#### **International Review of Humanities Studies**

www.irhs.ui.ac.id, e-ISSN: 2477-6866, p-ISSN: 2527-9416 Vol. 6, No.1, April 2021 (Special Issue), pp. 466-487

#### SCHIZOPHRENIC AUDITORY AND VISUAL HALLUCINATIONS IN THE POEM "DU PYEON-EUI JUGEUM"

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Although the mental health issue is often brought up as an interesting discussion topic for these past few years, negative stigmas towards people with psychological disorders, especially schizophrenia, still exist within society. However, by expressing self-acceptance and innermost thoughts in her poetry, Choi Seung-Ja succeeded in breaking the stigmas and lived her life as a schizophrenic poet. Based on this fact, this research aims to unfold the meaning of the auditory and visual hallucinations shown in Choi Seung-Ja's poem entitled "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum" and to explain the motives behind the creation of the schizophrenic aspects. In order to achieve these goals, this research was carried out in three stages: reading stage; reconciliation stage; interpretation stage, through expressive psycho-literary approach. The result was obtained by associating the poem's sensory imageries with theories related to schizophrenia disorder, the poet's life history, and historical events. The findings show that "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum" reflects Choi Seung-Ja's notion which doesn't portray death merely as a beginning of destruction but also as a gateway to self-restoration and catharsis. Furthermore, hallucinations were used not only to develop the poem's imageries but were also used to project the feelings and the external aspects of the poet.

**KEYWORDS**: Choi Seung-Ja, Hallucinations, Korean Modern Poetry, Psycho Literature, Schizophrenia

#### INTRODUCTION

These days, the mental health issue is often brought up as a discussion topic by people around the world, including South Korea. Not only highlighting issues such as depressive disorders or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), schizophrenia disorders became the talk of the town in the 2010s. This phenomenon was caused by the decision of the Korean Neuropsychiatric Association (KNA) to change the term *jungshinbunyeolbyung* (split-mind disorder) to *johyeonbyung* (attunement disorder) as the official Korean term of schizophrenia in January 2012 (Cho et al., 2018). The decision itself resulted from a social phenomenon where the general public associates certain tendencies to people living with mental health issues, to the point of creating several negative stigmas against these people (Lee, Park, Park, Kim, & Kwon, 2014).

Schizophrenia disorder is still regarded negatively by South Korean society. The prejudice was based on the impulsive and aggressive behaviours shown in some cases (Kim, 2019). Although GBD 2017 (2018) reported that there were approximately 20 million people living with schizophrenia worldwide, this case only possessed 0.6% of the South Korea population. In addition, schizophrenia disorder covers a wide-ranged and varied spectrum, making the behaviour shown in each person may be different from another. In the end, the prejudiced people's limited capability and the society's limited knowledge had a major impact on awakening stereotypes and discrimination acts towards people with schizophrenia in South Korea.

However, the stigmas were successfully broken by Choi Seung-Ja, a South Korean female poet. Choi Seung-Ja started her career as a poet in 1979, actively publishing her works before taking a hiatus in the 1990s. According to Choi Seung-Ja's account, her decision to take a break from the South Korean literature scene was caused by her deteriorating mental condition. Choi Seung-Ja often experienced auditory hallucinations, later followed by insomnia and alcohol use disorder. Therefore, during her vacuum period, she underwent rehabilitation to receive treatments. After 11 years of disappearance, Choi Seung-Ja bravely admitted that she has been living with schizophrenia.

Based on these facts, this study aims to find and explain the meaning of the schizophrenic auditory and visual hallucinations depicted in Choi Seung-Ja's "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum". Moreover, this study also seeks to unveil Choi Seung-Ja's motives for forming the schizophrenic expressions presented in the poem. This research also answers how Choi Seung-Ja turned the schizophrenic aspects into an instrument that enables her to express her ideas and outlook on life.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

A qualitative-descriptive method is used in conducting the research. The analysis was carried out in three stages: the reading stage, the reconciliation stage, and the interpretation stage.

In the first stage, the authors read and understand the essence of Choi Seung-Ja's "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum" which is designated as the primary data source. Then, the authors collected data regarding Choi Seung-Ja's life history, historical events that occurred in the 1960s to 1981, and studies on the diagnosis of schizophrenia. The data were obtained from secondary data sources in the form of books, journal articles, news, theses, and dissertations that are relevant to the research objectives. Lastly, the authors analysed the imageries identified as auditory and visual hallucination experiences. By connecting the imageries with the data obtained earlier, the meaning behind every element can be deciphered thoroughly.

An expressive psycho-literary approach was used in analysing the variables. Abrams (1953) states that this approach sees literary works as the result of externalizing the internal aspects of an author through a creative process stimulated by one's feelings. These internal aspects do not only embody the author's feelings, thoughts, and outlooks but also incorporate historical events and socio-cultural phenomena that occur in the author's surroundings. The expressive theory regards the external aspects of an author as important elements in literary works because these aspects are considered to have undergone a creative process influenced by the author's feelings, thoughts, and perspective (Abrams, 1953). Reckoning with the connection between the author's psychological condition and her surroundings, the expressive psycho-literary approach is considered appropriate to be applied in analysing the poem.

