

Immigration through Education:
The Interwoven History of Korean International Students, US Foreign Assistance, and Korean
Nation-State Building

By

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Abstract

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This dissertation identifies Korean international students as immigrants, as conduits of knowledge transfer, and as agents of change. Part of the American Cold War policy was to establish Korea's higher educational institutions with a core group of US-educated people. Figuring prominently in this story is the US government's use of foreign assistance as a diplomatic tool to build its influence abroad. The Korean government readily accepted the aid but imprinted its designs on the American blueprint to reflect its own goal of building a modern nation-state. American universities under contract with the US government assisted the redesign of key departments at Seoul National University (SNU) and the establishment of Korea Advanced Institute of Science (KAIS). Planned as model universities or paradigms for other Korean institutes of higher education, both national institutes became the standard bearers of "modern" knowledge. Both projects favored US-educated Koreans. To this end, the majority of the faculty members in the departments selected for restructuring at SNU was sent to the US to be trained and the overwhelming majority of KAIS' inaugural faculty members held doctoral degrees from the United States. The benefits and prestige associated with an American education in the Korean society contributed to a positive cultural representation of the US as a whole. This caused a growing number of Koreans to immigrate to the US to pursue their studies. These international students were central to Korean American immigration. They were information brokers, the first links to chain migration, and contributors to the changing racial and ethnic make-up of the American population in the twentieth century.

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Introduction

Some time between the two world wars, the world's intellectual center began to shift from Europe to the US. From philanthropists like Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller to educators like Nicholas Murray Butler and Stephen Duggan, American committed themselves to international educational exchange and knowledge transfer. They established agencies and institutes to coordinate educational exchanges, and created programs and scholarships to attract foreign students and scholars to the US. Between the two world wars, the American government also began allocating funds to "international education." However, it was the bombing of Pearl Harbor that forced the US to abandon its isolationist stance and significantly invest in the education of other nations. America's growing sense of obligation and desire to educate the world paralleled its growing political and economic strength and aspiration. Following World War Two, both American and Soviet governments used their humanitarian aid and technical assistance for strategic ends.

Both the US and USSR strategically gave educational assistance to foreign countries as a significant part of their "people-to-people diplomacy." The share of world's students, especially those students from developing nations, gravitated towards these two "patron" nations. International students at the individual level, universities at the institutional level, and knowledge transfer on the national level were significant components of the cultural diplomacy that both the USSR and the US launched, and among the most serious and long-lasting of all of their postwar programs. However, it would be misleading to call these activities simply diplomatic since the military and economic might of the US and the Soviet Union were ever present. Nor would it be accurate to call these interactions imperial since the one-sided connotation of the term ignores the receiving countries' active role in soliciting and modifying the aid to their advantage. In Korea, imported US knowledge and institutional models mutated to better reflect the conditions and needs of Korea. Yet, the main source of funding flowed in from the US and the number of US educated decision makers in Korea grew. The Korean government and its elite's reliance and connection with the US cultivated a cultural practice of seeking solutions to problems abroad. The US became a place with personal solutions for discontented Koreans and many hoped to immigrate to the US. Those who entered the US, including the international students, helped fuel a vibrant Korean American community in the US.

The diplomatic exchanges and activities between the US and Korea triggered a chain of interconnected negotiations. The US government provided its assistance to Korea to generate American goodwill, which in turn would persuade Koreans to comply with US policies; at the same time, the Korean government used the aid to rebuild its country according to its plans. Though the governments negotiated the conditions of the aid, its reception and utilization depended on the people, place, and time in which the projects were undertaken. The confluence of influences, exerted by both the giving and receiving countries, determined the persuasive power of the American influence.

A large body of studies focuses on the non-coercive, persuasive power of the United States, but few have addressed the ways that higher education and immigration are linked together with American cultural diplomacy. Joseph Nye's concept of "soft power" can help us to understand how the America can build and maintain its power

through non-military and non-economic measures. In his important work, *Power in the Global Information Age*, Nye defined soft power as “getting others to want the outcomes that you want – [it] co-opts people rather than coerces them.” He continues, “The ability to establish references tends to be associated with intangible power resources such as an attractive culture, political values and institutions, and policies that are seen as legitimate or having moral authority.”¹ Nye emphasizes that through soft power, the dominant country exerts its primacy over other countries, arguing that the politics of primacy should not be confused with empire. In this way, power is measured not by a state’s resources, but by its ability to change the behavior of others. Examined through this lens, most if not all humanitarian dimension of American overseas involvement contain a strategic, political purpose and have the ability to create soft power. US education has been a “power resource” and an influential contributor to American soft power in Korea. Though the US has held what I call the primacy of influence, Korea selectively chose what it would accept from the US, modifying the aid received to reflect its unique culture and circumstances. As much as this dissertation is about America in the world, it is also about Korea in the world.

Korean international students are central characters in the story about Korea in the world, including its part in US immigration history. Korean international students, as with all international students, are immigrants. This study is a part of US immigration history.² Difficult to define but instrumental for this work is the term immigrant. It is largely a political and legal term that differentiates a person by her citizenship, and assumes her intention to maintain and exercise the privileges attached to it. It was only in 1924 that the US government created the categories of nonimmigrant and immigrant. The American government specified international students as people with the intention of returning to their home country, as opposed to immigrants with the legal rights to reside permanently in the US. Yet these categories of immigrants and nonimmigrants were not exclusive, and people’s intentions could change.

There is inherent tension and conflict in conflating students with immigrants. For example, the Korean government and by extension its embassies did not acknowledge students as Korean immigrants. When the Korean embassy in Washington DC announced the scheduled summit meeting between President Park Chung Hee and President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965 it addressed “the Koreans and students in Washington.” The letter purposefully differentiated Korean residents from Korean

¹ Joseph Nye, *Power in the Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalization* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 5.

² A number of key terms are used interchangeably in the following study. Foreign students, international students, and educational exchangeees, and program participants all refer to the central subjects of this work. For the most part, the first two terms are catch-all labels for the larger body of foreign citizens residing in the US for the primary purpose of receiving a degree or furthering their expertise in an accredited US educational institution. I tend to use the titles participants and exchangeees for those persons participating in government-sponsored and or limited-term projects like the SNU and the KAIST Project. Though international students could be studying at all levels of education from preschool to postdoctoral level, I focus on Korean students who were pursuing a post-secondary education in an accredited American institution of higher education. Also, in certain places I refer to students as scholars. All students are scholars in training, but in particular there were those participants and exchangeees whom their peers already recognized as scholars. This was particularly true for project participants in senior positions or those involved in training or observation programs.

international students.³ However, this invitation assumes that students were part of the larger Korean community in the US. Intentions and legal status may change, but what all immigrants shared was the undisputable fact that they lived in the US. At the simplest level, all international students became immigrants when they entered the US. This work also engages with recent works by scholars who call for the inclusion of highly educated, professional immigrants into the larger American history.⁴ Moreover, the immigration path of international students to the US contributes to the growing immigration literature that challenges the unidirectional notions of immigration.⁵ This dissertation identifies modern immigration as an unintended consequence of US soft power that began with its Cold War involvement abroad. The American presence overseas was foundational to the culture of migration that formed in Korea. In America's quest to maintain and expand its "global leadership," education became a powerful tool for change. US foreign aid, particularly in the form of educational assistance, affected the very structures of Korean society and governance.

Education or re-education of Koreans figured prominently in America's aid to Korea. As part of its relief and rehabilitation efforts in Korea, the American government sent out survey teams to observe, evaluate, and recommend a course of action; and then its experts and educators to serve as models and resources of "modern" knowledge and correct teaching methods. Following on the heel of the survey reports and coinciding with overseas assignments of American experts were educational exchange programs or what the US State Department called participant training programs. The purpose was for Koreans students to learn what was necessary in the US and then to pass on that knowledge to fellow Koreans when they returned to Korea. US-educated Koreans would become the foot soldiers of Americanization (a term often used interchangeably with modernization) of Korea. A highly selective group of Koreans, in their positions of great visibility and access to the public, established and maintained a US-styled educational system in Korea. The prestige attached to their US education was strengthened by the extensive US military presence and aid in Korea and by the assumption that the US-educated were more effective in negotiating with Americans.

³ Young Chang Chae, ed., *History of Korean-Americans in the Washington Metropolitan Area, 1883-1993* (Annandale, VA: The Korean Association of Greater Washington, 1995), 70.

⁴ Since the late 1980s, the practitioners in the burgeoning field of transnational history, demography, and sociology, in particular, have increasingly acknowledged professional immigrants as significant to immigration flow to the United States. Some examples include Paul M. Ong, Lucie Cheng, and Leslie Evans, "Migration of Highly Educated Asians and Global Dynamics," *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 1, no. 3-4 (1992): 543-567; Wilawan Kanjanapan, "The Immigration of Asian Professionals to the United States; 1988-1990," *International Migration Review* 29, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 7-32; and John M. Liu, "The Contours of Professional, Technical and Kindred Work Immigration, 1965-1988," *Sociological Perspectives* 35, no. 4 (1992): 673-704. In particular, the growing presence of Asian natural scientists and engineers has been noted and discussed in such works as Hyaelweol Choi, *An International Scientific Community: Asian Scholars in the United States* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995).

⁵ Dino Cinel's *The National Integration of Italian Return Migration, 1870-1929* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) is an example of work in immigration history that acknowledged the continuous flow of people between countries, a phenomenon that demographers have long acknowledged. Dino Cinel's examines the cause, characteristics of Italian migrants to America and the impact of their return migration. Though this monogram focused on Italian returnees, he asserts that return migration from the Americas to Europe was common at the turn of 19th century.

The size of US educational assistance to Korea paled in comparison to its overall aid to Korea; however, the effects of US sponsored educational projects in Korea surpassed America's limited timeframe and resources. A statistical overview of international students shows the long-lasting effects of this diplomatic expenditure, a storyline that coincides with the Cold War-driven rise in America's primacy of influence. The majority of international students from developing nations did not return to their countries, instead choosing to meld into American society. Though most students had declared their intention to return to their countries after their studies, they remained in the US as American immigrants. Debates on "brain drain" gained momentum in the 1950s, peaked in the 1960s, and regenerated in subsequent decades. American universities and government welcomed and facilitated study abroad, touting it as an American duty to train other nations' leaders. In reality, most students from developing nations were being trained for the US domestic workforce, which in turn contributed to the symbolic image of the US as a place for individual advancement. Korean students are a case in point. Their trends in enrollment, subject areas pursued, and demographics of the Korean students reflect the larger historical changes taking place in Korea and in the United States. From the mid 1950s to the mid 1960s, the most popular area of studies for Korean international students was in the social sciences. It reflected the Korean government's reorganization and its efforts in strengthening its civic organizations. More Korean students enrolled in engineering programs than any other academic areas starting in the 1960s, which also coincided with Korea's modernization project centered on science and technology. In addition to Korea's national trajectories, increased US involvement in Korean affairs created more points of contact between Koreans and Americans and yielded more information about immigrating to the US. As a result, more Korean came to study and live in the United States. The Cold War shaped the history of Korean international students in the US.

This is a Cold War story.

The American government was central in making the US the most popular destination of study abroad. The Americanization projects it imposed on its non-English speaking population within its borders were among its first "study abroad" programs. Deliberate program of assimilation focused on making Americans of all within its borders. For example, American policymakers implemented a policy of assimilation for Native Americans at the turn of the 19th century that included boarding school training for American Indian children.⁶ Ironically, the US government set up no programs for students from foreign nations until after the First World War. Until then, only a few wealthy and academically qualified individuals journeyed to and through America learning mostly through observations and conversations. The First World War pushed the US to evaluate its role in international education as it received and recruited scholars, mostly from Europe. US educators and politicians claimed that better international understanding would prevent future wars, and philanthropic organizations and concerned citizens created networking associations and institutes. One notable brainchild of the

⁶ For a detailed analysis on this federal program, see David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995).

post-WWI period was the Institute of International Education (IIE).⁷ Established in 1919, IIE became a clearinghouse to coordinate information for students and schools alike.⁸ In the same year, Andrew Carnegie created the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace for the purpose of exchanging ideas and individual. The Rockefeller Foundation, another private initiative, joined this small but influential cluster as the main sponsor of student exchanges during the 1920s. Areas studies emerged soon after in the 1930s, but it would take another world war for it to flourish. However, the American government began actively to exert its influence through education in the intervening years between the two world wars. At an inter-American conference in Buenos Aires in 1936, the US government committed to systemically support cultural relations with neighboring nations. The resulting Act for Cooperation with the Other American Republics in 1938 formally launched its educational exchange programs with sixteen Latin American countries.⁹ The next world war would enlarge this technical assistance and go beyond the Americas.

The end of World War II left the US with an enlarged sense of its importance and belief that it had an obligation to restructure the world. The US government and the American public embraced this global responsibility, viewing their nation as the model for other nations. A sense of mission pervaded every corner of the nation, from its congressional halls to lecture halls and from the press room to the newsstands. The war also did its part, initiating the shift of the intellectual center from western European nations to the US. Academics, those who did not fall victim to war's devastations, migrated to Canada and Australia, and in greater numbers to the US. Immediately following the Axis' surrender, a spate of organizations formed to facilitate international educational exchange worldwide. Non-profit organizations like the CIEE and NAFSA were created and based in the United States.¹⁰ In 1946, President Harry Truman signed the Fulbright Act, the US government's flagship educational exchange effort. For the State Department that oversaw the program, the Fulbright's usefulness to its foreign policy trumped its purported educational influence. The author of the bill crystallized this view when he stated,

High academic standards are important..., but the purpose of the program is not the advancement of science nor the promotion of scholarship. These are by-products of a program whose primary aim is international understanding.¹¹

⁷ Council for International Exchange of Students, a division of the Institute of International Education helps administer the Fulbright Scholar Program. "*A Brief History of IIE*" (New York: Institute of International Education, Inc., 1996-2000), http://www.iie.org/Content/NavigationMenu/About_IIE1/Mission_and_Profile/History/History.htm (accessed February 10, 2002).

⁸ IIE continues to handle all graduate students under the auspices of the Fulbright Program.

⁹ US Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, *A Guide to U.S. Government Agencies Involved in International Educational and Cultural Activities* (September 1960), 1.

¹⁰ US-based CIEE, Council for International Educational Exchange, was founded in 1947 initially to facilitate the transportation needs of persons participating in exchange programs. Established in 1948, NAFSA, National Association of Foreign Student Advisors, is a non-profit international organization headquartered in Washington DC. Both organizations receive strong support from the US Department of State.

¹¹ Quoted in Steven E. Deutsch, *International Education and Exchange: A Sociological Analysis* (Cleveland, OH: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1970), 278.

In addition to the educational exchanges, the US government provided massive reconstruction funds to Latin America primarily through the Four Point Program and to Europe through the Marshall Plan.¹² And in the following decade, the US greatly expanded its foreign assistance through the Mutual Security programs, which cemented America's role in international education and knowledge transfer.

Education became a powerful mechanism for shaping the postwar world. The massive infusion of American resources to developing nations included compulsory education, vocational training, higher education as well as institution building and curriculum development at all levels. Higher education was a particularly important arena of influence since it served as the center of social, political, and economic development. For developing countries like Korea, the US provided a model modernization, and funds for its achievement. In recent study, *Missing the Boat*, educators Craufurd Goodwin and Michael Nacht conclude that American economic and intellectual strength are interrelated. They wrote, "US scholars, in effect, reflected the intellectual strength that flowed from an economy that in 1950 accounted for more than 50 percent of the world's gross product."¹³ Starting in the 1950s and continuing to the 1970s, American technical and developmental assistance programs outstripped the size and influence of educational cultural exchanges supported by the Fulbright Programs, expanded further by the Fulbright Hays Act of 1961 and the International Education Act of 1966. Technical or development assistance focused on institutional building through university contracts while the cultural exchanges emphasized "international understanding" through a few select individuals. In reality, the impact of the individuals on institutions and vice versa worked in tandem, and they cannot be divorced from each other.

There is no denying that governments use education to promote a standard set of values and practices, as well as their policies and interest.¹⁴ By the late 1950s and the early 1960s, the interests and policies of the US and the Soviet Union extended beyond their own borders. The US was involved on a much larger scale than the Soviet Union in the expansion of higher education of the decolonized and developing countries. By providing the much needed money and expertise, the US inserted itself as a model for development. In particular, the US helped establish or rehabilitate key national universities, overseeing the changing roles of universities in the process. Higher educational institutes were geared not only to produce and provide knowledge but also to

¹² Bruce Seely, a historian of science aptly described the Marshall Plan as "the most massive technology transfer in history." See Bruce E. Seely, "Historical Patterns in the Scholarship of Technology Transfer" in *Comparative Technology Transfer and Society* 1, no. 1 (April 2003): 7-48.

¹³ Craufurd Goodwin, and Michael Nacht, *Missing the Boat: The Failure to Internationalize American Higher Education* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 8.

¹⁴ On the domestic front, government funding and money flowed into American higher institution through grants, GI bills, university contracts, among other. The space race was on. The landing of the Sputnik in 1957 had a ripple effect on the American scientific community. The following year, Congress passed the National Defense in Education Act, which initiates the close courtship and patronage between high education and the government military complex, particular in science and technology. For some universities, like Stanford University, its very character changed. Kerr's lucid identification of a multiversity resonated with the realities of the time. For more details on Stanford University see Rebecca S. Lowen's *Creating the Cold War University: The Transformation of Stanford* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). See Clark Kerr's *The Uses of the University* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1964).

generate blueprints for infrastructural development and social acceptance for these changes. For its part, the US government funded and mediated projects between American and foreign universities to build up a network of US-styled educational systems. By the 1957, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) developed a standard contract provision for its university endeavors in anticipation of the rapidly mushrooming technical assistance programs that would crop up in the Americas, Asia and Europe.¹⁵ By the fiscal year 1964-1965, sixty-seven American universities were providing assistance in forty-one countries under 101 separate under USAID contracts totaling over \$170 million from American public coffers.¹⁶ Most of these projects had a participant training or US study abroad component for their foreign participants.

The Soviet Union also flexed its political and economic might in giving “unselfish assistance to the peoples of the developing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America,” according to a Russian ministry pamphlet.¹⁷ In 1960, the USSR developed a unique higher education institution specifically designed for students from developing countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Only 10% of the student body at People’s Friendship University were Russians, who presumably would go on to government or professional work related to these developing areas. Latin American students enrolled at the People’s Friendship University in greatest numbers, followed by African students, and then those students from Arab countries.¹⁸ Unlike in American higher education where the Asian students made up the majority of all foreign students by the mid-1960s, there were few Asians at the People’s Friendship University. This reflected the different territorial orientations of US and Soviet foreign assistance.

The competition between the two countries was obvious. A 1970 Soviet publication put forth by the USSR Academy of Pedagogical Sciences boasted: Thirty educational establishments are being built and equipped in these countries with Soviet aid.... Many higher schools abroad use Soviet textbooks, study plans and methodological material. In recent years, over 16,000 Soviet professors and teachers have worked in educational establishments abroad.¹⁹

Seymour Rosen, an American scholar working for the Institute of International Studies in Washington DC, responded that though the programs appeared substantial, they were “generally not on a par with comparable US programs.” He continued,

In enrollments of foreign students and in professional research and training on foreign areas, the United States has a substantial lead. The number of institutions involved in area research and training in the United States is much greater than in the U.S.S.R., and U.S. academic programs appear more developed and flexible than those in the U.S.S.R.²⁰

¹⁵ John W. Gardner, *AID and the Universities* (New York: Education and World Affairs in Cooperation with Agency for International Development [1976]), 20.

¹⁶ Education and World Affairs, *The University Looks Abroad* (New York: Walker and Company, 1965), 268.

¹⁷ USSR Academy of Pedagogical Science, *USSR Education* (Moscow: 1970): 102-103, quoted in Seymour Michael Rosen, *Soviet Programs in International Education* (Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Education, Institute of International Studies, 1971), 2.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Unlike the foreign students studying in the USSR, those enrolled in the US did not receive public educational assistance.

Scholars called for renewed interest in international education. Writers of IIE's *Open Doors* lamented that "[i]n the eyes of many decision-makers, international education has lost its luster as a public and intellectual value."²¹ The public reaction to US involvement in Vietnam accentuated domestic unrest over issues of racism and poverty, and an increasingly vocal American public called for the withdrawal of its soldiers from foreign lands. It challenged its government to reprioritize how it spent its energy and resources, to place greater importance on the domestic rather than foreign affairs. Policymakers responded by scaling back or cutting out many of its foreign aid programs.

In Korea, the importance of American education continued even as the US government was scaling down its educational assistance. The US terminated some programs and withdrew additional funding from others, but "American style" educational reconstruction continued in Korea. Academic institutions and new departments mushroomed throughout Korea; many imitated the American funded schools and programs. However, what they imitated was the form and not the function. Korean higher education never shook off its Confucian-based civil examination system or its colonial antecedents. Its higher education institutes operated in a centralized and hierarchical manner based on seniority and "in-breeding."²² Even today, the Korean educational system carries the vestiges of its Japanese colonial history. The prestige and privilege given to US education did not translate into Korean high education. Although the US government funded and the Korea government supported the changes in the educational structure in Korea, it was the US-educated persons in Korea who mediated and advocated US education in Korea. Together they strengthened the support and appeal for greater imitation of the US educational system. And these changes provided unprecedented opportunities for upwardly mobile Koreans to gain access to the United States. In this way, US education in general was a source of validation.

The Cold War drove not only the educational assistance and the modern shape of higher education in Korea, but also the beginning of Korean immigration to the United States. As the US sought to shape world, the world in turn forced the American government to face the paradox between the democracy it preached abroad and the discrimination it practiced at home. Historian Mary Dudziak writes in her book *Cold War Civil Rights*, the negative foreign press coverage of America's racial tensions and riots sullied America's image.²³ Dudziak effectively demonstrates that that negative press and reactions from foreign nations affected the course of domestic events. The US government was also forced to reevaluate how it defined its citizens, and by association its permanent residents. In 1947, the US Congress began an exhaustive investigation in the fields of immigration and nationality. The interplay between foreign affairs and immigration policies opened up legal avenues for an unprecedented number of

²¹ Institute of International Education, *Open Doors 1970* (NY: Institute of International Education), 5.

²² In-breeding is a term used by Korean faculty members to describe the hiring practice that favors candidates with undergraduate and/or graduate degrees from the institution that is hiring. In this way, the older Japanese structures based on connections continued even as the Korean education system conferred prestige on the US-educated.

²³ Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

immigrants from developing nations, Koreans included, to become permanent residents of the US.

Timeframe

This work is roughly chronological with the first two chapters dealing with the US military occupation of Korea in the mid 1940s and the US relief and rehabilitation efforts following the Korean War. American involvement in newly developing countries and its competition with the USSR and newly independent Korea's nation building activities provide the backdrop for the structural changes discussed. The middle three chapters look at two Korean universities, arguably the most important higher education institutions in Korea. Seoul National University (SNU) received singular attention and funding from the mid 1950s to the early 1960s and firmly reestablished itself as Korea's center of civic society under the Rhee Regime. Plans for the Korean Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIS) unfolded in the mid-1960s with the initial stages of institution building occurring in the early 1970s. The intervening chapter between these two institution histories gives the details of the participant training or the study abroad program of select SNU professors. The juxtaposition of these two institutions shows the continuity in Korea's reliance on American expertise, training, and educated. The last two chapters focus on Korean international students: those who returned to Korea after their studies and those who remained in the United States. My discussion and analysis of the impact of the US-educated Koreans to Korea and to Korean America are not neatly bound by time. Unless otherwise indicated, I focus on Korean students who entered the United States between 1945 and 1965. They occupied a unique position within Korean American immigration history, from which they encouraged other Koreans to immigrate. Both those who returned and those who remained, facilitated the mass immigration of Koreans following the Hart-Cellar Act of 1965. They strengthened the positive image of the US in Korea and became the necessary starting points and links in the chain migration of Koreans who immigrated to the US.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter One begins with the period of US military occupation of Korea following WWII, identifying the genesis of "Americanization" of Korean education to this time period. A US-educator led workshops for Korean school teachers became the precursor to the larger university contracts that took place after the Korean War. Because Korea was not politically or economically significant to the US government at this time, American aid to Korea was relatively modest with short-term goals. With the outbreak of the Korean War, the US government drastically increased its military presence and civilian aid to Korea. Korea's needs arising from the war and its changing strategic importance to the US government sets in place an educational transfer process that would henceforth affect the political and educational landscape of Korea. Conditions that allowed the US to intensify its civilian aid to Korea included the restructuring of its foreign aid agency, new legislation, changing global politics, and changing political leadership. This chapter places Korea's educational reconstruction within a larger Cold War history by showing that the US government established universities and administered scholarships in newly independent, developing countries to familiarize the people with the "right" philosophy and methods, the American way. The US was

building and asserting what Joseph Nye calls “soft power.” US-educated people were at the center of this diplomatic strategy.

Chapter Two delves into the earliest and the most significant university contract established between the US and Korea, the Seoul National University. This section opens with a series of reports that informed American officials of the potential benefits of a reconstructed Korean higher education to bolstering a vibrant economy and fostering political stability. The US government contracted with the University of Minnesota to establish this model national Korean university. Careful consideration of the planning, implementation and effects of the SNU Project reveals that the United States directed these efforts and that Korea had limited decision-making power. The US made decisions according to its own definitions of Korea’s education needs, definition which in turn reflected the US own interests in Korean development. However, Koreans were able to influence the development and outcome of the program. Indeed, structural limitations in Korean society ultimately undermined the most basic stated US goal of the program, the transfer of US knowledge and practices, because Korea could not actually employ returning students in positions from which they could use the training they acquired in the US. Yet for the US government, the outcome of the SNU Project was highly favorable – it successfully created a critical mass of US-educated Korean academics and created a positive association between US education and educational credibility in Korea. The chapter closes with an analysis of the reports that evaluated the SNU project and the some of the long-term consequences of the project.

Chapter Three is about the study abroad program of the SNU Project that both governments heralded as a major success. Soon after the administrative structure of the project was set in place, two groups of Koreans were chosen to study in the US, mostly at the University of Minnesota. It was understood that upon completing their training abroad they would resume or begin their teaching position at Seoul National University or the National Officer Training Institute.²⁴ This chapter describes the process of selecting, training, and evaluating the Korean participants. It provides a step by step description of how the first group of faculty members in targeted departments at SNU became US-educated. Pieced together using individual’s applications, transcripts, private correspondence to the semi-annual records, institutional and government documents, and interviews provide a rare glimpse into the study abroad experiences of persons slated to lead Korea. I chose one particular group of the government sponsored students, and to the extent possible, followed their class schedule, projects, internship, and other academic activities to show that all the structural and administrative planning was fundamentally and ultimately prepared for the training of *people* who exerted their will and created choices for themselves.

Chapter Four discusses three interconnected topics in relating US-educated Koreans to the Korean government’s goal of improving its science and technology and to the US government’s spread of its soft power. First, there was the changing political and economic policies of the US and Korean governments. Under Park Chung Hee, the

²⁴ In reference to the NOTI candidates, Professor Draheim wrote Chief Advisor Schneider, “By signed agreements, on their return to Korea these men will serve as faculty members for NOTI subject to call by the Director of OGA and the Dean of NOTI.” Draheim to Schneider, May 19, 1958, in Lloyd Milton Short Papers [hereafter Short Papers], Box 17, Folder “KP-6a Dr. E.R. Draheim Reports,” University of Minnesota Special Collections, Minneapolis, Minnesota [hereafter location not included].

Korean government implemented a series of five-year economic plans that called for a mass import of scientific and technological knowledge. The ambitious plans established research and teaching institutes, of which KAIS stood at the core of the favored cluster. As for the US government, it funneled its nonmilitary assistance through its foreign aid agency, the US Agency for International Development. The chapter situates US involvement in Korea as a part of its overall global effort to win the “hearts and minds” of people. In conjunction with the military bases and soldiers, the US government aimed to influence the knowledge and skill creation in developing countries like Korea. In the case of KAIS, the US government exerted its influence by paying Stanford University to act as the expert adviser. It is evident that there was a strong push for an entrepreneurial university schooled in practical uses of science and technology. Secondly, I explore how the Korean and US governments put forth their political objectives through the KAIS Project. Though the project unfolded between 1971 and 1981, only the formative years are examined. Lastly this section pays careful attention to the US-educated Korean candidates for professorships at KAIS. Their application materials give a glimpse into the lives of an immigrant group that has been largely unacknowledged by historians, students who made their home in the US both temporarily and permanently.

Chapter Five begins with the first meetings between Koreans and Americans and the educational opportunities that arose as result of contact. A miniscule number of Koreans left to study in the US in the first five decades of 20th century. Early Korean American historian Bong-youn Kim put the total number of Korean students in the US from 1882 to 1940 at 891.²⁵ According to the Institute of International Education records, 1,197 Korean students enrolled in American universities for the academic year 1954/1955 alone.²⁶ Yet, the enduring positive image of the US began with the pioneering group of Korean students. Early encounters between Koreans and Americans set the stage for later encounters, and specifically laid the groundwork for educational exchanges. It delves into two key factors contributing to the growing popularity of study abroad in Korea following World War II. First, US-educated Koreans occupied key roles in civic and civil organizations in Korea that were highly visible and influential, made more so by American support and recognition. As US educated elites took on vital positions in Korea, particularly in Korean politics and higher education, they fueled the desire for more education. The most visible of these individuals occupied key positions in the emerging postcolonial Korean society, and Koreans began to associate US education with elite status. Second, more information and opportunities became available for studying in the US.

Those returning from the US, as well as cultural contact with the US in general, created a new benchmark for educational advancement. In addition, the Korean press regularly carried inspirational news stories of Koreans who had earned advance degrees from American universities. The last section examines how the Korean press elevated US-educated Koreans in society. Often packaged as human interest stories, these articles written between 1945 and 1970, emphasized the scholars as ordinary Koreans who accomplished extraordinary academic feats. These news articles serve as case studies in how images about US education proliferated after World War II and show one avenue of ideas that linked US education with individual success.

²⁵ Bong-youn Choy, *Koreans in America* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1979), 78.

²⁶ *50 Years of Open Doors*, CD-ROM (NY: NY: Institute of International Education, c2000).

Chapter Six demonstrates that Korean students are immigrants in the way structural constraints circumscribed their everyday lives and their cultural expectations and characteristics linked them to the Korean immigrant community. Moreover, they lived for significant amounts of time in the United States where they participated in the making and changing of American society. Many did not fit into the traditional immigration story that portray American immigrants as permanently leaving their “motherland” to forge better lives in their new “home”; it was assumed that physical residence and home were the same. The immigration path of these students was neither unidirectional nor defined by notions of belonging. The history of international students demonstrates that they exercised a flexible notion of migration. Individuals made their migration choices, both during and after their studies, on the personal benefits and costs associated with each of the options. The movement between Korea and the US was facilitated by technological advancements and greater relations between the two countries, but it was also complicated by the imagery and expectations attached to the US-educated. Though they were expected to return to Korea after their studies, many remained in the United State with some making short and extended visits to Korea. Although transnational research has become increasingly more popular in the last two decades, the transnational realities have been playing out in people’s lives for much, much longer. Moreover, though immigrants operated within the structural processes set in place by the government, their decisions also altered and shaped the parameters of those very structures. As part of a whole, these immigrants have changed the American society they live in. Immigrants as a whole greatly affected the symbolic image of the United States and they contributed to their new country’s influence abroad. International students are a part of a larger story of the United States in the world.

Chapter 1 “Koreanization”

The Japanese soldiers and civilians remaining in Korea had no time to plan, no time to think. They were no longer in power, and the American soldiers were not far away. Their time in Korea was over, and the very short trip across the Sea of Japan would transport them back to a long-departed place, one that differed wildly from the place in their memories. Jubilant American officials and soldiers marched in, often occupying the very buildings the Japanese had just vacated. The swift and unplanned transition from Japanese colonial rule to American military rule in Korea took place.¹ Japan surrendered to the Allies on August 5th and the United States Military Government in Korea (USMGIK) began on September 7th. Korea was arbitrarily divided at the 38th parallel with the US military taking control of South Korea and the Soviet Union leading North Korea. The division launched a race to rebuild Korea.

US reconstruction efforts in Korea differed from those in Japan and Germany. Where the US acknowledged that Germany and Japan had their unique culture, Korea was not imagined to have a salvageable heritage. Plans for Germany and Japan called for redirection and realignment, but in Korea the focus was removing colonial past. Professionals worked with the goal of systematically restructuring the former Axis societies, while the military officers entering Korea sought to quickly meet Korea’s immediate needs and get out. In 1945, Korea was not a priority to the US. But the Korean War changed everything. By the end of the Korean War, the US government had poured millions of dollars into its defense and had allocated even more for its postwar “relief and rehabilitation.”

The Korean War disrupted and revised the two governments’ views of each other: the US government included Korea as geopolitically important and the South Korean government accepted US assistance. When ceasefire was called in 1953, the influx of US military aid and commonly perceived threat of communism had cemented the unequal alliance between the US and Korea governments. Much had changed between the needs and goals of the two countries between the time of Korea’s independence and its civil war. Korea’s material need was much greater after the Korean War. The US military occupation from 1945 to 1948 took place when the Korean economic infrastructure was relatively intact, while there was widespread devastation after the Korean War. US aid to Korea during its military occupation consisted of short-term and short-lived projects. In terms of its educational assistance, the US military experimented with brief in-service teacher training in democracy through programs like the Teacher Training Center. As the Korean War drew to a ceasefire, the US government assumed a long-term approach to revamp the entire education system by training the country’s elites. Through its involvement in the reconstruction of Korea’s higher education, the US seized an opportunity to reshape Korean society.

When American soldiers entered Korea, they found a country amalgamated to its colonial past. Korea had become a Japanese protectorate in 1905 and then was annexed to Japan in 1910. Then for the next thirty-five years Korea provided fodder to the economic and imperial aspirations of Japan, supplying it with manpower and natural resources ranging from soldiers and “comfort women” to tungsten and rice. The Japanese government established industries and educational institutions, and the Japanese flooded into Korea to control these institutions. They developed and exercised managerial and technical skills in jobs that were categorically denied to

¹ Korea refers to South Korea or the Republic of Korea, unless otherwise noted.

Koreans. So, when the Japanese fled, there were very few Korean educators, politicians, and scientists. This squelching of indigenous leadership and its development exacerbated the already difficult transition from being a colony to an independent nation.

An entire generation of Koreans shared the fate of being mere workers in their own nation. Ironically, that blatant discrimination paralleled the growing equality among the Koreans. During its colonial rule, Japan outlawed Korea's hierarchical system that defined people as yangbans, commoners, and slaves, and governed their interactions with each other.² In a society where commoners were punished for wearing certain colors of clothing or where slaves could be beaten to death for minor offenses, Japan imposed a classless society. The Japanese government deemphasized distinctions among Koreans. The colonial rulers denied landownership and even the use of Korean name, both of which defined the person's status in Korean society. In 1940, a decree ordered all Koreans to adopt a Japanese name. The Japanese argued that such conditions helped establish equality and incorporation into the Japanese society.

When Japan surrendered in August of 1945, the baton of control over Korea passed to the US. Hence began the "Koreanization" program. The US Military Government in Korea (USMGIK) controlled and coordinated the postwar relief and rehabilitation and became an overseer in the rebuilding of an indigenous Korean government. Central to restoring Korea to itself was the removal of all things Japanese.³ Yet, the official language of the government during this key moment was English. The highest official position a Korean could occupy was that of an adviser to American officers. One month into the occupation, USMGIK renamed itself the South Korean Interim Government, reflecting the temporary nature of their commitment. These actions all point to the occupation government's lack of organization, and demonstrate that American convenience was the ruling criterion. To its credit, the US was in unchartered territory as it took place during a volatile time in a hotly contested area of the developing Cold War.

The US administration used the catch-phrase "defending democracy" to rally domestic support for its actions abroad. When the US entered WWII, it had justified its actions primarily as an act of self-defense against "subhuman" Japanese, but as the war progressed the US quickly enlarged the scope of defense to extend to the world.⁴ The American government suspended its

² The Korean social hierarchy is simplified here.

³ The head of all public institutions had to be a Korean national by law. Ironically, USMGIK placed an American military officer as the chief administrator of Korea's preeminent university immediately after Korean liberation. Acknowledging the symbolic and real importance of Seoul National University to the Korean populace, the military government replaced him with a Korean national and declared that all subsequent presidents must be Korean. See "Establishment of Seoul National University," Ordinance Number 102, Section IV (August 22, 1946), reprinted in Byung-hun Nam, "Educational Reorganization in South Korea under the US Army Military Government: 1945-48" (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1962), 233. Examples of the on-going "Koreanization" projects abound. In some cases, the very vocabulary developed and used during the colonial period had to be changed. Reference to elementary school as "people's school," a linguistic vestige from colonial times, was outlawed and the nation overnight adopted "primary school" as the correct term. Overnight, "people's school" could not longer be heard, except in quickly corrected slip of the tongue, while city and school officers replaced signs and plaques. The Korean National Museum, another example, was housed in the former Japanese General Government Building until 1995 when it was moved to its current location. The fate of the former building became a topic of a heated public debate. One camp favored the demolition of the building that had once been the seat of Japanese colonial power in Korea. Its opponents argued against the demolition on the grounds that such symbolism no longer held ground over Koreans. Moreover, the demolition of such a massive building in the middle of a bustling city would be costly. Symbolism won out; the building was demolished in 1996.

⁴ John W. Dower has written extensively on the racialized relationship between the US and Japan. Dower's *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (NY: Pantheon Books, 1986) evaluates the contrasting images of the "others" created by the governments and the press that fed into their own sense of superiority and the others

ideological differences with the Soviet Union, but with the surrender of the Axis nations, the perceived common ground between the US and the Soviet Union disintegrated. When the Korean War erupted, Asia as a region came into view as a key bulwark against communism.

George Kennan, an influential political scientist, voiced the central goal of US foreign policy as the containment of the Soviet Union. Kennan held to the belief that fledgling countries must be protected from Russia and its errant political philosophy. For the next seven years, the US military would lay its template of democracy in Korea, Japan, and the Philippines. The US military occupation in Japan began in August 1945 and in Korea in September 1945. The US Senate and House of Representatives passed the Philippines Rehabilitation Act in December of 1945 and April 1946 respectively. And under this act, the Philippines transitioned from being a US territory to an independent nation.

When the Japanese withdrew from Korea, Americans quickly moved to join the Russians who were already in the peninsula. The US government agreed to a trusteeship of Korea with temporary multilateral administrations to govern. The US arbitrarily suggested a territorial split on the 38th parallel to divide the administrative activities of the US and the Soviet. Just as it divided Germany, this plan split up Korea into two zones; the Soviet Union supported Kim Il Sung in the North and the US supported Syngman Rhee in the South. This compromise between the political giants ignored the deep-seated desire of the Koreans to be independent from all foreign powers.

Unlike Japan or much of Europe, Korea was relatively unscathed by the world war and its physical infrastructure remained intact. However, the artificial severance of the country into two greatly retarded the transition from colonial dependency to autonomous statehood. Much of Korea's natural resources and industrial centers were located in the north while most of its citizens and its food production was in the south. According to information gathered by US officials, "Two-thirds of the industry, 90 percent of the hydroelectric power and practically all major coal, iron, and other mineral deposits as well as the forests were located in the north while 75 percent of the agriculture and two-thirds of the population were in the south."⁵ The interdependency between Korea's two regions became a casualty of global politics.

Koreans did not unequivocally endorse the American and some eyed Americans with suspicion and fear. The close-mindedness and lack of respect shown to the Koreans from the top ranking officers to the foot soldiers antagonized many Koreans. Occupational authorities indiscriminately repressed communist groups in Korea, and supported only those Koreans who shared Washington's views. Although stories of good soldiers circulated, the less publicized but recurring violence inflicted by American soldiers spread quickly by word of mouth among the Koreans. American GI's violence and disregard for civility was so widespread that the Commanding General John R. Hodge was forced to address it in an open letter to his troops. In it, he listed "one murder in armed robbery, several other armed robberies and several unwarranted physical assault against Koreans committed by men in the uniform of the United States Army."⁶ Hodge wrote that such crimes undermined the American prestige and must be stopped. Yet, violent actions went unpunished. To combat spreading Korean antagonism toward the American GIs, Korean leader Syngman Rhee addressed his compatriots: "We have our duty

inferiority. Dower follows the encounters between the US and Japan into the Japanese Reconstruction in *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of the World War II* (NY: W.W. Norton, New Press 1999).

⁵ Subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations, *Relief and Rehabilitation in Korea: Hearings on H.R. 2574*, 83d Congress, 2d sess., 1954, 11.

⁶ Public Relations Office Headquarters XXIV Army Corps [Seoul, Korea], April 18, 1946, in George Fox Mott Papers [hereafter Mott Papers], Box 19, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, CA [hereafter location not included].

to do, while our friends are endeavoring to solve our problems peacefully. We must cooperate with them....”⁷ Koreans continue to rebel against both the perceived and real threats to their personhood. A *Los Angeles Times* article reported on isolated incidents of anti-American demonstrations and civilian throwing stones at American soldiers.⁸ Some parents hid their children, especially their daughters, from the soldiers, and ad hoc watch groups cropped up in villages to monitor American movement. Native protests and resistance against Americans lasted as long as the military occupation.

Americans’ ignorance of Korea in general and arrogance created an uncooperative, unproductive environment. Much like the Americans satirized in *The Ugly American* by Eugene Burdick and William Lederer, few knew the Korean language or culture.⁹ Benjamin Weems was one of few career officers who knew Korea. Born to Christian missionaries, he had spent most of his childhood in the “Hermit Kingdom.” He characterized the Korean American relation during USMGIK as one of miscommunication.

Yet after approximately two and a half years of American occupation, most Koreans have misgiving or even resentment toward the Americans in Korea,.... Except for a few hundred Koreans who had studied abroad, Korean relations with Americans before occupation were almost entirely limited to association with less than five hundred missionaries and about a hundred business people scattered throughout the entire peninsula. Only a handful of missionaries and children of missionaries possess a working knowledge of Korean, and there are far too few Koreans who have a good comprehension of English....¹⁰

Those few who had the language facilities were a highly selective minority in Korea. Their lives were drastically different from those of most Korean citizens. The average Korean had no power to question the actions of the American GIs.

The unequal power dynamics between the Americans and Koreans was further reinforced by American aid that shaped and established institutions in Korea with their built-in biases against things native. Although the US military occupation planners ultimately failed to establish a liberal democracy and an open economy during its rule, they began the process of creating an infrastructure that would protect US interests in the long run. US foreign aid began as a way to help other countries and protect its interests without deploying soldiers abroad or making long-term commitments. These event-specific, short-termed grants lowered the chances of prolonged commitment and cost less in terms of dollars and lives, than American physical presence abroad.¹¹ The US also contributed funds to larger international organizations, preferring not to claim sole responsibility. For example after the Pacific War, the US joined other Allied nations in funding the newly created United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). The US contributed the most to this multinational organization, and led in every way but in name.

⁷ Rhee’s speech translated into English in *The Korean American Times*, September 1, 1946.

⁸ *Los Angeles Times*, January 7, 1946.

⁹ Eugene Burdick and William Lederer, *The Ugly American* (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1958).

¹⁰ Benjamin Weems, “Korean-American Relations in South Korea,” *The Voice of Korea* 5, no. 103 (April 2, 1948), in Gregory Henderson Papers [hereafter Henderson Papers], Box 1, Harvard-Yenching Library and Archives, Cambridge, MA [hereafter location not included].

¹¹ *The Columbia Encyclopedia* identifies the land-lease as the first US foreign aid. *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed., s.v. “foreign aid,” <http://www.bartleby.com/65/fo/foreignaid.html> (accessed February 10, 2005).

The role and use of foreign aid expanded greatly in 1947 in response to Soviet aggression in Eastern Europe. The American regime responded with the Truman Doctrine, materially supporting its tenet by inaugurating the European Recovery Program (ERP) or the Marshall Plan. Concomitant to the Marshall Plan was the creation of the first independent aid agency, Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA). This prototype signaled to the importance and permanence of US foreign aid operations to its diplomacy. At the same time, the Department of Defense was created, hinting at the entangled relationship between diplomacy and force.¹² The US government stationed more and more of its soldiers abroad at the same time its foreign aid solidified as a permanent diplomatic tool. And in its position of economic strength, the US took on more and more of the cost of rehabilitating the postwar world.

Civilian assistance and military assistance are inseparable in most postwar rehabilitation efforts. In Korea after WWII, Armed Forces Assistance in Korea (AFAK) of the US 8th Army administered the \$425 million of the relief fund that the US Senate approved for use in Korea.¹³ AFAK faced more than war devastation. Natural disasters intensified the catastrophes of wartime. An American journalist wrote,

While Koreans were absorbed with the problem of rehabilitating their country in June, two disasters struck the country. The worst flood in 20 years washed out 20 percent of the summer grain crop, reducing estimated harvest to less than 60% of the 1940-44 average of 1,427,000 metric tons. The flood also washed out communication lines and interfered with attempts to combat the second disaster – a cholera epidemic brought into the country by those repatriating from China.¹⁴

AFAK had to multitask. Through its operating arm, the Korean Civil Assistance Command (KCAC), it distributed immediate relief in the form of food, clothing, and medicine. Soldiers built temporary shelters and schools while Army photographers chronicled these goodwill gestures. AFAK also supported a wide range of educational projects including among others a rehabilitation center for disabled children, in-service training programs for Korean administrators, a press for textbook publication, and the merger of the “existing educational facilities into a reorganized Seoul National University [SNU].”¹⁵ As a testament to the blurring of the military and civilian activities, the budget approvals for SNU’s operation appeared in AFAK’s ledgers.¹⁶ In terms of its overall education program, however, AFAK concentrated on primary and vocational education training since it affected the greatest number of Koreans.

Central to the postwar assistance was America’s goal of democratizing and Koreanizing the new country. Those recruited to Korea to assess the situation argued that former colonizers had used education to “Japanize” the Koreans. Experts and uniformed personnel called for a new mode of thinking and understanding. There was an underlining assumption that a native modern Korean educational system did not exist so an American system needed to be introduced.

¹² The National Security Act combined the Department of War and the Navy under the Department of Defense; the newly created Central Intelligence Agency replaced the Office of Strategic Services. The new organizations allowed greater flexibility, coordination, and discretion.

¹³ In 1946, the US Army had asked Congress for \$500 million as part of its fiscal appropriations, which the House cut to \$350 million and the Senate increased to \$500 million; a compromise of \$425 million was reached.

¹⁴ “Flood Havoc in Korea Told,” *San Francisco Examiner*, August 25, 1946, in Henderson Papers, Box 1.

¹⁵ “Establishment of Seoul National University,” Ordinance Number 102, Section II, August 22, 1946, cited in Byung-hun Nam, “Educational Reorganization in South Korea,” 233.

¹⁶ National Economic Board, “US Army Force in Korea. South Korean Interim Government Activities,” no. 33 (June 1948), in Mott Papers, Box 5.

According to the American educators, Korea's centralized and authoritative education stood in contrast to the decentralized and democratic system of American education. Korea's education, the Americans identified, was the key to change. Clearly education held the interest of both political and military opinions. The US Department of State and the War Department jointly appointed a five-member educational team to Korea, and together they briefed the survey team in Washington DC and on the ground in Korea.

The survey team reported back with a summary of existing programs, review of future plans, and recommendations based on the guiding principle of "Koreanization." The objective of "Koreanization," they stated, was the "development of a program indigenous to the life and culture of Korea, under Korean leadership."¹⁷ They continued that in order for the incubating democratic government to grow, it was imperative to foster freedom-loving individuals. "The youth of Korea," one section of the report began, "constitutes the largest and most promising population group among which real democratic ideals can be developed."¹⁸ Since they believed protecting and cultivating democracy was an existential practice of all democratic nations, they implicitly prioritized democratization over "Koreanization." In this sense democratization or Americanization was the guiding principle behind Koreanization.

Though their optimism about the ultimate benefit of Americanization did not waiver, these educators did feel ambivalent about *replicating* an American educational system in Korea. Those who created the 1947 report adhered to the idea that democratic ideals could be taught, but they questioned the wisdom of replicating American education abroad. Jonathan Zimmerman in his book, *The Innocents Abroad*, aptly shows that many of the American teachers going abroad grappled with the applicability of US learning and teaching in a foreign context.¹⁹ US educators sent to Korea also struggled with question to what degree US education should be implemented; however, but they never doubted the ability of US education to instill democracy and create political stability.

American educators endorsed the idea of retraining Koreans after the American models. Those who created the 1947 report proposed the creation of the Teacher Training Center (TTC) in Korea, a unique program that would "provide intensive short-term courses of training for [Korean] educational administrators and teachers at all levels."²⁰ All educational specialists would be recruited from the US, and teach one of the following specializations:

school administration, school finance, philosophy of education, education psychology, methods of teaching reading, tests and measurements, curriculum construction, audio-visual aids, physical sciences, biological sciences, social sciences, public administration, industrial arts, vocational teacher-training, agriculture, industrial education, home economics, health and physical education, library science.²¹

It was an all-inclusive program. The authors of the proposal envisioned the TTC as the nerve-center of all educational activities in Korea. USMGIK adopted the project in the autumn of 1947, and brought George A. Selke, the Chancellor of the University of Montana system, to

¹⁷ C.O. Arndt, A.J. Brumbaugh, James R.D. Eddy, Jay Franklin Ray, Jr., and Douglas N. Batson, *Report of the Educational and Informational Survey Mission to Korea*, June 20, 1947, in Mott Papers, Box 23.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Jonathan Zimmerman, *Innocents Abroad: American Teachers in the American Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

²⁰ C.O. Arndt, AJ Brumbaugh, James RD Eddy, Jay Franklin Ray, Jr. and Douglas N. Batson, *Report of Educational and Survey Mission to Korea*, June 20, 1947, in Walter H. Orion Papers [hereafter Orion Papers], Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, CA [hereafter location not given].

²¹ Ibid.

Korea in the spring of 1948.²² Selke's report became the blueprint for the TTC.²³ The US Congress supported the idea approved twenty five educators to be sent to Korea by August of 1948.

The Acting Director of the TTC, Walter Orion, stated the institute's goal as "teaching democracy." Thus, "the basic aim of the TTC was to work with Korean teachers in such a way that they might gain an understanding, and belief in, democratic procedures in modern education, including the concept of respect for the individual."²⁴ Rote memorization would be replaced with participatory learning. Imported American educators would give seminars, not lectures. Through discussions, Koreans students would set their own agenda.²⁵ Student educators would develop the ability to think for themselves and to question authority, an essential tool in democracy. The expectation was that once the students became exposed to American education, they would embrace it and become its missionaries. "Democracy" was literally the buzzword in every subject taught during the intensive in-service programs. For all its grandiose plans, the TTC operated two in-service programs before it closed permanently.

What were the results of the TTC? Both American and Korean participants gave its workshops glowing marks, noting its success in transferring democratic learning in Korea. Korean educator Nak-kun Kim, evaluating from outside the program and in retrospect, pronounced the TTC to be a failure. Kim did give credit to the in-service program for conferring a modicum of prestige to primary, secondary administrators and teachers who suffered from low morale and low pay. The participants, he observed, seemed impressed and inspired, but "[t]hey seemed to disregard everything that they learned about teaching methods."²⁶ It is doubtful that a long-term project could have brought lasting changes but sixteen weeks had no chance. The US government was committed to the ideas of democracy, but not to Korea. However, the Korean War dramatically changed this view. Congress began to identify individual countries for political conversion. According to a Congressional report, "Along with the Philippines and possibly Japan, Korea appears destined to be a showcase at which Asian peoples will look to discover what American ideas and principles mean when applied in an oriental setting."²⁷ Korea, as a part of the targeted region, became important.

Nineteen fifty was a pivotal year in American foreign affairs. USSR's mastery of the atomic bomb and the loss of China to communism as well as the rampant communist baiting of McCarthyism and disputes over the federal budget compelled President Truman to order a reassessment of American foreign policies by January of 1950. The National Security Council (NSC) in its policy paper number sixty-eight dropped Kennan's policy of containment with its emphasis on maintaining status quo through diplomatic and psychological tactics and instead advocated for a strong proactive military stance against any potential threats from communism. According to historian John Lewis Gaddis, Kennan's policy defended centers of industrial-military capable of perimeter defense, while NSC-68 deemed all points along the perimeter

²² Following the Korean War, the US 8th Army assisted Korea using the GARIO funds. In 1948, approximately \$400 million of GARIO funds went to Korea. Funding for the TTC was made available under P.L. 739 of the 80th Congress and the Military Government contributed additional resources.

²³ Marvin S. Pittman to General Edgar Erskine Hume, April 1, 1949, in Orion Papers.

²⁴ Memorandum from Orion to the Theatre Command, November 1948, in Orion Papers.

²⁵ "The Teacher Training Center," in Orion Papers.

²⁶ Nak-kun Kim, "Observation on Teaching Methods," *Sai Kyo Yuk* [The New Education] 8 (August 1956), 33, quoted in Nam, "Educational Reorganization," 212.

²⁷ US Congress, *Relief and Rehabilitation in Korea*, 51.

important.²⁸ The new foreign policy committed a tremendous amount of resources to defend, and to a large extent define democracy for the entire world. The final form of NSC-68 arrived on Truman's desk in early June, and by late June North Korea had attacked South Korea.

Truman promptly accepted the recommendations of the NSC-68. His administration quickly labeled the North Korean invaders as Communist-led and Soviet-controlled, and identified South Korea as a perimeter nation and a victim of unprovoked aggression. Two days after the invasion, without Congressional approval, Truman committed US troops to Korea. The US public applauded Truman's decisiveness, and the Congress followed suit with its approval with minimal haggling. As for the Department of State, it moved quickly to define the Korean War not as a civil war, but as part of a global war against communism. The Department of State flooded the public with documents, pamphlets, and speeches, stating that it was fulfilling its "responsibility to place full and accurate information on such critical events before the people of the United States and the world so that they may reach informed judgments concerning the actions of this government."²⁹

Information focused on the *Communist* attack on Korea. Truman announced his decision to commit America to Korea:

In Korea the Government forces, which were armed to prevent border raids and to preserve internal security, were attacked by invading forces from North Korea...

