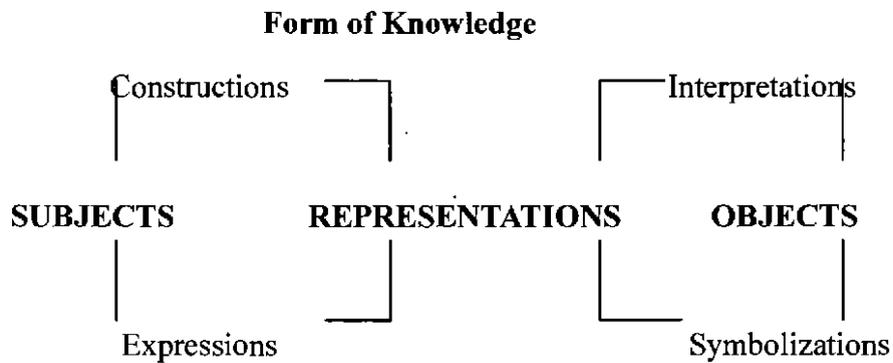
#### 2.2.3.1 Definition of social representations

According to Moscovici, 'social representations should be seen as a specific way of understanding, and communicating, what we know already' (Moscovici 1984: 17). Social representations are forms of social thinking used to communicate, understand, and master the social, material, and intellectual environment. As such, they are

analysed as products and processes of mental activity that are socially marked. He proposed two modes of a special category of knowledge and beliefs, namely those arising in ordinary communication, and the heterogeneity of intellectual forms such as science, religion, and myth. Thus, social representations constitute collective systems of meaning which may be expressed, or whose effects may be observed, in values, ideas, and practices.

Jodelet clearly illustrates the whole picture of representations (Jodelet 1993: 185).

**Figure 3. The sphere of social representations**



This form of knowledge is construed in the course of social interaction and communication. It operates as a system of interpretation of reality, serving as a guideline in our relation to the surrounding world. Thus it orients and organizes our behaviour and communication.

The representation is a practical form of knowledge, linking a subject to an object. It is rooted in every day practices to a representation of something. The constructing of the representation involves a social dimension, at practical and formal level, by a system of beliefs, images, values, opinions, attitudes, semantic meanings and behaviour. Jaspers and Fraser note that representations can be social in at least three senses: (1) They deal with social reality mainly in the social structural and cultural

sense. (2) They are social in origin and (3) they are widely shared and as a result they become part of social reality itself (Jaspers and Fraser 1984: 105). Thus, the representations are not individually produced replicas of perceptual data, but are themselves social creations and, as such, part of social reality (Moscovici 1984: 65).

The notion of representations, originating from the word *représentation* used by the French, is difficult to translate. It is too vague in conveying the way Durkheim and contemporary philosophers used it. A representation, in the French meaning, is like a mental photographic picture rather than a painting. And in addition, representations relate to ideas, way of evaluating, seeing and imagining objects or persons (Pickering 2000: 12). Accordingly, human beings are essentially representational, because only through representations can human beings communicate with one another.

While social representations occur in societies in their structure, or their inner dynamic, Arbic emphasizes that all representations must be called social representations (Arbic 1984: 179). Then, social representation is defined as the elaborating of a social object by the community for the purpose of behaving and communicating (Moscovici 1963: 251). Social representations are an integral part of culture. Moscovici was highly emphatic about public opinion, for example, the impact of science on culture. The theory of social representations is relevant to the study of social change; the theory accounts for the dynamics of the change in public opinion and why the distribution of opinion takes the particular form it does. Social representations provide an appropriate theory and a diversity of different methods of research.

In sum, we have presented the notion of representations. It stands out that all knowledge is dependent on representations: the world can be known not as a thing in itself but only through representations. We have seen ideas or representations as

being very much within our immediate concern in society. Representations are closely related to the social, to society itself. Social knowledge is knowledge about the social environment. So, the theory of social representations can possibly aid one to examine the indigenous perspective of an ethnic group.

#### 2.2.3.2. Theory of social representations

According to Moscovici, the theoretical concepts ought not to be tied to any particular empirical procedure; rather, he suggests that the theory needs to encompass a methodological polytheism (Duveen & Lloyd 1993: 90). This means that each research project needs to establish in its own terms which methods for describing social representations are appropriate to the specific object of research. From this point of view, there are many kinds of representations, which are collective representations, individual representations, representations of feeling, religious representations, and so on. It can be argued that representations can present everything. It is true that the world exists for us only to the extent to which it is represented.

The present researcher is mainly concerned with social representation in order to explore cultural identity in ethnographic perspective. This theory can be applied to the Korean cultural context. Then our question is: How can representations represent people or culture? What is a representation of prototypes for various social roles? How is a discourse system related to cultural identity at all?

The study of social representations shares common ground with the main constituents of mind. From this position two methods of procedure are open. What is important is to see representations as functions of thought, rather than to understand what representations are all about. They thus constitute a mode of thinking or

perform a function of the mind within the realm of human understanding.

Durkheim holds that representations represent reality in the mode of thinking or mind (Pickering 2000: 11). Representations are human-made devices. Representation means that there is a thing behind the idea which is in the mind of the individual, or held to exist by a group of individuals in their minds. We can't deny that representations are associated with a faculty of the mind. By such a faculty of creating representations, classification is made possible, which in turn leads to the formation of categories. Without classification, knowledge as we understand it at its most basic level is impossible. But representations lack objective value and they do not portray things as they really are. They consist of artificial constructions. So, the researcher is agreement with the proposition that representations are inaccurate but nevertheless are approximations in the right direction and are the only mental tools mankind has. Emler and Ohana suggest that the theory of social representation provides four sets of pointers to research strategy:

First, it directs attention to the fact that social representations are communicated ideas and images. Undoubtedly the most important of these is the language, literally, the words that people use to express their knowledge. Second, social representations are representations of something. They are defined by their content, even if that content is structured. Third, social representations are socially constructed and sustained forms of knowledge. People harbour certain knowledge as members of groups, communities, societies, or cultures. Fourth, social representations are shared and as such are properties of social groups and not isolated individuals. It is important to recognize the kinds of social groups to which people belong (Emler and Ohana 1993: 85).

Thus, representation mediates the language of observation and the language of logic:

expressing pure facts and abstract symbols. Ordinary verbal language was a means both of communication and of knowledge, of collective ideas and of abstract research, since it was common to both common sense and science (Moscovici 1984:17). Language re-emerges in that historical and conventional reality. Moscovici insists that the welding of language and of representation is one of the most remarkable human phenomena.

However, a social representation is a cognitive phenomenon such as images, prototypes, or set of concepts. In practical terms, social representations relate cognitive representational phenomena to linguistic representational phenomena. This is connected to the following question: How does discourse analysis develop a social approach to the phenomenon or representation. McKinlay, Potter, and Wetherell suggest that a form of discourse analysis is provided by social phenomenon or representation (McKinlay, Potter, and Wetherell 1993: 134).

There are at least three ways in which the theory is distinctively social. First, social representations are linked to communication processes, the most important of these being unstructured everyday talk. The genesis of social understanding is allied with social representations. Secondly, social representations provide a theoretically principled way of distinguishing between social groups. It means that social representations offer a code for communication and are basic resources for making sense of the world. That is, the purpose of all representations is to make something unfamiliar, or unfamiliarity itself, familiar (Moscovici 1984:23). Thus, the theory suggests that representations are a unifying and homogenizing force. That is, social representations are the very thing that makes groups what they are (Moscovici 1984: 12). Thirdly, representations provide an agreed code for communication. To the extent to which people share common representation, they will understand what other people are talking about and will be able to have fluid and intelligible

conversations.

Discourse analysis can best be understood through its interconnected central concepts of function, variation, and construction and the analytic unit in the interpretative repertoire (McKinlay, Potter, and Wetherell 1993: 143). People do things with their discourse. This is connected to the issues of how people use discourse and how discourse uses people. Ochs defines discourse 'as a set of norms, preferences, and expectations relating language to context, which speaker-hearers draw on and modify in producing and making sense out of language in context' (Ochs 1990:289). Discourse relates language to both social and psychological contexts, including affect, knowledge, beliefs, social acts, activities, and identity.

From this perspective, knowledge of language and socio-cultural knowledge are not universally shared by all members of a social group. Language and culture constitute bodies of knowledge, structure of understanding, and conceptions of the world. Language and culture are open systems, and individuals have the potential to modify linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge throughout the course of their life span.

Discourse might serve interpersonal communication, which formulates the local discursive context for a wider purpose. Discourse lies at the heart of the process we are pursuing. In particular, it manifests an ideological effect in the sense of legitimating the actions of one interest group in a society. Thus, social representations are characterized in the standard rhetoric of cognitive processes. They call the unfamiliar familiar, anchor onto prototypes, objectify novel phenomena, and so on (McKinlay, Potter, and Wetherell 1993: 144).

Discourse is variable because speakers are constructing their talk differentially according to the required function. LeVine argues that reflective discourse in

variability as a property of culture raises many more theoretical issues. Reflective discourse refers to conventionalized formats for commenting on cultural beliefs and norms in themselves and on their influence on social behaviour (LeVine 1984:81). He proposes two aspects of discourse: indigenous cultural description and analysis within a culture, and the partitioning of culture into domains. The former is in-group cultural knowledge as a virtually secret code. There is a lack of explicitness about norms and a lack of explanation of symbolic activities. The latter is literate cultures, which are rich in commentaries about their own symbols. Reflective discourse about beliefs and values is conventionalized as attributes of specialists or as a situational format for conversation among ordinary people.

In discourse, regularity does not necessarily appear at the level of the individual speech. Rather, there is regularity in variation itself. It requires interpretative repertoires in inconsistencies and differences. Interpretative repertoires can be built by people for use in constructing versions of actions, cognitive processes, and other phenomena in their discourse.

Billing stresses that a rhetorical approach must move from a monologic to a dialogic approach (Billing 1993: 45). He emphasizes the importance of argumentation in social life. A rhetorical approach would oppose the methodologically dominated social sciences, in which quantitative means dominate the ends of theory. The rhetorical approach emphasizes the social content of culture. Moscovici insists that a social representation corresponds to a system of values, ideas and practices. He suggests that the act of communication is integral to social representations: the term representation should be reserved for a special category of knowledge and beliefs, namely those that arise in ordinary communication and whose structure corresponds to this form of communication (Moscovici 1984a: 952).

It links communication to the nature of social representations: social representations

are modalities of practical thought oriented towards the communication, comprehension and mastery of the social, material and ideal environment. It means that the social representation, as an act of communication, is implicitly recognizing the centrality of rhetoric. Although the social representation approach links social representations to communication, and thinking to conversation that is particularly related to the transformation of social representations of common sense (Billing 1993: 46), we would stress that people constructively draw on ordinary linguistic resources and that these prove to be sufficient as a means of gaining an understanding of the way that representations are used to create sense in everyday life. Thus, social representations theory has the virtue of offering a strongly social perspective and constructing versions of the social world and the social role.

Which criteria and in what manner can it be scientific representation? In other words, what is a representation of prototypes for various social roles?

The study of social representations creates a common ground for establishing ethnographic description. It provides the descriptive framework which made possible the interpretation and assessment of individual actions. It is possible to argue that cultural research proceeds from some ethnographic interpretation on the part of the investigators, that they begin with participation in their own culture (Duveen & Lloyd 1993: 96). Sociology or ethnography has been taken to refer to participant observations combined with interviews undertaken in a field setting. From these observations of society and their work with interviewing informants, ethnographers construct an interpretation of events. The ethnographer is aiming through these procedures to describe the collective life of a society, to articulate the beliefs which are shared by the members of this culture.

Geertz stresses the interpretive or hermeneutic aspect of social sciences. Their most

visible outcome is a revised style of discourse in social studies (Geertz 1983: 23). He has explored the interpretive and critical methodologies of anthropology and argued that cultures should be interpreted as texts, much like literature. Geertz argues that culture is a web, and the analysis of it is not an experimental science in search of law, but an interpretative one in search of meaning.

Geertz stresses that constructing a representation, expressing an attitude, or forming an intention are going to play central roles. Starting from their observations and interviews with informants, ethnographers generate various accounts which form the basis for interpretation. For him, participant observations and interviews with informants have been the most common sources of data. Ethnographic descriptions have also been derived from textual sources, both historical and contemporary.

Geertz distinguishes between thin and thick descriptions. What separates them are that thick descriptions of their meanings refer to some public, social context (Geertz 1973: 6-7). An interpretative procedure is generating thick descriptions of a culture, which will articulate the collective systems of meaning that sustain a culture as a particular set of social relations. Since virtual terms evolve through different phases depending on the stages of the design project, we use social representations which are articulate or made manifest, to construct a believable character of personality in order to become ethnographers in our own culture and benefit from the anthropological experience that is called into being there.

#### 2.2.4 Collective representations

Collective representations raise the notion that members of different societies perceive the world through different conceptual frameworks. On the one hand, Moscovici describes collective representations in the language and style of the

ethno-methodologist. On the other hand, social representations are cognitive systems with a logic and language of their own (Deutscher 1984: 74). It is true that the historical and sociological study of the categories would inspire a conceptual relativism. All recognition of the world is derived from perspectivism or relativism which is mediated historically and linguistically. Relativism premises that all people are equal and that each idea has the same value. Conceptual relativism holds that concepts vary from culture to culture, in such a way that each language community has its own set of concepts. There are no universal standards that transcend language communities by which such concepts may be judged. Cultural relativism is when one sees an object in an open perspective or when one's attitude overcomes a fixed idea. Cultural relativism is today almost rhetorical (Kakar 1990:427). What its practitioners demand is evidence of a more direct kind from within their own culture itself.

According to Turner (1969, 1986, 1986b, 1992), his question is about how individuals actually experience their culture. He introduced that cultural paradigm, constituting the relationship between experience and expressions, which is based on Dilthey's hermeneutics. Turner defines that an experience is more personal to a human being who not only engages in but also shapes an action. If it was not a personal experience, another person will not be fully aware of it or be able to articulate what the other person experiences. We have only transcended the narrow sphere of experience by interpreting expressions (Turner & Bruner 1986: 5). For Dilthey's hermeneutics (1976:230), by interpreting he meant understanding, interpretation, and the methodology of hermeneutics; by expressions he meant representations, performances, objectifications or texts. Turner is mainly concerned that the relationship between experience and expressions is dialogical and dialectical, in that we understand other people and their expressions on the basis of our own experience and self-understanding. That is, experience structures expressions and

expressions structure experience. These dialogic relationships of mutual dependence were basic to Turner's anthropology.

From this perspective, our knowledge of what is given in experience is extended interpretation through analysis of cultural expressions. Our knowledge is realized actuality that turns experience into expression; it is cultural expression that we live by. Expressions are a people's articulations, formulations, and representations of their own experiences. An expression involves a processual activity, verb form, and action rooted in a social situation with real persons in a particular culture in a given historical era. It means that people are active agents in the historical process, who construct their own world. So, expressions are constitutive and shaping, not as abstract texts but in the activity that actualises the text. It is in this sense that texts must be performed to be experienced, and what is constitutive is in the production (Turner & Bruner 1986: 7). It is in the performance of an expression that we re-experience, re-live, re-create, re-tell, re-construct, and re-fashion our culture.

However, a collective representation is simply a shared phenomenon created by and through our thinking. Taken together, collective representations constitute nothing less than the world we all accept as real. Moscovici argues that more attention must be paid to the socially shared nature of knowledge and understanding. The social is not seen as a feature of cognition or the representation itself. In the wake of the sociologist Durkheim, Moscovici studied the collective, shared character of cognitive representations, for which the term social representations is used. The collective representations operate in an essentially ideal manner, reducing or eliminating materiality. It is argued that collective representations reveal the true society.

Thus, collective representations are a kind of cultural construction of reality. The

theory of the cultural construction of reality calls into question the very possibility of the interpretation of culture. Geertz proposed that cultural phenomena should be treated as significant systems. In *The interpretation of cultures* (1973), Geertz examines cultures as meaning-systems and attempts to describe a culture's conceptual universe. Culture as a form of knowledge is not a matter of methods, but the textbook for establishing rapport, selecting informants, transcribing texts taking genealogies, mapping fields, keeping a diary, and so on. It is called a notion of 'thick description' for it is an elaborate venture and a demanding kind of intellectual effort (Geertz 1973: 6). Cultural institutions and processes attempt to actualise this relationship in the form of social structure and action. He holds that culture is the web not of an experimental science in search of law but of an interpretive one in search of meaning (Geertz 1973: 5). Elements of a culture ideal will represent a projective system, a set of social and individual fantasies which may take the form of art, literature, or ideas. Geertz recognizes that the image of a culture pattern is overly mechanistic and implies too much constancy and articulation.

In the above, we have recognized that actual experience is related with expressions: representations, objectifications, discourses, and performances. All cultures are constructions that take historical elements from different eras and sources. Understanding of culture is not as a set of privileged texts but rather as the systems of meanings embodied in all social practices. Turner insists that it is in the interpretation of cultural texts that culture has found its most intense expression. He seeks in some sort of collectivity to develop ways of acting that will authenticate both the actors and the group simultaneously. It is a critique of the privatisation of theory. Turner was primarily excited by group life itself, life as expressed in lived-through experiences of the participants. Turner, in *The ritual process* (1969), was interested primarily in the ways in which groups achieved order and meaning together, through producing their cultural texts.

According to Kuhn, major scientific achievements, which he called 'paradigms', entail conceptual networks through which scientists view the world (Kuhn 1970: 102). Scientists who belong to different paradigm governed communities inhabit different worlds, seeing different things when they look in the same direction, and thus will experience communication breakdowns (Kuhn 1970: 149-50). The form of knowledge that belongs to a specific community as such is a cultural domain.

As we have already mentioned in chapter 1, Gadamer's hermeneutics clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place, rather than prescribe a method for understanding. Understanding occurs through one's own preconceptions by the reception history of what is being understood. Gadamer holds that one should develop a historical self-awareness, which makes conscious one's own prejudices and allows one to isolate and evaluate an object on its own. One's historical self-awareness is embedded in history through one's effective history, personal experience and cultural traditions. Thus, one's self-understanding is connected with the reality of history and the reality of historical understanding that are being historically and culturally constituted.

According to Habermas, the domain of knowledge is grounded in lifeworlds by the horizon-forming contexts of culture, society and personality. A lifeworld not only forms the context for the process of reaching understanding but also furnishes resources for it (Habermas 1990: 135). The lifeworld offers a storehouse of cultural givens from which members participate in communication. The lifeworld also provides the symbolic horizon in the light of which specific issues concerning the cultural, social or subjective world can be addressed. The symbolic horizon is embedded in a cultural stock of knowledge that can be used in defining situations.

Accepting logical knowledge on its own terms and observing its historical development should always be an important method for understanding local cultural practices. Habermas conceptualised the notion of 'publics' in his book *The structural transformation of the public sphere* (1989). This concept can provide a means of identifying indigenous possibilities for development of collective cultural identities as the sphere of intersections between culture and identity, and between social, organizational and cognitive networks. Habermas's normative ideal of a public sphere is based upon rational-critical debates. Habermas defines the public sphere as an institutionalised realm of discursive interactions in which citizens deliberate about their common affairs through rational-critical debates. His idealized picture of the eighteenth-century bourgeois public sphere has met serious criticism on both empirical and theoretical grounds.

But our lifeworld is more complex and fluid than the example of drawing a fixed object. In real life an individual is constantly switching from one public to the other. Habermas illustrates that the blueprint of the bourgeois public sphere in the eighteenth century may be presented graphically as a schema of social realms (Habermas 1989: 30). The line between state and society divided the public sphere from the private realm. The sphere of public authority is the state as the realm of the police, and the court as courtly noble society in the eighteenth century. Currently, the notion of the publics' original meaning is reversed to privatised, in the consciousness of the consuming public, from its political character. The commercialisation of the participation in the public sphere on the part of broad strata is designed predominantly to give the masses, in general, access to the public sphere (Habermas 1989: 169).

However, the sociological reconstruction of the notion of publics reveals a deeper concern with the level of ontological reconstitution of identities and cultures.

According to Ikegami, he explores publics as sites of cultural production and identity formation (Ikegami 2000: 992). Ikegami's research has explored the mechanisms by which the changing structure of the relationships of multiple publics affects the process of forming collective cultural identities. He has proposed the sociological reconstitution of the concept of publics:

First, we need a more radical epistemological and ontological view of publics. The exercise of ontological examination of identity formation will entail the redefinition of publics by the interpretive use of network analysis. Second, the relationship between social or cognitive network dynamics and the cultural and identity practices that issue from them should be understood as a form of emergent properties. Third, it is not sufficient to point to the plurality of publics. The social field of multiple publics is always charged with dynamics of power. Therefore, the interrelationships and hierarchical structures of publics must be analysed to understand the efficacy of communicative messages produced in these spheres. Fourth, to properly analyse the interrelationships of publics, we should reconnect the theory of publics with theories of macrosocial networks (Ikegami 2000: 993-4).

He tries to reconstitute the indigenous concept of publics in Japan by means of network analysis. Network analysis draws on its imagery and ideas to reconstitute such concepts as publics and identity. It implies not only concrete external and measurable social ties which are chiefly concerned with the phenomenological complexity of networks, but also the form of narrative stories which is assimilable to structures of meaning (Ikegami 2000: 996). Narratives allow human beings to address the ontological problems involved in translating knowing into telling, which are held within the collective memories of an imagined community. From a phenomenological perspective, what we now perceive as collective cultural identities emerge as stories. He prefers to call these categorical identities rather than

personal or collective identities, because members of a community constitute national cultures.

Thus, he redefines the notion of publics as communicative sites that emerge at the points of connection among social and cognitive networks (Ikegami 2000: 997). A public may emerge on the basis of concrete institutionalised networks and communicative infrastructures. His idea originated from Habermas' communicative rationality which underlies action that is aimed at mutual understanding. Particularly, Ikegami develops the ontological dimension of the public sphere through an internal dialogue. He states that the idea that a person is an integrated and consistent entity is a myth (Ikegami 2000: 998). He considers the person as a collection or network of multiple identities in which exchanges with an internal otherness are constant functions of maintaining selfhood.

#### 2.2.5 Conclusion

The notions of the person have been understood by theological concepts or dogma in theology. Theological anthropology lacks an understanding of the existential personality of the sufferer. It is only concerned with just the intrinsic character of the creature itself.

In science, there are two modes of approach in understanding human beings: natural science and cultural science. On the one hand, human nature is brought under the explanatory umbrella of natural sciences. A naturalistic account of the person is limited to such things as microscopic behaviour and consciousness. A reductive or naturalistic account is not sufficiently stable or lasting to explicate or capture human nature. On the other hand, the cultural approach based on the cultural sciences premises that human nature is both highly plastic and culturally configured. It claims

that what constitutes a human consciousness is the rich matrix of relations it bears to the other humans, practices, and institutions of its embedding culture.

Human beings, unlike the intrinsic character of the creature itself, are plastic in character and like cultures are endlessly various. The character of one's perception, one's cognition, and one's behaviour is determined by the particular configuration of representations. The roots of social representations have discovered a transformation of content within society of the images, ideas, and language that make communication and action feasible. This enriches society's ontology and reshapes its reality.

The theory of social representation can make the indigenous person self-understanding of his or her own lifeworld. The conceptual framework of social representation occurs in the socio-cultural interrelationship where it is constituted and used. It premises that phenomenological experiences are cultural experiences. Wundt's *Volkerpsychologie* made it clear that groups were any groups characterized by a culture of their own; the national group remained the prototype for all the others. He saw the characteristically human form of life as involving the phenomenon of culture.

However, Durkheim tries to understand human nature by means of social-structural determinants in scientific mentality. The concept of 'collective conscience' is open to the origin of social groups and structures. The social representation proposes that it is possible to communicate and act through a construction of social representations which mediate social reality. It occurs in culture as social and historical reality in one's lifeworld rather than as principle or metaphysical concepts. Customs, myths, ideas, and religions strongly influence one's socialization and are inherited from a particular culture.

Most disciplines, in non-Western thoughts, developed from Western academic theory which was grounded on Western culture and philosophy. Non-Western thinkers often face a difficult problem and make the mistake of copying Western thought without self-reflection on their own situation. Such reflection can help the theory of collective representations approach to indigenous contexts. Cultural approach, as a methodological relativism, starts with the deconstruction of the hegemony of knowledge, Euro-American centralism, and patriarchy/masculinity. The notion of collectivism has created an opposite meaning to individualism in Western academia. This concept is not a real representation of a non-Western theoretical framework that is constituted on its own terms.

From this perspective, our task is to construct theories in order to build an indigenous knowledge form. From the ethnic perspective, it should start with cultural discourse such as customs, myths, ideas, and religion in their own language. We are confronted with another difficult problem within the domain of theology. Korean theology has been developed without any cultural application or reflection spanning just over 100 years of mission. There is no cultural concept to develop the theological theories. They are still dependent on a Western conceptual framework. Specifically, practical theology only depends on other theologies such as dogmatic theology, historical theology, and biblical theology. A Korean practical theology challenges empirical theology as an academic discipline. This would involve both a critical theological interpretation of historical events and a commitment to the witness and service of God's Kingdom in history.

From this point of view, collective representation is a basic theory to further Korean studies. Korean collective representation forms an infrastructure in order to deepen Korean self-understanding.

### 2.3 Korean studies

Korean scholars, since the early 1900's, have been attempting to explain the character of the Korean culture in order to explain the cause, character, and direction of current transformation in the Korean society. But they are confronted with the difficulty of the Koreanology, its underlying cause a cultural defeatism, the negative cognition of traditional culture, blindly dependent on Western academia, and lack of professionalism. No one has yet systematically explained the character of Korean culture. They have attempted to explore Korean culture within the domains of history, psychology, culture, literature, and folklore, but usually by Western theory and methods.