#### HALLUCINATIONS AND DELUSIONS: THE EXISTENCE OF THE "NONEXISTENCE"

Schizophrenia is a psychological disorder characterized by dysfunction of thoughts, emotions, and behaviour as the main symptoms (Kring, Johnson, Davison, & Neale, 2013). Based on the *DSM-5*, a person can be considered living with schizophrenia if they experience hallucinations, delusions, disorganized speech, abnormal motor behaviour, or negative symptoms, such as loss of motivation or emotion (APA, 2013; Kring, Johnson, Davison, & Neale, 2013). There are no absolute symptoms that should be experienced by oneself to be diagnosed with schizophrenia, resulting in its wide-ranged and varied spectrum.

Kring, Johnson, Davison, and Neale (2013) divide the symptoms into three categories: positive symptoms, negative symptoms, and disorganized symptoms. Positive symptoms include distortion and excessive behaviour, such as hallucinations and delusions. In contrast to the said symptoms, negative symptoms are shown in the form of behavioural degradation, such as apathy, alogia, anhedonia, flat responses, and asocial behaviour. Meanwhile, disorganized symptoms are manifested through abnormal speech and abnormal motoric ability. Additionally, there are other symptoms that can't be grouped into these three categories, such as catatonia and unmatched responses.

As one of the positive symptoms, hallucinations are the most common symptoms of schizophrenia. Symptoms of hallucinations in this syndrome involve sensory experiences, such as auditory, visual, tactile, olfactory, and/or gustatory hallucinations (Mueser, Bellack, & Brady, 1990). However, among these five types of hallucinations, auditory hallucinations are the most common to be found in the overall cases (Sartorius, Shapiro, & Jablensky, 1974). Auditory hallucinations of schizophrenia can be characterized by several attributes, such as unpleasant and destructive, authoritative, often appear in the form of male voices, can be manifested in one or a group of voices, and are present in the patient's daily life (McCarthy-Jones & Longden, 2015; Scott, Nurcombe, Sheridan, & McFarland, 2007; Kent & Wahass, 1996).

On more severe stages, people might experience visual hallucinations (Mueser, Bellack, & Brady, 1990). Generally, these symptoms appear alongside with auditory hallucinations (Waters et al., 2014). Visual hallucinations in schizophrenia tend to involve normal-sized animals, family, or religious figures in a coloured scene (Teeple, Caplan, & Stern, 2009). Furthermore, visual hallucinations can be projected as a complex and negative vision, also generally interpreted as having personal relevance to one experiencing it (Waters et al., 2014). Hallucinations in schizophrenia can be influenced by various factors, such as traumatic events, emotional experiences, family, culture, ethnicity, biological conditions, clinical conditions, and demographic factors (McCarthy-Jones & Longden, 2015; Bauer et al., 2011).

Apart from hallucinations, positive symptoms are also manifested through delusions. According to the American Psychiatric Association (2013), delusion is a fixed belief that is hard to be changed due to the presence of conflicting evidence. In other words, delusions can be defined as the subjectification of facts that exists in the reality (Sass, 2018). People experiencing schizophrenia have a tendency to project their subjective belief in the real world, to the point they perceive it as something objective. Delusions can be classified into seven categories, such as persecutory delusion, delusions of reference, grandiose delusion, delusion of control, erotomania, nihilistic delusion, and somatic delusion.

#### DEPICTING ONE'S IDENTITY IN LITERARY WORKS THROUGH SCHIZOPHRENIC ELEMENTS

As the manifestation of one's mind, literary works have the power to reflect its creator's identity. Other than playing the role of a medium that accommodates an author's creativity, literary works also carry one's subconscious mind. It was stated by Hens (2000) in his study on the poem Weihnachten 1967 written by a poet from Austria, Ernst Herbeck (1920-1991), who was living with schizophrenia. Hens explained that Herbeck composed the poem by utilizing a spontaneous method, resulting in incoherence between each line of Weihnachten 1967. Herbeck combined various aspects of schizophrasia features, such as incoherence, irrational word and sentence

arrangement, and distinctive syntactical structure. As a result, the output has its own uniqueness that distinguishes it from other literary works.

Another schizophrenic aspect is also found in the works of Arthur Kenneth Nortje (1942-1970). In his research, Smith (2013) wrote that Nortje created several personas in his works to describe the suffering which he experienced due to the practice of apartheid politics. Schizophrenic behaviour, such as self-objectification and alienation, are reflected in the persona. The creation of this persona proves that Nortje used a schizotypal approach in portraying the suffering. In contrast to poems of resistance in general, Smith mentioned that Nortje's patriotism was manifested through a "dark persona" filled with negative emotions and self-inferiority.

Apparently, Choi Seung-Ja's works also embrace the negative emotions internalized in the personas of Nortje's poetry. This was stated by Kim In-Ok (2014) and Kim Jeong-Shin (2014) in their respective research. In his research, Kim In-Ok concluded that Choi Seung-Ja's poetry was full of paradox and extreme negation in response to the consciousness of death built in herself. Kim In-Ok stated that the use of the tragic lyrics was a manifestation of Choi Seung-Ja's attempt on escaping death. This study emphasizes the rejection of hopes and alienated self-exploration as the characteristics of Choi Seung-Ja's response towards the world's absurdities.

