UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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Conditions of Containment: Mixed-Race Politics in Cold War South Korea, 1940s-1980s

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

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by

Laura Ha Reizman

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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by

Laura Ha Reizman

Doctor of Philosophy

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Professor Kyungwon Hong, Co-Chair

Professor Namhee Lee, Co-Chair

This dissertation examines the discursive construction and management of the *honhyŏla* (the "mixed-blood child"), or "mixed-race" Korean born during U.S. military occupation (1945-48), the transition to the First Republic of Korea (1948-60), the Korean War (1950-53), and the postwar decades that followed. Utilizing South Korea- and U.S.-based archives, I examine films, memoirs, and media accounts, as well as documents from government agencies and non-profit organizations from between the late 1940s and the 1980s. The disavowal resulting from the U.S. military empire's expansion into the Asia Pacific and the South Korean nationalist project have shaped the material and discursive processes that render mixed-race Koreans and Korean-Americans into gendered and racialized subjects of the Cold War. I argue that the concept of "mixed-race" is a *transnational* regime of racialization produced out of the contradictions of U.S. narratives of benevolence as they intersect with Korean nationalist investments in racial

purity. This work unpacks how *honhyŏl* or “mixed-blood” is a political construct that benefitted the development of South Korea as an ethnic nationalist state and the U.S. as a Cold War superpower. I foreground how assumptions of normative sexual relations and investments in heteropatriarchy are at once reinscribed and scrambled in the constitution of “mixed-race” as a discursive, bureaucratic, and ontological category. I emphasize how different modes of cultural production have generated knowledge about mixed-race Koreans, and narrate how the post-liberation era of USAMGIK (United States Army Military Government in Korea) and the ensuing Korean War produced political conditions of racial exclusion that denied mixed-race subjects citizenship and history. “Conditions of Containment” stresses the impact of ethnic nationalism, Cold War geopolitics, and cultural productions on the erasure and overrepresentation of the mixed-race figure and offers an alternative reading of subjecthood in Cold War South Korea and the United States.

The dissertation of Laura Ha Reizman is approved.

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2021

Dedicated to the memory of my mother, 하현자, and grandmother, 김성희

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INTRODUCTION

The story of "mixed-race" Koreans of the Cold War is at best a patchwork history. The Korean War, as the first highly publicized "hot" war of the Cold War, resulted not only in the approximately three million deaths of Korean civilians but also in the birth of a new population whose claim to citizenship was hindered by South Korean ethnic nationalism and the discriminatory policies of paternal recognition that also made claiming U.S. citizenship difficult to impossible.[1] This legacy resulted in the elision of mixed-race Koreans from Asian American history, which has often centered the immigrant experience *in* America, and South Korean history, which has focused on perpetuating the concept of the "pure" bloodline.

This project contradicts the rather fragmented contemporary Korean rhetoric of a new multicultural Korea beginning in the post-authoritarian era of the 1990s and on. That is, while what is understood as multiculturalism or multicultural policies in Korea is associated with the marriages of aging Korean male agricultural workers and other blue collar laborers to female marriage migrants from Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, or ethnic Koreans in China, South Korea's longer "multicultural" history was ignored until 2006, when Hines Ward, a mixed Black Korean American football player, was invited to return to Korea as a special guest, thereby bringing attention to the history of "mixed-blood" Koreans of the post Korean War era.[2] Now, the topic of mixed-race Koreans is often used as a time marker for a longer trajectory of

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[1] Births of mixed-race Koreans due to U.S. military presence began before the Korean War but the significant rise (from tens to hundreds to thousands) in this demographic did not happen until wartime and especially thereafter.

[2] While there were a number of news articles around this issue in the mid 2000s, present day media discussions have shifted from grappling with the concept of a changing Korean society to managing its new population. Moreover, English language news sources contribute to this misconception by referencing Korea as a racially homogenous nation state. Note: I capitalize the word, "Black," to center the political genealogy of the word; however, within the context of South Korea, the term "mixed-race" is the racial marker that supersedes "white" or "Black."

“multiculturalism” and “multicultural” people in Korea, and referenced as a disappeared people, a reference that is both apt and deeply problematic. Apt in that there is no critical mass of mixed-race Koreans in Korea that can rally for political change, and problematic in that it demonstrates an amnesia regarding South Korea’s responsibility in their disappearance, while also reflecting a lack of recognition for those who remained.

Such beliefs negate an earlier history documenting the births of thousands of so-called “G.I.” or “U.N.” babies between the late 1940s-1970s, whose mixed-race and dual national lineage perplexed lawmakers on both sides of the Pacific. As children and youths, mixed-race Koreans had little political agency to effect change within and without the borders of South Korea. Stateless, mixed-race Koreans’ liminal legal and social status within Korea and the US resulted in their excision from national narratives. Through an examination of the material circumstances and cultural representations of mixed-race Koreans who remained in Korea, “Conditions of Containment”— in reference to the material and discursive conditions of the Cold War both in the restructuring of postwar South Korean society and in the entrenchment of anti-communist sentiments—offers a reassessment of Cold War geopolitics as they played out in the lives of a marginalized population.

The U.S. occupation period (1945-1948) and the Korean War period (1950-1953) were violent transitional years that reckoned with national independence after nearly thirty years of Japanese colonialism. Concepts of race and racial purity were deeply informed by the experience of being colonized by Japan wherein racial hierarchies relegated the *yamato* race as superior. The anti-colonial intellectual movements during the colonial era, which grappled with the concept of the Korean *minjok* (ethnic nation, people) as descendants of *Tan’gun*, the mythical progenitor of

the Korean people, defined Korea as a nation of its own comprised of a "pure" Korean race.[3] These early intellectual movements helped delineate Korean citizenship for both Koreas as a matter of blood purity. Therefore, the question of citizenship, and thereby of legitimacy, requires an examination of the legal and social processes that developed in the nascent Republic of Korea.

The promulgation of South Korea's 1948 Korean Nationality Act solidified the exclusionary nature of Korean citizenship, which required nationality to be based on paternal lineage. Patrilineage was determined by *hojuje,* the family head system, a remnant of Japanese colonial practices that was then preserved by the American Military Government as an easy way to classify and maintain order. It privileged the head of household as male and Korean. In instituting this law, the majority of lawmakers advocated for the "purity" of bloodline as a primary factor in establishing nationality, thereby promoting *jus sanguinis* as the requirement for citizenship. As mentioned earlier, this fixation on bloodline was in large part due to the anticolonial discourse that had been circulating for several decades (and even prior to formal annexation) against the Japanese colonial government in which *minjok,* a term used by Korean nationalists to define a distinct Korean nation, was rooted in racial ideology.

Furthermore, the Korean Civil Act of 1957, otherwise known as the family law, played an integral part in legitimizing the patrilineal family as the proper Korean family. The law, which had initially been drafted in 1948, identified males as heads of households. The *hojŏk,* the family register record, played an integral role in this equation in not only legitimizing one's citizenship, but in revealing his or her family pedigree ergo social status. The daughter was under her father or brother's *hojŏk* only until she was married, at which point her name would be erased and transferred to her husband's. Women were unable to be the head of their household. The

[3] See Henry Em's *The Great Enterprise: Sovereignty and Historiography in Modern Korea* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).

importance of the family register system cannot be stressed enough. As Bongsoo Park writes in her illuminating dissertation, "Intimate Encounters, Racial Frontiers," which discusses the legal and social consequences of mixed-race individuals in the 1950s-1960s, "The Korean family register counts a household as a unit of society whereas the social security system in the United States counts an individual as a unit of society."[4] Korean personhood was very much associated with being a legitimate member of the patrilineal family and thus of society. Without a *hojŏk,* it was legally impossible to gain South Korean citizenship. In this scenario, a child born in wedlock is given the father's surname and once registered in his *hojŏk* becomes a legitimate member of the South Korean nation state. For a child born out of wedlock, the biological father still possessed the discretion to register the child under his *hojŏk.* If the biological father did not acknowledge the child, the mother could register the child under her family's *hojŏk,* that is, typically under her father's or brother's. Legally, the child would be considered a sibling or niece/nephew to the mother.

For mixed-race individuals, this method was one of the only avenues to gain personhood unless the mother married a Korean man willing to place the child under his *hojŏk.* Yet, more often than not, family heads may refuse to place the child on the *hojŏk* due to the stigma attached to a child of out-of-wedlock sexual relations, especially when the father was not Korean. What becomes apparent in this thorny picture of Korean family law and citizenship is the deeply gendered nature of national belonging. Having a Korean mother was not enough to legitimize one's Koreanness legally or socially. As might be expected, abandonment of mixed-race children was common during these early decades of South Korea. If the foreign father refused to recognize his child, the reality for mothers of mixed-race Korean children—of utter social

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[4] Bongsoo Park, "Intimate Encounters, Racial Frontiers: Stateless GI Babies in South Korea and the United States, 1953-1965" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 2010), 55.

contempt from society and ostracization by her own family—was, in essence, poverty and social death.[5] Under these conditions, mixed-race individuals faced similar fates and the most prudent solution became international adoption.

Non-agnatic adoption had never been a culturally common practice in Korea and was, in fact, perceived with suspicion and distaste as it recalled Japanese colonial practices of adopting Korean children in order to "dilute" bloodlines. But by the 1950s, international adoption became a fix-all solution for the Syngman Rhee government to resolve the quandary of mixed-race individuals who posed a contradiction for the Republic of Korea's constitutional ideology of racial and ethnic homogeneity. For the international community, especially Americans, Cold War rhetoric and humanitarianism in the form of international adoption was a familiar trope after World War II, when European orphans were shipped to England and the United States, or when Hiroshima child victims were "morally" adopted by American families, that is, have a kind of fiduciary pen pal relationship wherein the child continues to reside in Japan.[6]

Consequently, between the early 1950s to the early-mid 1960s, approximately 4,000 to 6,000 mixed-race Korean children were sent for adoption to the United States.[7] These early adoptions began a seven decades long international adoption enterprise between South Korea,

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[5] I draw this term from Orlando Patterson's work on chattel slavery in which he uses the concept to explain the ontological condition of the Black slave as a "social nonperson," natally alienated from her kin and from any claim to her birth right and ancestors. Her social existence is based purely on her relationship to her master. I find this term productive and applicable to postwar mixed-race subjects because their abandonment by one or both parents and more importantly the state, produced a similar condition of natal alienation and social death that legally and socially identified them as rootless outsiders and as "genealogical isolates." Orlando Patterson. *Slavery and Social Death* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 5.

[6] This is also due to the immigration restriction placed on Asians at the time. For further information, see Laura Briggs' *Somebody's Children: The Politics of Transracial and Transnational Adoption* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

[7] See Tobias Hübinette, "Comforting an Orphaned Nation: Representations of International Adoption and Adopted Koreans in Korean Popular Culture" (Ph.D. diss., Stockholm University, 2005), and Park 2010 for further information.

the U.S. and Europe that continues to this day. What is significant and often unacknowledged is that Korean international adoption initially began as an effort to eliminate mixed-race Koreans.[8] The legacies of colonialism, war, poverty, Cold War ideologies and their ensuing military occupations all played a part in what resulted in the gendered and racialized conditions of national belonging that barred those deemed impure from national participation.

Without discounting the affective, political, and economic consequences of international adoption, certainly not all mixed-race individuals were expatriated through this method; and those who remained—the subjects of this dissertation—faced social and economic difficulties that further stigmatized them as a problem class.[9] The realities for mixed-race Koreans have historically been fairly grim in that the constant harassment children received in school often led many to drop out, effectively guaranteeing a future of menial work, if any. Even those who excelled in school were discriminated against from entering higher education and/or white-collar work. Considered to possess a kind of handicap, mixed-race males were typically denied the required military service, which thereby denied them equal access to work and citizen rights as most jobs required evidence of military service. Consequently, employment involved manual

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[8] Not until the 1990s was South Korea surpassed by China as the number one sending nation of adoptees.

[9] According to Mary Lee, the Korean government estimated approximately 20,000-60,000 were born since the Korean War. As will be revealed in later chapters, these estimates fluctuate because accurate records were not kept unless they involved overseas adoption and even those were problematic with regards to family information, birth date, and name. Furthermore, those recorded were classified under the "disabled" category, along with other children whose physical and/or mental condition was deemed degenerate, such as having a harelip, heart disease, or being premature. Mary Lee, "Mixed-Race Peoples in the Korean National Imaginary and Family," *Korean Studies,* Vol. 32 (2008): 60. Additionally and somewhat contrary to this report, Eunjung Kim discusses how the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs began a statistical report in 1954 that categorized and counted those "considered to need the state's protection and surveillance." This included "leprosy patients, mixed-blood children, widows, drug addicts, patients with infectious diseases, and prostitutes," and clearly went beyond the documentation of adoptees. By 1961, mixed-race children were also included under the handicap category. Kim astutely notes that, "Although there was a distinction made among physical, mental, and social conditions, disability in general was not understood as solely an individual body's functional difference but rather as *connected to the presence of external prejudice and stigma related to differentness*" (my emphasis). As such, those whose phenotypical features appeared different, such as mixed-race individuals, were thereby labeled as disabled. Eunjung Kim, "Minority Politics in Korea" in *Intersectionality and Beyond: Law, Power, and the Politics of Location*, eds. Emily Grabham, Davina Cooper, Jane Krishnadas, Didi Herman (New York: Routledge-Cavendish, 2008), 236.

labor in construction, factories, restaurants, and work in military camp towns—all financially insecure and physically demanding labor.

The legal complications and social implications surrounding the *hojŏk* delimited mixed-race Koreans from access to rights afforded Korean citizens that included education, military enlistment, and gainful employment. Documentation or lack of documentation informed one's legibility in both legal and social spheres and removal via international adoption being the only "solution," mixed-race Koreans who remained continued to live in legal and social limbo. The illegality of their lives was further compounded by a day-to-day contempt by their community and even extended family. Ostracism of mixed-race Koreans was not merely due to their having a non-Korean parent but to their material and symbolic connection to U.S. military prostitution. In other words, mixed-race Koreans were stigmatized because more often than not, their mothers were assumed to be "prostitutes" for the U.S. military; and, this relationship to prostitution is one of the reasons why mixed-race children born post-1945 were perceived as polluted. Social stigma prevented the recognition that many poor, dispossessed Korean women were compelled into sex work to survive or support their families, and that they were used in the Cold War against communism. Their exploitation—including those who were previously enslaved as comfort women for the Japanese military—was viewed by the South Korean government as a necessary evil in order to secure and maintain U.S. military partnership against North Korea. The military alliance, fueled by anti-communism, contributed to the gendered relationship between South Korea and the U.S. This history, viewed as shameful, has been ignored or if acknowledged, has been viewed as external to national history.

This project aims to reclaim this past and put into question Korean national shame around mixed-race subjects and the concept of legitimacy as it has been constructed in legal, social, and

national terms. The disavowal resulting from the U.S. military empire's expansion into the Asia Pacific and the South Korean nationalist project have shaped the material and discursive processes that render mixed-race Koreans/Korean Americans into gendered and racialized subjects of the Cold War. I argue that the concept of "mixed-race" is a *transnational* regime of racialization produced out of the contradictions of U.S. narratives of benevolence as they intersect with Korean nationalist investments in racial purity. This work addresses questions of citizenship, race, gender, and nation in postwar South Korea by highlighting this subaltern Cold War history that has affected the lives of hundreds of thousands in South Korea and in the United States. As an interdisciplinary project that draws from literary studies, visual & film studies, history, and critical race studies, "Conditions of Containment" makes clear the transnational connections between Korea and the U.S. beginning with the post WWII period to the late 1980s. In this way, this work is an intervention in current modes of knowledge production both in the U.S. and in South Korea in that it will add to and complicate the history of Asian immigration, the Cold War, and American racial politics typically taught and understood in black and white terms—either as mono-racial group history or as mono-ideological (communism vs. democracy) history; at the same time, it also intervenes in South Korean ethnic nationalist history writing.

Literature Review

My interdisciplinary approach is in conversation with Korean studies works such as Andre Schmid's now classic *Korea between Empires 1895-1919*, and Gi-Wook Shin's *Ethnic Nationalism in Korea,* and Henry Em's *The Great Enterprise,* three works that examine the development of Korean nationalist thought in the twentieth century. These writings emphasize the importance of the concept of *minjok,* a modern term borrowed from the Japanese meaning "ethnic nation," during the turn of the century when Korean subjects of colonial Japan began

using it to distinguish themselves from their colonizers. *Minjok* marked the discursive transition from pre-modern to modern notions of self and community and helped develop the vocabulary for what we now understand as ethnic nationalism and patriotism in Korea.

While these works challenge the essentialist narratives of Korean nationalist scholarship, their focus on Korean intellectual and nationalist history do not address miscegenation, gender, or race as it were but instead delimit our focus to a historiographical and/or macro-sociological understanding of ethnic nationalism as part of a larger social movement. For instance, Schmid's historical analysis of colonial period newspapers argues that the development of Korean nationalism was deeply informed by conditions of global capitalist modernity, while Em highlights sovereignty as a key aspect of Korea's position as a colony within a new world system of nation states. Shin's genealogy of ethnic nationalism illustrates how the nation state model came to override other forms of community through "contentious politics." These works elaborate on how *minjok* is a decidedly modern invention. My interest in *minjok* is its *discursive relation* to the rising mixed-race population during the Cold War era. In other words, as a nation rooted in the concept of *danil minjok* (single race nation), *honhyŏl* (mixed-blood) stand in direct contradiction to this framework.[10] Especially in my fourth chapter, I emphasize the significance of terminology and language as discursive methods of inclusion and exclusion, examining how epithets like *t'wigi* function to construct the subject against the normative Korean subject.

Furthermore, my project is also deeply informed by research on U.S. militarism in Korea such as Katherine H.S. Moon's *Sex among Allies,* Ji Yeon Yuh's *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown,* and Grace Cho's *Haunting the Korean Diaspora,* all of which examine how sexual contact between American soldiers and Korean women operate within the larger politicized

[10] *Honhyŏl* is the Korean term for mixed-blood: *hon*-mix *hyŏl*-blood and is typically used to refer to mixed-race Koreans. While it is not a derogatory word, it is controversial, as indicated by its etymology.

context of U.S./Korea relations. In contrast to the works described earlier, this scholarship is centered around the material conditions of war and post occupation, highlighting the gendered inequities from the intimate to the national. Additionally, Jin-Kyung Lee's *Service Economies* work on necropolitical labor, which she explains as a kind of disposable labor involving soldiering, prostitution, and migrant work, reveals how the exceptionality of South Korea as an industrial miracle accords with its relationship with the U.S. That is, the "miracle" of the Han River of rapid postwar economic success could not have come about without its financial and military reliance on the U.S., which employed South Korea as one of its primary bases in the Asia Pacific for its own imperial expansion. These works, along with transpacific scholars such as Sue-Je Lee Gage, Michael Cullen Green, Setsu Shigematsu and others, are invaluable in that they connect the ways in which war, militarization, gender, and race operate in intimate settings even as they inform and are informed by nationalist and Cold War ideology.[11]

While this scholarship highlights the stigmatized relations and the impact of U.S. military bases in Asia, I am interested in attending to the productive results of these connections, namely the unacknowledged history of mixed-race Koreans. By doing so, I bring attention to the fact that mixed-raceness in Asia further complicates the question of nation and belonging both reminiscent of yet divergent from the "problem" of métis children in 19th century Indies. That is, mixed-race Koreans destabilize racial and class hierarchies but also put into question subjecthood and citizenship in an era when one's legal connection to a nation state means the difference between citizenship rights or statelessness.