Fortunately, most current Korean scholars are more interested in an indigenous perspective for studying Koreanology. Some scholars already try to conceptualise a framework on their own terms within their own culture. Choi (1997) analyses Korean culture by means of an examination of theory and methods. He has introduced some representative books in each field: Yoon published *Korean character* (1964) from a psychological perspective, Choi published *Korean social character* (1965) from the sociological perspective, Hong (1969), Yim (1988), and Kim (1992) examined the value perspective by an empirical methodology, and Yi (1977, 1983) explored folk customs based on documents of history, life, and folklore. Kim (1967) analysed the Korean consciousness structure by a questionnaire. Oh (1982) investigated the Korean psychological structure in the social psychological perspective. Kim (1987) explained Korean values through his study of literature and statistics from a psychological perspective.

The Korean study aims at identifying Korean culture. It is broadly divided into three

domains: human sciences such as history, literature, linguistics, religious study, and folklore; social sciences such as sociology, anthropology and psychology; and arts such as music, dance, architecture, and painting. In employing the cultural approach, we investigate the reconstituting of the Korean cultural identity. According to Choi, he defined Koreanology as asking: what is the Korean culture? In other words, understanding of the Korean arises from Korean cultural identity (Choi 1998: 10). We are indispensably concerned with the notion of culture in order to define culture. Generally, culture is divided into two modes: material culture as cultural relics, arts and tools, immaterial culture as religion, ideas, worldviews, values, and humanity. It is not easy or simple to define the notion of culture by one methodology. On the contrary, it is more productive to define the notion of culture from an integrated perspective.

But the present researcher premises that the Korean lifeworld is interconnected with the Korean identity and the Korean social character, and that the Korean lifeworld is an effective path to integrate with the Korean personality and the Korean society. The Korean lifeworld can be understood by the theory of social representations, which constitute collective systems of meaning. The Korean lifeworld necessarily needs to establish its own terms for reflecting social reality. That is, one is required to establish the conceptual framework for understanding the Korean cultural character. Social representation is a very effective way to describe social realities. This process is accomplished by applying indigenous definitions of Korean culture and a reconstitution of the theoretical category of culture to establish the cultural identity.

Korean studies have focused on culture character in order to describe personal identity formation. The theory of collective representation is adapted to exploring Korean social-cultural realities. Korean society is more intimately concerned with

group relational character than an emphasis on distinct and autonomous individuals. We thus need a comparison between individual and collective society.

### 2.3.1 Individualism and collectivism

Currently, cultural psychologists have discovered an important dimension of cultural variation. Culture as knowledge formulation has proved to have considerable potential for ethnographic investigation and theoretical analysis (D'andrade 1984: 89, Kim U, Park YS, Park, DH 2000: 66). Cultural category creates an entity, in the sense that what is understood to be out there is affected by the culturally based associations built into the category system. Each category system is based on cultural background under categories such as customs, myths, ideas, religion and philosophical foundations. If culture consists of shared information or knowledge encoded in systems of symbols, individualism and collectivism represent a particular pattern with key moral and philosophical threads that are used to maintain, propagate, and reify particular social structures and norms.

Thus, we also need a brief discussion of individualism and collectivism. Comparative analysis of individualism and collectivism is achieved from an indigenous perspective by examining their philosophical foundations. Each idea is ontogenetically bound with the given socio-cultural context. Collectivism has particularly examined cultural products such as language, myth, and customs as vehicles for understanding culture.

#### 2.3.1.1 Individualism

Kim has developed a conceptual clarification and elaboration of individualism and collectivism by means of ecological influences and ideology (Kim 1994: 19). He

presupposes that climatic and natural conditions shape and determine the existence of various types of life forms, including that of human beings. The social world is an ecological complex in which cultural meanings and knowledge are personally embodied. Early in human history, collective units developed strategies to cope with and adapt to their ecology. Accordingly, ecology refers to a total pattern of relationships between life forms and the physical environment. Values, norms, and beliefs were institutionalised as cultural models that served to mediate between ecological pressures and individual survival.

Kim and Choi attempt an ideological approach to individualism as liberalism, against Confucianism in collectivism (1994: 26). What coincides with the genesis of this individualist language is an individualist ideological process. In individual society, liberalism becomes a dominant philosophy that delineates the concept of self and society. From this perspective, individuals are considered to be rational and universal entities. Individuals are considered to be autonomous, rational, goal-directed, and free to choose and control their determinate ends or purposes. The Western conception of the individual is typified as a self-contained, self-causing, autonomous, potentially individuating entity.

There is faith in the inherent separateness of distinct persons. That is, individuals constitute a self-contained functional unit as a unique and solid entity. The content of self-fulfilment can vary widely, from hedonism to self-actualisation. Most Western Europeans and North Americans consider freedom an important value.

At the interpersonal level, individuals are considered to be discrete, autonomous, self-sufficient, and respectful of the rights of others. They interact with others utilizing mutually agreed-upon principles, such as equality, equity, non-interference and detachability. At the societal level, liberal society lacks a clear articulation of

substantive goals such as the common good, collective welfare, and social harmony. Substantive goals are handled by concerned citizens, interest groups, or governmental agencies.

Triandis examines data at the individual level of analysis and uses the terms *Allocentrics* and *Idiocentrics*. This terminology allows quick reference to the *idiocentric*, who selects mostly individualist solutions in collectivist cultures, and the *allocentric*, who selects mostly collectivist solutions in individualist cultures (Triandis 1994: 47). In a theory of the self in relation to culture, individualist cultures had members whose selves included more private elements. They also had public selves with more individualist elements. The more individuals can decide what norms are applicable, the more individualistic is the culture. It means that individuals have in their cognitive systems all the diverse elements depending on the situation and the culture.

### 2.3.1.2 Collectivism

In psychology, the notion of collectivism originated from Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* (folk psychology). He thought that human social life could not be brought into the laboratory, but only processes in their social aspects. The social aspect of mental processes expressed itself in certain objective products: language, myth and custom.

Wundt himself drew from his general theory of action through gestural communication. The basis for communication lay on the most primitive level of functioning and meant that the mind of the individual was part of a trans-individual psychological system. Gestural communication thus leads to cultural products that have an objective existence (Danziger 1983: 309). Language provides the medium in

which human higher cognitive activity operates. Myths, formed on the basis of language, give form to human capacities for imagination, and customs provide the framework within which individual choice and volition must operate.

These three components of culture are the product of a collective subject. They are not the product of intentional choices by individuals, but interaction produces them and they are themselves regular and lawful. It should therefore be possible, according to Wundt, to use observed regularities of cultural change to draw inferences about the underlying psychological processes in individuals. For him, behaviour was as varied as the infinite diversity of circumstances under which individuals made their decisions.

Han (1998) presented a paper on 'Cultural Psychology: How can we do it?' It opens the possibility that cultural psychology will be able to conceptually grasp cultural phenomena and categorize them. The formation of concepts of culture is the first step in overcoming the Euro-centric point of view which lies at the heart of academic psychology.

In his book, *Self and Society*, Western (1985) summarized the historical evolution of Western collectivism in four stages: Primary Communitarian Collectivism, Secondary Communitarian Collectivism, Individuated Collectivism, and Synthetic Collectivism. According to him, the contemporary Western notion of collectivism nears the third category, Individuated Collectivism, which is characterized by the individual person whose existential demands precede collective interests. In this contemporary model of collectivism, 'no longer does the individual exist for society; rather, society exists for the individual' (Western 1985: 267). This idea of individuated collectivism is deduced from his multidisciplinary review of the thoughts of major social theorists on society and culture.

Thompson similarly remarked that ‘Durkheim was arguing against the prevailing tendency to reduce such an explanation to the levels of individual psychology or biology’ (1985:14). At one point, Western (1985), too, observed that

historically social and cultural theorists have predominantly focused on the level of the group. Marx focused on class as an analytical unit. Durkheim prescribed the explanation of social facts in terms only of other social facts (Western 1985: 212).

However, Durkheim asserted that there are social and cultural processes that can only be explained and conceptualized holistically, rather than atomistically. These holistic processes, though based on and repeated in the individual consciousness, do possess characteristics of their own which are distinctively differentiated from those of the individual participating entities. Durkheim's ‘collective consciousness’ or ‘collective representations,’ for instance, are not viewed as equivalent to the sum of the states of individual consciousness. They have their own independent existence, and the individuals only encounter them as a given condition, of which formation and operation the individual members take no account.

In short, the Western discourse of collectivism is logically maladaptive in describing a ‘non-individualist’ collectivism such as that of Korea, because the conception of individuals derived from the individualist language lacks the contextual framework of the Korean society. With this contextual derangement, any efforts to illuminate Korean collectivism with the Western notion of a group are bound to be futile, if not completely impossible.

The discussions in the following chapter present a more detailed analysis of the inadequacy of the current Western discourse of collectivism to describe Korean collectivism.

### 2.3.2 Korean collective representations

The heart of social representations understands the concepts, as the mode of living for human beings in the world, which constitute a particular historical community and social interrelationships rather than universal ones. Shweder criticizes modern anthropologists for being persuaded by the enlightenment view that in reason can be found a positive rationality.

The enlightenment view . holds that the mind of man is intendedly rational and scientific, that the dictates of reason are equally binding for all regardless of time, place, culture, race, personal desire, or individual endowment, and that in reason can be found a universally applicable standard for judging validity and worth. (Shweder 1984:27).

He denied that human life and belief should be dictated by reason and evidence, which is the normative uniformity of mankind. He calls this anthropology's romantic rebellion against the enlightenment. A central tenet of the romanticist view holds that ideas and practices have their foundation in neither logic nor empirical science; that ideas and practice fall beyond the scope of deductive and inductive reason; that ideas and practices are neither rational nor irrational but rather *nonrational* (Shweder 1984:28).

He states that this concept follows from Geertz's cultural relativism and Kuhn's scientific revolution. It is premised on human existential uncertainty and on an intentional conception of constituted worlds. The principle of intentional or constituted worlds asserts that subjects and objects, practitioners and practices, human beings and socio-cultural environments interpenetrate each other's identity (Shweder 1990: 1). A socio-cultural environment is an intentional or constituted

world. Such worlds are human artifactual worlds populated with products of our own design.

Accordingly, intentional things have no natural reality or identity separate from human understandings and activities. Our identities interpenetrate and take each other into account. This means that an intentional or constituted world is no logical requirement or that across intentional worlds the identity of things must remain fixed and universal. The cultural approach is the study of the interpersonal maintenance of any artifactual world. From this perspective, we aim to develop a conceptual framework, and especially Korean collective representations suitable for analysis of socio-cultural environments, and suitable for the analysis of persons in every sphere of their constituted lifeworld and historicity.

According to Han, collective representation is indispensable to a discussion of the historical constitution of collectivism (Han 1998:12). It requires explaining how collective representations, concepts, and meaning are connected with social structure. It also needs explaining what processes will lead to the development of a new symbol or representations, and if collective representations are constituted by human beings rather than natural conditions. It is obvious that the constitution of representations is closely related with the particular historical background.

### 2.3.3 The research process

This research process focuses on cultural discourse and identity formation in order to build a model of cultural identity. Previously in this study, we agreed that personal identity, in social representations, is embedded with culture and historical traditions. We intend to build a theory derived from the background that the analyst brings to the research situation (Strauss & Corbin 1990: 43). The most important facts of the

research process are to recognize what is important in data and to give it meaning. It helps to formulate a theory that is faithful to the reality of the phenomena under study (Strauss & Corbin 1990: 46).

According to Dreyer, the research processes reflect on the methodological implications of the dialectics of belonging and distancing for empirical research in practical theology (Dreyer 1998:5). He is concerned with the methodological debate in practical theology, the dialectic between an insider (participant, hermeneutical) approach and an outsider (observer, empirical-analytical) approach. Furthermore, this debate on a participant or an observer approach is usually linked to the debate between quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Dreyer followed the conclusion to Ricoeur's (1991) argument that the hermeneutical dialectic between belonging and distancing is at the heart of the methodological dialectic between the insider/engaged participant perspective and the outsider/detached observer perspective (Dreyer 1998:14). We should therefore employ both quantitative and qualitative research.

However, the research process requires Habermas's three domains of knowledge: Instrumental knowledge uses empirical-analytic methods, Practical knowledge uses hermeneutic methods, and Emancipatory knowledge uses critical theory methods. That is, the research process requires the objectifications of reality, human social interaction or communicative action, and one's history and biography. Particularly, the notion of the lifeworld is an effective path to conceptualising about cultural reproduction and identity formation. The cultural reproduction of lifeworld achieves communicative action through the interpretative accomplishments of the actors themselves by means of the processes of their mutual understanding. Such a lifeworld would gain by empirically motivated attitudes and rationally motivated attitudes.

### 2.3.3.1 Dialectic between quantitative and qualitative research

The studying of Korean culture is still confronted with the problem of lacking a systematically conceptual framework about its cultural character. The Korean academic tendency is generally more used to Western concepts than to unfamiliar indigenous Korean concepts. Particularly, the majority of theologian of Korean conservative theology strongly depends on Western theological concepts. Euro-American theological concepts have dominated their scientific concepts, that is philosophy, history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and so forth. The challenge is that the construction of concepts or theories should be defined in the Korean history and cultural environment. So the Korean practical theology should enter the lifeworld of Korean religious people and meet them on their own ground and on their own terms.

In its form of knowledge, the conceptualisation of culture itself must be an expression of the history of Korea and our terms of language, such as belonging. What we have called belonging is the adherence to this historically lived experience, what Hegel called the substance of moral life (Ricoeur 1981: 116). Our understanding about culture mediated historical consciousness is what makes meaning appear as meaning. That consciousness is outside of itself, it is towards meaning. The Korean collective culture brings to language and meaning the historical connection mediated by the transmission of literature, customs, art, and religion which renders present the historical past. The lived experience of phenomenology corresponds to consciousness exposed to historical efficacy (Ricoeur 1981: 117). Belonging as insiders, participants, from a hermeneutical perspective, are associated with the central techniques for a qualitative approach. Only through entering into the lifeworld of the researched as an insider, can the

researcher hope to gain an understanding of meaning (Dreyer 1998: 9).

However, in terms of Ricoeur, all consciousness of meaning involves a moment of distanciation, a distancing from lived experience. Hermeneutical distanciation is the phenomenological epoch, that is, an aspect of the intentional movement of consciousness towards meaning (Ricoeur 1981: 116). Understanding recourse to distanciation is at the very heart of the experience of belonging.

Belonging indicated that the frame of reference is a universal principle and mode of personal lifestyle in the Korean's social-cultural lifeworld. The Korean lifeworld understood by most is ordinarily comprised of language, symbol, and attitude. Sometimes we do not recognize our culture, because we are too much accustomed to it. Then we need a distanciation from the perspective of belonging as an observer. We can recognize the Korean cultural character by means of conceptualising - making unfamiliar – such familiar things as mode of lifestyle, meaning of words and symbols.

Above, we have argued for a comparative analysis of individualism and collectivism. Each category system is based on the cultural background, which is comprised of customs, myths, ideas, religion and philosophical foundations. Social structure and norms are influenced by a system of symbols, ecology and ideology such as moral and philosophical trends. Then the collective approach is more adapted to the Korean socio-cultural environment.

From this point of view, the present research is going to adopt a dialectical approach which is both qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative research is not a single way of doing research, but rather a methodological pluralism which can be traced to the worldview or set of basic beliefs of the researcher (Schurink 1998:241). Qualitative

research is derived from a semiotic or pragmatic criterion of the real with its emphasis on the meaningfulness of things and the interaction between knowing subject and known object. Qualitative research aims to understand the social lifeworld and the meaning that people attach to everyday life. It is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced or produced (Mason 1996:4), when data generation is flexible and sensitive to the social context in which data are produced. The unit of analysis in qualitative research is discourse, whether the captured discourse of conversations, the produced discourse of interviews or the constructed discourse of field notes. Qualitative research's focus is on critical instances, the meaningful order of things, and collective understandings. And finally, knowledge is actional in that it is recognized in its instrumentality.

While on the other hand, quantitative research is derived from the material criterion of the real with its emphasis on the objective character of phenomena and the independence between the knowing subject and object of knowledge. Quantitative research is based on positivism, which takes scientific explanation to be a universal law. The unit of analysis is a quantity, whether that quantity is a unity, as in types and categories, or an amount, as in elements, attributes, conditions, or states. One's measurement involves the literal quantification of the object or state as a function of its members. Finally knowledge moves toward the propositional, enduring and ahistorical.

The domain of qualitative research often begins with an interest in how something is done, the social value of an activity or symbolic resource, and the meaning of an action or text. It is assumed that these interests are best explored in the everyday contexts of actions, texts, and accomplishments.

The Korean lifeworld requires the ontological approach to be concerned with one's

perceptions regarding the nature of reality or the world and what there is to know about it (Schurink 1998:240). Such ontology has two main components. Propositions about reality establish which entities the subject considers as existing. Categories of the real determine how the existing entities are conceived. It involves asking whether what you see are the very nature and essence of things in the Korean lifeworld. What is the Korean ontological position or perspective? The way of conceptualising social reality relates or connects with different philosophies and ideas.

According to Choi, he approaches the analysis of structure and structural variation in order to constitute a general theory of and to explain the lifeworld of the Korean social characters (Choi 1994: 18). It presumes that Koreans have a historical consciousness of linear time, and a social structure as a family system. This is based on subjects such as characters, values, behaviour, value system, worldview, consciousness, and so on. Choi argues that Koreans and Korean society represent a family system and whole-part worldview that internalised their lifeworld, social structure and value system (Choi 1994:20). Ontology formulates cultural production and identity formation by means of the sociological reconstitution of the collective representations. Ontological dimension developed an internal dialogue through a philosophy, religion, and myths.

The Korean lifeworld requires epistemological analysis to understand one's perception of where he or she stands in reality or the world. Our question is how Korean culture can be known, and how knowledge can be demonstrated. Epistemology helps us to generate knowledge and explanations about the ontological components of the social world.

Natural sciences have developed a scientific ideal such as an objectification, which

is a universal principle; it does not reflect cultural variations. The cultural approach brings a new challenge to the weak domain of natural sciences with methodological individualism. But to do so, collective representations must be deeply concerned with cultural character and its variations. Cultural sciences indispensably set an academic paradigm compared with other disciplines. It aims to build an indigenous discipline in a culture's historical context and in its own language. We have agreed that cultural knowledge reflects the social phenomenon of the ordinary lifeworld by means of collective representations. The Korean collective representations are a kind of cultural construction of reality. Collective representations converge with the Korean cultural selves through the Korean historical consciousness and cultural identity, which enable us to explore the view of reality by interpretation of the cultural phenomenon.

But the present research aims more to develop an adequate constitutive scientific approach than an empirical scientific approach based on the testing of a conceptual framework and theory. A constitutive scientific approach as a collective representation establishes basic concepts and theoretical frames. These concepts take into account ordinary language and historical-cultural interconnections. The term interpretation refers to the fact that the aim of research is not to explain human behaviour in terms of universally valid laws or generalization, but rather to understand and interpret the meanings and intentions that underlie everyday human action (Mouton 1996:2).

The Korean lifeworld needs a methodology in order to study one's perception of how he or she can find out about reality or the world. The Korean lifeworld demands a theoretical formulation of the reality under investigation. This researcher believes that the most appropriate methodology in this research is grounded theory, which is a qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an

inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin 1990: 24). We will discuss more detail below.

## **2.4 Grounded theory**

Glaser defines grounded theory as based on the systemic generating of theory from data (Glaser 1978: 2). Rubin and Babbie (1993:55), Strauss and Corbin (1990:24), and Schuerman (1983:111) explain that grounded theory is centred in the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research. This is a style of qualitative analysis that focuses on generating theory, and grounding that theory in data. The theory provides an interpretation of a phenomenon inductively derived from qualitative data collected as it occurs in the real lifeworld. This is a general method of comparative analysis to discover theory with four central criteria, i.e. work (generality), relevance (understanding), fit (validity), and modifiability (control). If a theory is faithful to the everyday reality of the substantive area and carefully inducted from diverse data, then it should fit that substantive area. This methodology can be applied to both qualitative as well as quantitative data. It will answer the question of what was going on in an area by generating either a substantive or formal theory.

Grounded theory is a do-it-yourself methodology where neither research-assistant nor research-grant is needed (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Glaser 1978). This application makes it especially suitable for research on the implementation of ethnography in the areas of cultural study. There are various benefits connected to the grounded theory approach, one of which is benefits of the grounded theory approach is that it usually involves collaboration by researchers and practitioners in identifying strategies for dealing with complex problems. Another benefit is that the investigators are involved in the social situation under study. This kind of research must employ

grounded theory methodology, which allows flexibility in data gathering and analysis that is necessary not only to identify and explain relationships among variables but also to understand the complex and dynamic context in which the phenomena being researched take place and the ways in which the human participants make meaning of their experiences. Grounded theory also allows the researcher to address realistic problems and situations which might not ordinarily be pursued. Finally, such an approach results in a more complete understanding of the totality of a given situation rather than some smaller, perhaps less significant, aspect of it.

This study is mainly concerned with the communication model that underlies culture, i.e. it aims at identification of the cultural character. As is noted, communication is pervasive in culture; without communication, there is no culture. In this view culture serves a modelling function. In our discussion we will explore both theoretical and grounded models of culture. The conceptualisation of culture as an arena for the exchange of signs is qualitatively fundamental. Communication is not an aftereffect of culture. Communication as an exchange of symbols constitutes a cultural network. From this point of view, the notion of culture relies on the mental structures organizing a culture. Culture is an element of the structure functioning in social life. It indicates that communication is the social epoch of a culture and is composed of shared signs. Therefore, our task is to understand and develop theoretical models, and to generate empirical models based on culture.

In terms of theoretical sensitivity, Glaser argued that theory comes from being well grounded in the literature as well as professional and personal experience (Glaser 1978:3, Strauss & Corbin 1990: 50-53). The literature study is important in order to understand cultural relevant categories and the relationships among them, and to put together categories in new, rather than standard ways. A knowledge of the literature

can be used to make us sensitive for what to look for in our own data and can help us to generate questions. Philosophical knowledge can provide ways of approaching and interpreting data. A study of the literature can give us ideas where we might go to uncover phenomena important to the development of our theory.

This is so because it is true that social and cultural phenomena occur in history and constantly boost the process of change. Process representations of socio-cultural phenomena are gaining ground and led to focusing upon the role of culture context, and upon describing such temporal processes like the institution of knowledge, as well as knowledge gathering. The cultural approach has paved the way to a localizing kind of research: doing in-depth local studies has become the hallmark of interpretative anthropology (Geertz 1985). This is the quest for process-oriented theories that study the arts, myths, customs and religion.

#### 2.4.1 Coding procedures

Coding procedures constitute the central process by which theories are built from data. A code is the concrete result of that process, whether a condition, an activity or a relation between data. Data collection and data analysis are tightly interwoven processes, and must occur alternately because the analysis directs the sampling of data (De Vos & Van Zyl 1998:271). For examining cultural propositions, the coding process is mainly used as the methodology of literature study and interview in this study. Coding of culturally constituted beliefs should define the Korean cultural character. There are three stages of coding: open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin 1990: 58).

##### 2.4.1.1 Open coding

Open coding is the initial stage of analysis and imposes a priori set of categories on the data. Categories do not simply emerge from data, but from the specific procedures used to organize and interpret data. In actuality, categories are created and meanings are attributed by researchers who embrace a particular configuration of analytical preferences. The goal of open coding is to reconstruct the specific categories that participants have used to conceptualise their own worldview. When examining methods of grounded theory, one may note that most of the analytical procedures used to generate categories do not assume the form of specific rules or procedures. Usually, the guidelines are general and their applications are subject to the situational demands of the given study. The general nature of the guidelines provides researchers with the analytical space needed to negotiate meanings within the particular domain or context under study.

Two analytical procedures are basic to the coding process; the first pertains to the drawing of comparisons, the other to the asking of questions (Strauss & Corbin 1990: 62). Comparing something with a standard represents a phenomenon. Comparisons are committed to opening the private lives of participants to the public. In a sociological approach, social representation constitutes collective systems of meaning which may be expressed, or whose effects may be observed. The process of grouping concepts that seem to pertain to the same phenomena is called categorizing. The phenomenon represented by a category is given a conceptual name which should be more abstract than that given to the concepts grouped under it. The process of open coding stimulates the discovery not only of categories, but also of their properties and dimensions. There are several different ways of approaching the process of open coding.

a) Ethnography and culture

In open coding, the domain of culture is ethnographic research, where ethnography is the work of describing a culture (Spradley 1979:3). Cultural contexts have influenced our thinking about research methods and provide a basis for understanding the development of our particular coding scheme. The goal of ethnography is to grasp the native's point of view, and his or her relation to life, in order to realize the person's vision of his or her world. It is important to recognize the influence of one's discourse on the community.

However, culture has been defined in hundreds of different ways. There is no universally adopted definition that one can appropriate, because there are many forms of cultural research. Our goal in ethnography is to grasp the native's point of view; we need to define the concept of culture in such a way that each culture provides people with a way of seeing the world. It categorizes, encodes, and otherwise defines the world in which people live. Spiro proposed cultural frames for the concept of the cognitive salience of cultural propositions.