Similar to Kim In-Ok, Kim Jeong-Shin explained the negative emotions shown in Choi Seung-Ja's poetry as well. According to Kim Jeong-Shin, the negative emotions projected by Choi Seung-Ja in her poetry originated from her denial about reality and herself. This indicates that the pressure experienced by Choi Seung-Ja, both internally and externally, grew to be the core motive of the anxiety, despair, and consciousness of death manifested in Choi Seung-Ja.

Based on the explanation above, studies regarding schizophrenic aspects in literary works had indeed been done before. However, these studies have only reviewed literature works through approaches towards its schizophrasia and schizotypal features. Furthermore, research related to Choi Seung-Ja's works only examined the aspects of self-awareness and expression of negation shown in her poetry. This study is the first one to specifically examine the schizophrenic hallucinations elements in Choi Seung-Ja's poem. It is hoped that this study could raise the general public's awareness of mental health issues with the aim that negative stigmas against people with psychological disorders, especially schizophrenia, could be demolished.

#### CHOI SEUNG-JA: HER LIFE STORY AND TRANSFORMATION AS A POET

Choi Seung-Ja was born in Yeongi, South Chungcheong Province, South Korea in 1952. She studied in Sudo Girls High School until 1971 and pursued a degree in German Studies, Korea University. While attending college, her academic activities were often intervened by political issues. The authoritarian regime saw Korea University as the homeland of student activists. Therefore, college activities were suspended most of the time, and students suspected of being

involved in the democratic movement were expelled from the university. One of the expelled students was Choi Seung-Ja. It was assumed that her academic dismissal was caused by her position as the editor of Korea University's literature magazine (Choi & Kim, 2015).

After the expulsion, Choi Seung-Ja began to work in the literature field. She started her career as an editor and translator in a publisher (Kwon, 2017). In 1979, Choi Seung-Ja published five poems through the magazine *Munhak-kwa Jiseong* (Kwon, 2004). Then, her first poetry collection book, *I Sidae-eui Sarang*, was published in 1981 and received positive feedback from the general public (Lee, 2006). After that, Choi Seung-Ja continuously brought out phenomenal works in South Korean literature. Up until 2016, Choi Seung-Ja has published seven other volumes of poetry collection books, viz. *Jeulgeoun Ilgi* (1984); *Gieok-eui Jib* (1989); *Nae Mudeom, Pureugo* (1993); *Yeonindeul* (1999); *Sseulsseulhaeseo Meonameon* (2010); *Mul Wi-e Sseuieojin* (2011); and *Bin Bae-cheoreom Teong Bieo* (2016). Later, in 2010, Choi Seung-Ja won the Jirisan Literature Prize and the Daesan Literary Award for her success on her sixth poetry collection book, namely, *Sseulsseulhaeseo Meonameon* (Choi & Kim, 2015).

However, despite all of her achievements, Choi Seung-Ja's life wasn't as easy as it sounds. Choi Seung-Ja said that she often heard "voices" in her ears (Choi, 2010). In an interview with Chosun.com (2010), Choi Seung-Ja explained the disorders that she began experiencing, such as irrational speech, eating disorders, and obsessive behaviour (Choi, 2019). As a result, Choi Seung-Ja had been experiencing sleeping disorders for six months (Lee, 2017). When she couldn't fall asleep, Choi Seung-Ja consumed alcohol to make herself faint (Choi, 2010). Based on the report issued on Chosun.com (2010), Choi Seung-Ja was afraid to show her vulnerability, thus she decided to live alone in a tenement. Her deteriorating health, both physically and mentally, required Choi Seung-Ja to receive treatments at Pohang Medical Center and take a break from her career as a poet. After eleven years of hiatus, Choi Seung-Ja returned with *Sseulsseulhaeseo Meonameon* which received great response from the general public.

In the South Korean literature realm, Choi Seung-Ja is considered as one of the representative poets of the 1980s (Lee, 2006). One can assume that her popularity arose from the use of expressions uncommonly expressed by female writers of that time. Choi Seung-Ja broke away from women's inherent stereotypes, such as femininity and beauty, and introduced the concept of women trapped in suffering, subjectivity, and power through her literary works (Lee, 2006). Moreover, Choi Seung-Ja's poetry are also characterized by expressions that represent the despair of life (Kwon, 2004).

As time goes by, Choi Seung-Ja's works have undergone many transformations, especially in terms of emotions. Her poetry collections seem to describe her spiritual journey on finding the meaning of life and her existence. The journey was preceded by self-rejection and denial about the whole concept of the corrupted, tarnished world (Koo, 2005). Then, through the book *Gieok-eui Jib*, Choi Seung-Ja projected a new outlook on life by forgiving herself and her surroundings (Koo,

2005; Jin, 2008). In the end, her effort to accept herself led her to enlightenment that gave birth to hope and a new beginning (Koo, 2005). Choi Seung-Ja consistently mentioned "death" and "despair" in her works. However, these expressions were not used merely to convey sadness or misfortune. Choi Seung-Ja used these expressions to foster the courage and strong determination that she needed in her life (Kwon, 2004).