The burgeoning topic of Korean transnational adoption also intersects with my work.

[11] Including, Sue-Je Lee Gage's "The Amerasian Problem: Blood, Duty, and Race" (2007); Michael Cullen Green's *Black Yanks in the Pacific* (2010); Setsu Shigematsu and Keith Camacho's edited collection, *Militarized Currents* (2010); Sarah Kovner's *Occupying Power* (2012); Cynthia Enloe's *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases* (2014).

Tobias Hubinette's and Eleana Kim's respective works commence this relatively new field, followed by Soojin Pate's *From Orphan to Adoptee* and Arissa Oh's *To Save the Children of Korea.*[12] Pate's and Oh's respective works focus on the Cold War origins of international adoption that examine the deployment of humanitarianism to help expand U.S. empire and also spotlight the international adoption industry that rose from this history. Kim's *Adopted Territory* is the first English language publication that mentions how transnational adoption began as a method by which the nascent South Korean government could rid itself of the rising social welfare problem of orphaned mixed-race children. By the 1960s, the dearth of mixed-race children had opened up the adoption circuit for "full-blooded" Korean children to be adopted overseas. This little-known link between mixed-race Koreans and the origins of transnational adoption illustrates the impact of government policies on its postwar demography.

Moreover, Cold War ideological discourse between North and South Korea in which mixed-race Koreans were portrayed as a symbol of South Korea's weakness against foreign powers, hastened their expulsion from their land of birth. As such, I expand on this aspect of transnational adoption history in Korea by looking into the contexts under which mixed-race Koreans were viewed as social burdens and racial outcasts on one hand, while on the other hand were viewed as humanitarian rescue projects by Americans. My contribution here is in highlighting the connections between transnational adoption and mixed-race politics in postwar Korea. Rather than glossing over the issue of mixed-race Korean children as the impetus for Korean transnational adoption, I centralize this issue to point to how the heightened production of ethnic nationalism created a number of postwar subaltern subjectivities that imbricate one

[12] Marc C. Jerng's *Claiming Others: Transracial Adoption and National Belonging* and Laura Brigg's *Somebody's Children: The Politics of Transnational and Transracial Adoption*, while not specifically about Korean transnational adoption, talk about the broader racial and political implications of transnational adoption, which I also find productive.

another.

I am also in conversation with the field of postcolonial studies, especially with Gayatri Spivak's question on the subaltern. I draw on the notion of the subaltern to think through the politics of identity and how the "epistemic violence" of othering works to construct a particular historical narrative that requires unitary, decipherable subjects. Since the small number of Korean-language works on mixed-race Koreans are produced by non-mixed-race Koreans, such as novels or short stories between 1960s-90s written by Korean writers, or as Korean anthropological or historical examinations on the contemporary "multicultural" issue, part of my aim here is to reconsider the unspeakability—of being overrepresented and being spoken for—of the subaltern subject by examining self-narratives written by mixed-race Koreans during the Cold War.[13]

In addition, while Korean film studies has been a popular field of research in the U.S. beginning in the mid-2000s, research has often revolved around genre, director, or global circulation studies.[14] However, Yu Chi-na's edited collection, *Understanding Sexuality in Korean Films,* looks at representations of sexuality and the female body in modern Korea in such well-known films like *Youngja's Heydey, Madame Aema, Deep Blue Night,* and others. While the writers in this collection focus on class and gender issues, I hope to contribute to this scholarship by investigating how race and gender operate in films of the 1960s-80s that depict camptown sex

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[13] Novels or short stories such as Nam Chŏng-hyŏn's "Punji" (1965); Pok Kŏ-il's *Camp Seneca ŭi kichich'on* (1994); Chŏn Sang-kuk's *Chippagqi tungchi ŭi ppŏkkuki* (1989); Ahn Jung-hyo's *Silver Stallion* (1990). Scholarship such as Pak Kyŏng-t'ae's *Sosuja wa Han'guk Sahoe: Iju nodongja, Hwagyo, Honhyŏrin* (2008); Chŏn Kyŏng-su et.al's *Honhyŏresŏ tamunhwaro* (2008); Chŏng Pyŏng-ho and Song To-yŏng's *Han'guk ŭi tamunhwa konggan* (2011); and Yi Ch'an-uk et.al's *Han'guk sahoe wa tamunhwa* (2014). Please note that all Korean names are written with surname first in order to adhere to Korean convention, unless the person in question has published in English or commonly writes their romanized Korean name in the English order.

[14] Such as Hyangjin Lee's *Contemporary Korean Cinema* (2001); Eungjun Min, et.al's *Korean Film: History, Resistance, and Democratic Imagination* (2003); Mee Hyun Kim's *Korean Cinema from Origins to Renaissance* (2007). Yu Chi-na's edited collection is romanized as *Han'guk yŏnghwa seksuŏllit'irŭl mannada* (2004).

workers, mixed-race children, and the U.S. military. Most significantly, I look at these intersections by paying attention to how ethnic nationalism is reproduced or challenged in the discursive terrain of cinema through the portrayal of mixed-race subjects and military sex workers.

I also draw on works with a comparative perspective on colonial and postcolonial Asia Pacific such as Takashi Fujitani's *Race for Empire,* in which he argues that the U.S. and Japanese war regimes, respectively, similarly managed their despised populations in order to discredit their enemies and win the war. Likewise, Lisa Yoneyama's *Hiroshima Traces,* which I will discuss in more detail later, speaks to the politics of memory in postwar Japan, examining how different political actors participate in constructing historical narratives. I also employ Theodore Hughes' *Literature and Film in Cold War South Korea,* which argues for a reassessment of the South Korean cultural field by dehistoricizing a nationalist literary canon that has been informed by the legacy of Japanese colonialism, the U.S. occupation, and the Korean War. I believe these comparative works help expand our understanding of what might be possible in writing or rewriting a narrative of a postcolonial postwar condition and in unearthing narratives that have been subsumed under nationalist ones.

Within the small number of existing critical scholarship on mixed-race Asians of war and militarism, I am in conversation with Annmaria Shimabuku's work *Alegal,* in which she incisively examines U.S. military and Okinawan sexual encounters and Okinawa's colonial relationship to Japan through a biopolitical lens. Her work is concerned with what she writes as, "a form of life that exists in a condition of unintelligibility to the biopolitical state," especially as it relates to mixed-race Okinawan subjects.[15] Mitzi Uehara Carter's work on Black Okinawans,

[15] Annmaria Shimabuku, *Alegal* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019), 12.

language, and Okinawa's militarized space, similarly addresses unintelligibility but through critical ethnography and self-ethnography. Yuri Doolan's work on camptowns, mixed-race Korean adoptees, and Korean wives of U.S. military personnel, offer much needed historical context that expand on U.S. militarism in Korea and its afterlives.

Finally, I broadly engage with more recent works that address the legacies of the Korean War such as Crystal Baik's *Reencounters: On the Korean War and Diasporic Memory Critique,* which examines the manifestations of war as experienced by contemporary multigenerational Korean and Korean diasporic subjects; Monica Kim's *The Interrogation Rooms of the Korean War,* which explores the relationship between warfare and humanity through the figure of the POW and the "intimate" spaces of the interrogation rooms; Heonik Kwon's *After the Korean War: An Intimate History,* which argues that kinship, as both a political and public concept, was a central factor in the politics of decolonization and the Cold War; and Su-kyoung Kim's *Korea's Grievous War*, which centers the role of grief and its suppression for victims of anti-communist violence. These works help expand on the diversity of wartime and postwar experiences that grapple with the material and psychic inheritances of the Korean War.

These select writings and fields engage with my project from a historical, political, and cultural perspective, beginning with the question of race and nation in the colonial context, to legal measures and humanitarian gestures within the Cold War context, to an analysis of literary and filmic representations of mixed-race Koreans, and finally, to an examination of subject-making through self-narratives under the lens of critical race theory. I build on these published works to develop a cohesive understanding of mixed-race Korean history and racial politics in Korea during the Cold War era.

Theoretical Framework

One of the major themes that runs throughout this work is the politics of knowledge production. What kind of knowledge is being produced? For what purpose? By whom? Of whom? Knowledge production requires conscious or unconscious choices on representation. Defining representation in the simplest of terms, Stuart Hall writes, "… representation is the production of meaning through language."[16] It is in this "production of meaning through language" that narratives of mixed-race Koreans circulate and are made concrete. The very concept of "mixed-blood" takes form and political relevance in its articulation. The trope of the tragic "mixed-blood" Korean center the individual as a figure that is inherently trapped between two worlds that are otherwise racially and culturally segregated. By viewing mixed-race Koreans in this manner, we do not easily see the historical and systemic forces that organize, marginalize, and dispossess. The power of language in describing, narrating, and situating people, places, and things is one of the primary concerns in my genealogy of mixed-race Koreans of the Cold War era.

Edward Said's *Orientalism,* now over four decades old, still remains relevant in this work. In unpacking the Middle East's representation in European and British works of literature, art, and politics, Said's incisive critique of the "Orient" as a European invention that "… has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience," similarly (though not exactly) mirrors my own critique of the discursive construction of "mixed-blood" Koreans as contrasting that of the "pure-blood" Korean. Much like how the Orient was

[16] Stuart Hall, "Making meaning, representing things," in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices,* ed. Stuart Hall (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997), 16.

"*made* Oriental," I argue that those born during and after the Korean War, of Korean mothers and (most often) American servicemen fathers were "*made* mixed-blood."[17] Through films, other visual works, memoirs, letters, newspaper and magazine articles, and government documents, this project examines how these various forms of cultural, legal, and political works produce knowledge about mixed-race Koreans while also exploring the ways in which state and non-state actors participated in the management of this marginalized population.

Moreover, the politics of knowledge production are also intertwined with the politics of compassion. That is, the ways in which mixed-race Koreans were narrated by American missionaries and the Korean writing public not only helped construct the trope of tragedy but furthered efforts towards immigration through international adoption or in building programs to assist those who remained in-country. This process relied heavily on the image of children as innocent victims and as tabula rasa especially within the Cold War logic of saving the vulnerable from communism. As Liisa Malkki writes, "The moralized, sentimentalized figure of children as sufferers works in much the same manner as does the figure of suffering animals. Both do affective cultural work as expressive moral subjects (but not as rational, knowing subjects)."[18] The mixed-race Korean child was simultaneously depoliticized as a moral subject and politicized as an anti-communist subject in order to rationalize humanitarian intervention. Suffering becomes part of the discursive characteristic of mixed-race Koreans of this era, and it is through what Amit Rai writes on the practice of sympathy as, "… a specific form of sociality that facilitated the elaboration of various forms of power-relations," that we see how American

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[17] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 1-6.

[18] Liisa Malkki, "Children, Humanity, and the Infantilization of Peace," in *In the Name of Humanity: The Government of Threat and Care*, eds. Ilana Feldman and Miriam Ticktin (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 67.

missionaries, Korean state and non-state agents, the Korean writing public, and the U.S. military intersect in the depiction, assessment, and management of mixed-race Koreans of the postwar era. While the theme of representation runs throughout each chapter, my engagement with the politics of compassion is especially predominant in chapters one and two where I examine *how* the Korean writing public discuss mixed-race Korean children and youths, and analyze the correspondences and writings by American missionaries and state agents whose descriptions were key components in order to rationalize humanitarian intervention and "save" mixed-race children from materially and morally destitute lives.

In addition, with the Korean War as a ghostly backdrop that continues to permeate and affect several generations of diasporic and peninsular Koreans, Avery Gordon's use of haunting is particularly helpful in articulating the conditions of being mixed-race in postwar Korea. The concept of ghosts and hauntings help negotiate and make meaning out of a modernity that has disavowed all but a positivist understanding of social life. Gordon asks, "How do we reckon with what modern history has rendered ghostly? How do we develop a critical language to describe and analyze the affective, historical, and mnemonic structures of such hauntings?"[19] Likewise, how are the remainders of the Korean War manifested in the mixed-race subject? And how might we understand race itself as one such mediated form of haunting? History as a form of contentious politics, "as always a site of struggle and contradiction between the living and the ghostly, a struggle whose resolution has to remain partial to the living, even when the living can only partially grasp the source of the ghost's power."[20] is marred by its specters. In the case of South Korea, they come in the form of comfort women, camptown sex workers, mixed-race

[19] Avery F. Gordon. *Ghostly Matters* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 18.

[20] Ibid, 184.

subjects, returning adoptees, diasporic Korean expats, retiring Korean emigrants, "multicultural" families, and migrant workers—peripheral subjects that embody the material traces of Korea's postcolonial and postwar condition. By breaking their silence and demanding inclusion or by the simple act of returning, these subjects trouble the concept of Korean identity as something knowable, illustrating how law and culture help reproduce racialized gendered relations in the development of nationalism and in navigating international politics.

Using the Korean diaspora in the U.S. to examine the legacies of the Korean War, Grace Cho's *Haunting the Korean Diaspora* focuses on the figure of the *yanggongju* to address the repression and silence surrounding the role of military sex workers within Korean and Korean diasporic history, "This text, therefore, is an unraveling of the effects of trauma—of the way in which the psychic figure of the *yanggongju* has been constituted by trauma and, through her very erasure, has also permeated the unconscious of the Korean diaspora."[21] Cho's methodology of reading for silence helps reveal how utterances that are dismissed as inadequate forms of knowledge such as schizophrenic babble, superstitions that pinpoint otherworldly occurrences such as *honbul* (ghost flames) and the like actually intervene in Korean and U.S. nationalist discourses that construct the *yanggongju* or the military bride as a figure of shame. My focus on multiracial Korean subjectivity directs our attention to the next generation with which I consider how transgenerational haunting, shame, and erasure are manifested in the figure of the mixed-race Korean, which is further complicated by her uncertain postwar juridical and social status. In this reiteration, the connection to the *yanggongju,* which I explore in chapter three*,* is present through a mixed-race Korean subjectivity as a kind of spectral return.

Like the tragic mulatta figure in 19th and 20th century American literature, mixed-race

[21] Grace M. Cho. *Haunting the Korean Diaspora* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 17.

Korean subjects have typically been portrayed in cultural productions and in news media as tragic, fatalistic characters whose ultimate demise results in their untimely death or if "lucky," emigration to America where they presumably live lives free of discrimination. Even more recent portrayals of mixed-race subjects stick to this trope of social and financial deprivation.[22] Consequently, I pose the question of recuperating the subaltern mixed-race subject through the autobiography. With mixed-race Koreans being spoken for by humanitarians, government officials, scientists, and journalists, the autobiography offers space to speak to one's own lived experience. The writers I analyze grapple with expressing the racial trauma they have endured growing up as mixed-race subjects in postwar South Korea. In her discussion of trauma and testimony, Leigh Gilmore writes, "Language is asserted as that which can realize trauma even as it is theorized as that which fails in the face of trauma."[23] My focus here is not so much on the conscious choice of relating trauma as trauma like the authors of Gilmore's work, but in coming to terms with trauma through language that is used to harm the subject.

In this effort, I turn to Judith Butler's *Excitable Speech* to rethink how the interpellation of the subject through language helps make legible a particular kind of subject, "Language sustains the body … by being interpellated within the terms of language that a certain social existence of the body first becomes possible. To understand this, one must imagine an impossible scene, that of a body that has not yet been given social definition, a body that is … not accessible to us, that nevertheless becomes accessible on the occasion of an address, a call, an interpellation that does

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[22] An episode titled, "Kkumkkunŭn hŭkchinju" [The Dreams of Black Pearl] on Channel 208 in Seoul, on 12.01.2010 portrays the story of a 22-year-old half Black woman named Estelle living in the countryside who dreams of breaking into the Korean pop music industry.

[23] Leigh Gilmore, *The Limits of Autobiography: Trauma and Testimony* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 7.

not ‘discover’ this body, but constitutes it fundamentally.”[24] As such, it is by calling one *honhyŏl,* literally “mixed-blood,” that a person becomes *honhyŏl.* Language then, defines a body and makes the subject. Moreover, “One ‘exists’ not only by virtue of being recognized, but, in a prior sense, by being *recognizable*.”[25] What or who is recognizable within our modern political structure is formed by language, which constructs our epistemic relationality of being. Language has the potential for great violence but also possesses the possibility of redemption depending on its interpellative function. In the case of postwar Korean mixed-race subjects, a close reading of terminologies used to describe and categorize within legal texts, fiction, memoir, film and media works can help unpack their varied meanings.

Finally, I also draw upon what might be termed transpacific or empire studies that look critically at the Cold War as an epistemological formation. In *The Other Cold War,* Heonik Kwon disrupts the idea that the Cold War was a war only between two superpowers. Instead, the “long peace” the West experienced was complemented by the hot wars that exploded onto the postcolonial terrains of such places like Vietnam and Korea. Kwon brings our attention to how the effects of the Cold War linger on from an ideological level down to an individual’s corporeality, echoing Gordon’s and Cho’s respective works on haunting, “Just as the decomposition of a dead body is considered across cultures a critical and perilous time when the physical death of a person coexists with the symbolic vitality of the person’s animus, the ‘decomposition’ of the cold war is the unsettling situation in which the lived reality is not really free from the immediate past and has not reintegrated the past into the time present as a past history—that is, it has a kind of spectral existence.”[26] Therefore, despite the fact that the Cold

[24] Judith Butler. *Excitable Speech* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 5.
[25] Ibid.

[26] Heonik Kwon. *The Other Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 33.

War had no clear end, the overrepresentation of its dissolution produces an epistemological function of disavowal, pushing alternative knowledges and experiences into the realm of the spectral.