As a result of normal enculturative processes, social actors learn about the propositions. In addition to learning about the propositions, the actors also understand their traditional meaning as they are interpreted in authoritative texts or by recognized specialists. Understanding their traditional meaning, the actors internalize the propositions. It is only then that they are acquired as personal beliefs. As culturally constituted beliefs, cultural propositions inform the behavioural environment of social actors, serving to structure their perceptual worlds and to guide their actions. At this level, culturally constituted beliefs serve not only to guide but to instigate action, that is they are possessed of emotional and motivational, as well as cognitive, salience (Spiro 1984: 328).

The existence of such a frame as part of the cultural heritage of the group requires a historical explanation. One's personal histories have influenced one's research

perspectives and one's choice and range of methods. Korean culture is bound and embedded in the Korean history, which is made up of one's historical consciousness, personal experience and cultural traditions, that allow participants to assimilate new experiences. Cultural knowledge articulates cultural propositions through the Korean collective representations that are indigenous to Korean people. In order to accomplish this objective, an alternative conceptual framework is outlined. Our task is to constitute a conceptual framework delineating the indigenous Korean perspective. It specifically focuses on the nature of collective representations in Korean culture. The emphasis is on examining concepts or collective representations that exist in everyday language. Concepts used in everyday language are the lay version of people's understanding of their lifeworld. Although people do not have the means to describe and explain this complexity, most people are able to function effectively in a given culture. Any given word has functional utility and communicative value for the users. It represents a version of social reality, a shared reality.

#### b) The uses of scholarly literature

In terms of theoretical sensitivity, Glaser argued that theory comes from being well grounded in the literature, as well as from professional and personal experience (Glaser 1978:3, Strauss & Corbin 1990: 50-53). The literature study is important to understand culturally relevant categories and the relationships among them, to put together categories in new, rather than standard, ways. The literature can be used to make us sensitive about what to look for in our own data and to help us to generate questions. Philosophical knowledge can provide ways of approaching and interpreting data. The literature can give us ideas where we might go to uncover phenomena important to the development of our theory.

Constas proposes a two-dimensional model designed to facilitate the documentation of procedures used to generate categories (Constas 1992: 253). The domain representing the first dimension specifies the various components or actions associated with the development of categories. The second domain addresses the temporal aspects of category development. Process representations of socio-cultural phenomena are gaining ground; these have led to focusing upon the role of the cultural context, and upon describing such temporal processes as the institution of knowledge, and knowledge gathering. It is true that social and cultural phenomena occur in history and constantly the process is one of change. The cultural approach has paved the way to a localizing kind of research: doing in-depth local studies has become the hallmark of interpretative anthropology (Geertz 1985). This is the quest for process-oriented theories that study the arts, myths, customs and religion.

Constas suggests that components of the categorization process are discussed according to three procedural elements: origination, verification, and nomination (Constas 1992: 257). As a component of categorization, origination identifies the locus of category construction. The associated question is: where does the responsibility or authority for the creation of categories reside? In this study, the participants themselves identify categories. A participant is living documentation. Participant observation demands involvement in the social and cultural world chosen for study. Observation can range from a highly structured, detailed notation of behaviour to a holistic description which is guided by events and behaviour. A cultural proposition is related to an expression of deeper values and beliefs. The review of documents is rich in portraying the values and beliefs of participants in the setting. It is possible that categories may have emerged from the cultural traditions, worldview, belief system and values or intellectual constructions of the researcher which originated from a constitutive perspective.

Categories are derived from statements or conclusions found in the literature of other researchers who investigated a similar phenomenon. In comparison to categories derived from literature, interpretative categories are exemplified by semiotics and hermeneutics. The gathering and analyzing of documents should be linked to the research questions developed in the conceptual framework of the study.

One question relating to cultural character is referred to in the literature as the constant comparative method of analysis. The content of collective representations can be divided into two categories: cognitive knowledge and experiential knowledge. The literature study examines the cultural character through observation of data in terms of their immanent context, before trying to construe the data in the light of existing theories. The literature theories helped to frame our research questions in this thesis, influenced the structure of data collection, and influenced our coding system. We examined the literature from several theoretical perspectives, searching for constructs that would allow a deeper and more sophisticated understanding of the processes. To do this, we drew from the literature to build a tentative model of reflection.

The creation and application of categories is somewhat analogous to performing a test of face validity. The question associated herewith is: on what grounds can one justify the creation or existence of a given set of categories? Using interpretative and analytic literature, we propose descriptive-interpretative frameworks for understanding of cultural propositions. Categories should have the appearance of logical connectedness. The rational approach relies on logic and reasoning. Here it is important that categories reflect some sort of functional consistency or hierarchical relationship.

The theory in the literature is not focused on a general theory or on concepts, but is a grounded theory. Theoretical and conceptual frameworks might be used to guide

quantitative research projects and to interpret their findings (Strauss & Corbin 1990: 49). We want, in grounded theory, to discover relevant categories and relationships among theories and concepts. Some literature gives very accurate descriptions of reality, with very little interpretation. Reading a literature can make us sensitive to what to look for in our own data and can help us to generate questions. The collective representation of experiences needs to be differentiated from cultural products. Wundt, for example, examined cultural products, such as language, myth, and customs, as vehicles for understanding culture (Danzinger, 1983). He did not examine human experiences, human interactions, and human affairs as they occurred. Cultural products are, however, one step removed from the phenomena themselves. Distortions and biases can enter into an analysis when one attempts to interpret the meaning and significance of the cultural products.

However, knowledge of philosophic writings and existing theories can provide ways of approaching and interpreting data (Strauss & Corbin 1990: 51). Both individualism and collectivism have their own philosophical backgrounds that examine the meanings given to situations by the people involved. The traditional Korean value system was central to a family-related value. There were such values as filial piety, many offspring, importance of ancestors, and family or bloodline (Cha 1994:163). These beliefs and attitudes of the Korean people are based on their philosophical ideas, such as Confucianism, and can also direct theoretical sampling. The literature can give us ideas about where one might go to uncover phenomena important to the development of our theory. When we are developing a theory, we can reference the literature in appropriate places to validate the accuracy of our finding (Strauss & Corbin 1990: 52).

The nomination component is concerned with the naming of categories. The question asked for this component is: what is the source of a name used to identify a

given category? Names used to describe categories do not stand as a set of neutral descriptors. The process of naming a phenomenon invokes a certain power and often establishes a real or illusory impression of knowledge and certainty. The participants are a source of names which are particular to a specific context. On other occasions, category names are derived from existing theories by consulting the appropriate body of literature. The final source of nomination is derived from an interpretative orientation, such as either the hermeneutic approach or the semiotic approach.

However, in the coding process, categories may be created at various points in time during the research process. There is a continual checking procedure, and the opportunity for category creation and revision exists throughout the course of the study.

#### c) The qualitative interview

In another method of open coding, one might begin by analysing one's interviews and observations. Interviews may be categorized into three general types: the informal conversational interview, the general interview guide approach, and the standardized open-ended interview (Marshall & Rossman 1995: 80). Qualitative in-depth interviews are much more like conversations than formal events with predetermined response categories. Qualitative interviews are characterized by a relatively informal style, for example they have the appearance of a conversation or discussion rather than a formal question and answer format. They assume that data are generated via the interaction, because either the interviewee, or the interaction itself, is the data source (Mason 1996:38). It means that the participant's perspective on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant views it, not as the researcher views it. The interviewer does usually have a range of topics, themes, or issues which he or she wishes to cover.

In the coding process, the collection and analysis of interview data were influenced by a number of conceptual frameworks that come out of our context and communities. On the one hand, the way in which researchers see data and the meaning attributed to it, is what makes data useful, interesting, and a contribution to knowledge. On the other hand, our biases and perspectives influence interpretation throughout analysis, from how codes are developed to how results are interpreted. In qualitative interviewing, research questions are designed to explore the ontological position that people's knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interactions are meaningful properties of their social reality. The epistemological position is revealed in such a way in an interview as to gain access to people's interpretations and understandings. Epistemology is contextual, situational and interactional, and this requires us to take a distinctive approach in order to get to what we really want to know in each interview. Knowledge of the social process, change, organization, and meaning will stem from people's accounts and experiences. For this, we need to ask different questions of our different interviewees in order to achieve data which are comparable in key ways.

The role of the interviewer in qualitative research is required to be active and reflexive in the process of data generation rather than act as a neutral data collector. The researcher should be asking people about what is of special interest to them in their accounts, and he should be talking and listening to them. In this way, the interviewer ought to generate a fairer and fuller representation of the interviewees' perspectives.

#### d) Ethnographic interview

As was noted in the discussion of grounded theory itself, the interviewing of a cultural subject is essential in the methods both of ethnographic interviewing and of phenomenological interviewing. Ethnographic interviewing elicits the cognitive structures guiding a participant's worldviews (Marshall & Rossman 1995: 81). The value of the ethnographic interview lies in its focus on culture as seen through the participant's perspective and through a firsthand encounter (Taylor & Bogdan 1984: 77). Spradley (1979) identifies three main types of questions: descriptive, structural, and contrast.

Descriptive questions allow the researcher to collect a sample of the participant's language. Structural questions discover the basic units in that cultural knowledge and contrast questions provide the ethnographer with the meaning of various terms in the participant's language (Marshall & Rossman 1995: 82).

An ethnographic interview is a particular kind of speech event which is identified primarily by the kind of talking that takes place (Spradley 1979: 55). He argues that all speech events have cultural rules for beginning, ending, taking turns, asking questions, pausing, and even for how close to stand to other people. The ethnographic interview gathers most of its data through participant observation.

Spradley states that the three most important ethnographic elements are its explicit purpose, ethnographic explanations, and ethnographic questions (Spradley 1979: 59). When interviewer and informant meet together for an interview, it is necessary to remind the informant where the interview is to go. Processing the interview, the interviewers are led to discovering the cultural knowledge of the informant. It offers explanations to the informant that translate the goal of doing ethnography and eliciting an informant's cultural knowledge into terms the informant will understand. Since the goal of an interviewer is to describe a culture in its own terms, he or she

will talk to others in their cultural setting. When an informant is providing well-recognized cultural information, it becomes necessary to offer an explanation for the type of interview and interview questions that will take place. An ethnographic question is a descriptive question, is the easiest to ask, and they are used in all interviews. The fundamental principle of ethnographic interviewing is to provide a framework within which informants can express their own understandings in their own terms.

#### e) Analysing ethnographic interviews

In an ethnographic interview, we favour discovering the informant's own terms, rather than imposing categories from the outside that create order and pattern. Ethnographic analysis is the search for parts of a culture and their relationships as conceptualised by informants (Spradley 1979: 93). In order to describe a cultural meaning system in the informant's own terms, the interviewer must analyse cultural data in a way that is distinct from other forms of analysis used in social science research.

One is mainly concerned with a cultural meaning system which is encoded in social representations. Cultural meaning permeates the experience of most human beings in all societies. As previously mentioned, social representations are forms of social thinking used to communicate, understand, and master the social, material, and intellectual environment. Social representation itself consists of anything we can perceive or experience. We have perceived these terms as written words, but they are also based on speech events. But the range of things that can become representations goes far beyond speech sounds. Social representations relate with cognitive representational phenomena by using linguistic representational phenomena. A linguistic representational phenomenon is the domain by virtue of an

understanding of its epistemic grounding.

However, language is more than a means of communication about reality; it is a tool for constructing reality. Language occupies such a large part of human experience that most of us take it for granted. Different languages create and express different realities. In processing an interview, one will discover the cultural reality of a particular group of people. The questions are: how do the natives categorize experience, how do informants use these categories in customary behaviour, how to ask questions that make sense to informants, and what questions lie behind everyday activities (Spradly 1979: 17-18)?

Narrative is a form of meaning making (Polkinghorne 1988: 36). Narrative expresses its work of configuration in linguistic productions, oral and written. Narrative displays the extensive variety of ways of the imaginative creation of stories about fictitious characters, either passed on as part of a cultural heritage or as contemporary artistic creations. These productions affect human actions and events, which are particularly sensitive to the temporal dimension of human existence. Narrative is also a response to the human experience of feelings of discord and fragmentation in regard to time.

According to Ricoeur, the act of narrating is common to these two narrative types: historical narrative and fictional narrative. Narrative is independently established on each side of the line which divides the two narrative genres. It assumes that semantic categories marked by linguistic forms are related to meaningful cultural categories. Meaningful cultural categories in language have also been expanded to more general ethnographic methods, which have produced both descriptive accounts of cultural categories and generative models.

The indigenous linguistic phenomenon must rest upon its domestic discourse system, which is enmeshed with its germane socio-cultural web of meaning. The ordinary, common sense and language use can explain vastly more of the very nature of the phenomena of the host context than any scientific, non-historical, and non-contextual terms. The linguistic realities of Koreans can be best represented and understood by a perspective appreciating their own indigenous discourse system. Choi has even recommended that the indigenous discourse system related to the folk phenomena be the very storehouse of the Korean culture (Choi 2000: 18). Koreans' particular cultural dimensions are lurking right behind their daily discourse system. Their native discourse system may appear to be too plain or ordinary to be admitted to the fortress of scientific inquiries. It is true that the very phenomenological realities of Korean cultural dimensions are the plain clothes of their daily discourse.

It is through this mediational role of context that language comes into existence as it is to us. Cultural reality is generated only when the linguistic reality is actualised in a specific context. The meaning of the word and cultural reality related to that particular linguistic repertoire cannot be conceived of in separation from the context. A linguistic reality arises only when the person enters the process in which he/she sets out to construct the conceptual structure of language. Prior approval by the community is a given stipulation of a word having meaning. Whatever it is termed, it is the community and its social-cultural conditions that define the legitimate candidates of personal word-reality.

Discourse theorists maintain that talk is constitutive of the realities within which we live, rather than expressive of an earlier, discourse-independent reality. Discourse does not primarily serve an expressive function, nor does communication merely involve the transmission of a preformed message. One argues that both language and communication are cultural practices within which the various realities one

encounters are constituted. Discourse involves meanings, conversations, narratives, explanations, accounts and anecdotes. Shotter argues that talk and conversation are the primary human reality (Shotter 1992: 157). The primary function of our speech is to give shape to and to coordinate diverse social actions (Ibid 176). Edwards argues that discourse is a realization of underlying processes and structures of knowledge which are not as representations of pre-formed cognitions but forms of social action (Edwards 1991: 517). There is no meaning to reality behind the discourses that discourse represents. The very objects of our world are constituted as such in and through discourse.

There are various kinds of discourse, for example, referential, expressive, persuasive, narrational, and poetical. Different kinds of discourse require different patterns of comprehension. The merits of the narrative discourse have greatly to do with its accounting for the phenomenological representations of Koreans regarding their social interactions. This process has revealed the Korean cultural-specific interactional characteristics, but also brings to focus the dynamic layers of social interactions, which have received relatively little attention in the Western theories of communicative interaction.

Embedded in those indigenous narratives are ideas of how Koreans have made sense of the world, and how they continue to naively construct theories about their environment. Koreans have a rich resource of indigenous narratives too worthy and unique to be equivocated with foreign discourse. It is hoped that the discourse model of Koreans will serve as a heuristic model for such indigenously schematised attempts of Korean studies. The lifeworld of people attaches enormous heuristic values to indigenous narratives. My studies and other Korean studies have made extensive use of the indigenous narratives which people use in their lifeworld.

#### 2.4.1.2 Axial coding

This stage of coding is focused on one category at a time, the axes discovered by open coding. Again we look for patterns in the data rather than trying our own set of categories. Axial coding puts that data back together in new ways after open coding, by making connections between a category and its subcategories. This is done by utilizing a coding paradigm involving conditions, context, action / interactional strategies and consequences (Strauss & Corbin 1990:96). This is the specifying of a category in terms of the conditions that give rise to it; the context in which it is embedded; the action/interactional strategies by which it is handled, managed, carried out; and the consequences of those strategies.

We have a thick description of social life through an open coding process. Thick descriptions present in close detail the context and meanings of events and scenes that are relevant to those involved in the Korean lifeworld. We try to render a true to life picture of what people say and how they act in the ethnographic approach. Cultural description is marked by minimal interpretation and conceptualisation. It is more a sharing of interest in the human cultural phenomenon. At this stage, we need to develop cultural propositions in order to understand Koreans' traditional meaning. A cultural proposition is between life as lived, life as experienced, and life as told. In every day life, the most important skill or task is to learn the cultural propositions and maintenance of relationships with others. To properly understand the Korean personality and to construct the cultural character of the Korean people, it is necessary to fully understand the two aspects: learning social interaction skills and tasks, and interpreting and participating in social interactions within a proper, normative, socially prescribed manner. The procedure of analytic induction has been the principal means by which researchers have attempted to do this. It is a procedure for verifying theories and propositions based on literatures and interview data. In

other words, it arrives at a proper fit between the data and explanations of social phenomena.

Roughly speaking, on the one hand, cultural descriptions refer to interpretivism to make a case for cultural and historical specificity, interpretive understanding, and hermeneutic or semiotic analysis as a method of investigation. In this view, humans' experiences and actions should be interpreted and understood within the sociocultural-historical context of their enactment. The interpretivist regards culture and meaning as essentially part of the human being and largely constituting the person, and interpretivists also generally side with the ontology idealist, taking the view that ideas and culture are a different kind of existence. The empiricist, on the other hand, stresses universality, causal explanation, and experimentation as a method of investigation. Empirical hypotheses are thus derived and such hypotheses are tested by experimentation. Experimentation abstracts a cultural phenomenon from its socio-cultural context. The empiricist regards culture as external to human nature.

From this perspective, we suppose that culture is an essential part of human nature. Human beings transmit information both genetically and culturally from one generation to the next. Culture provides material and symbolic tools by which human beings adapt to their ecological and social environment and construct their own images of their world and themselves. The process of enculturation is crucially embedded in the social dynamics involving the developing of cultural propositions and socialization in the social, institutional context. Culture as a meaning system is a cultural group's characteristic way of perceiving the human being made part of its environment. Geertz's (1973) thick description, symbolic anthropology, treats culture as a public text. In the Korean context of conceptualising culture, cultural propositions are understood as a process by which meaningful cultural collective

representations are communicated from one person to another. We examine some collective representations below.

a) The Korean person

This researcher presupposes that the concept of the person treats culture as a central ingredient of the human mind. We will try to clarify the culturally specific or indigenous characteristics of the term identity in Korean society, and the socio-cultural construction process which implies a need for identity to be defined. The Korean conception of the person upheld a collectivism that represents a propagation of an ascribed, communal, and traditional social order rather than individualism. Collectivism is the adherence to or emphasis on the group or on group-based activities or interests. Korea has been viewed as representative of a collective culture (Choi 1997). Oh insists that groupness constitutes one of the socio-cultural constraints of Koreans (Oh 1982: 38). Because Korean collective representations are indigenous to the Korean people, the indigenous approach is adopted here for analysing Korean collective representations. The emphasis is on examining concepts or collective representations that exist in their own language. The following section is devoted to determining the Korean culture-specific properties of 'we-ness' and 'Cheong' discourse. These two concepts are salient and significant in the Korean society.

b) Woori (We-ness)

We-ness discourse includes such disciplines as psychology: Choi S C (1997), Kim U C (1993), Oh S C (1982) Kim J E (1987), Korean studies: Choi B Y (1994a, 1994b, 1997), Lee G T (1995a, 1995b, 1996), and religious studies: Choi J S (1995, 1997) Kim Y H (1979, 1987), Yoo T S (1965) Kim T G (1981).

The cultural psychologists offer a comparison of the self in collectivistic and individualistic societies, and then they examine the indigenous characteristics of the self on its own terms. Choi (1994a, 1994b, 1997), in Korean studies, defines the Korean social character through the historical consciousness and family system as a social structure. In doing so he defines the self of the Korean within the Korean worldview or value system. However, from the religious studies' perspective, their question is "What religion is most influential upon the Korean?" They unhesitatingly answered: Confucianism and Shamanism. They believe that religion strongly influences the self or identity which is maintained in the domain of consciousness or unconsciousness. These religions are a basic ideology for the Korean.

Firstly, the term of 'Woori' is most often used by Korean people to denote a group of people such as our family, an entity such as our nation, and even possessions such as our house, or a person, such as our wife. We discuss the self or identity in the Korean context based on Korean studies and cultural psychology. The nature of Korean selfhood can capture the daily experiential representation of the self of the Koreans. In doing so it is necessary to compare the question of identity as formulated in western academic psychology, specifically 'Who am I?' with the question 'Who am I in We-ness?' Through this process the notion of person is formulated in the relevance of different indigenous constructions.

As a dictionary meaning, we-ness indicates group members related to themselves. It indicates that we-ness is the self belonging in all kinds of groups: The Koreans have a group characteristic identity called collectivism. But Korean collectivism cannot be understood adequately according to Western notions of group or group-based tendencies. According to Choi, this was due to the fact that Western group discourse presupposes a notion lacking in Korean discourse, namely that persons are

individuated elements of the whole (Choi 2000: 145). It appears to be formulated to conveniently provide an emphasis comparable to the Western individualist framework. As previously mentioned, the Western sense of the self or individual is characterized by its assumption of an exclusively unitary, autonomous, and independent human entity. The Western notion of the group, as applied and understood in Western literature, lacks the conceptual properties to describe the Korean collectivism. It is a socio-culturally foreign and anonymous concept for Korean people. This individualist perspective of collectivism hardly does justice to the indigenous collectivism, as far as that of Korean society is concerned.

However, the term of Korean collectivism is compatible with the socio-cultural context of Korean society. A discussion of this understanding of collectivism follows, with emphasis being placed upon describing and conceptualising the phenomenological representations of the 'we' concept among Koreans. Korean researchers have defined that the relationally bound aggregate is a conceptual core of we-discourse, but not of group-discourse (Choi 1976, Oh 1982, Lee 1995, Yoon 1987). They hold that we-ness discourse is believed to be a better expression of Korean collectivism since it has to do with its conceptual force, that encompasses the elementary parts of individuals within a certain relational context. This relational we-ness discourse omits individual parts and emphasizes 'one-ness' or 'whole-ness.' The Koreans tend to succumb to the inevitability of the situation, or even advocate the necessity of re-orientation to promote the smooth functioning of the whole. This acceptance and willingness play the role of preparing the ground for the cohesive whole. Individual character then becomes deindividuated and depersonalised in the relational context (Lee 1995:144). It holds that individual identity converts to collective identity, the fading of individual elements is toward achieving a unified whole. Collective identity constrains individual presentations such as depersonalisation, is characterized by a unifying whole, and by the individual

controlling him/herself to harmonize with the whole.

The abstraction of 'Woori' can be explained as social representations that are forms of social thinking used to communicate, understand, and constitute collective systems of meaning which may be expressed in values, ideas, and practices. Here, 'Woori' can explain to us that there are two modes of function with social representations (Choi 2000: 152). First, 'Woori' directs the individual to the collective situation and common world, and it also controls the individual to establish rules in a context. Second, 'Woori' tends to describe a communication and interaction that provide rules and law systems for members of the society. From this perspective, the social representation of 'Woori' characterizes the function of an independent and dynamic factor such as depersonalisation which is a transcending state from the personal interpretation itself.

'Woori' formulates not only the cognitive dimension but also the affective and action dimensions. Particularly, the we-ness is infused with affective, emotional force such as intimacy, closeness, love, acceptance, something good, warmth, etc. These affective elements promote adaptation of we-ness and make it possible to sacrifice and make concessions to the group. As we-members repeat their interaction, and the relationships deepen and become more intimate, they come to construct certain affective expectations about the group. The Korean indigenous discourse of 'Woori' is full of such powerful factors absorbing the collective core. The affective force does not seem to directly take part in this attracting process. The affective force can effect an instant magnetization of the parts to the whole.

Secondly, according to Choi, he analysed the Korean social character in terms of its family system and historical consciousness, which is connected with the worldview and value system (Choi 1994). 'Woori' discourse is also strongly under the influence

of the worldview and value system. Worldview as an idea system provides a framework of thinking in order to read the world and social order and provide an understanding of the human being. It is a logical foundation based on the value system. Worldview constitutes that value is actualised and constructed by basic premises such as time and space, human being and nature, total and part, good and evil, and holy and secular. Choi supposed that the Korean worldview and value system originated from the 'Ga' (family) system; it developed during the 'ChoSun' era (Choi 1994: 19). The life of the family-centre constituted a part-whole worldview and family-centre value system. Individual self-realization is actualised from a family system that processes one's own home – one's own occupation – one's own nation. That is, self-realization is achieved only through 'Ga'. This leads to Confucian self-realization as generally seen by means of rising in the world and winning fame.

These factors imply that the self in Korea is defined in the context of the 'Ga' and within relationships. Korean close interpersonal relationships lie in developing and maintaining family relationships. The importance of it being a part-whole worldview is that individuals are thought of as imperfect partial beings, whereby it is a fact that they cannot function properly in society individually. The ideal model for 'we' relationships is that of the family (Sin 1998:213). Once a 'we' relationship is established between partial individuals, they become like family members. In an ideal and perfect situation, a 'we' relationship pursues unlimited care, mutual dependency, and unconditional, self-sacrificing help. So, 'Woori' elicits three major themes: a positive affective bond, oneness or wholeness, and the priority of the 'we' members over the individual. This positive affective bond consolidates the members into a unit, with no boundaries between the 'we' members. 'Woori' implies that such feelings of intimacy lie in understanding the Koreans' culturally shared conceptions of the family system. When Koreans recognize the other person as a 'we' member,

an 'our-side' mental set is activated. And the 'our-side' mental set is a derivative of the Koreans' culturally shared conception of 'we'. It also means that the Koreans' 'Woori' behaviour and feelings are associated with Koreans' cultural conception of Woori.