#### AUDITORY AND VISUAL HALLUCINATIONS IN THE POEM "DU PYEON-EUI JUGEUM"

The poem "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum" is one of the poems published in Choi Seung-Ja's first poetry collection entitled I Sidae-eui Sarang (1981). The book I Sidae-eui Sarang mainly talks about the rejection of the world (Jin, 2008). Choi Seung-Ja shared her thoughts on the "corrupted world" by using a tragic first-person narrative. Choi Seung-Ja also used the word "气管" (jugeum, death) a lot in the poems. By emphasizing the word "death", she intended to convey that death is the only way to escape the corrupted world (Koo, 2005).

Compared to the other poems in the book, "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum" shows the schizophrenia symptoms more explicitly. Through a first-person narrative, Choi Seung-Ja projected the experience of auditory and visual hallucinations in a persona who represents herself. The sections below contain the explanations of lines that resemble hallucinatory experiences, both auditorily and visually, as well as the interpretations of the meaning hidden in each variable.

#### **AUDITORY HALLUCINATION EXPERIENCES**

Auditory hallucinations were portrayed explicitly in several lines of the poem "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum". These lines were written in the form of utterances derived from familiar figures in Choi Seung-Ja's life, such as acquaintances and celebrities. The first line identified as a projection of a hallucinatory experience is cited as follows.

欲死欲死

怏怏發狂

"Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", the 2<sup>nd</sup> stanza

Translation:
Want to die, want to die
Dissatisfaction drives me crazy

In "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", the narrator mentioned that the words were spoken by the

lodger in Cheongpa-dong who has passed away. The word "Cheongpa-dong" is mentioned in another poem also included in the same poetry collection, namely, "Cheongpa-dongeul Gieokhaneunga". The poem tells a story about love and separation. However, the main idea of the poem wasn't the sadness when one's relationship ends. In "Cheongpa-dongeul Gieokhaneunga", Choi Seung-Ja emphasizes nostalgia of memories, both joy and sorrow, which she will cherish throughout her life (Kang, 2011). A strong bond between Choi Seung-Ja and the Cheongpa-dong area can be seen vividly in this poem. Reverting to "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", the bond between Choi Seung-Ja and Cheongpa-dong is attested by the news of the lodger's death.

뜬소문 뜬구름처럼 청파동 하숙집 아저씨가 돌아가니고 이침의 검은 전화 벨이 울립니다.

"Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", line 1-3 of the 1st stanza

Translation:

Just like a rumour or a drifting cloud the lodger in Cheongpa-dong passes away and the black phone rings in the morning.

Looking at the narrative, it is said that the lodger had muttered the words written in the second stanza before he passed away. The fact that the narrator heard these words indicates an episode of auditory hallucination experience since the "voice" came from the rice and soup served for breakfast. These events are described in the following lines.

법과국이한목소리로고인의 생전의말씀을 옮조립니다.

"Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", line 7 & 8 of the 1st stanza

Translation:

the rice and soup recite the deceased's words when he was still alive in harmony.

Referring to the indicators formulated by McCarthy-Jones and Longden (2015), the "voice" heard by the narrator can be categorized as an auditory hallucination due to the apparent irrationality of the sound source. Although the "voice" originated from the lodger's murmuring, the narrator heard it directly from the rice and soup that were supposedly inanimate objects. The

irrationality in this verse is coherent with the nonsense characteristic of the schizophrenic voice shown in schizophrenia's auditory hallucinations.

A big question might arise regarding the sound sources that appeared in the seventh and eighth lines, considering that there have been no examples involving inanimate objects as the main sound source. However, that doesn't mean that the involvement of rice and soup in the hallucinatory experience is an impossible oddity. The rice and soup's role as the sound sources can be considered acceptable if it's examined from a socio-cultural perspective.

As a dish, rice is playing a big role in Korean culinary culture (Kim, 2018). Rice is considered representing the basis and soul of Korean cuisines. Based on Kim's research (2018), this statement is reflected in the mindset of the Joseon people who prioritize the presence of rice in their daily lives. When serving out Korean dishes, it is very common to find a bowl of soup as a side dish. Another interesting thing about Korean culinary culture is the use of spoons and chopsticks as cutlery at the same time. This culture is quite different from Japanese and Chinese culinary cultures which only use chopsticks as cutlery. In Korean culinary culture, the spoon is not only used to eat rice and soup but is also regarded as the most important cutlery among the other eating utensils, to the extent the term "世全平台等(babsutgarak-eul notda, put down the spoon) was made to implicitly describe someone's death (Kim, 2018).

The spoon's important role, as a utensil used for eating rice and soup, reinforces the relevance of the lodger and the rice and soup's role as the sound sources. The lodger is a fragment of an emotional bond between the narrator and Cheongpa-dong. Therefore, it can be assumed that Choi Seung-Ja portrays the lodger as a memory that she will always cherish. The lodger's death seems to imply the "destruction" that began to seep into herself, starting from the smallest fragment in her memory. The emergence of the "destruction" represents the concept of the world that starts to become corrupted, causing unwillingness within the persona to acknowledge the world's existence.

Moving on from the lodger's death, Choi Seung-Ja portrays the rice and soup as souls that had been completely contaminated by the "decadence" of the world. In Kim (2018), Hyun Ki-Young, a novelist, once said that a spoon reflects rice and rice reflects one's soul. Hence, based on Hyun's statement, interpreting the rice and soup as "souls" is considered acceptable. The element that could prove the rice and soup's role as contaminated souls were the utterance spoken by the lodger. It is stated that the rice and soup followed the lodger's words which are seen as "damages" to the memory itself. Implicitly, Choi Seung-Ja unfolds her thoughts about the destruction of the world that resembles a vicious circle. The rice and soup, which didn't have any correlation with the lodger, could be contaminated with the disastrous elements that came from the lodger's death.