The attack on Korea makes it plain beyond all doubt that Communism has passed beyond the use of subversion to conquer independent nations and will now use armed invasion and war....³⁰

Though Truman began with North Korea's invasion, he quickly directed the reader's attention to the Communist invasion of independent nations. A month later, Truman went a step further and equated an attack on Korea as an attack on free nations, and an attack on free nations as an attack on the United States.

Korea is a small country, thousands of miles away, but what is happening there is important to every American. On Sunday, June 25th, communist forces attacked the Republic of Korea. This attack has made it clear, beyond all doubt, that the international communist movement is willing to use armed invasion to conquer independent nations. An act of aggression such as this creates a very real danger to the security of all free nations.³¹

US paraphrased this rationale at the United Nation's Security Council: "The armed invasion of the Republic of Korea continues. This is, in fact, an attack on the United Nations itself."³²

The initial support that the American public gave its government plummeted when the Chinese Communist "volunteers" inflicted heavy casualties on American troops in November of 1950. The public's clamor to "bring the boys home" echoed around the country. In response, Truman again addressed the American people for their understanding, this time on the radio.

²⁸ John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 91. For an overview see Stephen E. Ambrose and Douglas G. Brinkley, *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy since 1938* (NY: Penguin Books, 1997, revised edition).

²⁹ US Department of State, *United Nations Policy in the Korean Crisis*, (Far Eastern Series 34, Publication 3922, released July 1950), iii.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

³¹ "Address by the President, July 19, 1950," 9; US Department of State, "United States Policy in the Korean Conflict: July 1950 – February 1951" (Far Eastern Series 44, Publication 4263, released September 1951).

³² Statement of Security Council by the Representative of the United States to the United Nations (Austin)," June 27, 1950 [UN doc. S/PV.474], quoted in US Department of State, *United Nations Policy in the Korean Crisis*, 23.

I am talking to you tonight about what our country is up against and what we are going to do about it. Our homes, our Nation, all the things we believe in, are in great danger. This danger has been the rulers of the Soviet Union....

In June, the forces of Communist imperialism broke out into open warfare in Korea. The United Nations moved to put down this act of aggression and, by October, had all but succeeded. Then, in November, the Communists threw their Chinese armies into the battle against the free nations.

By this act they have shown that they are now willing to push the world to the brink of a general war to get what they want. This is the real meaning of the events that have been taking place in Korea. That is why we are in such grave danger.³³

President Truman explained that he had committed American troops to Korea ultimately for American security. He focused on communist imperialism and aggression, and not on a country most Americans did not know. Although it was unclear exactly what made a person or a country communist, it clearly opposed and threatened the “American” way of life and governance. The word “Communist” was a dangerous word. In 1953, the US government would put Julius and Ethel Rosenberg on trial for being spies for the Communists and execute them. And a scant year later from April to June of 1954, the Red Scare would culminate in the sensational finger pointing, fist pounding and yelling of the McCarthy hearings.

The Truman administration’s response to the deteriorating public and Congressional support led to the renaming and shuffling of foreign assistance programs that would make foreign aid near impossible to eliminate in the future. When Truman dismissed the popular General MacArthur as the United Nations Commander in Korea in April, a public storm erupted. Congressmen alarmed by the rising foreign aid and military spending quickly moved to lop off economic aid to “perimeter defense nations.” Truman consolidated foreign economic aid programs under the Mutual Security Program (MSP) that emphasized *domestic* security. It “hid” unpopular programs from public scrutiny by lumping them as a part of an overall effort to protect American citizens. Foreign military assistance was clothed in kinder, more acceptable language of humanitarian aid. For example in 1951, \$45 million was donated to the United Nations Korea Relief Agency (UNKRA) strictly for the purpose of providing relief and rehabilitation of Korea.³⁴ The Truman administration also signed a string of treaties and agreements that provided channels for de facto economic aid to Korea, and also provided the basis for stationing American soldiers abroad.³⁵

The Korean War cost the Democratic Party the presidency. Republican Dwight Eisenhower did not forget the lessons from his presidential election. His success at the poll was in large part due to the rising public disillusionment at the Truman Administration for the growing human and material costs of the Korean War. The intensely partisan election weakened

³³ Harry Truman, “Address by the President, December 15, 1950” in US Department of State, *United Nations Policy in the Korean Conflict*, 27.

³⁴ *Congress and the Nation: 1945-1964; A Review of Government Politics in the Postwar Years* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Service 1965), 169.

³⁵ When Truman signed the Treaty of Peace with Japan, both the US and Japan agreed to the American military presence “in and about Japan” to safeguard “international peace and security,” and to help protect Japan “against armed attack from without.” The US government entered into similar mutual defense treaties with the Philippines on August 30th and with Australia and New Zealand on September 1, 1951. As for Korea, arms transfers and military aid became a substitute for a formal defense treaty during the Korean War. None of these treaties had a termination date.

legislative support for the increasingly unpopular foreign aid program. Historian John Lewis Gaddis writes that Eisenhower and his Secretary of State John Foster Dulles understood that NSC-68 called for too high a cost in terms of American commitment.³⁶ In its place, Dulles put forth a new direction for American foreign policy, “brinkmanship.” At the same time, Eisenhower had no plans to demote or retire foreign assistance as a weapon against communism.

Armed hostilities in Korea ended with a cease-fire agreement on July 2, 1953; no peace treaty or a permanent resolution was reached. The artificial division of the country remained and the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union only intensified. By the end of the Korean War, anti-communism became a loud rallying cry in the US. A Cold War scholar Robert Johnson explains that the

rise of the national security state spread defense spending around the country, leaving members of Congress who sought to reduce it vulnerable to the charge of subverting national security as well as ignoring the economic interests of their constituents. Moreover, in the anti-Communist mindset associated with the McCarthy era, casting a vote against defense spending was often considered a political risk. In the decade from the end of the Korean War to the end of the Kennedy presidency, defense bills passed with an average of less than one negative vote in both chambers.³⁷

The American regime adhered firmly to the rhetoric begun by Truman and perfected by Eisenhower. It reminded the American public that all of its actions were firmly rooted in its desire to protect Americans and their way of life. Following the Armistice, John Foster Dulles delivered a speech before the American Legion, which was later broadcast to the nation. In it, he used the terms “aggressors,” “aggressive despots,” “Communists,” and “Soviet leaders” interchangeably. Reminiscent of Truman’s earlier speeches, Dulles told his fellow legionnaires, another epic chapter of glorious service for the nation [US]. For that, the American people must be forever grateful.... We do not make the mistake of treating Korea as an isolated affair. The Korean War forms one part of the world-wide effort of communism to conquer freedom. More immediately it is part of that effort in Asia.³⁸

He connected all of the disparate US involvements abroad and concluded “one simple sentiment dominates all that we do. We seek to promote the welfare of the United States.”³⁹

No such clarion call rang out in Korea. The war had devastated Korea. Its horrors were the most intimately felt by those who had lived through it. The sense of despair is vividly portrayed in the following letter from a Korean schoolgirl to her sister who was studying abroad. It seems that the past three months have been as long as 300 years. It is fearful to think of this hell-like tragedy. It is a great blessing from God that I have the freedom to write you.... After a number of narrow escapes, we are all safe. But when we came home nothing was left. We have not a single spoon, clothing or blanket. Since all our friends are in the same situation, there is no place to turn. Missing meals is so common.... It is impossible to study in Korea. All of our

³⁶ Gaddis, *The Strategies of Containment*, 147, 182.

³⁷ Robert David Johnson, “Congress and the Cold War,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 32, no.2 (Spring 2001): 89.

³⁸ John Foster Dulles, “Korean Problems,” address by Secretary Dulles before the American Legion, St. Louis, Missouri, *Department of State Bulletin* 29 (September 2, 1952), 9.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

teachers have been taken by the reds. School textbooks are all burned. It seems impossible to open the schools even next year at this time.

Koreans scavenged through American soldier's trash and discarded belongings, hoping to find something to alleviate their gnawing hunger or something to protect them from the elements.⁴⁰ Abject misery was a daily reality.

Even before the war's end, the destructive effects of war had been recorded. Based on fieldwork in Korea from late-September to mid-November 1952, one UN commissioned report explicitly linked the physical destruction to people's suffering.

The Republic of Korea is experiencing all the horrible consequence of war.

Widespread damage and destruction of homes and factories, serious declines in production, the drain of continuing combat on the economy, serious inflation, and insufficient aid from abroad all add up to a miserable state of life for the people of Korea... Much of the productive capacity of Korea is destroyed or damaged.⁴¹

Joseph Lehmann, the executive director of American Relief for Korea who visited Korea during the summer of 1951 observed, "Around this ghost city [Seoul], a population of refugees from within the city and from the north ekes out a bare existence, trying to find lost children, waiting for help from wherever it may come.... But much more is necessary if the winter to come is not to be a repetition of the slaughter by the elements."⁴² He found the refugee camps overcrowded, and hospitals that were extended beyond their capacity. Gregory Henderson also wrote about what he saw to his "Dear Friends" in America:

We pass burned out Korean houses along the road, an occasional burned-out school.... The substation and distribution system were badly knocked out, however, and there is virtually no electricity for anyone yet.

The change came abruptly as we neared the intersection with Pukahyundong – the road to Ewha and Chosun Christian Universities. To the left are the ruins of a large brick middle school-now completely burned out. Buildings around the old brick Bible Institute on the hill are destroyed with some damage to the missionary buildings; a swathe of destruction among Korean houses....⁴³

All this was in addition to the ongoing dramatic demographic shifts .

Korea experienced great population changes following World War II. Korean civilians and soldiers who had been in exile in China and Japan, and to a lesser degree in the US and Europe, returned. Historian Bruce Cumings estimates somewhere between 75,000 and 100,000

⁴⁰ Today, street vendors and hole-in-the wall places offer boo-dae chigae, literally "troop stew." This post-liberation cuisine has its roots in the war years. Hungry Koreans scavenged GI's campgrounds, especially their garbage near the mess halls or their living quarters for anything edible. Their findings would be placed in a large pot, water poured in, and a dash of crushed dried red pepper flakes added. When enough time passed to buffer the painful and hungry memories of war, this stew passed into Korea's nostalgic popularity. Its popularity in the 1990s and the early 2000s however plummeted when the media exposed that the stew's colorful history was repeating itself. Restaurants had not only borrowed the name from the past, but also the practice of scavenging; its ingredients were literally leftovers and even worse contaminated dregs!

⁴¹Robert R. Nathan Associates, *Preliminary Report on Economic Reconstruction of Korea*, [Doc. UNKRA/AG/13] (December 15, 1952), 6.

⁴² Joseph B. Lehmann, "Report of My Trip to Korea, July 8-August 6, 1951," in *American Relief for Korea* (NY: American Relief for Korea, Inc.), 1, in Mott Papers, Box 5.

⁴³ Gregory Henderson to "Dear Friends," October 23, 1951, in Henderson Papers, Box 1, Folder "Official Correspondence + memoranda – wartime."

Koreans who had fought in China repatriated between 1948 and 1950.⁴⁴ This number does not include thousands more who repatriated from Japan. This demographic shift was nothing compared to what happened during the Korean War when more than two million died and a quarter of the country's total population was displaced. After the war, the cities and towns of South Korea struggled to accommodate their returning residents, displaced neighbors, and refugees from north of the 38th parallel. The last group of more than two million people became permanent refugees in their own country.⁴⁵ All needed food, water, and shelter immediately, a daunting task in the face of widespread devastation. Korea buckled under the growing weight of its urgent needs.⁴⁶

Korea's economic infrastructure was in shambles. The onslaught of aerial and ground assaults had destroyed much of Korea's economy and its supporting infrastructure, such as its lattice of transportation routes and the communication system installed by the Japanese. Companies and industries had become casualties of war while the power plants and natural resources necessary to run them now resided north of the nonporous 38th parallel. Spiraling inflation and lack of foreign currency exacerbated the already precarious conditions of the marketplace and stymied the Korean government's attempts to stabilize it. On top of all these, leaders of the Cold War nations had reached no conclusion on the fate of the divided Koreas, and the treaty did not mark the end of the war. Both South Korean and US governments deemed an armed force capable of withstanding potential aggression to be a necessity, which continued to divert the much needed resources from civilian purposes to military spending. A group of American legislators visiting Korea a few months after the war observed, "South Korea at the moment is neither at peace nor at war. Although hostilities have ceased, the disturbing essentials of a war economy persist."⁴⁷

To recover from the war, Korea needed to build up its infrastructure. The international community sent its experts to jumpstart the huge task of reconstructing the shattered country, and these experts listed in report after report of how Korea's manpower was its greatest natural resource. At the same time, they noted, of how Koreans lacked experience and skills, so training and education would be essential to realize their potential. Korea needed outside intervention.

Korean experience in the first half of the twentieth century showed that state interventions had not benefitted Koreans. From 1905 to 1945, their lives in general were circumscribed by the needs and decisions of Japanese administrators.⁴⁸ The US military government, which operated from 1945 to 1947, then defined the limits of acceptable political behavior and economic activities. For the next three years, a pro-American authoritarian ruled Korea and after that a multinational war crippled the nation's economy and political apparatus.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Bruce Cumming places the civilian death toll alone at over two million in his book *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History* (NY: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1997), 290.

⁴⁵ A demilitarized zone, DMZ, was set up at the 38th parallel, and it became one of the most heavily guarded areas in the world. No border crossing was allowed.

⁴⁶ More than two million North Koreans took refuge in South Korea during the Korean War. See US House, *Relief and Rehabilitation in Korea*.

⁴⁷ Members of the House of Representatives visited select Asian countries in November and December of 1953. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Special Study Mission to Southeast Asia and the Pacific*, 83^d Cong., 2^d sess., 1954, 22.

⁴⁸ For a quick overview of how Korea fit into Japan's overall Asia policy and of how Korea was affected by it, see Michael Robinson, "Forced Assimilation, Mobilization, and War," in *Korea Old and New: A History*, ed. Carter J. Eckert, Ki-Baik Lee, et al. (Seoul: IlChokak, Publishers, 1990), 305-326.

⁴⁹ There are very few book-length, English-language biographies of Syngman Rhee. Earliest works on Syngman Rhee either lionized him or vilified him. Rhee's confidante and advisor Robert Oliver wrote *Syngman Rhee: The*

The United States stepped into this state of disarray. The US Departments of State and Defense used its foreign aid to determine the speed and priorities of Korea's recovery. A palpable and long-lasting change occurred in American involvement in Korea, in Korean education, and in the lives of Koreans.

As the superpower supporting and initially sustaining South Korea, the United States was committed to safeguarding it from another Communist attack. The country that Secretary of State Dean Acheson had declared nonstrategic to democracy became the first hot spot of the Cold War on June of 1950.⁵⁰ It took more than three years and over two million lives to restore Korea's boundaries to the pre-war division at the 38th parallel. Though the war did not result in overt territorial or political gains to the US, it resulted in the US again having a foothold in a country abutting the Communist giants, Russia and China. Historians generally agree that the Cold War drew the US into Asia and that the US sought to protect its interests from the Soviet threat.⁵¹ South Korea found itself integrated into a US-led system of anti-communist alliance as the US adjusted its foreign policy to help establish the newly independent countries as a part of a larger battle of influence between itself and the Soviet Union.

The US declared that North Korea operated under the tutelage and support of Russia and China, and the real threat was the threat of "losing" Korea to communism.⁵² The US feared an adverse domino effect on nearby fledgling nations. Truman announced to the US public,

In the simplest terms, what we are doing in Korea is this: We are trying to prevent a third world war.... The Communists in the Kremlin are engaged in a monstrous conspiracy to stamp out freedom all over the world. If they were to succeed, the US would be numbered among their principal victims. It must be clear to everyone that the US cannot – and will not – sit idly by and await foreign conquest....

If history has taught us anything, it is that aggression anywhere in the world is a threat to peace everywhere in the world....

The aggression against Korea is the boldest and most dangerous move the Communists have yet made.

The attack on Korea was part of a greater plan for conquering all of Asia.⁵³

Truman portrayed the Korean War as a prelude to another world war that is if the US did not intervene.

Man Behind the Myth (NY: Dodd, Mead, 1954). In it, Oliver continued his role as Rhee's advocate. However, Rhee's contemporaries, including journalists, politicians, and scholars more often than not portrayed him as self-righteous, despotic and dictatorial. See Richard Allen's *Korea's Syngman Rhee: An Unauthorized Portrait* (Rutland, CT: C.E. Tuttle Co., 1960). Recent works portray Rhee with greater complexity, but the negative portrayal still continues. See Jonsuk Chay, *Unequal Partners in Peace and War: The Republic of Korea and the United States, 1948-1953* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2002).

⁵⁰ For an assessment of Korea's importance to the US prior to the Korean War, see Rosemary A. Foot's *The Wrong War: American Policy and the Dimensions of the Korean Conflict, 1950-1953* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

⁵¹ Modern US diplomatic relations in the Middle East also started as a bulwark against Soviet-led communism. See Nathan J. Citino, "Out of the Blue? Historical Scholarship on U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East" in *OAH Magazine of History* (May 2006), 8-12.

⁵² According to historians, documents that have recently become available in Russian and Chinese archives reveal that the Chinese had not been involved in the surprise North Korean attack on South Korea on June 25, 1950.

⁵³ Harry S. Truman, "Preventing a New World War," April 11, 1951 in US Department of State Publication 4195, General Foreign Policy Series 48 (April 1951), 2-3, 7.

The Armistice ended open hostilities, but the US and USSR continued to yield great influence on the two halves.⁵⁴ The two Koreas' recovery and progress would be weighed and compared; thus, the reconstruction became a test of wills. Leaders in Washington also planned on presenting Korea as an example of a successful democratic nation and a viable alternate to Soviet-styled communism to the newly forming countries in Asia. The reconstruction of Korea, along with Japan and the Philippine, would be a microcosm for trends across Asia and so the US ramped up its formidable aid. Along with Japan, the Philippines, and New Zealand, and the US signed a Mutual Defense Treaty with Korea in October of 1953. The US military stationed its forces "in and about" the countries to safeguard "international peace and security" and to protect them "against armed attack from without."

Scholars of Korean political economy and history acknowledged that the US postwar policy focused on stabilization programs, military support and foreign private capital.⁵⁵ They identify the 1950s as a time of direct grants by the US government, and one area that enjoyed such support was higher education.⁵⁶ Previously during the military occupation in Korea, Washington had primarily focused on compulsory and vocational education under the slogan of "Koreanization." And on a very limited scale, USMGIK sent Koreans abroad for advanced studies and brought foreign experts to Korea to initiate and facilitate projects. In the immediate post Korean War period, the US intensified its effort in building the Korean infrastructure and sought more directly to affect social capital through higher education.

The US government used education to guide the social and ideological transformation so the values and worldview of Koreans would align with its own. Historian John Connelly's observation about the character of Eastern European higher education is valid for Korea as well, "Universities were key to [producing] not only national histories and ideologies, but also elites..."⁵⁷ Universities would satisfy the most privileged and audible Korean sector clamoring for modern knowledge and training, and they would also serve as a site of training, transferring, and building skills and knowledge for a more productive manpower. For this purpose, the US government initiated an intensive restructuring of Korea's preeminent national university, Seoul National University (SNU). American project directors intended for SNU to mirror American universities and for changes in SNU to percolate down to other universities in Korea.

Stalin's death in 1953 affected US foreign aid. The new Soviet leadership increased its foreign aid to developing countries thus intensifying the competition between the two superpowers to incorporate these nations into their political networks. Those in the US Department of State raised the alarm: "To them, joining the United States and the Western European powers in a defense program is paving the way for new foreign domination."⁵⁸ Yet, "[w]ithin the boundaries of such [developing] countries lie important strategic materials and their location gives them command of major sea and air routes. It is in our interest that they do not

⁵⁴ The US administration considered China to be "the Asian puppet of the Soviet," and devoted much of its resource in preventing a potential communist Chinese infiltration. A 1954 Congressional report states, "The immediate threat is from mainland China... By virtue of its location, size, and manpower, Communist China intrudes itself in every phase of Asian issues." Source: "Special Study Mission," (1954), 100.

⁵⁵ See scholarly works by Tae-Gyun Park, Donald MacDonald, Jun-Eun Woo, and Chong-Won Yi.

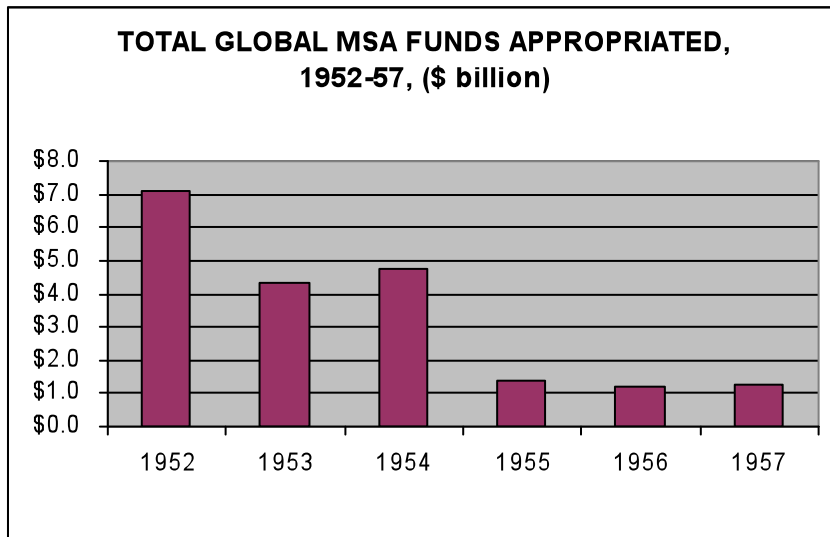
⁵⁶ Tae-Gyun Park, "Different Roads, Common Destination: Economic Discourses in South Korea during the 1950s," *Modern Asian Studies* 39 (2005): 661-682.

⁵⁷ John Connelly, *Captive University: The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education, 1945-1956* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 2.

⁵⁸ "Rough Draft of Report on the Mutual Security Act of 1954," 3.

fall under Soviet control.”⁵⁹ In summary, “[t]he economic reconstruction of the Republic of Korea has accordingly assumed tremendous immediate importance, an importance which has taken on new significance and urgency in view of the extraordinary relief and rehabilitation efforts of the U.S.S.R. and Communist China in Korea.”⁶⁰ And Korea benefitted from America’s sense of urgency. President Eisenhower sent Henry J. Tasca, then mission director of US foreign aid in Rome, to report on South Korea’s needs and to recommend actions for its recovery. The Tasca Report called for an integrated program of relief, rehabilitation and defense support, and called for approximately \$1 billion dollars to be spent over four years.⁶¹

The second factor was the Congressional decisions that opened up additional funding sources. In line with his campaign promises, Eisenhower submitted a request for federal expenditure that was lower than the previous administration. Particularly noteworthy was the reduced total dollar amount requested for the mutual security fund.



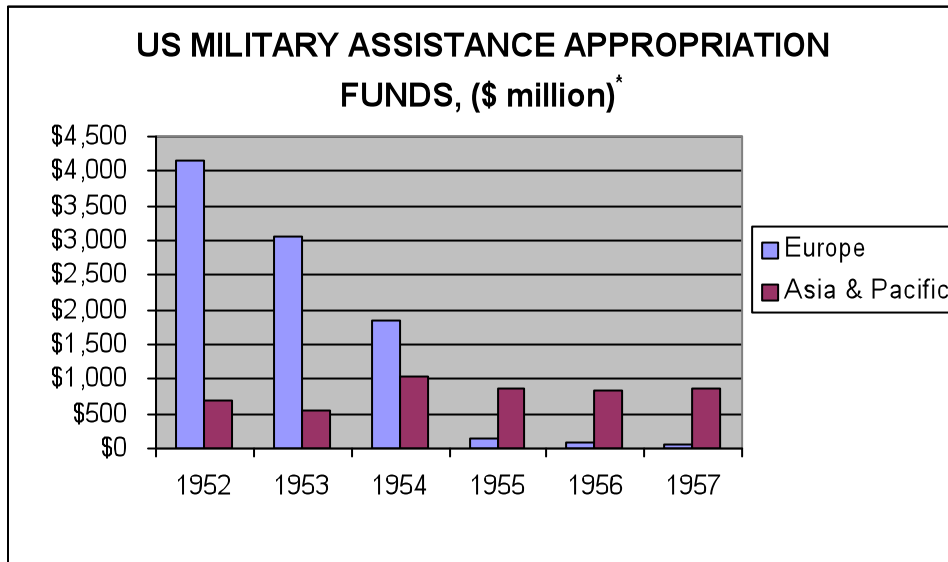
Yet, aid to Korea was not adversely affected. A close inspection of the mutual security funds showed that areas bordering Communist China, like Korea, received more funding than before.⁶²

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 29.

⁶¹ Observations and recommendations found in the Tasca Report served as the basis for the overall Korean reconstruction. Henry J. Tasca, “Relief and Rehabilitation Recommendations Contained in the Report to the President by Dr. Tasca, Special Representative of the President for Korean Economic Affairs, NSC 176 (Washington DC, Government Printing Office, 1953).

⁶² *Congress and the Nation*, 172-174.



These figures show that appropriation for Europe decreased dramatically while figures for Asia increased or retained its level.⁶³ Moreover, there was a backlog of previously appropriated but unexpended money that were earmarked and “locked in” for Korea. Congress reapportioned the money set aside for defense spending related to the Korean War to be used for Korea’s relief and rehabilitation. The Secretary of Defense certified that the ceasefire on the Korean peninsula resulted in roughly \$200 million of “saving” in the projected defense spending, and Congress passed it on to the Korean people on July 27, 1953, a mere four days after the Armistice was signed.⁶⁴

Amendments to the Mutual Security Act (MSA) allowed Eisenhower and subsequent presidents to envision unpopular civilian relief and rehabilitation as programs for American national defense. The rhetoric of the “security of the free world” imbued most of the speeches and literature surrounding the MSA. A rough draft of the MSA of 1954 gave an additional motive, one of fostering free market economy.

The primary justification for the assistance provided in the bill is the immediate advantage which it gives the United States in the cold war. Nevertheless, the United States derives a significant long-range benefit from technical cooperation and development assistance. Nations with a high standard of living are better customers and tend to be more peaceful neighbors than those living in squalor and harboring feelings of resentment and envy. The technology of today

⁶³ There are some discrepancies because some documents accounted for inflation and calculated the figures in terms of the current year while others did not. This chart was compiled using figures found in various appropriation bills for the Mutual Security Act. 1952 appropriation figures are from “Mutual Security Supplemental Appropriation Bill, 1953,” 58-59; 1953 appropriation figures are from “National Security Appropriation Bill, 1954,” 9-13; 1954 appropriation figures are from “National Security Appropriation Bill, 1955,” 14-21; 1955 appropriation figures are from “National Security Appropriation Bill, 1956,” 10-11; and 1956 appropriation figures from “National Security Appropriation Bill, 1957,” 17-20. Figures for the budget for 1957 are from “National Security Appropriation Bill, 1957,” 17-20. These data include military, economic, development and technical funds for Europe, Near East/Africa, Asia & Pacific, and American Republics.

⁶⁴ The transfer of \$200 million can be divided into: \$172 million from Army’s maintenance and operation, \$10 million from Navy’s ordinance and facilities, and \$18 million from Navy’s ships and facilities. Information is from “Mutual Security Appropriation, 1955,” 15 (footnote 1).

requires the full development of the world which hitherto have been neglected. The people of the United States will be better off in the future if the underdeveloped areas of the world are developed than if they continued as they are.⁶⁵

The connection made between international security and domestic markets made American actions and spending abroad more attractive to the American public.

Concomitant to the MSA amendments, Congress passed the Agriculture Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, and introduced a new aid concept that appealed to multiple constituents. Better known as Food for Peace, it served the dual role of getting rid of surplus farm commodities in the US, and providing a positive trade balance and grain to dollar-poor countries.⁶⁶ This act allowed surplus crop to be either sold on reduced terms or donated. Under this act, Korea bought American crops, and the US used all the payments it received in Korea. Since its inception, Washington has used the Food for Peace program to infuse its “soft” or non-convertible currencies in foreign countries with which it carried out many of its overseas projects.

Higher Education as a Significant Component of Korean Civil Society⁶⁷

In taking on Korea’s reconstruction, the US government reformulated the character of its assistance to Korea. The US government aimed at producing structural changes that necessitated long term commitment. Even as late as 1952, the US military had restricted its Korean civilian aid to “emergency relief” and had handed over to the United Nations all areas requiring long-term commitment, including education. The US government had focused on: agriculture, transportation, communications, public works, relief and welfare, health, and distribution of all aid goods; while UNRKA took charge of: education, housing, power and irrigation, forestry and flood control, industry, fisheries and mining.⁶⁸ Areas under the US government shared the goal of building the civic infrastructure to jumpstart the economy, which in turn would allow the country to participate in a US-led free market. The US State Department had been assessing Korea’s need throughout the war and determined that in order to develop Korea’s *economy*, it

⁶⁵ “Rough Draft of Report on the Mutual Security Act of 1954,” 5.

⁶⁶ The history of this act reflects the changing nature of the US foreign aid, which over times moved from an outright grant to “soft” loans and then to “hard” loans. When the Agricultural Surplus Act was passed, it was authorized to donate surplus agricultural commodities for famine relief and to sell farm goods to countries for “soft” or non-convertible currencies. An amendment added in 1959 authorized the sale of surplus farm goods to friendly countries, but required payment for the crop within 20 years of the sale. See *Congress and the Nation*, 177.

⁶⁷ Scholars seem to agree to disagree on the definition of civil society. However, much of the literature on civil society is informed by Hegel, Marx and Gramsci, and the difference in these philosophers’ views is predicated on the inclusion or exclusion of state, family, and market from the “sphere” that represents civil society. An in-depth view of their works is beyond the scope of this work, so they will be differentiated simplistically for the purposes here. Georg Hegel’s civil society is a realm that is distinct from the state, a realm between family and state. Marx and Gramsci both add the element of market to their understanding of civil society, so they understand civil society as an intermediate realm between market, state, and family. In keeping with Hegel’s tradition, Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato concur that civil society is voluntary and exists as an intermediate world between family and the state. Some scholars limit civil society to voluntary organizations, and others include all nongovernmental associations. See Robert Weller, ed., *Civil Life, Globalization, and Political Change in Asia: Organizing between Family and State* (NY: Routledge, 2005); Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994).

⁶⁸ UNKRA was responsible for all development programs in mining except for tungsten mining, which was under the surveillance of US agencies.

required trained manpower and industrial experts. To build a sustainable and growing economy, the country needed ongoing training and knowledge transfer. Planners were cognizant of the need to create these sites of transfer by developing Korea's education. Universities contributed to building up the Korean economy; they also had the potential to affect the Korean civil society. Thus, education fell under the aegis of American oversight because it would be a tool to equip and mediate Korean development. Yet it was not until after the Korean War that US involvement in Korea's higher education began.

The restructuring of this particular conduit of social capital after the Korean War warrants special attention because it occurred in periods of great change. It follows the formative years of a "new" civil society after the tumultuous years of colonial rule, military occupation, and civil war.⁶⁹ These events resulted in the crisis of social order that broke down existing paradigms of order and loosened the hierarchical structure of Korean society. A noted Korean specialist, Bruce Cumings writes, "What the Japanese had begun with their massive shifts of Korean population in 1935-45; what the national division had intensified, the Korean War completed: Koreans of all classes were now thoroughly displaced from their local roots. Everyone was jostled or pushed or thrown bodily out of his or her social niche."⁷⁰ In terms of education, Noel McGinn postulated that these

facts may well have weakened many of the influences that strongly condition social mobility in other countries, leaving education as a uniquely important means of individual advancement. This would explain the observed fierce competition for spaces in the higher levels of a school system, which do little to make people more productive but has practically everything to say about whether they will be successful in gaining access to high-income jobs and enviable social positions.⁷¹

The discontinuity caused by political and military upheavals provided an opportunity to introduce new structures. Academics and policy makers in the 1950s linked a strong civil society to a functioning democracy. And Washington began its programs in developmental and technical assistance that would shape the postwar societies.⁷²

⁶⁹ I examine the role of higher education on civil society using Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato's definition of civil society. They assert, "civil society refers to the *structures* of socialization, association, and organized forms of communication of the lifeworld to the extent that these are institutionalized or are in the process of being institutionalized [*italics added*]." See Cohen and Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory*, x. Educational institutions are key structures of civil society; they possess the ability to create social capital in the form of social rules and norms. Here I am informed by Francis Fukuyama's definition of social capital as "an instantiated informal norm that promotes cooperation between two or more individuals." See Francis Fukuyama, "Social Capital and Civil Society," prepared for delivery at "IMF Conference on Second Generation Reforms," (October 1, 1999), <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/seminar/1999/reforms/fukuyama.htm> (accessed September 22, 2006). This work examines Korea and the US as the "individuals," and universities as promoters of an "informal norm."

⁷⁰ Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, 301.

⁷¹ Noel F. McGinn, Donald R. Snodgrass, Yung Bong Kim, Shin-Bok Kim, and Quee-Young Kim, *Education and Development in Korea* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies Harvard University, 1980), 223.

⁷² America trained key Korean educators and individuals. These elites in turn became what sociologist Mark Granovetter calls "weak ties," that is "heterodox individuals at the periphery of the society's various social networks who are able to move between groups and thereby become bearers of new ideas and information." At the forefront of social and political change, these educators had the ability to influence the then current restructuring of Korea through their research and advisory roles as well as the future restructuring through their students. Although neither the US government officials nor reconstruction planners used the term "civil society" explicitly, their survey reports and evaluation readily identify education as integral component of bringing a country in line with its vision of democracy. Education was to play a central role in the proliferation of US political and economic philosophy in not

Academia in itself does not constitute civil society. However, higher education institutions are vehicles, which influence and develop values and skills in persons and promote norms and orders within the collective. Universities, as part of a larger civil society, have affected how quickly Western liberal democracy is replicated, adapted, or rejected within the developing countries. And within these universities, students and professors define and refine their social capital with which they project and uphold the values and ideas that they believe make up their society.

During the Cold War, the US government entered an era of surveillance, intervention and influence. It supported its position as a superpower with its ballooning defense budget used to an unprecedented degree abroad. Some foreign nations welcomed the US involvement while others did so grudgingly. In exchange, they received assistance in the form of military, developmental, and technical assistance. The military assistance with its direct relevance to US hard power dwarfed US investment in soft power. Unlike the military assistance that focused on building up the physical facilities and infrastructure, development and technical assistance depended on the transfer of knowledge and expertise and had the added effect of counterbalancing and softening the image of the US as a strongman country. These two types of assistance worked in tandem.

Korea's educational reconstruction took place within a larger story of the American consolidation of its soft power through higher education. Large-scale American international involvement began with Truman's Point IV Program. President Truman explained it to his audience in Wyoming that

Point IV provides an example of broad-scale collective action on the part of many countries to bring the benefit of better living conditions to millions of individuals who are now suffering from ill health, illiteracy, and poverty. The Point IV program is one of the greatest contributions we can make to the cause of freedom.⁷³

Truman assured his listeners that the US also had much to gain from this act of benevolence, "Our economic policies are also aimed at increasing the international flow of investment capital. The industrial growth of underdeveloped areas will mean more production, better markets, and a stronger world economy."⁷⁴

Though the European Recovery Program (ERP) or the Marshall Plan preceded Point IV, its program differed from consequent foreign aid programs that aimed fundamentally to restructure the receiving nation's society. Point IV assisted in the development in countries in Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East; whereas, the European Recovery Program sought to rebuild an infrastructure devastated by the war. Edward Ensminger of the US Department of Agriculture explained, "The ERP was a program to provide money as resources. The European community had traditions of doing things, they had leadership, they had the institutional structures and what they needed was massive inputs of money. And that was the

only Korea but also in all newly independent countries following World War II. Scholars studying state formation have criticized "civil society" as an idea imposed by Western institutions in many parts of the world. Whatever term or idea is used, the operation and influence of these structures occurred. See Francis Fukuyama, "Social Capital and Civil Society," and Mark S. Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (1978): 1360-1380.

⁷³ Harry S. Truman, "Address in Laramie, Wyoming.," May 9, 1950,"

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/print.php?pid=13478> (accessed October 31, 2006).

⁷⁴ Ibid.

Marshall Plan.”⁷⁵ Many developing countries, especially those emerging from years of colonial rule, lacked a critical mass of experienced persons and infrastructure *as well as* money. Lumped under foreign assistance, the US government sent soldiers and machinery as well experts and blueprints for universities to these nations. As in Korea, the arms of US assistance reached every sector.

The Mutual Security Act of 1954 blurred the line between US soft and hard power when it united military and technical assistance under the umbrella of security assistance. Harlan Cleveland, an American diplomat and educator, pinpointed the Korean War as the point in time when “mutual security” replaced “economic co-operation.” This confusing but politically effective phrase justified the wide-reaching arms of US foreign assistance.⁷⁶ With this merger, more money for civilian projects became available and the scale of educational projects entered a new stage.

The US entered into contract with US universities and colleges to engineer a program of technical cooperation assistance that would span the globe and embrace all potential “democracies.” This exchange of experts, along with infusions of money, enabled the restructuring and establishment of foreign universities. This was an important part of the overall assistance package.⁷⁷ US land-grant colleges and universities played significant roles as US representatives in foreign higher education.⁷⁸ Shortly after Truman’s inaugural address in 1948, John Hanna as the president of the Land-Grant College Association sent Truman a telegram offering the services of the land-grant colleges in carrying out Truman’s Point IV Program. Hanna emphasized the historical role of the land-grant universities in helping American farmers as a proof of their ability to help developing countries with their rural backgrounds.

The US government entered into contract with mostly land-grant US universities to send its professors and administrators abroad. Although some projects dealt directly with nations’ ministries of education, most US universities were contracted to establish or rebuild foreign

⁷⁵ Douglas Ensminger worked for the US Department of Agriculture from 1939 to 1951. He witnessed the birth of Truman’s Four Point Program. His public career included being the Coordinator of the Foreign Training with land-grant colleges as well as a member of the FOA Latin American Extension Conference. In the latter half of his career, 1951 to 1970, he worked for the Ford Foundation as a representative for India, Pakistan and Nepal. Douglas Ensminger, interviewed by Harry S. Taylor, Columbia, Missouri, June 16-17, 1976, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/esmingr.htm> (accessed September 20, 2006).

⁷⁶ Harlan Cleveland, “The Convalescence of Foreign Aid,” *The American Economic Review* 49, no. 2 (May, 1959): 217.

⁷⁷ For Korea alone, the US government provided multiple consultative technical services to Korea. A short list was included in the first technical lecture given by an OEC staff member in Korea. “Consultative technical services have been provided through the contract with Smith, Hinchman and Grylls Associates in the broad fields of engineering, veterinary science and public administration at Seoul University; with the George Peabody College in the field of Library Science and teacher training at Yonsei University and Kwangju Normal School; with the Philco Corporation in the Ministry of Communication; with the Utah Construction Company in diamond drilling and tunneling for the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Other contractual services are in the offing such as the teaching of business administration Yonsei and Korea Universities by the University of Washington, St. Louis, MO; the improvement of governmental fiscal management through statistical methods taught by the Stuart Rice Institution, as well as the development of handicrafts and industrial arts under agreement with Smith, Scheer and McDermott.” He also talked about US corporations engaged in building thermal power plants, dams, fertilizer plants and other industrial. William E. Warne, “The Place of Technical Assistance in an Economic Development Program, January 28, 1952, in Short Papers, Box 17, Folder “KP-02 Information, 1958-.”

⁷⁸ See NASULGC [National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges], *The Land-Grant Tradition* (Washington, DC: Office of Public Affairs, NASULGC, 1995) for information on the history and current workings of the land-grant colleges and universities.

universities. Most contracts were negotiated on a two or three-year renewable basis. While American educators and administrators went abroad, a small contingent of foreign students and experts traveled to the United States for advanced training.

American scholars and administrators hired by the US government entered every corner of the world. A CIC-AID (Agency for International Development) Research Project looked at thirty-five US land-grant universities on USAID contract projects in agriculture from 1951 to 1966, a study that included:⁷⁹

Afghanistan	India	Paraguay
Argentina	Indonesia	Peru
Bolivia	Iran	Philippines
Brazil	Iraq	Sierra Leone
Cambodia	Japan	Somali Republic
Ceylon	Jordan	Taiwan
Chile	Kenya	Tanzania
Colombia	Korea	Thailand
Costa Rica	Malawi	Tunisia
Dominican Republic	Mexico	Turkey
Ecuador	Nigeria	Uganda
Ethiopia	Pakistan	Uruguay
Guatemala	Panama	Zambia

With the exception of Japan, all of the countries are situated in what Immanuel Wallerstein would define as periphery with agriculture-based economies⁸⁰. If projects undertaken by private US were included then Lebanon, Egypt, and Vietnam would join this roster. In all of these countries, US focused on educational capacity building. Stepping back from this project, the US State Department reported in 1958, that there were 470 contracts with American universities and 848 contracts with other firms or individuals to assist foreign educational development; ninety-six per cent of these contacts were for assignments in Asia, Africa and Latin America.⁸¹ Regions where US government-university contracts are noticeably absent demarcate Soviet's sphere of influence. If a map plotting Soviet educational assistance were available and it were superimposed on top of the one by the US, most if not all regions of the world would be covered.

⁷⁹ I did not include Stanford University and Cornell University, which were part of the study. CIC is short for Committee on Institutional Cooperation. CIC-AID Rural Research Project File, 1950-1968, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana, IL.

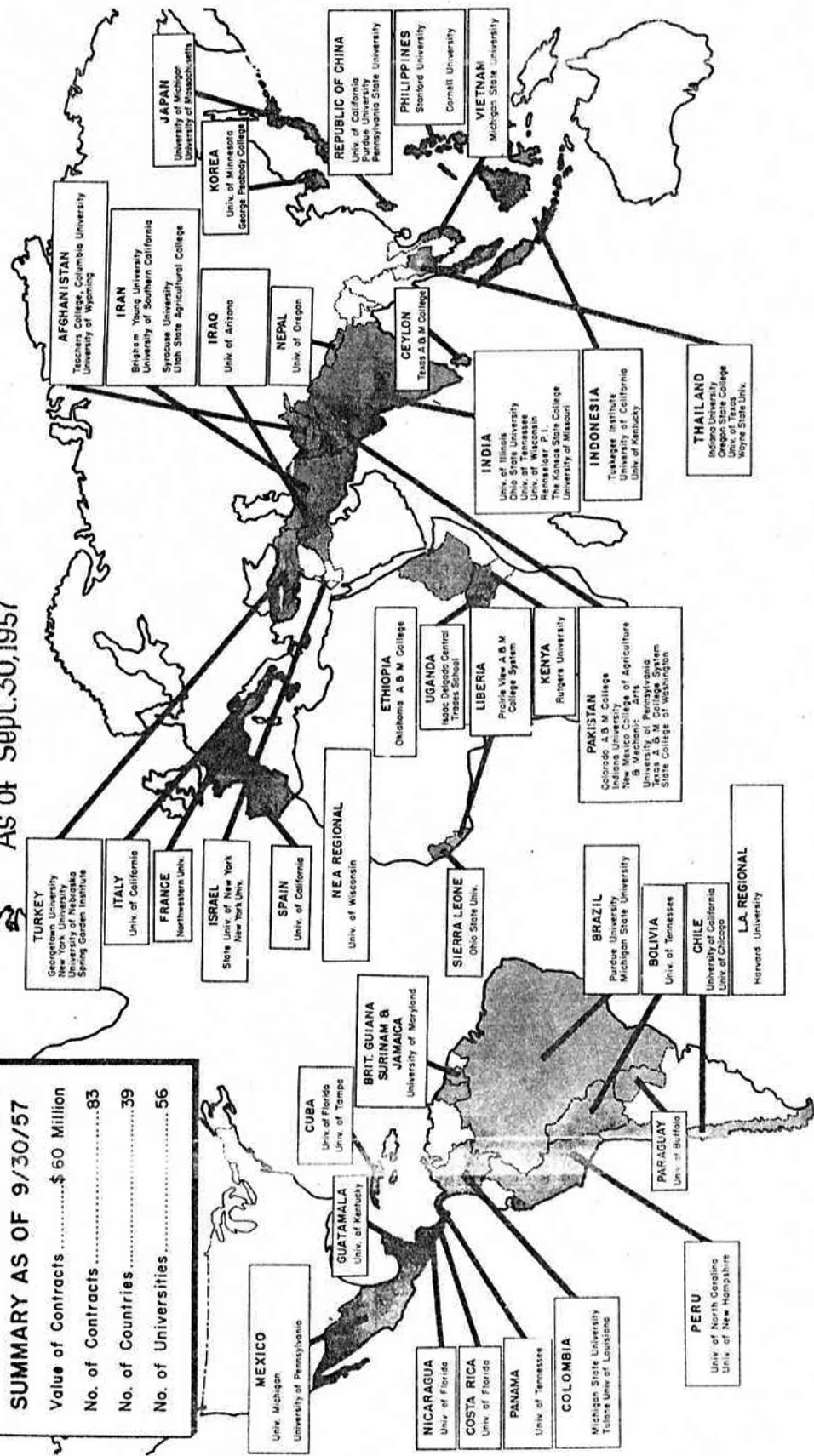
⁸⁰ See Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World-Economy: Essay by Immanuel Wallerstein* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

⁸¹ Cleveland, "The Convalescence of Foreign Aid," 227-228.

UNIVERSITY CONTRACTS IN OPERATION BY COUNTRY

AS OF Sept. 30, 1957

SUMMARY AS OF 9/30/57	
Value of Contracts	\$ 60 Million
No. of Contracts	83
No. of Countries	39
No. of Universities	56



Government-university contracts led to restructuring of existing schools, creation of new institutions and research centers and often included advisory roles to government ministries. From Seoul National University in Korea to Kabul University in Afghanistan, the universities that were being rebuilt already enjoyed prestige in their nations. These universities were most often located in the capital city, in countries where the capital city was also the center of the nation's commercial and cultural center. Located in the most vibrant city in their country, these universities supplied their nation's elites from industry leaders and ministry personnel to literary critics. In some countries, especially those receiving massive military aid, the US government granted resources for universities in multiple regions of the country. For example, under contract with the US government, Michigan State University sent its staff to Colombia to strengthen universities in Bogota, Palmira, and Medellin.⁸² The Pakistan Project involved five Pakistani universities and six American universities.⁸³ One of the US universities, Washington State University, advised the University of the Punjab at Lahore while it coordinated the development of the new West Pakistan Agricultural University at Lyallpur.⁸⁴

American experts and planners working within foreign countries held firm to their belief in the superiority of American system and training. Likewise, those in Washington based their decision on the needs of the US more than on the needs of the foreign countries. One political scientist from Stanford University interviewed officials of USAID in Washington, DC and found that without qualification the "national interest" served as the guide to all foreign aid decisions. A Congressional report stated, in more diplomatic terms, the objective of American foreign assistance programs was "to encourage the evolution of free political and economic systems in other independent nations by assisting them... in their economic development."⁸⁵ Modernization was a buzzword for the planners. This modernization required reorganized social, economic and educational institutions, and Americans would lead the way. One agricultural economist makes light of the all-inclusiveness of this term. He wrote, "Modernization (development) [was] analogous to Westernization, specialization, commercialization, industrialization, urbanization, individualization – all this and more."⁸⁶

The effect of US foreign aid on reconstructed universities must take into account the fact that the transfers of knowledge and exchanges of persons unfolded amidst a larger history of politics and economics. The Seoul National University Project is a case study of how the US influenced newly independent countries by assisting and funding the reconstruction of their higher education infrastructure. The next chapter describes how University of Minnesota went about restructuring Seoul National University. It was part of a US involvement in Korean education and US efforts to develop its primacy of influence in developing countries. In the

⁸² "MSUE Provides International Extension Leadership, Historic Overview," <http://www.web1.msue.msu.edu/intext/history.htm> (accessed October 2, 2006).

⁸³ Ray C. Kenneth, "Practical Applications of Comparative Education in the International Cooperation Administration," *Journal of Educational Sociology* 30, no. 3 (Nov., 1956): 142.

⁸⁴ Information from the finding aid for "WSU-AID Contract (Pakistan Project) Records, 1952-1972," Wisconsin State University Library Catalog, <http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/Holland/MASC/finders/us26.htm> (accessed October 3, 2006).

⁸⁵ David Wurfel, "Foreign Aid and Social Reform in Political Development: A Philippine Case Study," *The American Political Science Review* 53, no. 2 (June 1959): 457.

⁸⁶ Ralph A. Loomis, "Why Overseas Technical Assistance is Ineffective," *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 50, no. 5 (December 1968): 1330.

process of building these US-styled institutions, studying abroad became a reality for a select few and over time a course of action for the majority of those seeking university positions.

Chapter 2 Seoul National University Project, 1954-1962

A snapshot of Seoul National University (SNU) in the early 1950s would show shells of bombed buildings, broken laboratory equipment, and soldiers. A picture taken a decade later would provide a dramatic contrast with newly constructed multi-floored buildings, laboratories with working educational apparatus, and students. Not visible to a camera's lens but equally noteworthy would be the remarkable change in the educational training and background of the faculty. In the early 1950s, those few in the teaching staff with formal advanced education had been trained domestically or in Japan. By the early 1960s, US-educated professors dominated SNU's larger, better funded departments. Sponsored by the US government and supported by the Korean government, the SNU Project that took place between 1954 and 1962 produced these long-lasting changes in the academic training of the SNU's faculty.

The SNU Project fit into the larger project of knowledge transfer from the US to Korea.¹ It was central to the two governments' plans to revamp Korea's higher education as a whole by restructuring Seoul National University in part. The US government hired the University of Minnesota to undertake this large-scale project. The plan laid out by the American consultants was straightforward. American professors would arrive in Korea to begin SNU's conversion into a more efficient, American model. Equipped with appropriate teaching and management experiences from the US, they would oversee the construction of buildings and procure necessary equipment and research materials. Shortly after their arrival, select Korean professors would leave for the US to receive an American education that would bring them up to date with current research, legitimize their expertise, and identify them as conduits of modern education. These individuals would return to Korea after a prescribed amount of time and continue the reconstruction efforts begun by the outgoing American scholars they would replace. As for Seoul National University, the massive infusion of American money and knowledge would plug it into a network of "modern" universities and more importantly provide it with necessary funding to become "modern." As for the University of Minnesota, it would have performed a valuable service in promoting international education both in the US and abroad. Through the SNU Project, the Korean government would receive the much needed funding, and in form and function this US aid would bring legitimization to Korea as a developing, modern nation. So did this happen? And more fundamentally, why did this happen? The answer depended on who responded.

The involved countries, universities, and individuals looked at the project from different angles. As with most things planned, the SNU Project did not exactly follow the American consultants' prescription. In 1983, David Steinberg cautioned that "developing countries are sophisticated in assessing and manipulating the plurality of U.S

¹ Historians of science have questioned the use of the word "transfer" because it does not acknowledge the changes that occur during the process of "moving" or conveying the knowledge. Some suggest that the concept of "translation" more accurately depicts how models of development, technology, and education are reworked and modified when placed within different cultural settings. Robert Kargon and Stuart Leslie propose this terminological change at the beginning of their work "Translating American Models of the Technical University to India and South Korea" in *20th Century Sciences: Beyond the Metropolis – Sciences and Development*, ed. Martine Barrère (Paris: L'Institut Francais de Recherche Scientifique Pour Le Développement en Coopération, 1996), 153-166.

interests.”² At the most fundamental level, the SNU Project’s rhetorical goal of introducing practical and innovative knowledge as practiced in the US failed. Many of the US universities involved, including the University of Minnesota underestimated the transforming power that a culture has on imported concepts and organizational models. The Korean government used US educational assistance as part of its overall development and nation-building, and understood the project as part of the larger US-Korea relations within a highly politicized global setting. Korea needed American aid for its domestic development, and thus it suppressed disagreements with American opinions in order to take advantage of the American investment. Seoul National University attained new buildings, new equipment, new curriculum and even new credentials for select faculty. Yet beneath the “new” surfaces, the old still remained. Change in form (credentials and accreditation) preceded the changes in function (content and behavior). As for those scholars selected to study in the US, it was a chance of a lifetime on many fronts. The selection itself conferred public and social recognition of their potentials and abilities. Study abroad could potentially expose them to the latest research in their field and also bring about understanding and connections with Americans with their seemingly unlimited resources and wide-reaching influence.

Tension and resistance governed the initial changes brought on by the SNU Project. Seniority ruled Korean academy and social relations in general. Yet, the project’s American administrators favored younger scholars over senior faculty for advanced degree programs in the US. Returning junior members had more advanced training than their senior colleagues but still occupied an inferior position in terms of academic autonomy and departmental authority. Acceptance of American credentials and formal training was not automatic, but it was inevitable. The bilateral higher education projects, regardless of the tension and resistance, infused more and more US-educated to SNU’s chosen departments. It created a critical mass of US-educated persons who by contractual agreement had to be employed for a predetermined amount of time. Whether accepted or not, the US-educated stayed. Moreover, even the most disgruntled academics could not deny the material benefits of American assistance. By necessity and obligation due to the Korean War, the bureaucratic and social milieu of Korea favored American civilian assistance. Through the SNU Project, the US government elevated and fostered an influential group in Korean society that sympathized with American points of view in Korea. Through higher education, the SNU Project cultivated Korean elites who were ideologically and culturally attuned to the US. Even those who were not friendly to the US, through their study abroad could learn the language and system, and gain understanding of how to engage and negotiate with Americans. The advantages gained by the US-educated, those realized as well as assumed by their compatriots, further contributed to more and more Koreans seeking to study abroad in the United States and had long-term, long-lasting effects on Korean higher education.

