

The industrial development of Korea started at the end of 1960s when Jeeha Kim started to work as a poet. The corrupt government used modernization as one of many ruling strategies, which destroyed the traditional "life-value" idea and the culture of revival under the name of "industrial development of the country." Kim strongly resisted and tried to preserve the life-value idea against the power of death, which tried to destroy the life-centered communal nature. He emphasized this point, as a poet of resistance and fighting. Not only his "Five Enemies", but also "Red Street" and "With the burning thirst" show his life-centered idea. However, his direct fighting and resistance gradually evolved into a wide embracing and reconciliatory stage. "Looking up the star field", "The torment of center", "Flower blooming", "The dawn river" (2006), and "The silk road" (2000) which were published after the year of 1980; after "Aerin" belonged this reconciliation stage. Kim's poetic world shows the features of the stage of his direct resistance and fight against the power of death, and the reconstruction of revival culture keeping with the very fundamental and expansive view which may even purify the power of death. Especially, "Hwagae; Flower blooming", "The dawn river", and "The silk road" which were published recently show the realization of apocalyptic prediction and the features of the concentration on life and peace in detailed contexts.

Now, I'd like to raise the question: what is the fundamental reason that made Kim repeat his fierce resistance and fight almost to the point of death, and paradoxically find the starting point of revival at the point of crisis? The next quotation describes the situation in this perspective:

Around that time, in the hole between the concrete and an iron-barred window, I found a spot where the dust piled up, and a grass seed flew down there, absorbed the rain drops, sprouted, and grew leaves. How I wept when I came back to jail after I saw it. Life! How freshly and powerfully did that word approach to me! One life could fill an enormous space! A life of one stream of waving without a beginning or an end. Of course, there is no fence and wall. There's no death and destruction. I could probably say that I became smaller and smaller, and had stenocardia and schizophrenia. How could I have acquired the principle of life in my mind and body?

- "From the burning thirsty to the ocean of life"

Kim discovers ironically the wide and endless spacious self during a crisis of imprisonment through an iron-barred window. In other words, a grass seed is the portrait of the poet, himself, and the seed is a clear mirror for the reflection of his essence. His imagination in the narrow jail paradoxically is spreading out to the ocean of life which does not have a fence or a wall. The jail, of course, primarily indicates the place where the poet is imprisoned in very real oppression. However, ultimately, it could be understood as a space of fighting and resistance against the power of death, and a symbol of the structure of endless fighting. At this stage, the poet starts to leave the way "to experience a big principle in his mind and body" beyond the structure of fighting.

In fact, Kim's poetic pursuit of life-rehabilitation after showing remarkable inner endurance opens eyes to some truthful aspects, which can be found in the poem "The torment of the center." In this thesis, I would like to analyze and reveal the features of the life-centered idea that are shown in Kim's poetic world.

Recently, all human beings are experiencing an environmental crisis; physically, we could destroy the whole earth and all of the environment, and spiritually, we face the loss of self-identity. These crises are attributable to a mainly human-centered ideology that has progressed since the sixteenth through seventeenth century with the shift toward the modern mechanical paradigm. The modern ruling principle is based on self-centered ideology and rapidly change living creatures into the non-living. It is well recognized that the mechanical ideology as a model of modern science, which was started by René Descartes and Isaac Newton, turned the harmonious relationship between Man and Nature and among men to the conflict with each other. This unbalanced structure and order was essentially caused by the idea of rational and analytical thought process models that recognize each life existence as a separate composing member in this world.

More recently, the environment crisis is discussed more seriously and broadly, "ecological poetry" has started to appear vividly at the surface of literature. Most ecological poetry are presently limited to satire and criticism of the phenomenon of environmental destruction. Lately, the ecological poetry published are still at the stage of revealing basic reasons of environmental destruction. They do not suggest any appropriate philosophical alternatives or proposals to solve this serious problem. Of course, it is also meaningful to describe the shockingly serious environmental problem. It could lead readers to consider this problem in their daily lives. However, this approach to writing cannot solve any ecological problems.