The "damage" gnawing at the lodger was preceded by dissatisfaction. If the lodger is positioned as a fragment of a memory, the dissatisfaction in the second verse can be interpreted as a response to the flaw in the socio-cultural system that applied in Choi Seung-Ja's surroundings.

Choi Seung-Ja was one of the front liner poets who supported and fought for feminism (Lee, 2006). Through the book *I Sidae-eui Sarang*, Choi Seung-Ja spoke up her protest against phallogocentrism, authoritarian regime hegemony, and postcolonialism values that exist in South Korean society (Kim, 2010; Lee, 2015). The protest can be reckoned as a manifestation of Choi Seung-Ja's dissatisfaction with the prevailing socio-cultural system.

In the second stanza of the poem "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", it is stated that the dissatisfaction within the lodger drove him crazy to the extent he had wished to die. The use of the word "crazy" in this stanza refers to the end of Choi Seung-Ja's fight to fulfill her "dissatisfaction" which gradually destroyed the "memories". In the 1970s until the 1980s, the protests done by Choi Seung-Ja could be considered as actions that were unlikely to come to an output. This was caused by decades of political oppression and a patriarchal culture ingrained in the daily lives of South Korean society. The impossibility led the "memories" to its death so that the narrator was no longer able to see the world from a positive outlook.

In general, the first and second stanzas tell about the first death witnessed by the persona; the death of a memory that she wanted to cherish throughout her life. The death began to cause a conflict within the persona to dissociate herself from the seemingly meaningless world. Continuing her spiritual journey, auditory hallucinations is also presented vividly in the following lines.

마마돈고우 대디컴홈

"Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", the 5th stanza

Translation: Mama don't go Daddy come home

The fifth stanza of the poem "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum" includes an important part of the song Mother sung by John Lennon, a musician who was active in the music industry from 1956 to 1980. Before pursuing his career as a soloist, Lennon was a member of The Beatles, an English rock band that was declared as the most influential music group ever existed. Since then, Lennon had received recognition for his ability in making music. Some of his works, namely Help!, Woman, and Imagine, were considered the most phenomenal works in the global music scene. The lyrics that Lennon composed also received a lot of praise, thanks to the storyline and the overflowing feelings that inhere within it (Zager, 2012). Lennon's Mother was remarkably full of raw emotions and able to show his excellence in composing music.

Lennon passed away in a homicide carried by Mark David Chapman on December 8, 1980, in Manhattan, New York. Surprisingly, Chapman was a big fan of The Beatles. In fact, before the

murder happened, Chapman had asked Lennon to sign the album he had brought with him (Associated Press, 2018). His anger towards Lennon's lifestyle, works, and statements that had provoked religious parties were the main motives of the murder (Jones, 1992). Choi Seung-Ja alluded to Lennon's murder in the fourth stanza of "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum".

어느 날 맨하틴에서 존 레논은 죽고 고인이 된 목소리만 떠돌아다닌다.

"Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", the 4th stanza

Translation:
One day in Manhattan
John Lennon died
and only the voice of the dead was heard.

Lennon's appearance as one of the auditory hallucination elements experienced by the narrator can be triggered by several factors. McCarthy-Jones and Longden (2015) define several attributes that characterize schizophrenic auditory hallucinations. Based on their research, it was stated that auditory hallucinations generally appear in the form of a male voice. The third line of the fourth stanza proves that the narrator did hear Lennon's voice. Scientifically, Lennon's presence as the sound source isn't an oddity because it can be considered as a manifestation of the schizophrenic auditory hallucinations' characteristics.

Moreover, the content of hallucinations can also be influenced by socio-cultural aspects in one's surroundings (Bauer et al., 2011). Choi Seung-Ja grew up in the same period as the peak of the Beatlemania phenomenon (1963-1966). Beatlemania is a phenomenon of The Beatles' dramatic popularity boost which led to fanaticism towards the band (Harvey, 2017). This phenomenon didn't only happen in The Beatles' homeland, England, but also occurred globally. In South Korea, even though the authoritarian regime was in power, Beatlemania's influence was still visible, especially in the local music industry. As a result of The Beatles' influence, many local singers had begun to use electric musical instruments, such as electric guitars and electric organs, as well as to pursue popular music genres (Lee & Son, 2003). In the 1970s, South Korean society showed great interest in The Beatles, even though the band had been disbanded (Lee, 2002). The Beatles' significant presence in the life of South Korean, especially in the 1970s, created a sense of familiarity in Choi Seung-Ja. Therefore, Lennon's appearance in the mind of the persona can be seen as a manifestation of the socio-cultural influences that originated from Choi Seung-Ja's surroundings.

