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## Abstract

## **Incarnation of Spiritual Values - Contemporary Culture and Frustration of Korean Public Education -**

Choi, Chul-Byung\*

What seems to happen in a contemporary narcissistic and technologically determined culture and their educational effort is an attempt to do away with spiritual incarnation. One could say that if a post-modern culture differs from the modern one, it is perhaps through the idea that incarnation is inevitable, but surmountable by the constant *manipulation* of the incarnations of spiritual value. A narcissistic culture is precisely a culture which is characterized by a playful attitude with respect to the spiritual values in and through which the self manifests itself and seeks recognition. Technology promises not the freedom from all incarnation (the dream of the immortal souls knowing eternal bliss), but freedom of the bondage to a *particular* bearer of meaning and values. Technology and money provide the narcissistic subject with the perfectly adaptable support necessary for the enjoyment, via money and its virtual realities, of any value whatsoever. The perfect mastery of value means, however, the disappearance of transcendence, and therefore of real *happiness*: nothing *happens* any more.

The difficulties discussed here are, of course, peculiar to specific orders of knowledge and forms of life developments which find their origin in the coming about European Modern scientific-technological culture. Traditionally science( or *philosophia*) was usually seen as an activity which is itself an end-in-itself. Nevertheless for the modern European, science is seen as an *instrument* which is neutral in itself, but which *can be used* in good or bad ways. Learning and teaching science as an end-itself has become connected with technological manipulative developments in a way which cannot be disentangled any more.

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This local scientific revolution has produced global consequence that the neutrality of science and its education can no longer be proclaimed. The very pursuit of scientific-technological progress as an end-in-itself produces enormous, even though largely unintended, consequences for symbolically determined traditional spiritual values and its way of education. Scientific-technological approaches (e.g., to nature and natural kinds, to human procreation, to the human mind and body, to educational activity) inevitably influence the manner in which human beings symbolically relate to the world and with others. In this way they disrupt from outside the way people live their values and strengthen the existing narcissistic tendencies. Under the heading of 'scientific education', are we acculturating or frustrating ourselves?

- **Key Words** : contemporary culture, spiritual values, incarnation, instrumental technology, training and education.