During the Korean War, both the US government and the United Nations acknowledged education as pivotal to restructuring Korea. Moreover, Koreans’ tremendous desire for education necessitated that their leaders address their commitment to providing greater educational opportunities. According to C.W. Wood, the chief of the

² David I. Steinberg, “Korean-American Economic Relations: Lessons from Experience,” in *Reflections on a Century of United States-Korean Relations* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1983), 323.

Education Division for UN's Korean Reconstruction Agency, Koreans held an "intense, nearly fanatical zeal for education."³ He explained,

During and after the war, teaching and school attendance went on in any space available- outdoors or in dark, unheated shacks made of scrap lumber, tarpaulins, and plywood scrounged from the army. These people are cheerful, determined, and tough. They will struggle persistently for what they want and they want education.⁴

The ability to meet such needs spelled popular support. Both the US military government and the ensuing Korean governments responded to the popular clamor. Additionally they reasoned Korea needed a more informed and responsive citizenry for its national security and projected industrial growth. Korean education touched every area needing reconstruction, and schools themselves were to become agents of change. SNU would spearhead the changes. The SNU Project would restructure a university that would serve as a beacon and model, and the cadre of resident experts it would train would help produce the next generation of experts.

Why Seoul National University?

The US administrators chose Seoul National University as the primary site of knowledge transfer for historical and practical reasons. The few foreign aid workers and reconstruction planners familiar with Korea knew this institution. SNU was established by one of the first ordinances that the American military passed during its occupation of Korea from 1945 to 1948. The American military occupiers consolidated various universities in the Seoul area with Keijo Imperial University to form the "new" Seoul National University.⁵ The Japanese had modeled Keijo or Kyung Sung Imperial University in Seoul in 1924 after its own higher education system to create education-based elites in Korea.⁶ Koreans had comprised roughly 10% of Keijo University's student body, and its discriminatory admissions practices had dissuaded all but the most intelligent, persistent, and well connected Koreans students to attend. The Japanese colonizers rewarded the few Koreans who graduated from the Imperial University with jobs commanding privilege and prestige, and Koreans saw this national university as a public and symbolic space of advancement. The new organization and name change

³ C.W. Wood, "Post Liberation Problems in Korean Education," *The Phi Delta Kappa* 39, no. 3 (December 1957): 117.

⁴ Wood, "Post Liberation Problem," 117.

⁵ "Establishment of Seoul National University," in Nam, "Educational Reorganization in South Korea," 233-242.

Of the ten universities aggregated, nine colleges were located in Seoul and one in Suwon, a rural area abutting Seoul. The new consolidated establishment reopened with the following schools or colleges: College of Agriculture and Forestry, College of Commerce, College of Dentistry, College of Education, College of Engineering, College of Fine Arts, College of Arts, College of Law, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Medicine, including School of Nursing and Nursing Education, and Graduate School.

⁶ Yang-Won Kang Ha, "Economic Development, Hierarchy of Higher Educational Aspirations in South Korea, 1945-1985" (PhD diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1993), 90-91. Source: Yoon-Ki Hong, "Taehakkwa taehaksaeng: Seontaek kwa hyunsileui euimi [University and University Students: The Meaning of Choice and Reality]" in *Taehak, chayu, chisong: Taehaksinmoon e bich'in Seouldae samsipnyon* [University, Freedom, and Intellectualism: Thirty Year History of Seoul National University as Reflected in the University's Newspaper] (Seoul: Seoul National University, 1978).

aimed at displacing the overt Japanese identifier and beginning a simultaneous process of de-Japanizing and Americanizing the Korean universities.

SNU was also a practical choice. Through the merger, all academic subject areas deemed necessary for national economic and educational development existed under SNU's roof. This "conglomerated" university could serve as a template for all other universities in Korea. A survey published at the conclusion of the FOA/ICA educational projects in Korea indicated that nearly 90% of its assistance in higher education went to SNU while the other 10% went to Korea University and Yonsei University. The survey group justified concentrating its aid to these three universities on the assumption that substantial advantages would flow from these institutions to other universities and colleges.⁷ Both governments also preferred Seoul National University as the primary site of educational reform because it was a public institute with an established reputation. As a national university, the Korean government controlled all of its affairs. SNU received large land grants, tax exemptions, and quick presidential decrees to establish and reestablish new schools and faculties. It was also easier for foreign aid agencies and multinational organizations to justify investing in a country's preeminent public university than its private universities. These historical and practical factors led to the American decision to cultivate SNU to train Korea's elites.

The SNU Project can be divided into two stages. In the first stage, the American task force focused on those areas most needed to meet the subsistence needs of the Korean populace and to rebuild Korea's basic physical infrastructure. Malcolm Willey, the chairman of the advisory committee to the SNU Project, explained,

Our program involved agriculture, engineering and medicine, and it is based on the assumption that if Korea can move forward in those areas as a country, its internal economy will be improved and its national security will be enhanced. Primarily our job is that of retraining a faculty that has been isolated and devastated by war.⁸

Training in medical sciences addressed the basic health care needs while that in agriculture tackled the problem of food shortage and the recovery of food production. Engineering aimed at rebuilding Korea's network of transportation and communications as well as meeting the domestic energy needs. For example, select Korean participants in engineering studied modern technology "know-how" in textiles and ceramics specifically to help Korea build a low-capital, labor-intensive, export-oriented market. The first stage promoted the recovery of Korea's hardware.

Once the academic programs aimed at meeting the immediate needs of the people and building the country's physical infrastructure were set in place, US educational planners turned to Korea's bureaucracy. The second stage commenced in 1957, which tackled the training of practitioners and instructors of public administrators. It included the professional development of both the faculty at the civilian Seoul National University and the teaching staff at the military National Officer Training Institute (NOTI) of the Republic of Korea; many of whom also worked directly for the Korean government. The

⁷ United States Operations Mission to Korea, *Report on Survey on National Higher Education in the Republic of Korea*, (May 1960), 210-212.

⁸ Willey to Bailey, October 5, 1960, in Malcolm MacDonald Willey Papers [hereafter Willey Papers], University of Minnesota Special Collections, Minneapolis, MN [hereafter location not given].

Peabody Program, which was separate from the SNU Project, coincided in time period. In 1956, the US government offered George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville a renewable three year contract to develop and improve Korea's primary and secondary schools.⁹ It was initially offered to the University of Minnesota as part the "software" reconstruction, but the UMN passed on it.

In deciding to initiate the SNU Project, American administrators referred to three key reports written during the Korean War: the UNESCO Report, the Nathan Report, and the Tasca Report.¹⁰ Reestablishing an independent Korea guided the UNESCO Report's recommendations, while the Nathan and Tasca Reports measured Korea's need in terms of its economic potential and political alliance within a highly politicized region in the Cold War. The UNESCO Report, in no uncertain terms, listed "the peaceful reunification of Koreas" as its goal. The United Nations held onto this objective until 1966 when it recognized a separate North Korea and South Korea. The US, as seen in the Nathan and Tasca Reports, stated its goal for postwar Korean aid as restoring the state of the Korean economy to that found during 1949-1950, and building up the Korean defense capable of repelling communist aggression.¹¹ Unstated but understood was also the American government's view of its assistance as a way to foster American goodwill in the minds of Koreans.

All three reports agreed that a stable economy was essential to Korea's recovery. Education, the report writers wrote, was central in developing a vibrant economy. All reports mentioned Korea's dearth of natural resources and highlighted its untapped human capital. Manpower was Korea's greatest, if not its only, resource. These experts wrote that a trained and skilled work force would expedite Korea's recovery and support a sustainable economy. Unfortunately, Korea lacked an educational system capable of training its manpower, the missing lynchpin in Korea's recovery. To remedy to the program, they recommended that Koreans be sent abroad for training and that foreign experts be brought to Korea. Together they would establish institutions of higher learning.

In all of the reports, there was also an underlying assumption that relief and recovery initiated from without would best meet the needs of Korea. Planners believed emulation would be sufficient to convert an undeveloped country like Korea into a modern, industrial nation like the United States. As the Tasca Report framed the matter:

In all countries which enter into the early phases of the modernization, industrialization, and commercialization of their national life, large intangible human productivity reserves exist at the outset. These can be mobilized by experts who generate a cumulative process of *imitation* [emphasis added]. No development of new technical or managerial research is needed in

⁹ Herbert Dodge describes the Peabody Project as providing assistance in fields of textbook preparation, science education, early childhood of educational, educational research, and development of department of library science at Yonsei University. See Herbert Wesley Dodge, "A History of US Assistance to Korean Education: 1953-1966" (PhD diss., George Washington University, 1971), 267.

¹⁰ UNESCO stands for United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

¹¹ The United Nations commissioned the Nathan Report, but I identify it as an American document because the American consultants who wrote it worked and associated closely with US government officials. The objective of the reconstruction, as understood by the report's authors is characteristic of an American document.

Korea. The vast reservoir of knowledge available in Western civilization need only be tapped.¹²

Implicit in this statement was that the imported knowledge and the infrastructure from developed countries would be relevant and applicable in all countries. Without its own research and development, as implied in the above statement, developing countries would always be a step behind the US and in a position to imitate and follow. US policymakers' seemingly did not recognize that these developing countries could be a source of technical and managerial innovation. In the case of Korea, Americans relied on reports drawn up by non-Korean experts to determine how to implement the knowledge transfer.

The UNESCO Report was the most comprehensive and among the earliest reports written on Korea's educational state and it served as a reference for all subsequent postwar reconstruction reports.¹³ The UN involvement in Korea began within months of the war's outbreak. It sent the first multinational educational planning team to ever step foot in Korea in preparation for when the war would end.¹⁴ The commission members regarded education as "indispensable to personal and national advancement in Korea today, but the educational system lacks both a clear sense of direction and the means of efficient operation." According to these foreign experts, "all existing types of education work were observed, in terms of their physical settings, and in many cases classes were visited and detailed procedures examined." Though details abound on all levels of Korean education, only those sections that pertain to higher education, defined as post high school, will be discussed.¹⁵

Members of this multinational team asserted the importance of universities as being more than learning institutions. "Universities of a country affect its whole life and the universities of Korea must play a great part in shaping her new found freedom." Universities in Korea, they noted, had the duty "to associate [themselves] more freely with the life of the community in training leaders and teachers for a nation-wide provision of further education." Universities were training grounds for leaders and a model civil society where the "freedom" practiced and taught would percolate down to the general public.¹⁶

The survey team members peppered the report with links between education and economic advancement whenever possible because of the importance their sponsors placed on quantifiable results. The report explicitly linked the two stating, "it is of the first importance that Korea should meet the needs of the many vocations involved in her economy and should bring them into the sphere of influence of her universities." The UNESCO Report continues,

¹² Tasca Report, 6.

¹³ UNESCO/UNKRA Educational Planning Mission to Korea, *Rebuilding Education in the Republic of Korea. The Final Report of the UNESCO UNKRA Educational Planning Mission to Korea* (Paris, France: UNESCO, February 1953). Doc. WS/023.14 [hereafter UNESCO Report].

¹⁴ The UNESCO/UNKRA Educational Planning Mission to Korea team consisted of the following persons with their institutional affiliation, if available, in parentheses: Donald P. Cottrell (Dean of College of Education, Ohio State University), Vitaliano Bernardino of the Philippines, Arthur N. Feraru of the US, Charles L.J. Grosbois (former Superintendent of School, French Concession in Shanghai), Luciano Hernandez Cabrera of Mexico (UNESCO), Donald Portway of England (Cambridge University).

¹⁵ UNESCO Report, 3, ix.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 53.

But among other things, production awaits trained personnel which only education can supply. Thus paramount economic importance should be attached to at least a minimum rehabilitation of the educational system and its efficient direction toward the most urgent economic needs of the country.

Since the UN sought to make Korea self-sufficient, it expressed a great sense of urgency for recruiting competent professors and teachers who would train Koreans to run the day-to-day operation of their industries. An emphasis on practical training and skills for men involved in “industry, commerce, and the social sciences” dovetailed with the subject areas that the reports asserted required foreign funding and guidance.¹⁷

Group members agreed that Korean universities needed a massive infusion of knowledge from abroad. Importing skills and technological knowledge from abroad, they implied, was a necessary step in Korea’s path toward modernization. It was necessary to establish a political and economic system capable of perpetuating the political economy and philosophy of the “Western” world. Among its recommendations, UNECO suggested “the provision of facilities for Korean professors in all faculties to attend foreign universities and colleges for a period, which should normally be for one year.”¹⁸ Funding and support, it recommended, would allow one faculty member of each major college to be away at a time. In addition, professors returning from abroad “should be given boundless opportunity to describe what is done in other countries.” The report took as a given that the Korean education and scientific knowledge was so subpar and that it had much to gain from just imitating the “western countries.” The recommendation advocated knowledge transfer and not knowledge creation.

The UNESCO Report focused on Seoul National University over all other universities. Of the nine institutions identified for repair, SNU headed the list since “[t]his University rightly holds pride of place as Korea’s premier university, although by no means the oldest.” Of the suggestions made for medical college education, half pertained directly to Seoul National University. On the agricultural college front, the mission began with expressing its satisfaction with SNU’s National College of Agriculture and concluded that this college alone would sufficiently meet Korea’s needs. It sought to develop this college into a “very high grade college capable of supplying the graduates in agriculture that will be necessary in the Korean economy within the foreseeable future” and that other existing degree-granting agricultural colleges be closed. In this report on the *national* educational reconstruction, specific recommendations for Seoul National University reflect its perceived centrality to Korean society and governance.¹⁹

Nathan Report

At the request of United Nations Korean Reconstruction Administration (UNKRA), consultants at the American firm of Robert R. Nathan Associates also submitted a preliminary report on how to rebuild Korea. The economic adviser to the United Nations Command at the time recalled that the UN funded the project and the

¹⁷ Ibid., 53, 4.

¹⁸ Ibid., 59.

¹⁹ UNESCO Report., 59, 60.

Korean Government hired the American consultants.²⁰ The report's principal investigator, Robert Nathan, concluded that Korea had neither the military preparedness for self defense nor the necessary infrastructure for economic development. "It cannot be emphasized too strongly," he wrote, "Korea itself cannot now or soon provide any substantial quantity of capital for the rehabilitation of the country."²¹ This report, however, estimated that with outside aid, Korea could achieve the stated US government's goal of returning Korea to its quality of life in 1949-50.²²

Like the UNESCO Report, the Nathan Report also emphasized that any program for recovery and development had to begin with Korea's greatest resource – its people. "Manpower is the basic resource of the Korean economy and represents the greatest potential for immediate economic expansion." The report estimated that over a million employable Koreans were without jobs and a much larger number was underemployed; roughly "a third of Korea's manpower potential is being wasted through unemployment and under-employment." The consultants recommended that above all "work programs should be administered with the spirit of enlisting all who are unemployed and able to work in the patriotic cause of rebuilding and strengthening their country."²³

Korean manpower needed to be developed before anything else could be done. After that "the application of modern science in agriculture, transportation, communications, industry and trade [would be] inherent in achieving higher levels of productivity and enlarging the yield to be derived from natural resources of the community."²⁴ Furthermore, authors of the Nathan Report reasoned that as citizens understood the benefits of this technology they would demand greater educational opportunities. The researchers predicted that "[a]s the productive capacity of the country increases, there will be demands for more of those public and social services, which tend to enrich the lives of people. It is proper that education, health, housing and community facilities and other services should be expanded in Korea in order to increase its productivity of the economy."²⁵ Explicit in the recommendation was the belief modern technology and industrialization would raise the standard of living. Tacit in assessment was that citizens of an advanced, modern nation would seek and need education.

Lastly, there was the Tasca Report.²⁶ As the Korean War reached its eventual political stalemate and the US commitment to Korea escalated, the executive branch of the US government commissioned a report for internal use. At the behest of the National Security Council, President Dwight Eisenhower appointed Henry J. Tasca to head a mission "to investigate ways and means of strengthening the Korean economy." Tasca was at the time the mission of chief of the America foreign aid agency in Rome. The

²⁰ Oral History Interview with Nathan M. Becker, 86-88, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/becker.html> (accessed on October 15, 2006)

²¹ Robert R. Nathan Associates, *Preliminary Report on Economic Reconstruction of Korea*, Doc. UNKRA/AG/13(December 15, 1952), 45 [hereafter Nathan Report].

²² *Ibid.*, 1.

²³ *Ibid.*, 175-177.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 33-34.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 184.

²⁶ Bell Report would be the equivalent report for the Philippines. *The Bell Report: U.S. Economic Survey Mission Report: (with the recommendations in the Hardie report)* (Manila: Philippine Book Co., 1950). Henry J. Tasca, *Relief and Rehabilitation Recommendations contained in the Report to the President by Dr. Henry J. Tasca, Special Representative of the President for Korean Economic Affairs* (Washington, DC: US GOP, 1953).

“amounts and types,” “manner,” and “formulation of measures” to coordinate assistance, Tasca was told, rested on the objective of building up the Korean economy. Eisenhower received a report from Tasca in June 1953 that called for an integrated program of relief and rehabilitation and of defense support requiring approximately \$1 billion dollars to be spent over four years. These observations and recommendations of the Tasca Report served as the larger framework under which the SNU Project fell.

The Tasca Report included recommendations on improving education to arrest and reverse the devastating effects of the war. The penultimate point of its truncated list of the most pressing changes echoed suggestions found in both the UNESCO Report and the Nathan Report. It stated, “Technical and professional skills of the Korean people should be developed as rapidly as possible.”²⁷ Approaching the human capital and the need for their skilled labor from a different angle, the Tasca Report emphasized the untrained manpower of Korea was a crippling and limiting factor in its advancement. Again US government officials heard that technical training was necessary and that the newly acquired knowledge would harness the economic potential of Korea. The Tasca Report also called for a reevaluation and redistribution of Korea’s manpower, primarily by reducing Korea’s military size so more Koreans would be involved in its economic rehabilitation projects.

Tasca explained that it was in the long-term interest of both Korea and the US to raise a US-educated technical intelligentsia. Transferring knowledge to Koreans would cost the donors, United States specifically, less in the long run. First, it would eliminate the large overhead cost associated with employing foreign advisors and experts. Second, training Koreans by other educated Koreans would remove language and cultural barriers, making the knowledge transfer more smooth and cost effective. Furthermore, these professionals would occupy a pivotal role in the emerging civil society, and with the right training and support they could sway public opinion towards a certain political agenda or view. Moreover, their visibility and position allowed them to share the knowledge they acquired with an impressive number of people, in particular the present and future Korean educators and administrators, the elites of Korea. Koreans trained abroad was projected to not only spread the knowledge they gained but also the American way of life they experienced. Tracy Tyler, a professor and campus coordinator of the SNU Project, described the project as a

part of a joint effort between the two governments, American and Korean, to strengthen Seoul National University... [SNU professors] brought to the United States in increasing numbers for studying in the hope that upon completion of their studies they will go home as friends of the United States and missionaries of the American way.²⁸

American politicians also shared the idea of foreign scholars or students as cultural ambassadors. One Congressional report touted knowledge transfer through study abroad programs as “the most successful efforts to infuse local leaders with American ideas and ideals.” Congressional proponents discouraged any reduction in funding for exchange programs since its contraction, they argued, would be a serious setback to “American

²⁷ Ibid., 2.

²⁸ Tracy Tyler to Dean Macy; receipt stamp of April 20, 1961, in Institute of Agriculture Papers [hereafter IoA Papers], Box 50, University of Minnesota Special Collections, Minneapolis, MN [hereafter location not given].

prestige and influence.”²⁹ So in conjunction with the newly elected Korean government, the American government began the Seoul National University Project.

Why the University of Minnesota?

The US Foreign Operations Administration (FOA) awarded the massive contract to rehabilitate SNU to the University of Minnesota (UMN) in 1953. The contract was not open to competitive bidding. The FOA wanted a university with a strong academic record of graduate student training and research facilities in agriculture, engineering and medicine. Elite institutions like Harvard, Yale, Princeton and Columbia had no colleges of agriculture, so they were out. The agricultural component favored land-grant universities; however, many of these schools already were engaged in large-scale overseas commitment. FOA preferred that the university be free of such obligation, so this limited the choices to Ohio State University and University of Minnesota.³⁰ Both institutions had no contractual agreement with foreign universities and governments so it could fully concentrate on bringing SNU up to date. Adding to UMN’s attractiveness and apparent preparedness was the institution’s sensitivity and interest in its foreign student body. President James L. Morrill of the UMN showed interest in international education and provided support to foreign students studying on his campus. By 1954, UMN’s Office of Dean of Students ran remedial English language courses for those needing extra help. UMN’s Vice President of Academic Administration wrote that this tutorial program “had the support of special grants from the Graduate School which was particularly concerned with the instruction of foreign students.”³¹ Such a program would prove to be in great demand and its capacity stretched thin once the SNU Project commenced.

Harold Stassen, one of UMN’s famous alumnus, factored into FOA’s decision. Harold Stassen rose to the national prominence as Minnesota’s governor and then went on to serve President Eisenhower in various capacities in the Department of State.³² Stassen was the director of MSA and FOA in the Eisenhower administration, the two agencies that were most directly involved in planning and implementing the first half of the SNU Project.³³ In December 1953, Stassen placed a telephone call to Minnesota’s President Morrill and proposed the SNU Project.³⁴ The three-year project carried a budget of \$1.8 million to Minnesota’s largest university. Though the SNU Project did not contribute financially to UMN’s general overhead, it had a positive impact. This contract was revised and renewed with the project lasting eight years and the initial

²⁹ House Committee on Foreign Affairs, “Special Study Mission,” 98.

³⁰ Martin Bronfenbrenner, *Academic Encounter: The American university in Japan and Korea* (NY: The Free Press, 1961), 173.

³¹ Malcolm M. Willey to Dean E.W. McDiarmid, November 20, 1955, in Office of the Dean of Students Papers [hereafter DoS Papers], Box 52, University of Minnesota Special Collections, Minneapolis, MN [hereafter location not given].

³² Gayla Marty and Jennifer Schulz, “From Sutures to Stem Cells,” *University of Minnesota, Twin Cities News*, November 7, 2004, http://www1.umn.edu/umnnews/Feature_Stories/From_sutures_to_stem_cells.html (accessed January 16, 2005).

³³ Harold E. Stassen was the director of MSA from January to July of 1953, and the director of FOA from August 1953 to June 1955. Information from Willard F. Barber, “The Foreign Assistance Program,” http://calldbp.leavenworth.army.mil/eng_mr/txts/VOL45/00000003/art6.pdf (accessed October 15, 2006).

³⁴ Bronfenbrenner, *Academic Encounter*, 173.

payout to the University of Minnesota piling in comparison to the final figure. The total compensation to the UMN for its advisory services and training figured closer to \$7.5 million, which did not include the final year of its contract.³⁵

Besides Stassen, the University of Minnesota had a large number of alumni and affiliates who were intricately involved in Korean matters. One such alumnus was George Fox Mott, a founding member of the American-Korean Foundation (AFK) who had received his doctorate from the UMN.³⁶ Mott served as the director of AKF, the largest non-governmental relief organization to Korea, from 1952 to 1962. After stepping down from this position, he continued his services in Korea as the inspector general of the Armed Forces. As a former college dean and educational consultant, Mott was aware of Korea's educational needs and advocated for its reconstruction. Support for the contractual agreement also came from a prominent Minnesota legislator Congressman Walter H. Judd of Minnesota, an ardent foe of communism and an advocate of internationalist politics.³⁷ As a member and chairman of the Committee of Foreign Affairs of the House, Judd along with three other legislators undertook a special study mission to Southeast Asia and the Pacific. The study mission upheld previous recommendations for long-range projects and affirmed the need to accelerate technical assistance and training to these countries, including Korea. It called for the existing educational exchange programs to continue, at the minimum, at its then current level.

Once approached by the US government, the UMN sprang into action.³⁸ Its Board of Regents' sent three staff members to Seoul "to explore the desirability of a general arrangement under which the University would provide members of the University of Minnesota staff to the University of Seoul under a contractual arrangements underwritten by the Foreign Operations Administration."³⁹ The three administrators selected to confer with Korean authorities were the deans of the three academic areas to be regenerated at Seoul National University.⁴⁰ This survey team concluded that UMN was indeed capable of providing the necessary knowledge and training to the SNU staff and conveyed its approval to the Board of Regents.

The SNU Project operated within the protocol established by the US government for its educational assistance to foreign universities. In June of 1954, through the FOA it agreed with the Korean Government to finance the advisory and training activities of the

³⁵ US Department of State, *Report to the Congress of the United States, Examination of Economic and Technical Assistance Program for Korea, International Cooperation Administration, Fiscal Years 1957-1961* (Washington, DC, September 1962), 140.

³⁶ Though AFK was a civic organization, it originated from within the US executive branch. In 1952, President Eisenhower sent his adviser, Howard A. Rusk, to formulate a program of civilian aid to Korea. Rusk recommended the creation of the American Korean Foundation and became the organization's chairman of the board. Its first director was none other than General James A. Van Fleet, a commanding officer in the Korean War. Information from *Korean Republic Weekly Review*, February 18, 1962, found in Mott Papers, Box 14, Folder "Symons, Tomas D."

³⁷ For more detailed information on Walter H. Judd and other influential Minnesotan legislators see, Barbara Stuhler's *Ten Men of Minnesota and American Foreign Policy: 1898-1968* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1973).

³⁸ US Department of State, *Audit Report to the Congress of the United States, United States Assistance Program for Korea International Cooperation Administration, Fiscal Years 1954-1956* (Washington, DC, 1957).

³⁹ W.T. Middlebrook to UMN President J.L. Morrill, January 13, 1954, in IoA Papers, Box 50.

⁴⁰ "Korean News Digest," *Korean Journey* 4, no. 2 (February 1955): 15.

SNU Project.⁴¹ An interim contract was signed on August 1 and the final contract on September 28, 1954. The final document legally bound the University of Minnesota to aid Seoul National University for a 3-year period, with an assumption that the contract renewal was possible and desirable. This cooperative agreement was a type of retainer contract.⁴² Minnesota was to send technical personnel to Korea to act as advisors to SNU's colleges of agriculture, engineering, and medicine; to help rehabilitate the neglected and destroyed buildings; and to equip the classroom and laboratories with necessary equipment and books. The UMN would also train select Korean faculty in the US, primarily at the UMN.⁴³ Much of the details included here come from semiannual progress reports, annual administrative reports, and completion reports that the UMN submitted as a part of the standard government procedures of reporting and monitoring the progress of the overseas educational project.⁴⁴

Though the University of Minnesota was new to the field of foreign developmental assistance, governmental reports and examples of other contracts were available for reference and analysis. The survey team as well as its counterpart in Korea had UN and US reports and documents and their team members knew which areas their governments' desired to develop in SNU. UMN planners also communicated with other administrators of American universities involved in similar projects. Individual deans at the UMN referred to cooperative programs in their given fields. For example, Dean Gaylord W. Anderson looked at the "sister relationship" between the medical schools of Johns Hopkins University and Peiping University, now Beijing University.⁴⁵ Dean Macy consulted with other US land-grant universities beginning their agricultural programs abroad. Some UMN professors took observation tours to other US-assisted universities to learn what was already in progress. One UMN Professor of Agriculture, for example, visited the Philippines and Japan, paying special attention to the FOA project in agriculture between Cornell University and the University of Philippines at Los Baños.⁴⁶

The groundwork for the SNU Project's second phase in public administration was spearheaded by Lloyd Short, Chairman of the Department of Political Sciences at UMN. Short drew on his extensive experience as a consultant at the recently established Institute of Public Administration in Manila, a school established a few years back as a part of US assistance to the Filipino educational reconstruction. Short followed his first visit to Korea in March 1955 with an observation tour to Manila with representatives from SNU and the Korean government. It was during this trip that he determined and recommended

⁴¹ US General Accounting Office, "Audit Report... 1954-1956," 131.

⁴² For differences between "collaborative assistance contract" and "cooperative agreement" see Nancy L. Ruther, *Barely There, Powerfully Present: Thirty Years of US Policy on International Higher Education* (UK: Routledge, 2002), 107.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 131.

⁴⁴ Ruther, *Barely There, Powerfully Present*, 107.

⁴⁵ N.L. Gault, "Korea – A New Venture in International Medical Education," *University of Minnesota Medical Bulletin* 33, no. 2 (Nov. 1961), 74, in Short Papers, Box 17. Gault served two years in Korea as the technical adviser to the SNU's Medical School and also taught internal medicine.

⁴⁶ Roy O. Bridgeford, "Interim Report on Advisory Activities at the College of Agriculture, Seoul National University, March 1957-March 1958," April 1958, 1, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder "Project Report, MNU-SNU, Agriculture, 1958-1960." Records of the Philippines Project can be found in Cornell University Archives under "Cornell University International Agriculture Records," Archive No. 21-2-1700.

that a similar school would also benefit Korea.⁴⁷ When the original SNU contract was extended for two more years, provisions were added to include assistance in public administration and the establishment of a new Graduate School of Public Administration. The overall contract was again renewed with assistance to the original three study areas terminating on June 30, 1961 and public administration ending a year later on June 30, 1962.

There was a stark difference between the roles of Korean and American administrators in this initial stage. American teams of educators and administrators surveyed Korea in preparation for the project, and Korean educators visited the UMN more out of formality than out of necessity. On December 5, 1954, three Korean educators arrived at the University of Minnesota for a ten-day appointment.⁴⁸ They visited the University of Minnesota strictly to observe; indeed, according to the UMN's archives related to this project, their visit only merited a passing mention in their records. The Korean administrators played an insignificant role in the first few months of the SNU Project.

Having made the decision to enter into contract, UMN immediately set about appointing American personnel to oversee the project. It assigned Professor Arthur E. Schneider as its chief advisor and the head of the overall administrative structure in Korea.⁴⁹ Indicating how quickly the SNU Project proceeded, Schneider arrived in Korea a mere three weeks after the contract was signed. American educators quickly filled administrative and advisory positions in Korea, and they wanted an American support staff. Soon after Schneider's began his post, job postings for three principal secretarial positions in Seoul ran in UMN's *Daily*. The ad called for a minimum of one year commitment; the University hoped that the secretaries would extend their stay in Korea to three years. Foreseeing difficulties in attracting workers to a war-torn area, the ad emphasized free transportation to Korea through Hawaii or Alaska, a room in a Seoul *hotel*, and the buying power of American dollars. "Food prices are low, - lunch, 50 cents, and breakfast, 40 cents."⁵⁰ These incentives, however, failed to attract American candidates, and UMN administrators resorted to getting American secretaries "on loan" from the United Nations Command and the US military. Out of necessity, staff members began hiring Koreans, and to their surprise found hiring locals to be a sound practice. The following excerpts between American staff members share the felt benefits of employing Koreans:

[Korean secretaries] are superior to American secretaries in an assignment like this because they help U.S. do our business in two languages. In fact during the

⁴⁷ Elwun, A. Mauck, "Interim Evaluation and Project Completion Proposal for the School of Public Administration, Seoul National University," June 1961, 8, in Short Papers, Box 17, Folder "Korean Advisory Committee."

⁴⁸ "Korean News Digest," 15.

⁴⁹ Professor Arthur E. Schneider graduated from University of Minnesota in 1931 with a BS in forestry and received his PhD from University of Washington in 1953. In between earning his two degrees, he served as an adviser in forestry with the US provisional government in Korea from 1947 to 1948, and following his return from Korea he joined the UMN faculty in the School of Forestry. Schneider's biographic information can be found in the University of Minnesota's newsletter *Daily*, July 21, 1961.

⁵⁰ "U Civil Service Lists Secretarial Positions Available at Seoul," *Daily*, November 19, 1954, in Info File, Folder "Seoul National University, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, MN [hereafter location not given].

past year my Korean secretaries have been superior to the caliber of similar help we can hire in the U.S. Government.⁵¹

His colleague responded,

You have good reason to be proud of the work of our Korean secretaries...

Actually, there are very few errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar.⁵²

This example of hiring practice for the clerical staff reflected Americans preference for the familiar. They considered native options only when there were few or no other choices.

American administrators preferred all significant planning and implementation to be done by their fellow Americans. Cultural norms in negotiation and communication more often than not added to Americans' frustration with working with Korean officers and only strengthened their conviction that the American way was more efficient and ultimately more "right." William R. Weems, who served as the engineering advisor to Seoul National University and also as the acting chief advisor during Schneider's absence, wrote a lengthy letter offering his observations and suggestions about how to interact with Koreans. Weems' letter is quoted at length because it demonstrates a common belief that Americans could solve problem better than Koreans. Chiefly, he believed that, though commendable, Korean involvement and presence in the overall SNU Project retarded its progress. Weems wrote,

Koreans are extremely concerned about form and appearance. ...

Whatever the explanation I am convinced that it is a fact. Koreans are also not accustomed (as yet) to executive efficiency.... In dealing with Koreans, a common pattern is for the American to present a problem and a proposed solution. The Korean generally agrees because it is not polite to disagree and he is unsure of himself anyway and he feels that the Americans are a pretty soft-hearted and honest bunch, after all. When a Korean says "yes", however, he does not mean to commit himself. He is merely not saying "No", or at most merely expressing his feelings at the moment....

A week after the initial "decision", his ideas may be quite different, and they may change several more times in the case of important matters. It is essential that he and all concerned be given ample time to accept the ideas in the decision, clear it and air it thoroughly. Otherwise, the American, blithely charging ahead on the naïve assumption that the Korean side is equally committed and interested in making the best use of time, will be the victim of much frustration....

I am sure that the fine idea of maximum participations by the Koreans in any decisions is accepted by all on our side; it is just that the implications may have been overlooked.⁵³

This letter of advice identified cultural differences as the source of frustration. It also implied that greater efficiency and more positive results would be gained from US

⁵¹ Draheim to Warp, August 24, 1959, in Short Papers, Box 17, Folder KP-6.

⁵² Warp to Draheim, September 8, 1959, in Short Papers, Box 17, Folder KP-6.

⁵³ William R. Weems to Dean A. F. Spilhaus, March 7, 1956, in Short Papers, Box 17.

educators planning and deciding the course of action, and Koreans complying. The message was that the Americans should lead and the Koreans should follow.

Recruiting American professors to Korea to show the American way was not easy. The FOA contract stipulated that the UMN send its faculty members to act as advisors to the three colleges of agriculture, engineering, and medicine at SNU, as well as provide visiting professors to train the SNU professors in Korea. The FOA also hoped professors would commit to an extended period of time, but most who came stayed for three months or less, a situation that both the US and Korean governments found unacceptable. William E. Warne, the United Nations Command's Economic Coordinator, criticized the UMN for not fulfilling its agreement. In his letter to UMN President Morrill he lectured,

tours of three months or under are highly uneconomical and often of little practical value. Tours of three to six months' duration are only slightly more justifiable. Twelve months should normally be the minimum tour where the need for technical services continues; and two years has been demonstrated to be even better.⁵⁴

The UMN veered from the ideal and hired faculty members from *outside* its campus, as other contracted universities giving foreign educational assistance were doing. Anticipating objections, administrators presented two reasons for the external search. First, UMN administrators countered that such selection stemmed from the American and Korean authorities' insistence that American professors spend at least one year in Korea. "[It] does not appear possible to persuade... faculty members at Minnesota to leave their work in rapidly advancing fields for periods of time as long as now stipulated."⁵⁵ Second, the needs in Korea did not require professors working "at the frontiers of knowledge" and whose research required graduate level work. Just beneath the surface of this statement was the belief that UMN professors were overqualified.

Recruitment difficulties were not isolated to Korea; these affected all the countries that the US gave technical assistance. The US Appropriation Committee recognized that recruitment for technical cooperation activities were "extremely difficult, due to the nature of the field assignments and the extremely long period required for security clearance and appointment."⁵⁶ Of the nearly 2,600 positions authorized for these programs in 1953, roughly 1,000 remained vacant. In subsequent years, reconstruction and development planners added more overseas positions. The number of unfilled positions correspondingly grew with about 1,200 openings for trained technicians for overseas assignment in 1955.⁵⁷ Of the 45 countries listed individually in 1956, the program in Korea was the sixth largest in terms of overall expenditure.⁵⁸ When hiring

⁵⁴ William E. Warne, UNC Economic Coordinator to Pres. J.L. Morrill, August 9, 1957, in Short Papers, Box 17.

⁵⁵ "8th Semi-annual report," October 16 1958, 12, in Short Papers, Box 18.

⁵⁶ "Mutual Security Appropriation Bill, 1954," 6.

⁵⁷ "Mutual Security Appropriation Bill, 1957," 9.

⁵⁸ Data from 1953 is from "Mutual Security Appropriation Bill, 1954," 6. Data from 1955 and 1956 is from "Mutual Security Appropriation Bill, 1957," 10. Of the 45 countries listed, only the following countries, listed in the order of the most to the least authorized budget, only the following countries had more money set aside than Korea under the technical cooperation program: India (\$10 million), Pakistan (\$9 million), Iran (\$8 million), Indonesia (\$8 million), and the Philippines (\$5.9 million). The allocated budget for Korea was \$5.5 million.

needs continued unmet, the appropriation commitment cut the requested budget thus burdening those professors whom universities were able to attract with more responsibilities. In addition, an FOA audit of Korea explained that technical advisors and administrators were not allowed to bring their dependents, making Korea an even less attractive for the more established professors, who often had families.⁵⁹ The solution was to train Koreans with American knowledge; professors who did not need to be recruited nor incentivized to stay.

By the end of the SNU Project in 1962, an amazing 85% of the faculty members in the selected schools had studied in the United States, most of them at the University of Minnesota.⁶⁰ UMN archives indicated that roughly four out of five of the technical faculty of the SNU College of Agriculture had studied in the US through the SNU Project.⁶¹ To a lesser degree, other Korean elite universities were following suite. The SNU Project was wildly successful in establishing American education as a prerequisite or a ticket for teaching in Korea's higher education; an American education opened doors for the professorial candidates.

A Carnegie Foundation funded a study, conducted midway through the SNU Project. It awarded Forrest Moore a grant to conduct a survey on UMN alumni abroad.⁶² Moore visited Korea since it was "far in the lead in numbers of students from any country studying here [University of Minnesota]."⁶³ After visiting SNU he wrote, "The ICA [the successor agency to FOA] program returnees tend to dominate the scene because of sheer numbers."⁶⁴ He added, "the very fact of high centralization, almost all alumni located in the University, make alumni activities seem superfluous, since almost everyone may end up being an alumnus of Minnesota."⁶⁵ Moore made this remark only half way through the SNU Project; more US-educated would be joining the US-educated network in the undisputed trend-setting and much respected institute in Korean higher education.

Though the US-educated professors gained incredible visibility and recognition, they were underutilized due to the budget shortage of the university, and by association the Korean government. An investigation of the textile engineering faculty members at SNU showed that they were only getting paid a third that of comparable level in industry. Knowing well that the pay was insufficient, their department only gave them a teaching load of ten hours per week so that they could augment their salary with outside jobs.⁶⁶ Kim, a young instructor with a master's degree from the UMN, taught only two hours per

⁵⁹ US Department of State, *Audit Report... 1954-1956*, 20.

⁶⁰ UMN University Archives, InfoFile, "Seoul National University."

⁶¹ "13th Semi-annual report" (April 12, 1961), 9-10, in Short Papers, Box 18.

⁶² DoS Papers, Box 52, Folder "1.80.50.4 Carnegie Grant for Study of Relations of Foreign Students, 1957-59."

⁶³ Memorandum from Tyler to President Morrill, December 17, 1956, in President's Office Papers, Box 108, University of Minnesota Archive, Minneapolis, MN [hereafter location not given]. During the SNU Project, UMN had the largest concentration of Korean professors studying anywhere in the US.

Information contained in Herm Sittar's "Korean's Gratitude 'Hard to Express'," *Minneapolis Star* (18 January 1957). UMN Archives, "SNU – Info File."

⁶⁴ Forrest G. Moore, "The Carnegie Project – Report of Visit to: KOREA," August 4, 1959), 2, in DoS Papers, Box 52.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 3

⁶⁶ Chapin A. Harris, "Textile Education in South Korea" in *Bulletin of the Lowell Technological Institute*, series 6, no. 3 (February 1957): 4, 6, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder "KP-8 Korean Participants (1957-58)."

week the first semester he returned from the US. In his update letter to his advisor in Minnesota, he wrote that he earned only one fifth of his cost of living through his part-time instructorship. He was hopeful that he might be employed as a full time instructor so that “I can earn my living cost with the one job.”⁶⁷ Their US education secured them of their academic standing, but did not set them apart in terms of pay scale. SNU was contractually obligated to hire all professors trained under the SNU Project. It was an incredible opening, especially for the many young professors with little personal connections or resources, to enter Korea’s elite institute where Korean society’s upper crust defined, formed, and strengthened their connections. The study abroad experience also fortified the sense of belonging among the growing number of US-educated. To an extent what mattered was their shared experience abroad rather than the knowledge they brought back.

The politics within the highly centralized departments at SNU with their imbedded hierarchy of seniority initially created problems. Teaching assistants and instructors sent to UMN returned, and often they had more advanced training than the professors who remained in Korea, but the coveted full-time teaching position belong to the latter group. Reporting on SNU Department of Engineering, American advisors serving in Korea grumbled that older, senior staff members were reluctant to implement their recommendations.⁶⁸ In one instance, UMN public administration advisor posed a direct question to SNU Dean of College and Law as to why their Korean graduates were not teaching. Dean Tai Whan Shin stated, “most Korean participants returning from the States who are to succeed the American specialist are not wholly dependable for the job due to their short teaching and research careers. They are actually no more than instructors.”⁶⁹ Simply put, they had not earned the confidence of their superiors. The UMN administrator sent a huffy response, “I think that much faculty time is being wasted here if these men are not going to be used in the positions for which we are training them.”⁷⁰ It is evident that professors who the ICA passed over as being too “old” for advanced education did not agree. Regardless of how much teaching time their young colleagues were given, they were valuable members of the department that brought recognition and the much needed funding for the department. There is ample evidence that individual SNU department’s petitions to the Korean government went unanswered while similar requests by UMN administrators received prompt attention and action. Moreover, in the latter half of the project, UMN advisors paid close attention to those Korean participants who had returned but still needed to write their thesis to officially receive the master’s degree, most of whom tended to be younger faculty members. American professors made themselves available to them for advising and consultation. These young scholars, and SNU Project participants in general, had greater accessibility and contact with the UMN advisors than those not affiliated with the SNU Project.

Of all the SNU participants returning from abroad, those in the public administration program faced the most obstacles. Professors selected from the colleges of engineering, agriculture, and medical colleges, all had prior teaching experience at

⁶⁷ Tae Choon Kim to Short; October 3, 1959, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder “KP-8 Korean Participants (1957-58).”

⁶⁸ 13th Semi-annual report, 13.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

Seoul Nation University; the overwhelming majority of them had graduated from SNU or its predecessor Keijo Imperial University. Some public administration participants had no prior SNU affiliation, and it proved extremely difficult for the non-SNU affiliated to fit into and advance in this university. In the first class of public administration group sent to UMN, there were four participants with no previous affiliation with SNU. The absence of records on them suggests that none remained at SNU's School of Public Administration beyond the promised two-year tenure. Moreover, public administration was a new field of study in Korea, and the school was created anew by the SNU Project. However, its research and teaching overlapped and competed with those in the more established schools of political sciences and law.

Though rarely addressed outside the SNU circle, the undercurrent of discontent among the nonparticipants did surface. Professors and administrators not selected felt strongly that given the opportunity they also would have thrived from further learning and would have advanced their profession. Further, they implied that the University of Minnesota, with its lack of experience teaching foreign nations, was not the best place for the Korean professors. Yet none of the nonparticipants questioned the importance or desirability of a US education. This basic premise shows that the substance of US education went unquestioned, suggesting that a US, and to a lesser extent other foreign, degrees were coveted credentials. Given this basic premise, they could only slow, not impede, the influx of US-educated academics into their folds.

Many of the public administration participants were also being funneled to government positions rather than the intended university teaching positions, a practice that UMN decried. A UMN advisor sent a highly critical letter to the SNU Dean writing, "I am sure that you realize that our interest at Minnesota is in the training of professors rather than in the training of young men entry into government services."⁷¹ Administrators, especially those overseeing the Department of Public Administration and Law walked a fine line of asserting what their university and staff wanted and what the governments (US and Korea) wanted. The fluidity between SNU School of Public Administration and the Korean government was undeniable. An ICA terminal report on public administration identified that professors of this new school were circumventing their funding problems by "collaborating in the government research activities." The evaluator recommended that research budget be increased so the faculty would not be dependent on funding from "crash research needed by government for policy-making purposes." He continued, "If the School is to accomplish its social role – not only as a collaborator with government but as an independent source of public administration knowledge – commanding wide respect for accuracy, thoroughness, and integrity – it should exercise some independence in choosing research problems and in planning and executing research."⁷²

The US-educated SNU professors with perhaps the greatest potential to teach in Korea, as evaluated by their American educators, ironically had the greatest academic flexibility and mobility. In the eyes of UMN administrators, they were the successful

⁷¹ George A. Warp to Dean Tai Whan Shin, SNU College of Law, April 14, 1958, in Short Papers, Box 17.

⁷² Glenn D. Paige, "Research at the School of Public Administration: Seoul National University, 1959-1960" (United States Operations Mission to Korea, September 4, 1961), 3-12, in W. Grant Ireson Papers [hereafter Ireson Papers], Box 11, Folder "Informal Report Materials," Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, CA [hereafter location not given].

students groomed to be at the center of change. However, the hierarchical and centralized nature of the Korean higher education pushed some of them to the periphery in their department, inciting them to leave the academy and Korea altogether. Their credentials and language facility presented many options, both in the US and Korea. In a few cases, the US-educated left Korea, mostly back to the US.

Tae Choon Kim, one among the first class of public administrators sent to the UMN wrote in a private correspondence to his American advisor, “Our new school has many problems.”⁷³ He described how the school and its faculty suffered from “low prestige.” “It is particularly necessary [in Korea],” he explained to his UMN advisor, “for young instructors to wear nice clothes... and to have considerable length of period of study.”⁷⁴ He and his fellow UMN alumni at the School of Public Administration could not afford nice clothes on their teaching salaries, and others viewed them with their master’s degree as insufficiently educated. Martin Bronfenbrenner, an American educator who spent time at SNU during this period wrote, “Their youth stands in the way of them being accorded by their students the respect they deserve, and the American M.A. degree has lost considerable prestige as a result of the misguided leniency of some American institutions toward their Korean graduate students.”⁷⁵ Not content with his precarious teaching position, Kim turned to the US for a remedy. He applied and was accepted into a doctoral program at the University of California at Berkeley. Coincidentally, within weeks of applying to a doctoral program in the US, he was appointed full-time instructor and received an “adequate amount to live on and to study as a bachelor instructorship and assistant professorship.” Kim wrote, “I am very satisfied with the present status.”⁷⁶ Appointments of full-time professorships to other young participants followed as the old guards’ resistance became weaker and weaker. More and more US-educated joined as full-time faculty members.

Program Evaluations

What did the SNU Project accomplish? Was the purported knowledge transfer carried out? Did Seoul National University play an important role, as predicted, in reestablishing or revamping Korea’s higher education? Since the SNU Project was begun as a “model” for other developing nations, US foreign aid administrators were particularly interested in the answers to these questions. From government surveys on Korean higher education to evaluation reports alluding to the SNU Project, these documents shared a number of viewpoints. First, they viewed the transfer of knowledge by training Koreans in the US as the most effective part of the US foreign educational assistance. Nearly all these evaluations expounded on the merits of studying abroad, of which the SNU Project figured prominently. Those reports that had additional recommendations for the educational reconstruction, without fail, included the proposal to send more Koreans abroad for training. Second, these reports noted that Korea’s technical intelligentsia still needed to be developed and trained, preferably from abroad.

⁷³ Tae Choon Kim to Short, January 14, 1960, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder “KP-8 Korean Participants (1957-58).” Kim enrolled at the University of California, Berkeley.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Bronfenbrenner, *Academic Encounter*, 183.

⁷⁶ Letter from Tae Choon Kim to Short, January 14, 1960.

Lastly these reports indirectly pointed to the individual and institutional impacts of a US education.

For all included, the brightest spot in the educational assistance to Korea was the study abroad program. American politicians, educators, and consultants hailed this as the way to diffuse modern technical knowledge as well as American cultural values. Korean politicians fully supported the opportunities to develop its technical intelligentsia and Korean university administrators sought to further develop this channel of funding. More than knowledge, Koreans desired the credentials and legitimization associated with American education. An American advisor assigned to the Korean Ministry of Education wrote, "The program of teacher preparation has been given impetus by the growing nucleus of professors in each institutions who have studied in the United States or other foreign countries."⁷⁷ Speaking specifically on the SNU Project, an expert on higher education agreed,

The consultant shares the view that, beyond all the physical aid received by SNU from OEC, the 'participant' program by which a substantial number of Korean teachers, scientists, and educational leaders have studied and observed at the University of Minnesota (occasionally elsewhere) stands out as the greatest accomplishment.⁷⁸

Yet, the high visibility of the participants belied the fact that as a group they failed to carry out the knowledge transfer. The vast majority had simply observed the workings of a US university. The returning participants reentered an educational system that continued to be shaped by its colonial past. The American university contracted project did not overturn the highly centralized, hierarchical nature of administration and teaching at SNU. Compared to the growing presence of US educated persons in Korea, there was an absence of comparable change in the topics and teaching methods.

So how were the people who were most directly involved affected by their study abroad experience? A US government survey sought to answer this question. Though it was not specific to the SNU Project participants, it did include them as a subgroup. The survey team interviewed 50% of all ICA participant trainees, who studied abroad between 1955 and 1960, as well as their immediate supervisors and all United States Operations Mission (USOM) technicians involved.⁷⁹ This study, published in 1962, provided a statistical overview of this select group. One obvious finding was that the US-trained persons stood apart from the sea of domestically trained applicants in the job market. 94% surveyed answered that they had been employed continuously since their return, with 80% of them holding the same job.⁸⁰ Another way to appreciate the participants' employment opportunity is to look at how an elite group of graduates trained only in Korea fared. The 1960 survey on Korea's Higher Education stated that in

⁷⁷ Charlotte Drummond Meinecke, *Education in Korea* (Seoul: Ministry of Education, October 1958), 36, in Mott Papers, Box 8.

⁷⁸ George D. Stoddard, *Report of ICA Consultant on Higher Education in Korea with Special Reference to Seoul National University and the Contracts between ICA and US Universities*, April 10, 1959, 6, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder "Project Reports, MNU-SNU, Education (Higher)."

⁷⁹ US Operations Mission to Korea, Technical Training Branch, "Evaluation Survey of the R.O.K./U.S. Participant Training Program, 1955-1960. Statistical Summary" (September 1962). The survey included all ICA participant trainees so it was not specific to, though it included, the SNU Project.

⁸⁰ USOM, "Evaluation Survey," 50.

the late 1950s, there were approximately 3,500 students enrolled in colleges in law, with about 500 graduating each year. Even allowing for a 10% turnover each year, there was “18 times as many graduates as the field of work can absorb.”⁸¹ Less than 6% of the graduates of these highly competitive programs found employment commensurate with their training.

The market economy in Korea was still in its infancy and was incapable of absorbing huge numbers of highly skilled persons. There were few available jobs. When there was a job opening, there was a clear preference for those trained abroad. Prospective employers preferred persons with an American education over those trained in other foreign countries. US-educated Koreans affirmed in interviews conducted in 1959 that because of their had contact with persons in the United States they got better jobs and “that the overseas contact [gave them] prestige.”⁸² One UMN alumnus summed up the prevailing sentiment, “being pro-American was an advantage in Korea at the moment.”⁸³ Also due to the SNU Project, having the University of Minnesota on one’s resume was seen as a mark of excellence. An American educator visiting Seoul observed, “The large and rapidly growing group of alumni working on the Seoul National University faculty is making the name of the University of Minnesota well known and has resulted in a favorable response from other employers for those trained in Minnesota.”⁸⁴

Progress reports circulated internally within the SNU Project, however, contained mixed reviews. Individuals associated with SNU listed the acquisition of “contemporary knowledge and teaching practices” and the improvements in “classroom, laboratory and shop facilities for instruction in Korea at the college level” as major accomplishments.⁸⁵ UMN faculty members involved in the engineering department touted the long list of specialized equipment that was secured for various laboratories, but qualified this with the fact that uncooperative Korean faculty members limited the progress that could have been achieved. Advisors in public administration applauded “impressive” accomplishments being achieved at the new School of Public Administration and at the National Officials Training Institute (NOTI). However, they stated that without continued assistance “the gains will be jeopardized.”⁸⁶ Both American and Korean educators believed that the foundations work begun by the SNU Project to develop Korea’s technical intelligentsia was incomplete and needed to continue.

Near the end of the SNU Project, the Korean Ministry of Education and USOM jointly sponsored a survey to assess the then current state of Korea’s higher education. They hired an American team to assess specific fields in consultation with the US technical advisory staff already in Korea. All US technical advisors in Korea were associated with the SNU Project and UMN, and roughly half of the survey team was also from the University of Minnesota. Persons invested in the SNU Project were well positioned to direct and define Korea’s educational reform. This survey, hereafter called the 1960 USOM Survey, encouraged continued assistance to SNU with every turn of the

⁸¹ USOM, “Report on Survey of National Higher Education in the Republic of Korea” (May 1960), 155.

⁸² Moore, “The Carnegie Project,” 5, in DoS Papers, Box 52.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 2.

⁸⁵ 13th Semi-annual report, 11.

⁸⁶ 13th Semi-annual report, 15.

page. In addition, the survey placed SNU and UMN graduates in the best position to succeed. Practical means of more fully utilizing persons trained in the US were repeated throughout the survey. In agricultural sciences, the survey team recommended “developing short course training programs for faculty members of all colleges, using those people who have been trained in the United States.”⁸⁷ In its section on major needs for Korea’s graduate schools in Humanities and Social Science, it called for “limitation of graduate instruction and discontinuance of the non-SNU national universities.”⁸⁸ Authors adhered to their belief that the advances made at Seoul National University would trickle down and spread to other Korean universities and colleges.