### c) Cheong

The Korean culture is often called a culture of 'Cheong'. 'Cheong' can be narrowly defined as human affection, but its meaning is much broader. The elusive character of 'Cheong' creates the intrinsically complex nature of 'Cheong' itself. The Koreans' person-related 'Cheong' is one of the most important emotional dimensions, shading the informal or personal aspect of their social relationship. There is no exactly corresponding notion in the West. Most Korean scholars consider 'Cheong' as the fundamental basis of Korean emotionality (Choi S C 1981; Kim J H 1988; Kim Y K 1986; Lee G T 1988; Lee S W 1990; Lee T K 1977; Lee Y R 1986; Yoon T R 1987). Cultural psychologists particularly have defined 'Cheong' as the positive affective bond between individuals. For Choi, the word Cheong in interpersonal relationships can be used in two different ways (Choi 1990, 1991, 1997, 2000: 49, Choi & Choi 1998). One is used when describing the affective bond between two peoples. The other denotes a personal, internal state of affective mind. 'Cheong' develops between individuals when they share in experiences of sorrow and happiness, treat each other like family members, convey a sense of caring and loving, shape long term co-residence or have such contact, experience a common fate and plights, share difficult times, etc. 'Cheong' develops from close attachment to persons, places, or things.

'Cheong' refers to some kind of lingering feelings attached to persons, objects, places; or anything that the 'Cheong'-feeling person has come to contact or

experience in his or her life. A prefix can be added to the word 'Cheong'. For example, if the prefix 'Moe' (meaning mother) is added to 'Cheong', 'Moe-Cheong' refers to an individual's love for one's mother. The Korean mother-child relationship, 'Moe-Cheong,' is the epitome of 'Cheong.' Characteristics that are associated with 'Cheong' are unconditional, sacrifice, empathy, care, sincerity, and shared experience. As the processing of 'Cheong' develops, a dominant phenomenon amongst Koreans is the intimate relationship between parent and children, and the method of caring for children. Choi, Kim, and Yu investigate this intimacy-affective bond between parent and children as a source of parental influence on children (Choi, Kim, and Yu 1995). They have found the result that Korean parents more strongly influence their children than Western parents. Korean parents feel the oneness with children that characterises 'Cheong', sympathy, and solidarity, while Western parents feel an identification with children who are rational, independent, and individualistic.

'In-Cheong' means human compassion and sympathy, and 'Yeul-Cheong' means passion, if either one of the pre-fix 'In' (meaning human) or 'Yeul' (meaning heat) is attached. 'Cheongful' people are, thus, often observed to be emotionally dependent upon others. Because of this emotional dependency embedded in 'Cheong', 'Cheong' can be most likely developed among those between whom intimacy, privacy, and warmly shared feelings are experienced. Koreans can develop the most intimate emotional ties when they feel the shared mind in which each individual's selfhood is ensured by the co-existence of the other's selfhood. For Koreans, giving one's 'Cheong' to somebody means giving one's mind to him or her. They can be most emotionally close to each other when their individual selfhood is opened to and merged into the other's selfhood, creating a fused unit of mind.

In summary, the Western model of the person and social relationships has dominated Korean studies. It now seems this approach is fundamentally flawed. The Western concepts of love, liking, or altruism, for example, are not corresponding to 'Cheong'. 'Cheong' is one of the essential personal characteristics necessary for describing the Koreans' socio-emotional dimension. Reflecting the cultural emphasis of the Korean society on inter-individual relationships, rather than on intra-individual independence, Cheong embodies the emotional links among individuals who are socially and relationally bonded. It is the conceptual nucleus that constitutes the 'Cheong' bond among Koreans.

#### 2.4.1.3 Selective coding

This is the process of selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development (Strauss & Corbin 1998:143). Each existing category is represented in a central category. A central category should be able to account for considerable variation within categories, even while concepts are constructed by the analyst. As the concept is refined analytically through integration with other concepts, the theory grows in depth and explanatory power. By constructed, we mean that an analyst reduces data from many cases into concepts and sets of relational statements that can be used to explain, in a general sense, what is going on (Strauss & Corbin 1998:145). The concept is then able to explain variation by data. So, a theory that is grounded in data should be recognizable to participants, and although it might not fit every aspect of their cases, the larger concepts should apply.

In axial coding, cultural discourse is unique and fitted to local cultural conditions. The local fit and indigenous label appear in their own discipline with the unique cultural inheritance of the local setting. The cultural discourse requires clarifying the

role of the cultural concept that is determined by its cultural setting. Culture is not simply an organization designed, but rather a complex system of internalised adaptation prescriptions evolved, to meet the interesting needs of members of the culture. Each culture develops its own unique system of beliefs, institutions, and sanctions to enable individuals to cope with the environmental stresses that impinge upon them. Then, a cultural discourse should be represented in the core category of culture. To the extent that inference enters into a system, culture will play a large role in determining how discourses are classified. The cultural category constituted by the belief system fulfils in large measure the principal function of the cultural system. The notions of value, worldview, ideology, attitude, knowledge, cosmology and culture are similar and related to what are here called belief and the belief system (Hahn 1973: 208). Beliefs are here defined as general propositions about the world which are held to be true. The person is the locus of beliefs and belief systems. A society can also be characterized as having particular beliefs or belief systems to the extent that its members share these. Beliefs occur in the native's point of view as propositions through which they describe their culture. Society elucidates the nature of belief studies themselves by elucidating their epistemic sources. Epistemological considerations constitute the complexities of the belief system statement and analysis. Beliefs are consciously held in that they involve dispositions in people towards believing a cultural meaning system. Thus belief is defined as a part or aspect of the individual's awareness, but in active terms.

Hahn proposed that understanding beliefs and belief systems involves the following steps: the first, understanding and translation, deals with the nature and difficulties of translation, and the implications of these, and establishes the relevance of translation to understanding. The second, understanding and social interaction, analyses some implications of the anthropologist's interaction with native subjects as a tool of research. The third, the statement and analysis of belief systems,

explicates conceptions of system and analysis with regard to the study of beliefs. Finally, the fourth stage interrelates with the other sections and discusses some implications (Hahn 1973: 209-223).

Simon (1985, 1987), Hughes (1985), Kapur (1987), Kleinman (1978, 1985), Kleinman & Kunstader (1978), and Hahn (1995), as psychiatrists or anthropologists, use the notion of 'culture-bound syndromes' to explore methods of international disease classification. This concept is well used to define the role of culture-specific beliefs and practices in psychiatric syndromes. The syndromes are a group of signs and conditions characterized by a particular type of activity or behaviour. The syndromes are simply unusual and striking, it is necessary to group the syndromes which are significantly similar. The syndromes, then, should be classified by descriptive features that are as interesting as they are. The establishment of boundaries between classes is not simply the result of straightforward inference from empirical facts, but rather the result of their social uses as a means of producing cognitive and symbolic order. The creation of the categorical system and concept is grounded in the observation of signs and recording of data according to their shared attributes, which are taken as the basic data and assumed to have universal application. Hughes insists on the term 'culture-bound' through a culturally informed use of this categorizing scheme, and through the use of a concept of culture rather dynamically and not statically (Simon & Hughes 1985: 5). Therefore, the syndromes are uniquely or relatively more influenced in their etiology and expression by the specific cultural setting.

An exploration of culture-bound syndromes shows the variety of forms of propositions and range of human disciplines. Hahn (1995:45), Kleinman (1980, 1985), and Carr (1982) observed that culture-bound syndromes have evolved as the result of a social learning process in which the conceptual and value systems, and

the social structural forms that mediate their effects, have been legitimated within the indigenous system. Hahn and Carr note that the 'culture-bound syndrome' is an explanatory principle for distinctions between illness, as 'culture-bound syndrome', and disease, as 'culture-free syndrome' (Carr 1978: 289, Hahn 1995: 47). They illustrate that culture-bound syndromes are the particular elements that are psychologically incorporated by culturally specific concepts, and given this established syndrome. Then, illness must be shown to be caused by psychosocial factors in a given culture. It is concerned with disciplines such as psychology and anthropology. On the other hand, culture-free syndromes are phenomena that appear universally, that are the legitimate concern of medicine, physiology and psychiatry as a real disease. It is a matter of general theory to express a linear conception of cause and effect. But there is a discrepancy between Western criteria and indigenous systems in the classification of syndromes. Indigenous informants generally include more cases under a given syndrome name and more symptoms in individual cases than do Western investigators using specified criteria (Simons 1987: 25).

However, Kleinman attempts to develop a dialectic approach between Western criteria and indigenous systems. We live in a mediated, phenomenological, human world in which perception as much as action, interpretation as much as experiences, are the work of a dynamic dialectic between biophysical constraints and cultural constructions (Kleinman 1987: 49). Social structure, as a symbolic world, extends into the interiority of the person's body-mind, and physiological processes resonate systematically with human relationships. What we categorize is always a reworking of what has been previously categorized culturally and experienced personally. Hence, classifications will include the culture-bound syndromes not as a separate category, but will rather incorporate throughout the fact that some current categories will be adequate and that some entirely new categories will be needed.

For Hahn, human societies and cultures influence any epistemology, which differently affects the views of people who thus see the world differently (Hahn 1995: 76). Socio-cultural effects arise from the belief system. The culture of a society constructs the way societal members think and feel about the problem. The reality constructed by society helps its members make sense of the experience of a problem. Mediation, a mode of socio-cultural influence on a problem, is perhaps the best recognized of the socio-cultural effects. The concepts, ideas, and values of a society's culture guide the behaviour of societal members, distributing them in time, space, and activity. A society's beliefs produce problems not only by transforming persons but by more direct causation as well. It is true therefore that formulating ethnography and learning the language constitute essential steps in the process of belief system statement and analysis.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

Korean self-understanding is at the heart of the problem in the present research process. It connects very directly with the problem of suffering which is the main subject of this thesis. The present researcher has argued that Korean self-understanding occurs in the Korean lifeworld that is interconnected with the Korean identity and the Korean social character, that is an effective path to integrate with the Korean personality and the Korean society. The notion of 'lifeworld' is a storehouse of unquestioned cultural givens, which ingrain cultural background assumptions. It offers both an intuitively preunderstood context for the action situation and resources for the interpretative process in which participants in communication engage. Here, we concentrate more on the cultural discourses and identity formation, pursuing a communication model for the Korean.

Understanding of Korean people requires an indigenous perspective to develop an

adequate constitutive scientific approach which establishes basic concepts and theoretical frames. It is true that the most appropriate methodology in this research is grounded theory which is based on the systemic generating of theory from data. Korean collective representations which are accomplished, adequately attempt to use a grounded theory that is able to describe cultural propositions such as 'Woori' and 'Cheong'. This methodology can examine the other cultural propositions: 'Han' (suffering), 'Che-Myon' (social face), 'Nun-Chi' (tactfulness), 'Ping-Gye' (account, justification, excuse), 'Shim-Cheong' (mind), etc. These concepts lucidly conceptualise the Korean personality and the Korean society.

Korean self-understanding can be achieved with social interaction or communicative action by means of cultural characters, which integrate cultural discourse and identity formation. It generates self-reflection by gained critical self-awareness. Thus, Korean self-understanding provides a person's reality and communication model for the pastoral situation and counselling. Grounded theory is an infrastructure to explore suffering as an indigenous form of lamentation in Korea.

### **Chapter 3: Han as an indigenous form of lamentation in Korea**

### 3.1 Introduction

The researcher believes that most Koreans express Han to represent national emotion. The concept of Han is considered by scholars as well as by the general public to represent the underlying psyche of the Korean mentality and ethos of Korean culture. That is, Han is the Korean collective representation. Many scholars in anthropology and literature consider Han as embodying the indigenous folk-spirit or ethos of the Korean mind and culture (e.g., Choi K S 1991; Kim Y K 1975, 1980, 1986; Kim Y W 1986, 1989; Lee K T 1986, 1991).

However, the theme of suffering is not new in Western Christian and philosophical theology. As one of the oldest themes in suffering, Theodicy is the whole subject comprising the problem of evil and its attempted resolution. Leibniz and Hegel, as philosophical theologians, are the respected classic proponents of theodicy, which is the justification of God as legitimate. Anselm, Luther, Kitamori, and Moltmann, in the theology of the cross, were to address the issue of the pain of God. The researcher will briefly sketch the problem of suffering from a Christian perspective.

In order to clarify the general research processing, two axes have been drawn. One represents the Korean Han concept; the other represents the symbolic dimension intended in the communication. The Korean Han representation relates to the interaction between people and within the socio-cultural dimension. The symbolic dimension concerns the meaning attributed to suffering. Both axes will be discussed consecutively.

As has been outlined, the Korean collective representations comprise external or interpersonal communication in the socio-cultural context. This may occur in speech events, narrative, and cultural propositions. We will conceptualise the notion of Han

by means of collective representations. Meanwhile, the symbolic dimension contains Christian interpretation on the one hand and personal interpretation on the other. It is a correlation between the Christian meaning and aspects of personal experience. In this way one's own life story may be clarified.

As noted in Chapter 2, grounded theory explores the Korean 'Han' representation by using both qualitative and quantitative research. The first part of this chapter reviews the literature that analyses the concept of 'Han'. The concept of 'Han' is made explicit and distinct by examining 'Han' as an episode. The second part of this chapter provides an empirical study conducted with an empirical test on Korean immigrants in South Africa. Thus, we will construct a Korean communication model or theory.

## **3.2 Suffering and theodicy**

### **3.2.1 Suffering**

Some people agree that God exists; some people do not believe that there is a God. But all people agree that people suffer. Suffering is a common problem for all human beings. Suffering does not necessarily only concern our physical condition, but our psychological, social, cultural, political, and ecological condition as well. Illness, disease and health are conceptual categories; so are the various kinds of classifications which we apply to them. First of all, our task is to classify suffering itself.

Roughly speaking, suffering categorizes two boundaries to biophysical and cultural domains. According to psychiatrists and anthropologists, they use the terminological distinction of 'culture-bound syndrome'. Carr and Kenny define that disease entities

are regarded as universal phenomena, the results of biological factors; culture-bound syndromes, in contrast, are not like disease and result from social factors (Hahn 1995: 45). Such classifications are determined by our past experiences, expectations and purposes. They also determine the social organization, thought process, behaviours, and techniques related to healing in various socio-cultural settings (Kleinman & Kunstadter 1978: 1). There is no immutable, absolute reality about these.

Kapur has discussed how value judgements enter into the definition of health, illness and disease (Kapur 1987: 44). One examines the meaning of distress experienced by means of: the biological processes: what enzymes, what neurotransmitters, what cellular and intracellular components are disturbed? The psychological processes: what personality dynamics, what defence mechanisms are playing a part? And the social-cultural processes: what demographic variables, what cultural differences, what group interactions are related to this distress? The Western version of monothetic classification, grounded in the logic of Aristotle, provides the foundation for classification of diseases today, and is based upon the assumption that one can arrive at correct descriptions and arrange them in valid typological relations through observation, classification and generalizing (Lock 1987: 36). The medical model implies that the person is reduced to a functional organism. The concept of disease focuses on the person as an organism composed of cells, tissues and organs that must function adequately and in reasonable harmony to ensure biological continuity. It is agreed that the biophysical domain is a culture-free classification of universal phenomena.

But folk illness, which includes all indigenously defined illness entities, would be retained as a general term, including the culture-bound syndromes but not limited to them (Simons 1987: 21). For example, we investigate the Korean 'Hwa-Byung' that

is the term for a Korean diagnosis; it is not known in Western psychiatry. Korean psychiatrists have an indigenous approach; they use 'Hwa-Byung' in general public terms and approach indigenous psychiatry in preference to the cross-cultural approach. They examine and interpret 'Hwa-Byung' not by the usual psychiatric frame, but by using the language categories used by people to describe the 'Hwa-Byung' experience. 'Hwa' (anger) describes the condition of impatient strong emotion and feeling chagrined in the Korean dictionary. We illustrate the case of 'Hwa-Byung' below:

Case: an old woman lived in a fishing village:

Her son died in a crash with a taxi while riding a motorbike. The police closed the investigation and heard only the taxi-driver's testimony that asserted the motorbike was turning illegally. But, in actual fact it was the taxi-driver turning illegally, as proved by the accident scene. Upon her petitioning the government for a re-investigation, the staff of the taxi company threatened the old mother, and offered a bribe to the policeman.

In these circumstances, the old mother suffered from 'Hwa-Byung', complaining of fullness in the epigastrium, indigestion, dyspnea, diffuse muscle and joint pain and fatigue. Choi characterizes 'Hwa-Byung' as an extreme mental anguish, feeling chagrined and angered in great agitation, extreme excitation and circulatory exhaustion and an impediment of emotion and personality (Choi 2000: 362). Alford also similarly sees that 'Hwa-Byung' is the Korean people's inherent syndrome, such as suppressed anger (Alford 2000: 131). This syndrome includes feelings of anger, fear, and suffocating. 'Hwa-Byung' involves the peculiar Korean cultural emotional system and has unique Korean characteristics, developing processes, and symptoms. This disorder of emotion and personality develops physiological and physical symptoms. 'Hwa-Byung' is difficult to place in disease classifications which have their origins in Western cultures. In this perspective, it has been proposed that all

illness is in fact culture bound (Prience & Tchong-Laroche 1987: 3). Collections of signs and symptoms remain constant over time and are verifiable by all investigators. Thus, the 'Hwa-Byung' status, as an illness, must be seen to be caused by psychosocial factors in the given culture.

Folk-illness uniquely and meaningfully emerges from local cultural experience. Sometimes, locally, illness is attributed to spirit possession and treated by a special healer such as a shaman or witch doctor. The meaning of illness both for individuals and for cultures is an important area of interpretation in its own right. It is based on all indigenous beliefs about the cause of any culture bound illness, even those with specific signs and symptoms. Such beliefs are bound up with each syndrome's meaning and function within a culture, curative practices, moral evaluations, and so forth. They reflect a society's representations and values. Cultural values often influence the mode of symptom presentation, determine the manner in which the patient will communicate his or her distress and influence many variables in the process of seeking help (Lin 1983: 105).

This fact should be judged by its social uses as a means of producing cognitive and symbolic order. The recognition of illness is grounded in the observation of signs and recording of symptoms. Particularly, the East Asian diagnosis is valuable in facilitating a search for the psychosocial and environmental origins of an illness episode, and for interviewing the patient (Lock 1987: 37).

### 3.2.2 Theodicy

The term 'theodicy' was first used in the seventeenth century; it is defined as the effort to reconcile God's power and justice with the reality of suffering. It begins, in philosophical precedents, within a framework concerned with defining both God's

existence and God's goodness and power. It requires the adherent of a theistic faith to reconcile the existence of an omnipotent, omniscient and morally perfect God with the existence of evil. Theodicy reflects on the sense and non-sense of suffering and asks how suffering in this world influences our speaking about God.

### 3.2.2.1 Theodicy as a philosophical perspective

The term 'theodicy' owes its official birth to a 1710 text of Leibniz (Das 1997: 563). In Leibniz' theodicy, in its most general form, the justifying circumstance is that the actual world is the best possible world, and the justifying principle is that God is justified in permitting whatever evils are required for the existence of such a world. For Leibniz, the lesser evil is always taken up in the divine calculation of that greater good which is the whole. According to this logic, God's will is bound by the rational laws of non-contradiction and of compossibility. Pain in some part is necessary in order to make the whole more powerful. From this point of view, physical suffering is the price we must pay for the benefit of being embodied, and moral suffering is the price of human freedom. Hence God is always justified. Suffering in the best possible world is always justified by the ultimate goodness of the whole.

Hegel also picked up Leibniz' line of thought; he posited that the 'philosophy of history' is via theodicy. The logic of history reveals the good order of things by reconciling understanding and reality. Hegel derives their intelligibility and their justification from their belonging to the overarching whole: the truth is the whole. This exchange between the whole and the constituent parts has an explicitly dialectical effect. Indeed, the logic of history not only determines reconciliation among people, but also which are the physical and psychic pains which individuals and groups must suffer in order to find their place in a society which is reconciled with itself. Hegel emphasized the need of self-emptying as a way to reach a higher

harmony.

On reflection, Leibniz and Hegel worked this out in categories which are still too metaphysical and abstract. Hegel's theodicy always allows that the conservative powers in society are in the right. It raises the suspicion that theology blesses the existing power and ignores the cry of the oppressed. Thus, theodicy becomes suspect as a theory of legitimation.

### 3.2.2.2 From theodicy to anthropodicy

Despite the efforts of these theologians, the thought persists in many quarters that theodicy is perhaps one of the least satisfactory areas of the theological enterprise (Surin 1983: 225). There were so many claims to have solved the theodicy problem which have appeared to be unwarrantedly optimistic. It leads to an important social issue arising from Hegel's theodicy. Geertz (1977) stated that the problem of suffering is an experiential challenge in whose face the meaningfulness of a particular pattern of life threatens to dissolve. The challenge for religion was paradoxically, not how to avoid suffering but how to suffer. How could individuals be supported by religious systems of meaning and patterns of sociality?

The intellectual thrust of the Enlightenment was to secularise this problem, to transform theodicy into anthropodicy. Nietzsche reacts against the rational theodicy of the German idealist, which is Leibniz and Hegel's theodicy of history. Nietzsche's polemical expression 'God is dead' announced that a certain concept of God was now dead, that is the traditional metaphysical idea of a God (Fiddes 1988:177). The God of rational legitimations must sooner or later collapse because this God denies the vital power of life within us (De Schrijver 1990:102). Nietzsche asserted that death is a cultural fact. Quite simply, belief in God is no longer an option (Leech

1985:4). Many contemporaries assume atheistic stances because of their discontent with a political system which legitimises itself religiously (De Schrijver 1990: 101). They doubt the good order of the world and reject God and religion.

Nietzsche's point of departure is a desire for life that frees itself from the yoke of imposed systems of meaning and which radically opts for an interpretation which is to be personally constructed. Nietzsche's theory of interpretation presented a doctrine of interpretation which would allow us as many perspectives in the interpretation of history as possible (De Schrijver 1990:104). We are in a new interpretative situation that requires and permits the interpreters of the church to work towards a new understanding. Paradigms now shift from one-dimensional concepts of God to multi-dimensional concepts. Toulmin proposes that reversing the postmodern paradigm, 'we move from written to oral, universal to particular, general to local, and timeless to timely' (Brueggemann 1993:6).

Nietzsche insists that vital contextual interpretation provides more satisfaction than the ready-made answer dictated by universal logic. Nietzsche criticises interpretation of suffering in a logically impeccable way (Whiteside 1993: Introduction 3). This implies a shift from rationality to perspective. There thus emerges a perspective of freedom as representation and appearance which allows us to look at suffering differently. Nietzsche insists that not a monotheistic God, but human beings, will be fashioned under the sign of the self-affirmation of the subject who defends his differential uniqueness (De Schrijver 1990:110). As with Nietzsche's critical analysis, suffering is a contextual issue concerning a problem of human existence.

However, Kleinman, Das, & Lock deal with the theme of 'social suffering' against those who retain some faith in traditional religious explanations of suffering. Social suffering is not concerned simply with ideological argument, but may be used to

explain the actions of those who inflict suffering on vast numbers, by reference to the larger cultural, social, and political conditions of the contemporary world. Political and economic factors shape the distribution of suffering in the contemporary world. They see social suffering as calling for a linking of social policy with health policy, social theory and theory in the humanities with health science and public health categories (1996: preface 9). Kleinman & Kleinman observe suffering as a social experience: 1) Collective modes of experience shape individual perceptions and expressions. 2) Social interactions enter into an illness experience (Kleinman & Kleinman 1996: 2). This means that relationships and interactions take part in the experience of suffering. Its collective mode and intersubjective processes can be shown to be reshaped by the distinctive cultural meanings of time and place. Social suffering addresses cultural representations which elaborate different modes of suffering. Cultural representations require not only engagement with what is at stake for participants in those local worlds, but also bringing those local participants into the process of developing and assessing programmes in an ethnographic context of action. As suffering is socially produced, human problems have their origins and consequences in the social force inflicted on human experience. Social experience is transformed in and by developing historical, ethnographic, and narrative studies that provide a more powerful understanding of the cultural process. It is in collective life that individuals seek to understand their experiences and to work towards healing. Hence, suffering as a social perspective seeks imaginatively to probe its many dimensions, to make more precise its various meanings.

### 3.2.2.3 Theodicy as the theology of the cross

However, the church has long debated whether God can suffer like a human being. The notion of the suffering God could be of paramount importance in the theology of the cross. There have been many theologians who have held to the idea of God's

suffering. Among them, the present researcher would single out Luther, Kitamori and Moltmann as strong advocates of the notion of a suffering God. Their ideas concerning God's suffering will be briefly discussed.

a) Martin Luther

Luther was the major theologian to address the issue of the suffering of God. Luther developed his *theologia crucis* into a program of critical and reformation theology (Moltmann 1974:72). Luther was convinced that only through the cross of Christ is God's Word revealed; the cross constitutes the only genuine theology (Oberman 1989:248). The theology of the cross has a significance and urgency in the present century (McGrath 1985:2). We find Luther's developing theological insights crystallised into one of the most powerful and radical understandings of the nature of Christian theology.

In speaking of the wrath of God, Luther said that God's wrath is not directed against a human being but against his / her lack of faith (Oberman 1989:315). Every sin insults and wounds God. Toward sin, God responds with wrath. Luther indicates that the wrath of God is not an expression of God's essence but the undeniable relational entity existing between God and sinners. For him, wrath is God's alien work against God's creative work. Wrath is not essential to God, but is, rather, an existential expression of God's suffering. Luther addressed the issue of God's suffering in his theology of the cross. He employed the terms 'theology of the cross' and 'theology of glory' to describe the knowledge of God (Ebeling 1972:226). The theology of the cross delineates the crucified God and the hidden God (McGrath 1985:161). The theology of glory perceives God from the standpoint of His divine work in creation, while the theology of the cross understands God from the standpoint of divine suffering.