Back to discussing the lyrics of *Mother*, which appears in the fifth stanza, this song is the

result of the primal scream therapy which Lennon had undergone as someone with neuroticism. In Blaney (2005), Arthur Janov explained that neurotic behaviour come from trauma repressed in one's mind, thus it dissociates itself from the person. Apparently, Lennon was suffering from childhood trauma, a result of his parents' absence in his early days. His father, Alfred Lennon, left Lennon and his mother, Julia Stanley, when he was still an infant. After Alfred Lennon's disappearance, Julia Stanley gave Lennon up to his aunt, Mimi Smith.

The pain felt by Lennon due to his non-existent parents was constantly repressed, causing him to develop substance dependence (Blaney, 2005). The gap between Lennon and his trauma was bridged by a psychologist named Arthur Janov through primal scream therapy. By means of this therapy, Lennon was led to recall memories related to his trauma. The therapy aims to provide personal space for someone to express their anger, sadness, and frustration that have been repressed within them through screaming, hysteria, or even violence.

The series of screams heard in *Mother* are the result of Lennon's flashbacks recalled during the therapy. The song contains ten repetitions of the lyrics "Mama don't go / Daddy come home". The repetition is not executed monotonously. Lennon sang the lyrics as if he wanted to show the process of primal scream therapy itself. Initially, from the first to the third lines, the lyrics were sung naturally without any intonation difference between each repetition. Then, starting from the fourth to the sixth lines, Lennon began to scream while still trying to maintain the tone that formed the song's base. At this stage, it is noticed that Lennon's screams escalate gradually. Finally, on the seventh to the tenth lines, Lennon no longer sang the lyrics but showed a hysteria that came off after being buried for too long. The whole process of singing, from the normal stage to the hysterical stage, reflects the process he had gone through to release his hidden fear. At the end of the song, Lennon arrived at a conclusion that freed him from the fear of the parental absence in his life.

The specific use of the lyrics "Mama don't go / Daddy come home" in the poem "Du Pyeoneui Jugeum" shows that Choi Seung-Ja profoundly comprehends the meaning of the lyrics for Lennon. Choi Seung-Ja used Lennon's experience in recalling the bad memories, anger, and frustration that he felt in the past as a medium to convey her emphasis on death, the main theme of the book I Sidae-eui Sarang. In the poem "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", Mother was heard by the narrator along with her realization of Lennon's death in Manhattan. The release of "damage" (trauma) that was carried out simultaneously with the release of "soul" (life) from one's body reflects Choi Seung-Ja's belief in death's role as a medium of restoration for the soul and the corrupted world. Through this stanza, it can be seen that Choi Seung-Ja no longer perceived death merely as a life destroyer. On the other hand, Choi Seung-Ja saw death as a gate that must be passed through to start a whole new life. Although "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum" is full of tragic and negative expressions, these aspects are used as a paradox to imply the hope that will come after one can "let go" of their fear and resentment.

#### VISUAL HALLUCINATION EXPERIENCES

Aside from auditory hallucinations, visual hallucinatory experiences were also found in several lines of the poem "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum". Not to mention that the elements related to visual hallucinations in this poem also appear in many of the other poems included in the same poetry collection book. In "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", the words "parents", "black", and "humidity" are identified as elements that play major roles in the visual hallucinations experienced by the persona.

밥상머리에서 문득 어머니 아버지라는 종족은 그리운 물의情 불의情 으로 녹아 버리고

"Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", line 4-6 of the 1st stanza

Translation:

Suddenly at the end of the dining table creatures named mother and father melted into the longing spirits of water and fire

"Parents" was the first element that Choi Seung-Ja mentioned. This element was also used several times in other poems included in the book *I Sidae-eui Sarang*, such as "*Iljjigi Naneun*", "*Jahwasang*", "*Seulpeun Gippeun Saengil*", "*Bujil-eobneun Mureum*", and "*Dasi Taeonagi Wihayeo*". The use of parental figures as key elements in the poem carried a personal significance to Choi Seung-Ja. In his research, Jang (2016) stated that parents took part as a form of absence in Choi Seung-Ja's works. Parental absence is interpreted as the result of internalizing self-abandonment while building the persona's mindset (Jang, 2016). Through the internalization process, Choi Seung-Ja created a protagonist who rejected their own parents therefore they had no one to depend on.

The possibilities of parental involvement in visual hallucinations have been scientifically proven. Familiar figures, such as family, animals, and religious figures have strong possibilities to appear in the occurrence of visual hallucinations (Teeple, Caplan, & Stern, 2009). Besides, family factors hold major influences on the hallucinatory experiences of a person with schizophrenia (Bauer et al., 2011). Thus, visual hallucinations may reflect the emotions and outlook of someone towards their family members.

According to research conducted by Jang (2016), the father is described as a superior and oppressive figure while the mother is described as someone to lean onto. However, this portrayal was created as a result of the emptiness in the persona therefore the portrayal of the parents only

existed in the mind of the persona. The same empty feeling was clearly shown in the poem "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", especially in the fourth to sixth lines of the first stanza.

In the first stanza, it is stated that the narrator was going to eat breakfast with both of their parents. A family having breakfast together can be indicated as the portrayal of a typical harmonious family. This argument is strengthened by the presence of the Cheongpa-dong lodger who represents memories. However, from the perspective of the narrator, the parents transformed into water spirit and fire spirit. The parental figures' transformation, from real physical forms to mystic substances, marks the beginning of the emptiness and self-abandonment internalization in the persona. This incident happened as if it was following the lodger's death to rip the essence off the narrator's life.