Mixed-race Koreans of the Cold War existed in this liminal space in which they were made to make no sense within the larger epistemology of South Korean narratives of progress and purity. Instead, they were fit into American narratives of rescue while American culpability was concurrently disavowed. The question of official and unofficial memories comes into play. In her work on narratives of victimization in post WWII Japan, Lisa Yoneyama speaks to how memory becomes a contentious site in which various political actors attempt to legitimate certain narratives over others, "the imagined opposition between History and Memory seems to rest on and contribute to a false dichotomy … the two views reveal not so much that there is a stable distinction between the terms but rather that the production of knowledge about the past, whether in the form of History or Memory, is always enmeshed in the exercise of power and is always accompanied by elements of repression."[27] Similarly, in her work on memory and Vietnamese American subjectivity, Thu-Huong Nguyên-Vo contends that the discursive memories of victors, progressives, empire builders, and survivors are "acts of anamnesis against historical and on-going erasure of Vietnamese American distinct presence by forced forgetting."[28] Likewise, I seek to unsettle South Korea's own construction of postcolonial and postwar memory that, in its efforts to manufacture a fixed, stable identity, elides voices of dissent through acts of anamnesis that recall a racially pure nation state.

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[27] Lisa Yoneyama. *Hiroshima Traces* (Berkeley: UC Press, 1999), 27.

[28] Thu-Huong Nguyên-Vo. "Forking Paths: How Shall We Mourn the Dead?" (*Amerasia Journal 31:2* 2005), 169.

Employing these sets of disparate yet connected theoretical frameworks: from representation, the politics of compassion, haunting, subalternity, naming/interpellation, memory, and empire, I unpack how the racial legacies of the Cold War helped produce and reproduce nationalist epistemologies of erasure and disavowal that pushed Korean mixed-race subjects into the margins.

Chapter Breakdown

My first chapter, "Korean Print Media on the "Mixed-Blood Problem": 1940s-1980s," reviews Korean newspapers and journal articles of the late 1940s-1980s and traces the changing viewpoints on the "mixed-blood problem" as South Korea experienced dramatic changes from post-liberation status, to civil war, and the postwar decades during which U.S. military bases proliferate. The births of mixed-race Koreans posed an epistemological and material problem for the nascent Republic of Korea that had founded itself upon a *tanil minjok* (single race) ideology. Writers responded to this new population in ways that reflected their own ambivalence to the presence of the U.S. military on the Korean peninsula. Some blamed Korean women for being promiscuous, while others worried over the children's future. As Western humanitarian measures created structural pathways for immigration through international adoption, many of the writers began promoting this method to "help" mixed-race children and orphans they viewed as otherwise doomed to a miserable fate in Korea. At the same time, we see more nuanced discussions beginning in the 1960s, especially as the first generation of mixed-race Koreans reached adulthood. Fear of social unrest was mingled with feelings of sympathy in approaching the "mixed-blood problem." This chapter complicates the dominant narrative of mixed-race Koreans as pitiful orphaned children requiring rescue. Rather, I argue that mixed-race Koreans were perceived in multiple modalities: as a reflection of female promiscuity, as representative of

the foreign, as a welfare problem, *and* as a a case for saving, depending on the political and economic circumstances that governed the Cold War era. Moreover, these works make clear that mixed-race Koreans were a topic of concern not only for American humanitarians but for Koreans as well.

My second chapter, “The Politics of Humanitarianism: Saving the 'Mixed-Blood Child,” builds on original archival material and highlights the conditions of citizenship and the precarious legal and social existence of mixed-race individuals during the Cold War period. Mixed-race Koreans were not ignored or abandoned by the state but rather, various state and non-state actors were involved in their management, even as they contributed to their production and representation as marginalized subjects. I examine the intersections between the Korean government and NGOs like the Pearl Buck Foundation in supporting the welfare of mixed-race Koreans. Reviewing correspondences and reports written by American missionaries and humanitarians, I explore how “mixed-blood” Korean children and youths were discussed within a framework of rescue and rehabilitation. For the Western missionaries and humanitarians, their argument for international adoption was bolstered by describing mixed-race children as orphans (even if they were not), not mentioning the mothers of mixed-race children, or implicitly or explicitly stating that the mothers were unfit to raise their children. If immigration was perceived as not an option because the child was too old, discourse shifted to providing education and/or work skills through special schools and programs. Discussion on the psychology of the mixed-race child was also an integral part of justifying care, as not only was it about saving children from physical destitution but about saving their souls to become proper Christian individuals. These overlapping conversations and strategies of care reflected techniques of humanitarian governance that emphasized the innocence of the child and the need for benevolent intervention.

My third chapter, "The Tragic *Yanggongju* in Cold War Korean Film," examines the overrepresented figure of the *yanggongju,* a.k.a. "Yankee princess" (or military prostitute), to unpack the significatory connections she has to the *honhyŏla*. Using the theory of haunting and theories of space and place, I analyze the politics of location that situate Korean women in precarious and multiple relationalities within the postwar landscape of the camptown and beyond. This chapter argues how narratives of shame, monstrous motherhood, and deviant femininity situate the *yanggongju* as a geopolitical site from which mixed-race Koreans are born. I specifically look at the films, *Hellflower* (1958), *Confessions of a Body* (1964), and *Black Woman* (1982), and analyze the main female characters who directly represent the *yanggongju,* as in the case of Sonya and President Mother respectively, or who indirectly imply her connection to the *yanggongju,* as in the case of Nan. While *Hellflower* has been analyzed in other scholarship, I offer new analysis by highlighting the connection Sonya has to the camptown, and by situating Sonya within a genealogy of *yanggongju* that have been fictionally represented on screen. Likewise, the figure of President Mother falls into this genealogy, but being both a devoted mother *and* military sex worker unsettles the stereotype of deviance attached to the *yanggongju*. Nan's character ties the three roles together as it is through her that we see the implicit connections the *yanggongju* has to the *honhyŏla,* not only through Nan's subjectivity as a Black Korean woman but through her own underground sex work as a bar hostess.

My fourth and final chapter, "Self-Narratives and the Politics of Race in South Korea: 1960-1970s," explores the use of language and the interpellation of the mixed-race subject as retold in the form of two autobiographies: Pak Ok-sŏn's *My Forsaken Star* (1965)*,* and Kim Bok-chŏn's *Sorrowful March* (1974). Here, I highlight how the autobiography offers a unique literary space for the subaltern to speak instead of being spoken for, while at the same time a

dialectical subject comes into existence through racial language. That is, I center how the "mixed-blood" Korean, or the *honhyŏl,* is a relational being through the process of social death. This ontological contradiction is palpable through the very language used to describe and denigrate mixed-race Koreans, which also binds them as ideological subjects of a linguistic community. I thereby examine the discursive implications of racial identifiers like "mixed-blood," *honhyŏl,* as well as epithets like *t'wigi* (*"*half-breed"), *kkamdungi* ("blackie") in constructing the subject. Through their interpellation and application of these racial terms, the writers both challenge and reinforce stereotypes made about mixed-race Koreans.

The four primary chapters weave a narrative about how the post-liberation era of the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK), the ensuing Korean War, and the postwar decades produced political conditions of racial exclusion that denied mixed-race subjects citizenship and history. Drawing on different forms of media, I build an archive that narrates the story of mixed-race Koreans of the twentieth century. "Conditions of Containment" stresses the impact that postcolonial nation-building efforts and Cold War politics have played in the erasure and overrepresentation of the mixed-race figure and offers an alternative reading of subjecthood in South Korea and the United States.

A final note on terminology: I use a number of contemporaneous terms, especially *honhyŏl,* and "mixed-blood," in order to situate them within the time period in which they were used. The terms are certainly problematic but to avoid using them altogether would elide the importance they had in constructing the mixed-race Korean subject in the first place. For the purposes of my own reference, I use the designation, "mixed-race," as a marker to discuss this marginalized community while also recognizing that the very word partakes in reproducing difference. It is impossible to write on this topic (or most any topic for that matter) without

employing racial language and I have spent some time wondering what term may best serve this work. I have settled on "mixed-race" only as a temporary marker to reference individuals and the community as a whole, and one that *somewhat* avoids allusions to racial partitions or blood quantum. This is an ongoing deliberation that may or may not shift in the next iteration of this work.

CHAPTER 1
KOREAN PRINT MEDIA ON THE "MIXED-BLOOD PROBLEM": 1940s-1980s

I. Introduction

This chapter reviews Korean print media of the late-1940s through the mid-1980s to situate the material and discursive conditions under which mixed-race Koreans lived. While the Korean War did not begin until 1950, foreign troops were already on the Korean peninsula in 1945, the bulk of whom were U.S. troops of the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK). These writings help reveal that Cold War era discourse on mixed-race Koreans was not only limited to American humanitarians (as I explore in Chapter 2) but that the Korean writing public was aware and concerned by the material, ontological, and epistemological consequences of "mixed-bloods" in Korea.

Children and youths were the focus of these writings because at the time there was no critical mass of mixed-race Koreans over the age of twenty-five or thirty. Moreover, social welfare infrastructure, which was heavily supported by foreign aid, was focused on orphaned or vagrant children whose numbers mushroomed after the Korean War. These articles demonstrate two intersecting concerns: social welfare and national belonging. In other words, addressing the "mixed-blood problem" meant addressing South Korea's (in)ability to provide social welfare support and what it meant to provide said support. It also compelled a re-examination of who belonged to the nation. Because the very existence of mixed-race Koreans contradicted the *tanil minjok* (single race nation) rhetoric perpetuated by the state, these writings demonstrate conflicted attitudes that identify mixed-race Koreans as both foreigners and as kin. Importantly, what emerges from these pieces is that the rhetoric of *tanil minjok* and the heteropaternal postwar

structure that privileged patrilineage ultimately constructed the "mixed-blood problem."[29]

The question of national belonging is, in essence, a question of recognition. Who gets counted as Korean? Who does not? Depending on this answer, which continuously vacillated, mixed-race Koreans were treated accordingly. In tracing writing over four decades, we see how writers of the 1940s and 1950s were concerned with the births of mixed-race Koreans, while writers of the 1960s-80s focused on their social welfare. These shifting concerns illustrate how perceptions of mixed-race Koreans went from viewing them as little more than fleeting consequences of war to permanent or semi-permanent fixtures of the South Korean population. Especially for later writers, unlike the discourse of American missionaries and humanitarians, the mixed-race Korean child was not a soul to be saved, but a population that needed to be managed and a sore reminder of the presence of U.S. soldiers and an unended war.

Korean writers addressing the "mixed-blood problem" were in essence, concerned with governance. As Michel Foucault writes, "One governs things. … The things with which in this sense government is to be concerned are in fact men, but men in their relations, their links, their imbrication with those other things[30] …" It was this *relationship* to the mixed-race population that required governance. Mixed-race Koreans exemplified a biopolitical concern many of the writers had over a seemingly growing population with little oversight. A large part of this effort towards governance was in documenting demographic trends of mixed-race Korean children and youths, offering socio-historical background information, family histories, and a consideration of

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[29] I use Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill's definition which states heteropaternalism as, "… the presumption that heteropatriarchal nuclear-domestic arrangements, in which the father is both center and leader/boss, should serve as the model for social arrangements of the state and its institutions." Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill, "Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy," *Feminist Formations* 25, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 13.

[30] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality,* eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 93.

the possible options available for social support.

This chapter complicates the dominant narrative of mixed-race Koreans as pitiful orphaned children requiring rescue. Mixed-race Koreans were in fact perceived in multiple modalities: as a reflection of female promiscuity, as representative of the foreign, as a welfare problem, *and* as a case for saving, depending on the political circumstances that governed the Cold War era. For instance, in the articles of the late 1940s and 1950s, the U.S. Occupation, the Korean War, and the immediate postwar years were periods where foreign military presence, the violence of war, and national division took center stage. Within this respective backdrop, early writings on mixed-race Koreans reflect a public coming to terms with the births of children who had no ideological place in a nascent South Korea. By the 1960s, with Park Chung-hee's (Pak Chŏng-hŭi) draconian rule focusing on military spending and economic development, social welfare fell by the wayside only to be picked up by foreign welfare agencies especially concerning the care of war orphans. Writings of the 1960s and 1970s reflect this familiarity with foreign aid and South Korea's development around social welfare practices. What these works reveal is that through an effort towards governance, mixed-race Koreans were recognized as both part of and not part of the *tanil minjok.* The mixed-race Korean stood in contrast to the values of the heteropatriarchal family, educational attainment, self-reliance, and the capacity for work and productivity, values that helped form a post-liberation concept of *tanil minjok.*

I have organized this chapter chronologically, beginning with early newspaper articles that address the significance of a new demographic amidst a war-torn population, moving onto longer magazine and journal pieces that advocate for the sympathy of the public, as well as a roundtable with mixed-race Korean youths involved in the HAPA club. The articles I selected for close analysis reflect differing yet overlapping concerns regarding "what to do" about mixed-

race children and youths. While there are a number of brief articles on the topic over the decades, the articles selected for this chapter, especially the latter ones, offer more nuanced and detailed understandings of the position of mixed-race Koreans in Korea. Or perhaps more accurately, reflect the writer's position on the subject. In tracing these discourses, I hope to show how, even though many of the writings proffer similar tropes of the tragic "mixed-blood" child, the perspectives and attitudes reflect a diverse array of opinions that range from xenophobia to advocacy.

II. A New Demographic: The Result of Deviant Women

As early as 1947, discourse on *honhyŏla* began circulating in newspapers. Early publications were minimal in their analysis of mixed-race Koreans other than narrating them as anomalies while faulting the mothers for immoral acts. This was a discursive move that positioned mixed-race Koreans not just as new, but new because they were viewed as unnatural and foreign. For instance, in an August 27, 1947 *Dong-A Ilbo* article disturbingly titled, "Yellow Hairs, Blackies: The Influx of Mixed-Bloods," the writer deplores the increased numbers of "mixed-blood" children being abandoned at police stations.[31] As the title implies, mixed-race Koreans were seen as an unwanted, alien population that was somehow inundating the Korean populace.

Moreover, their presence indicated a growing sexual immorality, as reflected in this introductory passage, "Appearing before the window of the police station is society's sexual corruption. The unruly sexual freedom and the scrambling of male/female norms that produced Asian women's fall from grace can be observed by the number of foundlings left at the women's

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[31] "Norangmŏri, kŏmdungi, honhyŏra ŭi pŏmnam" [Yellow Hairs, Blackies: The Influx of Mixed-Bloods], *Dong-A Ilbo,* August 27, 1947, 2. In translating the Korean term, *kŏmdungi*, I have settled on "blackies," as it is the literal translation. It is a pejorative term that could be likened to the "n" word but does not carry the same historical relevance.

police station."[32] The writer confirms his speculation by noting how eight to ten orphans at the station were of "mixed-blood" origin. The unnamed writer does not take into account that the appearance of mixed-race children was a result of foreign occupation or the economic instability of Korea at this time (or a combination therein). Instead, he faults Korean women for taking advantage of what he observes as the rapidly unraveling social mores of the post-liberation period.[33] The implication that U.S. and U.N. troops on the Korean peninsula resulted in "sexual freedom," was far from the realities that compelled Korean women into sexual labor, nor does the writer account for the possibility that women were also victims of rape. Mixed-race Koreans as anomalies was thereby tied to women's sexual deviance. In other words, being anomalies was not only in reference to their physical characteristics as "whities" and "blackies," but more importantly, represented a new female immorality.

A more nuanced perspective was reflected in a 1952 *Seoul Sinmun* article titled, "Mixed-Bloods, A New Social Problem Comes to Light," wherein the author relates the appearance of mixed-race Koreans to being products of war. At the time of the writing, the writer estimated that 356 mixed-race Koreans existed nationwide of whom 228 were raised by their mothers, forty left with extended family, and eighty-eight in orphanages.[34] However, it was also estimated that 64,934 Korean women were involved in military prostitution, not to mention "civilians" who were in romantic relationships with U.S. servicemen. The assumption was that, based on the large numbers of Korean women involved with U.S. soldiers, the official estimate of mixed-race

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[32] Ibid.

[33] The short article does not further unpack the reference to "unruly sexual freedom and the scrambling of male/female norms" but I take it to reflect the author's observation of a changing social landscape for those living near or working on U.S. bases in the post-liberation period.

[34] "Honhyŏra, saeroun sahoe munjero taedu" [Mixed-Bloods, A New Social Problem Comes to Light], *Seoul Sinmun,* October 26, 1952.

children was likely low.

Another central concern for the *Seoul Sinmun* writer was the treatment of mixed-race children and their mothers, women who were often derided as *yanggongju*, while their children were called "whities," or "blackies," by youths and adults alike: "This is due to a contempt that arises out of what can be called a deeply rooted tradition of *tanil minjok* that Koreans proudly identify with. Rather than take responsibility as a society for having such women in our midst and for the father's country to also take responsibility, innocent children are being harmed."[35] The article concludes with an interview with the director of an established Seoul orphanage who recommends that mixed-blood children be raised by their father's country, where richer financial resources and cultural diversity exist.[36]

This piece offers a more sympathetic perspective on mixed-race children that touched on the social constraints imposed by ethnic nationalism. However, like the earlier *Dong-A Ilbo,* the source of the problem lay in the deviant sexuality of Korean women while to a lesser extent, foreign soldiers, as can be observed from this quote, "However, according to national statistics that estimate the number of *yanggongju,* at 64,963 along with those women who work at [military] institutions whose conduct is less than upstanding or are filled with foolish vanity, it is likely that the number of mixed-bloods [as documented earlier] is nothing more than a statistical number and [in reality] is several times the current count."[37] While the narrative is focused on statistics, the underlying message incontrovertibly implicates the immorality of women as the primary reason mixed-race children were being born.

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[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

The demographic rise and the increase in wanton female sexuality were not the only concerns. Merely a year later, a 1953 *Minju Sinbo* newspaper article highlighted the legal conundrum of mixed-race Koreans with the *hojŏk,* or family registry—the primary legal document that acknowledged one's Korean's ancestry and thereby confirmed citizenship.[38] By October of that year, the 367 mixed-blood children were in legal limbo due to their lack of a *hojŏk*.[39] Legal action was foremost on the mind of the writer, "If we are to look at the numerous mixed-bloods born of U.N. 'wives' as innately tragic characters shouldering their fates, regardless of who is morally responsible, the government must establish firm countermeasures for their future."[40] In pressing the government to legitimate mixed-race Koreans, the article briefly draws attention on the question of responsibility. Unlike the previously analyzed works, the writer of this piece moves away from blaming either Korean women or U.N. troops but highlights the fundamental importance the Korean government could play in the lives of these children. These statistics, combined with the acknowledgement that these children were stateless predicted a looming problem for the *Minju Sinbo* writer.