The theology of the cross is the main subject of Luther's thought. For him, the wisdom of the cross is the standard of all genuine theology. For Luther, it is impossible to know God except through the cross. The knowledge of God is not theoretical knowledge but involves the entirety of human existence. It is impossible for us to view the cross as an objective reality in Christ without knowing ourselves as crucified with Christ (Althaus 1966:28). To Luther, the cross is the expression of the divine pain. The cross ends all speculation about the divine character. To unbelievers, God appears to be wrathful and angry, but to believers, God reveals himself as vulnerable through suffering. Therefore the cross can be understood in terms of the human experience of suffering.

Nevertheless, there is a problem in Luther's approach to divine knowledge. He overemphasised the cross of Jesus Christ as the only way to know God. In reality, not only through Christ's death, but also through his life do we come to know God. Even in the incarnation, we find the agony and wounds of God. The divine helplessness is shown throughout the life of Jesus Christ. It is impossible to separate Jesus' life from his cross. Our knowledge of God must derive from a balance between the life and the cross of Jesus Christ.

#### b) Kazoh Kitamori

Kitamori is a Lutheran thinker who conspicuously spoke about the suffering of God in his "Theology of the pain of God" (Kitamori 1966). Kitamori does in fact make the conflict between the wrath and love of God the very basis of his theology of the pain of God (Fiddes 1988:22). Using Luther's concept of the wrath and love of God, God fighting with God at Golgotha, Kitamori synthesised God's wrath and love within a third dimension: the pain of God (Kitamori 1964:21). Kitamori makes a

distinction between the grief of God and the suffering of God. He views the grief of God as a dialectic between wrath and love (Kitamori 1964:108-112). God overcomes His wrath towards sin through His love for humankind. The grief of God is wrath that has been conquered by love. The grief of God is the negative expression of a love that does the impossible. In the cross, wrath battles with love, all within the same God. This grief expresses itself in the fact that the Father allows the Son to die.

To him, the essence of God is the divine pain as revealed at the cross: This essence can be comprehended only from the words on the cross (Kitamori 1964:47). For him, the essence of God means the heart of God, which is pain. Kitamori was critical of western Christianity's preservation of the idea of divine impassability influenced by Greek philosophy. One of his theological tasks was to win over the theology which advocates a God who has no pain (Kitamori 1964:22). His task was twofold: to advocate the all-embracing nature of God and to include the pain of God in the all-embracing divine nature. Through God's pain, God resolves human pain and through God's own pain Jesus Christ heals human wounds (Kitamori 1964:20).

How does God heal human pain? Kitamori believes that God heals us through our own participation in God's pain. To him, 'take up your cross and follow me' means to serve the pain of God through your own pain. By serving God through our pain, our pain is healed in sharing divine salvation (Kitamori 1964:52). Kitamori, however, holds that pain as God's essence cannot be interpreted as substance. The pain of God is not a concept of substance, but it is a concept of relation, this being the nature of God's love (Kitamori 1964:16). In suggesting this relational model, he rejects the accusation of patripassianism by accusing his detractors in turn of asserting a non-relational model of God. God's suffering is produced by the tension between God's essential nature and God's existence in the world. It is fully revealed in the incarnation and crucifixion.

### c) Jürgen Moltmann

According to Moltmann, the cross of Jesus Christ is the centre of all Christian theology for all theological themes have their focus on the crucified God (Moltmann 1974:4). It reveals who God really is and who Jesus is. At the cross, Jesus died abandoned by God, the cross exposing God's self-abandonment and self-identity. Moltmann bases his theology on the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Moltmann 1974:65). The event of the crucifixion, particularly Jesus' loud cry, is the centre of the theology of the cross: Jesus died crying out to God, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In the God-forsakenness of Jesus, we see that God has made the suffering of the world his own in the cross of his son (Moltmann 1974:227-8). This indicates the true identity of God. Moltmann understands the death of Jesus on the cross as God's active suffering (Fiddes 1988: 61). Moltmann's concept of God allows God-himself to be crucified in Jesus. God takes upon himself the judgement for human sin and shares the destiny of humanity.

The theology of the cross means a radical change in the western Christian concept of God. The God concept inspired by the Greeks is one of apathy, with immutability as a static-ontic category. In contrast, the theology of the cross is one in which the pathos of God is emphasised. It is in the pathos that God reveals Himself in such a way. He becomes involved in loving solidarity with the suffering of human beings: God is in our suffering and our suffering is in God. This identification describes the core of God. Christ the crucified is the center of the human's true theology and permits knowledge of God. This presupposes that while indirect knowledge of God is possible through his works, God can be seen and known directly only in the cross of Christ.

But a question arises: how do we know God through the events of the cross? Both Luther and Moltmann maintain that we must first understand the event of the crucifixion by our participation in Christ's death, which provides us with the knowledge of the suffering of God. How, then, do we participate in Christ's death and suffering? While it is clear that we cannot experience Christ's suffering directly, we can have an indirect experience of the suffering of Jesus by sharing the suffering of the downtrodden. Without knowing the suffering of people in the world, we cannot understand the cross of Jesus Christ, nor the reality of God, nor the knowledge of the trinity. We experience Christ's crucifixion in the world through the oppressed.

Moltmann's theology of the cross is an inter-trinitarian event that becomes a constituent element in the being of God. Somehow, he suggests, it is the beginning of God's history of universal suffering, so that the Trinitarian God-event on the cross means the history of God (Moltmann 1974:255). Immanent trinity and economic trinity are replaced by a staurological trinity within which immanence and economy alternate compatibly. The economic trinity does not merely reveal the immanent trinity; the economic trinity reflects back to the immanent trinity and initiates suffering in God. From a Trinitarian perspective, the theology of the cross means a dynamic, inter-Trinitarian event. The Holy Spirit is thus an ongoing, future-revealing and liberating agent of the work between the Father and the Son.

Moltmann goes beyond the boundaries defined by the revelatory and nouthetic dimension of the cross towards an inter-Trinitarian definition of being. Therefore, God proves this in His compassionate humanity. He proves his divinity, as a dynamic dialectic within the historicity of the events of the cross.

#### 3.2.2.4 Theodicy as the existential question of suffering

When people are weighed down by the suffering they have to bear existentially, they express their deeper questions and doubts. These are concerned with the meaning of life. Suffering enters life by the door of the human quest for meaning and fulfilment. The burning question then is: why, and why me, for God's sake? These questions are more concentrated on human existence than on God's justification. They are concerned with people's attitudes and communication within themselves and with others about these religious symbols and ideas (Van der Ven & Vossen 1995: 8-9). These are related to the question: what is suffering really in an existential sense? What is the function of religious symbols and ideas in dealing with suffering? What does communication about suffering and religion imply and which hermeneutical theological aspects are at issue in this?

Particularly, empirical theologians, such as Vermeer, Van der Ven, & Vossen 1996, 1997; Hutchison, Greer & Ciarrocchi 1999; Vossen 1993; Van der Ven 1989; and Van der Ven & Vossen 1995, have attempted empirical research on the effects of an experimental theodicy course in giving pastoral opportunities to people to stimulate belief. Van der Ven & Vossen (1995) attempted to explore religious ways of dealing with suffering by using six models of theodicy. Dealing with suffering implies a process of coping in which thought, feeling and action are reshaped. Coping means that things gain a new place, a new meaning, in life. It is mainly concerned with a cognitive-emotional reconstructing process. One's image of God makes specific interpretations of the sufferer's images, symbols, models, valuations and preferences in mid-suffering. Understanding of the image of God enables a reframing of the sufferer's cognitive-emotional frame of reference in which feelings of trust and acceptance arise and consolation or positive feelings emerge. Thus, religious models of interpretation may therefore influence the personal experience of suffering.

The theodicy model, as a religious interpretation of suffering, is executed by two modes of implicit and explicit theodicy: implicit theodicy relates to the cognitive and

affective aspects of the religious consciousness of ordinary people. Explicit theodicy refers to the systematisation of such motives by theologians (Van der Ven & Vossen 1995: 17). Explicit theodicy systematises the essential doctrines of God such as God's omnipotence and God's love, and concepts of theodicy in which an absolute-transcendent image of God and an immanent-transcendent image of God are present, as in Schillebeeckx (1974) and Schoonenbeg (1986). Six models of theodicy are summarized below.

- The retaliation model: God sends suffering as a punishment for sin. God is an absolute-transcendent supreme judge.
- The plan model: God makes use of the suffering in a larger plan he has for man and the world. God's omnipotence is primary, God guides earthly happenings according to His intentions.
- The therapy model: to hold a midway position between the absolute and immanent-transcendent models. Suffering is viewed as a means of purifying people in order to realize their true humanity.
- The compassion model: God is close to the sufferer in pity. He reveals Himself in the face of Jesus. He comforts, supports, heals, and establishes community.
- The vicarious suffering model: God is the close inspirer of self-sacrifices for the benefit of others. The innocent sufferer takes the place of God Himself in His surrender to other sufferers.
- The mystical model: suffering is a way to intensify the intimate relation between God and the human being. On the side of the sufferer, the desire for surrender to God takes pride of place, through which physical, psychic, and social suffering is transformed into the mystical suffering of separation from God.

Van der Ven stated that the retaliation, plan, and therapy models are related to the so called traditional-theoretical theodicy on the one hand, while the compassion, vicarious suffering, and mystical models belong to the tradition-critical, practical theodicy on the other hand (Van der Ven 1998: 212-214). Practical theodicy models are the communicative orientation of the dialectic between our modern culture and the true content of Christian faith. This communicative action of theodicy models is the hermeneutical process employed to establish the correlation between the traditional Christian faith, such as the kerygmatic orientation, and the sufferer's own situation, such as the participating orientation. Empirical theologians are to extend a communicative goal orientation for the project of religious education, liturgical pastoral work, and church development.

In this perspective, the model of this thesis is to open the possibility of communication between Christian faith and the notion of Han as an indigenous form of lamentation in Korea. It means that the Korean church can communicate with indigenous Korean cultural society and Christian faith. Our task is then to develop the notion of Han in which the Koreans' own terms and history are embedded.

### **3.3 Conceptual analysis of Han: a literature review**

## AZALEAS

When you leave, tired of me, I will be ready to let you go, no complaints,  
whatsoever.

And I will carpet your way with azaleas, armfuls, from the familiar Yaksan hill.  
May you enjoy light steps on the flowers for your path. As you go ahead, if you like.  
When you leave, tired of me, I surely won't cry, no tears, never.

Kim Sowol -- 1922

Much of Korean literature, religion, and history contain the concept of Han. The above poem, one of the most popular poems in Korea, expressed a farewell-Han and love-Han for women. When her lover leaves, she cannot seize the lover, even if she really wants him to stay with her. This is a representation of the Han of Korean women. As in this case, all Korean literature expresses the subject matter of Han, as no literature existed without Han in olden times. Korean Han may be understood as a native spirituality, ethos, and window to see the Korean lifeworld (Sung 1990: 249). Thus, we can conceptualise the notion of Han through plentiful Korean writings such as poems, novels, folk tales, songs and dances. This concept is necessary to redefine the theological concepts for an indigenous Korean theology by the designed hermeneutical principle.

Lee defines Han as an emotional residue of the mind (1995: 228, 1991). Choi, borrowing the definition from Ko Un, describes Han as the mental state of being resigned, resulting from an extensive experience of frustrating and tragic life-events (Choi 1991: 14). Kim analyzed the Han ethos in famous Korean literature by examining folk heroes (i.e., the stories of Shim-Chung, Hung-Boo, Jangwha Hongryen, Chun-Hyang, and Hong Kildong) (Kim 1980: 26-27). He considers Han not as a single emotional state but as a complex emotional and cognitive condition. He lists the various facets of Han as follows: loneliness, sorrow, emptiness,

suffering, sadness, empathy, tragedy, deprivation, remorse, and hate. Kim concludes that cultivated Han emotions and sentiments can easily be found in Korean literature and art.

For Sung, Han is a tragic feeling of induration in mind as a person without a humanistic life. Although he was interested in Han as a historical perspective, he argued that Han accumulated during Korean history which was a series of invasions from outside such as by China, Japan, and North Korea. It has also caused the Korean socio-cultural structure, that is a class of noblemen (*Yangban*) and fellows of low birth (*Sangnom*) or a hierarchical social system such as Confucianism. The common people have an oppressed Han in their minds and this is culturally presented in art and literature by mask dances, dramas, the dance of a handicapped beggar, songs, etc. The common people expressed Han by satirising scholars and noblemen in folk arts.

However, Han more often occurred in women than in men, so that most Korean shamans are women such as a sorceress or a shaman (Choi 1991: 100). A woman's Han resulted from a frustration of desire and volition, resulting from patriarchy and sexism. Korean women are living with a Han which confirms their destiny to accept a masculine society. From this, they develop a grudge, resentment, hate, and jealousy against this unjust social system. These accumulated emotions finally become a Han. These negative emotions and volitions are directly related to a passive attitude in their personal or social relationships. According to traditional ideas or ethics in sexual relations, a woman was serving but a single husband yet man, on the contrary, was free. In the above poem, we can see a woman's typical attitude about her man leaving her.

Hence, the Korean Han is released through singing and dancing; this process is known as 'Han-Pulyi'. Suffering and grief are turned into excitement when entangled

feelings of Han are gradually released. Korean arts are based on this process of excitement to represent an expression and celebration of one's tragedy.

### 3.3.1 Context of the development of Han

We examine this context by means of studying interconnections in using the word Han. We can see them through considering an ordinary conversation in daily life. Choi conceptualizes three stages of the context of Han development (Choi 2000: 87).

Firstly, Han results from discrimination between class, status, and property. Someone who is born with an ill-fated condition (e.g., disability) or a low status position (e.g., serf, slave, woman, or illegitimate son) can lament their unfortunate circumstances of lacking opportunities and the joys of life. In traditional Korea, they had to accept and suffer through their deprived existence since their misfortune could not be traced to any source; they were simply born into an unfortunate situation. In both instances, the source or the cause of individuals' frustration cannot be controlled or eliminated. They cannot change their situation; they must accept their fate and live with it.

Secondly, Han occurs from serious deprivation or from feeling a great deprivation by comparing oneself with others. For example, these may be poverty, a lack of education or ignorance, a child's mistake, etc.

Thirdly, an individual who made an irrevocable mistake that led to tragic consequences could develop Han (e.g., a convict who ignored his mother's advice to study, the death of a family member caused by driving while intoxicated). Although individuals recognize that the mistakes they made created the consequences they suffer, they cannot turn back the clock of time and rectify the situation. In all these cases, individuals are powerless to change their situation; they must accept their fate

and live with it.

### 3.3.2 Process of the development of Han

This process, borrowing the definition of the Korean cultural psychologists, describes the developmental stages below. Choi, Kim, and Yu analysed Han development as connecting with time processes and psychological changes (Choi, Kim, and Yu 1995, Choi 1991, and Choi 2000: 91-92). In each stage of the development of Han, they saw three domains: a cognitive, emotional, and social.

In the first stage, the reactive phase, an individual experiences a tragic event, a series of tragic events, or a tragic situation. The nature of these tragic experiences can be further divided into four categories as follows: tragic event, deprivation, exploitation, or mistake. A tragic life-event (e.g., an accidental death of a beloved spouse, bankruptcy, disability) could act as a devastating turning point in a person's life. Although a person is full of anger and fury, he or she does not have an avenue to vent his or her anger. Tragic events occur accidentally and there are no just causes; there is no one to blame. Experiences of tragic events or situations can provoke raw emotions of anger, fury, frustration, vengeance, hostility and outrage. Since Korean culture places priority on substantive goals (e.g., collective good, social harmony) over individual interests (Kim, 1993), suffering individuals are forced to accept their fate. Attempting to change their fate, vocalizing their anger or taking revenge could disrupt social harmony and collective welfare.

At the transformation stage, individuals fatalistically accept their tragic situation. This is the second phase of Han. Tragic events that have occurred to an individual are now transformed into a personal tragedy. Thoughts of the particular event or situation that created Han constantly recur in the mind. It is repeatedly brought to

mind and they relive it continually. Individuals are forced to accept their fate and their unjust situation, and to internalize their raw emotions. The raw emotions become trapped in one's mind and are not allowed to be expressed outwardly. They want to talk about it all the time to other people, but others are reluctant to listen to them. The raw emotions of Han are now internalized and transformed into self-pity, sorrow, pain, suffering, helplessness, and hopelessness. The emotions no longer contain psychological venom and are not harmful to others. Individuals feel sporadic anger, frustration and remorse, and suffer from tremendous mental anguish. This phase can be summarized by the phrase 'Han has become knotted'.

The third stage is the reflective phase. Although such a person can rationalize, he or she is just a powerless pawn in the wheel of life, but he or she refuses to accept this fate. Individuals begin to protest against fate and heaven. Why did this happen to me? Why of all people must I suffer through this tragic fate? Why can't I experience the happiness and joy that other people experience? The only way out of this dire contradiction is to be released from one's own predicament. One way of dealing with Han at the individual level is that individuals try to reflect upon their Han and develop a detached view or passively accept their fate. A way of releasing Han socially is through singing and dancing or in religious rituals. Through singing and dancing, a person distances oneself from one's own life and thus from one's own tragedy; this is known as a release of Han. It is a detached way of releasing an unspeakable mental anguish that has coagulated in one's mind. Although the person does not resolve the situation, he or she is released from his or her self-imposed prison of emotions.

**Figure 4. Four stages of the development of Han**

<b>Stage1 reactive phase</b>	<b>Stage2 transformation phase</b>	<b>Stage3 reflective phase</b>	<b>Stage4 transcendental phase</b>
Tragic event or situation	Acceptance of tragedy	Protest fate	Detachment
Deprivation Injustice Mistakes	Self-blame Fatalism Nihilism Rationalization	Yes, but... Why me? Optimism	Disengaged Aloof Impartial Other-worldly
Raw emotions	Internalisation of emotions	Emotional release	Emotional serenity
Fury Anger Vengeance Frustration Outrage	Suffering Pain Sorrow Helplessness Hopelessness	Grief & elation Sorrow & joy Sadness & Happiness	Calm Peace Void Nothingness Tranquillity
Social pressures	Social tolerance	Social acceptance	Cultural glorification
Passive acceptance Suppress raw emotions	Distancing Sympathy Pity Compassion	Consolation Empathy Cheong Verification	Celebration Collective Consciousness Glorification Reification

(Choi 2000: 91-92)

The last stage, the transcendental phase, is a leap away from the reflective phase. Individuals can be released from their tragedy and reach enlightenment if they can detach themselves from their suffering and ultimately from their realities; this

process is called emptying of one's mind. Their Han becomes objectified and now they can truly detach themselves from their Han reality, which is only transitory. Individuals who have reached this stage are completely calm, tranquil, and serene. They are detached from their day to day activities, their emotions, and their own self. They disengage themselves from the web of life and their lives are put into a universal perspective known as void or nothingness.

### **3.4 Empirical test of Han**

We will consider the result of an empirical study of Han representations that investigates the context and process of Han development. The primary concern of this study was to stimulate, promote and improve the communication of people within themselves and with others through Han representations. The result of such a study is important because it provides information to understand the concepts of Korean lamentation. This investigative study was done to formulate a model of personal character. The indigenous form of lamentation tested empirical studies which are based on grounded theory.

#### **3.4.1 Theoretical assumptions of Han representation**

The most central assumption of Han is an indigenous form of lamentation in Korea and representations of the Korean national emotion. An indigenous form of lamentation is constituted not by employing metaphysical concepts or a given conceptual framework, but by using their own language within the Koreans' cultural and historical background. The researcher explored and collected data about their personal stories through an interview. The empirical research was to evaluate the validity of the theoretical framework outlined above.

The representation of Han is one that can be used in a communication model in a

Korean counselling situation and pastoral context. The character of Han is to understand a person's attitude and behaviour patterns in response to suffering. This concept is constituted by affective, cognitive, and conative dimensions of personality. Thus, understanding of the concept of Han is connected with the defining of personal characters by means of a cognitive, affective conative mechanism. Accordingly, we can understand the Korean personality by via the concept of Han.

#### 3.4.2. Empirical analysis of Han

An empirical study was conducted to find out how Han is represented in the Korean people. This empirical research aims to evaluate the validity and mechanism of the theoretical framework outlined above. In-depth interviews were carried out with a group of Korean immigrants in South Africa to examine the context of Han occurrence and the process of Han development.

During the process of the in-depth interviews, respondents were asked to complete an open-ended interview schedule regarding areas that respondents personally experienced to be full of Han. The schedule was formulated from a literature study of Han and personal Han stories obtained in in-depth interviews. Three rounds of interviews asked the person to describe the following characteristics: 1) the background of the person full of Han, 2) the emotional feelings of the person, 3) the physical syndromes of the person, 4) the worldview of the person, 5) the behavioural patterns of the person, the attitudes of the person toward the causes of their tragic situation, the feelings of anger and revenge toward the situation, person, or object, and 6) the frailty, strength, or spirit of the person who is coping with the tragic situation.

#### **Figure 5. Interview schedule**

Rounds of interviews	Gender		Age			Vocation		
	Male	Female	20 - 30	31 - 40	41 - 50	Business	Housewife	Profession
1	3	3	1	4	1	1	3	2
2	2	3	3	2		2	1	2
3	3	2	1	4	1	1	1	3
Total	8	8	5	10	2	4	5	7

### 3.4.3 Interview process

The concept of Han was constituted through an interview process which proceeded in three rounds: open coding, axial coding and selective coding in grounded theory. The coding process aimed to conceptualise Han, which was built from interview data. Most informants were Christian and between 20 - 45 years of age. They were all university graduates and half of the respondents were studying postgraduate courses.

#### 3.4.3.1 Classification of Han

The present researcher established the categories used when participants told their own Han stories: events, emotions, attitudes, worldview, religion and social relationships.

Question 1: The background of the person full of Han. What contexts bring suffering?

The first question sets the context of Han development. Han events occur when individuals experience a tragic situation or event that is beyond their control, such as poverty, the death of a family member, external events that one cannot cope with or overcome, failing to achieve a goal, and fatalistic or destined situations where one is

forced to accept reality against one's will. Han exists when a person is unjustly treated, that is, experience discrimination as a person when one is excessively oppressed, a person could not express his or her will because of external pressures, a person was mistreated by authorities, a person is unjustly persecuted, or a person who feels betrayed. The most common characteristics of people who experienced Han are poverty, bereavement, being uneducated, conflicts among the family members, conflicts between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, being forced to leave their homeland during the Korean War (especially Koreans from the North who left their homeland), and the loss or injury of a child due to a traffic accident.

Question 2: How do you feel about suffering?

As an emotional category, the question considers the emotional feelings of the person about suffering. The most frequent responses are to describe feelings of anger, fear, suffocating, frustration, loneliness, remorse, I don't-care attitudes, sadness, tragic feeling, powerlessness, giving-up, and mood swings. Anger and suffocating are two of the most common phenomena.

Question 3: What kind of physical syndrome occurs?

The most common physical syndromes are headaches, indigestion, insomnia, etc. Such physical conditions became a chronic illness or an incurable disease if the syndrome lasted for a long time. As mentioned above, 'Hwa-Byung' disease represents the development of a physical syndrome from an emotional feeling of suffering. 'Hwa-Byung' represses anger in the common response. Enduring anger caused the sufferer to develop a physical disorder. One notes that this cultural syndrome magnifies a crisis of cultural reality. We cannot deny that a 'Hwa-Byung' illness reflects the oppression of culture and constitutes a native impediment for Korean people.

Question 4: Where does suffering come from? Does suffering come from evil or sin?

What is Heaven's vengeance?

These questions explore the worldview to understand the origin of suffering. Even if respondents do not define evil exactly like the Western concept of it, they describe instances of bad behaviour such as murder, rape, and theft. Koreans are not used to the Western concept of evil but more often use the ordinary word of 'sin' that indicates a state of mind. Sin is closely connected with punishment as its result. Participants often mentioned the term 'Heaven's vengeance,' that means a reward in accordance with the deed. Frequently, they related heavens' vengeance to the cosmos principle; it has a social character rather than a metaphysical idea.

Some respondents said that suffering results from Satan or the devil, as from the Christian perspective. This answer is the sort of knowledge which is based on Christian ideas. It is difficult to explain the devil in terms of social relationships or interactions between people. A common response was to see evil as resulting from a relationship itself or a betrayed relationship. It means that evil defines a failed relationship. This idea attributes all issues of relation to family relationships and the world to interwoven human relationships. It explains the Korean personality as overlapping selves, all people are always interconnected, Cheong exists anywhere. Thus most Koreans do not recognize the Western concept of evil.

Question 5: Is suffering your fate or a social problem? Do you want revenge?

Some informants attributed suffering to personal sin or God's punishment. This answer is based on the Christian faith that God retaliates when people disobey His word. The other respondents referred suffering to social problems and human avarice. No one related suffering to his/her fate, the respondents were all under 43 years old and well educated. They believed that Han must be released from a wish for revenge by means of oblivion or forgiveness.

Question 6: How do you cope with suffering? How do you endure, forgive, and transcend suffering?

The most common response was to cope by means of the individual's will or faith. This answer is based on the idea of 'promotion of virtue and reproof of vice' in the traditional proverb. Koreans have believed that good will win finally. This idea also relates to Jesus Christ and his final triumph. Most Christian respondents overcome suffering through prayer, faith, charity, and so forth.