The use of the water and fire spirits as the effects of the parents' physical transformation is supposedly reasonable. In Confucianism, there are *qinqin* and *zunzun* principles that regulate the closeness of relationships and hierarchy in a community group (Jung, 2019). *Qinqin* can be defined as affection, while *zunzun* can be interpreted as respect. These two principles can be comprehended by using an analogy of comparing mother and father to water and fire. In the *Book of Rites* (*Liji*), it is explained that a mother can be described as someone who is close and affectionate but not respected enough (Jung, 2019). On the other hand, a father can be perceived as someone who is respected but not approachable. This concept is similar to the relationship between humans, water, and fire. Water is analogous to a close relationship between mother and children, whereas fire is analogous to a distant relationship between father and children (Jung, 2019). This principle is consistently implemented by Choi Seung-Ja in her poetry to define the relationship between the persona and their parents.

The fact that the parents' physical transformation marks the beginning of the spiritual emptiness within the narrator is proven by the last stanza. As previously mentioned, the last stanza of "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum" is referring to the lyrics of John Lennon's Mother. This stanza indicates the persona's willingness to let go of the trauma, specifically related to the parental absence, that was repressed in themselves. Also, in contrast to the first and second stanzas, the death portrayed in the last stanza reflects the persona's eagerness to be reborn as a better person. Hence, a pattern that could connect the beginning and the end of the poem has been found. At the beginning (the first and second stanzas), Choi Seung-Ja presented the first type of death, namely, death as the beginning of destruction. On the contrary, at the end (the fourth and fifth stanzas), Choi Seung-Ja depicted the second type of death, namely, death as a medium of restoration and catharsis. By referring to this pattern, it is concluded that the meaning of the parental absence in the narrator's life shown in the first and last stanzas are depicted as polar opposites. If the narrator has accepted the absence of their parents in the last stanza, the parental absence in the first stanza certainly marks the beginning of "damage" within the narrator and their surroundings.

Aside from "parents", "black" and "humidity" elements also play major roles in the visual

hallucinations experienced by the persona. These two elements appeared in the third stanza.

청찬하늘에서 검은 배가 다가온다. 우주의 습기를 기득 품고 외계의 모르스 부호를 단속적으로 흩날리며 죽음은 우리에게 메시지를 보낸다

"Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", 3<sup>rd</sup> stanza

Translation:

A black ship soaring through the blue sky. Full of the cosmic humidity continuously sending an extraterrestrial morse code death sends us a message.

In the third stanza, the narrator saw a black ship sailing in the sky. The word "black" written in the first line took an important part in determining the meaning of the visual hallucination experienced by the narrator, shown by the consistent use of expressions related to the word "darkness" in Choi Seung-Ja's poems. Choi Seung-Ja also used the words "\(\frac{1}{2}\)" (bam, night) and "0\(\frac{1}{2}\)" (eodum, darkness) in her works, such as "Jahwasang". In the poem "Jahwasang", Choi Seung-Ja briefly described the persona as the darkness and sadness that Adam and Eve felt when they were thrown out of heaven. The separation of Adam and Eve was caused by their inability to control the lust within themselves. Based on this information, it was concluded that the expression of darkness represented the confusion that arose because of the punishment for human immorality. Considering the association between the words "black" and "dark", this interpretation can also be implemented to interpret the poem "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum".

If the hallucinatory experience is interpreted by considering religious context, just like the poem "Jahwasang", the ship in "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum" is assumed to be the portrayal of Noah's ark. Noah's ark managed to save some of animals, Noah's followers and family, and Noah himself from the great flood. Setting the story as the context in understanding "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum" third stanza, the ship which the narrator saw can be considered as a medium to save mankind from destruction.

In the poem "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", the persona stated that the ship was a black coloured one. In order to explore the meaning behind the description, the analysis needs to be based on the

concept of "black" as the representation of humans' frantic feelings as shown in the poem "Jahwasang". As previously mentioned, the emergence of this emotion was caused by human's inability to win over their own ego. Assigning the word "black" as an attribute of the "ship" indicates a connection between the frantic feeling and the ship's role as a saviour. If the "black ship" is presumed as a manifestation of the frantic feeling within humans, it can be concluded that the ship serves to save mankind from the doom caused by their inability to maintain their and the world's purity. The only way for mankind to save themselves is by exposing their existence to death. Therefore, the ship certainly sailed to the realm of the dead.

Interestingly enough, Choi Seung-Ja didn't include clear information concerning the ship passengers. However, Choi Seung-Ja implied a hint that depicts the passengers of the ship in the second line of the same stanza. It is said that the ship is full of "cosmic humidity". The word "合기" (seubgi, humidity) also appeared in another poem entitled "Gae Gateun Gaeul-i" published in the book I Sidae-eui Sarang. In "Gae Gateun Gaeul-i", a line was found which reads as follows:

모든사물이습기를 잃고

"Gae Gateun Gaeul-i", line 1 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> stanza

Translation:

All of the creatures lost its humidity

"Humidity" mentioned in the poem "Gae Gateun Gaeul-i" can be interpreted as the soul of a living creature. If a creature that "lost its humidity" is interpreted as a lifeless creature, a ship that is filled with "cosmic humidity" can be interpreted as a ship on which living substances are being carried. The concept of "cosmic" mentioned in "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum" isn't only limited to humans but also embodies all living elements without any exception. This argument is based on the theme of the book I Sidae-eui Sarang which not only sees a corrupted soul as a negative concept but also considers the existence of the world as the same filthy element. Therefore, the expression "cosmic humidity" can be interpreted as all substances that are still living in the world, both humans and the microcosmic and macrocosmic elements around them.