Newspaper reports continued to highlight the fact that mixed-race Koreans were numerically significant anomalies of the Korean population—significant enough to concern themselves of the cause and potential social disturbances that awaited Korean society.[41] Mixed-race children were not only visible in the Seoul vicinity but anywhere where U.N. troops were located such as Masan, a southern city west of Pusan, where one report noted fourteen "mixed-

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[38] "Honhyŏra munje taech'aek surip sigŭp" [The Urgent Need to Establish Countermeasures for the Mixed-Blood Problem], *Minju Sinbo,* January 28, 1953.

[39] See my introduction for more information about the *hojŏk.*

[40] Honhyŏra munje taech'aek surip sigŭp."

[41] While hundreds of mixed-race Koreans amidst a population of nearly 20 million was an inconsequential number, the very fact of their existence and their numerical growth appear to be the point of concern.

blood" children living in stark circumstances with their mothers.[42] Another 1953 article estimated 358 mixed-race Koreans scattered throughout the Korean peninsula, including eighty-four in Seoul, ninety in Kyŏnggi province, seven in Ch'ungbuk province, four in Ch'ungnam province, thirteen in Chŏnbuk province, four in Chŏnnam province, forty in Kyŏngbuk province, seventy-three in Kyŏngnam province, thirty-nine in Kangwŏn province, and three in Cheju Island.[43] In this way, the counting of mixed-race Koreans became important to the discourse as their rising numbers were presented as social and demographic urgencies.

Beginning with the late 1940s, what began as a narrative of blame and chastisement of "errant" Korean women shifted in the early 1950s to the collective fear of an unwanted population growing out of control. Mixed-race children were viewed as anomalies not only due to their physical difference but because they implied at Korean women's promiscuity with foreigners. Their existence suggested illegitimate sexual encounters and South Korean emasculation. Along with these implications was the rise of this population that represented a social welfare problem South Korea had little infrastructure to manage.

III. "Mixed-Bloods" as Part of a Postwar Orphan Population

Numbers played yet another role. While most mixed-race Korean children lived with their mothers, they were still viewed as part of a growing postwar orphan population that primarily included non-mixed-race Korean children. In a July 1955 magazine article in *Sae Kajŏng* [*Christian Home*] titled "Mixed-Blood Children and the Adoption Issue," writer Hong Ok-sun details the issues surrounding domestic adoption, suggesting that international adoption

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[42] "Appa ŏmnŭn honhyŏra Masan sinae man 14 myŏng" [Fatherless Mixed-Bloods, Fourteen in the City of Masan Alone], *Masan Ilbo,* May 12, 1954, 2.

[43] "Sahoebu, honhyŏradong silt'ae chosa" [Ministry of Social Affairs, Mixed-Blood Children Survey], *Seoul Sinmun,* July 11, 1953.

may be the best option for "mixed-blood" children who were placed in orphanages.[44] Hong first discusses the concepts around children, drawing from the U.N. Children's Charter to state how children have the right to be raised by their parents, to be loved, to be protected from harm, and to have access to education.[45] She questions whether Korean culture—within the framework of the Korean orphanage—can offer these basic rights. According to Hong, the orphanage houses, "… a variety of orphans and abandoned children. Looking at just physical traits, the children range from gentle and elegant-looking to stout and sturdy, and while there aren't too many, there are also curly-haired children with tall noses. In a way, they are reminiscent of Hans Christian Anderson's story, 'The Ugly Duckling.' Children require the love of parents and the warmth of a family. In other words, they should receive and enjoy love, care, and the protection that they desire."[46]

By framing children as rights-bearing individuals, Hong shifts the perspective on children as being entitled to lives of love and care. She contrasts this modern perspective with Korea's neo-Confucian notion of children as extensions of a larger kinship system that privileges patrilineal lineage. That is, agnatic adoptions—especially in later Chosŏn Korea—happened for the purposes of securing male descendants and continuing ancestor rites in aristocratic families, not necessarily to benefit the well-being of a parentless child.[47] This attitude towards adoption continued into the contemporaneous moment of Hong's writing wherein kinship ties were based

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[44] Hong Ok-sun, "Honhyŏra wa ibyang munje" [Mixed-Blood Children and the Adoption Issue], *Sae Kajŏng,* July 1955, 40. While the Korean title translates to *New Family,* the publication's English title was *Christian Home.*

[45] Ibid. I believe the author is referencing the Declaration of the Rights of Child 1948 as the next version was not published until 1959. It was in 1959 the Declaration was formally adopted by the UN.

[46] Ibid.

[47] For more information, see Mark A. Peterson's *Korean Adoption and Inheritance: Case Studies in the Creation of a Classic Confucian Society* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1996).

on blood ties unless the family could not produce a male heir. Moreover, the law at the time reflected these attitudes and made it difficult for interested families to attempt non-agnatic adoption.[48] With their lack of familial ties and physical features that called unnecessary attention to themselves, mixed-race Korean orphans—it was implied—had little chance of getting adopted.

Hong thereby suggests international adoption as an ideal solution, informing the reader of the levels of checks and balances American adoptive parents underwent to successfully complete a domestic adoption. By detailing American adoption practices, she highlights the importance the U.S. placed on the matching process and on the child's well-being. According to Hong, when the Korean War brought the world's attention to the impoverished conditions of Korea—especially that of abandoned and orphaned children, this tragedy paved the way for 'friendly nations' like the U.S. to adopt mixed-race and non-mixed-race Korean children.[49] International adoption then, was depicted as a benevolent opportunity to solve Korea's orphan crisis, with the added benefit of knowing that children were being matched with caring families. Hong's emphasis on the child's well-being reflected the female audience of the magazine, women who read *Sae Kajŏng* to learn proper Christian values and morals as wives and mothers.[50] From this perspective, the emphasis on the physical and psychological health of these children appeared as natural motherly concerns, "Whether a child is adopted within Korea or internationally, the utmost concern is to match the child with the proper family and environment to secure the child's future."[51]

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[48] Hong Ok-sun, "Honhyŏra wa ibyang munje," 41.

[49] Ibid, 42.

[50] As per the *Encyclopedia of Korean Culture, Sae Kajŏng* is listed as a magazine that began in 1954 to cultivate Christianity in their Protestant female readership.
https://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/SearchNavi?keyword=새가정&ridx=0&tot=1

[51] Hong Ok-sun, "Honhyŏra wa ibyang munje," 42.

The article not only introduces readers to the issue of mixed-race Korean orphans but does so in a manner that incorporates Christian values of individual human agency while reassuring the reader on the ethics of stranger adoption. At the same time, it also implicitly disciplines Korean women on proper motherhood by illustrating how to *think* about children, especially orphans, with compassion. Even as Hong recognizes that international adoption was not a cure-all solution to the issue of abandoned and orphaned mixed-race and and non-mixed-race Korean children, she proffers it as the best solution to a growing problem. This did not mean that it was the only solution and in fact, she also suggests that domestic laws on adoption be revised to better accommodate the interests of the child. For mixed-race Koreans who continued to reside in Korea and were raised by single mothers, Hong acknowledges that Korean society and the government must attend to their assimilation and education.[52]

"Mixed-Blood Children and the Adoption Issue," not only offers a woman's perspective on the issue of mixed-race Koreans in the Cold War period, but also brings to light the view of middle-class, progressive Korean Christians whose interest in the betterment of children drew from Western concepts of individualism and humanitarianism. Orphans, especially mixed-race orphans, were not scourges but were the less fortunate that required care and compassion. This line of thinking also aligned with the tacit acknowledgment that readers were educated, caring women engaged in proper motherly and wifely duties. Hong's work is the first within the selection of writings in this chapter to present a more thorough rationale for sending mixed-race Korean children abroad.

IV. Advocating for, yet Pathologizing the "Mixed-Blood": An In-Depth Study

The November 1963 issue of *Sin Segye* (*New World*), a monthly magazine of literature

[52] Ibid.

and culture, published an in-depth review of the status of mixed-race Korean children. The timing of the article correlated with the fact that after almost two decades since the USAMGIK, more information and importantly, interest in mixed-race Koreans reflected the awareness of a growing *honhyŏla* population. Writer Kim Hŭi-t'aek details the conditions under which mixed-race Koreans were born and raised, pointing to their connection to camptowns and military sex work.[53] This article appears to be the first of several that offered a comprehensive study of mixed-race Koreans and their mothers. The result was a mixture of advocacy and pathology that neglected the gendered conditions produced by heteropaternalistic state.

For instance, referencing mixed-race Korean children as "by-products" of war and occupation, Kim writes of their background as children of American or foreign troops and Korean women. The mothers were described sympathetically as women who fell into prostitution due to the social and economic disruption caused by the Korean War, yet were also characterized in condescending anthropological terms, "For example, there is a hierarchy between women who associate with white men and those who associate with black men, or women who cohabit with one man compared to those who work the streets. Those who associate with black men or are streetwalkers receive the most contempt."[54] Describing camptown sex workers as poor, ignorant, and shackled in debt to their pimps, Kim paints a dejected portrait of the conditions mixed-race Koreans were born into. Portrayed as deviant yet pitiful, camptown sex workers and their mixed-race children were discursively situated as subjects outside proper heteronormative familial relations. As women without husbands, and children without fathers

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[53] *Sin Segye* first began publication in 1962 with the aim of covering a wide range of topics including, "education, religion, culture, economics, politics, and society." See "Sae chonghap kyoyangji sin segye, palgan" [The Publication of a New Liberal Arts Magazine: *New World*], *Kyŏnghyang Sinmun,* October 13, 1962.

[54] Kim Hŭi-t'aek, "Han'guk honhyŏra ŭi haeoe ibyang saŏp" [The International Adoption Business of Korean Mixed-Blood Children], *Sin Segye,* November 1963, 261.

living on the margins of society, mixed-race Koreans and their mothers were depicted as objects of both pity and scorn.

Being unwanted was another trope. In the matter of their birth, Kim writes, "Mixed-blood children are not born because of the wishes of their parents." Rather, Kim suggests that the reasons were all but sincere, such as the father-in-question falsely promising marriage, or the woman using pregnancy to secure marriage or being unable to afford an abortion, or doctors refusing abortion based on the woman's health.[55] Kim asserts that because the men had abandoned their pregnant partners or had left (with the promise of return) when the children were only a few months old, *honhyŏl* rarely remember their fathers. While their mothers "dance at cabarets or entertain customers," the children grew up alone and realized that they did not resemble their mothers nor the other neighborhood children.[56] Viewed as foreigners, the mixed-blood children—according to Kim—scorned their mothers for their life choices, while the mothers attributed their mixed-bloodedness as an innate reason for their attitudes, "because they are made of a different seed."[57] What is emphasized in Kim's explanation is that mixed-race Koreans were not wanted in their own right but were products of poverty, ignorance, and even desperation. By delimiting the narrative in this manner, Kim and other such writers elided the complexities of choice and its affective considerations to simply that of choiceless births and choiceless attachments after birth.

What was missing in his analysis was that the circumstances he describes were not so much an indication of mixed-race Koreans being unwanted as they were about the heavily

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[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid, 262.

gendered structural forces that Korean women had to navigate for survival. The possibility that poor women hoped for a better future through marriage (as one of the only avenues available to them), or would want their mixed-race children and *did not* abandon them, or were laboring in troop entertainment to support themselves and their children was glossed over. Moreover, the trope of being unwanted elided the material conditions that compelled poor women to get involved with U.S. military sexual labor in the first place—labor that ultimately benefitted the South Korean government's alliance with the U.S. military as well as the middle and elite classes who did not have to "sacrifice" themselves in the same manner.[58]

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, statistics have played a large role in assessing mixed-race Koreans, and this article offers even more information. Numbers helped provide the basis for biopolitical governance, even with a transient population. In his discussion of the colonial census in Malaysia, Benedict Anderson writes, "The fiction of the census is that everyone is in it, and that everyone has one - and only one - extremely clear place. No fractions."[59] The numerous categories of the Malaysian populace were constructed by colonial officials, not by the residents themselves. Similarly, counting mixed-race Koreans required the fiction of clarity in identifying race and residence. Using an unnamed survey, Kim concludes that approximately 1,389 mixed-race Koreans existed in South Korea, of which 989 were white, 339 were black, 61 were other. Of the total number, 1051 lived with their mothers, 338 lived in an orphanage. Seoul housed 504, Kyŏnggi province 596, and the remaining numbers scattered throughout the peninsula. However, based on the 20,000 U.N. camptown sex workers, Kim estimated that the yearly birth rate of mixed-race Koreans was 500-600—much higher than the

[58] See Katharine Moon's *Sex among Allies* (1997).

[59] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (Verso: New York, 1991), 166.

recorded estimate. Furthermore, amongst the five international adoption agencies in Korea, 2,116 mixed-race white Korean children and 736 mixed-race Black Korean children had been adopted overseas.[60] This numerical assessment of how many, where, who, and to where provided a basis for Kim's next suggestions in resolving the *honhyŏl* problem.

International adoption was once again portrayed as a beneficial solution. Even though the rising numbers seemed an answer enough to suggest adoption, Kim further qualifies his suggestion by discussing the current state of family life. For instance, in the case of the mothers having married Korean men, problems developed with the in-laws who may reject the child, who then let out their frustration onto their younger siblings, resulting in further punishments. Kim relates that these experiences resulted in the child becoming withdrawn or defiant, and it was under such circumstances mothers asked for their children to be adopted overseas. Similar to Hong's earlier assurances, Kim highlights the ongoing services for adoptees in the U.S. where social services ensured their mental health. According to Kim, once adopted, efforts were made to convey news of the child to the birth mother.[61] At the same time, adoption was not universally accessible to all mixed-race Korean children such as mixed-race Black and/or older children. It simply came down to the fact that younger, white-looking children were most desired for white families who comprised the highest number of adoptions.

For those who remained behind, regardless of society's best efforts, the effects of social harm persisted, "Because of their strained and anxious lives and societal rejection that result in loneliness, they could very well run away or commit a crime."[62] The comment offers a twofold

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid. I assume Kim meant on the part of the social service agency.

[62] Ibid, 263.

perspective in that even as Kim points to society's detrimental effects on mixed-race Koreans themselves, he also implies that their maladjustment could have detrimental effects on society at-large. The potential for delinquency was always one step away. Kim situates the "*honhyŏla* problem" within the larger dilemma of child welfare in the Republic of Korea where approximately 50,000 Korean orphans needed looking after and receive proper education. Mixed-race Korean children comprised only a small segment of this growing issue. From his standpoint, while U.S. troops in Korea remained a reality, this did not necessarily mean that the population of mixed-race Koreans would increase, leading Kim to question whether there would be enough critical mass in the future for mixed-race Koreans to advocate for their rights. However, political activism would require the active participation of mixed-race Korean youths but because they were treated as outsiders by sometimes their own families and neighbors, had little investment or knowledge in organizing. Instead, they dreamed of departing from Korea, where they hoped a better future lay.

With these concerns, Kim writes, "The biggest obstacles mixed-blood children face are in finding a stable household, a community without racism, accessing good education, and living in a wholesome, ethical environment."[63] Kim promotes overseas adoption with the assurance that American social welfare agencies made careful investigations into adoptive families before selection. He characterizes these families as Christian with a humanitarian interest in adoption and whose professions involved strong human relations such as pastors, teachers, businessmen, and doctors.[64] Like the Hong article, Kim depicts the U.S. social welfare system favorably, and in doing so offers what feels like a concrete solution for the child (even as the mother is erased).

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[63] Ibid, 263.

[64] Ibid, 264.

Mixed-race Korean children in these households, according to Kim, were living harmoniously with their adoptive siblings and parents as evidenced by photographs sent to Korea. In addition, Kim believed that their ability to acclimate to American culture offered hope that their lives would soon be secure.

Kim concludes by reiterating the importance of providing a stable, loving home environment for the children, and for these reasons continued to support overseas adoption. But he also suggests the importance of strengthening domestic adoption because not all mixed-race Korean children would be adopted overseas. Yet developing proper infrastructure for domestic adoption required expansion, agency collaboration, and funding, all of which seemed difficult to attain. Kim therefore suggests a two-part solution in which overseas adoption continue to be expanded while enhancing studies on mixed-race Koreans and developing agencies and infrastructures. In these ways, Kim believed that mixed-race Korean children could feel a sense of belonging, "When they realize that they are receiving the respect and love they deserve as human beings, and when they sense they are wanted by society, they will be able to realize their full potential by contributing to society and becoming productive human beings."[65] Kim recognized that creating a welcoming and supportive environment was the key to the future success of mixed-race Koreans.

As can be gleaned, Kim's thoughts ping-ponged between supporting mixed-race Koreans domestically to making a case for their international adoption. They were portrayed as growing up in unsavory environments (therefore harboring the potential for becoming unsavory themselves) but also being victims of society at-large. Vacillating between pathologizing mixed-race Koreans and advocating for them, his writing was the first of a handful of detailed studies

[65] Ibid, 265.

that were published in popular and professional journals alike. Its characterization of mixed-race Koreans as objects of pity, fascination, and advocacy reflects the complex attitudes held by the writing public, perspectives that became further complicated as mixed-race Korean children grew into young adults. These conflicting attitudes were symptomatic of a public that critiqued the structural inequities and racial rhetoric that positioned mixed-race Koreans as familiar outsiders but to which they themselves continued to subscribe to.

V. A Study of a New Generation of Mixed-Race Koreans: Interviews with Young Adults

In the March 1974 edition of *Wolgan JoongAng* (*Monthly Central*), titled "Mixed-Blood Person," writer Ch'oe Kwan-sik highlights the first generation of young *adults* who were coming of age two decades after the Korean War.[66] Of approximately 3,000 mixed-race Koreans living in Korea, Ch'oe estimates 1,000 were then adults.[67] Beginning his essay with the story of a young mixed-race man who had committed suicide in 1973, Ch'oe describes a harsh social landscape experienced by *honhyŏrin*, "Under the name of humanism, we get upset about the racial conflict that is happening overseas yet for our brothers and sisters who are suffering on this land, we are blankly unaware of their silent screams."[68] Ch'oe connects what was presumably the civil rights and Black Power movements in the U.S. and anti-colonial struggles worldwide to the racist conditions of South Korea, and takes his readers to task by addressing the moral urgency facing mixed-race Koreans. Under such conditions, it is perhaps no surprise when Ch'oe writes that barely 10% of the 126 surveyed between the ages of 18-22 were interested in settling in Korea

[66] *Wolgan JoongAng* was first published in 1968 by the newspaper company, *JoongAng Ilbo-sa,* and offered in-depth reporting on a diverse array of topics. According to the *Encyclopedia of Korean Culture,* the magazine had stated their aim as follows, "In order to be the people's strength, blood, skin, hope, and courage, it will pursuit topics of dignified interest." The magazine is still in publication, however in the late 1970s it was briefly suspended, and later, changed names, though it is currently published under its original name.