Education was a small part of the overall US assistance in Korea, but the US government stated in no uncertain terms, “the highly important role of education in the economic development of Korea.”⁸⁹ Yet, it was disappointed that “the progress achieved in the economic development of Korea was considerably less than was reasonable to expect” from over \$1.5 billion worth of assistance. According to a report submitted to Congress, funds and programs were mismanaged. For example, it found fault in the curriculum developed at the College of Engineering at Seoul National University. The curriculum was develop, it stated “without direct knowledge of the types of engineers and scientists needed in Korea. As a consequence Korean economic development probably did not receive the full potential benefits of this branch of higher education....”⁹⁰ The report continued that it did not match Korea’s immediate needs,

United States financing to the [SNU] engineering college provided equipment for such courses as Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering, Aeronautical Engineering, and Nuclear Engineering. These courses would seem to offer very limited employment opportunities and to have an unimportant place in the Korean educational picture in terms of their present and foreseeable economic value to the country.⁹¹

The US government’s attempt to modernize Korean public administration also met with mixed success. An objective of the School of Public Administration was to equip future public officials with the tools to “base administrative decision as well as theoretical propositions which aid in the analysis of the events of daily experience.”⁹² For the first six years of USOM, a time period coinciding with the SNU Project, US educators introduced “American concepts of organization, management and other activities.”⁹³ American foreign aid workers considered this system to be a placeholder of sorts until Korea “developed its capabilities to the point of initiating and developing its own versions.”⁹⁴ The crowning achievement of the public administration during this period was the opening of the SNU School of Public Administration in April 1959. UMN handpicked the first class of faculty members and predetermined the school’s curriculum before turning over the administrative functions to Koreans. In public,

⁸⁷ USOM, “Report on Survey,” 47.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁸⁹ US Department of State, “Report to the Congress,” September 1962, 142.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 141.

⁹² Glenn D. Paige, “Research Frontiers in Korean Public Administration,” May 1960, Appendix F, 35.

⁹³ Frank M. Landers, “Technical Assistance in Public Administration; USOM/Korea- 1955-1967” (USOM Korea, 1967), 8.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

American educational field officers deemphasized their direct involvement noting for example that the “Minnesota advisory staff did not engage in active conduct of class.”⁹⁵ American advisors publicly announced its success in equipping Korean leaders with “the tools and techniques of modern social science research.”⁹⁶ Yet in the project’s terminal report, Glenn Paige blamed Korean researchers for not using these “tools and techniques” correctly. He criticized them for allowing their “values” to interfere with gathering objective data.⁹⁷ Changes in the Korean political climate, Paige explained, stalemated American educators’ efforts and prevented them from addressed these wrongs.

A succession of changes in political leadership in the early 1960s caused rapid turnover in ministries and political functions as administrators and personnel were removed, shuffled, and appointed. The average tenure of a cabinet member in the Second Republic was only about two months!⁹⁸ An American historian Carter Eckert remarked, “The political disturbances which culminated in the overthrow of the Rhee government... marked the beginning of a work slow-down [for US assisted programs] that was never to regain its former pace.”⁹⁹ There was a “sharp expansion of Korean efforts to improve its own public administration and a corresponding contraction of USOM participation therein.”¹⁰⁰ During this time of political turbulence, the US government curtailed its involvement in developing Korean managerial capabilities.

Ultimately, evaluation and understanding of the SNU Project rested more on the agenda of the two countries’ political leaders than on what was achieved. Nineteen sixty-one heralded the beginning of Kennedy’s short administration in the US and Park’s long administration in Korea. As promised in his presidential campaign, Kennedy quickly went about differentiating his administration from that of Eisenhower’s. The difference was in grade. Eisenhower assumed that his foreign assistance would be used as a tool to encourage positive attitudes toward the US, while Kennedy made the link between assistance and goodwill explicit. To this end Kennedy established Alliance for Progress, the Peace Corps, and the Agency for International Development (AID) to focus on advancing economic and social progress in developing nations.¹⁰¹ The Kennedy administration worked under the premise that US-led economic developments would lead to stable, non-Communist governments since these advancements would mitigate the conditions that made communism attractive in the first place.¹⁰² Therefore, it considered social, economic and cultural instrumentalities important in arresting communism. His administrators deemphasized foreign countries’ academic, technical training and focused instead on vocational educational needs.¹⁰³ The academic SNU Project did not match the new plans and its contract was not renewed. Korea also experienced dramatic political

⁹⁵ Ibid., 181.

⁹⁶ Paige, “Research Frontiers in Korean Public Administration,” 48.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 43.

⁹⁸ Eckert et. al., *Korea Old and New*, 356.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 130.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 7.

¹⁰¹ See Elizabeth Cobb Hoffman’s *All You Need is Love: The Peace Corps and the Spirit of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998) for an overview of the Peace Corps.

¹⁰² Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 222. Walt Rostow, Kennedy’s assistant and counselor at the State Department, was central to the formulation and articulation of the administration’s new strategic concept. Rostow’s book *The Stages of Economic Growth, A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge University Press, 1960) was instrumental in circulating and explaining this approach to development.

¹⁰³ Comptroller General of the US, “Report to the Congress,” 143.

changes in the early 1960s. Three different republics or administrations ruled between 1960 and 1963. Rhee's forced resignation in April 1960 marked the end of the First Republic and the July presidential election that followed heralded the beginning of the ineffective Second Republic.¹⁰⁴ Soon after on May 16, 1961, Major General Park Jung Hee and Lieutenant Colonel Kim Jong Pil seized power through a military coup d'état. Park ruled Korea through a military junta until 1963, and thereafter as the constitutional leader of Korea's Third Republic.

Impact of the SNU Project on Korea's Higher Education

The SNU Project made a significant impact on the shape and direction of Korean higher education in that it served as a model for other Korean universities. Descriptive and evaluative accounts of the SNU Project made its way into the planning files of other Korean universities. When the Korean government turned to the United States in the mid-1960s for assistance in establishing the first national higher education institute devoted to science and technology, the US aid agency sent a copy of the terminal reports of the SNU Project.¹⁰⁵ Elsewhere a public administration specialist wrote in 1967, "it appears rather definite that the development of the Graduate School of Public Administration at Seoul National University was the principal factor in the spread of public administration in other universities and colleges."¹⁰⁶

The preference bestowed on SNU also set in motion unintended rivalry and tension between the haves and have-nots. It aggravated the tension between individuals sent abroad and those who were not, departments selected and those that were not, and the institution funded and all others that were not. From individuals to departments to universities, this project created a group of elites, even within SNU. When Forrest Moore of UMN visited Seoul, he noted "rivalry among the contract students in different broad fields of study (Medicine, Agriculture, Engineering and Public Administration) and also between the Seoul National University group and students privately sponsored in Minnesota."¹⁰⁷ Some privately sponsored professors felt that the publicly funded professors had not followed as rigorous of a program as they had. They claimed that SNU Project participants had it easy: exemption from the competitive admissions selection; no anxiety over funding; and professors devoted to guiding them through the academic maze. There was also friction within the department. Older, more established professors who had been passed over for study abroad resented the younger, junior professors for the lost opportunity. The old guards were unwilling to step aside and let their less experienced, albeit more educated colleague, take positions of leadership. Although specialists in Korean education trace the rise of conflicts between younger

¹⁰⁴ College and university students were the main characters in the mass student demonstrations that forced Rhee out of the Blue House. These college and university students, Korea's first post-colonial generation to come of age, protested against the network of corruption and against the socioeconomic system that could not accommodate them. When the fraudulent result of the rigged election was announced in April of 1960, the simmering dissatisfaction erupted into mass demonstrations and marches known as the "April Revolution." The civil unrest resulted in effectively ending Rhee's regime. See Eckert et al, *Korea Old and New*, 354-356.

¹⁰⁵ The terminal report written by Glenn D. Paige was copied and sent to KunMo Chung from the AID Office.

¹⁰⁶ Landers, "Technical Assistance in Public Administration," 190.

¹⁰⁷ Forrest G. Moore, "The Carnegie Project," 3.

faculty with a US doctoral degree and older faculty trained in Korea or Japan to the 1970s, but the seed of discontent had already been planted and had begun to sprout by the end of the SNU Project.¹⁰⁸ Then there was also the division within SNU; the “have-not” departments became dispirited. An educational psychologist hired to evaluate Korea’s higher education noted that at SNU “aid to certain specific areas” affected non-assisted areas negatively.¹⁰⁹ The SNU Project also created a gap between SNU and other elite Korean universities. The massive reconstruction efforts centered on SNU gave it a head start that other universities could not match for many decades. The tension created by such preferential treatment did not dissolve with the end of the SNU Project. Even now, nearly half a century later, discontent over SNU’s elitist and “special” standing in Korea ruffles the feather of many standing outside its gates and classrooms.

The SNU Project did raise institutional and individual awareness of US funding and of US education. Administrators at higher education institutions renewed their efforts to solicit funding from abroad as well recruit educators who had been trained abroad. The SNU Project was the first among a string of collaborative programs between Korean and American universities. For example, Yonsei and Korea University entered into an agreement with Washington University in St. Louis to improve their curriculum and instruction in business administration.¹¹⁰ The Jesuit Order chose Marquette University in Wisconsin to plan and establish a Jesuit university in Seoul.¹¹¹ Archival files of many American universities, from Michigan State University to Cornell University, contain requests and assessments of possible and actual educational projects carried out in Korea.

For individuals, studying abroad became a vehicle for personal achievement and for forging powerful connections. The strong presence and visibility of US-educated persons in key positions in academia and the government equated US education as a legitimizing credential for these elite positions. Even before the SNU Project commenced, there had been a felt presence of US-educated Koreans in the Korean government. During the US military occupation of Korea, its politics was derisively called the “translators’ politics.” American officials had depended heavily on English-speaking Koreans who for the most part had studied in the US. These individuals assumed many of the highest political posts, including that of the presidency.¹¹² Following the Korean War, a number of American-educated Koreans shifted between key positions in ministries, intergovernmental organizations, and academia. The Korean government drew heavily from elite institutions’ faculty, especially that of the Seoul National University. For example, almost all of SNU’s Dean of Graduate School of Public Administration and College of Law received their advanced degrees in the United States and had been appointed to public office during their careers. In the first two decades of Korea’s independence, the ministers and vice ministers of its Ministry of Education had taught at SNU either before or after their public service.¹¹³ In the words of an expert on Korean society, education is socializing and selective and “gives credentials

¹⁰⁸ Sungho Lee, “The Emergence of the Modern University in Korea” in *Higher Education* 18, no. 1 (1989): 112.

¹⁰⁹ Stoddard, *Report of ICA Consultant*, 6.

¹¹⁰ Lee, “The Emergence of the Modern University in Korea,” 100-101.

¹¹¹ Bronfenbrenner, *Academic Encounter*, 164.

¹¹² Syngman Rhee received his doctoral degree from Princeton University.

¹¹³ Landers, “Technical Assistance in Public Administration,” 187-188.

to graduates so that they are entitled to certain rewards and privileges in society; it also legitimizes a social structure in which certain kinds of knowledge are defined as valuable, and in which only certain persons are defined as capable of managing that knowledge.”¹¹⁴ Education thus became a social demand, and in particular a premium was placed on a US education.

A US education became especially important in academia. There was a concerted effort on the part of the US and Korean governments to replace experts educated in Japan with instructors educators in the US. Some critics have argued that US influence on the Korean higher education was “self-imposed with American encouragement and assistance” while others postulate that there were no option but to adapt or adopt the American system.¹¹⁵ What is clear is that both governments actively initiated and supported this conversion. During the Korea War, key Korean scholars were sent to the United States for “safekeeping” and “retraining.”¹¹⁶ Then following the war, they were sent to the US as part of the SNU Project. For those educators not familiar with the US, observation tours and workshops led by American educators or Korean returnees were set up. Korean educational system itself was reorganized and patterned after that of the US.¹¹⁷ And the increased interaction between Koreans and Americans after the Korean War as well as information from those returning from overseas made studying abroad more accessible.¹¹⁸ In part, the SNU Project’s and other participant training programs strengthened the valuation of US degree as a criterion for elite faculty positions. By the early 1980s, the executive director of the Fulbright Program in Korea could boast, “Nearly every university in Korea has professors on staff who had been Fulbright scholars.”¹¹⁹ In particular, those Korean scholars with American PhD’s became “symbols of modernization and advancement,”¹²⁰ and valued members of the emerging elite. Within academia, the number of US-educated persons steadily increased. And by the late 1980s, one of five professors with a PhD had earned it in the US.

¹¹⁴ McGinn, Noel F., Donald R. Snodgrass, Yung Bong Kim, Shin-Bok Kim, and Quee-Young Kim, *Education and Development in Korea* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies Harvard University, 1980), 237.

¹¹⁵ Youngnok Koo and Dae-Sook Suh, eds., *Korea and the United States: A Century of Cooperation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984), 102.

¹¹⁶ This group of awardees included acting presidents of universities, deans, and mathematicians. Half of this select group was directly affiliated with Seoul National University. Source: “8 Korean Leaders Study at Top US Universities,” *Korean Messenger* 1, no. 5 (Fall 1952), 1 and 4, in Mott Papers, Box 23.

¹¹⁷ For more detail on the structural changes of the Korean educational system see: Jeong-kyu Lee, *Historic Factors Influencing Korean Higher Education* (Somerset, NJ: Jimoondang Publishing Company); Byung-hun Nam, “Educational Reorganization in South Korea under the US Army Military Government: 1945-48” (PhD diss. University of Pittsburgh, 1962); Kyu Young Park, “The Reconstruction of Educational Theory: Confucianism, Practicalism, and Pragmatism” (PhD diss., 1996); Roy W. Shin, “The Politics of Foreign Aid: A Study of the Impact of United States Aid in Korea from 1945 to 1966” (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 1969).

¹¹⁸ Youngnok Koo and Dae-Sook Suh, eds., *Korea and the United States: A Century of Cooperation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984), 108.

¹¹⁹ Mark Peterson, “The American Impact on Korean Education: The Fulbright Contribution,” 46 in the Proceedings from An International Seminar on Humanity and Education, “American Impacts on the English Teaching and Education in Korea,” held on June 21-22, 1983 at Jeon Bug National University, Seoul, Korea.

¹²⁰ Song, “Who Stays? Who Returns? The Choices of Korean Scientists and Engineers” (PhD diss. Harvard University, 1991), 86.

Table 3. Distribution by country of where faculty members earned their doctoral degrees as of 1980¹²¹

Field	Country					Total
	Korea	N Am	Europe	Asia	Others	
Linguistics and Literature	60.1%	14.1%	18.9%	6.6%	0.1%	100.0%
Humanities	39.2	38.3	15.7	6.5	0.3	100.0
Social Sciences	47.2	36.4	11.6	4.7	0.2	100.0
Business Administration	65.5	26.1	5.4	3.0	0.0	100.0
Arts and Physical						
Education	24.6	60.7	11.5	3.3	0.0	100.0
Natural Sciences	53.5	29.7	6.0	9.4	0.4	100.0
Engineering	56.8	19.1	10.3	13.6	0.2	100.0
Fishery & Marine	53.0	6.1	19.7	21.2	0.0	100.0
Medical Sciences	90.2	3.7	1.6	4.4	0.1	100.0
Agric and Forestry	63.4	14.7	3.9	17.1	0.9	100.0
Total	61.1	21.9	8.7	8.0	0.3	100.0

At elite institutions like Seoul National University, a US doctoral degree was almost a necessity. According to the *2002 National Directory of University Professors in Korea*, the majority of SNU professors in every field, except for linguistics and literature and medical sciences, had earned their advanced degree in the United States. Departments of linguistics and literature logically preferred those educators who studied in countries most closely identified with the languages and literary works being taught. As for the humanities, professors at SNU received their final degrees fairly equally between the three categories of Korea, US, and other countries. This diversity came from preference for professors with intimate knowledge of the cultural and social elements of their areas of study. In terms of the characteristics of professors at SNU, those in the College of Medicine deviated the most from the overall pattern in that its faculty was comprised almost exclusively of graduates from Korean universities.¹²² Some of the factors contributing to this deviation include the admissions practices of US medical and dental schools, the Korean educational structure for medical programs, and professional licensing procedures. For these reasons, the following chart on SNU professors excludes the fields of linguistics and literature, humanities, and medical sciences. Accounting for these exceptions, 68% of all SNU professors received their doctoral degrees in the United States.

¹²¹ Table found in Wochul Kang, Insook Chang, Sungho Lee, *Daehak Kyosoozawon Teuksung Yonkoo* [An Analysis of Characteristics of University Professors] (Seoul: Korean Council for University Education, 1983), 37, quoted in Lee, “The Emergence of the Modern University in Korea,” 109.

¹²² *Chŏn’guk taehak kyosu myŏngbu* = *Faculty Directory of Universities in Korea: 2002-yŏndo* (Seoul: Han’guk Taehak Kyoyuk Hyŏbŭihoe, 2002).

Table 4. Distribution of country of where SNU faculty members earned their doctoral degrees as of 2002.¹²³

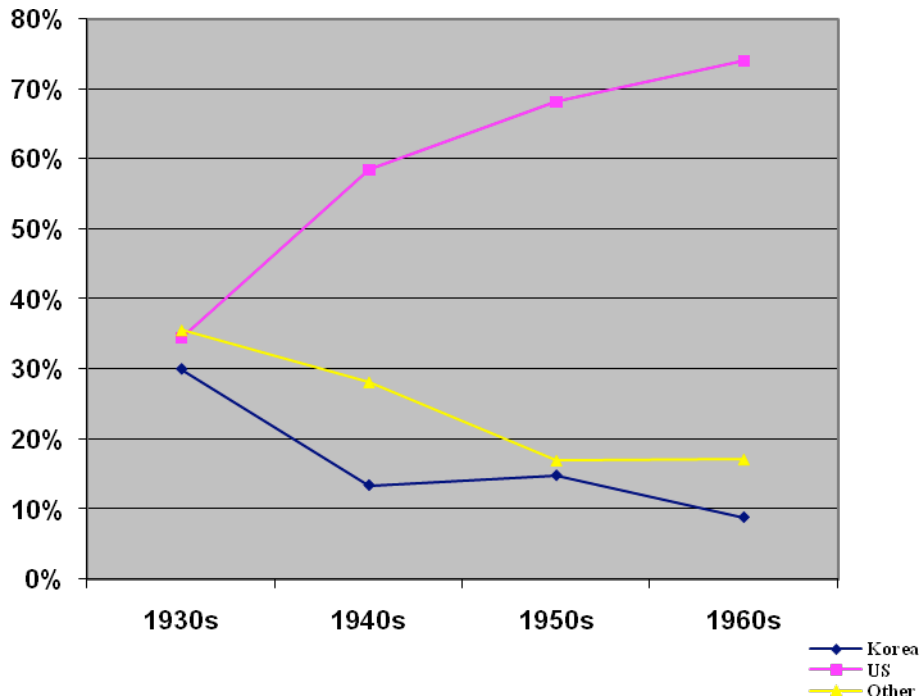
<i>Field</i>	<i>Country</i>			Total
	Korea	US	Other	
Social Sciences	11%	65%	24%	100.0%
Law	17%	60%	23%	100.0%
Field	11%	63%	26%	100.0%
Natural Sciences	5%	83%	12%	100.0%
Engineering	11%	75%	14%	100.0%
Home Economics	25%	63%	13%	100.0%
Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine	19%	61%	20%	100.0%
Education	24%	59%	17%	100.0%
Business Administration	7%	89%	5%	100.0%
Total	15%	68%	17%	100.0%

There is a near reversal in the distribution of where the SNU faculty received their doctoral degrees. At the start of 1980s, roughly 60% received their final degree in Korea and 20% in the United States. SNU began the 21st century with 15% educated in Korea and nearly 70% in the United States. When the US and Korean governments sent Korean professors to the United States in the late 1950s, they wanted a cadre of US-educated elites to advance Korea's economic development. These scholars were US-germinated seeds to be grown in Korea, with the hopes that they would produce other Korean scholars. They were fruitful in guiding subsequent scholars to the most recognized path to Korean academic success, a US doctoral degree.

Another way to look at the clear preference for US educated professors is by looking at where the SNU professors received their degrees over time. The following chart groups the professors by the decade of their birth with the assumption that most professors were hired at or around the same time as their contemporaries. All SNU professors except for those in the medical sciences were included.

¹²³ Table compiled by author based on data from *Chŏn'guk taehak kyosu myŏngbu*.

Chart 1. Distribution by country of where SNU faculty members received their doctoral degree by the decade of their birth¹²⁴



This graph depicts the undeniable fact that over time a greater percentage of SNU professors earned their doctoral degrees in the United States. A similar pattern is found throughout Korea's elite universities. The practice of seeking persons trained abroad is now firmly established in the Korean higher education.

In Closing

A series of reports generated near the end of the Korean War established that the Korean higher education was central to creating a vibrant Korean economy. Linked to the desired changes in Korean higher education was the need for its university professors to have modern, American training. To this end, the Korean and American governments initiated the SNU Project. Its planning and implementation show that the US made decisions according to its own perception of Korea's education needs, a view that reflected its interests in Korea. Despite the US decision-making role, however, Koreans exerted their influence on the development and outcome of the program. Indeed, structural limitations and cultural norms of the Korean society compromised the most basic stated US goal of the program -- the transfer of US knowledge and practices. Yet for the US government, the outcome of the SNU Project was highly favorable -- it

¹²⁴ Chart compiled by author based on information gathered from *Chŏn'guk taehak kyosu myŏngbu*. All professors in the medical sciences are excluded. This chart excludes the lone educator born in the 1970s who was working in SNU as of 2002.

successfully created a critical mass of US-educated Korean academic elites and created a positive association between US education and educational credibility in Korea.

Presented as a humanitarian activity, the SNU Project softened the image of the US image that was being shaped mostly by its military interventions and involvement. The SNU Project along with other educational assistance programs contributed to the development of universities as spaces for interactions and as points of contact. At Seoul National University, as well as other national universities with American funding running through its vein, there emerged a contested ground of influence peddling. It also became a platform for individuals to widen their opportunities and choices. The Korean preference for US educated individuals in universities and political arena only added to the pressures for individuals to go abroad. When filtered through the instrument of time and hindsight, the SNU Project did not change the highly centralized structure of the university nor the hierarchical classroom teaching.¹²⁵ The SNU Project did, however, establish the implicit requirement of a US degree for academic career advancement in the most prestigious universities. These persons, by their example and by their advices, in turn encouraged their students to go abroad. When US foreign aid agency shifted its focus away from academic training, the mass attraction and importance of a US education had already been established along with a steady and widening stream of students from Korea to the US.

¹²⁵ Most scholars writing about Korea's educational system without fail mention its highly centralized structure. For a specific example see Jeong-kyu Lee, "Globalization and Higher Education: A South Korean Perspective," <http://globalization.icaap.org/content/v4.1/lee.html> (accessed June 11, 2006)

Chapter 3

Studying Abroad: the SNU Participants¹

Two-hundred twenty-six members of the SNU faculty studied at the University of Minnesota under the Seoul National University (SNU) Project.² The program took place over six academic years, with the first class entering in the academic year 1955-1956 and the last entering 1960-1961.³ The Project's first phase involved the training of the teaching staff at SNU's schools of medicine, agriculture, and engineering, with veterinary medicine and nursing as subfields. A typical candidate was male, married, mid-thirties, with less than five years of teaching experience at SNU. The second phase of the SNU Project worked to establish the School of Public Administration, which included recruiting or training its new faculty members. UMN professors hired to develop the new department interviewed and chose its first faculty members, and immediately sent them to the UMN for training. Participants for the second phase came from Korean bureaucratic offices and from various universities in Korea. It was understood that upon returning from their training abroad they would resume or take up a teaching position in Seoul National University or the National Officer Training Institute.⁴ Together the two phases of the SNU Project provided advanced training for 57 SNU professors in agriculture, 64 in engineering, 78 in medicine, and 27 in public administration.⁵

Participant training or study abroad was at the heart of the SNU Project. It commenced soon after the UMN laid out its basic administrative structure. The selection process began with the SNU administrators drawing up a preliminary list of qualified participants based on the applications they received from SNU faculty members of departments slated for assistance. American administrators then narrowed down the list of candidates based on information and results found in the candidates' applications, medical examinations, personal interviews, and English proficiency evaluations. The successful candidates then enrolled in intensive language program and attended orientation meetings as part of their pre-departure preparation in Korea. Most arrived a few weeks before the semester began to hone their English language skills, make cultural adjustments, and in general familiarize themselves with the American educational system, specifically that of the University of Minnesota. In consultation with their American advisors, they made their class selection. Academic schedules differed widely for participants of the Project's first phase. Though they formed a tight-knit social circle, few crossed paths with

¹ The UMN Project participant training program was part of a larger study abroad program sponsored and funded by the US government. When the OEC director gave the statistics on Korean participant programs, he said that a total of 685 trainees had gone to the US or a third country in the years 1955, 1956, and 1957. However, he noted that this figure did not include the 103 who received their training at UMN. In this lecture and most other US sponsored participant training programs, the SNU Project is listed separately, suggesting that the project administration and goal differed from other programs. Mission director of OEC, ICA, Technical Lecture No. 1, [n.d.]. Short Papers, Box 17.

² The last "Semi-annual report" of the SNU Project gives this figure. However, a December 1969 document in the Info File on the UMN-SNU contract lists 229 participants as having studied in the US, in UMN University Archives, InfoFile, "Seoul National University."

³ For convenience, those arriving on the UMN campus for the first time will be referred to as the entering class of that particular year.

⁴ In reference to the NOTI candidates, Professor Draheim wrote Chief Advisor Schneider, "By signed agreements, on their return to Korea these men will serve as faculty members for NOTI subject to call by the Director of OGA and the Dean of NOTI." Draheim to Schneider, May 19, 1958, in Short Papers, Box 17, Folder "KP-6a Dr. E.R. Draheim Reports."

⁵ NOTI participants are included in this total. Source: "13th Semi-annual report," 19, in Short Papers, Box 18.

other Korean participants in classes or laboratories. The public administration participants, on the other hand, regularly met during their required year-long seminar sequence. In addition to UMN classes, the SNU faculty participated in fieldwork, internship, conferences, and independent research. Most participants began as non-degree, terminal students, but some participants received extensions to finish their master's degree or to pursue a doctoral degree. All participants returned to Korea and took up their teaching post, contributing to the growing prestige and legitimacy of US education and experience in Korea, especially in higher education.

The governments set the outer limits of the SNU Project and the administrators created the patterns for the participants to follow; yet, these individuals modified and determined the outcome of the project. Koreans participants exerted their will and created choices for themselves. More than any plans, their expectations and aptitude shaped their experiences in the US. Their transcripts and evaluation letters reveal they had differing work ethics. SNU Professor Paik's academic performance led his American professor to extend "his welcome here [UMN] to continue with research problem leading to obtaining the Ph.D. degree."⁶ Professor Choe, in the words of a very diplomatic UMN official, "made a most unfavorable impression."⁷ At the same time as one professor acknowledged an SNU faculty member as being on par with his best doctoral students, another wrote in disbelief about the "immature attitude" of a Korean participant who failed to "take the final examinations in his courses, in spite of the warning that such a step would be reported to the officials of Seoul National University."⁸ All candidates, regardless of their performance in Minnesota, were guaranteed a teaching position for at least two years.

Administrators from Minnesota planned for SNU's administrators to tour the UMN campus before the participant training program commenced. American planners scheduled observation tours or short-term "study abroad" trips aimed to "sell" the Project to the Korean decision-makers. SNU administrative officers would be brought for short periods of three to six months to the UMN to familiarize them with the latest developments in teaching methods, curriculum, laboratory procedures, research techniques, and service activities. The SNU President and deans of respective departments would be the first to visit. Soon after, select department heads and senior staff members would come to Minnesota and be given a more concrete picture of what the SNU Project would to achieve in their respective school. UMN campus coordinator Tyler summarized in a confidential letter,

Thus oriented, it was felt that these senior staff members would be much more likely to appreciate and utilize to the fullest the training in the U.S. received by the younger staff members who earned advanced degrees or carried courses for credit in the fields of their specialties.⁹

However, the campus tours did not go as planned. By the time the first class of SNU professors began in Minnesota, none of the four department deans had been at the UMN.¹⁰ Although three colleges were being rehabilitated in the first phase, there were actually four deans' offices involved since the Dean of Agriculture and Dean of Veterinary Medicine worked

⁶ Richard to Macy, November 12, 1956, in UMN Archives which one, Box 48, Folder "Staff to U of M who have returned to Korea."

⁷ Jacob K. Frederick to Tyler; March 25, 1960, in IoA Papers, Box 48, Folder "Staff to U of M who have returned to Korea."

⁸ Personal file of YSL, in IoA Papers, Box 48, Folder "Staff to U of M who have returned to Korea."

⁹ Tracy Tyler, "Academic Achievement of Korean Scholars – A Report on Minnesota Experiment," labeled "Dean Macy: For your information" with receipt stamp of April 20, 1961, 1, in IoA Papers, Box 50.

¹⁰ "Members of the SNU Faculty Studying at UMN," November 1, 1955, in IoA Papers, Box 48.

for the College of Agriculture. Some eventually came, and some never made it to the US. The Dean of Engineering, Yung Mo Hwang, was supposed to have arrived with the first class of engineering staff in the summer of 1955, but there is record of his arrival during the scheduled time or thereafter.¹¹ Likewise, Dean Haik Hyun Cho of the College of Agriculture did not participate.¹² Dean Sun Chin Kim of the College of Medicine and Dean Soon Sup Oh of the College of Veterinary Medicine arrived in the summer of 1956 with the second class of participants. They had postponed their observation tour to a more convenient time for them and for SNU. Yet coinciding with UMN objective to provide observation rather than training, neither Dean Kim nor Dean Oh enrolled in classes or received a degree or certificate for their time in Minnesota.¹³ As per recommendation, the average length of study abroad was shorter for SNU administrators than for its professors. By the fall of 1958, roughly 13% of the total participants had spent an average of six months in the Minnesota campus. 90% of this group held the positions of dean, department head or senior professor; and none of them were conferred a degree.¹⁴ Though UMN administrators made the initial decision on who would participate and for how long, it was up to the Koreans to carry it out.

Korean department faculties conducted the preliminary screening and submitted only those candidates they found acceptable for consideration. Candidates could withdraw their names at any point of the selection process. Each pre-screened candidate submitted a black and white photograph of himself in a dark suit along with a biographical data sheet, referred to in short as “bio-data.” These detailed resumes provided each candidate’s educational and job history, travel history, language proficiency, involvement in other technical assistance activities, and professional aspirations. Within a few days of submitting the bio-data, each candidate was interviewed to verify how accurately he had represented his English skills. An American project administrator would then countersign the bio data of the successful interviewees. For the final step, each candidate submitted the results of his medical examination.¹⁵

The application process culminated with an acceptance letter. The following excerpt of the acceptance letter made it into the hands of all participants in the Project’s first year:

We have reviewed the credential submitted in support of your application for advanced study at the University of Minnesota.

I am honored to inform you that we shall admit you as a special student for further study in the field of your major professional interest, as specified on your application. In view of our ignorance about levels of instruction and grade systems of the Korean institutions, we believe it to your best interests to reserve the decision regarding level of course work and ultimate program plans until you can confer with a faculty adviser, after your arrival, at the University of Minnesota.

¹¹ ICA sponsored Professor Bum Shik Woo, Head of the Textile Engineering Department and Dean of Students of the College of Engineering to study in the US. Professor Woo spent the 1955/56 academic year at Lowell Technological Institute in Lowell, MA. Source: Chapin A. Harris, “Textile Education in South Korea,” *Bulletin of the Lowell Technological Institute*, series 60, no. 3 (February 1957), 6, in Short Papers, Box 18.

¹² Dean Haik Hyn Cho’s son participated in the project. Assistant Professor Chai Moo Cho of biochemistry specialized in soil science and incidentally received the first PhD among the SNU participants in 1959.

¹³ In IoA Papers, Box 48, Folder “Staff from Korea who came to UMN.”

¹⁴ In *ICA-UMN Contract*, September 1958, 7, in Short Papers, Box 17.

¹⁵ Only one candidate was held back due to his illness. The departure date for one professor from SNU College of Agriculture was pushed back by half a year because he tested positive for tuberculosis.

Since your assignment for study here is limited on one- or two-year period, we can provide no assurance now that you can complete the requirements for a particular degree. We shall make every effort, however, to plan studies for you that will be most useful for your academic career at the Seoul National University upon your return to your country.¹⁶

The SNU Project administrators purportedly based their selection on the academic potential of the candidates in the areas most needed in postwar Korea. In actuality, the greatest determinate in the selection process, especially for candidates in degree programs, was age. Administrators agreed that the younger, junior professors would be the least missed in the already understaffed departments at SNU. Older professors should remain, the planners argued, because their valuable teaching skills and knowledge were needed immediately for classroom teaching. In private correspondences, UMN administrators worried that many of the older SNU professors would be resistant to change and that they would be slower to learn than their younger counterparts. Cognizant of the growing tension among professors over the selection bias, Minnesota representatives in some cases had to insist that Korean administrators include more senior members in their preliminary candidate lists.¹⁷ A few “older professors” who were selected, unfortunately, performed poorly at the UMN, which further reinforced the selection bias.¹⁸

The majority of Koreans brought to the UMN were junior faculty members. The Project representatives considered graduate student instructors as members of the faculty and thus they were eligible and preferred for study abroad. The program of study set up for the young scholars was to be comparable with the study the UMN required its own graduate students. Almost all graduate degrees that the UMN conferred to SNU faculty were to junior staff members. For example, from December 1958 through March 1961, eleven Korean faculty members earned PhD degrees; of whom nine had been teaching assistants and two lecturers at SNU.¹⁹ From December 1955 to March 1961, forty-four SNU Project members earned master’s degrees. All of the degree recipients had been teaching assistants and lecturers at SNU, the two lowest rungs in the faculty ladder, before coming to the UMN.²⁰

Unlike the participants in the first phase of the Project, who were professors already teaching at SNU, candidates for the public administration training program had diverse work experiences. In particular, in the first year candidates differed from subsequent classes in that only half of the eighteen candidates had experience teaching at a college level. Two high school teachers, a bank teller, and a literary translator were among the applicants.²¹ This diversity was not to be repeated in subsequent years. Candidates for 1958-59 were more representative of the public administration participants in general in that they had prior teaching experience in a

¹⁶ Tracy F. Tyler to Graduate Advisers of Korean Faculty Members Studying at the University of Minnesota, receipt stamp receipt of September 28, 1955), labeled “Subject: Planning Program of Study,” in IoA Papers, Box 48.

¹⁷ Martin Bronfenbrenner, *Academic Encounter: The American University in Japan and Korea* (NY: The Free Press, 1961), 180.

¹⁸ A private correspondence between American professors described “the difficulty that many older individuals experience in going back to school and having to do the work for an acceptable rather than merely a passing grade in a difficult subject.” In order to prevent a particular older SNU participant from “some feeling of a loss of ‘face’,” the letter writer suggested that he audit courses, in IoA Papers, Box 48, Folder “Staff to U of M who have returned to Korea.”

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 27-28.

²¹ Information based on bio-data of 1957-58 public administration participants. Short Papers, Box 18, Folder, “KP-8 Korean Participants (1957-58).”

university setting. This second class of public administration students included eight educators and one alternate for the SNU faculty and six participants and one alternate for NOTI's training staff. From the applications of successful candidates, the selection committee favored young candidates with a bachelor of arts in law with current affiliation at an accredited Korean university. With the exception of one SNU candidate admitted, all taught at a university as a lecturer or an assistant professor; the exception was a doctoral candidate in an ICA-supported university in the Philippines. There were no apparent correlation between successful candidacy and socioeconomic status, as it was measured by the occupation of the candidates' fathers. Applicants included sons of a fisherman, a public officer, a businessman, a farmer, a owner of distillery, a Congressman, and a government officer. As for NOTI candidates, the committee stated that their decision was based on the candidate's "value as future instructors at NOTI" and "future value to the ROK Government."²² More practically, all selected candidates received favorable evaluations on their English language skills. However, testing well in English did not necessarily mean that the candidates knew the language well.

When the first class of participants arrived on the UMN campus, it became evident that their English skills greatly hampered their learning. "Many of these colleagues from Korea had a bookish learning of English," wrote Malcolm M. Willey, "but lacked the proficiency that is called for in day to day contacts."²³ So for the following year, American advisors in Korea recommended English instruction prior to their departure, "but most of them [were] so busy and have so many commitments that attendance at the language courses [was] not good."²⁴ The recommendation became a requirement the following year. Starting in 1957, candidates enrolled in the Foreign Language Institute (FLI) in Seoul for five weeks of English instruction. The campus coordinator at the UMN noted with pleasure, "There can be no doubt that most of this superiority [in competence] was due to the English language instruction which most of the members of the group participated in before they left Korea."²⁵

American administrators showcased American thinking and practices as part of its orientation held in Korea. Among the activities offered were lectures on all encompassing topics like the "American Government" and "American Culture"; English-only "round-table type of discussions" led by invited government officers and project directors; and barbeques replete with hot dog and ketchup. In one particular year, the final pre-departure activity planned was a barbeque. Though it occurred in Korea, the gathering was laid out like a welcome mat to US culture. The coordinator chartered a bus to take the "participants, wives, girl friends, and children" to Kwang Nung (King's Tomb). Draheim announced that in case of rain, the party would be held at his house. Attending such a family gathering with one's girlfriend, unless marriage was pending, was unheard of. Moreover, the grassy area surrounding the tomb may have resembled the open outdoor space of an American picnic area, but it was not then or now a place for a cook out. Today, this and other dynastic areas are cordoned off with little placards that say, "Do not walk on the grass." Korean etiquette called for invitees to bring gifts to another's home, but they certainly never had "to bring their own picnic lunch and drinks. Draheim did provide "hot dogs," which he made sure to place in quotation marks.²⁶ He certainly had no plan to serve the literal version of the Korean dog stew, which was a source of ridicule

²² Draheim to Prof. George A. Warp, May 12, 1958, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder 19.

²³ Malcolm M. Willey to Dean E. W. McDiarmid, November 29, 1955, in DoS Students Papers, Box 52.

²⁴ "Office Memorandum of Visit to Seoul, Korea," October 1, 1956, 4, in IoA Papers, Box 50.

²⁵ "English Language Program Reports – SNU (Aug. 12-Sept. 21, 1957)," 6, in Short Papers, Box 18.

²⁶ Memo from Draheim to NOTI-related participants, June 3, 1958, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder 9.

and revulsion among the American soldiers. The candidates were being invited to much more than a picnic or a barbeque. It was an invitation to experience a part of American life and was a preview of what was to come in Minnesota. For most, it turned out to be the only picnic they attended. The goodwill of the planner made clear the great cultural divide separating Koreans from Americans, even those sympathetic Americans living in Korea. The Korean participants, whether they were ready or not, headed to the US.

The orientation continued at the UMN, but like the SNU Project itself, the Minnesotan orientation was also a work in progress. The UMN Campus Coordinator began the Project's first year at a near panic. It was near the end of May, but where were the participants? Besides those who were already on campus, more participants were supposed to arrive on or about the 5th of June followed by another group between the 10th and the 20th of June. The letters that the Chief Adviser in Korea sent him said more participants would *probably* arrive in the "fall of 1955," but he really had no idea exactly when they get to Minnesota.²⁷ Then there were those participants in engineering who have not even been selected yet. He was fielding questions from UMN deans, professors, and the foreign student advisor on what would be needed. Inquiries regarding language training were made with various experts on campus, but it was difficult to choose a course of action when he did not know when the participants would be arriving. The sense of chaos pervaded every aspect of the program.

Candidates' bio-data that the UMN personnel received from their Korean counterpart stated their proposed departure dates. However, candidates viewed these proposed departure dates as mere guidelines. For example, during the academic year 1955 and 1956, records indicate sixteen SNU professors being trained in agriculture and veterinary medicine. As far as it can be ascertained, one professor arrived in April of 1955, with other arrivals scattered throughout June, September, December and even as late of April of 1956. Although American personnel in Seoul recommended coordination, Korean participants chose to exercise their options. A few members decided to prolong their stopover, mostly in Hawaii or California, while some chose to remain in Korea a few more weeks to put their personal affairs in order, like getting married! A UMN staff member wrote that "the failure of the Koreans to arrive when expected" was a major handicap to a successful orientation program. He continued, "This circumstance complicated class adjustment, forced the staff to spend time repeating the pretesting program, and unhappily restricted the planned orientation activities."²⁸

Garbed in their professorial uniform of a dark suit and tie, the Korean professors did arrive on the Minnesota campus, usually in groups of two or three. Some loosened their ties or even took them off and adjusted to their new status and role as international students. They first headed for the Office of Campus Coordinator and then to their assigned on-campus housing to drop off their luggage. Unbeknownst to the participants, the UMN community had opposed the on-campus assignment of a large block of rooms to the foreign nationals. However, the "[Korean Advisory] Committee agreed that it had an obligation under the FOA contract to house the Koreans in the dormitories."²⁹ As with any person, the tendency to seek the familiar was strong. One American professor noted in his evaluation of one SNU professor that "it would be desirable from the language point of view if the Koreans would room by themselves or with

²⁷ Arthur E. Schneider to Tracy F. Tyler, May 19, 1955, in IoA Papers, Box 48.

²⁸ "English Language Program Reports – SNU (Aug. 12-Sept. 21, 1957)," 7.

²⁹ "Korean Advisory Committee notes from May 18, 1955, in Short Papers, Box 17, Folder "Korean Advisory Committee."

English-speaking students in order to get more practice in the spoken language.”³⁰ Contrary to the suggestions, SNU members roomed exclusively with other SNU participants or with other Koreans attending the UMN.

The orientation activities consisted mainly of improving English training and developing cultural awareness. Of the battery of placement tests given during the orientation, the impromptu written composition tested the cultural adaptability as well as expectations of the SNU group. Participants arriving in the summer of 1957 wrote on the essay topic, “What has happened to me since I left Korea.” At the end of the month-long language course, they wrote two additional essays on “American customs causing difficulties in my adjusting to the American life” and “The meaning of my year in America for my future work in Korea.”³¹ For public administration participants, in particular, the UMN Campus Coordinator matched them with American graduate students with similar academic and special interests. In the later years, social functions like dinners in private homes were added.³²

Professors assigned to advise Korean faculty also needed to prepare themselves to the special needs of their foreign students. They wrote to ask the campus coordinator for additional information and direction in guiding these students. For how long were the Koreans staying in Minnesota?³³ Should the SNU members be enrolled in graduate or undergraduate courses, for credit or for audit? What was their enrollment status, visiting scholars or students working for a degree? Tyler began fielding questions immediately after he entered his post as the campus coordinator. Tyler wrote that Korean faculty members were not promised more than one year of study. However, if the individual was not profiting from his studies, then “we” could in an extreme case send the person back to Korea. On the flip side, they could also grant extensions to deserving participants. As to which courses were applicable, Tyler provided that they “should be planned in terms of their individual abilities.” It was up to the advisers to recommend specific classes and for the participants to act upon those suggestions. And if the participant seemed unready to tackle a graduate course, then they could register as an auditor. Tyler reminded the advisers that in regards to all decisions, the guiding criterion should be “whether it would benefit Seoul National University.”³⁴

Every SNU professor in engineering, medicine, and agriculture was assigned an adviser in his field of specialization. For the public administration participants, one professor counseled the entire group. All participants met with their advisers at the start of their studies, but many shied away or even avoided all follow-up meetings. To counteract this trend, some advisers

³⁰ J.W. Lambert to Tracy Tyler, September 5, 1961, in IoA Papers, Box 17.

³¹ Harold B. Allen, Associate Professor of English and Director, “A Report Concerning the Special Intensive Program in the English Language given at the University of Minnesota for Faculty Members from Seoul National University of Korea,” in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder “English Language Program Reports; SNU Visiting Faculty.”

³² In Short Papers, Box 18, Folder “English Language Program Reports; SNU Visiting Faculty.”

³³ A small contingent of the participants left for other universities after their orientation at the UMN. For example, Korean academes needing training in textile and naval architecture left for Lowell Technological Institute and Massachusetts Institute of Technology respectively, and a specialist in veterinary medicine departed for the University of California at Davis. Dr. Chapin A. Harris of the Lowell Technological Institute spent three months in Seoul as Adviser in Textile Engineering to SNU in the summer of 1956. Following his return, he published an article in his school’s bulletin detailing Korea’s textile education. Of note are the pictures of the ICA participants at the Lowell Technological Institute and the pictures of Seoul National University. “Textile Education in South Korea,” *Bulletin of the Lowell Technological Institute*, series 60, no. 3 (February, 1957): 3-13, in Short Papers, Box 18.

³⁴ Tracy F. Tyler to Graduate Advisers of Korean Faculty Members Studying at the University of Minnesota, September 28, 1955[stamp of receipt], in IoA Papers, Box 48.

mandated interviews or meetings that went unheeded.³⁵ The level of interaction depended on the type of program pursued to a certain extent. Auditors and non-degree candidates rarely met with their assigned advisers while those working towards a degree or engaged in laboratory-based research projects did.

The needs of SNU as it related to the Korean rehabilitation circumscribed the participants' academic choices. First of all, SNU professors enrolled in classes that related to his area of expertise. An examination of the classes taken and research conducted by SNU professors in agriculture and veterinary medicine show that they took survey courses in their field. They not only gained "modern" knowledge but also American teaching methods and research techniques. As for the ultimate goal of rebuilding Korea's infrastructure, SNU professors with the language facility and prior technical skills immediately looked for ways to apply what they were learning to solve Korea's need. For example, participants looked for practical solutions in food production and management. While one scholar analyzed how to efficiently process meat and milk, another considered methods to market agricultural products. Others studied ways to increase crop yield in Korea, and designed a system of agricultural cooperatives and credits. While at the UMN, Ho Sik Kim successfully produced a mutant strain of mold that yielded "greater starch- and protein- digesting properties than the parent strains."³⁶ His work led to publications and recognitions in academic circles, and more importantly it resulted in a more nutritional and digestible grain for his countrymen.

As a group, participants took back to Korea with them the teachings and course materials from hundreds of classes. The eighteen public administration candidates in 1958-1959 alone took eighty-nine different courses in ten departments in the course of one year.³⁷ Every member also took a special "core seminar" every semester designed specifically for the SNU participants, and in their final semester at the UMN enrolled in a "Special Projects" course. Cross-referencing their bio-data sheets with their UMN transcripts, individuals took classes that aligned with their professional interests, often only taking courses from one department. Again from the public administration class of 1958-1959, all the journalism courses were taken by C.K. Park. He was on leave from his government position in the Press Section of Korea's Office of Public Information and prior to this government post he had "handl[ed] documents concerning press release" and "edited and translated news articles."³⁸ Professor Suh concentrated on the School of Education's course offerings in preparation for his future assignment as the liaison between SNU and NOTI. As expected, he explored the relationship between these two Korean institutions for his final project at the UMN. Another candidate in this class, D.H. Park from ROK's Ministry of Finance, was told that he would be responsible for "general training related to financial administration" when he returned to his government post. More specifically he would teach a course on Budget Control. Accordingly, all but his required core seminars were in the economics department.³⁹ The course of study followed by this public administration class was representative in that each Korean student learned as much as he could in his given field, but not at all representative of the breadth of knowledge advocated and touted by American universities.

³⁵ Memorandum from Warp to participants, September 12, 1958, in Short Papers, Box 18.

³⁶ W. F. Geddes to Tracy Tyler, November 13, 1956, in IoA Papers, Box 48.

³⁷ The eighteen participants took one course in agriculture, 20 in business administration, 14 in economics, 11 in education, 1 in history, 6 in journalism, 1 in mathematics, 25 in political sciences, 4 in psychology, and 6 in sociology. Compiled using transcripts of the public administration candidates, entering class of 1958. In Short Papers, Box 18, Folder 19.

³⁸ Information from bio-data and transcript for CKP, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder 19.

³⁹ Information from bio-data and transcript for DHP, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder 19.

Besides their classroom learning, SNU professors were to observe and absorb the mindset and work ethics of Americans. This was particularly true for public administrators who would be training Koreans to manage and lead their society and economy. The following activities, attended by Koreans public administrators who came to Minnesota in 1957, show these candidates' exposure to the workings of the American government and its commercial enterprises. Minnesota scheduled visits to different organizations and arranged meetings with their representatives for the future Korean public administration experts. This included tours of the Southdale Shopping Center, Ford Assembly Plant, and the Glen Lake Tuberculosis Sanitarium. They traveled to St. Paul to meet with Minnesota Governor Orville Freeman.⁴⁰ And in their mandated group seminars, many public officials visited as guest lecturers. For example in one class session, the Commissioner of Administration for the State of Minnesota spoke on the "practice of public administration," and shared how the methods they were learning were being practiced in his organization. In addition, the Korean candidates attended the annual conference of the American Society for Public Administration in New York City, followed by a visit to Washington DC.⁴¹

Not all planned activities showcased the merits of an American education and society. No amount of planning and organizing could mask the "unequal freedom"⁴² practiced by the American public in the mid to late 1950s. One poignant example took place in the summer of 1959 when the SNU participants took a long bus ride to Washington, DC to attend a national conference for public administrators. By the time they arrived, it was late so they headed straight to their lodging. The campus coordinator had reserved a "single room without bath for [each of the participants] at the lowest available rate" at the YMCA.⁴³ A good night's rest was not to be had for the group since the manager on duty simply told them that there was no vacancy and turned them out. He gave no explanations for why their reservation was canceled nor did he offer suggestions for other accommodations. A few weeks after the incident, a Korean participant recounted the scene in his letter to his adviser. He wrote quite diplomatically, "Even though we failed to get the reservation at the YMCA Hotel, fortunately we met an American father who arranged for us to stay at a hotel and who carried us in his car at midnight."⁴⁴ Since the advisor already knew about the changes in the lodging at the time the letter was written, the additional details were most likely provided to "air out" the problem. Upon receipt, Professor Warp, the public administration advisor, addressed his shock and embarrassment to the YMCA manager,

Until now, I had assumed that you had arranged for them to stay at another hotel.... It seems strange that YMCA personnel would leave a group of foreign visitors arriving in Washington late at night and with definite and confirmed reservations to their own resources in finding lodging. Frankly, I am shocked at this treatment. I think that some investigation is in order.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ "Schedule of visitation, between fall and winter quarters, 1957-58," in Short Papers, Box 18.

⁴¹ "Material for Semi-annual Report – Public Administration," [July 1958?], 1-5; similar information found in "8th Semi-annual report," October 6, 1958), 13-19 in Short Papers.

⁴² This phrase is from Evelyn Nakano Glenn's work of the same title. Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

⁴³ Letter from Kubanis to various YMCA; dated 5 June 1959. Short Papers, Box 18, Folder "Korean Participants (1958-1959).

⁴⁴ Warp to Mr. Carleton Knight, manager at central branch YMCA in Washington, DC, July 13, 1959, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder "Korean Participants (1958-1959)."

⁴⁵ Ibid.

A volley of letters ensued resulting in a formal apology from the YMCA manager. Warp concluded the inquiry by telling the manager that he had “passed on to them your expression of regret concerning the situation.”⁴⁶

Why had the conference attendees felt that they had no recourse but to walk out of the not-so-Christian behaving establishment? The SNU participants did not even inform their advisor of the unpleasant encounter until a few weeks after the event. Perchance they sought some distance from the event or they were reluctant to cause their advisor or campus coordinator embarrassment. More likely, they understood that the American society was stratified and the much touted equality did not apply uniformly to everyone. They understood the unwillingness of Americans to look beyond the participants’ racial uniform of “yellow skin.”⁴⁷ This did not come as a surprise. The unequal interaction between the two governments, American soldiers and Korean civilians, and between American administrators and Korean participants had shadowed and foregrounded their study abroad. In spite of the “unequal freedom,” individual participants knew they had much to gain from the Project.

Of all the Korean trainees sent to Minnesota, public administration participants received the most funding for off campus travel since their “research laboratory” was the greater American society. Whereas UMN educators exclusively handled the education of candidates in the first project, US government officers -- from embassy personnel to state governor -- became involved in the second. The Minnesota representatives justified the expenses incurred by appealing to American officials’ belief that these international students, upon their return home, would be in positions to directly influence the shape and direction of Korea’s bureaucracy. From their government offices and lecture halls, these persons could introduce American system of bookkeeping and housekeeping within Korea’s two largest institutional arenas, the government and higher education. These individuals did aid in the redesign and renaming of Korean ministries and their subdivisions to reflect those of the US. They applied the modern and scientific method of measuring results and changes using quantifiable variables that they had learned at the UMN. In theory, the use of these measurements and analyses not only facilitated data sharing but also made it easier for US officials and foreign investors to understand and justify their investment in Korea. Even after their UMN studies, the US government provided funding for participants to attend and present at international conferences held for newly emerging democratic countries. These conferences brought together the many foreign public administrators the US had helped educate.

As a group, the Korean students had a steep learning curve, which included specialized knowledge and a new language. Every participant training program involving non-English speaking countries experienced this language difficulty. English topped the list of factors shaping individual progress and choice. The SNU Project files are full of folders containing private correspondence, progress reports, and evaluations expressing worry over the participants’ lack of oral and aural English skills. Some Korean participants enrolled in remedial English courses and caused over enrollment in communication and language classes. During the first year of the SNU Project, UMN’s foreign student advisor informed the Dean of Students, “While these students are registered and are eligible to use the normal Educational Skills Clinic and the Speech Clinic on a fee basis, the fact remains that neither of these clinics is staffed to absorb this

⁴⁶ Warp to Mr. Carleton Knight, July 21, 1959, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder “Korean Participants (1958-1959).”