In the third stanza of the poem "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum", the narrator also said that they saw/heard an "extraterrestrial morse code" continuously sent by the black ship. Considering that hallucinations can be influenced by the socio-cultural aspects of a schizophrenic (Bauer et al., 2011), "extraterrestrial morse code" can be seen as the representation of the Golden Record carried by the Voyager 1 probe rocket. From its launch in 1977 until 1981, articles about the Voyager project were published numerous times in South Korean newspapers, such as Dong-A Ilbo, Kyunghyang Shinmun, and Maeil Business Newspaper. Besides aiming to understand the process of forming the solar system and its evolution as well as elements that make up the universe

(Associated Press, 1977), the launch of Voyager 1 also aims to inform the existence of the Earth to extraterrestrial creatures by utilizing the Golden Record (Ham, 2019). The Golden Record is a disc that contains images, sounds, songs, and greetings that project life on Earth. Moreover, the Golden Record is engraved with symbols that explain how to use the disc, how to reach Earth, and a map of the solar system. The symbols consist of specially designed images and units of calculation, thus it could be decoded by extraterrestrial creatures.

Based on the explanation above, the "extraterrestrial morse code" described in the third stanza has the same function as the Golden Record. The narrator is representing extraterrestrial creatures who receive and decrypt the Golden Record. If the Golden Record aims to inform the Earth's presence, the "extraterrestrial morse code" serves to remind humans about death's existence. By that means, humans can find ways to death, hence they are free from the damage that has corrupted their souls and their surroundings. The statement "continuously" written on the following line describes Voyager 1's endless journey in an attempt to expose the existence of life on Earth. Therefore, this line can be interpreted as an internalization of awareness concerning the existence of death within the persona.

Through the third stanza, Choi Seung-Ja displayed a dynamic character development within the persona. Starting with them helplessly looking at the ship, Choi Seung-Ja showed the persona's inability to find solutions to their problems. However, portrayed by the persona receiving the message from death, Choi Seung-Ja showed a transition of the persona's outlook on death. By raising their awareness of death's existence, the narrator no longer saw death as a gate to destruction and nothingness. On the contrary, they were able to perceive death as an absolute existence that exists at the end of every living creatures' journey. In conclusion, the third stanza describes a transition that is crucial for the continuation of the persona's spiritual journey.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The poem "Du Pyeon-eui Jugeum" reflects Choi Seung-Ja's spiritual journey in defining the concept of life and death. Choi Seung-Ja started her story by internalizing pessimism and nihilism values into the persona whom she created as the narrator of the poem. This aspect was displayed through the first death that took away the persona's memories and anchor, resulting in the nothingness which the persona was drowned into. However, due to the death consciousness, the persona started to see death from a different perspective. In the end, the persona was willing to accept death as an absolute existence and let go of the anger, sadness, and frustration buried in herself. The persona no longer perceived death as mere destruction and began to consider it as a catharsis.

As someone living with schizophrenia, Choi Seung-Ja succeeded in presenting series of auditory and visual hallucinatory experiences. Aside from becoming substantial elements in the

poem's imagery development, all of the hallucinatory experiences reflect the social and cultural phenomenon that occurred in Choi Seung-Ja's surroundings. This finding shows that Choi Seung-Ja's mind is easily affected by her surroundings. Looking at the schizophrenic hallucination attributes, Choi Seung-Ja's subconscious is indeed vulnerable to the phenomenon happening around her. What's unique is that Choi Seung-Ja was capable to make use of the symptoms to create a reflection regarding the essence of death, the world, and herself. Through the hallucinatory experiences, Choi Seung-Ja found a way to shed her fear, anxiety, and despair, thus she could find peace and accepted her fate as an element of life.

Choi Seung-Ja is a living proof that psychological disorders shouldn't have been seen as mere limitations or weaknesses. On the contrary, the mind process of people with psychological disorders, which tend to be more complex and unique, can give their work distinctive features and colours. Using literary works, people with psychological disorders got themselves space to freely express their emotions, thoughts, or even fear that often can't be comprehended by others. Not only serving as therapy, but literary works can also show the wonders of a person with psychological disorders' subconscious, hence the general public has the opportunity to educate themselves and reflect on the stereotypes against people experiencing psychological disorders. Considering that mental health issues are still frequently discussed, it is better if non-governmental organizations or professionals could bring up psychological disorders reflected in literary works as a topic for discussion. Therefore, the general public can finally see these people from a humanist perspective.

While conducting this research, the authors felt that the limitations of the research corpus restricted the authors in analysing Choi Seung-Ja's psychological tendencies. We hope that this research could be developed by studying various works of Choi Seung-Ja to provide a more comprehensive analysis. In addition to that, we realized that psychological aspects in literary works would always be an interesting topic to be explored. Therefore, we also hope that research in this field can continue to be developed in an effort to educate the general public about mental health issues.

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