[67] Ch'oe Kwan-sik, "Honhyŏrin" [Mixed-Blood Person], *Wolgan JoongAng,* March 1974, 285-86.

[68] Ibid, 285.

while the rest still dreamed of migrating abroad.[69] While this article was also rife with demographic statistics, what was especially relevant was the information surveying the opinions and attitudes of the subjects themselves.

The topics highlighted by Ch'oe are ultimately about relationality and belonging. For instance, how did mixed-race Koreans see themselves in relation to non-mixed-race Koreans? Interestingly, the question is framed around the notion of superiority. Over half, at fifty-six, believed they were superior to non-mixed-race Koreans, thirty-nine considered themselves no better or less than, twenty-eight regarded themselves inferior, and three replied "other." Considering their marginalized status in Korea, the fact that more than half of the respondents believed themselves to be "superior" requires some unpacking.

Uwŏl hada, or being superior, is the term used in the article. However, how does a logic of superiority make sense amongst a dispossessed class? One explanation is that the contradictory depictions of mixed-race Koreans as being an unwanted underclass connected to camptown prostitution while representing America, Korea's powerful big brother ally associated with material and cultural wealth, have produced dissociative perceptions of the self as racially superior than the "average" Korean. Adding to this dialectic are persistent references to "mixed-bloods" belonging to the powerful land of their fathers, which further cemented fragmented notions of oneself as outside of the Korean body politic. As noted, while not all mixed-race Koreans who were surveyed believed themselves to be "superior," the term here incorporates a complex amalgamation of racist, classist, and ethnic nationalist attitudes internalized by the respondents. It may not necessarily suggest a true belief of one's superiority over others so much as a recognition of one's difference, validating the desire for immigration.

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[69] Ibid, 287.

Other topics included dating and marriage. According to Ch'oe, mixed-race Koreans often dated amongst themselves or accounted for at least half of their dating experience. Ch'oe points to the prejudice especially amongst parents who had difficulty considering mixed-race Koreans as viable marriage partners for their children. Here, he quotes an unnamed director of a single mother charity organization who had been working with mixed-race Koreans for ten years, "While I am prepared to do pretty much anything, if you were to ask me if I am willing to marry my daughter to a mixed-blood, I could not help but hesitate." Even those who were in advocacy positions took pause when it came to marriage. Ch'oe responds thus, "It is not difficult to interpret this response as the most realistic."[70] Ch'oe's remark identifies the anxiety and racism harbored in even the most active supporters of mixed-race youth. Marriage meant the coming together of two families and the expectation of progeny to follow. Even without racism to guide their thinking, the potential parents-in-law recognized the lifetime of difficulty facing their children were they to marry a mixed-race Korean. In other words, they recognized that the social and structural racism against mixed-race Koreans excised the possibility of having one's own family, which required gainfully employed fathers along with productive mothers that conformed within a heteropatriarchal framework.

Regarding a sense of belonging within Korean society, they were asked whether they considered Korea their motherland. Forty-eight replied positively, forty-two viewed their father's country as their motherland, while nineteen felt they had no mother country.[71] When asked about how happy or satisfied they felt with their lives, thirty-six were hopeful, fifty felt rejected but were willing to keep trying, twenty-five felt "so-so," and nine felt suicidal. Ch'oe concludes this

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[70] Ibid, 293.

[71] Ibid, 288.

section by stating that, "If only this society offered even a small gesture of kindness towards them, the likelihood of their being healthy [upright] members of society is great."[72] The implication is that mainstream Korean society's persistent discrimination, both subtle and blatant, had created a deep sense of unbelonging. The affective repercussions ranged from being unable to create strong and long-lasting social relations with non-mixed-race Koreans, desiring to immigrate to the United States or elsewhere with more than half of the respondents feeling that the country of their birth was not their homeland, and to feeling rejected and even hopeless about their futures.

The narrative highlights how mixed-race Koreans coming of age in Korea in the 1970s struggled to make a space for themselves socially and materially. However, as much as the article offers an in-depth look into the lives of mixed-race youths, its use of empirical evidence also helps advance a mode of thinking that reifies heteropaternalism and an acceptance of xenophobic logic. Without fathers, mixed-race Korean youths had no sociality to speak of—as evidenced by the discourse around marriage. In addition, asking society to offer even "a small gesture of kindness," assumes that it is a matter of being open-minded, which still positions mixed-race Koreans as outsiders who require the sympathy of the public. Instead, the real issue lay in the the structural conditions that created a double bind for mixed-race subjects of being situated between the "norms" of heteropatriarchy and ethnic nationalist sentiments of belonging.

"Mixed-Blood Person," provided a new perspective by bringing in the opinions and stories of mixed-race Koreans who were by then old enough to be interviewed. The article was further supplemented by a number of statistics that broke down their living circumstances and educational backgrounds, peppered with Ch'oe's commentary. Statistics and commentary

[72] Ibid.

worked in union to construct a narrative that vacillated from advocacy to pathology. For instance, even as Ch'oe writes that most mixed-race Koreans were unable to access proper schooling, and were often turned away from jobs, he also admonishes them for having negative attitudes, "In the midst of mixed-bloods are those who wandered through orphanages and institutions as young children and while these circumstances are certainly not satisfactory, since they ate free food, received clothing, and education, without realizing it they grew a lack of self-reliance and, combined with a sense of superiority from being 'seeds of first class citizens,' their weakness is that they have no patience for dirty work."[73] Faulting those who grew up in institutions for being lazy and ungrateful, Ch'oe contributes to the pathologization of mixed-race Koreans even as he continues to advocate for them. This vacillation reflects the inability of writers like Ch'oe in situating mixed-race Koreans within the idealized subjectivity of Korean identity—mixed-race Koreans could not help their situation yet they contributed to it, therefore they continue to stand distinct from the rest of the populace.

At the same time, Ch'oe is careful to delineate a particular subset of mixed-race Koreans in his writing, "Based on the opinions of relationship experts, those mixed-bloods who are in normal families do not have any major problems. The problem is with those who were born as a product of war, between G.I.s and comfort women and lost the chance to be adopted overseas and got old."[74] While mixed-race Koreans who were not part of this history were in the minority, Ch'oe's remark highlights the fact that not all were born due to U.S. military presence on the Korean peninsula. Discourse of this period generally ignored any diversity of backgrounds amongst the mixed-race Korean population, because as Ch'oe notes, the problem did not lie with

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[73] Ibid, 292.

[74] Ibid, 286.

those who had stable, loving families with responsible fathers. Instead, the problem lay in the needy, those who posed the threat of discontent to society. In the next section, we delve into how mixed-race youths themselves viewed such attitudes towards them and their methods of negotiating and surviving Korean society.

VI. A Roundtable of Young Mixed-Race Korean Men: "Liberation Also for this Country's Mixed-Bloods"

The August 1979 issue of the magazine, *Kidokkyo Sasang* (*The Christian Thought*) offers a frank discussion amongst mixed-race Koreans of the Cold War period.[75] "Liberation Also for this Country's Mixed-Bloods" is a transcription of a roundtable that took place on June 26th in *Kidokkyo Sasang*'s office and moderated by the magazine's editor-in-chief, Kim K'wae-sang. Importantly, it illustrates how mixed-race Koreans have consumed, circulated, contributed to or diverged from narratives written about them. The roundtable included four mixed-race male participants in their early to mid-twenties that included: Chŏng Wang-gi, a second-year student at the Inchŏn Sports College, Yi T'aek-ki, a taxi driver, No Ch'ŏl-su, who worked at the Camp Carroll Shipping Branch, and Mun Ch'ŏl-nam, the purser for the HAPA Club. The roundtable appears to have been organized around the upcoming commemoration of Korea's liberation on August 15th, and introduced the subject matter of "mixed-bloods," along with the current state of South Korea. Kim notes how even after thirty-four years of liberation, the country was still heavily dependent on foreign aid, with not all Koreans having access to the same rights, "I believe that it is true liberation only when all citizens enjoy political freedom and economic

[75] The monthly magazine, *Kidokkyo Sasang,* was first published in 1957 by the Christian Literature Society of Korea for the purposes of indigenizing Christianity and advancing Christian culture. The magazine was read not only by Christians but by a wider intellectual community because of its progressive essays on theology and Korean culture. It is still in publication.

equality without any oppression or discrimination[76] …" In connecting mixed-race Koreans with the country's liberation commemoration, Kim questions the notion of freedom by observing South Korea's continued reliance on foreign (read: U.S.) aid, while marginalized Koreans such as "mixed-bloods" experienced social and economic discrimination. The speech helps set the tone of the roundtable as a supportive and even liberatory space for participants to speak frankly about their lives.

Each of the participants grew up with their mothers or with a close relative, near Seoul and/or near military bases, and all seemed to have experienced varying levels of poverty. The questions posed by Kim ranged from romance, marriage, family, work, to general advocacy. What emerges from the discussion is the precarity of their lives from an early age due to: unsteady income their mothers were able to scrap together, of living in a one or sometimes no-parent household due to their mothers passing away at a relatively early age, of lacking regular family life, and of being heavily discriminated against by locals—making education often unattainable and stable employment nearly impossible.

On the topic of education, it seemed all too common for mixed-race Koreans to receive sporadic and inconsistent education resulting in their dropping out. Reasons often circled back to a lack of resources both financially as well as socially. Mun Ch'ŏl-nam had moved to Seoul to attend a *hagwŏn* and was staying with his aunt. Working during the day while attending the *hagwŏn* at night, life seemed to move along until one day his aunt confronted him, "Then one day, my aunt said she went to a fortune teller who said that because there is something strange in her house that her business will not do well. And then she asked, 'What are you gonna do about it?' So, the next day, I returned home to my mother. I cannot explain the shock I received after

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[76] Kim K'wae-sang, "I ttang ŭi honhyŏlin aegaedo haebag ŭl" [Liberation Also for this Country's Mixed-Bloods], *Kidokkyo Sasang,* August 1979, 27.

listening to what my aunt said to me. … After that I felt hopeless and lost and couldn't study or do much of anything."[77] In addition to the everyday racisms Mun was subjected to, suffering the indignity of being viewed as "bad luck" by his own family member appeared to have been the last straw. With few experiences to offset this disturbing encounter, and without emotional and financial support, Mun gave up hope of attending college. Mun's narrative offers testament to the liberal discourse that had been circulating about the difficulties of being "mixed-blood" in South Korea. That is, Mun confirms the narrative of discrimination written about in earlier writings on the topic. As his own witness, Mun and others in this piece offer powerful narratives that only testimony can provide.

Yi Taek-ki's case similarly adds to this dialogue by offering another aspect to consider in the educational lives of mixed-race Koreans of the Cold War period. His schooling suffered not from one particular instance, but because his family was transient—moving from place to place in order to find stable employment—making it difficult to receive proper education. In addition, Yi recalls moments of dire poverty, "I remember during my elementary school days there were times we had no money and we'd have to sell my school books to eat some noodles."[78] Under such grim circumstances, learning was secondary to survival. However, for a period of time he had the unique experience of attending a school dedicated to educating mixed-race Koreans. Yi grew up in Yongsan near the U.S. military base in Seoul and attended an elementary school for mixed-race Koreans, "I wondered why I was taken to this small tent school when there was a big school right next door. But I saw that there were other dark skinned and white skinned *isseis* gathered together studying. In order to prevent bullying at the big school, this segregated school

[77] Ibid, 32.

[78] Ibid, 33.

was established. But because of our weak finances, we moved here and there."[79] Transience was an aspect not directly discussed in previous works but adds to the narrative of poverty often associated with mixed-race Koreans. Yi's story allows readers to connect the effects of poverty on mixed-race children's education or the lack thereof.

Education was a complex issue as it was not merely about universal access but the type of education one had access to. As previously discussed, the quality and consistency of primary education for many mixed-race Koreans of this period was in and of itself a major challenge due to individual socio-economic circumstances and the broader social conditions that made discrimination an everyday experience. If one had successfully completed highschool and was inclined to higher education, access to college was yet another obstacle. In response to Kim K'wae-sang's question as to whether there were barriers to school admission, Mun Ch'ŏl-nam notes that, "There is no legal barrier. … It is not blatantly stipulated. Even at Seoul National University you can take the exam, but you are failed at the interview."[80] The implication was clear. That while there were no laws barring mixed-race Koreans from entering university (and there were successful cases), the structural barriers from birth to highschool graduation made it difficult to acquire academic excellence; and, passing the written exam did not guarantee entrance since the interview segment (or, the observation of one's physical features) often resulted in denial. Barriers were a common topic of discourse in situating mixed-race Koreans within South Korea's social stratum. Mun's description of the university interview not only highlights the social and structural barriers to education but confirms the depiction of mixed-race

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[79] Ibid, 29.

[80] Ibid, 35. Mun seems to be referring to athletics as that is his interest. However, the discriminatory process of the college entrance exam, specifically the interview process, was broadly applicable. Yi Taek-ki concurs by noting that it was not just about interviews for college but interviews for employment where it was during the face-to-face interview that mixed-race Koreans were not hired.

Koreans as a discriminated class.

Moreover, even for those who have acquired work, being *wang-tta* (outcast) followed them into the workplace. As Yi T'aek-ki recalls:

> Even when I am employed, it never works out for too long. I was at an auto-repair factory. When it becomes winter, those of us at the factory stoke a fire and share stories. When I walk by to do work, they whisper amongst themselves. I could tell they were talking about me. My mood becomes dark. If I say to them, 'Just tell me to my face instead of talking behind my back,' they just laugh and get up. Sometimes it gets so bad that I end up in a fight. And then I end up having to leave the job.[81]

Experiences like these contributed to stereotypes of mixed-race Koreans as unreliable problem-makers, while conversely, they further entrenched a nihilism towards work and life after such repeated encounters. Here, Yi offers an explanation to the stereotype of the lazy and transient mixed-race Korean, proving how ostracization led to what appeared as shiftlessness.

Another aspect to the issue of education is the opportunities provided by social welfare organizations and the Korean government that focused on vocational training. Chŏng Wang-gi, the boxer attending Inchŏn Sports College, comments that, "Up until now, we received partial technical education but can the education bureau think about mixed-bloods just a little bit and offer education in foreign affairs? I think that would be very desirable. General education is so important but right now we are only getting vocational training."[82] Chŏng hits at the broader issue that intersected with the complicated history of mixed-race Koreans. The government limited post-secondary educational opportunities by offering only vocational training. Public help with acquiring a university education or related training was unavailable. Chŏng's statement reflects what was unsaid: that the best that mixed-race Koreans could do was some form of skilled or unskilled wage labor.

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[81] Ibid, 33.

[82] Ibid, 38.

Social welfare was another related issue. As to whether they received organizational support, the participants list the Pearl Buck Foundation, the Wilson Foundation, the Hanmi (Korea America) Foundation, as well as the Korean government. Support came in various forms that included the subsidization of school fees, providing short-term shelter, small monthly living stipends (once qualified), as well as vocational programs. While these different methods of support alleviated hardship to some degree, social welfare itself was also a problem as Yi T'aek-ki notes, "There is another aspect to this. Korean society brought out too much of our dependence. From having received help from a young age, we have trouble being self-reliant and have become dependent on those who supported us. We've gotten used to an easy-going attitude of thinking something will work out or that someone will help us."[83] Yi's comment gestures towards a perceived laziness (and echoes Ch'oe's statement in "Mixed-Blood Person") created by years of welfare dependence. However, rather than social welfare creating laziness per se, due to the extreme social ostracization they were met with, mixed-race Koreans were unable to push past the poverty line and were compelled to rely on social welfare for survival. Therefore, being self-sufficient was a primary narrative in the discourse on mixed-race Koreans. By admitting that they themselves have "gotten used to an easy-going attitude of thinking something will work out," Yi contributes to this discourse of laziness even as welfare was one of the few methods by which mixed-race Koreans and their mothers were able to survive.

This binary of self-reliance and support plays out in No Ch'ŏl-su's talk of his time working as a subcontractor at the Hyundai Shipyard in Ŭlsan with other mixed-race Koreans:

> What I felt from that experience was that those lending help should not help in a manner that prevents self-reliance, similar to that of raising pigs. If you're going to help then don't just offer a little then assume the person can't follow through and give up. Instead, stick it through. Or, just leave us alone so that we can figure things out on our own. When fire from one's foot falls off, it naturally extinguishes on its own. And,

[83] Ibid, 36.

> if you came to help extinguish a fire that fell from another's foot, then see it through and extinguish it instead of complaining about it not burning out.[84]

The shipyard experience gave No the rare chance of working with other mixed-race Koreans. The environment of camaraderie amongst his colleagues made a dramatic difference not only in their productivity but their confidence in themselves, resulting in the successful completion of the hired work. Having consistently experienced stereotypes of being lazy, stupid, or unable to do a job, the temporary work at the Hyundai Shipyard emboldened No to the realization that being in a supportive environment, without the constant micro-aggressions or blatant name calling, made a difference in one's ability to be self-reliant and become productive members of society. No's testimony corroborates the fact that mixed-race Koreans *can* be productive members if given fair opportunities. While Yi's story above implies that mixed-race Koreans can fall into laziness, No's discussion illustrates that laziness was not natural but circumstantial.

The issue of advocacy was also interlinked with social welfare support. That is, how government funds were dispersed had only compounded the problem. For instance, No noted that once qualified as a "disadvantaged mixed-blood," the village office can recommend you to the national government to receive welfare checks of 7,000 won a month.[85] While this small bit of money is welcome over none at all, Yi Taek-ki suggests, "Rather than the government give 7,000 won a month to individuals, it would be better if all mixed-blood problems should be addressed through the sole mixed-blood organization, HAPA, by some organized policy effort."[86] In essence, instead of distributing small sums of money per month to individuals, No recognized the power in directing funds to a central organization dedicated to supporting mixed-race

[84] Ibid, 37.

[85] 7,000 won in 1979 amounts to about 48,000 won in 2020, or about 44 U.S. dollars.

[86] Kim K'wae-sang, "I ttang ŭi honhyŏlin aegaedo haebag ŭl," 39.

Koreans by mixed-race Koreans.

The organization, HAPA, did offer a number of services for mixed-race Koreans.[87] Founded on November 21, 1971, the club was for adults eighteen years or over and at the time of the roundtable, had 476 registered members. HAPA organized volunteer community service, athletic competitions, vocational training, English study groups, helped with job placement and medical care, and had organized bible study for those interested. The club clearly offered a number of community services that coincided with other social welfare services but the difference lay in their orientation. Returning to No's earlier argument about self-reliance, the club was perhaps one of the few if not only organizations that was for mixed-race Koreans by mixed-race Koreans, thereby offering a sense of empowerment welfare support could never provide.