⁴⁷ The term “racial uniform” appears in Gary Y. Okihiro’s *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 1994).

kind of load.”⁴⁸ Documents circulated internally were laden with alarm and a sense of urgency, calling for an immediate solution to the language problem. One adviser warned that his students were having “great difficulty with English in their coursework..., special measures to save these students from academic failure [was needed].” He emphasized, “This is an emergency situation.”⁴⁹ The UMN hired additional staff members as well as tutors hired specifically for the SNU participants, but their services were not enough. When speaking to those out the UMN campus, the Project administrators spoke in a much more subdued and positive tone,

All of our participants have had some difficulty in understanding oral English....

Judging from examinations and reports, most of the students write at least as well as they speak. Some of them do an outstanding job in their written work.

Practically all of the participants do well in reading – only a few have been unable to keep up with the heavy reading assignments which we impose upon our graduate students.⁵⁰

In reality, the language difficulties precluded the knowledge transfer envisioned by the planners. In some cases, participants and their advisers decided that it would be more profitable for them to “get as much information as possible from [their] courses without attempting to obtain a degree.”⁵¹ According to one adviser, a Korean agronomist fared much better when the pressure of finishing a degree was removed. Yet, he continued to isolate himself from his American classmates, choosing instead to work on “various papers which he wrote based on library research.”⁵² Some professors wrote bluntly that they could not comment on SNU members because of their inability to communicate let alone evaluate their academic performance.⁵³ They found it impossible to pursue their proposed field of studies because of their language problems. In one particular case, a SNU teaching assistant had such “unusual language difficulties” that he had to switch from his stated goal of studying agrarian cooperative to the number and chart-oriented statistical methods.⁵⁴

The SNU professors experiencing the most success in their coursework and research tended to be those in the hard sciences. As in any graduate school program some scholars stood out among their peers. American professors recommended exceptional students to be kept at the UMN to pursue a master’s or doctoral program. Not surprisingly, the most glowing recommendations belonged in the dossier of PhD candidates. Cho, Chai Moo was among the first group of SNU educators admitted to the UMN. He quickly established himself as a skilled scientist, and his initial two-year program was extended for another two years so he could finish his doctorate program. Upon his return, he became the first postdoctoral research fellow at the Korean Academy of Science. Another participant identified as an excellent candidate from the beginning of his studies was SNU teaching assistant of Veterinary Medicine Cho, Byung Ryul. Professor Pomeroy commented on how Professor Cho “had very little difficulty in participating in formal classes” because he had a “good knowledge of English before he came to the University.”⁵⁵ The SNU teaching assistant completed his coursework for a doctorate in

⁴⁸ Forrest G. Moore to Dean EG Williamson, October 3, 1955, in DoS Papers, Box 52, Folder “1.8.50.3 English for Foreign Students, 1955-60.”

⁴⁹ George Warp to Tracy Tyler, October 21, 1957, in Short Papers, Box 18,

⁵⁰ Short to Lawson, January 13, 1960, in Short Papers, Box 17, Folder 67.

⁵¹ A.R. Schmid to Tracy Tyler, August 30, 1961, in IoA Papers, Box 48.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ In IoA Papers, Box 48, Folder “YLC.”

⁵⁴ In IoA Papers, Box 48, Folder “YKS.”

⁵⁵ In IoA Papers, Box 48, Folder “BRC.”

Minnesota and finished his dissertation upon his return to Korea. Ho-Wang Lee, the leading candidate for Korea's first Nobel Prize in the sciences, was among the exceptional students. As part of the SNU Project, he received his master's degree in 1957 and a doctoral degree in microbiology in 1959. He is currently the president of the National Academy of Sciences, and was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, DC.⁵⁶

No generalization, however, can be made of which phase of the Project was "easier" or more successful. The first phase of the Project consisted of scientists and engineers, engaged in fields with its own highly technical language and skills that in part rivaled English as the functional mode of communication. In general, the Korean scientists' also studied at the UMN for a shorter period of time and received fewer extensions than the second phase participants. The public administration candidates experienced difficulties in their courses because of their heavy reading load and discussion-based learning. However, these social scientists had a greater support network with a dedicated adviser and tutors.

Academic success was often measured by degrees earned, and in order for Korean participants to complete their graduate studies they needed extensions. The UMN professors and administrators did not initiate or decide all of the extension cases. The process was similar to the candidate selection process in that no one monopolized the decision-making process. Yet Korean administrators did interject their opinions and ultimately determined who continued on at the UMN. The factor that kick-started the process of extending a candidate's studies was foremost the demonstrated ability of the Korean candidate. Second in importance seems to have been the candidate's initiative. In the case of H.B. Im, he waged a personal campaign for his extension by visiting professors to ask for their support in continuing as a graduate student in the Department of Botany.⁵⁷ His professors lent their full support for this "unusually capable scientist" to pursue his PhD at the University of Minnesota.⁵⁸ The recommendations were then forwarded to the Chief Adviser in Korea who then passed it onto the President of SNU. The President then consulted the Dean of Agriculture, who insisted that Im return to resume his teaching duties. SNU's administration denied Im an extension. The SNU President conveyed to Minnesota representatives that Im's immediate return to Korea would meet the "[p]rimary need for upgrading of staff through graduate studies and an opportunity to become acquainted with present day ideas of course makeup of curricula...."⁵⁹ This reply stopped the administrative process for extension.

The SNU Project participants, especially those with extensions, conducted research aimed at expediting Korea's recovery and reconstruction. American advisors guided the advanced degree candidates towards topics that coincided with the teaching duties awaiting them in Korea. SNU professors were further encouraged to conduct research with immediate application to Korea. One semi-annual report stated that for participants in veterinary medicine, "Considerable freedom [was] given each Korean faculty member in choosing his research problem, trying to relate it to the more important animal disease problems of his country."⁶⁰ As for the engineering participants, strong emphasis was placed on acquainting them with laboratory methods in order to "make best use of the laboratory equipment which the advisers [were]

⁵⁶ William Hoffman, "Land of Morning Calm Revisited," *The Doric Column*, February 189, 2003, <http://www.mbbnet.umn.edu/doric/korea.html#broadband> (accessed on May 25, 2010).

⁵⁷ Allan H. Brown to Dean Bailey, January 30, 1958, IoA Papers, Box 48, Folder "BYI."

⁵⁸ Evaluation letter from Ernst C. Abbe, in IoA Papers, Box 48, Folder "HBI."

⁵⁹ Schneider to Tyler, March 14, 1958, in IoA Papers, Box 48, Folder "HBI."

⁶⁰ "8th Semi-annual report," October 6, 1958, 11, in Short Papers, Box 18.

recommending that the ICA purchase for the [SNU] University.”⁶¹ Most SNU engineering professors were sent to other America institutions as the specialized knowledge sought was not available at the UMN or other institutions were more commercially oriented in their approach. The UMN sent those studying textile to Lowell Technological Institute, ceramics to Ohio State University, and naval architecture to Massachusetts Institute of Technology.⁶² In the medical sciences, few candidates were granted graduate degrees to lend greater legitimacy to the modern methods they would be introducing in Korea. More than any departments, SNU’s College of Medicine worked towards breadth of knowledge in the *field* as a whole through individual’s specific areas of specialization. For example, the first class of SNU physicians at the UMN pursued at least fifteen different areas of specialization.⁶³ In line with the needs of a postwar country which suffered enormous casualties, the only subjects being covered by more than one physician were in such “generalist” areas as internal medicine and surgery. The research and internship of public administration students built up the curriculum and led to practical experiences of the SNU’s new School of Public Administration. All public administration candidates wrote either a year-end project detailing the course that they would teach or a proposal for a research project that they would implement in Korea. Professor Warp, the public administration advisor to the SNU Project, reminded his students “keep in mind that you are preparing your course for offering in Korea, not in MN.”⁶⁴ All candidates also submitted their course outline, a paragraph on each class meeting, a bibliography of selected work pertinent to their topic, and a course reader. They identified English-language scholarship pertinent to their courses; materials that they felt should be translated into Korean. Most of the courses they prepared for emphasize changing the Korean government could change to promote economic development.

Public Administration candidate study abroad ended with an internship, mostly at US government agencies. They were dispersed throughout the East and Midwest for their on-job training.⁶⁵ For example, the class that entered 1958-59 was assigned to:

<u>Participants</u>	<u>Internship</u>
Cho, Suk	
Choon	US Department of Interior
Choi, Chong	
Ki	World Health Organization, regional office
Choi, Kwang	
Pil	Tennessee Valley Authority
Kang, Pyung	Institute of Survey Research Techniques,
Kun	University of Michigan
Kim, Kee	Institute of Records Administration,
Mook	American University

⁶¹ Chapin A. Harris, “Textile Education in South Korea” in *Bulletin of the Lowell Technological Institutes*, series 6, no. 3 (February 1957), 6, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder “Project Reports, MNU-SNU, Engineering, Jan-June 1957.”

⁶² “Members of SNU Faculty studying at UMN,” November 1, 1955, in IoA Papers, Box 48.

⁶³ The areas of study included biochemistry, internal medicine, gastroenterology, surgery, radiology, pediatrics, parasitology, anatomy, obstetrics/gynecology, anesthesiology, microbiology, otolaryngology, pathology, pharmacology, and physiology. Source: Ibid.

⁶⁴ Memorandum from Professor Warp, April 9, 1959, in Short Papers, Box 18.

⁶⁵ Compiled using transcripts of the 1958 public administration candidates. In Short Papers, Box 18, Folder 19.

Lee, Hong Soo US Bureau of Budget
 Lee, Woo Center for International Studies,
 Hyun Massachusetts Institute of Technology
 Park, Chang Public Relations Division, Port of New York
 Keun Authority
 Park, Dong Department of Administration, University of
 Hee Michigan
 Park, Jong
 Han US General Services Administration
 Park, Tae Sup US Department of Agriculture
 Rhee, Hai
 Won National Capital Planning Commission
 Suck, Jae
 Duck US Department of Commerce, Chicago office
 Suh, Bong
 Chan University of Delaware

Though most public administration participants, including those above, pursued a master's degree, few completed the program. Before leaving the UMN, they completed all coursework, passed their comprehensive written exam, chose their thesis topic, and began their original research. The plan was to write their thesis and defend their work in Korea. Many of the degree candidates were junior faculty members, and they found their job situation in Korea precarious. Few had full-time teaching positions, and most lectured at multiple universities or did translation work to make a living. Some of the younger instructors also devoted considerable emotional energy on the serious task of finding a mate.⁶⁶ One SNU professor taught classes and headed up the special library in public administration while looking for ways to supplement his income.⁶⁷ UMN advisors were aware of their busy schedule, and continued to remind and encourage them to finish their theses.⁶⁸ For some participants, it was not the lack of time, but the lack of a pressing need to finish their thesis. Their department exerted no pressure for them to complete their degree program and there seemed to have been no negative repercussion for not getting the American degree. The norm was an American education, with or without the degree. In the case of one candidate, UMN Professor Warp commended him for his active participation in the development of the new School of Public Administration and the publication of his book, and then encouraged him to finish his thesis.⁶⁹ Sang-jo Yi's book was the first Korean language publication on public administration written by a SNU Project participant. Had it been written in English, the 400-page tome likely would have sufficed for a master's thesis.⁷⁰ Once in Korea, the participants adjusted to the immediate economic and academic needs that faced them. They needed Korean language books for their students and develop methods that applied directly to their on the ground conditions. A completed thesis did not fit a need.

Though few received a diploma, most SNU Participants received an official document for their participation. Minnesota's representatives understood the need to be recognized, and

⁶⁶ Lloyd M. Short to Tae Choon Kim, February 9, 1960, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder KP-8.

⁶⁷ Warp to Mr. Hae Kyun Ahn, December 18, 1958, in Short Papers, Box 18.

⁶⁸ See Short Papers, Box 18.

⁶⁹ Warp to Sang Jyo Lee, December 30, 1959, in Short Papers, Box 18, Folder "KP-8 Korean Participants (1957-58).

⁷⁰ Sang-jo Yi, *Haengjŏnghak wŏllon* [Public Administration] (Seoul: Changmunsa, Tan'gi 4292, 1959).

against their general policy, issued certificates of attendance or completion to the participants. The last semi-annual report on file stated that roughly three-quarters of them enrolled in classes for credits; the remaining quarter audited courses, observed procedures, and or “worked” with American professors.⁷¹ In total, there were Korean 226 participants supported by the SNU Project.⁷² Of this group, forty-four received their master’s degrees, and eleven earned doctoral degrees.⁷³ There was no initial plan to confer PhDs, so this 5% exceeded the administrators’ expectations. On the other hand, the majority of participants failed to join or complete a master’s program. Roughly 80% of the participants returned from abroad without the knowledge expected of specialists. Although American professors found the academic performance of most SNU professors to be less than satisfactory, all held teaching and leadership positions upon their return.

American professors questioned whether these individuals had really mastered the knowledge that Korea needed. One UMN professor expressed his grave reservation about his student’s ability to teach. Professor Myers wrote in his evaluation letter, “[I] doubt whether he has the ability to assume larger responsibilities.”⁷⁴ Some acknowledged that participants worked hard, but added phrases like “I cannot state that he was a topnotch student”⁷⁵ and “it would appear that ... his intellectual capabilities are not brilliant.”⁷⁶ Nonetheless, most commentators echoed the following comment, “he should make an effective member of the Seoul National University faculty.”⁷⁷ Implicit in many of their evaluations was the understanding that the professorial staff at SNU would be held to a different standard than would professors at an American university. Except for the doctoral students, UMN administrators lowered their standard for the participants. It did not take much to impress some of the American educators. In a matter-of-fact tone, one professor wrote, “Frankly, we feel that the selection of participants for this year was rather good. No one in the present group failed.”⁷⁸ Americans confined their negatives comments to private communications as they publicly endorsed their Korean participants, reasoning that a US-education could only improve a person’s teaching and administrative skills.

⁷¹ “13th Semi-annual report,” 19.

⁷² 229 participants are listed in a December 1969 document found in the UMN University Archives, InfoFile, “Seoul National University.”

⁷³ “13th semi-annual report,” 26. The numbers are again different in the InfoFile. Documents in the InfoFile list 14 PhDs and 60 MAs.

⁷⁴ W.M. Myers to Dean H. Macy, December 18, 1958, in IoA Papers, Box 48.

⁷⁵ In IoA Papers, Box 48, Folder “KWS.”

⁷⁶ J.W. Lambert to Tracy Tyler, September 5, 1961, in IoA Papers, Box 48.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ George A. Warp to Dean Tai Whan Shin, SNU College of Law, April 14, 1958, in Short Papers, Box 17.

Chapter 4

KAIS and the Question of Intellectual Mobility

Korean students entered the United States in increasing numbers after the end of the Korean War. The encounters and interactions between the citizens and governments of the US and Korea during the military occupation in the 1940s and even more during the civil war in the early 1950s produced educational openings for Koreans. Joint US/Korean programs, aimed at equipping Koreans with skills to rebuild their country, sent a small but influential group to American universities in the 1950s and 1960s. The Seoul National University (SNU) Project was arguably the most important example of such a joint project. The US government hired the University of Minnesota to rehabilitate four key departments at its preeminent university, SNU. Washington University, George Peabody School of Education, Syracuse University, and Battelle Memorial Institute engaged in similar technical assistance programs with other Korean institutions. These government-sponsored student scholars, along with privately-funded students, returned and served key roles in Korea's postwar reconstruction. By the mid-1960s, they occupied strategic policymaking positions as well as key teaching posts in elite Korean universities.

The majority of Korean students, however, remained in the US. Unlike the select students in joint programs, who had jobs waiting for them, most students would have to go back to Korea and then look for employment. As a matter of fact, Korea in the early years of post-WWII rehabilitation and post-Korean War reconstruction could not easily absorb these students. Some students had gained expertise in handling specialized machines while others had graduated in fields that did not exist in Korea. Many Korean students found their chances for personal advancement to be far greater in the US. Though the Korean government knew about the phenomenon of nonreturn, it did not actively seek the repatriation of these skilled people. Under President Park Chung Hee, Korea would begin to recruit a few among the growing body of educated Koreans in the United States.

With Park Chung Hee's inauguration in 1963, the Korean government poured its energy on industrializing the nation. Park considered the development of a science and technology base as critical to strengthening the Korean economy and security. The Park government actively recruited a small cadre of US-educated elites to return to Korea as a way to import scientific knowledge. Furthermore, the Korean government sought to establish an indigenous research university where Korean scientists and engineers could share and expand on what they had learned abroad. The Korean government formally requested and received assistance from the US government in creating its first teaching university devoted solely to science and technology. This institute was to generate practical solutions to the nation's fledgling industries. The search for a university to emulate led to Stanford University, who was then contracted to coordinate and oversee the establishment of a Korean entrepreneurial university. What followed was the founding of the Korea Advanced Institute of Science (KAIS).

The founding of KAIS reflects the interwoven histories of the two governments, their educational institutes, and people. Under Park Chung Hee, the Korean government implemented a series of five-year economic plans that called for the mass importation of scientific and technological knowledge. The ambitious plan established research and

teaching institutes, of which KAIS stood at the core of the favored cluster. With this university, the Korean government sought to create a science and technology infrastructure that would spur economic growth and redefine Korea as a modern, industrial nation. The US government viewed the joint project as a means to spread its “soft power.” In conjunction with the military bases and soldiers, the US government extended nonmilitary assistance aimed to win the “hearts and minds” of people. Through the US Agency of International Development, the US government hired Stanford University to guide the Korean government in establishing a university schooled in practical uses of science and technology. Though the KAIS Project unfolded between 1971 and 1981, the chapter only looks at the formative years as a prism into the political objectives practiced by the US and American governments through academia. It also examines the Korean international students recruited to join KAIS’ faculty. The selection process of KAIS’ first group of academics provides a bird’s eye view on the little studied group within the Korean American community, its international students. One gets a rare glimpse of the Koreans who studied and resided in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, a glimpse into the lives of an immigrant group largely unacknowledged by historians.

By necessity, Korea strengthened its ties to the United States. In the years immediately following the Korean War, Korea leaned heavily on American financial and military support. The US government held the purse string, and also the control over which projects would be funded and expedited. Together with the fledgling Korean government, they began various projects of reorganization and development in educational and political arenas that used American models. For example, the Seoul National University Project, implemented between 1956 and 1962, imported professors from University of Minnesota to design and equip select departments in Seoul while it exported Korean professors to be trained in the US. The organization charts of Korean ministries and bureaus changed, with their names and chain of commands being more reflective of the US. Korean elites educated in America occupied some of Korea’ top government and education posts, in the context of massive American military and civilian assistance, which established a seeming causal link between US affiliation and power in Korea. Though how the Korean government, including its US-educated Syngman Rhee, exercised their authority was far from democratic, it was in their interest to keep the appearance of negotiation. Korea’s precarious economic and political situation circumscribed how loudly and forcefully the client state could express its differences with the patron and not surprisingly, Koreans followed the American lead. However, this relationship changed significantly during Park’s presidency. In contrast to the post-war reconstruction period, Korea became more assertive in promoting its own interests.

There were three major developments that allowed Korea to be more assertive. First, by the early 1960s Korea had a strong, nationalist leader who was committed to modernization and industrialization. With the 1961 coup Major General Park Chung Hee ousted the Korean leadership and two years later he ascended to the Presidency. In the same manner, Park pushed and implemented his agenda on the nation. Thus, the Korean government more efficiently, albeit even more despotically, mobilized its resources than before. From the early 1960s, the Korean government under Park linked its national security to a flourishing economy; and to this end, his administration institutionalized the

development of science and technology. The Korean government was determined to create a strong national identity and global political stature through economic strength, and it viewed the US as its model. Second, there were more US-educated Koreans, including bureaucrats, policymakers, and economists, who were equipped with modern training and well-versed in American ways to guide and engineer the convoluted diplomacy between the two countries. For example, US-trained Korean economists and policy planners penned the series of Five-Year Economic Plans, which was the blueprint for all matters related to Korean development in the 1960s and 1970s. Korean scientists with US doctorates filled nearly all top research and teaching positions created by the government. Moreover, US-educated Koreans mediated the diplomatic relations between the two countries. These persons brought to the table not only Korea's needs, but also their understanding, sensitivity, and proficiency as advocates because of their experience in both countries. Third, in the intervening years between the end of WWII and the end of the Korean War, Koreans had learned how to use, solicit, incorporate, and rely on US foreign aid to make national improvements.

At the core of the nation-building effort was the plan to make Korea into an industrial nation. To this end, economic considerations guided Korea's political, financial, and social developments. Korea's Economic Planning Board, a ministerial level body, oversaw all three five-year economic plans that Park initiated. The first, 1962 to 1966, aimed at creating an infrastructure and was characterized by the development of the export sectors in textiles, shoes and other light assembly industries as well as the promotion of such select industries as cement and fertilizer. During this first phase, the government engaged in building up physical infrastructure like roads and dams. These labor-intensive projects alleviated rampant unemployment. In the second period from 1967 to 1971, Korea turned to labor-intensive, export-oriented industrialization. The government introduced more structural changes that accelerated the predominance of labor-intensive manufactures while positioning itself to build up industries such as steel, shipbuilding, and chemicals. During the third period, from 1972 to 1976, the Korean government promoted industries such as heavy and chemical industries.¹ In terms of manpower development and use, Korean planners made a conscious shift away from menial labor and a giant step towards innovative, scientific and technological skills.

The Korean government deviated greatly from the democratic process advocated by the US government. Park's regime began with a coup d'état followed by a questionable electoral process. Park's internal security forces violently quashed all dissent.² The government preempted workers from organizing and students from demonstrating by sending in the police force and by closing down the schools. It required school children to flank the streets waving hand-held Korean flags while foreign dignitaries passed by them on the street, a pageantry of happy citizens. President Park

¹ See Republic of Korea, Ministry of Science and Technology [hereafter MOST], *The Third Five-Year Manpower Development Plan, 1972-1976* (Seoul: Republic of Korea, 1971) and Republic of Korea, Economic Planning Board, *The Third Five-Year Economic Development Plan 1972-1976* (Seoul: Republic of Korea, 1971).

² Political oppression was especially fierce during the period known as the Yushin Period from 1972 to 1979. For more on Yushin see Hak-kyu Son, *Authoritarianism and Opposition in South Korea* (London; New York: Routledge, 1989) and Byeong-cheon Lee, ed., *Developmental Dictatorship and the Park Chung-hee Era: The Shaping of Modernity in the Republic of Korea* (Paramus, NJ: Homa & Sekey Books, 2006).

attempted to deflect the blame of causing political malaise to his pro-American dissenters. When President Park dissolved the National Assembly and issued amendments to the Constitution in October 1972, he emphasized that America's political model was not applicable to Korea and an alternative was needed.

We have always attempted awkwardly to imitate closely the democratic institutions of others. We can no longer sit idle while wasting our precious national power in imitating the systems of others.³

Indeed, what the Korean government sought to reproduce in Korea was not the political system of the US but its material wealth.

The Korean government and its policymakers looked to the United States as a model for economic success. They measured Korea's progress in relation to that of the US. Korean desire for American-based knowledge and methods was nowhere more evident than in the area of science and technology. The Korean government commissioned studies to evaluate the state of science and technology in Korea. These documents were quick to point out that compared to advanced nations, Korea lacked experimental and practical education in these "modern sciences." Though these documents compared Korea to advanced nations, the measure and standard of development and improvements was that of the United States.⁴ For example, the Korean Ministry of Science and Technology wrote in 1971 that although Korea's scientific and technical manpower had increased in proportion to the expanding economy, still it "represent[ed] a small percentage when compared with that of the United States."⁵

Korea mainly viewed science and technology in practical terms as revealed by its oft-repeated objective of "increas[ing] productivity and accelerat[ing] industrial development."⁶ Indeed, the documentation surrounding the series of Five-Year Economic Plans and their supplementary plans in manpower development and educational reforms stated explicitly that science and technology was key to its overall economic plans. Its technological competitiveness, the Korean government believed, should undergird its economic growth and national identity. Economist Richard Nelson and his colleagues call this concept technonationalism. Nelson describes it as "combining a strong belief that the technological capabilities of a nation's firms are a key source of their competitive prowess, with a belief that these capabilities are in a sense national, and can be built by national action."⁷ In accordance, the Korean government fostered technonationalism through its use of policies, and thus assisted the movement, adoption, and adaptation of new technologies.

Under the Park regime, Korea systematically developed institutions to support its increasingly science-based industries. During the first five-year period from 1962 to

³ Park Chung Hee's speech was found in "Draft Amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Korea," (Seoul: Korean Overseas Information Services, October 1972), 10-11, in Mott Papers, Box 5.

⁴ One example of comparing the state of Korean science and education to "advanced nations" can be found in Technical Development Center of Korea, *A General Survey of Higher Education in Korea; General Report – Administration, Finance, and Facilities* (Seoul, December 1967), 275.

⁵ Republic of Korea, MOST, *The Third Five-Year Manpower Development Plan*, 15.

⁶ Republic of Korea, Economic Planning Board, "First Five-Year Plan for Technical Development: Supplement to First Five-Year Economic Plan," (Seoul, Republic of Korea: 1962), 7.

⁷ Quoted in Bruce E. Seely, "Historical Patterns of the Scholarship of Technology Transfer," *Comparative Technology Transfer and Society* 1, no. 1 (April 2003): 29.

1966, the Korean government laid out the infrastructure for its science and technology-based goals by creating two coordinating institutions, Korea Scientific and Technological Information Center (KORSTIC) and Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST). At the start of the first five-year period, KORSTIC was organized as a gateway agency to acquire, coordinate, and disseminate information.⁸ KIST, founded at the end of this period, became the first multi-disciplinary scientific research institute. Both measures sought to accelerate the international exchange of knowledge. The second five-year period running from 1967 to 1971 commenced with the establishment of the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) for the overall coordination of the menagerie of the government funded scientific and technological research centers, as well as managing the supply and demand of scientists. The capstone of the third period was the establishment of Korea Advanced Institute of Science (KAIS), the first engineering graduate school in Korea.

Korea coordinated plans to create the material infrastructure for science and technology with its efforts to create Korea's technical intelligentsia. At the same time that the Korean government encouraged emigration as a means of population control, it recruited top-level Korean scientists and engineers residing abroad back to Korea.⁹ All five-year technical manpower plans pointed to this group of persons as the solution providers and called for their repatriation "for the direct utilization of their advanced knowledge and skills for the development of Korean science and technology."¹⁰ The Korean government had attempted a similar project during the postwar reconstruction period in the 1950s, but it had little success. The government-initiated effort in the 1960s and 1970s was more successful because there were more qualified persons to choose from. By the mid-1960s, there was a growing pool of Korean scholars studying and working abroad. According to UNESCO tabulations, in 1962 there were 5,304 Koreans studying abroad and by 1968, there were 9,283 of them.¹¹

The Korean government was well aware of the growing group of educated Koreans abroad. Through its consulates and contacts in Korean immigrant organizations, the Korean government kept track of its émigrés with advanced training. The Korean government published a directory of Korean scholars and students in the United States with the individuals' academic information.¹² It also created an agency to aid those

⁸ ROK Economic Planning Board, "First Five-Year Plan" (1962), 46-47.

⁹ Following works discuss the centrality of foreign-educated skilled scientists and engineers in the Korean government's plan for national development: Geun Bae Kim, "Han'guk kwahak kisu yŏn'guso (KIST) sŏllip kwajŏngae kwanhan Miguk ūi wŏng-jo wa kŭ yŏngyang ūl chungsim ūro" [A Study on the Process of Establishing KIST: Focusing on U.S. Assistance and Its Influence] in Han'guk Kwahaksa Hakhoeji, vol. 12, no. 1 (1990): 44-69; Namhee Kim, You Kyung Han, and Young Jin Han., "Haeoe gokŭp inchŏk chawŏn ūi kungnae yuch'i silt'ae e kwanhan yŏn'gu: Ipkuk kwa ch'eryu saenghwal ūl chungsim ūro" [Attracting and Recruiting the Foreign Highly Skilled], Kyoyuk haengjŏnhak yŏn'gu [Journal of Educational Administration] 23, no. 1, (April 2005): 357-374; and Korea Science and Engineering Foundation, *Han'guk Kwahak Kisuja ūi Hyŏngsŏng Yŏn'gu 2: Miguk yuhak p'yon (A Study on the Formation of Modern Scientists and Engineers in Korea II: Studying in America)* (Han'guk Kwahak Chaedan, December 1998).

¹⁰ Republic of Korea, MOST, *The Third Five-Year*, 10.

¹¹ UNESCO, *Statistics of Students Abroad, 1962-1968* (Paris, UNESCO, 1972), 151.

¹² Korea, US Taesagwan, Changhaksil (Office of the Educational Attaché, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the US), *Chaemi Han'guk hakcha wa yuhaksaeng = Korean scholars and students in the United States: 1969-1970* (Washington, DC: Chumi Taehan Min'guk Taesagwan Changhaksil, [1970?]).

students abroad who were seeking jobs in Korea. However, this agency was understaffed, uninformed and ineffective. Though the Korean government created avenues as well as kept tabs on individual scholars in the US, it only engaged in information gathering. It did not want a large scale repatriation of its educated expatriates. The Park administration recognized that its economy could not absorb this large population of emigrants. Their return would adversely affect the remittances they sent, making the much needed dollar for national improvements even scarcer.

Despite the encouraging words directed at all Korean students and scholars living abroad, in reality, the Korean government was only interested in those with specialized skills. The Korean government recruited US-educated scholars who could contribute directly to its economic development. Candidates approached for jobs in the new science and technology institutes and research centers are a prime example. The selection committees for the newly created research and teaching institutes limited their searches exclusively to Korean scholars with doctorates. Only a few experts with US doctoral degrees in select engineering fields qualified for many of these posts. As incentives, the government exempted foreign trained Koreans from taking national examinations for select professional licenses, and established and supported national associations for scientists. It gave the National Association of Engineers the responsibility “for the introduction and utilization of technology from advanced countries, and for further developing and providing training in technology in Korea – areas which will materially further the industrial and economic development of the country.”¹³ The link between knowledge and economic advancement was never far from the policymakers’ thoughts.

Though the Korean government actively encouraged the select repatriation of highly skilled persons, the actions of its overseas undercover agents dissuaded some Korean intellectuals from returning. Professor Gregory Henderson testified to Congress in 1976 that agents and sympathizers of the Korean government worked in the United States.

I understand from high Korean government sources that there are at least 18 KCIA agents in the US with diplomatic or consular titles operating out of the WA Embassy or South Korea’s several consulates in the US. There are, of course, numerous other undercover agents, sleepers and professional informers and contacts within the branch offices of Korean business corporations and among Korean immigrants in the US.¹⁴

Undercover agents harassed political activists and newspaper editors whose views differed from those of the Park Administration. Politically active Koreans in the US understood that Park dissenters would not be hired in Korea because companies knew that the Park Administration would penalize them. Some of the affected scholars responded by remaining in the United States and criticizing the Park Administration from afar.

¹³ Republic of Korea, Economic Planning Board, *Professional Engineers in Korea* (Sae Chong Printing Co., 1965), foreword.

¹⁴ This is an excerpt of Henderson’s testimony given to the Committee on International Relations of the US House of Representatives on March 17, 1976. Gregory Henderson, “The Activities of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency in the United States,” 3-4, in Henderson Box 7, Folder “Koreagate Testimony – March 1976, April 1976.”

Contrary to the Korean government's wishes, those few who returned were from all academic disciplines. A range of reasons, from uniting with family members to prestigious teaching position, motivated them to return. As a group, these returnees greatly influenced the emerging shape of US-Korea relations. Beginning in the US occupation period in the late 1940s, English speaking politicians and public officers dominated the diplomacy between the two countries. The pattern set during the early stage was only strengthened with time. Hahm Pyon Choon, former Presidential Secretary General and ambassador to the United States, is representative of top-ranking, US-educated diplomats. Hahm graduated from Northwestern Law School and Harvard Law School, and then taught at an elite Korean law school before taking public office. Having an advanced degree from the US and teaching experience in an elite university was among the shortest routes to public office. Three years after serving Park as his foreign affairs adviser, Hahm was appointed ambassador to the US. At the relative young age of 42, he became the "face" of Korea to the Americans.¹⁵ Former Korean ambassadors Chung Il Kwon may not have taught at a prestigious university, but he had in common with other countless Korean ambassadors the experience of having studied and lived in the United States. Having an intimate knowledge of the United States was a quality that more and more Koreans traversing through the labyrinthine corridors of the US and Korean political and social arena shared. Because of the prevalence of US-educated Koreans in roles of influence in Korea, US education legitimized people's skills and status in Korea.

US-educated Korean economists were just as influential. In particular, many of the masterminds orchestrating Korea's overall economic development were US trained. The Economic Planning Board (EPB), referred to as the "nerve center" of the Park Administration almost exclusively hired assistants with US doctorates to aid the deputy prime minister. As the masterminds of the Five-Year Economic Plans, they moved virtually every other part of the government. With the knowledge they gained abroad, these economists applied the latest theories and practices in market capitalism to Korea. They created a blueprint for development that more firmly established Korea in the purview of American economic hegemony. These technocrats were touted as "brilliant" by foreign governments and organizations watching and evaluating Korean progress. Not surprisingly, outside observers noted with optimism that they were foreign trained.

Along with diplomats and economists, US-educated Koreans occupied top positions in Korean higher education. The US government had a powerful ally in this group of persons, who were invested in protecting and promoting their American connection. Their American degrees testified to their modern knowledge as well as the more practical requirements of speaking a common language. American degrees, the PhD in particular, conferred title and prestige. The high visibility of US-educated public figures elevated American education, as a symbol of success and high status. Articles about successful Koreans who had studied abroad abounded in Korean newspapers and magazines. Writing in the mid-1960s, the editor of a popular Korean women's magazine, *Yŏwŏn*, identified eleven praiseworthy women. Without fail all had either been educated

¹⁵ Douglas Woo, "South Korean envoy to U.S. explains Park's Tactics," *Honolulu Advertiser*, July 10, 1974, in Mott Papers, Box 15, Folder "Strockman, John S., Jr."

or had spent a significant amount of time in the United States.¹⁶ Not surprisingly, ambitious young Koreans latched onto the idea of going to American colleges as the path to success. Wealthy mothers enrolled their preschoolers in elite English education institutes; the tuition for one such institute in Seoul cost more than twice as much as a typical Korean university tuition.¹⁷

The number of Korean students entering the US increased every year since the end of the Korean War. Statistics kept by Institute of International demonstrate the rapid growth:¹⁸

<u>Year</u>	<u>Korean students</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Korean students</u>
1950	302	1980	6150
1960	2310	1990	23360
1970	3857	2000	59022

For much of this period, Korea has been among the top ten source countries of international students to the United States.¹⁹ Whether these persons experienced dramatic transformations in their worldview and values is a moot point. The popularity of American education indicates the social capital attached to it.

By the early 1960s, the US government intensified its program to project a gentler, kinder, and less selfish image of itself. The deployment of American soldiers abroad and the proliferation of US military bases had seriously damaged its image as a peacekeeper, and these costly measures undermined the US administration's domestic support. The Kennedy Administration expanded its foreign assistance to Africa and Latin America, especially through Alliance for Progress and the Peace Corps. American teachers joined the American soldiers abroad.²⁰ Beginning in the early 1960s, the US government replaced private foundations as the principal funding agent for international education.²¹ It granted more scholarships for promising students from developing countries to come study in the United States. These nonmilitary assistance programs attempted to counterbalance the image of US military brute force with the helping hand of US largesse. Purportedly independent of military and security concerns, developmental assistance activities were identified as a humanitarian response to others' need.

The American administration separated its overt military operations from humanitarian and technical assistance, and to a larger extent practice image control. The Kennedy administration passed the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 which formally

¹⁶ Jjanghan Yösöng 11," *Yöwön*, as mentioned in Sang-Dawn Lee, *Big Brother, Little Brother: The American Influence on Korean Culture in the Lyndon B. Johnson Years* (Lanham MD: Lexington Books, 2002), 100.

¹⁷ Jin-Yeong Lee, "Haebang kwa sobi munhwa ü chibae" [Liberation and Rule of Consumption Culture], *Cheongmaek*, June 1966, 36, cited in Lee, *Big Brother, Little Brother*, 35.

¹⁸ Institute of International Education, *Open Doors*.

¹⁹ Between the 1975 and 1982 Korea's rank fluctuated between 11 and 14 because of the influx of students from OPEC nations.

²⁰ Zimmerman's *Innocent Abroad* provides an excellent historical treatment of American men and women who went to developing countries as teachers and missionaries.

²¹ Nancy L. Ruther, *Barely There, Powerfully Present: Thirty Years of U.S. Policy on International Higher Education* (UK: Routledge, 2002), 4.

separated its foreign military assistance programs from nonmilitary aid.²² Then to oversee its nonmilitary programs, it created the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Thus, educational assistance programs with direct involvement in physical and social infrastructure building, like the KAIS Project, fell under USAID. The Kennedy Administration placed it outside the direct control of the Department of State, so USAID and its coordinating programs appeared relatively independent from the actions of military decision makers. The reorganization created a new façade to US foreign aid, but its overall activities and objectives remained similar to those of the past. There was a carry-over to USAID of the economic and technical assistance operations of the previous foreign aid agency – of which technical training and contracts through US and foreign universities comprised a significant part. Thus, the agricultural surplus distribution activities of the Department of Agriculture as well as loan activities continued.

USAID, as an arm of the US government, actively pursued the creation of US soft power, or in the popular parlance of development theory scholarship, capacity building. As for its objectives, the US government continued in rhetoric to view foreign aid as a way to arrest the spread of communism by promoting the economic stability and security of all nations. Without a doubt, some American participants firmly believed their assistance led to improved quality of life and to the safeguarding of democracy. Many of the consultants working for the US government in the 1960s were economists, and they believed that economic stability was an effectively repelled communism.²³ US policymakers found the writings and ideas of W. W. Rostow particularly compelling.²⁴ He worked as the deputy special assistant for national security affairs under Kennedy in 1961 and also as the national security adviser during the Vietnam War in 1968. W. W. Rostow's *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (1960) served as a blueprint to the Kennedy administration for how and why the US should deploy foreign aid to developing nations. Rostow considered his modernization theory was a counter theory to socialism and communism. Rostow posited that countries simply occupied different stages of development and that the less developed countries could become modern with increased knowledge, specifically Western technology. This knowledge would allow nations to gain better control of their natural environment, an inherent quality of modernization.²⁵ Rostow and fellow economists encouraged the US government to disseminate the knowledge needed to propel all countries into the modern, global capitalist system through its foreign assistance aid.²⁶ In response to the primacy placed on modernization theory, there were subtle shifts as the US fostered programs to

²² USAID, "USAID History," http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/usaidhist.html (accessed September 27, 2006).

²³ Bruce E. Seely, "Historical Patterns in the Scholarship of Technology Transfer," *Comparative Technology Transfer and Society* 1, no. 1 (April 2003), 14.

²⁴ Rostow co-founded Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Center for International Studies, a controversial think tank funded by the US government.

²⁵ Kimber Charles Pearce, *Rostow, Kennedy, and the Rhetoric of Foreign Aid* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001), 4.

²⁶ Since the publication of Rostow's seminal work, scholars have devoted many pages pointing out the flaw's in Rostow's argument. Many scholars share the criticism that Rostow made no provision for differences between nations as well as the difference between the nations and the United States.

“develop economic resources and increase productive capacities.”²⁷ Coinciding with the establishment of USAID, technical assistance and institution building gave way to macroeconomic policy and capital transfer as “levers of choice to promote economic development overseas.”²⁸ And US-educated people figured prominently as the necessary human capital.

Yet, US foreign assistance cannot be divorced from its military and political involvement in global politics. The Korean government traded its support in the Vietnam War for American assistance in its development, which included science and technology knowledge transfer. Park Chung Hee visited President Lyndon B. Johnson in May 1965. By July, Johnson sent his Special Assistance for Science and Technology adviser Donald F. Hornig to Korea.²⁹ Then in October, Korea sent its first dispatch of non-combatant Korean units to Vietnam. By February of 1966, the two governments signed an agreement to establish Korea’s first research center in science and technology.³⁰ Shortly after the contract was drawn, Korea sent twenty thousand combat troops to join the more than forty five thousand technicians and civilians already in Vietnam. In time, Korean soldiers comprised the second largest group of non American soldiers in Vietnam during the conflict.

The US government was ready to help those who helped themselves. The Korean government fit this phrase in multiple ways. Korea had launched a national development project that emphasized rapid economic improvements and full participation in the global capitalist system, and aligned itself with the US and supported American aspirations in the Cold War arena. Just as Japan had been a center of production and a way station for the US during the Korean War, Korea served these functions for the Vietnam War. Though the Korean political system of governance diverged dramatically from that of the US-professed democracy, Koreans desired America’s material wealth.

The KAIS Project

Tracing the origins of Korea Advanced Institute of Science (KAIS) provides concrete evidence of the Korean government’s single-minded focus on building a modern nation based on Western knowledge and US government’s use of foreign assistance to win the “hearts and minds” of people. The Korean government planned to create a nation-state identity defined by modernization and KAIS would help create the “foundation for national industrialization... laid through the establishment of a brain and skill development system.”³¹ The establishment of KAIS highlights centrality of US-educated Koreans in Korean higher education and national development as well as the growing legitimacy of US education and know-how in Korean society. The establishment of KAIS, a national institution established to help with Korea’s nation building, shows that changes in higher education became a fruitful expression of US soft power. In turn, Korea’s receptivity to US educational training and methods validated America’s belief in its moral authority.

²⁷ “USAID History.”

²⁸ Ruther, *Barely There*, 71.

²⁹ Information from *Dong-A-Ilbo*, July 8, 1965), cited in Lee, *Big Brother, Little Brother*, 117 (footnote 12).

³⁰ “Korean Facts at a Glance,” [n.d.], 63, in Ireson Papers, Box 20, Folder “Terman Survey Materials.”

³¹ Republic of Korea, MOST, *The Third Five-Year*, introduction.

When the Korean government determined that the time to establish and support a highly technical graduate program was now, it recognized the dearth of skilled scientists and technocrats as the greatest impediment to Korean modernization. Korea's emerging technocrats emphasized the need to import highly technical scientists, specifically its skilled expatriates. Though foreign education was equated with aptitude, planners understood that that not all Koreans educated abroad were equal or desirable. Ironically, knowledge about the latest cutting edge research and equipment could be an impediment because they may not be pertinent in Korea. For example, proficiency in handling advanced equipment would have no relevance in a laboratory without such equipment. In addition, academics tended to be narrowly focused within their given field of specialization. In a country where these fields were in their embryonic stages or not even formed, their specialized knowledge could not be fully used. Then there was the matter of collaboration and funding, both of which would be in short supply in Korea.

The Korean government stated the primary objective of the state-sponsored Kawhakhwa (Scientization) movement as a "change [in] the mode of thinking and living among Korean people."³² The government grouped its citizens into three categories, with the group labeled "technical personnel" receiving the most attention. The objectives listed for the technical personnel (along with their identification) reflect the desired national characteristics: proficiency in "practical skills" (technical high school graduates) which would be "adaptable to new technology" (engineering university graduates) leading to "research compatible with national development" (scientists) for the "enhancement of industrial technology" (engineers).³³ The government wanted everyone, from its housewives to scientists, to acquire and apply practical scientific skills. Housewives would have "medical knowledge and skills for household work" while scientists would conduct "research compatible with national development."³⁴ The professional workers, the highest level among technical personnel, would reach beyond its own national borders and gain "internationally recognized qualifications."

Defining the Kawhakhwa Movement were KORSTIC, KIST, and KAIS. These institutions formed the scientific triumvirate as a mean to make the nascent scientific infrastructure more stable and sustainable. KORSTIC coordinated the scientific information to keep the mostly US-educated Korean scientists up to date while KIST provided the avenue through which these persons learned of Korea's problems and provided solutions. KAIS would train enough Korean scientists and engineers to meet the demand projected by the ensuing scientific and technological advancements. Korea was in a hurry to modernize. When it came to these institutions, no detail was too small for the Park Administration. When there were delays in the KIST construction, President Park assigned the ROK Army Corps of Engineers to the site.³⁵ When KAIS was being built, Park ordered soldiers to landscape and cleanup the KAIS campus so it would not "look so much like a prison." An American eyewitness marveled that within days of this

³² "Science and Technology and the Development of Korea: Phase One Report," December 1973, 61, in Ireson Papers, Box 20.

³³ *Ibid.*, 60.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ US Agency for International Development, Operations Mission to Korea, Battelle Institute Team, "Status Report; Korea Institute of Science and Technology; December 15, 1966 to April 1, 1967," Battelle Institute Team, USOM/K/IED (Seoul, Korea, April 15, 1967), 43.

command, “thousands of trees, 4’ to 6’ tall, have been planted all over the place!”³⁶ Later he learned that in excess of 5,000 trees had been planted to make the once brown hillside look green from the distance.³⁷ A sense of urgency and heavy-handed despotism, a trademark of the Park Administration, marked the KAIS Project.

The paper trail for KAIS began with expatriate KunMo Chung. That a professor at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn in the US wrote the first draft on the establishment of KAIS is not as incongruous as it first seems. Chung was among the first students to have earned a graduate degree from the School of Public Administration at Seoul National University (SNU), a school established with USAID support. Chung matriculated and studied at SNU at the height of American involvement at his alma mater. Though Chung left for the US immediately after his time at SNU to pursue his doctoral studies at Michigan State University, he kept in touch with USAID personnel.³⁸ In 1969, Chung prepared a report on the establishment of KAIS with the encouragement of John A. Hannah, the head of USAID.³⁹ Though Chung drew up the initial blueprint for Hannah’s private use, a copy of it also made its way to the Blue House in Korea.

Park ordered the establishment of KAIS in March of 1970, at which time he invited KunMo Chung to serve as the advisor. Park’s order breathed KAIS into existence and his cabinet formalized it the following month by drafting a legislation to create KAIS. Before the National Assembly gave its perfunctory approval, the Park administration had already formally requested USAID aid in financing, designing and manning the university. Park called for a special National Assembly meeting on July 16 to approve the KAIS Law. Under the auspices of USAID, the Terman Survey Team, the American team hired to evaluate the feasibility of establishing KAIS Project arrived the following day on July 17, 1970. They worked under a tight schedule.

Frederick E. Terman, the famous project leader, was key to the KAIS Project since Korea sought to create a university at the hub of science and technology similar to the position Stanford University occupied in Silicon Valley. From his position as a Stanford University engineering professor, dean, and provost Terman implemented and carried out a number of original teaching innovations which conferred on him the label of “father of Silicon Valley.” These schemes attracted nascent technology industries to the university’s vicinity and encouraged the dynamic interaction between local industries and the university. Historians of science Robert Kargon and Stuart Leslie, in their comparative work on technology transfer in India and South Korea, succinctly identified some of Terman’s ideas that were implemented:

An honors cooperative program, where corporate employees earned advanced degrees while working full-time on company projects; research exchanges that brought corporate researchers to university laboratories and classrooms, and professors to industrial laboratories; affiliate programs that offered members a sneak peak at university research and first pick of the best graduate students; the Stanford Industrial Park, where companies

³⁶ Ireson to Terman, May 26, 1973, in Ireson Papers, Box 8, Folder “Ireson Korea Trip – May to Sept 1973.”

³⁷ Ireson to Annett, May 30, 1973, in Ireson Papers, Box 8 Folder “Ireson Korea Trip – May to Sept 1973.”

³⁸ “Resumes of Faculties,” January 1, 1973, in Ireson Papers, Box 18.

³⁹ KungMo Chung, “The Establishment of a New Graduate School of Applied Science and Technology in Korea,” submitted to USAID, Department of State, December 1969, in Ireson Papers, Box 10.

could set up advanced laboratories and manufacturing facilities close to campus, and to university consultants.⁴⁰

Implicit in USAID and Korean government's request to Terman to lead the survey team was also their desire for him to create not only a preeminent training center but also a hybrid academic industrial community that integrated Korea's technonationalism.

As Korea's economic development accelerated, experts from within and without Korea agreed that Korea's higher education was inadequate. Following his field study of Korea's science and technology, Terman concurred with this general view adding, "A self-sustaining Korean economy needs a steady supply of engineers and applied scientists who combine high ability with advanced training oriented toward the technological needs of Korean industry."⁴¹ KAIS would provide the solution; it would become the main mechanism for producing these skilled persons.

The Korean government turned to the USAID for three important reasons. First, there was historical precedence. Under the aegis of USAID and its predecessor agencies, Korea's higher education institutes, most notably Seoul National University, had received large infusions of funding, expert advice, and training opportunities for its faculty members. Second, the new school needed a model. An institution of KAIS caliber and character did not exist in Korea, so the planners looked outside. Lastly, the foreign aid not only brought the needed financial aid from the largest donor nation but also its implicit recognition. Along with this legitimization, US support would lend itself to opportunities to become plugged into a larger commercial network dominated by American interests.

KAIS had a utilitarian purpose. The classical Western university model, with its assembly of scholars pursuing knowledge for knowledge's sake was not ideal. KAIS, even in its pre-fabrication stage, had a clearly defined practical goal. As stated in its feasibility study, "The principle objective of KAIS will be to assist the economic development of Korea by providing the nation with superior graduate training in those fields of applied science and engineering of importance to Korean industry." The Korean government envisioned KAIS as the space where the needs of the industry and the innovations of academia would become enmeshed.

KAIS would be the first institution of its kind, and the Korean government put its weight behind the institution. It passed unique provisions that exempted KAIS from existing educational laws and employment acts. The government guaranteed its financial viability through a national endowment and promised, using a presidential decree that later became codified in law, not to interfere with its governance. Unlike other institutions of higher learning, KAIS would be authorized to confer its graduate degrees in accordance with its own regulations. So in August of 1971, USAID formally signed a development loan agreement for KAIS with the Korean government. By then, the Park administration had already hurriedly passed needed legislation, declared presidential decrees, completed the legal registration to formally establish an institute of higher

⁴⁰ Robert Kargon and Stuart Leslie, "Translating American Models of the Technical University to India and South Korea" in *20th Century Sciences: Beyond the Metropolis*, edited by Martine Barrère (Paris: L'Institut Français de Recherche Scientifique Pour Le Développement en Coopération, 1996), 161.

⁴¹ "Survey Report on the Establishment of the Korea Advanced Institute of Science," December 1970, vi, in Ireson Papers, Box 7.

education, and held a ground breaking ceremony for KAIS. The first class of students entered KAIS less than two years later in March of 1973.

The KAIS Project followed the pattern set by the SNU Project with significant alterations. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) entered into contract with Stanford University, much like the one its predecessor agency signed with the University of Minnesota for the SNU Project. Both projects created national institutions of higher education that were to serve as models for other domestic universities. Both the SNU and KAIS Projects took place during politically turbulent periods of modern Korean history when its political and social structure was in flux. Thus SNU and KAIS were subsumed under the larger goal of national reconstruction and received the full extent of the Korean government's support. For both, the Korean government provided land, labor, and legislative support, and the US government supplied the money and the experts. The governments worked in tandem to shape these universities as key contributors to Korea's emerging economic structure.

For the US government and their experts, these institutions would serve as models for other developing countries' universities. As one proponent of the KAIS Project stated to his colleagues at Stanford University, "The KAIS project is an opportunity for Stanford to participate in the development of a new concept of graduate education in developing countries.... The KAIS concept can possibly serve as a model for graduate education in many other countries currently burdened by European turn of the century type of universities."⁴² This was ironic. Though Korea had never been under direct European rule, the Japanese had planted a German model of educational system, as it was modified by Japan's national goals. American universities were also in part modeled on German schools, but like Japan, the American experience and history shaped them into unique American institutions.

The KAIS Project of the early 1970s is reminiscent of the SNU Project of the mid-1950s. SNU was the original model for US-assisted high education reconstruction in Korea, and not surprisingly consequent educational these projects shared common traits with it. This section enumerates the commonalities between the SNU and KAIS Projects. However, because the SNU and KAIS Projects occurred in two distinct time periods, there were important differences. A comparison of these projects reveals much about the changing interactions between the two countries and the evolving image of the US in Korea. Both projects aimed at creating a lasting infrastructure and raising a group of ruling elites or leaders.

The differences between these two projects attest to their distinct time periods. Following on the heels of World War II, the SNU Project was a US government initiative based on US and UN recommendations. The US government paid for most of the project costs, concentrating on basic infrastructure development and public administration. On the other hand, the Korean government initiated the post-Korean War KAIS Project. It met the bulk of the financial obligation associated with the actual buildings or its "hardware" while the US government paid for the American experts responsible for the "software" or content. KAIS focused on the development of skilled manpower, specifically in science and engineering to build upon the basic infrastructure laid earlier by the SNU Project.

⁴² Iresons to Joseph M. Pettit, Dean of School of Engineering, June 9, 1972, in Ireson Papers, Box 7, Folder "Contract Correspondence."

On a superficial project level, the KAIS Project relied on the protocol set by the SNU Project: US survey team, US decision making and coordinating efforts, and American professors.⁴³ Yet in the KAIS's planning phase, there was greater Korean presence and decision making than in the SNU Project. The Korean government hired a Korean national as its advisor in the KAIS Project, and the US-educated Chung provided the operational details to Terman's overarching design for KAIS. Also, the Korean government appointed the university's first president before Stanford's contractual agreement began. Ironically President Sang Soo Lee received his graduate education at London's Imperial College, making him an unlikely leader to implement an American style of university that would incorporate US teaching and administration through US-educated persons.⁴⁴ The Korean government's choice of Lee illustrates that it chose a person that fit its vision of KAIS. President Lee did surround himself with Korean scientists intimately aware of the US educational system, and perhaps foreseeing the challenges ahead he signed up a sizeable group of Korean scientists working at US research universities to his University Advisory Council.⁴⁵

All involved agreed that KAIS's success rested on the quality of its staff and faculty. It needed for its charter faculty members and administrators to be well versed and recognized in modern knowledge and innovation not available in Korea. More specifically, professors needed training from an industrial nation preferably the United States. If SNU was the first phase of US effort in reconstructing Korean higher education, than KAIS was the second phase. By the time this second phase began, there were a sizeable number of Koreans in the United States with advanced training, and KAIS targeted these persons to fill its professorial rank.