Kim could be understood as a poet who clearly signals and directs ways to solving the problem going beyond the mentioning the poor ecological situation that is covered by other literature. He emphasizes the *re*-recognition and discovery of life existence. His recognition of life-value starts from the discovery of the essence of himself—he could be the essential existence of life himself.

I counted/ How old I am/ The age of earth is three thousand five hundred million years old/ After the space exploded, fifteen billion years old passed/ Before that, after that endless years// Oh, enormous ages// I die endlessly/ The life has no death// There's no fear/ Today// I will love a grass/ Will love me.

—"New spring 8"

Who am I? I am Space. Therefore, my age is the same as the age of space. My body is a cumulative entity with endless history. I survive with the help of lots of things such as the water I drink, air, food, etc. And these things are also produced by something else. Therefore, Kim sings "Did you forget/ A leaf feeds me/ The water drops breed me/ the birds foster me." ("I, once") All individual life only has conditional life. Each life must be dependent to another part of life in space. In other words, the close connection with the complement-life is necessary to execute self-organization in the space. The subject of life cannot be limited to the individual life unit and cannot be separated from others. Instead, it should be understood as a being who becomes a part of life in space with the complement-life.

In the quoted poem above, the narrator counts his age in opposition to linear time models. It can be produced by recognizing his identity; he is one being in space. The narrator says that he feels it "in my ears/ the spacial time / in my blood lines." ("I, once") Kim sees the spacial scenery; "My mind is open/ and embraces the whole space and creatures" ("Collection 4 of Mountain time") and "In my bone/ the grass is growing/ the Sun and the moon is coming out" ("Collection 5 of Mountain time") I am

the incarnated spiritual being. Therefore the holy "god " stays in my inner part.

There's no such day/ The living one/ The living one is/ Now, and here/ From here to there/ From the now to the old, or the future far away/ Above, or deep down, all around beyond the four directions// Full of life/ Overflowing with life, now, and here/ There is an endless day/ Therefore/ Let the longing/ Toward me// In my heart/ Oh, god / You are alive like this// Everyday/ Without death/ Only life.

- "That day"

This poem shows Kim's idea about life which could be the measurement standard to understand humans and the world. "God (creator)" who is the object of his admiration is not above the real world, and exists as the living one in his inner part "now, and here/ Therefore the longing/ Should be toward me." The poet emphasizes that "I am", meaning "he is" the endless, and spiritual spacial being. This reminds me of Waiting for Master ideology of Jewoo Choi. The interpretation of Waiting of Master ideology of Suwoon (Jewoo Choi) 內有神靈 外有氣化 一世之人 各之不二 focuses on the point that the spiritual being is kept in the inner part of Man, and becomes another when it comes out into the world, so, the two cannot be separated. In these verses, the spiritual being means inner essence; the "氣化 " means the external relationship with the other existence, and "不二" means movement and actualization. If I interpret this verse directly, it means that there is spirit in the inner part, it should be flowing outside, and it must work in real life . This could be symbolically applicable to everyone including himself since all have a universal spiritual being within. Therefore, the order of the universe has movement, circulation, realization of spiritual existences, and all beings should participate in the order of life continuously, and accomplish their own self-identity.

This poem shows the discovery process of his essence to extend to the relationship with the external existence:

There is no such thing as loneliness/ Yes/ Soil, water, air, and wind/ They are all brothers/ No, they are adults/ Higher than the brothers/ I have come to think that/ I am very happy// Like a blessing/ The bird is singing above my head.