Yet, the issue of political power and advocacy still hung in the air. As a social and community organization, HAPA was relatively successful, yet shifting government priorities or changing policies was another matter. For No, if HAPA were directly supported by the Korean government in some manner, it would indicate that the government was interested in real change. Instead, HAPA existed precariously, much like its members, as it relied on funding from the Wilson Foundation, the Hanmi Foundation, and membership dues. This narrative reveals the ambiguous position of the government that avoided providing substantial support to HAPA, which had they done so would in turn indicate an acknowledgement that mixed-race Koreans were a Korean problem rather than an overseas issue.

While there were no laws barring mixed-race Koreans from entering any avenue of

[87] The article does not explain how the club was named HAPA. Because it is capitalized, it may seem like an acronym. However, the world itself is a Hawaiian term meaning "portion, fragment," and has been (and continues to be) used to refer to "mixed blood" Hawaiians. How the founding members came upon this term is an interesting question I currently do not have the answer to.

employment, as noted earlier, the social and economic barriers and stereotypes affixed on mixed-race Koreans made gainful employment unlikely. However, obstacles to entering the military was even more blatant, "Because of President Park's decree in 1973, we cannot enter the military or even the reserves. It is not an exemption but a deferment. So it's not that we don't have to go to the military but rather that they will not accept us."[88] In response to Kim K'wae-sang's comment that most men want to avoid military service, Yi T'aek-ki notes that, "That's a different circumstance. You could consider it a military exemption, but it is entirely different when you want to go and they will not allow you to enter. When you get a physical, they accept elementary school graduates, the crippled, orphans, and the mentally retarded for at least reservist duty but not mixed-bloods."[89] The law was established under the premise that mixed-race Korean males were being saved from unnecessarily harsh discrimination.

However, barring mixed-race Korean males from the military only proved to the broader Korean society that they were not part of the polity. Moreover, military service was an integral part of the process men underwent in gaining ready employment thereafter. Without the record of military service, employers did not look kindly on those without military service as it was seen as unpatriotic. In many ways, without Korean military service, males were not considered men in a society that promoted militarized heteromasculinity. The barring of military service, therefore, created further impediments rather than relief for mixed-race Korean males.

On the topic of romantic relationships, the group of young men seemed to agree that mixed-race Korean women had the upper hand, "I am not sure about other aspects but in the case of marriage, women have an advantage. For women, as long as the man is accepting there aren't

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[88] Ibid, 35.

[89] Ibid.

many issues, but for men it becomes complicated."[90] Chŏng Wang-gi refers to a gendered Korean society that calls for men to be providers and women as homemakers. For Chŏng, it becomes more "complicated" for men because of the expectation that as husbands and fathers to-be, they must be financially solvent. He continues, "Amongst our members, for men, there is a higher ratio of marrying Korean women. Women also, but there are more cases of women marrying foreigners and moving abroad. So even at HAPA, women have more power than the men (laughter). For men, they must blaze a trail on their own but for women, they just need to find a good partner."[91] Chŏng's comment brings up the fact that at least observationally, mixed-race women appear to have more "options" because they have the possibility of dating American soldiers stationed in Korea in addition to dating Korean men.

Yet, what these options reveal was not only the racism but the heteropaternal structure that mixed-race Koreans were navigating to survive in South Korea. With the societal norm of this era expecting all Korean women to marry and be good mothers, mixed-race Korean women were ironically at an "advantage" against their male counterparts as they theoretically had the option of finding Korean or American husbands who could provide a stable life. Whether this was the case was another matter. Like the case of mixed-race Korean men, any relationships with Korean men would need to undergo the scrutiny of his family, while relationships with American soldiers did not guarantee a legal binding contract of marriage.

For those present at the roundtable, No Ch'ŏl-su explained his own romantic predicament:

> I have said to my girlfriend that although I am mixed-blood, my love is pure, I will work a hundred times harder, to not think of my future negatively and to believe in me. While she accepts this, her family has questioned whether I am Korean or American and say

[90] Ibid, 39.

[91] Ibid.

> I'm neither. So, I argued back. I said, my living environment, education, way of thinking all are Korean so why are you saying I'm not Korean? And they said that that's me thinking like that but do people around me think of me that way? After that I didn't respond. … Although we love each other because I am an *issei* I experience a lot of attacks that I cannot respond to.[92]

While No was still in his relationship at the time, the difficulties of gaining family acceptance was yet another obstacle to overcome in the path to adulthood.

Unlike the articles before and after, "Liberation Also for this Country's Mixed-Bloods" offered space for mixed-race (male) youth to speak for themselves and address the socio-economic barriers preventing them from advancing beyond subsistence. The topics covered: education, work, military service, social welfare support, and romance bring to light the lived experiences of mixed-race Koreans and the challenges they faced in being recognized and accepted into South Korean society. The structural and social discriminations they faced speak to processes that prevented their entry into Korean personhood, and as No's argument for governmental support of the HAPA club attests, direct government action and support were needed, without which mixed-race Koreans continued to exist in liminality. The relevance of this piece lies in its mobilization of testimony in substantiating the discourse on mixed-race Koreans by liberal Korean writers. By testifying to the various levels of discrimination they had experienced, mixed-race Koreans corroborated the sympathetic narratives that also pathologized their circumstances. Even as they critiqued the structural conditions that made their lives impossible, their answers helped reinforce the "tragedy" of being "mixed-blood." Next, we see an article written just a few years after the publication of this roundtable event, detailing mixed-race Koreans through the lens of social welfare. Statistics once again come into play as the writer offers his recommendations on the "mixed-blood problem," while the voices of mixed-race

[92] Ibid, 31.

Koreans are again silenced in favor of the paternal perspectives of well-meaning Koreans.

VII. Another Statistical Study

In the December 1982 special edition on youth welfare in the journal, *Sahoe Pokchi* (*Social Welfare*), Kim Kap-chu writes on the current conditions of mixed-race Korean youths. Statistics play an even stronger role in this professional journal as Kim begins with an extensive demographic report on the population of mixed-race Koreans, reviewing everything from their living conditions to their desires for their future. While these numbers cannot be entirely accurate as there was no method that could account for every single mixed-race Korean in Korea, it offers a detailed baseline mode of assessment. Moreover, as can be observed from earlier works, Korean writers have used statistics to impress upon the public the importance of the "mixed-blood problem." Whether it is to warn against a population rise or in the case of this particular article, to offer a sociological analysis of a marginalized group, statistics played an integral role in accounting for both the material and psychic circumstances for mixed-race Koreans. Through the aggregation of numbers, writers like Kim produced narratives about mixed-race Koreans that emphasized their need for assistance and the rationale for proper governance. Caring for mixed-race Koreans was not only good for them but good for society as a whole. I will summarize some key points in Kim's report before moving onto his detailed analysis.

Total count. He points to the numerical decline of mixed-race Koreans, which counted 1,692 in 1973 and 892 in 1982.[93] The decline was attributed to overseas adoption, study abroad, and lower birthrates.

Sex and race ratios, and age range. When it came to sex and race ratios, at the time of his

[93] Kim Kap-chu, "Han'guk honhyŏl ch'ŏngsonyŏn ŭi pokchi munje" [The Welfare Problem of Korea's Mixed-Blood Teenagers], *Sahoe pokchi,* December 1982, 110. This section, from "Total Count" to "Going abroad or settling in Korea," is a mix of translation (including the subtitles) and my own summary.

writing 43.3% were white Korean males, 28.2% white Korean females, 18% Black Korean males, and 10.5% Black Korean females. These numbers were explained as girls being preferred for adoption over boys, and more sexual relations between Korean women and white servicemen compared to Black servicemen.[94] The age ranged from 47% being 0-7 years old, 21% being 8-19 years old, and 20 years old or older comprised 32%. The reason for children between 8-19 years being the smallest percentage was again attributed to overseas adoption whereas the older youths were too old to be considered as prospects. Another point of consideration was that the numbers of mixed-race Koreans fluctuated depending on whether there were troop withdrawals. Kim refers to these fluctuations as "episodic."[95]

Location. Regionally, Kyŏnggi province had the largest percentage of mixed-race Koreans with 43%, Seoul with 19%, then Pusan with 10%. Other regions were minimal, each ranging from 1%-7% of the total counted mixed-race Korean population. Three primary spaces inhabited by mixed-race Koreans were camptowns, big cities, and the countryside. The assumption was that those living in and around camptowns had mothers who worked as sex workers or who were somehow connected to the trade. The camptown provided some form of livelihood and also hope of leaving for the United States as they lived and worked with foreigners. It was also a space where mixed-race Koreans did not stand out in the same way they would in other parts of Korea. Those living in large cities tended to be young adults looking for work, and those in the countryside tended to be living with their mother's families or placed there to be hidden, a small percentage may have been in the countryside for work or because they were living with foster families.

[94] I also suspect that there were more white than Black servicemen but I'll need to confirm this.

[95] Written in Korean via an English transliteration as literally *ep'isodŭjŏgin.* Kim Kap-chu, "Han'guk honhyŏl ch'ŏngsonyŏn," 111.

Education. With regards to education, 21% attended preschool, 15% dropped out, 5% attended elementary school, 7% attended middle school, 15% attended high school, 33% were enrolled in college, and 3% were college graduates. The large percentage of drop outs happened during middle and high school years. Livelihood and a need to work was another reason for dropping out.[96]

Living situation. The living situations of mixed-race Koreans were relegated as such: 34% lived with their mothers, 9% lived with their mothers and step fathers, 5% with their mothers and half-siblings, 5% with foster parents, 9% with relatives, 6% in either orphanages or institutions of some kind, 5% lived on their own, 13% were living with their spouses, 13% with other mixed-Korean siblings in a single-family household.[97]

Employment. Regarding employment, as per the earlier numbers, 21% were preschoolers, 33% were students, 19% were unemployed or did free labor, 17% worked in an office or in entertainment, 10% were housewives or work with the U.S. Eighth Army or similar institution. Overall, there were very few firm career paths for mixed-race Koreans and teenagers often tried their hand in the music industry where there was less prejudice.

Physical living spaces. Mixed-race Koreans lived in a variety of spaces but overwhelmingly 60% lived in rented rooms, 22% lived in apartments or houses that were typically of poor condition, 5% lived in institutional facilities, and 13% lived with foster parents, relatives, or on their own. Kim believed that their housing precarity further contributed to their lack of well-being.

Quality of life. Quality of life was measured by self-sufficiency level in which 3% were

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[96] Ibid, 112.

[97] Ibid.

considered at a high level, 30% average, 45% below average, 14% were on some sort of welfare, and 10% were on extreme poverty welfare. Moreover, the self-sufficiency level was measured based on managing basic needs, and relief was distributed to those who could not work at any level.[98]

Family background. In reiterating the background from which mixed-race Koreans were raised, 70% were raised by their mothers, 5% were raised by foster parents, 10% were raised by relatives, 15% were on their own or in institutions. Kim concludes that based on these findings, the issue of appearance and the problems it caused for mixed-race Koreans were less important than environmental factors.

Going abroad or settling in Korea. In imagining their futures, 89% wanted to immigrate overseas. Those who wanted to settle in Korea amounted to 11%. In the circumstances that led to the births of mixed-race Koreans, Kim deduces that it was due to: the “sacrifice” of the mother to help her family, was escaping Korea when she fell into relations with a U.S. soldier, fell in love, raped, was working in the Army base when relations developed, or worked as a “prostitute” due to issues of livelihood. The empiricism of these studies helps ground Kim’s narrative within a landscape of poverty and postwar circumstance. While these possibilities may very well be true, Kim’s simplification erases the personal narratives and subjectivities of the mothers in question. Within these circumstances, mothers of mixed-race Koreans desired to go abroad over everything else. As children of “prostitutes,” mixed-race Korean children experienced difficulty assimilating into Korean society. In considering the urgency of this issue, Kim writes that the reader needed to consider the distribution of camptowns across Korea: Tongduchŏn, Ŭijŏngbu, P’aju, Munsan, Songt'an, Taegu, Waegwan, Pusan, Kwangju, Changdong, all of which held

[98] Ibid, 113. My guess is that the relief distribution was for mentally or physically handicapped persons.

countless social problems.

In explicating the issues mixed-race Koreans dealt with, Kim categorizes them as: social, family, regional/environmental, educational, mental/emotional, comparison between Korean vs. mixed-race Korean teenagers, economic, and issues related to physical appearance. Kim writes, "In a society that views itself as racially homogenous and reveres patriarchy, fatherless mixed-bloods have difficulty entering society and aspire towards a future. The image of 'mixed-blood' minorities projected by mass media is that of a problem child, resulting in Korean society's passive attitude towards mixed-raced people. Mass media has portrayed 'mixed-bloods' as outsiders to the point that they themselves have internalized this attitude, and through the use of such terms that identify them as other they are denied connection to Korean society."[99]

Moreover, Kim refers to how the term "mixed-blood," implied a negative association with U.S. military prostitution. With mixed-race Koreans being viewed as children of prostitutes, the association further snowballed into other relevant aspects of social life that included love relationships and marriage. Kim's analysis of mainstream media's portrayal of mixed-race Koreans highlights how mixed-race Koreans have been othered and pathologized through discursive means. Moreover, while Kim uncritically references the rhetoric of *tanil minjok* (racially homogenous nation) and patriarchy as structures that already impede the lives of mixed-race Koreans, as I have noted in my introduction, it is these two frameworks combined that ultimately constructed the "mixed-blood problem."

The issue of family becomes complicated for mixed-race Koreans, "The deficient love that is the result of being raised by a single mother or the conflict that could arise with a stepfather, the introversion that develops due to growing up with siblings with a different father,

[99] Ibid, 114.

the desire to have a normal family, the desire to meet their American father, the whispers arising from relatives, the glares from neighbors, the suspicion of their mothers' situations, all of these difficult aspects they grapple with, they grapple with alone. These are issues only one cross-section of society—the mixed-blood family—experiences."[100] The non-normative and discordant family, in combination with social ostracism, was a situation only mixed-race Koreans experienced, according to Kim. Kim's advocacy is clear in his empathetic description, at the same time he contributes to the pathologization of the mixed-race Korean's family due to the absence of the biological father. Even as Kim critiques the inequitable structural conditions mixed-race Koreans lived under, his subscription to patriarchal norms helps cement the deviance of the mixed-race Korean family.

Moreover, where and how mixed-race Koreans were raised were often centered on the camptown experience, "For the most part, the development of their characters and social adjustment are deeply affected by growing up near bases and orphanages (facilities), and in unstable families. Those growing up near the military base have such close relationships with the (U.S.) military that the term 'camptown life' was developed to describe the experience. Therefore, the work of separating mixed-bloods from the [influence of their] local environment is in my judgement an indispensable necessity."[101] Social environment alone was not the culprit of the maladjusted mixed-race Korean but education also played an important role.

Kim writes that the Korean education system was founded on Confucian ethics, which centered respect for one's parents. Yet mixed-race Koreans disrespected their mothers. In addition, "With a face that only befits to speak fluent English, is it not the sorrow of mixed-

[100] Ibid, 115.

[101] Ibid.

bloods to speak in forced English after having received second-rate language instruction?"[102] Kim excoriates the education system for ultimately failing mixed-race Koreans in their lack of respect for their mothers, of providing substandard and heterogenous curriculums that make it difficult for mixed-race Koreans to properly focus, and in particular providing poor English-language education that could have otherwise benefitted mixed-race Koreans. Kim argues that there was no system that could educate mixed-race Koreans to be competitive and confident in their intellect, noting that, "It is noteworthy that not a single person, other than mixed-bloods, has not achieved the honor roll at some point during their school days."[103]

Kim's focus here on the social environment and quality of education experienced by mixed-race Koreans brings to light the socio-economic impediments that not only prevented mixed-race Koreans from achieving their potential, but in fact were major contributors to their formation as one of South Korea's underclass. Growing up in camptowns and—as Kim subtly implied—being exposed to military prostitution, raised in unstable families and in institutions, and receiving a third-rate education all contributed to a dispossessed subject who was easily identified by the color of their skin and their not-quite-Asian appearance.

Kim also recognized that mixed-race Koreans needed to psychologically liberate themselves as *honhyŏlin*:

> It is not difficult to define oneself in the special category of mixed-blood. On one hand, one's appearance makes obvious the connection to America and one need only to conform to such expectations, while on the other hand one's inner self is shaped by Korea, the land of one's birth. In this way a conflict develops as neither side can be discarded. Because regardless of what part, human beings desire to belong and within that belonging to be true to oneself … As Rousseau stated, adolescents undergo two forms of rebirths in order to become a member of society: the first being physical and the second psychological. However, for our mixed-blood teen, they must undergo yet a third rebirth that others do not need to think about, that is the concept of 'mixed-

[102] Ibid, 116.

[103] Ibid.

blood,' which ought to be exorcised.[104]

Kim describes how coming of age for mixed-race youths also meant contending with their liminal subjectivity between being American and Korean. The burden of being *honhyŏlin* was one that mixed-race Korean youths needed to bear yet also overcome. Kim does not offer any specific prescription on how to do so but recognized that their lived experience differentiated their outlook from their non-mixed-race peers, "growing up, somewhere along the line, the point of reference [for these two groups] differed in their observations and discernments of the world around them, and mixed-bloods cannot but hold a different perspective that transcends the nation[105] …" In other words, Kim substantiates that mixed-race Koreans' perspectives were informed by their experience growing up as outsiders in Korea. Therefore, their collective outlook on life was incompatible with those who never had to question their belonging to the nation-state.

Gainful employment was another major topic. Kim believed that the ability to financially support oneself was one of the biggest issues mixed-race Koreans faced. As a minority group associated with the U.S. military and prostitution, social ostracism of the mothers of mixed-race Koreans ultimately resulted in the families' economic impoverishment. According to Kim, in the last ten years approximately twenty relief organizations, including the Pearl Buck Foundation, the United World Mission, the Korea-America Foundation, the Good Shepherd Convent, Father Alfred Keane, to a lesser degree the state's social welfare department, and previously the U.S. military, were involved in aiding mixed-race Koreans, "However, in aiding those who suffer deprivation, the relief organizations encouraged dependency, causing bad habits among mixed-

[104] Ibid, 117.

[105] Ibid.

bloods and promoting the need for perpetual U.S. aid."[106] Echoing Ch'oe Kwan-sik in the 1974 article and Yi T'aek-ki in the 1979 roundtable, Kim also underscores the duality of social welfare in both assisting and debilitating mixed-race Koreans. In Kim's eyes, the well-meaning support resulted in inhibiting self-reliance and contributing to misery.