There is a strong link between SNU participants and KAIS. The US supported and modeled departments at SNU retained its highly centralized, hierarchical nature where limited cutting edge research was conducted. Yet, the growing number of US-educated professors at the university built up an image of American education as an increasingly important credential for getting entry into Korean higher education. As a result promising undergraduates of this reconstructed university went to the US to pursue graduate degrees. It is these students that link the two projects together.

In the initial stages of KAIS development, more than 80% of the applicants for a position in the KAIS faculty analyzed for this work either received their undergraduate

⁴³ The observations and recommendations of the Terman Survey Team became the basis for the KAIS Project. After a positive review from the survey team, the US and Korean governments entered into contract to officially begin the joint venture. The US foreign aid agency selected and entered into contract with Stanford University to oversee the Project. While the UMN had been referred to as the sister university for the SNU Project, Stanford defined itself as a *coordinating* university for the KAIS Project. Stanford sought to disavow officials from their assumption that all recruited experts would be from Stanford University. Stanford's Frederick Terman was chosen as the architect of the KAIS Project and W. Grant Ireson as the coordinator/executioner in Korea. A small contingent of American professors joined Ireson in Korea. Ireson had been a professor of industrial engineering at Stanford since 1951. Ireson's educational development activities were substantial, spanning the entire globe. He was an advisor on the development of a new four-year engineering school in Benin City, Nigeria. He provided his consultative service at Taiwan's Tunghai University and also at Singapore University. He was also directed the Ford Foundation financed Multinational Project at Stanford aimed at strengthening graduate faculty at ITESM in Mexico and PUC and Brazil. In Ireson Papers, Box 7.

⁴⁴ In Ireson Papers, Box 15.

⁴⁵ Sang Soo Lee, KAIS President to Terman, January 11, 1972, in Ireson Papers, Box 7.

degree at Seoul National University or at the very least began their academic career at SNU. The twin goals of setting SNU apart as an American institution and of using SNU graduates as conduits of knowledge unfolded in a modified form. SNU and its US-educated professors did not necessarily carry out the knowledge transfer but they did provide examples as well as information and encouragement for study abroad. SNU was established not as a robust, independent research university, and it depended on knowledge brought in by the returning Korean scholars from abroad. Naturally, its graduates turned to the United States for advanced training.

Though the KAIS Project directors wanted to create a unique educational institution different in character from SNU, the pool of people available and applying for position at KAIS were SNU alumni. Though the administrators worried that KAIS would “become another branch graduate school of Seoul National University,” they considered few non-SNU alumni professorial candidates.⁴⁶ Moreover, this predominance of the SNU-educated among the US-educated seeking positions in Korea perhaps indicates a more developed information channel or link due to their university’s prestige and support from both the US and Korean governments.

Preference for a US education was built into the university system as seen in both the SNU and KAIS Projects. The lion’s share of educational materials and books procured for the classrooms and the libraries were written by American scholars, published in the United States, and written in English. In the case of KAIS, its main architect Terman explicitly stated during its planning, “much of the instruction will be given in English, and a majority of the educational materials will be in English.”⁴⁷ In sum, academic progress and vitality was communicated and measured against standards of the United States. In this setting, Koreans who studied in the United States were at a clear advantage.

Though all decisions ultimately rested in Koreans’ hands, Americans held a great amount of influence on the decision-making process. USAID disbursed its loan to purchase equipment only through the contracted American university. Stanford’s sway was nowhere more evident than in the selection process of the charter faculty members. The contract negotiated between Stanford and KAIS stipulated that American planners would “[a]ssist those selected for KAIS faculty in finalizing their teaching and research plans.”⁴⁸ American administrators determined which areas of specialization should be taught, and worked with Korean officers and newly appointed Korean university administrators to identify, interview, and select the candidates in these fields. To ensure that the selected professors emulated the style of learning they had received in the US, their American advisors oversaw their teaching and research. For example, American administrators’ recommendation also shaped a department’s curriculum, which in turn affected which courses were taught.

Just as the US contracting university exerted great influence in the recruitment and selection of the professors, it was here that the greatest differences between the SNU and KAIS Projects occurred. Both projects’ administrators desired Korean educators with advanced training in the US. Whereas in the earlier SNU Project, there was no

⁴⁶ Handwritten note from KunMo Chung to Terman, January 14, 1973, in Ireson Papers, Box 12, Folder “KunMo Chung, Professor.”

⁴⁷ Terman Survey Report.

⁴⁸ “Negotiated contract no. KAIS-SU #1,” effective date December 1, 1971, in Ireson Papers, Box 7.

significant pool of US-educated Korean candidates or enough incentives to induce the few available to return, in the KAIS Project there were prospective candidates for its faculty. The SNU Project planners created a pool by sending faculty and graduate students already teaching in Korea to the United States to be trained. As for the new field of Public Administration, planners chose aspiring public administration scholars for their potential. All selected persons began their advanced studies at the University of Minnesota with the understanding that they would teach at SNU. A few came back with doctoral degrees, some with master's degrees, and most with certificates of participation, proofs of their foreign training. For the SNU Project, the participant training or exchange component became the main instrument of creating and recruiting US-trained professionals for the SNU Project. For the KAIS Project, candidates for its faculty were privately sponsored students who had already finished their graduate trainings or were nearly done with their studies. The KAIS Project administrators would be choosing from a group of Korean scholars scattered throughout the US. They needed to first find the candidates.

Stanford University as the Coordinating Office occupied a central role in recruiting the charter faculty for KAIS. In its capacity as KAIS' public relations agent, Stanford "[kept] Korean scientists and scholars abroad informed of KAIS programs and progress."⁴⁹ Its duties included providing "aid in searching out and evaluating faculty prospects for KAIS, contact prospects on behalf of KAIS, convey information to KAIS, and make recommendations for hiring the best qualified candidates."⁵⁰ The KAIS search committee used three tactics to locate promising candidates. First, it looked at the recruitment efforts of Battelle Memorial Institute on behalf of Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST). Like the recruiters for KIST, the KAIS Project coordinator contacted "establishment of channels of communication" such as Korean American churches and associations. Stanford sent letters to Korean organizations in Boston, New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago and Ann Arbor, Michigan about the open positions on the KAIS faculty.⁵¹ The Korean student population was widely dispersed throughout the US and these letters only reached the larger Korean communities. Despite this initial effort, the outreach yielded few results. And since the job advertised required specific qualifications held by few Koreans, the search committee turned to US universities. W. Grant Ireson, the Director of the KAIS Project, wrote to numerous deans of American universities requesting names of Koreans with PhD's in various fields of engineering who might be interested and available to return to Korea as faculty at KAIS.⁵² Lastly, the American search committee turned to print media. The US Coordinating Office placed job announcements for full-time faculty members in publications that they believed professional Koreans engineers and scientists might read.⁵³ Though the search committee cast a wide net, it was less than satisfactory with its

⁴⁹ Ibid., 8.

⁵⁰ "Contract No. KAIS-SU," 5, in Ireson Papers, Box 7, Folder "Contract Documents"

⁵¹ USAID Operations Mission to Korea, "Status Report," 9.

⁵² A template of the letters sent to the deans, January 23, 1973., in Ireson Papers, Box 17, Folder "Thank you letters to deans."

⁵³ Accordingly to the KAIS Monthly Procurement Report of January 1974, ads were placed in the "IEEE Spectrum," "The ASEE Journal of Engineering Education," and the KSEA "Newsletter," in Ireson Papers, Box 12, Folder "Monthly Activity Reports."

catch. It was difficult to find Koreans with significant teaching and working experience in the US who wanted to return to Korea.

The personal papers of Ireson contain recruitment and application materials of ninety-one Korean scholars who were considered for KAIS's charter faculty. These documents provide a rare glimpse into the lives of this understudied group of highly skilled graduates of American universities, and also illuminate the changing demographics of Korean international students pursuing an American education. These privately supported students of the KAIS Project provide a stark contrast to government sponsored students of the SNU Project. The majority of them had received no government funding, and were not obligated to return to the country of origin. They were among the growing number of Korean international students with no definite plans to return to Korea after completing their studies. As discussed in the next chapter, American industries and academic institutions welcomed these foreign scientists and the US government facilitated their permanent settlement through its immigration and labor laws.⁵⁴

Professorial candidates for KAIS did not comprise a monolithic group, yet as a whole their experiences in the United States differed from those of the participants of the SNU Project. The greatest difference was in their educational attainment. One hundred per cent of the candidates soliciting or being recruited to KAIS had received an advanced degree. All but two had completed or were near completion of their doctoral programs. More than 90% had been trained in the United States. They had lived and studied in the United States much longer than their SNU counterparts, which translated into more time to acquire the needed language, social, and research skill necessary to navigate American academia and work life. In contrast, only 5% of the SNU participants completed their advanced training. English difficulties plagued the SNU participants, preventing some from pursuing their studies. In some evaluations letters, UMN advisors note that some candidates took a full year just to acquire a working knowledge of English, often the entire length of their stay.⁵⁵

Whereas, most of the government sponsored SNU professors received their training at University of Minnesota, KAIS candidates earned their graduate degrees from every part of the United States. This group brought to the table their experiences from nearly one hundred US colleges and universities. Most KAIS applicants received their education from multiple US universities having transferred from one school to another to follow an expert in their field, to pursue a new academic interest, to study at a more prestigious university, and/or to find a better "fit" with their personal goals and interests. There is no doubt the KAIS group experienced greater geographic mobility and greater academic freedom.

The family-supported or privately-sponsored KAIS candidates listed their spouse and children as dependents residing with them in the United States; none wrote "spouse" as the closest relative living in Korea. Most either got married before or during their studies, with their wives accompanying or joining them in the United States.⁵⁶ The fact

⁵⁴ Migration strategies employed by nonreturnees is discussed in chapter six.

⁵⁵ SNU participants' English difficulties and the resulting challenges are discussed in chapter three.

⁵⁶ Only one woman applicant expressed her interest. Ireson identified her as the strongest candidate in her area of specialization. Her educational background and relevant work history matched KAIS' needs.

that their nuclear family remained intact made a significant impact on their US experiences and it factored into their decision to remain in the United State or to return to Korea. The married SNU participants, in contrast, endured an enforced separation from their spouses because the government prohibited any dependents to accompany them to both encourage their return and to reduce the program cost.

The presence of the family added elements that earlier students sponsored by the government and traveling singly did not need to consider. There were additional expenses associated with a larger family often on a fixed income, but at the same time their spouses added significantly to their household income. A fifth of those KAIS applicants who checked that they were married indicated that their wives were also professionals.⁵⁷ For these double-income households, accepting a KAIS job would result in considerable financial loss and for some spouses irreversible career setbacks. Then, there were also children to consider.⁵⁸

Though a gendered analysis of the applicants and their family is not possible from these sources, they do provide a view that deviates from anecdotal assumptions that Korean wives worked as unpaid labor in their family businesses or were secluded in their homes. These were highly educated women with learning commensurate to their husbands. They made significant contributions to the household economy and to the household bank accounts. Though all but two women in the documents are identified as wives and daughters, these applications reveal that women had responsibilities both inside and outside the home. The two noteworthy exceptions were accomplished Korean female scientists who competed with male Korean scientists for teaching positions at KAIS. The KAIS search committee both implicitly and explicitly pulled the welcome mat from under these candidates' feet with open hostility in the case of the first and condescension with the second. Women as competent professionals, even those with their US PhDs and significant work experience, were not welcome at KAIS.

The appointment of a woman scientist caused KAIS' faculty to be "almost in a state of open rebellion."⁵⁹ One confidential letter informed how "application from Mrs. (Dr.) Chan was purely a formality." The rumor had it that her husband, who was appointed to Korean government's pet atomic project, refused to accept his appointment unless the government found a suitable job for his wife. Thus the Korean government forced the chief administrator of KAIS to offer Dr. Chan a position. In what appeared to

Ireson, acting as her advocate, highlighted how quickly her American employer had promoted her and given great responsibilities. Yet, she was not hired. In Ireson Papers, Box 3.

⁵⁷ The occupations listed for their wives included office clerk, bank teller, librarian, scientists, physician, electro-cardiogram technician, and history professor. Information from application materials and recruitment reports in Ireson Papers, Boxes 1-4, 12, 14, 15.

⁵⁸ Children's names suggest the parents' flexible response to their American lives. A simple assumption would be that those planning to return to Korea would give their children Korean names while those intending to remain in the US would give American or Americanized names, in both cases to help the kids fit in. Regardless of their legal status and reflective of their overall ambivalence to the concept of permanent settlement, parents applied any one of the following naming practices for their children's legal names: Korean names, "American" names, both with one serving as the middle name, or Korean names spelled in such way to reflect American names (i.e. Jean Young, Sue Young). Most couples chose to adhere to one particular naming practice for all their children, but those who did not differentiate according to their children's gender as would be expected of the Korean patrilineal tradition.

⁵⁹ Dr. Chan's first name is not included in this or other documents. Handwritten letter from Ireson to Dave Annett, May 28, 1973, in Ireson Paper, Box 8, Folder "Ireson Korea Trip – May to Sept 1973."

be private, but publicly discussed, meetings he defended the hiring as stemming from coercion. The mutinous faculty members who themselves had been hired just a few short months before took the matter up with the Minister of Education. The other exception was an unsuccessful candidate who received Stanford's endorsement as the best candidate for the position being filled. Her resume revealed that she had ten years of relevant job experience with demonstrated leadership skills. The American company that hired her recognized her competence by rapidly promoting her to be the head of her division and compensating her well. Of all the KAIS applicants who listed their monthly salary, hers was the highest. Yet, in its evaluation of her application the search committee's line of questioning was gendered. She was not addressed as Dr. Kang but as "Ms. Kang." In addition, the search committee asked her, "We note that your husband's occupation is also teaching and that he is a professor. If you were awarded a position at KAIS would your husband and children go back to Korea with you?"⁶⁰ No similar clarification of wives or family's intent was found in male applicants' dossiers. Korean women scientists and engineers faced open hostility and condescension, an environment that was slow to change.

Not only KAIS but also other US and Korean research institutions as well as companies in the private sector valued and wanted their specialized skills and knowledge. What made them valuable also made them open to other attractive and competitive jobs. Since the question of who would return or remain in the US paralleled the larger issue of the scientists' long-term commitment and their competitiveness, the KAIS search committee had to accommodate some of their transnational family living situations. Some selected KAIS professors relocated their entire family to Korea while others moved back to Korea while their families or their children remained in the US. The idea that younger children adjusted and learned, language for example, more easily than older children was and is still commonly accepted. Many with young children, most of whom were US citizens by birth, chose the first option. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some Korean intellectuals based their decision on the perceived difficulties of their children to adjust to Korea. The more established, older professors with significant work and life experiences in the United States tended to keep their family in the US. For example, KAIS second president Joseph D. Park negotiated to be paid in US dollars in order to pay his children's US university tuitions.⁶¹ Park stated bluntly, "I still have kids in college and that costs money."⁶² So, he went to Korea but his family stayed in the US. Implicit in his action was that his allegiance lay foremost with himself and his family, and that he did not have plans to remain indefinitely in Korea. More established professors continued to be affiliated with their US universities during their KAIS tenure. If need be, they could return to their jobs. These professors and their spouses traveled between the US and Korea more often than the less experienced, junior professors. Ironically, those exercising the greatest mobility were also those professors KAIS sought to retain indefinitely.

⁶⁰ Ireson to Ms. Chunghee Kim Kang, May 7, 1973, in Ireson Papers, Box 14, Folder "Faculty Recruiting Pending."

⁶¹ Transcribed telephone conversation between Annett and Dr. Williams, April 2, 1971, in Ireson Papers, Box 16, Folder "AID/Korea."

⁶² *San Jose Mercury*, June 24, 1974, Ireson Papers, Box 19, Folder "KAIS Publicity."

To attract and retain the “lost brain,” the Korean government needed to pay the faculty well. The Terman Survey Report, the blueprint for KAIS stated, that “KAIS [is] empowered to recruit and support faculty on terms that will make it possible to bring back to Korea well qualified scientists and engineers now abroad.”⁶³ These terms were listed in dollar amounts. The planners had learned from the failed SNU Project and Korean higher education in general. Faculty pay was so low that professors could not support their families. Most professors had to supplement their income by working two, even three jobs, which left them little time for anything else. The proposed pay salary for the KAIS administrators and professors reflected at the lower end of the salary scale found at US universities and industries. Given Korea’s lower living cost than in the US, their salary considerably surpassed their spending power in the US. A 1971 KAIS planning document contained estimates of faculty salaries as part of its operating expenditures.⁶⁴ It listed:

Full professors including president and vice president	\$12,000
Associate professors and business manager	\$9,000
Assistant professors	\$6,500
Instructors	\$5,500

These figures excluded the subsidized housing, which would add another 10% to the budgeted salary. In addition, the one-time relocation expense of the professor and his family could be as much as his annual salary and became a significant expenditure.⁶⁵

Repatriated scientists and engineers would still be taking a salary cut. Whereas KAIS salary scale ranged from \$5500 to \$12,000; candidates’ compensation as listed on their application ranged from \$9,000 to \$19,200. One chemist hired as an associate professor at KAIS had previously earned \$18,500 annually.⁶⁶ His KAIS paycheck would be less than half of what he received in the US. As expressed by one applicant, “reservation due to the existing salary structures at KAIS” dissuaded many capable candidates from accepting a position at Korea’s unique science and technology institution.⁶⁷ At the same time, KAIS’s establishment coincided with Korea’s dramatic economic growth, which tempered the income disparity, ever so slightly.

Education specialist Ha-Joong Song in his doctoral dissertation evaluated the factors contributing to the decision of Korean scientists and engineers to return or remain following the completion of their doctoral programs in the United States. He presented what he called a “discrete choice analysis” about their choices. For those who received their PhD in the 1960s, he found that that the socio-economic gap between the US and Korea superseded personal preferences or perceptions, with the majority remaining in the United States. For the 1980s contingent, he found that personal conditions played a

⁶³ Terman Survey Report, vii.

⁶⁴ “Comments on Organization and Planning for Korea Advanced Institute of Science,” January 1971, 56, in Ireson Papers, Box 7.

⁶⁵ Relocation expenses easily surpassed the average earning of all but the most elite Korean workers. February 1974 Monthly Progress Report on KAIS shows that the airfare for a professor and his wife was \$2,855.40. The moving expense for an unmarried professor was slightly lower. In Ireson Papers, Box 7, Folder “Monthly Progress Report on K.A.I.S. Report (Report no. 14; February 1974).”

⁶⁶ KAIS application materials for IWC, in Ireson Papers, Box 1

⁶⁷ Phang to Ireson, January 31, 1973, in Ireson Papers, Box 4, Folder “Dr. Michael Phang.” Phang was a naturalized US citizen, so KAIS did not consider him for a permanent faculty positions. KAIS hired all non-Korean citizens as consultants or visiting professors only.

greater role in their decision. While the majority also chose to remain, such factors as the inability of their children to speak Korean became “one of the most significant indicators of their American commitment.”⁶⁸ Temporally, KAIS applicants fall into the first group. The KAIS charter faculty members made their decisions at a transitional time when Korea’s future was neither developed nor undeveloped, and before the infrastructure they would be working within was set up. These scholars thus made provisions that reflected their ambivalence toward repatriation.

Their legal status was another indicator of applicants’ different life stages as well as their ambivalence to a permanent residence in one country. Among Iresons’ papers containing information on ninety-one KAIS candidates, there were Korean nationals with temporary student visas, Koreans with US permanent residency, permanent residents with pending US citizenship, naturalized US citizens, and a naturalized Canadian citizen.⁶⁹ As their interests and decisions regarding KAIS reveal, the various legal statuses do not gauge a person’s commitment to live permanently in one country or another. Rather their legal status was a strategic tool that helped them navigate their needs and desires within the existing working and living conditions of the US and Korea.

Often, their legal status did reflect their academic status or job position. Of the examined KAIS candidates, all Korean nationals with temporary student visas were those students still in their graduate programs or in postdoctoral programs. In his personal observation as an international student, Ha-Joong Song asserted that as long as the Korean students concentrated on academic matters, their exposure to American life was limited.⁷⁰ By association, they had the least need to negotiate within the US labor market, an arena where non-US immigrants and citizens had limited legal recourse or protection. In contrast, the majority of the naturalized US citizens who applied to KAIS worked in industries, not in the academia. They were integral members of the labor market where salaries, positions, and roles were constantly negotiated. Perhaps their greater awareness and involvement in the American economy and society as well as having started and raised a family in the US led them to change their citizenship.

What is interesting about the KAIS candidates is their varying legal status and their flexible idea of migration. As one Korean scholar put it succinctly, international students could return, stay or wait. Those who returned directly after their studies had no immediate need for a legal status change, whereas many among those who chose to remain did in order to have more options. Within the latter group, there were scholars who adopted a wait and see approach. Song’s survey of Korean scientists and engineers with PhDs from US institutions concluded that an immediate return to Korea meant that the scholar would be confined to Korea whereas those with US working experience had greater mobility.⁷¹ Professional development in American was accepted throughout the world, while the converse did not apply.

Individual KAIS applicants have unique life histories and goals, and their decisions to apply, accept, or decline depended on individually ascribed meaning of their education. Some viewed KAIS as a fulfillment of their desire to *help* Korea. One graduate advisor recalled how his former student had “often expressed a desire [to] return

⁶⁸ Song, “Who Stays?,” 323.

⁶⁹ Application and supporting materials found throughout Ireson Papers, Boxes 1-4, 12, 13, 15, and 18.

⁷⁰ Song, “Who Stays?,” 160 (footnote 16).

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 150.

to Korea in an academic position.”⁷² Another senior professor wrote, “I know from conversations with him [Korean graduate student] that he would be anxious to return to Korea if the appropriate position in Civil or Industrial Engineering were available.”⁷³ Applicants’ patriotic professions however must be taken with a grain of salt, since they wanted a job created by Korea with an expressed purpose to advance Korea. One man wrote in his KAIS application of his great desire “[t]o serve my country and contribute to the advancement of science in Korea.” In the case of the Korean wishing to “serve *my* country [emphasis added],” he had previously renounced his Korean citizenship to become a naturalized Canadian citizen. Yet, even as they professed their desire to return, they knowingly chose to specialize in fields where there were no current needs in Korea, but fields with healthy job prospects in the US.

Though the decision to “return” was ultimately personal, there were structural changes in Korea that positively influenced their decision, primarily Korea’s economic growth and ability to absorb and support their skills. According to an American-Korean Foundation report, from 1946 to 1965 only 10% of Korean students returned.⁷⁴ A Korean government commissioned report estimated the return at 20% in the early 1970s.⁷⁵ Korea’s capacity to absorb these highly specialized persons grew slowly, and the rate of return increased over time. One scholar estimated that roughly half of Korean scientists and engineers who earned US PhDs from 1960 to 1988 lived in the United States.⁷⁶ A more recent study found that nearly 95% of US science PhD’s earned in 1990 and 1991 had returned to Korea by 1995.⁷⁷

As a group, American trained scientists and engineers exercised a greater degree of freedom in choosing where they would practice their skills. In the 1960s and 1970s, the US Immigration and Naturalization Services allowed skilled international students to adjust their legal status and become permanent residents or immigrants. A PhD from an accredited American institution was testimony enough to their productive capability and the American government could use their labor. In some professions, the American government did not even require a sponsoring academic institution or company. Along with the majority of the international students from other developing nations, most Koreans chose to settle in the United States constituted a part of the larger US immigrant population.

These KAIS applicants were part of a larger group of international students from developing countries in the United States. Historically, most privately sponsored students from developing countries did not return to their countries. Korea was no exception. Though the percentage of those who stayed has fluctuated from decade to decade, Korean students continue to remain in the US or stay to “wait and see.” The US

⁷² Thomas R. Harris, professor at chemistry and biomedical engineering at Vanderbilt University to Ireson, January 25, 1973, in Ireson Papers, Box 17, Folder “Thank you letters to deans.”

⁷³ Steven J. Fenves, head and professor of Department of Civil Engineering at Carnegie-Mellon University, to Ireson, January 2, 1973, in Ireson Papers, Box 17, Folder “Thank you letters to deans.”

⁷⁴ Gregory Henderson, “Foreign Students: Exchange or Immigration?” in *Foreign Service Journal* (April 1965): 36, in Henderson Papers, Box 2, Folder “Students + Immigration – Brain Drain.”

⁷⁵ Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the US, *Chaemi Han’guk hakcha wa yuhaksaeng*.

⁷⁶ Song, “Who Stays?” 148.

⁷⁷ Robert L. Paarlberg, “Knowledge as Power: Science, Military Dominance, and U.S. Security,” *International Security* 29, no. 1, (Summer 2004): 139-140.

government's official responses have varied over time, but as a whole its immigration policies have facilitated the change of status from nonimmigrant students, for those with exceptional skills with advanced training, to immigrant permanent residents. For example in April of 1970, a Congressional amendment exempted all international students, except for those who were financed by their home government, to adjust their legal status from nonimmigrant student to immigrant permanent resident without needing to vacate the country.⁷⁸ International students no longer needed to experience the inconvenience of leaving US and then reentering it after two years to become a permanent resident. Those who remained, with or without proper documentation, melded into the US workforce. Korean students also shaped the Korean American society. Those who returned joined the important segment of the emerging elites in Korea, and reinforced the notion of a US education conferring legitimacy and privilege in the Korean society. As one recent RAND researcher summarized, "The strength of the Korea-US science and technology relationship has developed in large part due to the network of relationships formed through the participation of Korean students and scholars in the US university system."⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Daniel Quinn, "The Brain Drain: Robbing the poor, aiding the rich?" in *Christian Science Monitor*, November 8, 1971, in Henderson Papers, Box 2, Folder "Students + Immigration – Brain Drain."

⁷⁹ Caroline Wager, Amy Wong, SungHo Lee, and Irene Brahmakulam, *Phase Transition in Korea-U.S. Science and Technology Relations* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003), 12.

Chapter 5 US-educated Elites and the Phenomenon of Study Abroad

On June 17, 1965, *Chosun Ilbo* proudly presented the success story of the Park-Lee couple.¹ Donning their graduating regalia, the pair held up their diploma and beamed into the camera. The article boasted that even the American media buzzed with excitement over the accomplishments of the son and daughter of the Land of the Morning Calm. It praised the husband-wife pair for becoming the first married couple in the long history of the American University to receive their doctoral degrees on the same day. Then the news articles turned to personal details that the readers understood and expected. Though they had prestigious degrees, Park and Lee came from humble backgrounds fraught with hardships that most Koreans had lived through. The couple spent their formative years enduring the dire consequences of a regime change and the devastation of the civil war. Park, along with his seven siblings and parents fled to Pusan, the southern most tip of Korea and began to rebuild their lives from the ground up as war refugees. Lee, on the hand, lost both her parents early in life, and her older brother had raised her. When the Korean War struck, the orphaned brother and sister fled to Pusan. There Park and Lee met, and soon after “received everyone’s permission to date.” Despite the disadvantages life had doled out to Lee, she studied assiduously. Ewha University accepted the determined woman, but she wanted more. After a year at Ewha, she finalized her plans to get an American education and left for the United States. The following year in 1953, Park, then her boyfriend, vowed to earn the highest degree - an American doctoral degree. Park also spent a year at another elite Korean university, and then headed for the United States. Shortly after arriving in the US, Park and Lee became engaged. A few years later they were married, and between their wedding and graduation, they had two sons. Their doctoral degrees completed their success. The article announced that after being away for nearly a decade, they would be coming home soon.

The United States was a far away land, and a PhD a lofty degree, but Korean newspaper readers understood that people, just like themselves, had dreamed big, worked hard, and achieved their goal. News articles on US-educated persons also focused on the personal, rather than the academic experiences of the Korean international students, further building a sense of familiarity between the articles’ protagonists and the readers. Most articles mentioned their age and marital status; some even included details of family planning. Articles clearly identified unmarried doctorates, and noted (down to the date of engagement and pending wedding) if their eligibility would change.² If they were married, then the articles listed their children’s ages and names. Accounts of long

¹ Won-su Chŏn, “Kat’ŭn nal ka’t’ŭn hakkyosŏ pubu paksa kach’i t’ansaeng - Pak Chŏng-su · Yi Pŏm-ju ssi Miguk Amerik’an Taehak esŏ hagwi” [Same Day, Same School, the Birth of an Educated Couple – Doctors Pak Chŏng-su and Yi Pŏm-jun from American University], *Chosun Ilbo*, June 17, 1965, 7.

² For an example of such article see, “Miguk esŏ irŭm ttŏlch’in tu yeohak’to paksa kwajŏng esŏ janghakkŭm t’an Pun Pok-cha yang’gwa Sin Myŏng-suk ” [Two Illustrious Women Scholars Earns Scholarship for their Doctoral Studies: Misses Yun pok-cha and Sin Myŏng-suk yang], *Chosun Ilbo*, November 8, 1964, 5.

separations between the student and his spouse and child(ren) exemplified these scholars' devotion and sacrifice for knowledge. Such details satisfied the readers' curiosity, and served as fodder for the forming lore of fame and success awaiting US-educated Koreans. The attention and praise heaped on these Koreans with America's highest degree undoubtedly seeped into the dreams and plans of other Koreans, students as well as their parents.

The perception and reception of the US-educated and US education in Korea are part of the overall history of Korean diaspora. As with all migrants, the students' choices and decisions unfold on a complicated plane with spatially and temporally crisscrossing considerations. Prospective students used the societal and educational standards formed in Korea to evaluate how their education in the United States would affect their future lives back in Korea. Evidentiary news articles of success created inspiring images of those educated in the US and foreshadowed the reception that they would receive when they returned. Given that very few students had the means to visit Korea during the entire period of studies in the US, they updated and at times replaced the images and values they brought from Korea with their experiences and expectations gained in the United States. To the extent time and interest allowed, students kept abreast of what was happening back in Korea, but much of how they thought Korea would perceive and receive them with their US education was informed before they left Korea.

Accordingly, this chapter is about Korea because US education for any Korean foreign student begins in Korea. Though Korean attitudes toward the US fluctuate between positive and negative, with a definite tilt to the negative since the early 1980s, the reputation of a US education as a knowledge base enjoys an unprecedented, if not uncritical, popularity and respect. The largely uninterrupted growth in the number of Korean students going to the US attests to the strength and lasting power of this image. How and why did this happen?

Table 3: Koreans Students in the US by Select Year³

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>KOREAN STUDENTS IN THE US</u>
1946	16
1950	302
1955	1815
1960	2310
1965	2666
1970	3857

The history of international students is one of contact. In the case of many developing nations with strong ties to the US, the contact between Americans and foreign students began before the students arrived on American campuses. Initially, American missionaries tiptoed into the country and introduced their worldview and lifestyle as well

³ Institute of International Education, *Open Doors*. The figure for 1945/1946 was not available, so the figure for 1946 is used instead.

as their religion. Then, the American Cold War warriors marched in with a new American template to use in the marketplaces, government chambers, and schools to name some of the most affected areas. Along with the new paradigm, Americans involved provided the needed information and support for Koreans going to the US for further studies. Each “first generation” Korean foreign students received indispensable help directly from an American missionary, soldier, or educator or indirectly through the acquaintances of these Americans. Through these persons, Korean students tackled the greatest obstacles to studying abroad, finding information and getting funding. Once the connection was made, many more points of contact emerged to help subsequent generations of Koreans receive their US education.

The increased contact between American educators and Korean students also reflected the history of the times. The US military occupation of Korea from 1945 to 1948 produced the largest (not accounting for the years when the number of Korean students were in the single digits) annual percentage increase of Koreans studying in the United States; in both 1947 and 1948 the number of Korean foreign students increased roughly 250%. Given that there was a lag time of one year between applying and enrolling at schools and between approving and implementing government projects, these years coincide with increased US government involvement and American contacts in Korea. Between the end of US occupation and the first year of the Korean War, when relief and collaborative program were minimized, the annual increase of Korean students to the US averaged 13%. Then the number spiked again in 1953, averaging 87% increase for the next three years.⁴ These figures corresponded to the ebb and flow of US military presence and involvement in Korea. The resulting critical mass of US-educated Koreans, along with Americans in Korea, added to the availability of information and led more students abroad.

Until the US military entered Korea at the end of World War II, American missionaries were the dominant group of Westerners in Korea. For a brief period between 1903 and 1905, Hawaii accepted Korean immigrants who displayed one or both of the following characteristics: intimate contact with American missionaries residing in Korea and desire for themselves or their children to pursue an American education. One historian goes as far as to say that Koreans considered Hawaii a stepping stone to an American university.⁵ In his 1961 autobiography, Easurk Charr wrote that in his case, American missionaries had served as information brokers and role models.⁶ So, with the support and reference provided by American medical missionaries, Charr and his “scholar cousin” left Korea for Hawaii. They wanted to be trained in modern medical science to help Koreans, much like the missionaries. Like the countless students before and after them, Charr and his relative came with the end goal of reforming Korea. As

⁴ Figures computed from data in Institute of International Education’s *Open Doors*.

⁵ “Korea Science and Engineering Foundation, *Han’guk kwahak kisuja ūi hngsŏng yon’gu 2: Miguk yuhak p’yon* [A Study on the Formation of Modern Scientists and Engineers in Korea II: Studying in America] (Han’guk Kwahak Chaedan, December 1998), 42.

⁶ Easurk Emsen Charr, *The Golden Mountain: The Autobiography of a Korean Immigrant, 1895-1960* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1961).

late as 1966, one Korean scholar made a blanket statement, “Korean students are well-screened ‘educational missionaries’ to this country [United States] and will be members of the elite group in Korean society when they return home.”⁷

A US education represented more than knowledge. Service to the Korean national cause became a rhetorical and literal rationale for study abroad, starting with the first student. Yu Kil-jun was a member of the initial Korean delegation sent to the US in 1883.⁸ He opted to stay and learn more about America in hopes of contributing to his country’s advancement.⁹ By the early 1900s, the idea of the US as a haven for scholars and political dissidents took hold in Korea. Around this time, China and Japan applied pressure on Korea to conform to their political needs. Korean intellectuals and politicians reacted by looking beyond its neighboring countries and affixing their gaze on the US for their nation’s viability. So by the time Japan had forcibly annexed Korea in 1910, Koreans considered the pursuit of a US education as an act of political rebellion, as well as escape from a fettered Korea.

With the end of Japanese rule in 1945 and the ensuing US military government in Korea, there were more points of contact between Americans and Koreans than ever before. US-educated Koreans, with the support of US military, took key leadership positions in the new republic. The Korean War was the watershed for study abroad, and the US became *the* choice for study abroad. The American involvement in the war and in postwar reconstruction added to the growing prestige and pride of studying in the United States by elevating and affirming people with cooperative knowledge of the US. American-educated Koreans comprised a small group of elites whose influence grew as the US government deepened its “patronage” in Korea.

The wish to go abroad was part of the larger phenomenon of *miguk byung* or the “American fever.” This “affliction” descended onto and permanently settled on Korean universities. An American education was the greatest symbol of status - a key and manifestation of success. It would not be an exaggeration to claim that all students at one point or another daydreamed about studying in the United States, especially at elite universities like SNU. One 1950s SNU graduate explained, “There was an unquestioned

⁷ Hyung Tae Kim, “Relationships between Personal Characteristics of Korean Students in Pennsylvania and Their Attitudes toward the Christian Churches in America” (PhD diss, University of Pittsburgh, 1966), 2.

⁸ Pyong-Choon Hahm notes that those Koreans who visited the US at the turn of 19th century were particularly impressed by its public education and were convinced that the country’s strength lay in its ability to educate its people. For more detail see Pyong-Choon Hahm, “The Korean Perception of the United States” in *Korea and the United States: A Century of Cooperation*, edited by Youngnook Koo and Dae-Sook Suh (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984), 23-52.

⁹ Yu Kil-jun enrolled in Dummer Academy in Massachusetts. Upon learning about the failed political uprising, he left behind his meager belongings with his American host and left for Korea. These artifacts along with some of his letters are now housed in the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, MA. Upon returning to Korea he wrote *Soyu Kyon Mun* [What I Saw and Heard in My Visit to the West]. According to historian Bong-youn Choy, “Many intellectuals read the book and were inspired to go to the West to learn about other nations.” See Bong-youn Choy, *Koreans in United States* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1979), 71. The most detailed English-language account of Yu-kil Jun’s sojourn in English can be found in Kay E. Black, “Peabody’s Korean Connection,” 19-27 in the pamphlet “The Peabody Museum of Salem 1987 Antiques Show,” in Henderson Papers, Box 2, Folder “Peabody Museum, 1987.”

assumption that we [SNU undergraduates] would help drive Korea's modernization." It was understood that in order to do this, he asserted "we needed to go abroad [to the United States]." ¹⁰ 1960s SNU graduate, Han gave a much more personal reason. ¹¹ He wanted to escape the penury and the constant physical hunger that plagued his life. Even at the nation's most prestigious university, the poverty that clung to him stunted the relationships he had with others and there was every indication that it would continue to harass him. He learned that the US could provide the answer. This desire for change also repeats itself in the life story of another Korean. Lee entered SNU nearly a decade after Han, and like him wanted to shed his lower class identity. He explained,

I wanted to be successful. The possibility of raising my social status [with a US education] was much better. There was no guarantee that a US PhD would lead to success but the chances were much higher. Yes, much, much higher. ¹²

He resolved to join the ranks of the US-educated and did. ¹³ An exceptional quality of a US education, as understood by these Korean students, was that it was available to everyone.

Koreans did not accept all persons and things American with an open heart. Although the Korean public held US *education* in high esteem, the general image and reception of the United States was full of tension. The truth of the matter is that the relationship between Korea and the United States has always been Janus-faced. Given the unequal power dynamic between the countries, few Koreans directly criticized the United States during this time. The negative reporting and opinions came mostly from Americans themselves. A veteran correspondent for the Asia Desk of the *Chicago Sun* wrote, "When our troops landed in South Korea on Sept. 7, 1945, thousands of Koreans danced, and cheered, or shouted Mansei, or 'Live a thousand years.' Within six months, surly Koreans were demanding to know how soon the 'liberators' would go home." ¹⁴

There was a range of acceptance and rejection of things American just as there were multi-faceted images of the American culture and people. There was also a schizophrenic image attached to Koreans seeking US association. Among those Koreans leaving for the United States were "loose" women cavorting with American soldiers on the one hand and respect-worthy scholars coveting knowledge on the other. Cultural historian So-Yeon Kang found that this dichotomous image of Americans also existed in Koreans women's magazines. In analyzing how these magazines depicted American culture in the 1950s, Kang found that there were two types of readers: fashion forward

¹⁰ Interview with Cha, August 12, 2008 in Seoul, Korea. Name has been changed according to the interviewee's wishes.

¹¹ Interview with Walter Kwang Woo Han, August 31, 2008 in Pleasanton, California.

¹² Interview with Lee, August 12, 2008 in Seoul, Korea. Name has been changed according to the interviewee's wishes.

¹³ Lee eventually went on to become the vice provost of Seoul National University.

¹⁴ Mark, Gayn, "Liberators' Turned Zones into Military Bases," *Chicago Sun*, November 2, 1947, in George A. Fitch Papers [hereafter Fitch Papers], Box 7, Folder "News Clippings," Harvard-Yenching Library and Archives, Cambridge, MA [hereafter location not included].

women eager to imitate American actresses as objects of envy and more conservative “women of virtue and cultivation [who sought and had] advanced awareness of America.”¹⁵ Implicit in this categorization is that there were two distinct groups of not only readers but two images of American women. Yet, US education as a concept and as a commodity received unequivocal, widespread public acceptance. It was positively associated with powerful politicians and educators, both Koreans and Americans, starting in the period of US Military Government in Korea.

Political figures are by nature public figures, and were among the most visible US-educated persons. The first occupant of many newly created posts in Korea from its head of state to the ambassador to the United States had doctoral degrees from the United States. Prior to, and often during their tenure, these men were referred to as *paksa*, a technical term for doctor of philosophy as well as a catch-all label denoting expertise. According to Dong Suh Bark, a scholar in Korean public administration, “the top political positions [prior to the military coup of 1961] were occupied by those who had returned from study in the United States.”¹⁶ Those with an American education made sure to advertize this fact. They slipped into their speeches and writings references to their time in the United States. First elected president’s Syngman Rhee adopted the Americanized practice of signing and referring to himself by his first name followed by his surname; general Korean practice places the surname before the given name. Former Korean Ambassador Yang told his audience in 1956 that the “happiest years of my life have been spent in Hawaii” where he had been a practicing medical surgeon.¹⁷

Just as high level bureaucrats gained power through their US education, lower bureaucrats strengthened their position through their American connections. As early as April 1946, the Public Relations Office of USMGIK started an English-language course for Koreans wishing to study in the United States. With an enrollment cap of one hundred, it was only open to public servants nominated by their bureau or section chiefs. The same news release also announced that pending negotiations, one hundred scholarships may become available, suggesting that the language course was in preparation for a fully funded study abroad program.¹⁸

A more defined avenue of study abroad was the Fulbright program. Though Korea was a small part of the whole Fulbright Program, the impact of the Fulbright scholarship carried great positive consequence to its Korean recipients. The Fulbright Program in Korea began in 1950, vetting applicants for their potential to become leaders. US embassy personnel affirmed its success by labeling a third of roughly three hundred

¹⁵So-Yeon Kang, “1950-yöndae Yösöng chapchi e p’yosangdoen Miguk munhwa wa yösöng tamnon” [The Represented American Culture and Female Discussion in 1950s Women’s Magazines], *Sanghō Hakpo* 18 (October 2006), 135.

¹⁶Dong Suh Bark, “The American-Educated Elite in Korean Society” in Youngnok Koo and Dae-Sook Suh, eds., *Korea and the United States: A Century of Cooperation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984), 271.

¹⁷“Yang, Korean Ambassador to the US,” August 9, 1956 in *The Korean Information Bulletin* 7, no. 8 and 9 (August-September 1956), in Mott Papers, Box 22.

¹⁸Public Relations Office, Headquarters XXIV Army Corps Newsletter, Seoul, Korea, April 23, 1946, in Mott Papers, Box 19.

recipients from 1950 to 1957 as “leaders.”¹⁹ By its second decade in Korea, this US Department of State program included judges, prosecutors, and special assistants to the ROK president as its alumni.²⁰ Fulbright’s 40 year commemoration in Seoul in 1990 gathered illustrious figures from all areas of Korean society. One Korean sociologist present at the celebration pointed out an interesting fact: comparing the historical meeting between the North Korean and South Korean delegates and the Fulbright Commemoration that took place a week apart in the same location, more high-level Korean politicians attended the latter.²¹

The positive link between higher education and high office manifested itself in the roster of Korean politicians. Korean scholars Bae-Ho Hahn and Kyu-Taik Kim conducted an impressive analysis based on questionnaire responses they collected from Korean political leaders in “the topmost stratum of Korea’s political hierarchy from 1952 to 1962.”²² Using father’s occupation as an indicator of class, they found, as expected, that 51% of the politicians were sons of the landlords or businessmen; they were from upper, upper-middle class. What was unexpected was that roughly 25% of all political leaders in their study were from the lower class, identified as sons of tenant farmers or laborers. For the politicians with humble backgrounds, Hahn and Kim identified that formal education was the key factor in facilitating their rise to the ranks of the political elite. 74% of these men from relatively low social origin, had received formal education at the university or postgraduate levels, with 13% having earned doctorates from universities abroad.²³ Higher education proved to be the catalyst for change for those with no previous contact or experience with political or economic power. For the entire period examined, more than half of the leaders had studied abroad. Hahn and Kim also found that in the years between 1952 and 1961, “the number of leaders who spent four years studying in Japan [was] almost the same as the percentage of those who spent over ten years in other countries, mainly in the United States.”²⁴ To put into perspective, these politicians served at a time when 90% of the total Korean population had either no formal education or only primary education. Hahn and Kim confidently could claim, “a university education is now for all practical purposes an absolute prerequisite for advancement to a top-level political position, in Korea.”²⁵

Along with these national politicians, leaders in higher education were among the most visible and public figures in Korean society.²⁶ A US education became especially

¹⁹ Gregory Henderson, [no title], [n.d.], in Henderson Papers, Box 1, Folder “Writings and Speeches – Korea.”

²⁰ “Fulbright-Hays Korean Grantee Directory, 1961-1972: Eleven Years of Educational Exchange.” Courtesy of Horace Underwood, director of Fulbright Korea, photocopy in author’s possession.

²¹ Il-joon Chung, “Haebang ihu munhwa chegukchuui wa miguk uhaksaeng” [Post-Liberation Cultural Imperialism and US Study Abroad], *Yöksa Pip’yöngsa* 17 (November 1991), 130.

²² Bae-Ho Hahn and Kyu-Taik Kim, “Korean Political Leaders (1952-1962): Their Social Origins and Skills,” *Asian Survey* 3, no. 7 (July 1963), 305-323.

²³ *Ibid.*, 311.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 318.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 311.

²⁶ For much of Korea’s recorded history, the ruling elites were also its intellectuals. Government posts were filled by civic examinations, which tested their knowledge of classical teachings. The symbiotic

important in academia. Following its independence from Japan, the US and Korean governments made a concerted effort to replace the Japanese educated experts with the American educated instructors in the Korean universities. Some critics have argued that US influence on the Korean higher education was “self-imposed with American encouragement and assistance” while others postulate that there was no option but to adapt or adopt the American system.²⁷ What is clear is that both governments actively initiated and supported this conversion. During the Korea War, key Korean scholars were sent to the United States for “safekeeping” and “retraining” during the war.²⁸ Then following the war, key scholars studied in the United States as a part of the SNU Project. For those educators not familiar with the US, observation tours and workshops led by either American educators or Korean returnees were set up. Korean educational system itself was reorganized and patterned after that of the US.²⁹ The increased interaction between Koreans and Americans after the Korean War as well as information from those who had gone abroad made studying abroad more accessible.³⁰ In part, the SNU Project and other participant training programs strengthened the valuation of US degree as a criterion for elite faculty positions. In particular, those Korean scholars with their US PhDs became “symbols of modernization and advancement,”³¹ and valued members of the emerging elite.

Following the liberation, highly profiled educators immediately emerged as self-appointed vanguards of educational reform. A close-knit group of educators gathered at a

relationship between the lettered persons and political power lent itself to elevating both the political and social status of these men. In turn, many of the intellectuals viewed themselves as the legitimate voice of the people. Though the relationship between the government and academia has changed over time, university professors have often served as advisors to government groups and as the moral voice of the public. In more recent times, professors from elite universities have commanded so much air time that they are nicknamed “teleprofs.” One American visiting professor at Seoul National University recalls that he regularly saw his colleagues on televisions or saw their pictures next to articles or columns they have written. He noted drily that they were obviously in great demand. For more observations of the visiting professor see, Fredric Marc Roberts and Kyun-soo Chun, “The Natives are Restless: Anthropological Research on a Korean University,” in NAFSA Working Paper #10, “The Korea Papers: Profiles in Educational Exchange.” Paper presented at the Advanced Professional Development Symposium on the Educational System of Korea, held in conjunction with the NAFSA Region VI conference in Columbia, Ohio from October 25-29, 1988.

²⁷ Youngnok Koo and Dae-Sook Suh, eds., *Korea and the United States: A Century of Cooperation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984), 102.

²⁸ This group of awardees included acting presidents of universities, deans, and mathematicians. Half of this select group was directly affiliated with Seoul National University. Source: “8 Korean Leaders Study at Top U.S. Universities,” *Korean Messenger* 1, no. 5 (Fall 1952), 1, 4, in Mott Papers, Box 23.

²⁹ For more details on the structural changes of the Korean educational system see: Jeong-kyu Lee, *Historic Factors Influencing Korean Higher Education* (Somerset, NJ: Jimoondang Publishing Company, 2000); Byung-hun Nam, “Educational Reorganization in South Korea under the US Army Military Government: 1945-48” (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1962); Kyu Young Park, “The Reconstruction of Educational Theory: Confucianism, Practicalism, and Pragmatism” (PhD diss., Loyola University, 1996); Roy W. Shin, “The Politics of Foreign Aid: A Study of the Impact of United States Aid in Korea from 1945 to 1966” (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 1969).

³⁰ Koo and Suh, *Korea and the United States*, 108.

³¹ Song, “Who Stays?,” 86.

private residence to discuss the direction of Korea's education. Most of those convened were US-educated with doctoral degrees. At a time when there were no graduate programs in Korea and only a few doctoral degree holders, this was truly a star-studded meeting. Those present formulated a post-liberation educational plan that promoted the American educational system, a system that also validated their qualifications.³² Most, if not all of the US educated professors in this early period held the Korean public's respect for what they stood for. They had entered their teaching profession under the Japanese colonial rule when few Koreans entered tertiary education let alone teach it. Most were Christian converts who taught at schools established by American missionaries. Hwal Ran Kim and Nak Joon Baek were among the most prominent Korean educators who taught at universities founded by American missionaries. To the English-speakers they were known as Helen Kim and George Paik. Helen Kim was the first Korean female recipient of a doctoral degree from anywhere. Shortly after completing her doctoral degree at Columbia University in New York she became Ewha Womans University's seventh president in 1936, the first Korean woman to lead a Korean university.³³ George Paik also received his doctoral degree from the United States. He returned to his alma mater to teach and in 1946 took the helm at Chosun Christian University, now Yonsei University.

To influence Korean educational elites, the US Department of State funneled American scholarships to Korea's top experts. During the USMGIK, the US government focused mainly on technical and vocational training; but with the Korean War, the focus shifted to high ranking administrators, professors, and bureaucrats. The US government also used the Fulbright-Hays program to establish and strengthen the US-educated in Korea. A directory of Korean grantees from 1961 to 1972 show continued focus on inserting and exerting American technology and ideals.³⁴ There were nearly four hundred grantees pursuing more than three dozen areas of studies. Teaching English took the overwhelming lead, reflecting its growing popularity and importance as the language of discourse, power and ultimately privilege. Chemistry and engineering, providing fundamental basis for the technology transfer, took the lead in the sciences. The most grants, however, went to the social sciences. More specifically, they went to individuals studying education, journalism, law, and political science. The overwhelming majority of the Fulbright scholars listed a higher education institution as their then present affiliation. These scholars were not only in positions to interpret and broker information, but also had a captive, willing audience in their students.

Aspiring Korean students needed information and connections. The desire to go abroad increased, but how it could be achieved was initially a mystery to all but a few hopefuls. It was not enough for people to know *about* others who had studied in the United States. Especially in the 1940s and 1950s, they needed to *know* the people, whether they be Americans or Koreans who knew Americans. Religious organizations

³² Yi, T'ok-ho. *Chinmi sadaejuui kyoyuk ui chongae kwajong* (Seoul: DahUm Publishers, 2001), 21.

³³ Ewha Womans University Archives, *Ewha Old and New: 110 Years of History (1886-1996)* (Seoul, Ewha University Press, 2005).

³⁴ "Fulbright-Hays Korean Grantee Directory."

and a few US universities extended scholarships to Korean students, but the opportunities for Korean students were limited. Though few pieces of written information fluttered into people's hands, most information came by word of mouth. Without a doubt, information was at a premium. And this information was scarcer the further one looks back.

Especially from 1945 to the early 1960s, both wealthy and destitute Korean students began their study abroad journey with the personal assistance of Americans *in* Korea who helped them acquire visas, school acceptance, and scholarships. During this time, no study abroad experience operated without American assistance; the level of American involvement was only a matter of degree. Cal Power's inspirational devotion to his former houseboy is now well-known, thanks to Billy Kim's bestselling biography published after Kim was appointed the president of the Baptist World Alliance from 2000 to 2005.³⁵ For Billy Kim, it began with Cal Powers's question about whether he wanted to study in the United States. Hearing the affirmative, Powers brought Kim a school application to sign and then filled out the rest himself. He then took Kim to the US Embassy in Pusan to get proper documentation, a drawn out process that required Powers to postpone his return to the US six times to see it to completion. Powers purchased Kim's boarding pass and then arranged for not one but two officers to greet Kim in America since he himself would not return to the US in time to welcome Kim himself. Power's aid was Kim's constant companion through his high school, college, and graduate school years in the United States.³⁶ Choi, in comparison, denied receiving help from Americans. However, the events leading up to his enrollment belie his assertion. Having received a scholarship from a wealthy Korean patron, he needed an American visa. "I knew someone, so he got a visa from the consul general [for me]."³⁷ That someone was an American official. Once in the United States, he stayed at the home of the former American advisor to President Rhee before beginning his US education at a university arranged by his American friend.

Ironically, the chance to get the most elite of all forms of higher education, American education, was available to some of the poorest Koreans – orphaned, destitute children. In the early 1950s, when only the most affluent Koreans could dream of sending their children abroad, the poorest of all poor in Korea, albeit in very small numbers, could also dream. For those without higher connections, American soldiers were among the first points of contact for Koreans. Orphaned busboys or errand boys to American platoons stood alongside scions of *yangban* families aboard ships leaving for San Francisco. The latter far outnumbered the former, but such opportunity for the "down-trodden" was celebrated and circulated far more widely and quickly. Kim noted matter-of-factly in his biography, he was poor before the war and poor after the war, so the war did not really affect him. Yet this teenage boy had the good fortune to work as a

³⁵ Baptist World Alliance is a worldwide alliance of Baptist churches and organizations that claims to represent over 47 million baptized believers. Source: Wikipedia, s.v. "Baptist World Alliance," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptist_World_Alliance (accessed March 16, 2009).

³⁶ Kūn-mi Yi, *Kū rŭl mannamyōn maūm e p'yongan i onda: Kim Chang-hwan moksa iyagi* [If You Meet Him, Peace Will Enter Your Heart: Pastor Kim Jang Han's Story] (Seoul: Choson Ilbosa, 2000).