- "New Spring 3"

The narrator thinks that of all existences as "adults." (god) The things is also universal being as like he is the living universal one. The narrator understands that even a non-living thing in its existence has life and a spirit. "Soil, water, air, and wind/ They are all brothers", shows the basic idea that the non-living and I are one body. All the other existences in the universe and I are one collective being, and have the same resource. It is not only the spirituality, but also the external existence that stays in my body. Both of them are common subjects who participate in the non-linear movement of lives in the universe. It is the recognition that subject and object become one and cannot be separated; therefore, Kim writes that "In a leaf/ staring/ myself" ("I, once") and "to the dry branch of tree/ Please bow once" ("What"). After he realized the principle of life he narrates that "there is no loneliness". He believes that the singing bird above his head is also a blessing.

Superficially, Kim's idea of communal life in his poetry looks similar to ancient animism. However, his idea is far different from ancient animism which is the belief that there are good and evil spirits in animals, plants, and non-living things, and these are considered as taboo. Kim's spiritualism focuses on the "communal subject" or the

"extended subject" of existence, and it can be compared to its ancient predecessor, which is dependant on the body and thought to be a mysterious taboo.

An individual life can be understood as an existence that has passive style. Kim writes about the individual life's value and principle:

In the empty room/ I am alone// Alone, I am living// Living/ Living as the universe// In the empty room/ There is universe// Everything/ are jumping living alone, together // One bright day/ A day in autumn/ I live in an empty room.

- "I am living"

The narrator "is alone/ in the empty room." All living things are living individuals living alone. But "living alone" does not mean living alone. Even though all existence lives alone, it lives with other as well. Kim expresses "Everything/ is jumping living alone, together." This sentence combines two paradoxical structures into one entity. Even though it appears to be a paradox, it perfectly reveals the principle of existence. It is also similar to the verses of "in the empty room/ there is the space." "In the empty room" and "there is the space in the room" look paradoxical, but when these two verses are combined into one structure, it produces a poetic balance. Based on this perspective, the entire principle of living things in his poetry is in contrast; the existence of life might be described in this paradoxical expression.

Each individual life is alone, but connected to outer space. Simultaneously, it is also open and closed to space. In other words, each living existence has both individual and universal features at the same time.

From the soil/ The power of pushing up, keenly/ The power of center//  
Booming flower/ Spreading/ Scattering in the air// .....// Tomorrow/ Going to  
the country/ Going to/ I will empty and bloom it

- excerpt from "The torment of center"

In Kim's poem, the life existence doesn't have a center. By emptying the middle, every flower can bloom as the center. The power of center comes out "from the soil" which makes flowers bloom by spreading to the air. In this poem, the description of "I will empty and bloom it" is the concentrated symbolic expression of the life principle's recognition. This kind of principle can be extended and applied to any existence in the space.

The principle of universal life can extend and evolve life through the horizontal communal relationship. Therefore, we could say that if the life existence is severed into two parts, the center and boundary, the life network could be destroyed.

3.

Kim lives the universal life. He discovers the principle of spacial life through the realization himself. All living things have a relationship with the universal complement-life, spirit as the subject of spacial life, and the unique feature of individual life. Space is harmonized and the living field for all the diverse life. However, the living things' order is being destroyed rapidly in this modern industrial society.

Eat and eat again  
Kill and kill again  
Now and here  
I

Who is destroying  
the earth throughly  
-excerpt from "Tear drops"

The main subject of the destruction of space is just "now, here / I". Human beings are undergoing the experience of the crisis of threatening of the ecosystem. Modernization has functioned much like cancer cells. Modernization, as the ruling system, deactivates the animation of the living and consequently destroys the ecosystem.

The exit to a new world must be found in order to escape the crisis of civilization due to "the entire world's modernization." Therefore, the living paradigm should progress to *seek to the continuous life* beyond the *unrelenting industrialization* of 20th century. The proper re-recognition and discovery of the essence of life is required to achieve this goal. The idea of respecting life which is related with the spirit, diversity and individuality is evident in Kim's poetry, could be the solution for the problem which is produced by the mechanical paradigm. Kim's poetry has meaningful value now in the history of human civilization.