

In Memory of Dr. Shlomit C. Schuster

Young E. Rhee

Abstract: In this short essay, I recollect my memories of Dr. Shlomit C. Schuster. Dr. Schuster was a great philosopher and a philosophical counselor, and I am struggling to spell out now the significance of the time I spent with her. Dr. Schuster visited Korea twice (2010 and 2012) and left a very strong impression on the members of the Korean Society of Philosophical Practice and Humanities, especially the Therapy Group of Kangwon National University. Someday I might realize the significance of her philosophical thoughts but I feel obligated to share something about the way in which we will remember her.

In 2007 a group of Korean philosophers to which I belonged held meetings with the purpose of studying philosophical practice. We met to read together important books in the field. The list included Gerd Achenbach (1984), *Philosophische Praxis*, Ran Lahav and Marria da Venza Tillmanns, eds., (1995), *Essays on Philosophical Counseling*. Lou Marinoff (1999), *Plato, not Prozac: Applying Eternal Wisdom to Everyday Problems*, Schlomit Schuster (1999), *Philosophy Practice: An Introduction to Counseling and Psychotherapy*, and Peter Raabe (2001), *Philosophical Counseling: Theory and Practice*.

After having read them for one and half year, we decided to establish a society to further our interest in philosophical practice and counseling with a topographic map of philosophical practice in Western philosophy. The Korean Society of Philosophical Practice (KSPP) was established in 2009.

From the vantage point of the present, 2007 was a very important year in Korean history of philosophical practice, because the two academic institutes, Korean Society of Philosophical Practice and Humanities Therapy Group (HTG) of Kangwon National University, were founded in this year. Since 2007, Koreans' interest in philosophical practice has increased. HTG and KSPP hosted annual international conferences and invited foreign speakers; in particular, we held the 12th International Conference on Philosophical Practice (ICPP) in 2012. From 2010 onwards, two journals were founded, the *Journal of Humanities therapy* and the *Korean Journal of Philosophical Practice*.

As I recall Dr. Shlomit C. Schuster, she was a philosopher with brilliant ideas and a ripe experience of philosophical practice. Dr. Schuster was a very friendly philosopher to the members of Philosophical Practice, mainly because she visited Korea twice and published two papers in Korean journals, and her book on the philosophy of counseling left a very strong impression on us.

HTG invited Dr. Shlomit to the 2nd International Conference on Humanities Therapy (July 8-12, 2010), at Kangwon National University. Dr. Schuster presented a paper, "Life, Happiness, and Desert Reflections," in which she emphasized that the modern understandings of life and happiness were primarily materialistic and scientific; in contrast, she proposed a viewpoint from the Sinai desert as an alternative to modern ways of desiring life and happiness. The point was the liberation of body and soul through a spiritual transfiguration of the person.

After the conference, the Korean Society of Philosophical Practice invited Dr. Schuster to a seminar. In the seminar she read a paper, "What makes a good counselor and what is the condition of successful counseling," followed by a joint discussion. According to Dr. Schuster, philosophical counseling could be characterized according to Achenbach's insight: an alternative to therapy, it is a philosophical dialogue which constitutes a free place for people to find their own directions in and definitions of the good life. Philosophical counselors can use free investigation and free thinking by which they can create multidimensional possible insights into a person's past and present, or complex existence.

Dr. Shlomit visited Korea in order to attend the 2nd World Humanities Forum in October 2012. The theme of the forum was "Humanities and Healing," and we invited Dr. Schuster and Dr. Raabe. Dr. Schuster presented a paper, "Instances of Philosophical Counseling and Byzantine Philosophy." She emphasized that Byzantine philosophy could be a resource for insight, enlightenment, and healing to both philosophical counselors and people who have interest in the field, and that contemporary philosophical counselors can learn how to achieve a noble and ascetic life from Byzantine literature and the communication with specialists of the Byzantine way of life.

Though we had little time for communicating with her, Dr. Schuster left a very profound impression on the members of our society. We owe much to Dr. Schuster for the establishment and development of our society. The Korean Society of Philosophical Practice will pursue the spirit of Dr. Schuster in philosophical counseling.

Young E. Rhee received his Ph. D from State University of New York (Binghamton). He is professor at Kangwon National University (Korea), and serves as President of the Korean Society of Philosophical Practice and the Korean Society of Philosophy of Science. He is Editor of the Journal of Humanities Therapy, and the Organizer of the 11th International Conference on Philosophical Practice, Chuncheon, Korea. He has been practicing philosophy in military camps, with single mothers and prisoners, and is currently developing the teleological-narrative model for philosophical practice and the dialectics of pain. His publications include books such as Bayesianism from Rationality to Objectivity (2015 in Korean), Body and Cognition (2015 in Korean), and Humanities for Parents (2016 in Korean). He published twenty seven papers on philosophical practice, among which are "Intention, Narrative, and Philosophical Practice", in Lydia Amir and Aleksandar Fatic eds. Practicing Philosophy (2015, Cambridge Scholars Press), "Teleological Narrative Model of Philosophical Practice", Universitas 43, 9(2016), and "A Purpose-based Model for Military Counseling", Journal of Humanities Research 48 (2016 in Korean). Email address: rheeye@gmail.com