³⁷ Interview with Gi-Il Choi, June 14, 2005 in Brookline, Massachusetts.

houseboy, considered to be the best job on the US army bases. There he met a humble American soldier who sponsored and supported his studies in the US. Kim left for the US in 1951 with four other students who were in their twenties and according to Kim, from “high class.”³⁸ Choi’s background differed drastically from Kim’s. Choi was born into privilege, and educated in both Korea and Japan before he joined the inner circles of Korea’s first president. He regularly met with Americans, not to clean their houses, but to discuss the best course of action for Korea. Then he fell out of favor with those in power, and so left Korea to pursue his graduate studies in the United States.

Encounters between Koreans and Americans brought on by the Korean War only grew with time. At the start of the war, it was rare for GIs to sponsor, let alone befriend Korean soldiers or civilians. A 1951 editorial by a reverend stationed in Korea read, “Only an occasional G.I. gets over the barrier, or come to know Korean soldiers in the same outfit.”³⁹ In acknowledging the goodwill of American soldiers toward Korean civilians, an American consultant reported, “It wasn’t always so when our boys first went to Korea.... [They] knew very little about that nation and were somewhat contemptuous toward the ‘gook’ as they called the Korean.”⁴⁰ By the end of the Korean War, these same soldiers had contributed upwards of half a million dollars to wartime relief of Korean civilians. They became the literal and figurative foot soldiers of a battle against communism and a battle for the hearts and minds of people.

“Waifs” and orphans attached themselves to army units hoping to find food, barter items, as well as the illusive security and affection that had disappeared from their lives. Some of the friendships that formed between the Americans and their young friends lasted beyond their short encounters. There were countless lesser known and forgotten stories of American soldiers’ generosity. For example, Army officer Robert E. Echols planned to sponsor a Korean young friend he had met during his three year tenure in Korea to attend college in the US. Before leaving Korea, Echols equipped young Joe with the proper documents and recommendation letters for schools, “vouch[ing] for his [Joe’s] integrity and fine character.”⁴¹ Some Americans even accompanied their friends across the Pacific Ocean to their American schools. Lt. Col. Price and his wife personally escorted their former houseboy to Michigan to begin his studies in engineering.⁴² When money precluded Mrs. Yang In Ai from achieving her dream of studying in the United States, American soldiers rallied to her side. The offering given through the Chaplain’s Office made up the largest portion of her scholarship.⁴³ The

³⁸ Yi, *Kū rŭl mannamyŏn*, 47.

³⁹ Reverend Edward Adams, *New York Times* editorial section, March 7, 1951. Adams was the field secretary of the Board of Foreign Mission of the Presbyterian in Korea.

⁴⁰ Reprint of Howard Rusk, M.D., “The GI’s Give a Hand to the Koreans,” *New York Times Magazine*, October 11, 1953, <http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/nyt-028Q.htm> (accessed on April 2, 2009)

⁴¹ Robert E. Echols of the US Army to Gregory Henderson, July 20, 1958, in Henderson Papers, Box 1, Folder “Personal Correspondence + Embassy Material – 1958-1962.”

⁴² “USAFIK Communication Officer Takes Koreans to US,” Headquarters XXIV Corps, Officer of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, press release for American Press via Tokyo Army News Service, May 4, 1948, in Fitch Papers, Box 7, Folder “Misc. Materials on Korea.”

⁴³ South Korean Interim Government, Department of Public Information (Seoul, Korea), Press Release 28 April 1948, in Fitch Papers, Box 7, Folder “Misc. Materials on Korea.”

largesse and doggedness of such ordinary American soldiers resulted in unprecedented educational opportunities for their Korean friends. These exceptional cases provided extraordinary material to the growing popularity of study abroad as they elevated the goodwill of Americans in the eyes of the Korean public.

American educational experts and consultants hired by the US government to aid Korea were an obvious source of information about study abroad. American missionaries from precolonial and colonial times in Korea had been the most accessible to their church members and fellow religious adherents; however, American educators and technical experts of the postwar time were recruited to help Korea as a nation. In speaking of American teachers who served in developing nations, Jonathan Zimmerman says their goals are no different from missionaries. In fact, Zimmerman writes, “All *teachers* are missionaries, too, inasmuch as they try to get students to behave or believe in new ways.”⁴⁴ For these educators, the “way” was US education.

In the 1940s and 1950s, a limited number of educators and technical experts entered Korea to assess the state of Korean education. These educators called for the retraining of Korean teachers, but few developed practical means or opportunities for further studies. One particular mission report attributed “lack of knowledge of modern teaching techniques [as] one of the main reasons for unsatisfactory class room conduct.”⁴⁵ The survey of this particular mission resulted in the US Congress voting to disburse twenty-five educators to Korea in the fall of 1948. Teachers assigned to the Teacher Training Center in Seoul ran workshops for Korean educators from every educational level. An American staff of about twenty worked with over five hundred Koreans in Seoul.⁴⁶ Given that the new teaching method being imparted was discussion-based rather than lecture-based learning, the trainees were up close and personal with these Americans. Korean participants’ evaluations indicated heightened awareness and curiosity about American education, and positive interaction with American educators. These encounters prepared the way for even greater contact between Koreans and Americans.

American educators visiting Korea acted as unofficial advisors to prospective students. One such person was Thomas Benner. Hired during the Korean War first by United Nations and then by the US Department of State, he believed US-educated persons were essential to Korea’s educational restructuring. In 1953, he personally escorted fourteen Koreans to the United States to begin their studies.⁴⁷ Visiting professors served as valuable references to their Korean pupils. It was not uncommon for students to make their college selection based on the institution from where these professors came. And the presence of these American soldiers and educators on the

⁴⁴ Zimmerman, *Innocents Abroad*, 112.

⁴⁵ “The Teacher Training Center,” [1948?], in Orion Papers, Box 1.

⁴⁶ American Mission to Korea for Teacher Education, “Teacher Training Korean – Seoul, Korea (October to November 1948),” 30, in Orion Papers, Box 1.

⁴⁷ “UNESCO Representative Goes to Korea,” *Periscope on Asia*, no.142, September 6, 1951; “Dr. Thomas Benner has Brought 14 Korean Students to America,” *The Korean Messenger* 2, no. 4 (December 1953), 8, in Mott Papers, Box 23.

Korean peninsula raised awareness, increased contact, and wedged the “idea” and possibility of study abroad into students’ minds.

The US-educated became the greatest source of inspiration and information for others wanting to study abroad. American educational assistance programs and their officers served as initial points of contact, but as more Korean program participants returned, they themselves became the information brokers. Experiences from their study abroad shaped their careers as well as slipped into social setting as interesting stories that served to remind the listeners of their American education. In the fifties and sixties, how many Korean could talk about seeing a football stadium made entirely of steel? The eyewitness of this incredible “modern monument” had seen it during his study abroad. In our interview, his hushed tone still carried the incredulity he felt when he first saw the sports arena. He marveled, “Americans used steel for *sports* – not for guns and cannons.”⁴⁸ Another talked about a nation with all-you-can eat stations in the school cafeterias. The US he saw and lived in was truly a land of plenty.⁴⁹ Casual mentions of hobnobbing with future American diplomats or “important Americans” dotted some returnee’s stories. Since many of the returned Koreans entered higher education, they held audience with students from elite universities. These students in turn saw in study abroad a way to realize the constant social affirmation they received that they would be tomorrow’s leaders.

Newspaper articles, biographies, and academic rosters strongly suggest that the overwhelming majority of Koreans studying in the US had an undergraduate degree from Seoul National University. As the most selective university in Korea, it was a meeting place of high achievers. Moreover, SNU had large clusters of US-educated professors in select departments. The US government had literally paid to place them in these departments by funding their studies in the US. Such technical assistance had aimed to rehabilitate Korean higher education with superior, American education; ultimately US educational assistance to Korea was a Cold War assignment to get Koreans to think more like Americans. The US government collected many dividends on the dollars it spent educating these professors since the standard of having a US education began with them and became entrenched through their students. These US-educated professors sent their brightest, most motivated students to the United States. Many US-educated SNU alumni pinpoint their decision to go abroad to their college days. For many of these undergraduates, their publicly revered US-educated professors were constant reminders of what a US education could do for them.

Students also gathered and distributed information informally through acquaintances and colleagues. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, they talked incessantly about their desire and plan to go abroad with each other. One professor, himself foreign-educated, declared that the “study abroad fever” raged among Korean students.⁵⁰ Information also percolated down from upperclassmen, who at one point or another had

⁴⁸ Interview with Choi.

⁴⁹ Interview with Han.

⁵⁰ Kyo-ho Yi, “Dogil yuhak saenghal” [Life of a Foreign Student in Germany], *Kidokkyo Sasang* 63 (March 1963), 28.

desired, sought, or even received admission and funding from an American university. Almost all of my interviewees laughingly noted that invariably someone knew someone who was studying in the United States. When the admission letters arrived, no matter how distant or removed the acquaintance, any connection was better than none. In the case of Lee, it was his father's friend's daughter's husband who was studying in the United States. This relative stranger greeted Lee when he arrived at San Francisco Airport in the early 1960s.⁵¹ Kim, on the other hand, contacted her sister, who had recently wed and joined her foreign student husband in Minnesota.⁵² Choi, who did not return to Korea after his studies, received numerous letters, telegrams, and telephone calls from his relatives in Korea asking for help and sponsorship in the US.⁵³

Though not specific to Korean students, one US survey on foreign students showed that knowing US-educated countrymen mattered in a student's decision to go abroad. This investigation commissioned by the US government in the early 1960s stated, "Each time someone decides to study in the United States he reinforces in his community the possibility of others' doing so."⁵⁴ Researchers found that of the nearly 1,500 foreign students interviewed, 95% knew others in their homelands who had studied in the US. Roughly two-thirds of this group knew someone who had studied at the same university. Of those pursuing a doctoral degree, 98% knew compatriots who had studied in the US. Anecdotally, Koreans fit this profile.

Along with the general foreign student population, the Korean student community also burgeoned, enlarging the contacts available to those wishing to go abroad. Students applied to schools, hoping that other Koreans already there would help them. Koreans arrived at schools like the University of Minnesota, George Peabody College of Teachers, and Washington State University in large numbers when the US government entered into contract with these schools to train Korean educators there. For example, Korean students made up the largest foreign student body at the Graduate School at George Peabody College of Teachers during the tenure of the technical assistance project.⁵⁵ Privately funded students also gravitated towards these schools simply because they had information about them. Once in the United States, many students transferred schools, enlarging the universe of schools being attended by Koreans. This helped in not only getting information about more schools to Korean students but also in raising awareness among admissions officers and registrars at American universities, which led more schools to recognize and accept Korean students. By the late 1950s, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers issued a placement guide for

⁵¹ Interview with Hong Yung Lee, September 23, 2008 in Berkeley, CA.

⁵² Interview with Kwang Ok Kim, August 11, 2008 in Seoul, Korea.

⁵³ Interview with Choi.

⁵⁴ Operations and Research Inc., "Foreign Students in the United States: A National Survey" ([Washington, DC]: US Advisory Commission on International Education and Cultural Affairs, [1965?]), 6.

⁵⁵ For information on Korean foreign students at George Peabody College for Teachers see Joy Ann Hays, "The Foreign Students in the Graduate School at George Peabody College for Teachers, 1956-1962" (PhD diss., George Peabody College for Teachers, 1962).

administrators scrambling to place Korean students in the right classes.⁵⁶ However, life stories of foreign students make it evident that these administrators relied most heavily on Korean students already present at their schools.

US-bound students tapped into another source – foreign language institutes and information centers. The United Nations established the Foreign Language Institute (FLI) that catered to diplomats, businessmen, and students preparing for their trips abroad.⁵⁷ Soon after, the United States government set up a Language Training Center (LTC) specifically designed for Koreans going to the United States.⁵⁸ Both institutes served a narrow group of people, those who already had the support to go abroad. Information centers, on the other hand, were open to everyone. American aid, both private and public, held open the doors of the Truman Educational Counseling Center and the USIS Center in Seoul. According to an informational pamphlet on the Truman Center, Korean students flocked to its center for information. It reportedly provided guidance to an average of 8,000 to 10,000 students annually from 1952 to 1976.⁵⁹ That would be nearly a quarter of a million students served or roughly five times the number of Koreans who actually went to the United States to study in the same time period.⁶⁰

USIS Center was the main source of written information for those wishing to go to the US. Though its utility as the primary reference decreased over time, it occupied an important place, especially for those students who had little personal contact with Americans or US-educated Koreans. The following excerpts testify to its key role in students' college selection.

I went to USIS and picked out three schools: East, West, and someplace in the middle [of the United States]. I ended up picking [the university on the] West [Coast of the US] because it was in California. See, there was this popular song about California....⁶¹ (early-1960s)

There was no information at the time. Nothing. [Pause.] Actually I went to USIS and found the addresses of colleges and wrote letters to them. At that time everything was random.... We [the students] just went there and checked [for] the addresses of universities. I applied to several.⁶² (mid-1960s)

Ironically, these information centers limited the scope of study abroad at the same time it provided more literature, more opportunities, and more contacts. The printed

⁵⁶ Clara Hankey Koenig, *The Republic of Korea; A Guide to the Academic Placement of Students from the Republic of Korea in United States Educational Institutions* ([Washington, DC]: AACRAO [American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers], 1958).

⁵⁷ Charlotte Drummon Meinecke, "Education in Korea" (Seoul: Ministry of Education, 1958), 32, in Mott Papers, Box 8.

⁵⁸ Herbert Wesley Dodge, "A History of U.S. Assistance to Korean Education: 1953-1966" (PhD diss., George Washington University, 1971), 259.

⁵⁹ "The American Kor-Asian Foundation: A Program History, 1952-1976," in Mott Papers, Box 3.

⁶⁰ Institute of International Education, *Open Doors*.

⁶¹ Interview with Han.

⁶² Interview with H.Y. Lee.

source presented US education as their best, and often the only option, as the centers' library collections focused on showcasing American universities and colleges. The Truman Center held as an objective "prepar[ing] young people for advance higher learning opportunities, *particularly in the United States*" [emphasis added].⁶³ USIS Center, a field office of the USIA (United States Information Agency) considered these occasions as opportunities in public diplomacy. Student visitors sifted through the glossy paged catalogues of American universities and colleges. Nearby were mail-order catalogs from popular US stores and carefully selected works translated in Korean at the USIS, all aimed to project a positive image of the United States. As a significant arm of "public diplomacy," all USIS Centers, including the one in Seoul, aimed to win the hearts and minds of people.⁶⁴

While the US government projected positive images of an American education, the Korean press lionized the US-educated Koreans. Though there were few Koreans earning US degrees, the news articles reported their progress and accomplishments, giving them far greater visibility than their small numbers would suggest. Benedict Anderson's seminal work *Imagined Community* (1983) argues that a shared activity, like the ability to read and write the same language for example, contribute to a common ground which in turn give the practitioners a sense of belonging to each other.⁶⁵ In this regard, these success stories connected these elites to the general public as fellow countrymen, whose accomplishments elevated the nation as a whole. The US-educated became objects of pride even for those who did not pursue higher education. In a society where success and status were used interchangeably, the positive newspaper coverage informed its citizens that a US education was a marker of status, further popularizing study abroad.

In the case of Korean students, newspapers played a significant role in recording and interpreting the accomplishments of the US-educated. These news articles familiarized and shaped the information for the general public. A search for titles of news articles containing keywords relating to American doctoral education from 1945 to 1970 in *Chosun Ilbo* yielded numerous articles from the front page to its entertainment section.⁶⁶ A quick overview of the articles examined reflects the changing composition of the US-educated Koreans. 1940s articles focused on US education in terms of how it could help Korea's postwar educational restructuring. Holders of US doctoral degrees appeared in articles as members of observation tours that spearheaded Korea's postwar reconstruction. By the late 1950s, the students who had left in the years surrounding the Korean War began receiving their doctoral degrees. Many more Koreans entered and finished their doctoral programs in the following decade. Articles announced their accomplishments and graduations, inclusive of their pictures, their family information,

⁶³ "The American Kor-Asian Foundation, Annual Report 74-75," in Mott Papers, Box 6.

⁶⁴ USIS Center remained under the US Department of State, along with other cultural and educational exchange functions, until 1978.

⁶⁵ Benedict Andersen, *Imagined Community: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983).

⁶⁶ *Chosun Ilbo* was one of three mainstream newspapers commandeering the Korean newspaper readership then and in the present.

translated title of their dissertations, exact dates of graduation, and post-graduation job assignments. Then starting in the late 1960s and continuing into the 1970s, *Chosun Ilbo* carried fewer graduation announcements. Instead the articles shifted to actual experiences of study abroad rather than on degree conferment. This reflected in part the numerical growth of the US-educated that chiseled away at the novelty of a US education in the Korean society. However, these changes do not suggest a decline in the popularity of study abroad. On the contrary, the news articles responded to people's curiosity and desire to connect more intimately with the scholars by providing greater details of their personal lives.

Chosun Ilbo articles from 1945 to 1970 relating to American doctoral education displayed one or more of the following characteristics. First, they were informational or factual; they announced lectures given by US-educated scholars. Second, some articles linked American education, delivered through the US-educated, to Korea's modernization. Third, it became a forum for exhortations or calls for action; US education became the answer or way to change what was not right in Korea. Fourth, articles served as a platform to discuss the people and culture of the United States. Last and most significant for this discussion, these articles made for great human interest stories. Together these articles raised public awareness and familiarity with US education and the US-educated, inserting the imported American knowledge as part of the collective identity and solution.

Factual articles announced lectures and research trips of Korean professors. At least for those heralded in the newspaper, topics of these talks had no relevance to their academic specialty, but rather derived from their experiences as Koreans living in the United States. For example, Professor Suh from Washington University was a Russian specialist, but his lecture was on Koreans in the United States.⁶⁷ As the hype of going abroad intensified, the newspaper addressed their readers' desire for more concrete information about studying in the United States. *Chosun Ilbo* invited four recipients of doctoral degree from American universities and held a press conference.⁶⁸ Using a question and answer format, students explained the changes and opportunities their US education brought them. Kang, a political scientist, opened the discussion with a topic of great interest— education as a way to personal success. “The more US work experience one has, the higher his salary and his social status [in Korea],” he affirmed. His fellow panelists highlighted other positive aspects of studying abroad while countering the tacit criticisms circulating in Korea about foreign students. Kim acknowledged that a lengthy study may remove students from Korean politics and problems and Dong added yes they could become more Americanized. But what, they asked, was the problem with working hard, becoming more driven and practical to achieve a better life for themselves? To conclude, each panelist gave his practical advice to future foreign students. One respondent implored all wishing to go abroad to learn to type. He said, “This will save

⁶⁷ “Miguk ūi Han’gukindŭl – Sŏ Doo-hwan paksa kangyŏnghoe” [Koreans in the US – A Lecture by Professor Suh Doo Hwan], *Chosun Ilbo*, July 10, 1962, 4.

⁶⁸ “Miguk yuhak, ne Paksa hagwi suryonja ūi chwadam” [Roundtable of Four PhD Recipients], *Chosun Ilbo*, July 29, 1965, 5.

you a lot of time.” Another panelist dissuaded students from setting too many goals: getting married, making money, and earning a degree. He felt qualified to state the obvious, “Getting a PhD is difficult.” All discussants mentioned that just coming to the United States did not automatically lead to success. Yet, none refuted the basic assumption that a foreign degree led to a better life.

News articles also promoted the link between an advanced US degree, equated with American knowledge, and national success. *Chosun Ilbo* presented these personal accomplishments as sources of national pride. When a Korean couple received their American doctoral degrees together on the same day, as described in this chapter’s opening, the news article declared that they had elevated “Korea’s prestige in the world.”⁶⁹ Other articles made sure to celebrate the *first* Korean accomplishments, noting that Korea too held a place in that particular field in the modern world. A 1960 article declared that a US-educated mechanical engineer was not only the first Korean but also the first Asian to become a member of a prestigious committee.⁷⁰ Another article celebrated the graduation of the second officially US-trained DDS, as shared by the first officially trained dental expert, since Korea’s liberation.⁷¹ Also to affirm Korea’s modern advancements, graduation announcements included transliterated technical, science titles. Titles of these thesis sounded completely foreign but impressive, and authenticated the technical knowledge gained. Without a doubt a foreign education mattered greatly in form. There was a 1969 account of a woman who overcame incredible hardship to earn a doctoral degree from a Korean university. As a sign of her dedication to scholarly pursuit, she vowed that someday she would earn an *American* doctoral degree.⁷² The assumption, shared by the Korean public, was that an American education was better.

There were also those articles contrasted US education and US educated with Korean education and Korea educated. A number of top Korean educators used this public forum to implore Koreans to work harder and to seek practical knowledge. In 1948, Dean Yoon of SNU was amazed at how American students worked endlessly and called Koreans to do likewise.⁷³ Nearly a decade later, Oh, a Korean educator who received his PhD under John Dewey at Columbia University, argued that the problem rested on errant educational philosophy that emphasized theory over application. He called for “basic, rudimentary [knowledge] that gives the person the ability to make a product with his hands.”⁷⁴ A prominent Korean medical researcher, explained in 1968, “The essence of US education is in its undergraduate and graduate school. Their purpose

⁶⁹ Chŏn, “Kat’ün nal,” 7.

⁷⁰ “Han’guk i naün suŏje konghak paksa haeoe’sŏto Go Kwang-rim” [Korean Engineering Doctor Abroad-Go Kwang-rim], *Chosun Ilbo*, January 15, 1960, 3.

⁷¹ “Miguk sŏ Yi Yŏng-ok ssi ch’ihak paksa hagwi rül hoetük” [Yi Young-ok Earns DDS in the United States], *Chosun Ilbo*, January 14, 1957, 3.

⁷² “Kungnae uir ūi yŏmunhak paksa Yi Hye-suk yŏsa” [Yi Hae-sük, the Sole Korean PhD in Women’s Studies], *Chosun Ilbo*, March 20, 1969, 5.

⁷³ “Kwahak chisik i saenghwahwa. Miguk hak’kye si ch’al Yŏn Il-sŏn paksa indo kwiguk tam” [Everyday Science as Seen by Dr. Yŏn Il-sŏn’s during his U.S. Tour], *Chosun Ilbo*, June 16, 1948, 2.

⁷⁴ “Miguk ūi kyoyuk kwa uri nara ūi kyoyuk O Ch’ŏn-sŏk paksa ūi kwiguk tamesŏ” [American Education and Korean Education, Dr. O Ch’ŏn-sŏk upon His Return from the U.S.], *Chosun Ilbo*, July 5, 1963, 5.

is not about degrees but about willingness to do research [to work] until death.”⁷⁵ Educators were united in calling for, to borrow the subtitle of a 1968 *Chosun Ilbo* article, “With a US PhD – A New Tradition.”⁷⁶

These news articles highlighted the positive aspects of the US, its people, and institutions. Foremost, the articles asserted, American scholars desired knowledge, not degrees. Students and educational observers witnessed the American academic’s humility and practicality and their sincere desire to share their knowledge in such simple terms that even a Korean visitor with limited English could understand. Koreans marveled at the unassuming manner of renowned American scholars. Albert Einstein’s much used, nondescript pen left quite a lasting impression on one Korean.⁷⁷ Another Korean educator reported on America’s advanced knowledge and plenty; no universities he toured lacked adequate funding.⁷⁸ Korean foreign students countered the negative “rumors” of American school and students with their lived experiences. In 1970, responding to “Korean press coverage of all American youths as rebellious hippies,” a Korean foreign student bristled, “My [fellow Korean] classmates study arduously. It’s normal to study until three in the morning and a lot of Americans do the same.”⁷⁹ These newspaper selections framed the image of United States, as it related to its education, in a positive light, chasing any shadows on the hallowed academic grounds away.

Aimed for the general public, newspapers embraced Korean foreign students as protagonists of human interest stories. They featured the personal lives of these scholars as success cases, often emphasizing the personal difficulties they endured and overcame. Often articles honed in on their personal lives while relegating information about their academic expertise to a sentence or two. There were straightforward announcements listing the “vitals” such as their name, age, date of graduation, place and degree earned, and thesis title. These tended to be tucked away in the “who’s who” section of the newspaper at the bottom of the page, usually clustered with news of which government appointees filled, left, and resigned from their posts. More often than not, articles on Korean students were displayed prominently with far greater details. Those US-educated who received the most attention served as inspirations. Numerous articles showcased them as ordinary people who accomplished extraordinary feats. These stories helped balance their peculiar position in Korean society as elites with humble roots. The key to this conversion, of course, was the US education.

Though the US-educated comprised a small, elite group, whenever possible the news coverage remarked on their “common” origins. The longest articles usually covered persons from disadvantage background, dramatizing the hardship they

⁷⁵ “Miguk ūi ūihak’gye” [American Medical Sciences], *Chosun Ilbo*, July 25, 1968, 5.

⁷⁶ “Chōng So-yōng chamu ch’agwan, Miguk sō paksa hagwittan sechōnt’ong” [Secretary of State Chōng So-Yōng, With a US PhD – A New Tradition], *Chosun Ilbo*, May 25, 1968, 2.

⁷⁷ “Kwahak chisik,” 2.

⁷⁸ “Miguk hak’gye rŭl sich’al han Yi Sung-nyōng paksa kwiguk” [Observations of U.S. Educational System, Dr. Yi Sung-Nyōng upon His Return from the United States], *Chosun Ilbo*, June 13, 1963, 5.

⁷⁹ “Mo Hye-jōng yōsa, mullihak paksa rŭl anko Miguk sō toraon” [Dr. Mo Hye-jōng’s Return with a US PhD], *Chosun Ilbo*, September 6, 1970, 5.

experienced. A Korean bachelor made his country proud by earning a PhD at 22 years of age. Even more noteworthy, he had received no help from his parents. He lectured and tutored on the side to cover his tuition and living expenses.⁸⁰ Another story told of a student skipping meals just to make ends meet because he had left Korea with only enough money to cover his trans-Pacific voyage.⁸¹ The image being created was that an American education was available to students from all walks of life, all who were extraordinarily intelligent and resourceful.

The trickle of Korean students to the US became a flood as the US government and individual Americans stepped into the newly independent country and into the lives of its citizens. An unplanned result of the US assistance to Korea following World War II was its contribution to the emergence of a culture of migration and of seeking public and private solutions abroad. All the actors involved acted out of their own self interest and desires within the shared platform of Cold War history. This chapter discussed how the Korean government and individual Koreans saw in the United States a reflection of what they hoped to achieve, and seized the opportunity presented to them. Just as large-scale technical and development funding from the US government altered the Korean landscape, scholarship and sponsorships influenced individual outlooks and worldviews. Korean international students were agents of change. They asserted a disproportionate level of influence on Korean civil society, government, and other Koreans. They enjoyed near complete social approval in their choice to pursue their dreams in the United States. In the time period examined, US-educated persons as a group contributed to the positive *image* of the United States as a land of opportunities abounding with paths to “success.” Moreover, this positive perception of the US implied that Koreans could be a part of its plenty. And with it a culture of respect and desire for study abroad, a culture of seeking solutions abroad, a culture of migration emerged. The increasing visibility of US-educated and the growing availability of information about study abroad worked in tandem to push an ever increasing number of Koreans to the United States.

⁸⁰ “Miguksö Ch’örhaik paksa. 22- se üi Pak Sam-yöl keun” [An American PhD at 22 Years of Age: Pak Sam-yul], *Chosun Ilbo*, July 14, 1959, 3.

⁸¹ “Han’guk i naün,” 3.

Chapter 6

Korean Student Immigrants and Their Immigration Path

Choi boarded a ship for the first time in 1948. It was about 7 o'clock at night when the vessel pushed off from the Inchon Port towards the United States. "Already the sun was down. So I went out to the deck to see, but I couldn't see. The next day I went out and already the sun was up. All I could see was water. There was nothing but the sea."¹ Then his thoughts turned to a more pressing need – food. "I went to dinner and I couldn't believe [it] --- roast beef, turkey, steak, fried chicken. I said to myself they [Americans] have so much." Unfortunately, he could not enjoy the plenty for too long because seasickness struck. Choi remembered that "there were other Koreans who were worse than I." His stomach churned with each toss of the wave and just when he found the situation tolerable, he arrived in San Francisco. He and the other bedraggled Koreans walked down the plank when a fellow Korean greeted them. The welcoming committee of one led the exhausted travelers to Mr. Yang's restaurant.

The Korean American community in San Francisco, as represented by its two key members, welcomed Choi to America. Yang was a cook and a minor celebrity in the Korean American community and within the inner circles of the diasporic Korean independence fighters. San Francisco has been a hub for transpacific travelers from the turn of the 20th century to the present. Yang's restaurant became a way station for Koreans en route to other parts of the US. Numerous students enjoyed a bowl of comfort food there before continuing their journeys. There are two known interviews with Yang, and in both he noted with pride that he and his wife distributed free meals to hundreds of young Korean students, even packing them lunches and dinners for their train or bus ride to their new American schools.² Yang was also a lifelong supporter of Syngman Lee, and he religiously sent the proceeds from his eatery to the US-educated politician who became the first President of Korea.

The other representative was probably Reverend Sa-Sun Whang of the San Francisco Korean Methodist Church. The leader of this church, Whang, served as the unofficial organizer, advocate, and social service worker for the Koreans living and visiting San Francisco. For example, Reverend Whang often opened his home to students and itinerant Korean workers alike until they found a place to live or left for school.³ The man of God frequented the port just in case Koreans, whether they were students from Korea or migrant workers from Hawaii, were onboard the arriving ships. The minister welcomed all his compatriots regardless of their religion. Unbeknownst to Choi, a privileged young man in the US to pursue higher education, he had just retraced the path of many Koreans before him.

Korean students have entered the United States for as long as there has been a Korean American community. Their numbers surged following the Korean War and have never let up since. However, literature on and about Korean America focuses on "post-1965 immigrants," and especially on immigrants in Los Angeles and New York- New Jersey metropolitan areas. This scholarship on the more recent immigrants often identifies them in economic terms: small business owners, middlemen, and underemployed immigrants. Narratives of plantation workers in Hawaii dominate what little has been done on pre-1965 Korean American history. This

¹ Interview with Gi-Il Choi, June 24, 2005 in Brookline, MA.

² Interviews with Choo-en Yang, in Bong-youn Choy, *Koreans in America* (Chicago: Prentice-Hall, 1979), and Sonia Shinn Sunoo, *Korea Kaleidoscope: Oral Histories* (Davis, CA: Korean Oral History Project, Sierra Mission Area, United Presbyterian Church, USA, c1982).

³ Interview with Reverend Mr. Whang Sa-Sun, in Choy, *Korean in America*.

“prehistory” tends to focus on the Korean independence movement and the struggle and strategies to maintain its members’ ethnic identities. In reality, Koreans were dispersed throughout the United States with significant groups in San Francisco, Chicago, Nashville, and Minneapolis, among others cities. Korean immigration into the United States occurred in the intervening years between 1903 and 1965. Not every Korean immigrant was the descendent of plantation workers of the past or the economically motivated immigrants of the present. Noticeably absent from Korean American history are Korean international students.

Korean students were immigrants in the way that structural constraints circumscribed their everyday lives and their cultural expectations and characteristics linked them to the Korean immigrant community. Moreover, they lived for significant amounts of time in the United States where they participated in the making and changing of Korean American society. The migration pattern of the student immigrants calls into question the traditional immigrant narrative of a defined sending and receiving countries. Koreans made choices about their migration both in the US and in Korea. These students exercised a flexible notion of migration that was facilitated by technological advancements and greater relations between the United State and Korea. Their migration choices were also complicated by the expectations and assumptions that the Korean society had of the US-educated. Though they were expected to return to Korea after their studies, many remained in the United State with some making short and extended visits to Korea. Moreover, though immigrants operated within the structural processes set in place by the government, their decisions also altered and shaped the parameters of those very structures. As a part of a whole, these immigrants have changed the American society they live in. Moreover, immigrants as a whole greatly affected the symbolic image of the United States, further contributing to America’s influence abroad. The US became a place where *individual* dreams could be realized. Voting with their feet, immigrants made clear that the US had the potential to be better than what they left behind. Institute of International Education reported nearly 300 Korean students in the US in 1950, 2300 students in 1960, and 3900 students in 1970.⁴ In the late 1960s, the Korean Ministry of Education put the nonreturn rate of all Korean students who had left for the US at more than 90%.⁵ These international students joined other new Americans in changing the demographic landscape of America.

The starting point of renewed immigration into the United States in the second half of 20th century was brought on by American involvement abroad. Though the resettlement of people was part of the larger modernization process interconnected through globalization, the US government largely funded and pushed for infrastructural changes that set this migration in motion. The Immigration Reform Act of 1965 helped bring about sweeping changes in the racial and ethnic background of the petitioners, but the preconditions that allowed for the entrance of an unprecedented number of immigrants was the presence of co-nationals already in the United States. A striking characteristic of the Immigration Act of 1965 was that it set its major criteria for admission on the principle of family reunification and favored immigrants with scarce occupational skills. Many of the foreign students already in the United States used these two immigration preference categories to gain legal permanent residence in the United States for themselves and their families.

Korean military brides and international students already in the United States prior to 1965 lent the legislation passed that year greater salience. The absence of these two significant

⁴ Data found in Institute of International Education’s annual publication *Open Doors*.

⁵ See Kwang Lim Koh and Hesung C. Koh, eds., *Koreans and Korean-Americans in the United States: A Summary of Three Conference Proceedings, 1971-1973* (New Haven: East Rock Press, Inc., 1974), 33.

groups leads to an incomplete understanding of Korean Americans in particular and American immigrants in general. Scholars have only recently begun tackling the complex history of Korean military brides, derisively dubbed *yanggonju* or “Western princesses” in Korean vernacular.⁶ They made up the largest group of Koreans to immigrate to the US from 1945 to 1965.⁷ Current literature, on the other hand, often ignores the immigration of international students as part of its foreign-born population and indispensable members of its ethnic communities. Yet, they are integral to Korean American history.

From 1945 to 1979, most Korean students adjusted their status and settled permanently in the United States. Some became leaders in the Korean American community and helped set up organizations that not only connected Koreans with each other but also mediated their place in American society. A handful, as academics, introduced Koreans to the interested American public. Others distanced themselves from ethnic communities and strove to become more “American.” The many paths taken by student immigrants show the complexities of migratory patterns and “norms,” and the students who traveled these routes offered to the American society a multi-faceted, more complex alternative image of Korean America.

Being a foreign student was a transient identity; international students as a whole were one among many subgroups within the immigrant community. Their student status could not shield them from the racial prejudice that affected all Korean immigrants. Early students also experienced difficulties finding adequate housing, employment, and social acceptance. Though they benefitted from the positive changes of the civil rights movement, their “racial uniform” continued to result in differential treatment from those of Anglo-Saxon descent. Within the confines of a society that defined all Koreans as foreign and not American, immigrants came to lean on the Korean American community as an alternative place of affirmation, acceptance, and belonging. Immigrants collectively maintained and built up the contours of this Korean immigrant community that provided a sense of familiarity and group identity. Lastly, students were immigrants because the general American public did not differentiate Korean international students from Koreans immigrants, whether they were visitors, permanent residents, naturalized US citizens, or American-born ethnic Koreans. To the outsiders, they made up a monolithic group.

Many within the Korean immigrant community shared a concept of “home” that was rooted in Korea. Regardless of their age, marital status, educational background, or any other demographic background, they shared this defining commonality which necessitated neither proximity nor interaction but facilitated both. For Hongman Lee, who served in various roles in local and national chapters of the Korean Students’ Associations, this realization came about almost haphazardly:

The fact that most of us are away from home for the first time in our lives makes things which were apart from us become part of us, and we, in turn, become part of them. We

⁶ See Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (NY: New York University Press, 2002), and Grace M. Cho, *Haunting the Korean Diaspora: Shame, Secrecy, and the Forgotten War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002). Historian Yuh highlights the liminal space occupied by the Korean spouses of American military personnel, and how the military wives have forged a sense of community and identity for themselves. In the more recent book, Cho asserts that the repressed, unexamined history of the sexual relationship between Korean women and American military personnel negatively affects Koreans in the United States through what she refers to as “transgenerational shame.”

⁷ Nancy Abelman and John Lie, *Blue Dreams: Korean Americans and Los Angeles Riots* (Cambridge Harvard University Press), 58.

become members of a community. Almost without realizing it, we become an element in the pattern of foreign life.⁸

Like Hongman Lee, Choon Taik Suh also received an MBA degree from an American university. Lee settled in Philadelphia and Suh in Washington DC, but neither could shake off the feeling of being an outsider. Lee talked about how “gradually a pattern begins to emerge.... habit takes over, and much of the feeling of living becomes routine.”⁹ There is no mistaking in Lee’s account that he never felt at “home” in the US. Suh also struggled with this discomfort, and he discussed it with his fellow Koreans about feeling like an outsider and about his thoughts about returning home to Korea. Their advice to him was to “buy a house” and put down roots, so Suh purchased a part of his American Dream. At the time of sharing his reminiscence, Suh had lived in the US for over twenty years and though he had grown “fond of America,” he accepted that the US would never be “home” to him.¹⁰

There are numerous accounts of Korean immigrants greeting their co-ethnics, who would otherwise be complete strangers, and sharing their resources. One such story comes from Walter Park of Washington DC. Sometime in the 1950s, he saw a couple who was about to get on a streetcar. They looked Korean to him, so he quickly approached and asked, “You are Koreans, aren’t you?” The couple went with Han to a nearby restaurant, where they got acquainted. Park learned that the man was a Korean foreign student and his wife a second-generation Korean American.¹¹ A similar story unfolded in a small rural town more than a decade later. Two Korean women looked across the grocery aisles at each other wondering if the other person was Korean. After a few instances of looking up and averting the eyes, one woman approached the other. Once they learned that they were both Koreans, they quickly forgot the previous moments of awkwardness and chatted like long-time friends, portending the friendship they would share in the future. Such stories repeated themselves throughout the US. Other stories not included here suggest that such instant bonds were made stronger in earlier years and in places when and where there were few Koreans. One place where shared bonds could be made and found was church, but student associations also fostered a sense of community.

Scholars of Korean American community rightfully acknowledge churches for providing the physical space for Koreans of all walks of life to congregate. Like it churches, Korean student associations have a long history, and these organizations existed throughout the United States. As early as 1914, *Sinhan Minbo* (The New Korea) recorded four to five Korean student organizations in the US.¹² A 1923 article in *The Korean Student Bulletin* listed eleven local leagues in nine states.¹³ This was in 1923 when Japan had effectively banned Korean

⁸ Hongman Lee, “Korean Community in Philadelphia” in *Forum, The Quarterly of the Korean-New York Jaycees* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1968), 18.

⁹ Lee, “Korean Community in Philadelphia,” 19.

¹⁰ Young Chang Chae, ed., *History of Korean-Americans in the Washington Metropolitan Area, 1883-1993* (Annandale, VA: The Korean Association of Greater Washington, 1995), 61.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹² *Sinhan Minbo*, a Korean-language newspaper, began its publication in 1905 in San Francisco.

¹³ Local leagues along with the names of their presidents and their school affiliations were:

New York City, NY – James Chung, Columbia University
Oberlin, OH – Miss Shinsil Kim, Oberlin College
Huron, SD - Mr. Samuel Whang and Y.K. Cheigh, Huron College
Boston, MA – Mr. C. Oh, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Los Angeles, CA – Mr. C.K. Hahn, University of Southern California
Chicago, IL – Harry Whang, University of Chicago
San Francisco, CA – George Kang, Stanford University

emigration. As Korean immigration opened up, the number of student associations and the scope of their activities grew.

Most student associations initially served a social function. Members of the Twin City Korean Club recorded in 1953 of how they gathered once a month “to have a friendly chat or occasional Korean version dinners.”¹⁴ Choi, who arrived in Boston in 1951, recalled that all Koreans who lived in and around the city met together a few times a year for a bowl of *gooksoo* (noodles). As more and more Korean students came to Boston, he added, they met more often.¹⁵ Eating together was among the most warmly recalled social memories of student immigrants, and these associations along with churches provided the occasions. In metropolitan areas and in college towns with a sizeable Korean population, the student associations served as the communities’ record keepers and compilers. For example, the Association of Korean Students in Washington DC provided a valuable resource to its co-ethnics, a community directory. In the organizations’ initial years, its directory only contained information about students, embassy personnel, and well known community leaders like ministers in its annual directory. However, reflecting its central role in the community, it began to list all Koreans in the area starting in 1960. As the Korean population swelled in Washington DC, it published a monthly newsletter, *The Torch* that addressed the need of Korean immigrants in general. Elsewhere in Minneapolis, the Korean Association in conjunction with the Korean Student Association jointly tabulated all Koreans in the greater Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area.¹⁶ The former president of the Philadelphia Korean Students’ Association boasted of the organization’s long list of annual activities: “intellectual and news publications, various sports contests, picnics, concerts, and social gatherings for national holidays, Korean movies, and other celebrations.”¹⁷

Organizations, like the Korean student associations, were instrumental in recording the community’s history at the local level. Few scholars dealt with the Korean American community as a whole until the 1960s. Warren Kim’s *Koreans in America*, published in 1971, was the first book-length monograph, a loose translation of the descriptive *Chaemi Han-in Osip-nyon sa* (A Fifty-Year History of the Koreans in America) published nearly a decade earlier.¹⁸ The original had been published and supported by the local Korean immigrant community in the US for the purpose of recording its own history. Published in 1971, Bong-youn Choy’s book by the same title was also largely descriptive but geared mostly for an American audience.¹⁹ Both Choy and Kim envisioned themselves as community chroniclers or scribes, either supporting themselves or supposedly patrons from within the Korean immigrant community. Their works

Philadelphia, PA – Mr. P.K. Park, University of Pennsylvania

Dubuque, IA – Mr. L.W. Chang, University of Dubuque

sEvanston, IL – Mr. Hyung Ki Lew, Northwestern University

Ann Arbor, MI – Mr. Dunn, University of Michigan

“Local Leagues” *The Korean Student Bulletin* 2, no. 4 (September 1924). Source: *The Korean Student Bulletin* (NY: v. 1-18, no.2; 1922-Mar./Apr. 1940), reprinted in Seoul, 2000 as part of *Haeoe ui Han’guk tongnip undong saryo* [Documents of Overseas Korean Independence Movement]18, Mijup’yon, 5.

¹⁴ “12 Students from Twin Cities Club,” *Korean Messenger* 2, no. 1 (January 1953), in Mott Papers, Box 23.

¹⁵ Interview Choi.

¹⁶ *Korean Student Association Directory, 1958/59*, in DoS Papers, Box 191.

¹⁷ Lee, “Korean Community in Philadelphia,” 19.

¹⁸ Warren Kim, *Koreans in America* (Seoul: Po Chin Chai Printing Co. Ltd., 1971) and Wŏn-yong Kim, *Chaemi Han-in Osip-nyon sa* [A Fifty-Year History of the Koreans in the United States] (Reedley, CA: Charles Ho Kim, 1959). Bong0-youn Choy includes a short biography of Ki in his book *Koreans in America*.

¹⁹ Bong-youn Choy, *Koreans in America* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1979).

were intensely personal and immediate, their books serving as a general chronology and fact book of the Korean immigrant community that they were a part of.

Kim and Choy do not question the Korean students' centrality to the Korean immigrant community. Their works veered from most research projects about immigrants that tend to play a numbers game in one form or another. Researchers tend to elide the less numerically dominant group for the sake of convenience, maximum impact, or cost management. On the flip side, researchers may extract information from a small segment that is indiscriminately applied to the larger group. None would deny, however, that the minority is part of the whole. Korean international students were a small but significant group of Korean immigrants. Organizations keeping a count on them recognized their importance starting in the 1950s, which demonstrates that significant Korean immigration preceded the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965. Even the haphazard recordkeeping shows that it was difficult to differentiate international students from the larger immigrant body. Statistical records indicate that there were initially very few Korean students. However, their small numbers belie their influence, contribution, and visibility in Korean and Korean American society.

So, how many Koreans were there in the United States? How many of them were students? A straightforward answer is impossible because inconsistencies and discrepancies plague most statistics on Korean Americans as a whole. The US censuses listed Koreans as a separate racial category in 1910 and intermittently through the 1970 census. However, it was not until 1980 that Koreans became a distinct ethnic category that would reappear in subsequent decennial censuses.²⁰ Unlike national surveys, the US Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) numbers did differentiate international students from immigrants. Following the passage of the Immigration Act of 1924, INS classified all international students as nonimmigrants, setting them apart from immigrants or people with the legal right to reside permanently in the United States. Yet these categories converged since new immigrants for any given year included those students who adjusted their status to permanent residency after entering the US as nonimmigrants. Thus, the categories of immigrants and nonimmigrants were not mutually exclusive.

Among organizations that kept data on Korean students, the Institute of International Education (IIE) was among the most complete and reliable. The Institute purports to have taken an annual census of international students since its establishment in 1919.²¹ In the 1940s, the IIE began its cooperative and collaborative works with the US Department of State, and it began methodically collecting information on international students enrolled on US campuses. Following the State Department's lead, the IIE defined a foreign student as a citizen of another nation residing in the US for the purpose of studying and who had the intention of returning to his country after completing his studies; he must be a temporary resident. For this reason, the IIE excluded students petitioning to establish permanent residence in the US as well as those who were displaced. In this way, the IIE placed mobility at the center of the students' identity. The IIE's definition of a foreign student hinges on the phrase "intention to return." Yet, a student's intention was a rather subjective condition since she could change her mind anytime.

²⁰ US Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, "The Asian Population: 2000," Doc. C2KBR/01-16, Washington, DC: GOP, February 2002, 2; Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, "Historical Census Statistics on Population Totals by Race, 1790 to 1990, and by Hispanic Origin, 1790 to 1990, for the United States, Regions, Divisions, and States," US Census Bureau, Population Division Working Paper No. 56, 2002, www.census.gov/population/www/censusdata/hiscendata.html (accessed on July 12, 2009).

²¹ Statistics of the earliest years were "borrowed" from the records of YMCA's Committee on Friendly Relations.

Her expressed desire or application for status change did not guarantee that she could remain in the US legally.

The IIE reported its findings from the census in its annual publication, *Open Doors*. In this annual bulletin, educational experts acknowledged Korean students as a significant group within the US international student body by the mid-1950s, or more specifically after the Korean War. Their growing presence clearly preceded and ran parallel to the legislative changes taking place in the US; their presence was a result of the US involvement and intervention in Korea. Largely statistical, *Open Doors* presented general trends, grouping and ranking students and their countries. Since the publication sought to explain the international student body as a whole, few country specific references or examples were given unless they epitomized or explained the trend being discussed, or when they served to mark nonconforming characteristics. Until the 1950s, *Open Doors* only mentioned Koreans as a part of the lists of students by their country of origin. Beginning in 1954, *Open Doors* began listing Korea as a top exporter of foreign doctors being trained in the United States. The language describing this medical group changed in 1961 to read that Korea was a “leading nationality group of foreign physicians in the United States.” The phrase leaves open the possibility that some within this group were residing and working in the US, and not just being trained.

A cursory look through *Open Doors* identifies the 1950s as the formative decade for Korean foreign students. Korean students’ impact on the composition of international students in the US and expanded American assistance in Korea coincided. *Open Door* mentioned Korean students for the first time in 1954, identifying them as the group. From 1956 to 1958, *Open Door* made specific references to Korea. Since this publication concentrated on providing overall trends of students, country-specific information was kept to a minimum. In 1956, *Open Doors* mentioned that Koreans were unusually concentrated in the social sciences. In the following year, it again recognized Koreans students as the fastest growing nationality group. The dramatic double-digit percentage increase of the Korean student body size in the US slowed to a mere three percent increase the next year, and the IIE staff felt compelled to explain, “The desire of the government of Korea to have Korean students return home as soon as possible has perhaps decreased the length of stay and therefore the number of Korean students [in the US].” For the next three decades, *Open Door* carried only a sentence or two for each of the following *decades*: in 1964 it identified Korean students’ tendency to concentrate in the social sciences, in 1973 on the differences between Korean students with immigration visas and those without, and in 1989 about the US being the most popular destination for Koreans studying abroad.²²

A table compiled using IIE’s annual census data shows a steady growth of Korean students to the US.

Table 6. Korea’s Ranking as a Sending Country of International Students, 1945-1970

<u>Year</u>	<u>Korean Students</u>	<u>Korea’s Ranking</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Korean Students</u>	<u>Korea’s Ranking</u>
1944/45	17	-	1958/59	2471	4
1946/47 ²³	16	-	1959/60	2474	5

²² *Open Doors*, 1954, 14; *Open Doors*, 1961, 14; *Open Doors*, 1964, 11; *Open Doors*, 1973, 9; *Open Doors*, 1989/90, 4.

²³ Statistical information for 1945/46 is not available in *Open Doors*.

1947/48	57	-	1960/61	2310	-
1948/49	203	-	1961/62	2234	6
1949/50	258	-	1962/63	2233	6
1950/51	302	-	1963/64	2411	7
1951/52	290	-	1964/65	2604	7
1953/54	649	-	1965/66	2666	7
1954/55	1197	8	1966/67	3218	7
1955/56	1815	4	1967/68	3435	9
1956/57	2307	3	1968/69	3765	8
1957/58	2404	-	1969/70	3991	10

Compared to the sheer volume of Korean students entering the US in recent years, about 75,000 in 2008 alone, the numbers above do not seem impressive. Another way to look at these figures is to consider how Korea, a nation the size of Illinois, has consistently been among the top ten of all sending countries of foreign students following the Korean War. For example in 1956-57, only Canada and Taiwan sent more students than Korea; one in every twenty foreign students enrolled in the United States was a Korean.²⁴ The chart above shows that the history of Korean international students is a Korean story, as it related to its increased interaction with the US. The increase in the rate of Korean students entering coincided with key historical moments in Korea: the end of the USMGIK in 1948, the end of the Korean War in 1953, and the beginning of Korea's Yushin government, and favorable emigration policy of 1962. The changing political economy of the United States worked in tandem to accept the students' arrival. It is within this context, that students made their individual decisions in Korea to go abroad and then in the United States to remain or return. For some students they weighed their options, prolonging the time between these two decisions. For others, the decision to leave Korea was a decision to reside in the US.

There is an assumption that all foreign students will return to the country after they complete their studies and or training. Yet all involved were well aware that not all students returned. Foreign governments, often in conjunction with the American government, kept count of how many of their students and scholars remained in the US. As early as 1957, the Korean Ministry of Education formed the Committee on Study Abroad and hired an American educator as its chief advisor. It chose Charlotte Drummon Meinecke for her previous work for USMGIK as a liaison between the military government and Korea's educational elites; she understood that the growing number of American-educated persons in this group had an inordinate amount of visibility and prestige. She knew that many who went abroad remained abroad.²⁵

The Korean government saw the "problem" of the nonreturn in two lights. First, it drained Korea's limited resources. Meinecke reported in 1958 that the Korean government had allocated \$2.7 million annually from its dollar exchange resources to be used for transportation and maintenance of Korean students studying in foreign countries.²⁶ This figure translated to

²⁴ McGinn, et al., *Education and Development in Korea* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies Harvard University, 1980), 92.

²⁵ Charlotte Drummon Meinecke, "Education in Korea," Committee on Study Abroad, MOE, Korea, October 1958, in Mott Papers, Box 8.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 44.

enough support for roughly three hundred new students studying abroad per year.²⁷ When students did not return, the Korean government lost not only the money they had invested in the students' from their early compulsory education to higher education abroad, but also their future contribution to Korea. Yet, nonreturn was not without benefits. These students sent remittances, raised political awareness about Korea, and linked American institutions and organizations to those in Korea. They formed a pool of highly qualified expatriates or a "brain bank."

Korea focused its investigations of nonreturning students on the United States since the popularity of the US as a country of destination was unequivocal. Meinecke found that there were nearly 4,000 Koreans students abroad in the late 1950s, of which 95% were in the US.²⁸ A decade later, the US continued to command the lion's share of the Korean students with 85% or 6,845 students; Germany came in a distant second with only 270 students.²⁹ The Korean Ministry of Education reported that more than 90% of these students in the late 1960s did not return. 80% of all Koreans who had finished their doctoral study in the US did not return.³⁰ The rate of nonreturn was even higher for those pursuing science and engineering. Heather Low Ruth in her study on the emigration of high-level Korea manpower found that 98% of all Korean scientist and engineer émigrés were to the US.³¹ This exodus included both domestically-trained and foreign-educated Koreans.

If the seat of recordkeeping and information sharing in the Korean government was in its Ministry of Education, the counterpart in the US government was in the Department of State. Study abroad was unofficially recognized as an arm of cultural diplomacy, and a part of its overall foreign policy. Beginning in the 1940s, the State Department kept ledgers of foreign students in the United States as it initiated and expanded its foreign aid. Its reference to foreign students as potential "ambassadors of goodwill" and the "future leaders of the world" abounded, as it took a permissive rather than restrictive stance towards their mobility. Yet, the US government could not ignore the growing worries of the foreign governments over their nonreturnees nor could it turn a deaf ear to the public debates over "brain drain." Political scientists and economists explored the costs of brain drain. They focused on the impact of nonreturn on the economy and governance of nations, which took the individual decisions of students to national and global levels.³²

The American government knew of nonreturning students and attempted to preclude overstay of select students mostly through legislation. One case in point was the US Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948, commonly referred to as the Smith-Mundt Act. Before the Senate passed the law, the State Department requested a provision that would require all

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 42. UNESCO's *Statistical Yearbook* yielded different figures with Japan and United States vying as the most popular destination for study abroad. UNESCO's numbers differed considerably from ROK government commissioned studies because UNESCO only considered Korean foreign students enrolled in higher education institutions in twelve countries, as opposed to all known foreign countries. Even in light of this, UNESCO's publications show Japan's popularity, one that Korean publications ignore. For example, UNESCO's tally for the academic year 1959/60 show 46% of the total student count in the US, 49% in Japan, and the remaining 5% scattered in ten other countries. Source: UNESCO'S *Statistical Yearbook*, 1961.