In a section labeled, "The Problem of the Body" Kim returns to the important role physiognomy played in the identification and discrimination against mixed-race Koreans, "It is true that the blonde hair from infancy fades away … However, other factors cannot be hidden such as one's large frame and tall height, or the American body odor that was probably inherited from their fathers, and there have been instances where wet ear wax determined whether one was mixed-blood or not. Other than the prominent nose, sunken-in eyes with double eyelids, and the long eyelashes, mixed-bloods look a lot like their mothers. If one's appearance poses a problem to exist within Korean society, isn't it time to consider our role and reflect otherwise in this modernizing world?"[107] Kim calls for Korean society to be reflexive and move past their xenophobia. However, his generalized description of the physical attributes of mixed-race Koreans also contributed to the racializing narrative that distinguished mixed-race Koreans from their compatriots. Body size, odor, large noses and eyes, and wet (vs. dry) ear wax all of these racialized eugenics-oriented descriptions support the claims of difference and unbelonging even as Kim writes of the resemblance mixed-race youths had to their Korean mothers.

At the time of Kim's writing, the Amerasian Immigration Act of 1982 had passed, offering hope for mixed-race Koreans to immigrate to the United States. Kim viewed the act as a great possibility for mixed-race Koreans to determine their lives—whether to leave or stay—

[106] Ibid, 118.

[107] The Korean title is, "Yukch'ejŏgin munje," which also can be interpreted as "The Bodily Problem," or "The Corporeal Problem," or "The Physical Problem." Ibid, 119.

where previously, options did not exist. However, it is unclear whether Kim understood the stipulations for immigration under the act, which largely limited eligibility. Even as Kim discussed the act as one option, he recognized that not all will or can leave. For both possibilities, Kim considered the challenges that lay ahead, then offered methods for mixed-race Koreans to manage their social and psychological situation. He writes,

> First, let us attempt to understand the essence of the self by clarifying how one's consciousness has developed from past to present and to see if we can then resolve those issues:
>
> 1. I was born in Korea.
> 2. I have a Korean mother and an American (or European) father.
> 3. Because of Korea's ethnic nationalism, I experienced internal conflict and a feeling of inferiority. Since America is a heterogenous nation state wouldn't such feelings disappear?
> 4. My physical appearance definitely resembles a Westerner.
> 5. Until now, Americans have given me aid.
> 6. Korean society is patriarchal and Koreans treat those with Western looks as foreigners and have a tendency to look down on the circumstances of one's birth.
>
> Mixed-bloods evade these points above and instead think like this: "Let's go to a place where no one knows of the circumstances of our birth and where we can live our own lives." This kind of thinking comes from the desire to emerge from mental and material anguish, reflecting the difficulties of social participation, overcoming economic adversity, and living in a society that neglects the notion of all human beings as equal. I propose we solve this through these next steps. 1) To hold a broad worldview and think of oneself as a warrior of a heterogenous world where one can rediscover the self through a new consciousness, 2) To receive an education and thereby improve one's marketable skills in order to be economically competitive (of course in the meantime be guaranteed subsistence), 3) To inspire an independent Juche consciousness by formulating an equitable notion of social belonging, 4) To improve one's own environment, 5) If an outsider becomes an enthusiastic can-do person in their own way, regardless of what society they are in they will be able to be proactive and full of confidence. However, these mixed-blood-specific issues can only be resolved by addressing other concurrent issues. The circumstances that caused the problems experienced by mixed-bloods are as follows:
>
> 1. Issues concerning the mothers of mixed-bloods (social ostracism and military prostitution)
> 2. The pressure to be uniform within social groups (sharing system)
> 3. Business policy decisions made by the government
> 4. If we can accurately analyze the problems arising from their environs and have an honest conversation with mixed-bloods since they best understand the problems they face, then what we call the 'mixed-blood problem' would disappear, and in its stead the topic would transform to a discussion on what kind of great worker one had become . . .

> In conclusion, I hope that we can encourage our mixed-blood youths who have tried their best in their roles and duties to be members of our society as fellow compatriots, and I hope for the consideration of Korean society so that our mixed-blood youths can more directly attain wisdom especially during these sensitive teenage years, and [finally I] stress that liberation from dependence is the solution to many of these problems.[108]

The first section of this quote is a series of statements that Kim believed that mixed-race Korean youths must accept before working towards change. Kim then critiques the attitudes of those who wanted to escape from Korea without having thought through their next steps. His solution was to encourage open-mindedness, education, independent thinking, and incorporating a "can-do" attitude—or being a *yŏljŭng in'gan* (passionate human), that would, in his opinion, help achieve success. At the same time, he recognizes that his solutions could not be enacted without resolving the structural issues that plagued the mixed-race Korean community. His last suggestion, of having an "honest conversation" did not seem to take into account that mixed-race Koreans have been speaking but that no one was listening.

Ending on a hopeful note, Kim looks to the future when mixed-race Korean youths could take their destinies into their own hands and transform themselves into productive members of society. Kim's work contributed to a growing study on mixed-race youths that were aimed at providing solutions. Compared with earlier writings, the perspective from which this article was written was one that was highly cognizant of the structural inequities that made life difficult for mixed-race youths. Yet even Kim could not entirely avoid racializing language while at the same time pointing out how social norms, and the lack of government involvement and the over-involvement of foreign aid organizations have contributed to their marginalization. This mixture of thinking was representative of those interested in the welfare of mixed-race Koreans.

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[108] Ibid, 121-22.

VIII. Revisiting the Amerasian in 1982

Again in 1982, an article on mixed-race Koreans was published in the yearly university journal, *Oedae,* of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. Written by the editorial team and titled, "Those Amerasians …," this long-form reportage was divided into three parts: historical background, interviews with mixed-race Koreans and social workers in Tongduch'ŏn and Songt'an, and potential resolutions to alleviate the challenges faced by mixed-race Koreans. The writers offer a complex portrait by situating the contemporaneous condition of mixed-race Koreans within a longer postcolonial history that involved decades-long successive military dictatorships:

> Therefore, the issue of 'mixed-blood children' should also be understood within this historical context. They are an outgrowth of the U.S. military that had deeply settled on the Korean peninsula, and are a by-product of the tragedy of our fratricidal war. Over a period of thirty years, they emerged as a social problem that shook the very core of society; now that the Korean peninsula is no longer an isolated 'frog in a well,' we must reduce the need to improve our consciousness as a member of the international community. From this standpoint, we need to recognize these births along with the bone-aching reality of our history, and that the lives of mixed-blood children are a counter-evidence to history; we want to understand what their lives are like, what their consciousness as Koreans are like, what their thinking towards Koreans are like, and based on our findings we hope to come up with the best conclusion (*kyŏllon*). However, the probability that the term 'conclusion' itself is already irresponsible and careless is very high.[109]

The writers were aware of their limitations to offer a neat conclusion to a social issue that had been decades in the making. They acknowledged that due to a combination of war and foreign occupation, the stigma attached to "mixed-bloods," was not of their making. In addition, as this is a student journal, while the names of the writers were not listed, the reporting was likely done by college students. The tone of the writing markedly differs in its spirit of alliance compared to earlier writings.

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[109] Editorial team, "Amerasian (*Amer-Asian*) kŭdŭrŭn …" [Those Amerasians …], *Oedae* 17 (1982): 340.

The use of the term, "Amerasian" also plays an important role in the publication of this article in 1982. The fact that the English-language term, used in conjunction with *honhyŏl,* is addressed in this issue is not surprising as 1982 ushered in the Amerasian Immigration Act (PL 97-359), the first of two rather unsuccessful U.S. immigration laws to account for the thousands of children fathered by U.S. military personnel in Korea, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Thailand. In fact, it is likely that the articles in this issue were a response to the law, which had garnered much global interest.

The writers note that while the concept of *honhyŏl* would apply to any person who is a mixture of two or more "pure" ethnic groups, the way reporters have covered *honhyŏl* identify the term with those second or even third generations born after 1950 with Korean mothers and American G.I. fathers. In English, "These mixed-bloods are called *Amerasian.*"[110] Referencing Pearl Buck's invention of the term, the writers point to its etymology, drawing from American + Asian, and categorize mixed-race Koreans as Amerasians since most had American fathers, because "as long as the U.S. military is stationed on this land, it is but a natural consequence."[111] According to their report of the Ministry of Health, *honhyŏl* or Amerasian were "children born of fraternization with U.S. soldiers during the Korean War," of which 1,500 were officially accounted for as they were declared on family registers (*hojŏk*). However, the reporters suggest that as many as 15,000 mixed-race Koreans remain in Korea with most living in camptowns like Tongduch'ŏn, Songt'an, Munsan, Ch'unch'ŏn, Ŭijŏngbu, and Waegwan, where they are more accepted and accustomed to life.

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[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid.

Fathers or the lack thereof was another primary aspect in the reporters' description of mixed-race Koreans, "For mixed-bloods, the concept of father is a distanced one. The man their mother is with for the time being for work is briefly called father. So mixed-bloods have no father, yet have many fathers."[112] As can be gleaned from the passage, those mixed-race Koreans whose mothers work as sex workers interacted with or were exposed to clients who were likely in a cohabitation agreement for a duration of some months. While the article does not shame mixed-race Koreans for not having fathers, their subjectivity was very much entangled in that absence. That is, their illegitimacy as Koreans was not only tied to their racial heterogeneity but to the assumption, true or not, that their fathers had abandoned them. Within the heteropaternal structure of a postwar militarized Korean society, recognition by the father—regardless of his nationality—meant personhood in the eyes of Korean society.

For the subjects of this article, none appeared to have consistent and responsible fathers, with their mothers often being their sole provider. Rarely in these discourses do we hear the voices of the mothers, either depicted as irresponsible, wayward women or just entirely omitted. Interestingly, the opinions of one woman, referred to only as B's mother, offers some insight into the thinking of at least one mother of mixed-race Koreans living in camptowns, "Even those children who have the possibility of getting adopted to the U.S. sometimes reject themselves. This is because they can't bear the thought of leaving their lonely mothers behind. There are also those who say that they will return for their mothers and bring them to the U.S. or that they will return to Korea to settle down."[113] The comment suggests that mixed-race Korean children were not all orphans (in fact, the majority were not), as often depicted in humanitarian discourse, but

[112] Ibid, 342.

[113] Ibid, 342-43.

some if not many had strong bonds with their mothers and were indeed deeply cared for, regardless of their impoverished circumstances.

However, on the subject of departure, B's mother insists, "But we must send them. On Korean soil, those kids are not treated as humans. For those women who have settled in this area, their biggest wish is to find a G.I. and go to America. Of course, it is ideal if the whole family can move together but if you feel regretful about letting your child go and you lose that [precious] time for adoption, then the child's future is ruined. For mixed-blood kids, going to America is the wisest choice."[114] Like many of the writers I have analyzed in this chapter, B's mother also suggests moving abroad as the ideal option for mixed-race Koreans. Yet her perspective is not one of a distanced observer or a concerned social worker. As a parent, her comment provides added weight, demonstrating her care and acknowledgement of the suffering of mixed-race Korean children. Moreover, her remark also illustrates that mothers of mixed-race Koreans were not—as commonly depicted—careless, licentious women but were loving, practical mothers who recognized that mixed-race Koreans could not live freely in South Korean society and access the same opportunities offered to their "monoracial" peers.

Departure, then, was a last-ditch solution to the "mixed-blood issue." However, departure would not be a necessary option were mixed-raced Koreans treated equitably. The issue of equity was often framed as an issue of opportunity, with access to employment being first and foremost. The cumulative experience of being teased and bullied by peers, and of being discriminated against by teachers and neighborhood adults made school learning difficult if not impossible for mixed-race Koreans. Therefore, leaving was not just about the possibility of living somewhere more socially accepting but about accessing opportunities for academic advancement and steady

[114] Ibid, 343.

employment that were denied in all but name in South Korea. It was a rare student who attended high school and even rarer to have attended college.

Yet, even those who learned skilled labor had trouble getting work because of their racial background. Several of the interviews point to a pattern where one undergoes training in trades like auto-mechanics or woodworking, receives the proper certificate but still cannot get hired. Here was one such case, "'When I was at the training center I learned to drive and do auto repair. If only there was somewhere to work, because I wish to have a job …' Unable to finish his sentence, he appeared to regret his circumstances of having learned a skill yet unable to apply them anywhere."[115] In another instance, the reporters relate the story of J, who was recently trained in woodworking. J, along with two applicants who were not mixed-race Korean, took a skills test at a woodworking testing site and finished under five minutes whereas the other two applicants required more time. Yet the results of the exam were ignored. Instead, the potential employer replied, "How could I trust a half-breed and assign him work?! Our company cannot hire him."[116] Reactions such as these were common towards mixed-race Koreans, not only limiting employment options but cementing a sense of hopelessness and worthlessness. As one interviewee remarks, "There's no point in studying, and we can't move elsewhere because we are too ashamed, so we just strum our guitars at home every day and we've become quite good with instruments."[117]

The editorial team offered a four-part suggestion that partially coincides with previous solutions by other writers in this chapter as well as by English-language writers I discuss in

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[115] Ibid.

[116] Ibid, 346.

[117] Ibid.

Chapter 2. First, was the question of U.S. citizenship. Comparing a similar situation in Vietnam, the writers mistakenly assume that Vietnamese "mixed-bloods" were immediately granted U.S. citizenship and assert that, "The logic that mixed-bloods cannot belong to either country paradoxically indicates that they can belong to both, and in order for them to spread roots in a country it is only fundamental that an institutional strategy be provided."[118] Implying that mixed-race Koreans should also have access to U.S. citizenship, the writers propose that at the very least—because adoption had been the primary method of immigrating to the U.S.—the adoption age limit of thirteen be abolished. Second, the team believed that South Korea's in-country support required improvement by providing financial aid for school fees, offering opportunities to study abroad, as well as access to some form of professional training center where one's vocational training would not waste away from disuse due to unemployment. Third, they ask that Korean society be self-reflexive of its fixation on social hierarchy, meaning that its treatment of "average mixed-bloods" should not differ from its treatment of foreigners, or even of mixed-race Korean children of high-ranking military officials.[119]

Moreover, they point to the hypocrisy around Korean society's attitude towards the U.S. military, "Even as we believe that the U.S. military is needed to maintain security [on the Korean peninsula], it is ironic and a fundamental problem of self-reflection that we have turned a blind eye to the U.S. military's inevitable by-product—the births of mixed-bloods."[120] The writers suggest that South Korea wanted to benefit from military protection without the consequences of having foreign troops on Korean soil. Lastly, they encourage mixed-race Koreans to liberate

[118] Ibid, 351.

[119] Ibid, 352.

[120] Ibid.

themselves, suggesting that they need to "recover their sense of kinship and break down the walls of alienation."[121] They imply that mixed-race Koreans take matters into their own hands without relying on others, in other words to take responsibility for their own lives. Yet, how exactly they were to do this under what was effectively a life of social death remained a question unanswered.

A second article in the same issue of *Oedae* titled, "Please Raise Your Hand: Concerning the Consciousness of Mixed-Blood Persons and Our Standpoint," comes from the perspective of a Red Cross training center officer who had worked for three years with mixed-race youths in providing them with vocational skills. The writer, Kim Ch'ang-pae, spends the first half of the article challenging the notion of a racially homogenous Korean nation that could supposedly trace its lineage back to Tangun, the mythical originator of the Korean "race." In disputing this seemingly age-old concept of "pure-bloodedness," Kim writes, "Why are we so arrogant toward mixed-bloods when we are cowed by Americans, can't even yell 'Yankee go home!' and are suckers for American products?"[122] Kim takes Koreans to task by pointing to the hypocrisy of South Korean society in its appreciation of American products, culture, and military even as it ostracizes mixed-race Koreans for their American "blood." In an interesting turn of logic, Kim uses the military alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States to further his point, "We began the Korean War but when we ran into trouble, it was they who helped us and mixed-bloods are their descendants; therefore, are we not one hundred times ungrateful for abusing the children of our friends?" While there is much to unpack in this statement, I will focus on the fact that here, mixed-race Koreans are depicted as the children of friends, and

[121] Ibid.

[122] Kim Ch'ang-pae, "Sonjom tŭrŏ poseyo, honhyŏrin kŭdŭrŭi ŭisik kwa uri ŭi sigak e kwanhayŏ" [Please Raise Your Hand: Concerning the Consciousness of Mixed-Blood Persons and Our Standpoint], *Oedae* 17 (1982): 354.

thereby to abuse them reflects churlish behavior on the part of South Koreans. Yet, as I have attempted to prove, the problem was not that they were the children of friends but that they were the unwanted children of South Korea.

As the previous writings have already discussed, prejudice towards mixed-race Koreans translated into limited educational and employment opportunities. As a Red Cross training center officer, Kim attests to the realities in which businesses would refuse to hire them because of their background, "From July of 1980 to April of 1981, I was busy trying to get our recent trainees hired; however, I have personally witnessed that for the most part businesses would not bother to test their talents nor competence but would outright reject their applications citing the difficult (*kollanhada*) position they would be in by hiring mixed-bloods."[123]

Conditions such as these reinforced the desire to go abroad, yet in the rare occasion of such a move, Kim quotes a letter he had received from one of his former students:

> 'Teacher, in America I am being treated like a Korean. I feel a bit disappointed to be treated like this in my father's country, but I am not offended. Because my hometown is Korea and I am a Korean. Once I am finished with my studies, I plan to go back to Korea and do my best to advocate for those in similar circumstances.' Although I am not clear whether he will stay in America or go back to Korea after his studies, the fact that he proudly identified himself as Korean even though he had been mocked as a half-breed [here], I could not help but think of those other brazen descendants of Tangun who had escaped to America because they loathed Korea.[124]

The passage reveals that moving to the U.S. did not solve the social rejection mixed-race Koreans faced. Instead, they were met with a new form of othering as Koreans and Asians in America. The letter prompted Kim to consider the circumstances of other mixed-race Koreans who had the opportunity to leave for America and realize that departure was not necessarily a true solution.

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[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid, 355.

