

SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION

The Path of the Korean Society in the Post-Pandemic Era

The Covid pandemic came as a belated coming of age to Korean society.

It was also a great blessing as it presented the entire society with an opportunity for collective awakening.

Society as a whole has been given a rare opportunity to look back on itself and be braced for the future.

Korean society has come to see that it has become an advanced nation overnight.

The path has not been easy at all.

Korea, with five thousand years of civilization, became independent after World War II.

It was placed at the forefront of the Cold War, feeling the pressure from the East and West camps, and had to build its life back in the ashes of the Korean War.

Looking back, Korea was in a very precarious situation.

It was not familiar with democracy. For quite a long time, in the beginning, it was not that different from North Korea in terms of culture.

But fortunately, the Republic of Korea has experienced a series of collective victories, entering successfully into modern time.

Korea, as a nation, overcame the financial crisis, the military dictatorship, Japan's economic sanctions, and the coronavirus crisis, fighting against them together.

How? Two nights would not be enough to tell all the stories. Let me take an example of K-Pop and K-Drama.

Over a decade from 1996, Korean cinema suddenly transitioned into a golden age.

The Day a Pig Fell into the Well in 1996, *Number 3*, *Connection*, and *Green Fish* in 1997, *Christmas in August* in 1998, *Nowhere to Hide* in 1999, *Joint Security Area*, *Peppermint Candy*, and *Dead or Bad* in 2000, *Goosebumps* in 2001, *Sympathy for Lady Vengeance* in 2002, *Memories of Murder*, *Old Boy*, and *Save the Earth!* in 2003, *Repatriation* in 2004 and *Monster* in 2006, these masterpieces were produced over this decade. Of these 15 feature films, eight were directorial debuts.

Why? In 1996, censorship was abolished. Just as the free amalgamation of neurons determines human intelligence and creativity, the unleashed creative conditions sparked such a great revival. There was the context of *Squid Game*, *BTS*, and *Parasite*.

Then, what are the challenges ahead of us who have come to realize that we've become an advanced nation overnight?

For the first, Korea is leading. The responsibility of a leader is to define what they saw as the first witness, to compromise and learn that we are not living on an island, we cannot last long only by seeking self-interests, and the world does get better when we pursue to live better together.

We shouldn't be preoccupied with more money. The International Monetary Fund and the OCED unequivocally say that inequality as a single variable has the most significant impact on economic growth. If we fail to have a growing and stable middle class, the entire society will slide into a squid game.

In this time of the fourth industrial revolution, things are changing rapidly. We should nurture in children the capability to study on their own when facing anything new. We should equip them with digital literacy to better understand the world and others.

Building a society that guarantees the free amalgamation of neurons, understands greater importance of questions than answers, and provides education, which takes care of the future of children. These are the challenges laid ahead of South Korea, which has become an advanced country overnight.