²⁹ "Overseas Koreans Number 623,100," *Korean Report* 9, no. 2 (April-June 1969), in Mott Papers, Box 14.

³⁰ See Kwang Lim Koh and Hesung C. Koh, eds., *Koreans and Korean-Americans in the United States: A Summary of Three Conference Proceedings, 1971-1973* (New Haven: East Rock Press, Inc., 1974), 33.

³¹ Heather Low Ruth, "Korea," in *The International Migration of High-Level Manpower*, edited by the Committee on the International Migration of Talent (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), 137.

³² Bruce Frederic Devine, "The U.S. Student Exchange Program: Reverse Foreign Aid?" (PhD diss., Claremont Graduate School and University, 1971), 3.

program participants to leave the US and reside in a “cooperating country” for at least two years before they could apply for permanent residency in the US.³³ This stipulation implied that unless such deterrence was put in place, participants would not return to their countries after their programs. Large-scale American government funds for international exchange began only in the late 1940s, and as the date of this legislation suggests, the issue of nonreturn followed soon after.

By 1950, the Senate Committee on the Judiciary created a special taskforce to evaluate the seeming porous nature of America’s borders. Its report affirmed that students were violating their status by not returning to their home countries, and included evidence of pending investigations of some of them. The subcommittee members wrote in their report “there should be no relaxation of the immigration laws which would open the door to permanent residence for student aliens.”³⁴ They opposed granting amnesty and permanent residence to students, concluding that “any laxity in the treatment of one group of nonimmigrants may not only provide an attractive loophole for aliens desiring to enter this country illegally, but also tend to undermine the controls over the whole nonimmigrant class.”³⁵ This concern was not without basis. A joint report of the Department of Justice and the Department of State confirmed, “We believe that foreign student status has become a method for many aliens to gain entry into the United States for purposes of acquiring, on a preferential basis, permanent resident status under other provisions on the Immigration and Nationality Act.”³⁶ Not only were students adjusting their status from nonimmigrants to permanent residents, but also visitors were applying for student status, and then becoming permanent residents. According to the INS records, the latter group made up the largest group applying for status change during the fiscal year 1974.³⁷

Many Koreans practiced the immigration strategy of status adjustment from a nonimmigrant to an immigrant all within the confines of the law. The number of status adjusters only grew with time in the Korean American community. In the 1960s, 16% of total Koreans admitted as permanent residents were status adjusters. They comprised 16% of the total in the 1960s, 14% in the 1970s, 12% in the 1980s, and an astonishing 46% in the 1990s.³⁸ Political scientist Ilpyong Kim points out, “This means that many Korean immigrants experience immigration life on a temporary basis before they decide to become permanent residents.”³⁹

Many students did forge an alternative path of immigration. Whether intentional or not, their education often led to immigration, and so being an international student became a viable step to becoming a permanent US resident. Students entered the United States legally as temporary residents or nonimmigrants, and then mostly through marriage or employment adjusted their legal status. A growing subset of foreign students used their student visas primarily to gain entrance to the United States rather than to study. According to a political

³³ The two year foreign residency requirement for the adjustment of status to permanent residency was further codified in the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952.

³⁴ US General Accounting Office, “Report to the Congress: Better Controls Needed to Prevent Foreign Students from Violating the Conditions of their Entry and Stay while in the United States” Department of Justice, Department of State, GGD-75-9, February 4, 1975, 2.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 15.

³⁷ Ibid., 36.

³⁸ For details on how many of the Koreans admitted to the US as permanent residents were new arrivals and how many were status adjusters, see Ilpyong Kim’s *Korean Americans: Past, Present, and Future* (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym International Group, 2004), 29. Source: Immigration and Naturalization Services.

³⁹ Ibid., 30.

analyst, “Students destined to enroll in vocational, business and language schools” used this loophole more than “students destined to enroll in academic institutions.”⁴⁰

The numbers reported by governments and organizations mentioned in the previous section stood for students, for individuals. They had people with relatives and friends, and had attended compulsory primary schools and selective secondary and tertiary schools with large student bodies. Most had been affirmed and recognized as important by their peers and society. In Korea where poverty lingered on every street corner and where education was lionized, those studying abroad were indeed a highly select group. During the period examined, most Korean students pursuing higher education in the US also had attended a Korean university before coming to the United States. Only a few select universities in Korea prepared students for graduate training, so those venturing to the US comprised an elite group. Coupled with the robust alumni network found in Korean higher education, most students leaving for the US tapped into a network of information and persons they could tap into. Even in the 1940s and 1950s when Koreans were just beginning to study abroad, roughly a quarter to half of the students entered a graduate program. The number of graduate students among the overall Korean student body increased to nearly half and then two-thirds in the 1960s and the 1970s respectively. Also given that approximately 90% of Korean students who studied in the US by the mid-1960s remained in the US, this network of US-educated Koreans in America was a influential and growing. Though few prospective students would have openly acknowledged or considered their study abroad as more than an intellectual pursuit, they knew or had heard that many of their school’s alumni had not returned to Korea, and they knew that many among their peers would also remain in the United States.

Koreans studying in certain fields, like in the sciences and engineering, were more likely to remain in the US. Scholars have attributed this trend to the expanding American labor market and its shortage of highly skilled people in these fields, as well as the inability of the underdeveloped Korean labor market to absorb highly skilled persons. Yet this does not explain the mass exodus and nonreturn of Korean professionals. By the mid-1960s, Korea was one of seven countries that lost up to 90 percent of their trained physicians to the United States.⁴¹ Korea’s burgeoning population needed these physicians for their basic health care needs. Physicists were another highly specialized group that there were jobs for in Korea. A December 1966 *Chosun Ilbo* carried an article on Korean physicists abroad, where it listed the scientists’ country of residence, possible reasons for not returning, employment and for some their legal status. The two seemingly extraneous facts here hint at two prevailing suppositions in Korea about non-returning scholars. There is an aside that only one Korean physicist was a full tenured professor in an American university, suggesting that the Korean scientists may not be living up to their full potential in the US. The other is that roughly 20% of all Korean physicists abroad

⁴⁰ US General Accounting Office, “Report to the Congress: Better Controls,” 610.

⁴¹ The other countries listed are Iran, Greece, Peru, Argentina, Turkey, and the Philippines. Walton notes that more Iranian doctors are reputed to be practicing in New York than in all of Iran. See Barbara J. Walton, *Foreign Student Exchange in Perspective: Research on Foreign Students in the United States* (Washington, DC: The Office of External Research, US Department of State, September 1967). Charles Susskind examined all foreign students who have received graduate degrees in engineering at Berkeley between 1954 and 1956. He found that within ten years after receiving their degrees, nearly a third of all master’s degree recipients and two-thirds of all doctoral degree recipients were US residents. See Charles Susskind and Lynn Schell, *Exporting Technical Education: A Survey and Case Study of Foreign Professionals with U.S. Graduate Degree* (NY: Institute of International Exchange, 1968).

had green cards or were permanent residents of the US.⁴² Such information shows that despite the Korean government's desire for students to return home as soon as possible, marketability of skills were not the only factors in the students' decision to not return to Korea.⁴³

It should not be assumed that all Korean students wanted to stay in the United States or had definite plans to settle permanently in the US. On the contrary, most students at the time of their departure, that is those who came to the US after Korea's liberation in 1945 and before its economic liberalization in the 1980s, planned to return to Korea either immediately after their studies or at an undetermined time thereafter. For KS Kim, there was no question in his mind that he would return. KS Kim, a high school teacher, received a Fulbright scholarship to study for a year at the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii. After this program, he stayed on in the US to receive a doctoral degree from Syracuse University. Kim had a government scholarship that required him to return, but more importantly his wife, son, widowed mother, and younger siblings awaited him in Korea.⁴⁴ Gi-II Choi also studied with the goal of returning to Korea. So when he completed his doctoral study at Harvard University, he and his family prepared to return. Even in this sample of two resolute individuals, only Kim returned. And even Kim at a later time considered returning to the US when his relatives who had immigrated to the US "invited" him and his families to join them. He weighed his options, but chose in favor of keeping his tenured position as a professor at Korea's preeminent university.

The majority of the Koreans studying in the US between 1945 and 1979 practiced a flexible notion of migration. Student immigrants considered and expressed their decision to remain in the US as contingent on personal situations and opportunities rather than being dependent on the letter of the law. Very few felt that "with the intention to return" clause of their nonimmigrant status was binding. Rather their life circumstances and aspirations were the factors governing their mobility. Given the right opportunity and circumstances, student immigrants thought that they could and would return to Korea. Yet few did in practice. Conversely those few who returned to Korea acknowledged considering, in many cases applying to, American teaching and or industry positions to understand and weigh their options.

A wide range of emotions accompanied the student immigrants' decision to remain. In interviews of nonreturnees, those in print as well as those I have conducted, lurk either a shadow of defensiveness or guilt for not having returned to Korea. Some expressed a sense of guilt for not returning and a sense of loss over unfulfilled influence and prestige they could have exercised had they returned to Korea. Since academic achievements, theirs including, had been affirmed and heralded as a source of Korea's betterment, their decision ran counter to the Korean national imagination. When Hye Ho Lee visited Korea after being in the US for over a decade many of his acquaintances asked him why he had not returned. He recalls, "Someone even suggested that my reluctance to return to 'where I should be' is plain unpatriotic!"⁴⁵ Lee and others' decision to remain was seen as motivated by personal gains, without regards to how the newly acquired skills could benefit the collective body in Korea. There were of course students who like Walter Han insisted that they "felt no obligation to Korea, no pull to Korea."⁴⁶ To Han who left Korea in the early 60s, his memories of Korea were inextricably tangled with memories

⁴² "Toraaji annūn mulli hakchadūl - Miguk yōngju 49 myōng... Paksa man 77 myōng" [The Nonreturning Physicists 49 in US Alone and 77 PhDs Overall], *Chosun Ilbo*, December 12, 1966, 5.

⁴³ Institute of International Education, *Open Doors* 1958, 7.

⁴⁴ Interview KS Kim, August, 12, 2008 in Seoul, Korea.

⁴⁵ Hye Ho Lee, "Letter to a Friend in Korea; My version of 'I Am What I Am'," *Forum, The Quarterly of the Korean-New York Jaycees* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1968), 9.

⁴⁶ Interview with Walter Han, August 31, 2008 in Pleasanton, CA.

of hunger and maltreatment; it had not invested in him so he reasoned he owed nothing in return. Nearly forty years later, Han continues to justify his decision in terms of an implicit obligation, lack thereof, to a state.

The Korean public, as mediated by the popular press, learned only about select nonreturning students. News articles reported almost exclusively on those who were deemed responsible and exemplary: married, employed doctoral (occasionally master's) degree holders. Kyung Hwan Kwon, who received his doctoral degree at the University of Michigan in mathematics in June of 1958, was to teach at the Tulane University the following fall.⁴⁷ Tae Shik Kang, a recent graduate of the University of Minnesota, was slated to teach at a state university in New York.⁴⁸ Hyuk Yoo finished his doctoral studies at Princeton University, taught at Dartmouth College, and then went to work in Washington DC.⁴⁹ Sung Soon Chun was offered a research position at the University of Utah after receiving his doctoral degree in engineering there.⁵⁰ It is possible that only "success" cases percolated back to Korea, but the glaring absence of coverage of nonreturnees in nonacademic areas or those who had not finished their degrees hint at a society that held a narrow definition of success. Korean students made their decision to remain or stay against this complex background.

In 1965, doctoral degrees were conferred on eight Korean students in the greater Washington DC area, and four of these recipients participated as discussants in a press conference. The issue of nonreturn was clearly a hotly contested issue for both Korea and the US. The moderator began with a question about their post graduation plans. Kim, a respondent, answered quite simply stating that two possible options existed: to stay or to go. If the recent graduate can get a professorial position, he added, than he could stay longer in the US and gain valuable experience that would lead to a higher salary and higher social status when he returned to Korea. Moreover, involvement in new research, especially for those in the natural sciences, would be a draw to the US. Park, the next participant to comment, followed with a defense for all who chose to remain.

There's no law that a person can't serve his country abroad. We all want to return. But there is no guarantee of a job in Korea or our needs being met; there is nothing definitive about our future in Korea. Just the thought of looking for a job and making a living in Korea instills fear in me.

"Yet," Park continued, "I am planning to go to Korea. Look for a job and earn a living." Chun, a recent graduate who took a teaching position at the University of Maryland adopted a more apologetic tone saying, "I want to go back [to Korea], but it's hard to say when I will get to go." Though the decision to stay or go was entirely in his hands, his indirect language placed the situation outside his control. As a way of explanation, Chun said, "Not being an American and living in the US is wrought with insecurities. There's no clear example or guarantee of success." The remaining discussant answered, "I'll stay here longer and get more experience in the school. Getting a degree doesn't mean the learning is over." So for him, his decision to remain in the US was to continue his learning. Two commonalities emerged in the four discussants' responses.

⁴⁷ "Kwōn Kyōng-hwan ssi Miguk taehak sō uihak paksa hagwi hoektūk" [Kwon Kyong Hwan Receives his PhD from a US University], *Chosun Ilbo*, June 8, 1958, 3.

⁴⁸ "Miguk Minnesota dae Kang T'ae-sik ch'ōrhak paksa" [Kang Tae Sik, PhD from University of Minnesota], *Chosun Ilbo*, August 18, 1966, 5.

⁴⁹ "Miguk p'yojunguk kūnmu yuhak paksa, kūmbal anae wa adūl terigo kwiguk," *Chosun Ilbo*, September 13, 1966, 7.

⁵⁰ "Haeoe esō halyak hanūn Han'guk ūi kwahakcha Miguk Utah taehak ūi Ch'ōn Sōng-sun paksa" [An Active Korean Scientist Abroad, Chon Song Sun of Utah University], *Chosun Ilbo*, July 16, 1970, 5.

All discussants rationalized why students would not return to Korea, and all stated the possibility and desire to return to Korea, either in the immediate present or the distant future. Students' flexible notion of immigration could not be separated from this publicly expressed sense of obligation or emotional conflict stemming from perceived differences in public and private expectations and desires.⁵¹

A case study of Korean students in the University of Wisconsin, as analyzed by Chong-Keun Bae in his dissertation, illustrates that students' defensive and apologetic tone about their nonreturn endured into the 1970s. Two particular examples from this unpublished dissertation are especially telling of the developing expression of flexible migration. Park wanted to return to Korea, but his personal contacts in Korea had not yielded any job offers, while there was a job waiting for him at an American university. Park chose the latter. However, the dissertation writer's aside that Park's American position was a one-year contract without tenure suggests that job security may not have been the determining factor. Chung, another interviewee, also wanted to go back to Korea, but his family obligations prevented him from doing so. He explained that his wife was expecting their first child and that he needed to remain and find a high paying American job to support his growing family in the US as well as his extended family in Korea. He sincerely hoped to return to Korea "one day." Again the writer alluded to an alternative reason by remarking on the interviewee's appreciation for individual privacy in the US. He quoted Chung, "individual privacy... is almost nonexistent in Korea because of close family and group ties."⁵² Both sampled students shared that their present circumstances compelled them to remain in the United States; however, if their situation were to change, they would readily return to Korea. There is a glaring lack of permanence to their decision.

From journalists to embassy personnel to academics, people have sought to understand why students did not return. A 1955 *Korean Times* article reported that Korean students abroad deliberately postponed their return in order to evade military conscription.⁵³ One American embassy personnel summarized the factors contributing to non-return as: "his [student's] orientation, the applicability of his education here [in the US] to his needs at home, his professional opportunities, [and] his standard of living."⁵⁴ Charles P. Kindleberger, focusing mainly on candidates for the doctoral program in economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, added marriage to an American spouse and quality of research collaborators and materials to the list of factors.⁵⁵ Interviewee's responses have further lengthened the list. Ha-Joong Song in his research on US-educated Korean scientists and engineers found that their school-age children's ability to speak Korean had a bearing on their decision to return or stay in the US.⁵⁶ A person I interviewed repeated Chung's response about needing a high American income to support his family back in Korea. For yet another interviewee, his siblings and parents had immigrated to the United States while he was studying in the US and he had no desire to go

⁵¹ "Miguk yuhak, ne paksa hagwi suryonja ūi chwadam" [Roundtable of Four PhD Recipients], *Chosun Ilbo*, July 29, 1965, 5.

⁵² Chong-Keun Bae, "The Effect of Traditionalism on Social Adjustment and Brain Drain: A Study of Korean Students at the University of Wisconsin" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1972), 125.

⁵³ "Arrival and Departure," *The Korea Times*, April 5, 1955, 2.

⁵⁴ Office memorandum from Gregory Henderson to [US] Ambassador, March 20, 1961, in Henderson Papers, Box 7, Folder "Immigration + Students - 1960-61."

⁵⁵ Charles P. Kindleberger, "Study Abroad and Emigration" in Adam Walter, ed., *The Brain Drain* (NY: The Macmillan Company, 1968), 139.

⁵⁶ Song, "Who Stays?," 323.

back to a “family-less country.” Another who left school without a degree, simply stated, “I didn’t make it.” This short answer meant much more than receiving a degree.

What was rarely debated or discussed was that staying in the US became the default option for all who had not achieved “success.” This undefined, open-ended term was comparative in nature. Korean international students in the US needed to be more successful, more learned, more recognized than their counterparts in Korea. For international students, this involved a graduate degree from an American university and offers of higher paying and more prestigious positions than those available to graduates from Korean universities. The following reflection from a “drop out” is valuable for both shedding insight into the minds of those most unrecorded, if not the most unwilling to talk about their experience as student immigrants.

[M]y original purpose in coming to the States was to obtain higher education, or more aptly the highest degree (Ph.D.?) so as to prepare myself for a ‘triumphant return’ to Korea, and [to] make everyone ‘concerned’ about me happy.... Well, I dropped out of the graduate studies some six years ago, and I have neither the highest degree nor enough wealth to compensate the evident failure in the original goal... The truth is that I have often thought about packing up my gears and flying back to the arms of my beloved people.... But, then, would I be welcomed? I don’t seem to have anything that has any semblance of a success, and I am afraid that the expectations on the part of my family and friends in Korea are so high that my going home as I am now would please no one, let along the possibility of becoming a ‘patriot’ just by coming back in Korea. This, then, would clearly indicate that my being here now was more or less compelled by a circumstance, and am still a captive of the circumstance.⁵⁷

What is evident in the above quote is that study abroad had become a path for permanent immigration for many students.

Government-sponsored students and privately-sponsored students at times took different paths to immigration; the former’s was slightly more complicated in theory. Most educational exchange visas issued to government-funded students required that the participants leave the US for at least two years after completing their program before they could request a status adjustment. Both governments wanted them to follow the rules, and from time to time exerted pressure on students who attempted to overstay their visa or immigrate. Their nonreturn called into question the objectives of the exchange programs and the lack of accountability between the public who contributed and the individuals also benefitted from the scholarships. Even in highly profiled programs like the SNU Project, participants had differing notions of when they wanted to return to Korea. Some project participants wanted to stay in the US indefinitely, while others longed to go home at the earliest possible date. In one case, the American program coordinator threatened to personally escort a particularly obstinate participant to the airport if he did not return to Korea immediately. For another professor, the return date could not come fast enough. He experienced intense stress during his first semester because of, as his American advisor noted, “his inability to adjust himself to separation from his wife.”⁵⁸ The US government prohibited family members from accompanying the participants in part to ensure that they would return to their country and to their families, and in equal part to lower program costs. However, no measures prevented government-sponsored exchange participants from returning to the US after fulfilling the required foreign residence. Though all SNU Project participants returned to Korea, it is not known how many returned to the United States at some time later. Personal

⁵⁷ Lee, “Letter to a Friend in Korea,” 9.

⁵⁸ In IoA Papers, Box 49, Folder “Wang, In Keun.”

correspondence between the Korean students and their American advisors show that some did return to the US after fulfilling the two year foreign residency requirement.

The US government made exceptions for those skilled persons it needed. J.H. Yoo, who had been in the US for nearly a decade and was working at Eastern Michigan University, wrote his friend,

I may have to go back to Seoul next summer (1971) to meet the foreign residency requirement (2 years). I received a travel grant (\$530) from the Fulbright Commission in Seoul when I came here (in 1963). [emphasis added]

Aware of exemptions but unsure of the exact steps, Yoo asked if there was “any way to be relieved from this restriction.”⁵⁹ Actually in 1970, the year the letter was written, Congress had passed an immigration statute facilitating the adjustment status for exchange visitors.⁶⁰ The immigration case of JH Yang, MD and his wife JS Yang, MD was one among many exemptions that the US government made for skilled Koreans. Yang and his wife filed a petition to waive the two-year foreign residence requirement based on the needs of their American-born children. Embassy officers perusing this case noted the physicians’ emphasis on “unhappy living condition of Korea” and on the preexisting medical condition of their American-born child. “On the face of it,” they wrote, “the Drs. Yang seem to have an argument that is hard to refute.”⁶¹ Two embassy personnel brought up the Yangs’ case as an example of students overstaying in another government document,

On the general question of students overstaying in the US mentioned in MacDonald’s letter, cases such as that of the Drs. Yang which he cited shows the problem when they establish roots and ties. It would seem that the time to put the pressure on them is the moment they complete their education and receive their degrees. Otherwise they get a job and the next thing we know they obtain a first preferences status as an essential worker. They either keep renewing or apply for permanent residence status and it becomes increasingly more difficult to budge them.⁶²

Dr. Yang had begun his residency training in St. Louis in 1953, but he did not apply for a waiver for nearly a decade, most likely in response to an order from the US Immigration Services to depart from the US voluntarily.

Around the time the Yangs received their green cards, D.W. Chung left Korea to begin his studies in San Francisco. A year later, his wife joined him and enrolled in a nearby community college.⁶³ Much like the Yangs, they and their American-born children became a part of the Korean community. Both the Yangs and the Chungs practiced a well-known migration strategy used by couples. The US embassy in Korea categorically denied issuing student visas to young couples, considering them to be at high risk for not returning. The husband typically entered the US first, and his wife followed shortly after with her own student

⁵⁹ JHY (Eastern Michigan University) to Gregory Henderson, November 24, 1970, in Henderson Papers, Box 6, Folder “Correspondence – 1970-1972.”

⁶⁰ “Legislations from 1961-1980,” 3, <http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/Legislation%20from%201901-1940.pdf> (accessed October 3, 2010).

⁶¹ Donald S. MacDonald to Gregory Henderson, February 2, 1962, in Henderson Papers, Box 1, File “Personal Correspondence + Embassy Materials – 1958-62.”

⁶² Office memorandum from R.G. Borin to Gregory Henderson, [n.d.], in Henderson Papers, Box 1, Folder “Personal Correspondence + Embassy Materials – 1958-1962.”

⁶³ Interview with D.W. Chung’s son in Mountain View, CA, August 2004.

visa.⁶⁴ Those couples who had children usually left them in their parents' care until either the kids could be "called for" when legal residence was gained or until the parents returned to Korea after their studies. In the case of Rose Kim's parents, her father, a journalist in Korea, came to the United States in 1959. Her mother joined him two year later, leaving their three children behind in Korea in the care of their grandparents. Though her parents talked about returning to Korea, they stayed and sent for their children in Korea to join them.⁶⁵

Another strategy employed, both purposefully and fortuitously, was marriage to a lawful resident or American citizen. There were lasting and fleeting unions. Walter Han registered semester after semester for over a decade to keep his legal status as a foreign student. He had little desire to return to Korea, a resolve made stronger when he met his wife Ruby, who had immigrated with her family to the United States. Through their marriage, Han shed his nonimmigrant status as a foreign student and became a permanent resident. Other interviewees acknowledged going to a Korean church, which often served as the locus of the Korean community in the area, in hopes of meeting a "nice Korean girl." When pressed, some added that their acquaintances, especially those who found their academic interests lagging and their desire to remain in the US growing stronger, may have sought to "settle" for a woman who would let them "settle" in the US. Unfortunately for Sarah Lee, this is what almost happened. Lee entered the US as a wife of an American GI, but the abusive reality that hit her in her new home prompted her to seek a divorce. She left her mid-Western town for Chicago, in hopes of meeting other Koreans. She was introduced to a Korean "foreign student," and she understood that he found her American citizenship to be very attractive. Lee told me that a foreign student was a "good catch"; she wanted to start her life with a good Korean man, so they got married. Not long after the wedding ceremony, she learned that not only was he not a foreign student, but also that he had a wife and children in Korea.⁶⁶ Both Lee and her ex-husband knew that marriage was a well-known channel of immigration for students, and had assumed that mutual benefits from such marriage would not be questioned.

International students also used employment-based status adjustment. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, when the US government began controlling what historian Erika Lee calls "America's gate," highly educated and skilled persons received preferential treatment. The Immigration Act of February 20, 1907 required all aliens entering the US to declare whether they intended to remain temporarily or permanently; thus, it created the categories of nonimmigrants and immigrants respectively. This law, however, exempted a limited number of professionals, professors included, from contract labor law. Also, when the US Congress implemented a quota system for immigration in the early 1920s, professionals were permitted to enter on a nonquota basis. In the first half of the twentieth-century, scholars became permanent residents by default.

By the second half of the century, the US government actively recruited highly skilled persons to its shores. Legislations passed since the 1950s facilitated the adjustment of status for educated, skilled persons already in the US. As a result of the enlarged scope of American

⁶⁴ In the interviews I conducted, many of the wives initially enrolled in community colleges but dropped out of school soon after due to financial constraints. The wives shared that in adopting this strategy they had hoped to not only be reunited with their spouse but also to pursue their studies. One or both in the relationship attempted to maintain their student status, until either a need to gain permanent residence arose or an opening for gaining legal residence came up.

⁶⁵ Rose Kim, "My Trek," in *Struggle for Ethnic Identity: Narratives by Asian American Professionals* edited by Pyong Gap Min and Rose Kim (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 1999), 49-58.

⁶⁶ Interview with Walter Han; interview with Sarah Lee, August-December 2006 in Boston, MA.

involvement in foreign countries, including its educational assistance to them, there were an unprecedented number of foreign students in the US. In the case of Korea, its bureaucrats and scholars were among the first to participate in the exchange. Personal exchanges with American civilian and military personnel stationed abroad and the educational programs that the US government sponsored increasingly made students the larger of the two groups. By the 1950s, these students were also a part of a growing body of skilled foreigners making significant contributions to American academia and in its economy. The US government passed various immigration laws to create avenues for these persons to become permanent, legally accepted members of American society. It was also at this time the many scattered immigration statutes came under the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (INA 1952). Also known as the McCarran-Walter Act, the INA 1952 removed the racial component of the immigration statutes of the 1920s, but it maintained quotas on countries. This document coincided with the emerging criticism against a government that promoted the “inalienable rights” of individuals in newly developed countries while permitting discrimination against people within its own borders. The INA 1952 also defined who were acceptable immigrants, and by inference American citizens. This legislation codified labor qualifications as an important prerequisite to immigration. A lesser known clause of the INA 1952 allowed a nonimmigrant already in the US to become a resident alien; it was a loophole aimed specifically at recruiting “skilled aliens” or foreign students and scholars who were already in the US.

Propelled by the desire to maintain and expand its leadership in the world, the US government attracted other nations’ leaders and scholars to itself both by providing them with individual scholarship and also by pouring funding into higher education institutes and research centers that could recruit them. One concrete step the US government took to facilitate the immigration of skilled persons came in 1958 when the Attorney General was given the power to grant permanent residency to skilled nonimmigrants. The Attorney General’s office issued a “hit list” of all occupations and skills that qualified for a green card. People I interviewed shared anecdotal stories of students whose interests and life goals changed to match that list. A retired Korean specialist librarian shared with me that “getting a green card was easy then.” He explained that most Korean foreign students in the 1950s and 1960s were fluent in Japanese and Korean, and though that particular combination of languages may be unnecessary for most jobs, it was still rare enough to qualify for a green card. The legal status change eventually led to American citizenship for an untold number of foreign students. Their American-born children, of course, were US citizens by right of birth. These new American citizens and permanent residents were well-positioned to take advantage of the categories of preferences that would open up with the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (INA 1965).⁶⁷

The students and their family members were among the first links of the chain migration that began in earnest under the INA 1965. That legislation facilitated the immigration of persons based on family reunification, removing all quotas for parents, spouse, and children of American legal residents and citizens. Some students, their spouses and adult children immediately invited

⁶⁷ Immigration Act of February 20, 1907 required all aliens entering the US to declare whether they intended to remain temporarily or permanently; thus, it created the categories of nonimmigrants and immigrants respectively. This law also exempted a limited number of professionals, professors included, from contract labor law. Information from “Legislations from 1901-1940,” <http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/Legislation%20from%201901-1940.pdf>; “Legislations from 1941-1960,” <http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/Legislation%20from%201901-1940.pdf>; and “Legislations from 1961-1980,” <http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/Legislation%20from%201901-1940.pdf> (all accessed on October 3, 2010).

or sponsored their relatives in Korea to join them, who in turn invited others upon their arrival. The INA 1965 further flung open “America’s gates” to all persons with the catch-all phrase “skills, abilities, or training needed in the United States.” Through its employment-based preference categories, the INA 1965 incorporated the continually updated and expanded list of qualified occupations coming from the Attorney General’s Office since the late 1950s. Korean students, both those already in the US and those to arrive in the future, used the INA 1965 to gain permanent residence. Students factored prominently in the ensuing massive immigration of what is commonly referred to as “post-1965 immigration.” The Cold War interaction between Korea and the US prompted the beginning of the student immigration, and the legislative changes in the US then lent to them permanent residence and legal acceptance in the US.

A few ironic developments emerged from the massive influx of Korean immigration that the students helped bring about. Korean students began to increasingly fade and eventually became “missing” within studies of the Korean immigrant community. Though the paramount INA 1965 did change the demographic ethnic, economic, and social make-up of many of the immigrant communities in the United States, it did just that; it changed them, not created them. Korean student immigrants were in the midst of the changes. The Korean immigrant students set the precondition that allowed the INA 1965 to dramatically alter the contours of the immigrant community. Student immigrants used both the categories of “family unification” and “skilled workers” to create a niche for themselves and their families in the United States, shaping the community they helped establish.

Around the time, I began my research on this topic I met a Korean graduate student. He was making his maiden flight to the US to begin his doctoral study in civil engineering.⁶⁸ Equipped with a valid visa for the next five years, “KC” was headed for MIT. He explained to me that the US was an obvious place to study, but to apply had been difficult. Born in 1967, he was older than most international students entering the US in 2003. After his mandatory military service, he worked as an engineer. He stated simply that he was very good at what he did. He stated confidently that with his work experience he could go back to the same line of work anytime. His studies would be a needed respite from his job and an answer to his restlessness or just maybe – “Who knows?” and he smiled

Once he decided to study in the US, the preparatory machinery began. He began the TOEFL-GRE-application process taken by all hopeful foreign students. Preparatory materials for the GRE and TOEFL abounded in every Korean bookstore, no matter how limited the shelving space. Scheduling a test date posed no problem, although he thought scheduling would have been easier still if the computer-based exam was permitted. He told me that test centers in Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan, and China administered only paper-based exams due to the high incidence of cheating in these countries. He scored well on both exams and soon completed his admissions applications.

KC then turned his attention to funding. First, there was the Fulbright. He quickly eliminated this. Nobody had nominated him. Besides, the Fulbright Commission was notorious for being picky about which schools students could attend and generally granted few engineering scholarships. Then there was the one given by the Samsung Corporation. An excellent scholarship, but it was only available after the student had enrolled at a US school. The lack of certainty was unattractive. He considered scholarships by the Korean government; he did not

⁶⁸ Interview with KC on August 24, 2003 en route from San Francisco Airport to Boston Logan Airport.

qualify for many of them because he exceeded the required age of “less than 30 years.” His options narrowed, but stories of research and teaching assistantships as “guaranteed” funding quelled his fear of depleting his life’s savings. The last option gave him the greatest flexibility. So he was back to square one, waiting for the “offer letters” from the admissions offices. He did not wait long.

The next task was getting a student visa. He walked in the US embassy. He knew that the average interview lasted about two minutes. Any longer meant there was a problem. He had waited in the anteroom with mixed feelings as US embassy officials weeded out those who seemed intent on settling in the US from those certain to return after their studies. KC planned return to Korea to teach or reenter the industry. His case looked good. He was an only son, his parents’ only child. He positively met the property or “wealth” requirements. Well, he was single and had been out of school for quite some time. Then again, he was not a young or older single female. Most importantly, he had an acceptance letter from a prestigious American university with documented proof of funding. He knew that his profile did not show any hints of becoming a ward of the American government. Within two minutes of his interview, the embassy personnel agreed. Visa in hand, he packed his life into a suitcase and embarked with only one expectation in mind - “A life different from the one in Korea.” What will he do once he gets his PhD degree? His reply, “I don’t know.”

KC may or may not settle permanently in the US. Contrary to the embassy personnel’s assumptions, KC’s intention after his studies is undecided. If he chooses to remain, he will follow in the footsteps of many who studied before him. Unlike Choi from the beginning of the chapter, he did not travel by boat nor was he greeted and fed at his port of entry. However, within a few days of arriving at MIT, he would be contacted and welcomed by the Korean student organizations on campus. More than a dozen Korean churches, at least three Korean grocery stores, and a host of other Korean institutions would gladly embrace his presence in Boston. Whether he chooses to participate or not, his membership into the Korean immigrant community began before he departed Korea. His path to America was paved by the many contacts between Americans and Koreans, the relations between their countries, and the culture of migration that ensued.

Conclusion

After World War II, US involvement overseas drastically enlarged the scope and character of immigration. The US government enabled many structural changes in those countries that also sent a significant number of immigrants to the US.¹ The American military, its government, and philanthropic organizations provided relief aid and developmental assistance at an unprecedented rate that produced a dramatic impact on the receiving countries. American foreign assistance helped fuel these countries' social, political, and economic structural changes as they established new institutions and organizations and reorganized existing ones. This process not only led to interactions between governments but also generated a flow of ideas, information, products, and people between the countries. New networks with their own set of implicit and explicit rules formed and a select group of people to monitor and mediate them emerged. The history of Korean international students in the US is a prime example of how American immigration is directly linked to the woven histories of Korean and American national histories which themselves are set on a global stage. Their history demonstrates that US immigration unfolded within a larger context of US foreign policy, one in which US nonmilitary assistance was used as an avenue to promote American attractiveness and influence abroad.

When the US government entered Korea following Japan's surrender, it was unsure of the role the US would play in this newly independent nation. American officials considered Korea's proximity to America's past and present opponents to be sufficient reasons to occupy the peninsular nation. Yet the US government deemphasized Korea's importance in its foreign policy regarding Asia. It initially engaged in short-term projects, concentrating on the immediate postwar relief of Koreans with no definite plans for the future. The goal for the American occupiers was to stabilize Korea as soon as possible and then to withdraw their troops. They operated through their English speaking interpreters, and supported the emerging US-educated political elites in Korea. Koreans educated in the US were understood to have acquired cultural as well as educational capital while abroad. Moreover, it could be argued that their studies had limited their contact with Japanese authorities and influence by physically removing them to universities across the Pacific Ocean. US-educated Koreans were among the most active

¹ Who is an immigrant? At the most basic level, an immigrant moves from one country to another. Implicit in his or her physical move is the intent to reside, contribute, and follow the rules of the country he or she enters. A person in transit to another destination is rarely considered to be an immigrant. Exiles, displaced persons, and stateless persons fall outside this definition because their intent as well as the origin and destination of their migration are contingent on changing factors that are outside their control. The question of *what* is an immigrant is much more complex. Time, citizenship, labor, and diplomacy are among the many components of this multi-faceted gem of a word. Immigrant is a politically charged term and status that defines not only the legal and political rights of a person but also the political, economic, cultural relationship between the country she leaves and the country she enters. Time, both in terms of the intended duration of his residence and the historical moment of his migration, is crucial to how the host society welcomes or rejects, and includes or excludes the immigrant. The social, economic, and political factors of the time determine a country's climate of immigration, which in turn affects the public reception and perception of immigrants. These components are part of the larger process of immigration that shapes the experiences of an immigrant. Kay Deaux, a social psychologist, provides an analysis of the interplay of factors on the macro, meso, and micro levels that shape the experiences of American immigrants. See her book *To Be an Immigrant* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006). Since most immigrants reside permanently in the US and can ultimately apply for citizenship, the status of citizen and immigrant are directly related and is only separated by degree. In this way, the United States, like all countries, has used its immigration policy to define who is and who is not an American. Immigration is a dynamic process and likewise its participants do not fit into a static category or description.

members of the diasporic Korean community, who often retained strong religious and political connections to the US. This influential group derived its privilege and power from the developing political climate that favored their association with Americans and noted their limited contact with Japanese.

Very few Korean students came to the United States during Korea's colonial period. Few students passed the rigorous interviews of the "Japanese Thought Police" to obtain the necessary passport to study abroad. There are cases of Koreans smuggling out to Manchuria and then across the Pacific Ocean. American missionaries played a key role as intermediaries between wealthy patrons, sympathetic educators, and religious organizations that financially some of the most celebrated US educated Korean luminaries of the 1940s Korea. These US educated, who returned to their newly independent nation, espoused the American occupier's plan to replace Japanese elements of Korea's education system with one that was more familiar and affirming to them, an American education system. Few returned, but those who did held highly visible and influential roles in the newly independent nation. As a group, both their number and influence only grew over time.

The Korean War modified the US government's policy toward Korea, which translated into greater points of contact between Koreans and Americans that lead more Koreans to the United States. Studying abroad had once been available only to religious converts or privileged young aristocrats, but increasingly became available to a wider group. Government sponsored and planned educational exchange programs and scholarships provided outlets for select Korean students and scholars. In agreement with the Korean government, the US government provided observation tours, participant training programs, and scholarships for Koreans at a time when few educational options were available to Koreans *in Korea*. American educators and experts sent to reconfigure Korea's educational system clearly favored those with American training, whether it was through study abroad or through workshops held by Americans in Korea. These commissioned experts expected the US-educated to take over the positions that they would vacate when they returned to the US. They built into the institutions a bias for American educated staff with their hiring practices, the tenor of program recommendations and evaluations on which future support and funding hinged. In addition to the government programs, individual acts of generosity, especially those by the American GIs, created openings for Koreans to study in the United States. These encounters between Koreans and Americans provided the possibility and the means of studying in the United States.

The traditional high regard for higher education in Korea shifted to accommodate the changing realities of the time. Koreans came to embrace American education as the epitome of modern knowledge and the gateway to privilege and power in Korean society.² The media covered them in a positive light. Korean newspapers reported on Korean graduates of American universities with unrestrained pride, portraying them as ordinary people who have accomplished extraordinary academic feats. Yet of all the Koreans who went abroad to study, only a minute fraction appeared in the Korean newspapers. And of the very select group of academics praised in these news articles, only a few returned to Korea.

Migration before 1965, as seen through students here, created a ready pool of immigrants who could use the provisions made by the INA 1965. Korean students, along with military wives, set the prerequisite for the chain migration. The INA 1965 facilitated the immigration of persons for the purposes of reuniting family members and for the purpose of providing US will skilled persons, preference categories which benefitted international students. Yet, these student

² A limited number of Koreans did study abroad in countries other than the US.

immigrants remain outside Korean American history; international students in general are absent in US immigration history. The necessary inclusion of international students in our history enlarges our understanding of immigrant communities. Their immigration paths reveal an understudied but well-traveled road.

For nearly four decades after the Korean War, most Korean international students who came to the US remained in the United States. This dissertation treats both those students who returned to Korea and those who settled permanently in the United States. Their very choice and action of entering the US made them immigrants. Moreover, they were agents of change who enabled further immigration by brokering information and becoming the first links to chain migration. They contributed to what historian Catherine Ceniza Choy calls the “culture of migration.” In her historical analysis of Filipino nurse migrants, Choy defines it as “the ways in which narratives about the promise of immigration to the United States – narratives circulated by the media as well as Filipino nurse migrants already in the United States – shape Filipino nurses’ desire to migrate abroad.”³ Likewise, Korean international students’ voice figures prominently in the Korean American immigrant narratives, of following and creating promises.

The positive correlation between higher education and social prestige and power in Korea added to the attractiveness of American education and America in general. Joseph Nye writes that academic and scientific exchanges are a source of soft power, and that they are powerful weapons in enhancing cultural understanding. To demonstrate the potency of the exchange, Nye refers to an educational exchange between Soviet Union and US in the 1950s where only 40 to 50 students were involved. He writes,

over time, powerful policy effects can be traced back to even those small numbers. Because cultural exchanges affect elites, one or two key contact may have major political effect. . . . The attraction and soft power that grew out of cultural contacts among elites made important contributions to American policy objectives.⁴

Elsewhere Nye writes, “Simply put, in behavioral terms, soft power is attractive power. Soft power resources are the assets that produce such attraction.”⁵ By this definition, higher education and the US educated are powerful assets to the US. Since the US military occupation of Korea from 1945 to 1948, the US government has assisted Korea in the rebuilding of its higher education and has aided Koreans in studying in the US. However, discussions of soft power rarely give enough credit to the active participation and influence on both of the countries involved. Since the US military occupation of Korea from 1945 to 1948, the US government has assisted Korea in the rebuilding of its higher education and has aided Koreans in studying in the US. Nor do these discussions acknowledge how individuals and institutions are the primary actors in bolstering or toppling the very legitimacy and credibility the governments need to exercise their soft power.

This study has shown some of the most concrete and influential ways the US government linked Korea’s elite higher education with American education. Figuring prominently in this story is the US government’s use of foreign assistance as a diplomatic tool to build its influence

³ Catherine Ceniza Choy, *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 4.

⁴ Joseph Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (NY: Public Affairs, 2004), 46.

⁵ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “The Benefits of Soft Power” in *Harvard Business School Weekly Newsletter*, August 2, 2004, <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/archive/4290.html> (accessed November 20, 2009).

abroad and the Korean government's goal of building a modern nation-state.⁶ The Korean government readily accepted the aid but revised the American blueprint to reflect its own needs. American universities under contract with the US government assisted the redesign of key departments at Seoul National University (SNU) and the establishment of Korea Advanced Institute of Science (KAIS). Both national institutes became the undisputed leaders in their fields and the standard bearers of "modern" knowledge. Planned as model universities or paradigms for other Korean institutes of higher education, American credentials and methods and above all US-educated persons were favored. Thus, the key to converting Korean higher education rested on Koreans who had studied in the United States. To this end, the majority of the faculty members in the departments selected for restructuring at SNU was sent to the US to be trained. As for KAIS' inaugural faculty members, the search committee selected from a small pool of Korean scientists and engineers educated abroad; almost all with doctoral degrees earned in the United States.

Education as a source of soft power for the United States was particularly potent in Korea because the US government provided educational assistance at times of grave turmoil and change in Korea. Following its liberation from Japan, Korea by necessity accepted aid and guidance in "Koreanizing" its educational system from its American military occupiers. For nearly forty years of Japanese rule, there had been a reordering of the political elites and thought leaders within Korea. Japanese colonial leaders had outlawed the hierarchical caste system that had determined a person's identity and social status. America's limited but crucial aid entered Korea at this juncture in time. During the military occupation, however, the US government considered Korea to be peripheral to its "perimeter of defense" against Communism.⁷ Then the Korean War erupted and the US reassessed Korea's significance in its Cold War policies and committed to the long-term viability of Korea as an independent nation. The US reprioritized its engagement in Korea and switched to large scale American endeavors to reconstruct Korea's higher education and economy. The rehabilitation of SNU became the first educational target. American and Korean planners focused on those departments at Seoul National University that would meet the subsistence needs of the Korean populace and rebuild Korea's basic physical infrastructure. With the first stage of SNU Project under way, they turned to methods of governance, mostly through schools of education and public administration. Then in the early 1960s, Korean President Park Chung Hee implemented a series of modernization plans that coincided with the US need for alliances and supports in its increasingly unpopular "clashes of armies and ideologies" in Southeast Asia.⁸ For Korea, American aid was foremost used to create a new order within its borders. "All education," historian Jonathan Zimmerman writes, "involves the transmission of values, whether educators acknowledge it or not."⁹ In the case of Korean

⁶ Gregg Brazinsky traces the large scale of American involvement in Korea's nation building as part of his analysis in explaining Korea's "distinctive pattern of political evolution." He acknowledges the importance of US assistance, but argues that Korean agency was the most important factor in Korea's dramatic transformation. I agree with his thesis that, "The ways that South Koreans adapted to American influence were ultimately as, if not more, important than anything the Americans did." Gregg Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 6.

⁷ John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 91. See also Stephen E. Ambrose and Douglas G. Brinkley, *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy since 1938* (NY: Penguin Books, 1997, revised edition).

⁸ Eric Foner's phrase "clashes of armies and ideologies" is found in the introduction he wrote for Naima Prevots' *Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

⁹ Jonathan Zimmerman, *Innocents Abroad: American Teachers in the American Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

higher education, American values were introduced as a part of its assistance in changing Korea's structure. Whether it was in establishing a new government following World War II, or creating and rehabilitating its infrastructure, or changing the direction of its economy, the US was well represented by US educated Koreans. In this way, the attractiveness of a US education was not only tied to a foreign nation, the United States, but also to a small but growing contingent of *local* elites in Korea. And it was in the interest of the elites to highlight the benefits and advances of an American education.

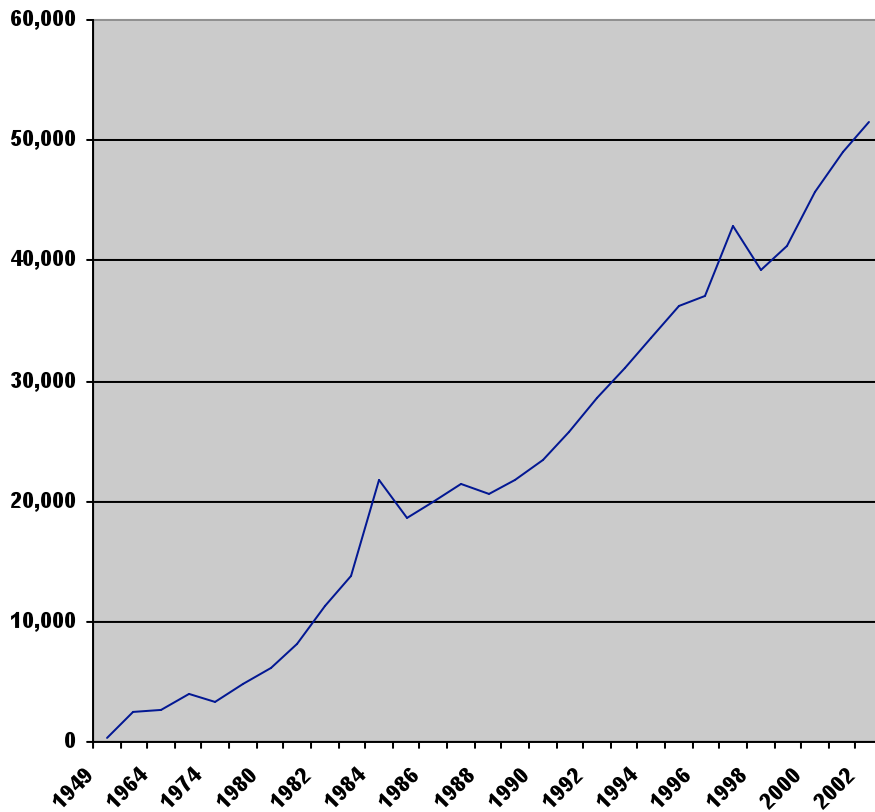
America's popularity has ebbed and flowed in Korea, and Americans occupy an ambiguous place in Korea's popular imagination. The terror tactics employed by rifle-toting soldiers and their heartfelt devotion to Korean orphans coexist in the Korean lore, for example. The English lingo spoken in and near military camptowns contrasts sharply with the English grammar taught in classrooms. Though not applicable in all cases, many of the dichotomous nature of these images could be simplified and categorized as being associated with hard or soft power. Joseph Nye, the pundit that coined this phrase, asserts the most basic trait of soft power to be its ability to attract which lead to acquiescence.¹⁰ In the case of Korea, American education holds a unique position as a source of soft power that remain relatively unaffected by the changing tides of Korean sentiments toward Americans. Moreover, the attractiveness of an American education runs parallel to the intense public criticism towards the Korean education system, and to its ability to meet the needs of Korean individuals and society. US education is a viable, if not the preferable, alternative. Since Korean independence, most information about educational opportunities and sources of funding were of and from the United States. They were the most well known, if not the only known choices. Moreover US educated entered the Korean political and educational stage during this time as foreign trained but *indigenous* leaders. The US and its academic institutions were thus secondary to the accomplishments of individual Koreans. Even while Korean discontent regarding American political and military involvement grew, Koreans tended to disassociate US education from US foreign policy. The relatively uninterrupted popularity of American education in Korea contributes to an ever increasing number of Korean international students to the United States every year.¹¹

¹⁰ Nye, *Soft Power*, 5.

¹¹ Overall Korean international student enrollment in American universities only dipped seven times between 1945 and 2010, and in all other years it rose. Source: Institute of International Education, *Open Doors*. Chart compiled using M. Thomson, REAC-EAP (November 2003), courtesy of Horace W. Underwood of the Fulbright Program Korea.

Number of
Students

Korean Students in the United States, 1949-2002



US soft power, at least in terms of higher education, is strong in Korea. Each individual who enters the US contributes and strengthens the image of the US as a place of personal solution. Study abroad is and was foremost a personal choice leading to greater range in physical, financial, and/or occupational mobility. In this way, study abroad was much more than an acquisition of knowledge or skills for individuals, or even the presupposed abilities attached to it – fluency in English and greater facility with American culture. Once in the United States, all international students deliberated on their option to remain in the United States or return to Korea. Their studies opened up a path to immigration and their choices perpetuated the flow of Korean immigration into the United States.

As much as the Cold War produced a “clash of armies and ideologies,” it also generated a flow of people engaged in cultural exchange. American involvement in Korean education is part of this larger Cold War story. Historian Eric Foner writes that as in previous wars, the American government waged “a concerted campaign to promote the ‘American way of life’ throughout the world.”¹² Central to the “selling of America,” Foner summarizes, was a certain celebration of American “freedom.” Many scholars have discussed in length the equating of consumer capitalism or market economy with American freedom.¹³ These Cold War stories also continue

¹² Found in Prevots, *Dance for Export*, 2.

¹³ Reinhold Wagnleitner, *Coca-colonization and the Cold War: the Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria after the Second World War* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 1994); Emily Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1982).

and overlap the topics debated by historians of empire. Gerald Gutek echoes the main threads followed by these scholars when he writes,

In the twenty-first century, Manifest Destiny is still at work. It takes the guise of a culture, economic, and sometimes educational attitude – that Americans have a mission to bring their ideas of politics (being democratic), economics (being productive and efficient), and education (being pragmatic and comprehensive) to the rest of the world.¹⁴

It has been quite some time since Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart “exposed” Donald Duck to be the power-crazed, money-obsessed American capitalist.¹⁵ In more recent works, Donald Duck has been replaced by Coca Cola, Nike, and Starbuck’s. Recent works have taken this field in new and exciting directions. In the last decade, scholars have renewed their interests in identifying the wide reach of America’s cultural influence or imposition, depending on the author. From American missionaries and volunteers in Jonathan Zimmerman’s *Innocents Abroad* to baseball in Robert Elias’ *The Empire Strikes Out*, scholars have provided additional perspective and a more complete picture of America’s influence abroad.¹⁶

There is a burgeoning literature on the Cold War that analyzes the consequences of American “empire building” not only to different regions of the world but also to the US. Mary Dudziak reminds the readers in her insightful book *Cold War Civil Right* that both the foreign and domestic press covered the American civil rights movements.¹⁷ Foreign nationals and their government representatives expressed their outrage against America’s violent, discriminatory practices, pointing to America’s professed mission for universal liberty and democracy to be hypocritical. Dudziak demonstrates that responses and reactions from outside the American border forced the leaders in Washington DC to take federal action. Battle for the civil rights for all Americans, she shows, was fought both at home and abroad. The interplay between US foreign and domestic policies is no where more evident than in the shape and character of American immigration.

This dissertation looked specifically at Korean international students as American immigrants. This work has shown that it was a part of the American Cold War policy to rehabilitate and establish Korea’s higher education with a core group of US-educated people. Both the US and Korean governments encouraged international education on a small scale that would strengthen its influence and nation state building respectively. However, the benefits and prestige attached to an American education in the Korean society strengthened a positive cultural representation of studying and living in the US that caused a growing number of Koreans to immigrate to the US. The American government’s use of foreign assistance as a diplomatic tool and the Korean government’s goal of building a modern nation-state provided the political and cultural encounters and accompanying opportunities that motivated students grasped. These international students were central to Korean American immigration. They were information brokers, the first links to chain migration, simply they were immigrants. This work has argued that the root cause of the changing racial and ethnic make-up of the American population in the

¹⁴ Gerald L. Gutek, *American Education in a Global Society: International and Comparative Perspectives* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 2006 (2nd ed.)), 47.

¹⁵ Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart, *Para Leer el Pato Donald* [How to Read Donald Duck] (Valparaiso: Ediciones Universitarias de Valparaiso, 1971).

¹⁶ Zimmerman, *Innocents Abroad*; Robert Elias, *The Empire Strikes Out: How Baseball Sold U.S. Foreign Policy and Promoted the American Way Abroad* (NY: The New Press, 2010).

¹⁷ Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

twentieth century rests in part on its actions abroad, and how the changes brought about by those actions created a “culture of migration” in foreign societies. No one government can effectively control immigration with legislation alone because a person’s intention regarding immigration reflects that individual’s experiences and expectations as culturally interpreted by the society he lives in. In the case of Korean international students, they will continue to immigrate to the US as long as the historical pattern of elevating and emulating the American way continues.

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