#### 3.4.3.2 Further formulation of the concept of Han

Individual experience of Han influences personality on the level of personal traits and in social relationships. By using the concept of Han, we can characterize the Korean personality. Möller insists that personality is usually described in one of two ways, either on the basis of a particular characteristic of the person or on the basis of certain social skills a person possesses (Möller 1995: 4). For Möller, there is no agreement on the definition of personality in personality psychology. Thus, personality is an essentially hypothetical but constructive concept for explaining the organisation and integration of behaviour and the differences between people.

In this perspective, we can formulate Korean personal traits and social images through the concept of Han. It can be divided into two categories, that of personal traits and social images. Personal traits constitute the behaviour patterns, thoughts and emotions which make every human being unique. Each individual experience of Han leads to a different process of the development of Han which takes place on reactive, transformative, reflective and transcendent levels.

Personality, in this process of the development of Han, is formulated on the first

level by the coping process. Some individuals discontinue this first stage and no more development takes place. Some other persons, on the other hand, are right through to the final stage coping well with Han. Therefore, individuals' traits can define the coping process of Han. Individual's social traits can also be defined within that same process as individual traits.

#### 3.4.3.3 Three models of Han

The present researcher is going to define some Korean personal characters within the Han experience. It will not be possible to define the universal Korean personality in the current study. The purpose of modelling a personality is to characterize the person full of Han who manages to cope with suffering. In this sense, personality acquires the meaning of a dominant personal trait, or of the social image of a person, in other words of the behaviour he or she exhibits towards others. This character is inferred from behaviour, for example unconscious processes such as mechanisms which help people to adapt to their environment. In addition, emphasis is also placed on a person's subjective cognitive experiences, how people see themselves, their feelings and thoughts, goals, and ideals. These subjective elements have to be understood in order to explain personal character. The primary concern here is thus what they have in common.

In classifying Han, we have categorized the respondent's attitudes, emotions, cognition, worldview and physical condition. Each category makes every human being unique and refers to the mode of daily circumstances of life. Individual attitudes and behaviours are reflected in characteristic responses to situations. Thus, the present researcher supposed that each category was divided into two criteria such as personal traits and social relationships. These two categories are the construct for explaining the integration of the person full of Han. The researcher then proposed

three models: the revenge-isolate model, the vindication-acceptance model, and the transcend-solidarity model.

Each model formulates two modes of character to describe personal traits and social relations for the person full of Han. It is not accurate in detail about the person full of Han, but characterizes the model as an ideal type on the extreme end of the scale.

**The revenge-isolate model** refers to continually harbouring Han against a person. Their attitude is abandonment, hopelessness, and powerlessness, and it isolates social relationships with negative thinking. This personality connects the Han person with hatred, revenge, and rebellious feelings. Sometime he or she bursts out in rage, anger or suddenly attacks the others. Attitudes to social relations are always dominated by negative thinking against social groups or organizations. The person full of Han has isolated himself or herself from social structures, and has difficulty communicating with others.

**The vindication-acceptance model** still holds Han but life is normal. The individual experience of Han internalises objective events, and sees Han itself. It means that individual with Han attempts to adapt daily circumstances of life to self-rationalization. He or she accepts social roles and expectations, but does not participate actively.

**The transcend-solidarity model** emancipates a person from Han. Individuals can reflect their Han story and the lifeworld expressing itself in the way one sees oneself, one's roles and social expectations. In terms of Habermas, emancipation is gained through critical self-awareness in the sense that one can recognize the correct reasons for his or her problem. Persons do not only communicate with one another, exhibiting the attitude of participants, but also give narrative presentations of events

that take place in the context of their lifeworld. Thus, this model identifies an emancipated personality as having a self-knowledge or self-reflection.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

The Korean lamentation is not only a representation of Korean culture but also a reproduction of the Korean cultural heritage. The concept of Han is formulated in the Korean's own language within historical and traditional properties of the given culture. This concept introduced us to embedded ideas, belief systems, and emotions in social-cultural traditions. We recognized, in cross-cultural perspective, the notion of suffering to originate in different historical and cultural circumstances when comparing Western people with Korean people.

We have conceptualised the concept of Han through examining the context and process of Han development by using the methodology of grounded theory. In this process, we have analysed the concept of Han and characterised the Korean personality. Particularly, the three-personality model can provide communication with the person full of Han. The person full of Han is able to exercise self-understanding and self-interpretation by using a model, which ultimately leads to the self-emancipation which is a release from Han. This model also opens possibilities to connect with Christian symbolic models such as theodicy models. Thus, the person full of Han can communicate with God in correlation between the contemporary, contextual religious experience and Christian tradition. Empirical tests between the three models of Han and theodicy model will be done in a future study.

However, the person full of Han needs to make sense of his/her personal identity for self-emancipation. For Ricoeur, human reality has narrative features. Individual experiences of Han must go to investigate one's personal Han story. So, the present

researcher will examine the narrative identity in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 4: Narrative identity and narrative theology**

## 4.1 Introduction

When people are repressed by suffering, they have a quest for organizing the meaning of life into temporally meaningful episodes. The meaning of life exists in the will to live, new life, and faith in the meaningfulness of existence. Grasping the meaning of life in mid-suffering leads to one's emancipation and freedom from suffering. Here, suffering is an inquiry into narrative and narrative meaning, and in particular, the primary form by which human experience is made meaningful. We assume that human reality exhibits narrative features. Narrative is the fundamental scheme for linking individual experiences of suffering and meanings into interrelated aspects of an understandable composite. The narrative scheme operates to produce the particular form and meaning that is human existence (Polkinghorne 1988: 13). The present researcher believes that narrative theory provides us with a perspective analysis of narrative that structures human identity. Accordingly, this chapter aims to establish personal identity as a narrative identity.

Narrative approaches to the study of personal identity focus upon questions such as: How do people come to self-knowledge? Can we, in fact, know who we are? To what extent do people adapt their personal stories to conform to culturally derived types of personality? How is culture integrated into or constitutive of an individual's self? These questions should find an answer in narrative theory, particularly if one pays attention to Ricoeur's narrative theory.

Personal identity in the pastoral context, however, is required to dialogue with the gospels for the meaning of life. The gospels offer the possibility of emancipation or freedom which Jesus somehow makes possible through his suffering on the cross. Personal identity, then, is an open possibility to connect with Christian faith through

a narrative theology. Considering narrative theology, our questions are as follows: what is the Christian faith concerning new life? How can we elaborate the horizon of meaning implicit in the narratives and symbols constitutive of Christian traditions?

Consequently, the researcher will examine a model of the hermeneutical circle of narrative. This hermeneutical model may provide us with a way of communicating with people themselves and with others about their religious symbols and ideas. It also aims at giving pastoral opportunities to people to stimulate communication with God and other people.

#### **4.2 Narrative identity**

We assume that human reality has narrative features. Narrative expression can understand the nature of human beings and can describe aspects of human existence within the linguistic realm. Paul Ricoeur has given us two instalments explaining what is involved in stating that identity is a function of narrative, namely, *Time and Narrative* (1984, 1985, 1988) and *Oneself as Another* (1990), though we are primarily interested in following Ricoeur's notion of narrative identity with regard to the two dynamic processes of emplotment and reading as articulated initially in *Time and Narrative*. Ricoeur commonly refers to these dynamisms as 'the world of the text' and 'the world of the reader.' This is attested to by the fact that the topic of narrative identity appears only in the conclusion to this major work, conclusions that were written a full year after the completion of *Time and Narrative*. Narrative identity seems to have been the unforeseen fruit of his long-standing hermeneutical principle that any self-understanding would be one mediated by signs, symbols, and texts. For Ricoeur, understanding human existence is possible by means of language and texts. This aspect relates Ricoeur's narrative hermeneutics to his theories of metaphor and textuality. Understanding human beings is feasible through symbols,

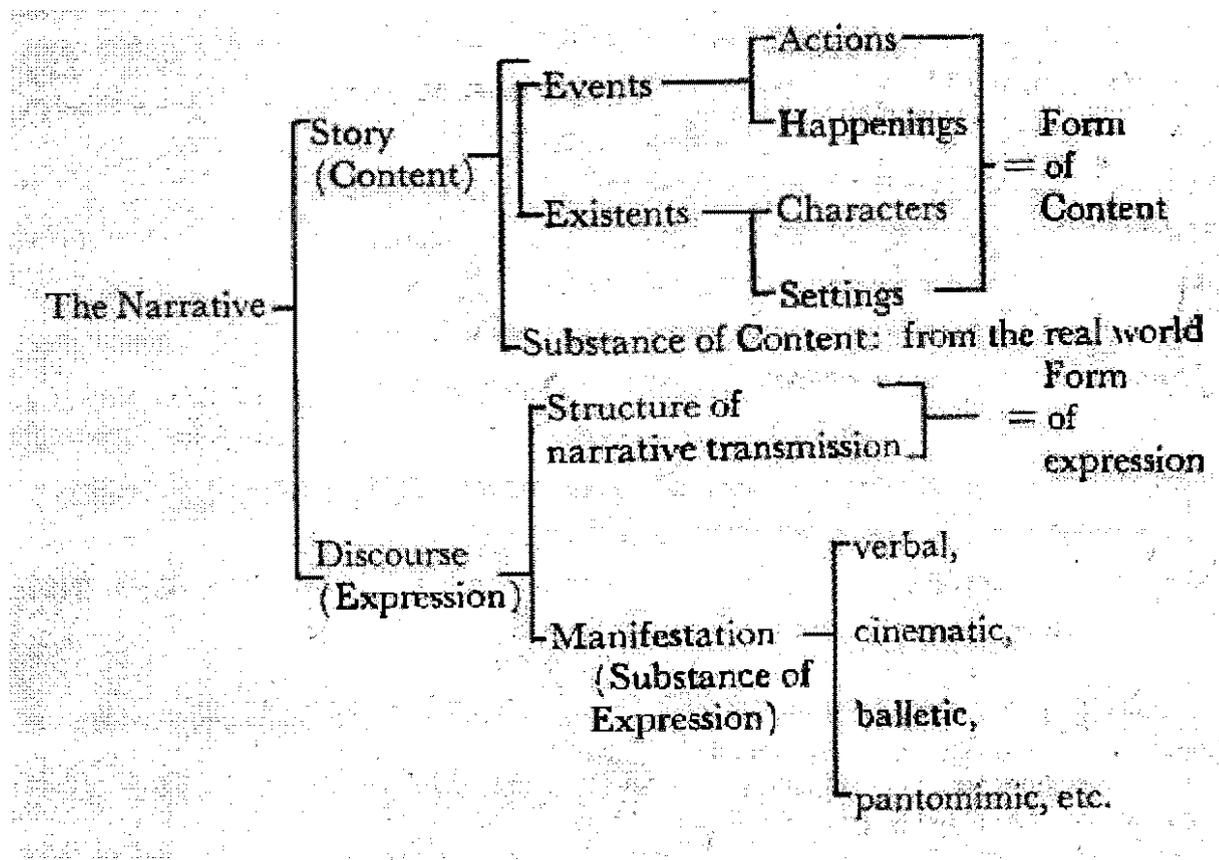
myths, metaphors and texts, all of which attest to the meaning of human existence. Our task, then, is to investigate the role narrative plays in the creation of identity and to sketch narrative theory.

#### 4.2.1 Narrative theory

The most inclusive meaning of narrative refers to any spoken or written presentation. Stories told, or read, articulate or configure the form of human experience. There is wide agreement amongst scholars from a variety of disciplines and amongst investigators with different theoretical perspectives that narrative is one of the primary forms by which human experiences are imbued with meaning (Bal 1985; Carr 1986; Mitchell 1981; Polkinghorne 1988; Ricoeur 1984; Sarbin 1986; Smith 1980; White 1980). The nature of narrative is to invite reflection on the very nature of culture and, possibly, even on the nature of humanity itself (White 1980: 5). Thus, Barthes defines that narrative is simply there like life itself ... international, transhistorical, transcultural (Mitchell 1981:1).

According to Erlich (1965) as a Russian formalist, he epitomized narrative as follows: each narrative has two parts: a story, consisting of the content, the chain of events (actions and happenings), and what may be called the existents (characters and settings), the objects and persons performing, undergoing, or acting as a background for them; and discourse, that is, expression, the means by which the content is communicated, i.e. the set of actual narrative statements. The theory then is dualistic: story is the 'what' that is depicted: discourse is the 'how'. This kind of distinction has been recognized since the *Poetics*. For Aristotle, the imitation of actions in the real world, *praxis*, was seen as forming an argument, *logos*, from which were selected the units that formed the plot, *mythos* (Chatman 1974: 295).

#### **Figure 6. The narrative structure**



(Chatman 1974: 300)

The two basic components of narrative are seen in the above diagram. The story is the content element of narrative, and discourse is its expressive element. Every story consists of a set of events and existents. Narrative, like all art, entails communicative acts; hence, we must posit two parties, a sender and receiver. Each of these represents several different personages. The sender is a composite of the real author, the implied author, and the narrator; the receiver, of the real audience (listener, reader, viewer, or whatever), the implied audience, and the narratee, whether external or internal to the story.

As functions of narrative, Turner regards narrative as the 'supreme instrument for binding the values and goals ... which motivate human conduct into situational structures of meaning' (Turner 1980: 167). He regards narrative as the essential part of religious rituals and social dramas, which are meaningful experience and

experienced meaning. In ritual one lives through events or through the alchemy of religious framings and symbolizing; one relives semiogenetic events, the deeds and words of prophets and saints or myths and sacred epics. Accordingly, the narrative component in ritual and legal action attempts to rearticulate opposing values and goals in a meaningful structure, the plot of which makes cultural sense (Turner 1980: 168).

Therefore, narrative is a form of discursive communication which consists of heterogeneous elements that are arranged together by means of a plot. Narrative is a place where sequence and language, among other things, intersect to form a discursive code (Scholes 1980: 204). One cannot narrate a picture, or a person, or a building, or a tree, or a philosophy. Narration is a word that implies its object in its meaning. A narration is the symbolic presentation of a sequence of events connected by subject matter and related by time. A narration is a text which refers to some set of events outside of itself. Thus, a narrative is a specific sort of collective sign or text which has for its object a sequence of events, and for its interpreter the construction of a very specific kind of iconic interpretant. The discursive level of communication is the level on which the referential function of communication is established. While this level is realized in the examination of metaphor as a sentence, in the narrative the discursive trait of preferentiality appears in the complete narrative.

#### 4.2.2 Ricoeur's narrative theory

According to Ricoeur, the central thesis of *Time and Narrative* (1984) is the existence of an assumed reciprocity between narrativity and temporality: time becomes human to the extent that it is articulated through a narrative mode, and narrative attains its full meaning when it becomes a condition of temporal existence (Ricoeur 1984: 52). Ricoeur's theory is closely related to narrativity and temporality.

He takes temporality to be that structure of existence that reaches language in narrativity, and narrativity to be the language structure that has temporality as its ultimate referent (Ricoeur 1980: 169). In order to show the reciprocity between narrativity and temporality, he attempted to find each feature of narrative brought out by reflection on either history or fictional narrative. He also examined different degrees of temporal organization. Finally, he considered the role of narrativity. The temporal implication of narrativity is the plot which connects the function between an event or events and the story.

He concentrated more on the level of the claim to truth than on that of the internal structure of discourse. He developed the notion of narrative theory from Aristotle's *Poetics*, which views literature as a *mimesis praxeos*. Mimesis is the dynamics of representation, the dynamics of a transposition from reality into a literary work. For Ricoeur, mimesis encompasses the life-world preceding a text, the mimetic act of the text, and the mimesis that results from the text (Ricoeur 1984: 52-87). This threefold mimesis is called prefiguration, configuration and refiguration. We will closely examine these terms of narrative below.

#### 4.2.2.1 Aspects of prefiguration

The notion of prefiguration expresses how the lifeworld is structured as a narrative. Ricoeur wants to explore the connections between narrative and action (Ricoeur 1984: 54). He is interested in the world of action in so far as it reads to narrative. He considers that narrative is a rearrangement of action and that the interpretation of its function is an act that follows this narrative rearrangement.

Sarbin (1986) supposes that human beings think, perceive, imagine, and make moral choices according to narrative structures. Narrative is an organizing principle for

human action (Sarbin 1986: 9). This human action is transformed in the narrative. This transformation takes place in the narrative text, which has formative rules of its own. Thus, a narrative gives a renewed rise to action by provoking the reader to read and to act. The configurational whole of a narrative is appropriate for explaining individual human actions. The present researcher examines the aspect of prefiguration from this perspective,

The recognition of the connection between action and narrative has been part of the Western tradition at least since Aristotle. In *The Poetics*, Aristotle identified narrative as the imitation (*mimesis*) or representation of human action (Ricoeur 1984: 32). The plot (*mythos*) of narrative is the organization of events, not as a static structure but as an operation or construction of synthesis. The *Poetics*, then, is about the composition of narratives, identified as a hermeneutic activity in which the relationship between parts is made apparent. In Aristotle's conception, the plot has the features of wholeness and completeness. That is, this is the way in which we arrange events and actions that give a sense of wholeness to the story, with a beginning and an end. The poet locates the beginning as the place where the events begin, which is of importance for what follows. The middle is the succession of events and the end is the poet's determination that the sequence of events contributing to the resolution of the adventure is complete.

The composition of the plot is grounded in a preunderstanding of the world of action, its meaningful structures, its symbolic resources, and its temporal character (Ricoeur 1984: 55). Firstly, he emphasized the very term action as a 'conceptual network' that structurally distinguishes the domain of action from that of physical movement. Action refers to motives and implies goals. In this network, we can identify an agent and recognize this agent's motives. It is obvious that narrative presupposes and uses the categories of the world of action.

Secondly, narrative composition implies that our practical understanding lies in the symbolic resources of the practical field (Ricoeur 1984: 57-59). Such a symbolic action is a rite, whereby an action expresses a more profound meaning. This symbolic aspect can be extended to meaningful action in general. Among the aspects of symbolic mediation, Ricoeur is interested in the public character of symbols. Symbolic meaning is a matter of sharing suppositions in a culture with participants who know the symbolic codes (Ricoeur 1984: 58). These codes form the symbolic network of culture, which are necessary in order for any particular action to be understood.

Thirdly, a preunderstanding of action is not limited to a conceptual network of action and to symbolic mediations, but concerns the temporal elements (Ricoeur 1984: 59-64). Aspects like motivation and goal are naturally linked with temporal dimensions like past, present, and future. Ricoeur propounds a strong unity among these dimensions. He uses this model which points out that Augustine's discordant-concordant structure of time develops some paradoxical features on the plane of reflective thought. The model unites the past, present, and future of action: I intend to do this, because I just realized ...; now I am doing this, because now I can do it; from now on I will do this. The structure of time is inscribed in the praxis. This is the way in which everyday praxis orders a practical articulation that constitutes the most elementary inductor of narrative.

#### 4.2.2.2 Aspects of configuration

The configuration expresses the mimetic value of the textual level. The configurative mimesis is determined by the narrative plot. Ricoeur proposes to disengage the configuring activity and to analyse its temporal structures. He agreed that the whole

configuration of a narrative is appropriate for explaining individual human action. Here, configuration has an intermediary position because it has a mediating function. This mediating function derives from the dynamic character of the configuring operation for which Ricoeur has led us to prefer the term *emplotment*. For Aristotle, the unity of the plot is a concordance of completion, totality, and appropriate extension. Narrative, then, is opposed to drama within the single encompassing category of *mimesis*. He was silent about the relationship between poetic activity and temporal experience (Ricoeur 1984: 31) because he did not consider temporal characteristics.

For Ricoeur, the term *emplotment* is a temporal figuration. He goes on to explore the relationship between narrative description and human experience. He has found narrative to be a life form that has functioned as part of human existence so as to configure experience into a unified process. Narrativity and temporality are reciprocal in their relationship (Ricoeur 1980: 169). He shows the reciprocity between narrativity and temporality: each feature of narrative is brought out by reflection on either history or fictional narrative. It is the accentuation of narrative temporality which can clarify the dynamics of figuration.

Ricoeur discussed the role of narrativity as the plot being the temporal implication of narrativity. The plot places us at the crossing point of temporality and narrativity: to be historical, an event must be more than a singular occurrence, a unique happening (Ricoeur 1980: 171). The plot brings together heterogeneous elements in a threefold way (Ricoeur 1984: 65-68). First, the plot takes a succession of events and creates a coherent whole. This gives intelligibility to the events; it makes an event more than just a single occurrence by placing it in an order of events. Second, the paradigmatic elements are arranged into a syntagmatic order and a transformation, which is the work of the configuring activity. Third, the plot provides a temporal mediation and

synthesis.

Ricoeur, furthermore, was concerned with emplotment as mediating function between the pre-understanding and the post-understanding. He suggested that plot mediates in three ways (Ricoeur 1984: 65): it is a mediation between the individual events or incidents and a story taken as a whole. The two reciprocal relations expressed by 'from' and 'into' characterize the plot as mediating between events and the narrated story. That is, the plot transforms the events into a story.

Ricoeur uses the term emplotment to signify the active character of gathering up or configuring the events into a whole. Emplotment is concerned with drawing out, from the flow of events, those that significantly contribute to the story under construction. Emplotment, under the aegis of what Ricoeur calls narrative intelligence or understanding (1984: 33), is the ability to take discordant events and heterogeneous episodes of human action and tie them together into a coherent plot, permitting a concordant readability to our lives. The construction of plots is the place where events become episodes and episodes become the stuff of stories. The manifold events are drawn into the unity of one temporal whole.

However, Ricoeur also investigates the norms which underlie the dynamics of the configuration. Whereas in prefiguration intelligibility is established by an appeal to universality, the plausibility of the plot is dependent on the concordant presentation of its discordant element. There is a world of difference between that which is culturally acceptable and that which is capable of being narrated. In narrative, it is not enough to have probable elements in a plot. The general traits of configurative norms receive an initial confirmation in the field of historiography. Ricoeur divides narrative into historiography and fiction. He begins his analysis of the poetics of narrative with an examination of historiography. An analysis of fictional narrative

follows; the analysis of historiography and fiction together covers the configurative part of the analysis.

Ricoeur has shown how his analysis of narrative structure confirms the Heideggerian existential analysis of time. He uses Heidegger's three main traits as the criteria of historicity. First, time appears at this level as 'extended' between birth and death. Historicity is to raise the time experience from the abstract succession of events to the level of Heidegger's 'within-time-ness' (Heidegger 1962:465). What is ultimately at stake is the possibility of grounding the possibility of history as a science in the existential structure of time (Ricoeur 1980: 181). Historicity is a mediating structure between temporality and within-time-ness.

The second trait of historicity is the priority given to the past in the structure of care that underlies the unity of the three dimensions of time. The unified experience of temporality is the making-present of preoccupation which prevails only in the experience of within-time-ness. Time is experienced as the recapitulation of what has already happened and as something that has stretched along, between a beginning and an end. In this way, narrative not only establishes human action in time, but also draws from the memory of past actions, the future of the second level of time experience. Ricoeur, within Heidegger's notion of 'repetition or recollection', asserts that historicity is brought back to its origin in the original structure of temporality. The function of narrative is to establish human action at the level of authentic historicity of repetition (Ricoeur 1980: 184).

According to the third trait, through repetition, the character of time is rooted in the deep unity of time as future, past, and present and the endlessness of historical time are grafted on the finite structure of being-toward-death. The finite aspect comes from the more radical structure of temporality as governed by the structure of being-

toward-death (Ricoeur 1980: 182). Death is the most personal of possibilities and cannot be shared. Although the understanding of time as historical can involve the recollection of the past and the destiny of the community of which one is a member, it makes one's past non-transferable to others and places individual personal recollection above the communal tradition. Ricoeur says that narrativity establishes repetition on the plane of being-with-others (Ricoeur 1980: 183). Narrative opens the experience of history and moves it beyond personal history to create a communal history.

Another view of the norms of the configuration is obtained from the field of fiction. The suspension of the configuration is carried to extremes in fiction, which has profound consequences for its norms. The relationship between history and narrative is simple enough, if one assumes that narrative is necessarily chronologically singular; that is, that narrative contains only one concept of time. This one concept is assumed to be the time of the events of the text. However, Ricoeur notes another concept of time present in narrative fiction, and this second concept allows for a re-examination of the reality of time itself.

Narrative fiction takes place as both an act of narrating and as the things narrated. There is a narrator speaking from a place in time, as well as the content of the narration that is taking place in time. Ricoeur describes a text that does this as a window, and notes that the fictive experience of time is the temporal aspect of this virtual experience of being-in-the-world proposed by the text (Ricoeur 1983: 10).

The narrative plot of fiction structures the narrated action in such a way that it enables a reconnaissance of different patterns of action, without a preliminary demand of strict coherence. Fictional stories regard their referential mode, that is their different ways of relating to the world of action, as being about this world

(Ricoeur 1981: 280). Fictional narrative is an iconic augmentation of the human world of action (Ricoeur 1981: 292). He attempts to take this conjunction between speech and imitation as the paradigm of the referential claim. The narrative as a quality of the model itself constitutes a binary opposition: the chronological aspect of the narrative and the diachronic aspect of the narrative, historical time and cosmological time, subject and object, sender and receiver, and so forth. As Ricoeur puts it, the world of fiction is a laboratory of forms in which we try possible configurations of action in order to probe their consistency and plausibility (Ricoeur 1985: 148). Imitation is a kind of metaphor of reality. The metaphor of a laboratory expresses how the fictional configuration provides ample space for experimentation with forms of action, values, estimations and norms. The recognition of this referential claim is the domain of the theory of the imagination (Ricoeur 1988: 128). The image is only a mental thing, a thing in the mind. But the image is not enclosed within the mind, that is it has a distinctive intentionality, namely to offer a model for perceiving things differently. So, fiction is not an instance of reproductive imagination, but of productive imagination (Ricoeur 1981: 293).

#### 4.2.2.3 Aspects of refiguration

The phase of refiguration is the act of reading. The text depends on reading and interpretation for its full meaning. The reading of narrative is expressed in this model as a refiguration. This stage corresponds to what Gadamer calls 'application' (Ricoeur 1988: 70). We may also view the configuration as a proposal, and the refiguration as its application and appropriation. The world of the reader is figured by the confrontation with the narrative. How does the organization of narrative determine action? The notion of refiguration implies that narrative is not only rooted in the world of action, but that it also returns to this world. These phenomena are illustrative of the fact that text and reader mutually presuppose each other (Ricoeur

1985:99). The present research, thus, examines what is meant by narrative referentiality: Does the refigured action display the same temporal organization? What does a narrative establish?

Ricoeur maintains that the concordance of narrative should not be opposed to temporal discordance. That is, narrative order and experiential disorder should not be opposed to each other. Narrative acquires its full meaning when it is restored to the time of action and of suffering in refiguration (Ricoeur 1984:70, 1988:99). The refiguration of narrative brings figurative meaning to a higher level. He can rightly speak of the hermeneutical circle of mimesis as a 'healthy circle' or an 'endless spiral' that would carry the meditation past the same point a number of times, but at different altitudes (Ricoeur 1984: 72, 76). Thus, the hermeneutic circle of narrative and time never stops being reborn from the circle that the stages of mimesis form. This hermeneutical circle concentrates our reflection on the transition between configuration and refiguration brought about by the act of reading.

He proposes that three dialectics make reading a vital experience (Ricoeur 1988: 168-169): the first dialectic, reading itself, becomes a drama of discordant concordance. The reader expects a configuration that reading is a search for coherence. The text provides a world to be inhabited by the reader. In other words, narrative proposes a world which is appropriated by the reader. A text sets up a novel space of indeterminacy for the reader where normal expectations are suspended and other variations on themes, dilemmas, and crises are presented.

The second dialectic that the work of reading reveals, is not only a lack of determinacy but also an excess of meaning. Every text reveals an unwritten aspect in the text. Reading takes turns to appear as an interruption in the course of action and as a new impetus to action. These two perspectives on reading result directly

from its functions of confrontation and connection between the imaginary world of the text and the actual world of its readers. Ricoeur said that the intersection between the world of the text and the world of the listener or reader, i.e. the intersection between the world configured by the poem and the world within which effective action is unfolded, itself unfolds its specific temporality (Ricoeur 1984: 71, 1988: 159). To the extent that readers subordinate their expectations to those developed by the text, they themselves become unreal to a degree comparable to the unreality of the fictive world toward which they emigrate. This fragile union can be expressed in the following paradox: the more readers become unreal in their reading, the more profound and far-reaching will be the work's influence on social reality (Ricoeur 1988: 179).

A third dialectic takes shape on the horizon of this search for coherence. The right reading is the one that admits a certain degree of illusion and at the same time accepts the negation resulting from the work's surplus of meaning. The world of the text and the world of the reader interpenetrate one another; as Ricoeur likes to quote from Gadamer, through a 'fusion of horizons,' the reader belongs to both the experiential horizon of the work imaginatively, and the horizon of its action concretely. As for a balance between these two impulses, it is never achieved.

In this way, refiguration constitutes the active re-organization of our being-in-the-world performed by the text to become the reader of oneself. The narrative interpretation properly provides 'the figure-able' character of the individual which has mediums of emplotment, reading, and self-identification which themselves refigure the self in search of an answer to the elusive question of identity.

The world of the text remains a transcendence in immanence which may be considered apart from reading. Ricoeur said that the world of the text marked the

opening of the text to its 'outside,' to its 'other,' in that the world of the text constitutes an absolutely original intentional object in relation to its 'internal' structure (Ricoeur 1988: 158). It is beyond reading, in effective action, instructed by the works handed down, that the configuration of the text is transformed into refiguration.

### **4.3 Personal identity**

How do people come to self-knowledge? The question of identity has been variously answered. If narrative is a form of discursive communication, then identity is a discursive achievement which is the object of various attributes and self-referential, all of which is realized in language. Identity is fashioned through narrative in which rational process gains its meaning through its function in the story world. The narrative forms itself, then, is a chief means of self-portrayal. Thus, the present researcher supposes that personal identity is an idea that a person constructs which is an ongoing effort involving the synthesis of many different ideas about oneself.

Sarbin and Scheibe, as narrative psychologists, address the question of the self-narrative in formation of self-identity (Sarbin 1986: 131). Scheibe, employing a contextualist view, asserts that;

Human identities are considered to be evolving constructions; they emerge out of continual social interactions in the course of life. Self-narratives are developed stories that must be told in specific historical terms, using a particular language, making reference to a particular stock of working historical conventions and a particular pattern of dominant beliefs and values. The most fundamental narrative forms are universal, but the way these forms are styled and filled with content will depend upon particular historical conventions of time and place. (Scheibe 1986:131)

Scheibe believed that people undertake adventures in order to construct and

Scheibe believed that people undertake adventures in order to construct and maintain satisfactory life stories. He accords special attention to sports and gambling in his treatment of human adventure. Narrative constructions are the socially derived and expressed product of repeated adventures. As narrative forms, Crites addresses the temporal dimension of story making (Crites 1986: 152). One's personal story or personal identity is a recollected self in the past, and the more complete the story that is formed, the more integrated the self will be. Thus, speaking and acting are the cardinal experiences in self-narrative.

Both psychologists remind us that people conceive of themselves in terms of stories. Stories draw together and configure the events of one's life into a coherent and basic theme. One's future is projected as a continuation of the story, as yet unfinished. In this perspective, identity is a production, which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation (Hall 1990: 222). Thus, identity is accomplished in writing and speaking from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific.

However, people's personal stories are always some version of the general cultural stock of stories about how life proceeds. Although personal identity is a discursive achievement, we consider that discourse is lodged within the realm of relation. Thus, the discursive creation of identity is more fundamentally a social undertaking. We understand narrative terms by means of forms of social interchange. Lived narratives are essential to the achievement of identity, in other words. Accordingly, the discursive creation of identity will now be discussed as a by-product of narrative, history, cultural life, and forms of relationship.

#### 4.3.1 Personal identity as a by-product of narrative

Ricoeur develops the theme of narrative identity from *Time and Narrative* (especially volume I) to *Oneself as Another*, in which the human subject historicizes itself and finds itself as the acting and suffering individual (Pucci 1992: 187). Ricoeur tells us that a narrative recounts what happens in human time in a way that pulls together events to give a whole story (Ricoeur 1984). Here, the question of identity is deliberately posed as the outcome of narration (Ricoeur 1991: 77). He has been concerned with the manner in which our very experience of time is dependent on the narrative structures that we impose on experience. It means finding a plot according to which the events can be ordered in a meaningful sequence. In this sense, narrative accounting in the present era gains its character from long-standing traditions of story telling, oral history, accounts of personal memory, and a variety of literary genres.

But, Ricoeur proposes to reconstruct a theory of narrative in order to describe personal identity as articulated in the temporal dimension of human existence (Ricoeur 1992: 114). The term identity is composed of two countering notions: self (*ipse*), that which is the opposite of otherness and strangeness; and identity (*idem*), that which remains the same, the extreme singular, the opposite of change (Ricoeur 1991: 73, 1992: 116, 1996: 451). It is the conjunction between the dialectic of the same and the other and the hermeneutics of selfhood. The dialectic of the same and the other is a detour, by way of discursive justification, within the field of a hermeneutic phenomenology of selfhood. In fact, the meta-category of the other intrudes in two ways on the hermeneutic of selfhood.

Under sameness, idem-identity includes the genetic identity that is attested to by the uninterrupted development of what we hold to be the same individual and the unchanging structure of an individual. The numeric identity of the same thing is across its multiple appearances: an identity established on the basis of tests that

identify and re-identify something as the same thing. As everyone immediately recognizes when personal identity gets articulated solely in terms of physical or metaphysical continuity, idem-identity does not give us any guidance for answering one crucial question of identity, 'Who are we?' The answer to that question is ipse-identity: selfhood. In contrast to idem-identity, ipse-identity is not dependent on something permanent for its existence. That is, experiencing a self over time does not necessitate having something the same, something perhaps metaphysical which grounds the identity of self.

Thus, the idea of personal identity holds the two notions of difference and sameness in tension. Ricoeur develops the concrete dialectic of selfhood and sameness in a constructive way. These two modes of identity combine in what we have called a narrative identity. Narrative is the term most appropriate to the investigation of the dialectic between idem-identity and ipse-identity. Because narrative grasps both discourse and its speaker, as well as the actions and their agents. In this way, narrative identity is communicated by way of the story told by the characters, concerning whom we may say that they are emplotted along with the story in which they take part. Both terms overlap with reference to notions of permanence in time. Therefore, the narrative constructs the durable character of an individual, which is one's own narrative identity and the sort of dynamic identity proper to the plot.

Ricoeur affirmed the epistemological status of narrative identity:

Knowledge of the self is an interpretation; the interpretation of the self, in turn, finds narrative, among other signs and symbols, to be a privileged mediation; this mediation borrows from history as much as fiction making the life story a fictive history or, if you prefer, an historical fiction, comparable to those biographies of great men where both history and fiction are found blended together (Ricoeur 1991: 73).

Narrative is concerned with creating a dramatic or hermeneutic unity. Such a narrative identity will only be known correlative to the discordant concordance of the story itself. The poet makes plots and represents action. By the same token, the human actor expresses his or her existence through action, and understands it to be part of a larger configuration of meaning. Hence, as a story arises from the emplotment of action, character arises in transferring the plot to the identity that unfolds as the story unfolds. The narrative constructs the identity of the character, what can be called his or her narrative identity, in constructing that of the story told (1992: 147-148). That is, character is the identity of the story that makes the identity of the character. In this way, character is the set of distinctive marks which permit the re-identification of a human individual as being the same (Ricoeur 1992: 119). That is, characters are themselves plots (1992: 143).

#### 4.3.2 Cultural identity

For Ricoeur, the self of self-knowledge is the fruit of an examined life which is one purged, one conveyed by the cathartic effects of the narratives, which are conveyed by our culture and community (Ricoeur 1988: 247). Personal identity is constituted by taking up narratives that become for individuals their actual history. Individuals play out their lives within culturally specific forms of narrative. Self-knowledge does not know itself immediately, but only indirectly, through the detour of cultural signs of all sorts, which articulate the self in symbolic mediations that already articulate action, among them the narratives of daily life (Ricoeur 1991: 80).

Ricoeur, in *Oneself as another*, searches for more authentic modes of displaying human subjectivity in the world (Pucci 1992: 204). The comprehension of the human self is mediated by the existence of the other, by the multiplicity of historical and practical relations with which the existence of each is textured. 'Who are we?'

and 'who is each of us?' is better discovered in our existence with others in a history in which we are aware of a world which is one and common. Such a world is formed by the others who have preceded us and who have transmitted the task to conserve the patrimony of values and of freedom. For Ricoeur, to think praxis is to think the subject in its finitude and frailty, in its intentional openness which realizes itself only in relation with others. Consequently, self-realization necessarily occurs with the relation of the self within its relation with the other. It is to liberate ourselves from a totalizing view through the liberating virtue of reflection itself.

As Ricoeur previously mentioned, we can describe a lived narrative that is imposed on the experience of time. Forms of lived narrative are fundamentally a social undertaking, that is, they are forms of social interchange in narrative terms. Life narratives reflect the prevailing theories about possible lives that are part of one's culture. Indeed, one important way of characterising a culture is by the narrative model it makes available for describing the course of life. In this view, culture is replete not only with a stock of canonical life narratives, but also with combinable formal constituents from which its members can construct their own life narratives. A life narrative is not how it actually was but how it is interpreted and reinterpreted, told and retold. Therefore, the culturally shaped cognitive and linguistic processes guide the self-telling of life narratives which achieve the power to structure perceptual experience, to organize memory, to segment and purpose-build the very events of a life.

However, the concept of the self is a highly individuated conception of personhood in the Western traditions. Geertz (1973) described that the Western view of the person bounded is a peculiar idea within the context of the world's cultures. Particularly, Derrida criticizes the logic of an identity which has been based on Western metaphysics since early Greek philosophy, which lies at the very roots of

Western commonsense understanding (Derrida 1978: 197). Derrida challenges the core identity theory and logic on which wholeness and hierarchy are based. He rejects wholeness as an ideal state of personhood to be integrated and one dominant hierarchy. He defines totalization as useless, and sometimes as impossible. One cannot determine the centre and exhaust totalization because the sign which replaces the centre, which supplements it, taking the centre's place in its absence this sign is added, occurs as a surplus, as a supplement (Derrida 1978: 289).

He has argued his master concept of 'difference', that all language and communication exist as a system of differences. The word 'difference' can refer to the entire configuration of its meanings (Derrida 1982: 8). Differences describe relations that are not locatable as specific presences. That is, the illusion of the self-presence of meaning or of consciousness is produced by the repression of the differential structures from which they spring. This concept gives us a non-centred and non-centrable representation of personhood. Thus, for Derrida the very concept of personhood is essentially the mutual recognition of the other-in-self and the self-in-other.

Foucault has created a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subject (Foucault 1982: 777). He criticizes the old paradigms such as positivism and individualism. In this view, he rejects not only humanism which believes that individuals are autonomous and responsible, but also totalizing forms of analysis and systematization such as any form of universal theorising. Rather, he claims to pursue thought only in the context of an analysis of power relations in modern culture, between self-understanding and power. Persons are embodied in discourse, that is, in social relations as power relations. This opens up an opportunity to rework instances of social interaction and self-definition in the politically judged patterns and other forms of domination at work in society. Power,

then, is treated as being productive of subjectivity. It means that the organization of knowledge has to create new objects of human understanding. Power becomes a central relational attribute of any inquiry directed at self-knowledge. Foucault also examines language at its interface with social institutions in order to identify the institutional rules. He is concerned with language and the constitution of the self in discourse. Thus, Foucault believes that the individual has become an object of knowledge in the interface between the self and social sciences.

Self-narrative or self-knowledge motivates a relation to 'the other' and the concept of 'difference'. These concepts are a critique of essentialism and mono-culturalism, asserting the unfixed and over-determined character of identities. Even as self-narrative claims the universal nature of its constituent identities, its struggle to maintain the cultural, sexual and racial dichotomies of self and other makes and produces social formations. The cultural identity, in relation to the other and to difference, recognizes both the interdependent and relational nature of identities. Alongside this promotion of difference and the other in identity formation, there have been attempts to reassert traditional moral and sexual values which delegitimise plurality and diversity. In doing so, in asserting the relational nature of identities, most of us cross these boundaries both in our individual subjectivities and our personal relationships.

Personal identity can never be based on some static and unchanging object. It is not only an interchange between person and structure, but also embraces relations between person and society. Thus, identity marks the conjuncture of our past with the social, cultural and economic relations within which we live. We have asked the question 'How is culture integrated into or constitutive of an individual's self?' Each individual is the synthesis not only of existing relations but also of the history of these relations. Forming our identities can be understood within the context of this

construction, in the intersection of our everyday lives with the various narratives and cultural characters. The emergence of a cultural difference is a response to the new subject and cultural identities. In making sense of identity and difference it has been post-structuralist writing that has helped to clarify these issues. According to Foucault, by invoking its claim to universal truth, such a system of knowledge hides cultural diversity and conceals the power structures that preserve the hierarchical relations of difference.

There are at least two different ways of thinking about identity. The first position defines 'cultural identity' in terms of a sort of collective one true self; more than superficially or artificially imposed selves, which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. In this view, identity is about belonging, about what you have in common with some people. Personal identity is often tied to the need to articulate a collective identity around race and culture even though as individuals we inhabit a range of positions within our histories and inside our diverse identities. Within the terms of this definition, a cultural identity reflects the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as one people, with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning.

As discussed in chapter 2, personal identity is constructed by social representations because human beings are both highly plastic and culturally configured. We can have a common historical experience through shared cultural discourse such as customs, myths, ideas, and religion. We can also share cultural codes through social representations, which can create the indigenous person's self-understanding of his or her own lifeworld. Particularly, Korean identity formation has employed collective representations that describe cultural propositions such as Woori, Cheong, and Han. The Korean person has a strong sense of collective identities, and of powerful inherited solidarities derived from a 'collective consciousness.' In this way,

Koreans achieve a sense of personal integrity when we represent ourselves and recognize in our historical consciousness. Otherwise, our identification has been a search for that most elusive of feelings, a sense of belonging. It was characterized by the belief system which constructs the way societal members think and feel about problems. So, on the one hand, culture and identities can never be wholly separate, while on the other hand, the interrelationships of differences are marked by translation and negotiation.

The second position recognizes that there are critical points of deep and significant differences which constitute 'what we really are' or 'what we have become'. Cultural identity is a matter of becoming as well as of being. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending life, or having histories. It is always constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative and myth. In terms of Derrida (1982: 3-27), individual difference makes sense of personal location, the stable core to our individuality, social relationship, and our complex involvement with others. Then, difference can refer to the entire configuration of its meanings. Difference could be said to designate a constitutive, productive, and originary causality, the process of scission and division (Derrida 1982: 9).

Korean people were positioned in and subjected to the dominant regimes of collective representation, which were the effects of a critical exercise of cultural power and normalization. These had the power to make Koreans see and experience themselves as 'other'. Every regime of collective representation is a regime of power formed, as Foucault reminds us (1980, 1982), by the fatal couplet, 'power/knowledge'. In this perspective, cultural identity is not a fixed essence at all, lying unchanged outside history and culture. It is not some universal and transcendental spirit inside us on which history has made no fundamental mark.

Foucault reminds us that the form of power makes individuals subjects.

This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. ... there are two meanings of the word 'subject': subject to someone else by control and dependence; and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to (Foucault 1982: 781).

A subject is conceptualized within a context of social and cultural meaning and a process of developing one's life in an interlinking with others and with the dominant ideology which becomes the basis of personal identity. Hence, subjects are discovered and interpreted in the narrative in which they discourse with all the others. This self-recognition is achieved through the process of narration that is personal and also culturally institutionalized with others.

#### **4.4 Narrative theology**

We have discussed a narrative theory and narrative identity in which the formation of subjectivity takes place. Narrative as a solution to the problem of identity is founded on the dialectic between history and fiction, the two major forms of narrative. The goal to the construction of a personal story is to give shape and meaning to one's existence. The function of narrative is mainly describing what reality is or re-describing what reality is like. In this view, we are concerned with narrative theology that reveals the importance of narrative for theology.

The present researcher, then, aims to examine the important function of narrative for theology and to connect with the Christian faith for dialoguing with Christian

religious symbols and ideas. Then the questions arise: What is the importance of narrative for Christian theology? How can we elaborate the horizon of meaning implicit in the narratives and symbols constitutive of Christian traditions?

The first question is to investigate narrative's significance in Christian theology. Ricoeur argues that the premier value of the religious symbol is for understanding the meaning of the human being in a world charged with the presence and absence of the sacred (Ricoeur 1995: 5). He treats the Bible as a deposit of free-floating metaphors, which means that he strives to bring the world of the Bible near the existential world. The essence of metaphor is 'bringing near' (*meta-pherein* = 'transfer'), a 'seeing together,' which associates seemingly disparate realms of meaning and puts them to creative use (Vanhoozer 1990: 4-5). In so doing, Ricoeur prefers hermeneutics rather than a strictly philosophical or dogmatic discipline. He opens up the possibility of an ample biblical world by means of narrative.

The second question is the problem of the meaning of the human being. The main task is a critical recovery of the power of myths, symbols, and narratives in an empty world of meaning and hope, which implies that we must recover meaning about the 'surplus of human being.' Ricoeur insists that to speak of possibility for human beings is to refer to an integral aspect of being. Thus, Ricoeur emphasizes the power of the text to disclose new possibilities and offer the reader an expanded view of the world and deeper capacity for selfhood. He believes that the world of the text can figure the identity of the sacred and reveal dimensions of the human condition. Ultimately, he envisions religious studies as a hermeneutical inquiry into the imaginative potential of myth, symbol, and story to aid our efforts to exist with integrity (Ricoeur 1995: 14).

#### 4.4.1 Narrative's theological significance

Metz studied narrative in an attempt to throw light on the understanding of the Christian faith in our present situation (Metz 1989: 251). Narrative promotes and exchanges real or original experiences of faith by means of narrative form. One is also able to use narrative practically in pastoral contexts and employ its socially critical effect, which is at the base of the emancipatory character of narrative. Metz suggests that this is one of the most important roles of narrative for contemporary theology: as a medium of understanding salvation and history and the narrative structure of criticism. Narrative mediates between the history of suffering, as the experience of reality in the existential conflict and contradiction, and the theology of salvation and of man's redemption and reconciliation through Jesus Christ. Thus, narrative is not a purely conceptual salvation and speculative reconciliation, but a dialectical process as the existential and transcendental interpretation of the relationship between salvation and history. This dialectical process was attempted by some theologians who developed an emphasis such as the theology of the cross which tried to resolve human suffering.

However, Ricoeur is not convinced that rebuilding theology on a narrative basis is sound. Biblical narrative is not identical to world histories, but is a frozen one-dimensional narrative in which all the varieties of discourse are found. Namely, biblical narrative is not a culturally motivated reduction of the rich interplay of temporal qualities (Ricoeur 1995: 236-238). This is a challenge to liberate the biblical narratives from the constraints of the Christian pattern, from a univocally chronological schema of the history of salvation. He suggests the task of biblical narrative in contemporary theology is to focus on referentiality, communicability, and self-understanding. The successful application of narratology to biblical narratives testifies to this continuity between religious and nonreligious narrative. In this way, narratives do in their own way constitute the identity of the community as a narrative identity (Ricoeur 1995: 241).

However, Root reminds us that the recognition of the narrative form illuminates the structures and explanatory power that operate both on the organization of the narrative and on the level of detailed elements within narrative (Root 1989: 263-271). Narrative pattern seeks to convey the fittingness of what occurs, namely that it does or can exist in the reader's life. From another perspective, Hartt argues the priorities of the story in Christian experience, borrowing the concept of 'imagination' from Christ, (Hartt 1989: 281). For them, imagination is the primary integrating power of experience and mind which is a distinct activity of the psyche as a whole. He more fully develops the notion of 'imagination' as biblical stories are full of imagination-expressive content (1989: 284), and holds that narrative is a reflective enterprise in theology.

Ricoeur defines narrative as a concept of the imagination that can be described as a rule-governed form of invention or as a norm-governed productivity, and as the power of giving form to human experience. In the general theory of narrative, fiction is the imagination considered from this double point of view. He sees in the reading of a text such as the Bible a creative operation unceasingly employed in decontextualizing its meaning and recontextualizing it in today's situation (Ricoeur 1995: 145). In this way, the act of reading realizes the union of fiction and redescription that characterizes the imagination in the most pregnant sense of this term.

Ricoeur proposes to limit the particular category of texts within the domain of the form of the imagination at work in the biblical text (Ricoeur 1995: 145-6).

Firstly, he intends to seek in reading itself, the key to the heuristic functioning of the productive imagination. As another way of approaching this presupposition, one can

explore the work of the imagination after reading, either as a personal form of the imagination or as a collective form of the imagination. In this sense, the act of reading unfolds itself into the individual and social forms of the imagination.

His second presupposition is that it is within the structure of the narrative itself that one apprehends this intersection between the text and life that engenders imagination according to the Bible. It means that the act of reading should encompass the text as a production of fiction and the free course of meaning brought about by the reader seeking to apply the text to life.

For him, the third presupposition is that the narrative-parables furnish the key to the enigma of the conceptual passage from a narrative to a paradigm, which in turn governs the passage from a narrative to life, which is finally the heuristic character of narrative fiction. This is an imagination by revelation in our history: that special occasion which provides us with an image in terms of which all the occasions of personal and common life become intelligible. This is a process of history or story becomes an image, a paradigm, or a symbol.

Ricoeur reminds us that the narrative-parable is the type of theory most favourable to investigating the link between a narrative and an image, because this is itself an itinerary of meaning which transforms a narrative structure into a metaphorical process, which in turn orients the whole process of transgression beyond the narrative framework. But his approach was condemned as a narrow understanding of the form of narrative. Then Ricoeur sought for this type of narrative a process capable of other applications without becoming a narrative interpretation of narrative. This is 'intertextuality' as one text, in referring to another text, both displaces this other text and receives from it an extension of meaning (Ricoeur 1995: 148). Intertextuality refers to the semiotics of texts rather than historical-critical exegesis;

it asks how a text functions as a text in its current state.

Here, he assures one that to understand a narrative dynamically is to understand it as the operation of transforming an initial situation into a terminal situation. To read a narrative is to redo with the text a certain line or course of meaning. Then, a parable is a general procedure of the narrative form of imagination and works in the case of non-parabolic narratives as well as in the case of parables. In his second presupposition, revelation then is the transfer from this history to our history, as suggested by Niebuhr (1941). Consequently, the biblical form of imagination is both a narrative and a symbolic form of imagination.

Hartt also asks that historical reconstructions of the real past be made for the present. The truthful narrative is judged by the morality of the specific community and character that form nothing less than a tradition (1989: 287). Historiographical cognitivity encompasses true accounts of the dealings of God with human beings. This demand is imperious for engagements with actuality. Thus, as a true bridge from tradition-community-history to actuality, it must be found with their own kinds of universals, and their own kinds of predictabilities. Ricoeur, concerned with the application of metaphysics to ethics and morality, said that the act of actually keeping one's word constitutes the actual transition between the metaphysical and the moral sides of self-constancy (Ricoeur 1996:457). From the same perspective, Hauerwas debates that a story requires foundational metaphysical beliefs because of their reality-intending characteristic. It involves ontological presuppositions about the story told in the Gospels. Hence, the story of the Gospel is necessary for understanding the nature and form of those beliefs. Therefore, Hauerwas emphasizes the narrative character of Christian convictions, which helps us understand better how claims about God entail fundamental assumptions about the narratability of the world and our lives (Hauerwas 1989: 304-309).

Hartt insists that as parts of the story are experiential and confessional, the vectorial structure of a historical situation is such that God is its ground, its providence, and its end (Hartt 1989: 290). That means that God is an agent, in a manner of speaking. Only God is an agent capable of self and societal unity; we are at best vectorial structures teleologically (Hauerwas 1989: 309). Hartt suggests that an indispensable pattern for this bridging is the action-character of structure accepted in the historical community as the proper service to God. In this view, a person can be defined only in relation to a direction such as categorical obligations. It means that a story facilitates the real and final sense of the trajectory in the metaphysical domain.

Thiemann also argues that the category of the narrative integrates a central literary genre in Scripture with an organizing theological image and provides the language by which we specify personal identity (Thiemann 1989: 320). On the other hand, Goldberg believes that a Christian narrative theology produces the specific story line, theme, and character to acknowledge God (Goldberg 1989: 349). Narrative seeks to provide an individuating identification of God within a story. Narrative identification thus entails the description of patterns of behaviour and accounts for the persistence of a subject throughout such changes.

#### **4.5 Hermeneutical model of narrative for suffering**

We have explored the issue of suffering by means of hermeneutics in a particular Korean cultural dimension. Narrative hermeneutics is necessary to deal with the relationship between language and reality; language is used by participants to reach a common understanding or a shared view. Narrative hermeneutics can be identified both as an observable event and as an understandable objectification of meaning.

In chapter 2, the present researcher developed a notion of deriving a cultural identity from an immanent historical consciousness in reproducing culture and keeping tradition alive by employing Gadamer's hermeneutics. In this view, individuals' self-understanding or identity formation is provided by the notion of 'social representations' or 'public spheres.' This is possible through a cultural integration into the specific culture. In this process, we had to explore the Korean indigenous socio-cultural perspective in order to identify the personal characteristics. These two notions employed the empirical-analytic method for an objectification of reality.

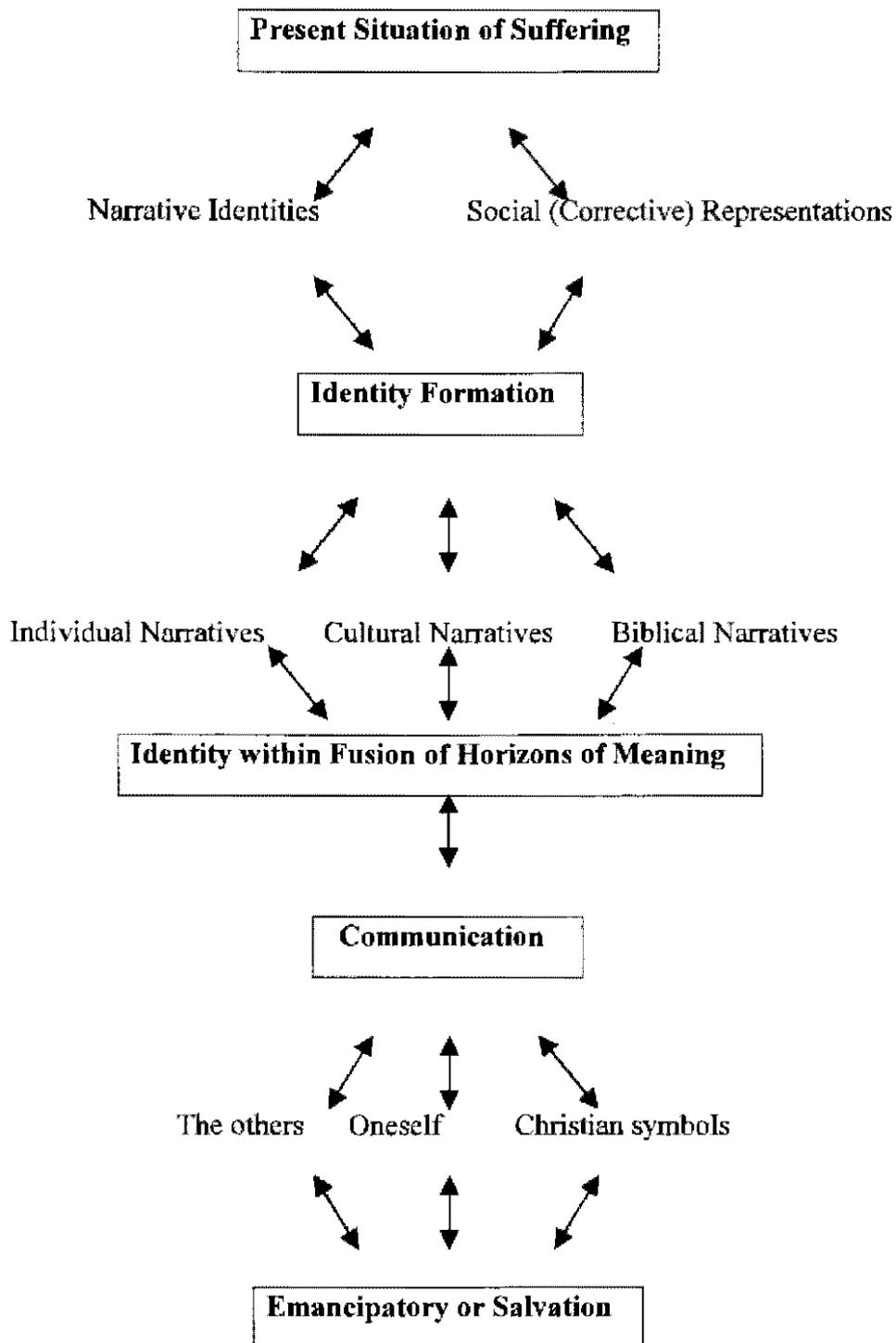
From a practical theological perspective, Gerkin has considered a cultural-linguistic model for pastoral care as well as for practical theology (Gerkin 1997: 110). Pastoral care must fit people's needs in our time, which indeed alters not only individual problems, but also the cultural context and social situation, which in turn alter the shape of Christian communities. Accordingly, he emphasizes that pastoral care and counselling contexts must shift the psychotherapeutic model to a narrative hermeneutical perspective (Gerkin 1986: 14), because the current pastoral context is deeply rooted in the midst of contemporary pluralism and rapid social change. The cultural-linguistic approach emphasizes the primary importance of interpretation and the language to be used in interpreting human situations and predicaments.

We have investigated narrative identity and narrative theology by way of a reflection on forms of language. Narrative creates and displays the myriad ways that we can live, on the one hand, while on the other hand it also mediates between the history of suffering and biblical ideas such as salvation or emancipation. Narrative allows us to imagine our world and ourselves. Narratives display, then, not only possibilities for the individual and his community, but for the biblical world as well. In this way, we attempt to link an individual experience of suffering with realms of meaning in forms of language that express human existence. This encompasses our quest for a

hermeneutical model of narrative.

#### 4.5.1 Hermeneutical model of suffering

**Figure 7. Hermeneutical model of suffering**



This hermeneutical model aims to construct a theory of personal identity by means of narrative theory and social representations, and of self-emancipation by communication with oneself, others, and God. Figure 7 schematises several important factors concerning personal identity, when it is undertaken both as a

process of social representations and of narrative identity within an attitude of openness to present and future emancipation and salvation. We shall begin our investigation with the present situation of suffering. It takes place in the midst of praxis and is promoted by the situation of people in mid-suffering. Indeed, we shall observe pervasive phenomena of the lifeworld of Korean culture.

Social representations are forms of social thinking used to communicate and understand. Social knowledge constitutes collective systems of meaning which may be expressed in values, ideas, and practices. We can be informed by a broad range of cultural knowledge and a certain quality of objectivity through social or corrective representations. The contextual arena embraces a community's life and work in its various dimensions.

Narrative reflects on the nature of humanity itself and on the nature of culture. Human reality has narrative features, and the person is a reality characterised by action, which presents narrative material and is recounted. Mimesis, in Ricoeur's narrative theory, encompasses the lifeworld preceding a text, the imitative act of the text, and the imitation that results from the text. This hermeneutical circle of narrative provides one's own story through an act of reading. In this act, a reader can know his or her action as a preunderstanding of the world of action and explain individual human action in his or her lifeworld.

Personal identity is constituted through a narrative process containing personal, cultural, and religious narrative. We can see personal identity in the fusion of horizons of meaning; that is horizons of understanding have not only developed out of a history of embeddedness in a sociocultural process, but also grew out of personal recognition of oneself, others, and God. The critical and constructive reflection of identity makes up the work of personal identity which involves

reflection on the horizon of meaning. The world of meaning shaped by each horizon is challenged and tested by the images and themes, imperatives and assumptions of the other worlds of meaning. Understanding necessarily involves transforming ourselves through genuine openness to the other. The various horizons of meaning inform and shape an individual's life in all its arenas and contexts of interconnection and intercommunication. The desire for fusion is confronted by the pluralism and contradiction of interpretations. There is a conflict of different perspectives in the crucible of mutual criticism searching for a new way of seeing. Thus, the task of understanding is the conquest of the text's alienness (Gadamer 1982:349).

However, the present researcher concentrates more on Ricoeur's hermeneutics which hold that understanding human existence requires a textual hermeneutics in the notion of appropriation, for interpretation of the text culminates in the self-interpretation of the subject (Ricoeur 1981: 158). Ricoeur's hermeneutics characterize correlative and reciprocal factors.

Self-understanding passes through the detour of understanding the cultural signs which the self documents and forms itself. On the other hand, understanding the text is not an end in itself; it mediates the relation to himself of a subject who, in the short circuit of immediate reflection, does not find the meaning of his own life. Thus it must be said, with equal force, that reflection is nothing without the mediation of signs and works, and that explanation is nothing if it is not incorporated as an intermediary stage in the process of self-understanding. In short, in hermeneutical reflection, the constitution of the self is contemporaneous with the constitution of meaning (Ricoeur 1981: 158-9).

The characterization of interpretation as appropriation is valuable for overcoming cultural distance and for fusing textual interpretation with self-interpretation. Therefore, reading culminates in a concrete act which is related to the text as speech

is related to discourse. The interpretation of a text culminates in the self-interpretation of a subject.

Self-understanding or self-reflection involves gaining some ideas, images, and meaning of who we are and should be. One's horizon of meaning is being critically correlated not only with the horizon of the Christian stories, but also with other horizons of cultural stories and personal stories. Personal identity, then, is shaped to communicate between persons who hold different points of view and different worldviews within their interaction and the conflict of their interpretations of life. On the one hand, personal requirements situate subjects to focus on the possibility of self-understanding and to extend the horizon of possible forms of self-realization. That is, the goal is to widen one's horizon of life possibilities, to transform traditional patterns of thought and behaviour in order to realize new and better forms of life. On the other hand, a Christian person requires an appropriation of Christian images of what life is and ought to be for pastoral counselling. It is important to ground personal identity in the narrative images and metaphors of the Christian story. This is a normative direction or the vectorial structure of a historical situation for critically reflecting on prejudice and false ideas.

Finally, personal emancipation or salvation is connected to communication with one's own consciousness, social world, and Christian symbols. One can be emancipated to respond appropriately in our communications by means of interpretations of our present situation and socio-cultural structure. Human understanding situates with the capacity of agents to thematize and explicate structural features of socio-cultural background. Namely, the question of meaning and emancipation are presented to us in terms of our communication. Persons depend in their understanding on interpretive schemes that are socially or trans-subjectively produced. And critical-reflective attitudes toward the symbolic schemes

are an essential part of the modern lifeworld. Habermas used the notion of 'lifeworld' to express entities in the objective, the social or subjective world. The lifeworld provides the symbolic horizon in the light of which specific issues concerning the natural, social, or subjective world can be addressed. Thus, he claims that the whole point of overcoming the solitary subject is to place the communicative agent in the midst of the socio-cultural lifeworld, a shared horizon of meaning and action.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

We have formulated a concept of personal identity based on narrative theory and narrative theology. Narrative effectively describes the nature of the human being, culture and Christian faith. A narrative scheme also operates to produce the particular form and meaning that is human existence. Thus, we create narrative presentations for ourselves and for others, for the past, present, and future. Narrative presentation is used to refer to personal awareness, to others, and the reception of a story by hearing or reading. In this view, the sufferer can construct a unified personal story, represent and interpret it to the inquirer, and evaluate it.

Particularly, Ricoeur developed the narrative theory that studies human subjectivity in the world. The comprehension of the human self is mediated by the existence of the other and by one's life narrative under the culturally shaped cognitive representations via the detour of cultural signs of all sorts among them. This is not only an interchange between person and narrative, but also a relation between person and society. Thus, identity formation constitutes a fusion horizon in which narrative, the others, and religious symbols are found.

### **Chapter 5. Conclusion and recommendations**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This thesis aimed to discover the cultural dimension in a contextual hermeneutics of suffering. It has been based on two hypotheses. The first is the cultural dimension of personal identity. The second is the hermeneutics of suffering. In this chapter we proceed to the summary and conclusions of this thesis. The chapter will begin with a summary of the research questions and results, and it responds to the hypothesis of the research project. The chapter will then attempt to develop guidelines and suggestions for further research projects regarding theodicy issues.

## **5.2 Summary and working hypotheses**

The summary and research questions in each chapter are addressed as follows:

In chapter 1, we recognized the irrelevance of the Korean church's presence and style in its society. The Korean church is alienated from society in spite of rapid growth in churches and membership. Our hypothesis aims to establish theological paradigms for the relationship between church and society. Most Korean churches, as predominantly conservative churches, have no theological perspective toward culture and social issues. Thus, the question arises whether it is possible for the Korean church to transform Korean society by itself.

Hence, the Korean church is confronted with the crisis of establishing a new theological paradigm in order for the church to transform society. In order to overcome the large gap between the church and social and cultural reality, the Korean church needs an empirical theology which makes use of social science research methods. Empirical theology characterizes the reciprocal relationship between God and human beings, church and society. Empirical methodology views the analysis of social practice itself with the aid of various kinds of social studies. For communication and reciprocal relationships, this model of practical theology

opts for a correlative approach focused on the communication theory of action and contextual theology of a transformative nature.

Contextual hermeneutics examines the cultural dimension as a paramount concept in this thesis. Contextual hermeneutics can explore a lifeworld in order to describe and understand a people's language for daily communication, popular cultural myths, and spirituality. We discussed three eminent philosophers: Hans-Georg Gadamer, Jurgan Habermas, and Paul Ricoeur.

Gadamer contributes to hermeneutic notions of 'historical consciousness' and 'fusion of horizons'. He clarified that the conditions of understanding take place within one's own prejudices. Hence, understanding is bound and embedded in history.

For Gadamer, history is not a phase of past consciousness, but constantly fuses the past and our own present consciousness. Understanding takes place in temporal distance. Another important condition in which understanding takes place is language. The aim of hermeneutical understanding is to open ourselves to what texts and tradition say to us. Thus, language is the middle ground of the process of communication. Linguistic understanding is not only entirely independent of the text, but is also historically and culturally constituted.

Habermas developed the notion of 'communicative action' which aims at mutual understanding through rational argumentation. Understanding is intrinsic to language and can be fulfilled only through a consensus arising from the common human lifeworld. Communicative action takes place within the horizon-forming contexts of culture, society and personality. Specifically, consensual knowledge rests on a cultural stock of knowledge shared by the members of a lifeworld. Communicative action can transmit and renew cultural knowledge, establish solidarity and build

social identity. Accordingly, communicative action takes on itself the reproduction of the lifeworld. Habermas introduces us to three domains of knowledge: instrumental as an empirical-analytic method, practical as a hermeneutic method, and emancipation as a critical theory method. These knowledge domains provide guidelines for this thesis.

Ricoeur's analysis of narrative is able to aid in the quest for understanding human nature. Narrative is the central level of discourse which constructs human identity. Narrative structures serve as major resources available to identify personal or cultural character.

Our main task in chapter 2 was to investigate premises of the dimensions of the cultural identity of the Korean people. It aims at developing an indigenous Korean self-understanding from the socio-cultural framework using its own terms and ideas. It supposes that Korean based counselling is a more culturally viable approach than a Western psychological approach. From this perspective, the research methodology was based upon the social content as well as the context of this kind of knowledge, which is practical and deeply rooted in social life. It also necessitated establishing a conceptual framework for understanding the Korean cultural character. It was found that social representation is a very effective way of describing social realities.

Social representations constitute collective systems of meaning in the course of social interaction and communication. Human beings are essentially representational, because only through representations can human beings communicate with one another. Accordingly, personhood must define social representations. Particularly, Korean personality is based on collective representations in the ethno-methodology which are mediated historically and linguistically. Collective representations are a kind of cultural construction of reality. The methodology of collective

representations is derived from perspectivism or relativism rather than from universal concepts.

However, Korean studies directly focus on the Korean culture in order to discover the Korean cultural identity. The theory of collective representation is adapted in this thesis to explore Korean social-cultural realities. A cultural study of Korea employs grounded theory, which allows the flexibility in data gathering and analysis that is necessary not only to identify and explain relationships among variables but also to understand the complex and dynamic context. Grounded theory is based on the systemic generating of theory from data. It is indispensable for Korean studies to discover theory from a conceptual framework such as the cultural propositions. We attempted to conceptualise the Korean culture-specific properties of 'we-ness' and 'Cheong' discourse and 'Han', which are salient and significant concepts in this thesis. We believe that grounded theory is the proper methodology to develop this cultural discourse.

Understanding of the Korean personality requires an indigenous perspective to develop an adequate constitutive scientific approach which establishes basic concepts and theoretical frames. In this perspective, chapter 3 explored Han as an indigenous form of lamentation in Korea. The Korean Han representation was examined by using qualitative research through reviews of the literature, analysis of the concept of Han and empirical interviews with Korean immigrants in South Africa. Korean Han may be understood as a native spirituality, ethos, and window to see the Korean lifeworld. Much Korean literature has dealt with the subject of Han. Han defines the mental state of giving up, resulting from an extensive experience of frustrating and tragic life-events. The Korean lamentation is not only a representation of Korean culture but also reproduces the cultural heritage. This concept introduced us to the embedded ideas, belief systems, and emotions in social and cultural reality. Thus, as

we have premised, Korean cultural discourses reveal the Korean personality.

We conceptualised the notion of Han by the use of grounded theory. In this process, we developed a three-personality model in which the person is in the midst of suffering. This person full of Han is able to carry out self-understanding and self-interpretation by using a model. It is possible to connect this model with the theodicy model for further study. This thesis hopes to have an effect on the Korean pastoral context and counselling.

One of the important themes in this thesis is suffering. We attempted to describe the indigenous concept of suffering in terms of the cultural dimensions. It was also necessary to define the nature of suffering within philosophy and Christian theological views. Suffering may be regarded in conceptual categories in which the various kinds of classifications are determined by our past experiences, expectations and purposes, and the social organization, thought processes, behaviours and techniques are related to healing methods. This classification is not based on universal concepts or meta-theory but is in fact culture bound within indigenous beliefs, as well as society's representations and values.

However, theodicy is one of the oldest and most traditional concepts in Christian theology. Many philosophers and theologians attempted to resolve the problem of suffering by means of logical legitimation. Classical theodicy is the effort to reconcile God's love and justice with the reality of suffering. Leibniz and Hegel are representative thinkers who attempted the justification of suffering by the use of the theory of legitimation. This idea derives its intelligibility and justification from its argument about belonging to the overarching whole. Indeed, the logic of history not only determines that reconciliation among people, individuals and groups must suffer for the good of society or for a higher harmony.

In moving from theodicy to anthropodicy, Nietzsche opts for an interpretation of being which is personally constructed rather than as the yoke of imposed systems of meaning. Human existence requires vital contextual interpretation which provides more satisfaction than the ready-made answer dictated by universal logic. Suffering in contemporary society more often occurs in social relationships in which institutions, political and economic factors. This means that interactions and relationships take part in the experience of suffering. Therefore, as suffering is socially produced, we seek imaginatively to employ multi-dimensions and to define its various meanings more precisely.

The problem of suffering in theology dealt with the idea of God's suffering in the theology of the cross. Luther, Kitamori and Moltmann strongly advocated the notion of a suffering God. They illuminate God's suffering within the all-embracing nature of God and include the suffering of God in the all-embracing divine nature. They advocated the crucified God to expose God's self-abandonment and self-identity. This indicates the true identity of God. They understood the death of Jesus on the cross as God's active suffering, which allows God oneself to be crucified in Jesus. Thus, the theology of the cross imparts a radical change in the Western Christian concept of God. It emphasizes that Christ the crucified is the centre of the human's true theology and permits a knowledge of God.

Empirical theologians deal with the problem of suffering in human existence that is concerned with people's attitudes and communications within themselves and with others about these religious symbols and ideas. They attempt to carry out empirical research on the effects of an experimental theodicy course in giving pastoral opportunities to people to stimulate belief. They employ a theodicy model as a religious interpretation of suffering. Theodicy models are communicatively

orientated to the dialectic between our modern culture and the true content of Christian faith. This communicative action of theodicy models is the hermeneutical process to establish a correlation between the traditional Christian faith and the sufferer's own situation. It means that a theodicy model opens the possibility of communication between the Christian faith and the notion of Han as an indigenous form of lamentation in Korea.

This whole thesis has focuses on the nature of human beings in terms of a linguistic paradigm, because human beings evidence narrative features in their existence. In chapter 4, we were concerned with narrative theories that provide us with an analytical perspective of narrative in order to construct a personal identity. Through the work of narrative, we can understand the nature of human beings and describe aspects of human existence within the linguistic realm. Narrative is one of the primary forms by which human experiences are imbued with meaning, which can reflect on the very nature of culture and on the nature of humanity. Accordingly, narrative is a form of discursive communication that consists of and establishes the referential function of communication.

Particularly, developing the concept of narrative theory from Aristotle's *mimesis*, Ricoeur explored narrative theory. Ricoeur's narrative theory provides us with an understanding of human beings by means of symbols, myths, metaphors and texts, all of which attest to the meaning of human existence. He argued for a reciprocity between narrativity and temporality: temporality to be that structure of existence that reaches language in narrativity, and narrativity to be the language structure that has temporality as its ultimate referent. He tried to reconstruct the elementary ideas in the story turned into texts by using the notion of mimesis.

Ricoeur tells us that the question of identity is deliberately posed as the outcome of

narration. That is, personal identity is articulated in the temporal dimension of human existence. The term identity is composed of two countering notions: self (*ipse*) and identity (*idem*). Thus, the idea of personal identity holds the two notions of difference and sameness in tension. Ricoeur develops the concrete dialectic of selfhood and sameness in a constructive way. Both terms overlap with reference to notions of permanence in time. Such a narrative identity will only be known correlative to the discordant concordance of the story itself.

For Ricoeur, to think oneself is to think the other. The comprehension of the human self is mediated by the existence of the other through the multiplicity of historical and practical relations. Individuals play out their lives within culturally specific forms of narrative. Thus, self-knowledge does not know itself immediately, but only indirectly through a detour via cultural signs of all sorts. Cultural identity articulates the self in the others and explores symbolic mediations that already articulate action, among them the narratives of daily life. In this perspective, Derrida and Foucault developed the notion of 'other' and 'difference' in forms of history and culture. They criticize an essentialism and mono-culturalism which asserts the unfixed and over-determined character of identities. The cultural identity, in relation with the other and difference, recognizes both the interdependent and relational nature of identities.

We have also investigated narrative's significance in Christian theology. Narrative promotes and exchanges real or original experiences of faith by means of narrative form. Narrative also mediates between the history of suffering and the theology of salvation and of human redemption and reconciliation through Jesus Christ. The truthful narrative is judged by the moral community and character of that form of tradition. This means that the story requires foundational metaphysical beliefs because of their reality-intending character. It involves the ontological presuppositions of the story told in the Gospels. In other words, the story of the

Gospel is the vectorial structure of a historical situation.

Finally, the researcher attempted to develop a hermeneutical model of suffering. Narrative hermeneutics deal with relationships between language and reality. Narrative hermeneutics then are able to connect between an observable event and an understandable objectification of meaning. That is, we can connect the problem of suffering with the meaning of dimension. According to this perspective, the present researcher employs the hermeneutical model of suffering. This model integrated all the study processes of this thesis. It started from the contextual situation of suffering, to formulate personal identity, communicate oneself, the others and God, and accomplish emancipation or salvation. This model also uses Habermas' three domains of knowledge and research methods: instrumental (empirical), practical (hermeneutical), and emancipation (critical).

### **5.3 Conclusions**

In conclusion, the researcher has described the Korean identity in terms of a major cultural dimension, so that one can understand the Korean personality and church within Korea's terms, history, and ideas. This study opens more possibilities for Koreanistic practical theology. The researcher has been personally challenged by the evidence of what he has discovered. But this Koreanistic approach is still a toddler in scientific terms. We still need to develop scientific concepts and theories within the Korean context and the practical application needs to be tested in case studies and other pastoral contexts.

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