Kim's discourse is interesting not only because he spoke directly to his advocacy of mixed-race Korean youths but because of his interactions with other advocates outside of the Red Cross training center. For instance, with his passing remark of one Lieutenant Colonel W.L. Croson, a treasurer of the U.S. 2nd Division Mixed-Blood Association, we can see that there was cross dialogue with various agencies involved in the support of mixed-race Koreans, including the U.S. military itself. In response to Kim's statement that not only Korea but the U.S. also needed to take responsibility for mixed-race Koreans, Croson admitted that, "'Of course, we will not evade responsibility. But isn't this really a problem of humanity[?] It is natural in a place where there are men and women, we will try to resolve this but we cannot command soldiers to not consort with women.' He was right and there was nothing I could say."[125] Kim's summary of the discussion leaves out a major omission in Croson's response in that U.S. soldiers were not "naturally" meeting Korean women. Rather, fraternization was occurring because camptown prostitution was sanctioned by both the U.S. and Korean governments.[126] By excising this fact, Croson's response seems more than reasonable—as if the situation was not of the U.S. military's making; Kim partakes in this rationale. The question of responsibility takes on new meaning by underscoring this omission since the stigma attached to mixed-race Koreans of the postwar period was not merely due to race but in large part due to their connection to camptown prostitution.

Kim relates another experience, this time with participants of a two-month leadership workshop that took place in Singapore and Hong Kong in 1981 where he interacted with Asians from the two host countries as well as from the Philippines, Taiwan, and Indonesia. In one

[125] Ibid.

[126] See Katherine H.S. Moon's *Sex Among Allies* (New York: Columbia, 1997).

session where participants discussed social issues troubling their countries, the topic of mixed-race Koreans apparently stumped others, "'In a population of 35 million, how are they a problem?' I attempted to explain our custom of *tanil minjok* that emphasized the importance of blood but they didn't understand. For them, it wasn't a problem … I was frustrated. Why is it that other Asian nations who are socially, culturally, and economically similar to us did not find this to be an issue? Or is it that we are creating a problem that doesn't exist?"[127] By incorporating the puzzled responses of neighboring Asian nations, Kim highlights the constructedness of *tanil minjok* (single-race nation), questioning its validity as the foundation of South Korean identity. In these moments of hesitation, we can observe how writers like Kim realize that perhaps it is they who are creating the "mixed-blood problem."

IX. "Mixed-Blood" as Photographic Trope

In an article titled, "The Heartbreaking Wounds of War: Mun Sŏn-ho's Mixed-Blood Child," in the March 1985 issue of the photography magazine, *Yŏng Sang* (*Living Image*), writer Yi Hyŏng-nok writes a short piece on an image of a mixed-race Black child by photographer Mun Sŏn-ho. Labeled under the category, "Appreciating the Masterpiece" [Myŏngjak kamsang], Yi's writing is less about detailing the conditions of mixed-race Koreans and more about offering a retrospective review of a photograph taken in 1963 by a renown photographer.

The image is a low-angle close-up of a mixed-race Black boy under ten years old. He sits sullenly on a swing, holding the chains that neatly divide the frame into thirds. He stares off into the distance with one tear rolling down the right side of his face while on the far upper right-hand corner of the image is a distant bird flying away. For Yi, the photograph is a reminder of the Korean War. As he writes, "Although it has been a long time since the biggest hardship of our

[127] Kim, "Sonjom tŭrŏ poseyo," 356.

people and the tragic fraternal strife of 6.25, the by-product and unhealed scars of war have emerged as heartbreaking problems for society, which can be witnessed everywhere."[128] For Yi, mixed-race Koreans were a "by-product" (*pusanmul*) of war and viewed as reminders of a time gone by that continue to haunt present day (1980s) South Korean society. As such, they become ideal photographic subjects in Yi's essay that highlights war photography as a form of realism.

Yi situates Mun Sŏn-ho's work amongst American and European realist photographers like Henri Cartier Bresson, Robert Capa, and W. Eugene Smith, while also referencing Edward Steichen's legendary 1955 exhibition, *The Family of Man,* to indirectly link the photograph to the anti-war/global solidarity theme prevalent in the popular exhibition.[129] Yi's focus is the image from a strictly formalist photographic perspective. The subject of the photograph, the mixed-race Black child, is conceptual and Yi's concern revolves around whether the addition of the dove in flight over-exaggerates the meaning of the image. With aesthetics being the central concern, Yi concludes, "While there is this downside, Mun Sŏn-ho's 'Mixed-Blood Child,' allows us to once again ruminate the 6.25 tragedy, but because those wounds have yet to heal, our hearts are broken. Moreover, this shocking image is a reminder that war must never recur."[130]

The "Heartbreaking Wounds of War" offers an interesting layer to the discourse on mixed-race Koreans. Here, they are entirely representational and function as elements of pictorial

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[128] Yi Hyŏng-nok, "Kasŭmap'ŭn chŏllan ŭi sangch'ŏ: Mun Sŏn-ho ssi chakp'um honhyŏra" [The Heartbreaking Wounds of War: Mun Sŏn-ho's Mixed-Bloods], *Yŏng Sang*, March 1985, 72.

[129] *Family of Man* was notably Steichen's major achievement as MOMA's curator, bringing together hundreds of photographers worldwide and over 500 photographs that portrayed earth's common humanity as a postwar response to WWII. The exhibit's popularity resulted in its eight-year run that toured 38 countries and 91 cities until 1962. However, critics like Roland Barthes found it essentialist, while Allan Sekula considered it "the epitome of American cold war liberalism." See Alise Tifentāle, "The Family of Man: The Photography Exhibition that Everybody Loves to Hate," *FK Magazine,* July 2, 2018, https://fkmagazine.lv/2018/07/02/the-family-of-man-the-photography-exhibition-that-everybody-loves-to-hate/.

[130] Yi Hyŏng-nok, "Kasŭmap'ŭn chŏllan ŭi sangch'ŏ," 74.

art. Even as mixed-race Koreans are discussed as "heartbreaking problems for society, which can be witnessed everywhere," Yi writes about the boy as an anachronism—as a haunting image safely ensconced within the frame of the camera. Mixed-raceness is posed as part of a meditation on war and used to converse with Western photojournalistic practices of documentation that were concerned with photography's positionality between realism and art. Yi's take on Mun Sŏn-ho's "Mixed-Blood Child" is likely not far from the artist's own intention in using the figure of the mixed-race child to contemplate war as universal tragedy rather than as a particularity of South Korea's postwar relationship with the US military's presence on the Korean peninsula.

X. Conclusion

These articles, ranging between the 1940s and 1980s, illustrate the concerns and attitudes of a Korean writing public who spoke from varying perspectives. From heteropatriarchal viewpoints on deviant female sexuality, Christian female perspectives on the care and adoption of the mixed-race child, quantitative and qualitative analyses of a growing and aging mixed-race population in Korea, a roundtable concerning the opinions of mixed-race male youths, ethnographic long-form journalism of mixed-race youths in camptowns, "expert" opinion of one who worked and mentored mixed-race youths, to a review of a photograph of a mixed-race Black boy, the articles speak to the fact that mixed-race Koreans (counter to the discursive amnesia of contemporary 21st century writings on Korean multiculturalism) existed and that the broader Korean society was very much aware of their existence.

Moreover, even as their viewpoints differed, many of the writers also overlapped in their portrayal of mixed-race Korean children and youths as inherently tragic. The conditions of poverty and social ostracism were framed in a way that could not not draw out a distressing picture of a group marginalized due to race and social class. While the focus was on the

structural inequities and social discriminations mixed-race Koreans had encountered, it also helped reinforce a particular vision of mixed-race Koreans that situated them as an underclass. Over and over it seems, the discourse ran through vacillating demographic numbers along with a depiction of the despairing conditions of a disenfranchised postwar community. The repetitiousness itself is something to consider as the trope of the tragic mixed-race Korean was reiterated again and again. The reiteration also spilled into latter sections of many of the writings where writers attempted to offer solutions.

In an effort towards governance, towards knowing and managing an ostensibly intractable population, the first solution was that of international adoption. However, if this was not an option (due to the age of the child), the next solution was support for better education and work training. Yet, as evidenced by several of the writers, learning an employable skill did not prevent hiring or workplace discrimination, which only furthered the image of mixed-race Koreans (in particular males) to be perceived as lazy and unmotivated. The possibility of immigrating as young adults was also bandied about; yet, immigration was also not a surefire method since laws concerning the U.S. (as this was the primary destination) made it difficult to impossible without sponsors and monetary resources most mixed-race Koreans did not have. The final answer suggested by more than one writer was in improving the inner strength and flexibility of the mixed-race subject. It was through one's effort and strength of mind that one could somehow overcome the extreme ostracism one faced. In short, the writers had no viable solution because, as argued by No Ch'ŏl-su earlier in the roundtable, government support was needed to fight the structural racism and discrimination mixed-race Koreans faced during this period. No amount of inner strength and flexibility was going to help overcome the deep structural inequities that resulted in their social death.

These works demonstrate how the rhetoric of *tanil minjok* and patrilineage ultimately constructed the "mixed-blood problem." By positioning mixed-race Koreans as victims of a narrow-minded and harsh society, the writers' critique of society and government pushed but did not push far enough to reveal how patrilineal recognition informed the *tanil minjok* narrative. In other words, there was no one "single race nation" without a Korean father that recognized his progeny. However, for many of the writers, being fatherless was the problem not the heteropaternal structure itself, which shamed women and their children into impossible circumstances. Therefore, although the barriers mixed-race Koreans faced were (rightfully) explained as the result of racial discrimination, these explanations neglected to acknowledge the impact heteropaternalism had on national belonging, which legitimated Korean citizenship and belonging through the father.

CHAPTER 2
THE POLITICS OF HUMANITARIANISM: SAVING THE "MIXED-BLOOD" CHILD

I. Introduction

This chapter examines how humanitarian aid, U.S. immigration policies, and Korean state welfare, have attempted to govern mixed-race Koreans of this period. Various state and non-state actors were involved in their management, even as they contributed to their production and representation as marginalized subjects. I examine the intersections between Korean governmental agencies and NGOs like the Pearl Buck Foundation, Holt Adoption Program, the Presbyterian Mission in Korea, and other agencies involved in the Korean Association of Voluntary Agencies (KAVA) in supporting the welfare of mixed-race Koreans.[131] These various entities and policies illustrate the local-global connections that construct the mixed-race Korean as a humanitarian, and importantly, as a political subject within a Cold War narrative. This chapter thereby explores the contradictions of the politics of compassion in the case of mixed-race Koreans of the Cold War.

As several works have already attested, the Cold War period was not only a time of intense munition build-up but an era when Western humanitarianism in postcolonial and postwar nation states was widespread[132]. War and humanitarianism in fact worked hand-in-hand, "When

[131] KAVA was first formed in 1952 during the Korean War in an effort to help provide emergency medical and social services to orphans and refugees. It is an umbrella organization for foreign aid agencies in Korea. What began as seven agencies banding together reached "120 agencies from thirteen countries" by the early 1970s. Services also expanded from emergency care to various support including family welfare services, community development, and so on.

[132] Works on transnational adoption are especially reflective of this topic, including: Soojin Pate's *From Orphan to Adoptee: U.S. Empire and Genealogies of Korean Adoption* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), Arissa Oh's *To Save the Children of Korea: The Cold War Origins of International Adoption* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015), Laura Briggs' *Somebody's Children: The Politics of Transracial and Transnational Adoption* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), Allison Varzally's *Children of Reunion: Vietnamese Adoptions and the Politics of Family Migrations* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017). This is not an exhaustive list.

the Korean War broke out, the U.N. dispatched troops from 16 member countries to defend south Korea. At the same time, social and Voluntary agencies from friendly nations rushed to Korea to provide emergency medical and other forms of care to orphans and refugees."[133] Humanitarian aid followed on the heels of the Korean War, ultimately setting up an infrastructure of foreign aid that would persist for decades to come.

Moreover, letters by G.I.s to their families, news stories of Korean orphans, and sponsorship programs, helped develop structures of feeling for Americans of this period that connected humanitarianism with a particular Christian middle-class morality. Through correspondences with their families, G.I.s described the stark conditions Korean children experienced, "'At night time you can walk down any alley and find kids [age seven] and younger sleeping in big pipes and in holes in the side of the hills. All they get to eat is what they can steal or bum.'"[134] Through such letters, G.I.s actively educated Americans and would ask family back home to send goods and clothing. Many spent their off-hours helping out at orphanages.

G.I.s also adopted Korean boys as "mascots" during their overseas stations, which sometimes lead to actual adoptions. At the same time, programs like Christian Children's Fund and Foster Parents' Plan allowed for Americans to sponsor Korean children through their monthly contributions.[135] Humanitarian aid in the early postwar period of South Korea was what Soojin Pate calls militarized humanitarianism, "to signal the process in which humanitarianism has become militarized, to indicate the ways in which humanitarianism has been appropriated

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[133] Cho Ki Dong, "Foreword," in *Oewŏn sahoe saŏp kigwan hwaldongsa: Oeguk min'ganwŏn chogigwan Han'guk yŏnhaphoe 40nyŏnsa, K'aba40nyŏnsa p'yŏnch'anwiwŏnhoe p'yŏn* [*40 Years History of Kava*] (Seoul: KAVA, 1995): 19.

[134] Arissa Oh, *To Save the Children of Korea: The Cold War Origins of International Adoption* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015), 23. The quote is from the Social Welfare History Archives in Minnesota.

[135] See Oh, *To Save the Children of Korea.*

and used by the military to serve its own purposes."[136] The publicity surrounding Korean orphans not only brought attention to the orphan "crisis," but helped craft an image of the U.S. military as a structure of benevolence.

As the issue of Korean war orphans became more publicized within the American public sphere, proponents of intercountry adoption grew. The Syngman Rhee administration supported this move as it would offer a solution to South Korea's rising social welfare problem and eliminate the contradiction that mixed-race Koreans posed for a supposedly ethnically homogenous nation state. South Korea's investment in its political representation—both nationally and internationally, combined with its weak infrastructure for social welfare, created tenable conditions for mixed-race Korean children to be sent for overseas adoption by proxy. While there were critics of this move, including NGOs like the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency (UNKRA), the International Social Service (ISS), and the American-Korean Foundation (AKF) as well as Father Youn of the League of Korean Social Workers, who observed that foreign interest in Korean children was what essentially led to the consideration of sending children abroad, they were in the minority.[137]

When Harry Holt brought twelve mixed-race Korean children to the U.S. in 1955 (eight of whom he and his wife Bertha adopted and four adopted by three other families), public discourse advocating for intercountry adoption proliferated. The publicity around this event was so great, the Holts were inundated with inquiries from Americans wanting to adopt.[138] This was a watershed moment for intercountry—now known as transnational—adoption. Over the next

[136] Soojin Pate, *From Orphan to Adoptee: U.S. Empire and Genealogies of Korean Adoption* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 34.

[137] Arissa Oh, *To Save the Children of Korea: The Cold War Origins of International Adoption* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015), 63.

[138] See Bertha Holt's *Bring My Sons from Afar* (1992), or *Seed from the East* (1956) for more information.

decade, several thousand mixed-race children were adopted into fundamental Christian American families primarily through the Holts, who set up the Holt Adoption Program, which lobbied for proxy adoptions, making the overseas adoption process more expedient for prospective adoptive parents.[139] This is essentially the origin story of transnational Korean adoption, a venture that began as a method of "saving" mixed-race children from starvation and ostracism but which resulted in an international economy that sent approximately 200,000 Korean children overseas to date.[140]

While this chapter is concerned with the politics of compassion as they play out in the *in*-country management of mixed-race Koreans from the 1950s-1970s, this subject cannot be addressed without also addressing the discourse on intercountry adoption. To put it simply, the answer to the question by foreign aid workers and the Korean government of what to do with mixed-race Korean children resided in one of two choices: to send them away or to keep them in Korea. What were the stakes in sending mixed-race Koreans overseas or alternatively, working with them in Korea? What role did humanitarian agencies play in the politics of belonging and Korean and American identity politics, respectively?

I review the role of missions, specifically the Presbyterian Mission in Korea and the development of the ECLAIR project (Eurasian Children Living as Indigenous Residents), the Pearl Buck Foundation, along with social welfare reports that shed light on the humanitarian

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[139] Now called Holt International, it has offices nationwide as well as branches overseas including South Korea. Holt was not the only adoption program at the time but was the most "successful." As the demographic of adoptees went from mixed-race to "full" Korean, by the mid-late 1960s, adoptions were not only limited to the U.S. but expanded to various parts of Europe. See Eleanna Kim's and/or Tobias Hübinette's respective works.

[140] Susie Woo estimates approximately 150,000 Korean adoptees reside in the U.S. and another 50,000 in Europe. She draws these figures from the works of Elise Prébin, Hosu Kim, and Grace Cho, respectively. Susie Woo, *Framed by War: Korean Children and Women at the Crossroads of Empire* (New York University Press, New York, 2019), 25.

logic of care surrounding mixed-race Koreans.[141] Through this exploration, we see that the story of mixed-race Koreans does not end with transnational adoption; instead, the "afterlives" of adoption play out in the in-country humanitarian governance of mixed-race Koreans in Cold War Korea. I argue that first through removal, then through reform, the "mixed-blood" Korean child was made into a humanitarian subject that required U.S. intervention; the narratives reveal the trajectory of U.S. imperialism and its modes of governmentality in South Korea, and South Korea's own efforts at governing a population perceived as someone else's problem. Additionally, the communications and organizations I analyze in this chapter are by no means comprehensive. Missing in this narrative are tens of other agencies and any lengthy analysis of Korean governmental and non-governmental agencies. Instead, this chapter analyzes the various networks of humanitarian aid that address both international adoption *and* in-country welfare.

II. Foreign Missions and the Question of Intercountry Adoption of "Mixed-Blood" Children, 1940s-1950s

The nascent years of the South Korean government and the immediate postwar years leading up to the early 1960s were a period when foreign missionary agencies were actively engaged in the aid of orphans and orphanages. Foreign agencies often worked together, along with Korean provincial or city government bodies, to expand humanitarian aid with the goal of Christian fellowship. For instance, even in the prewar year of 1949 when the southern half of Korea was under the newly-formed government of Syngman Rhee, China Children's Fund was in conversation with the Board of Foreign Missions in order to build a boy's home in Ch'ŏngju on land owned by the Board. China Children's Fund, which was already supporting a total of

[141] Presbyterian Mission in Korea is my shorthand to primarily refer to the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, Korea Office, The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., but also references as a whole the various branches and bodies of the Presbyterian Church and its connection to Korea.

fifty orphanages across Burma, Siam, and Korea, had been using a local Buddhist temple's spaces when the need to build their own space became imminent.[142] With more than thirty boys and a staff of four Koreans, China Children's Fund "envison[ed] not a large but an intensive work of training boys for Christian living."[143]

The zeal to spread Christianity as a way of life and inculcate youth into Christian morality worked hand-in-hand with an outlook that positioned Christianity against communism as can be observed in this letter between the two organizations, "At a time when Soviet propaganda is flooding this part of the country we have good reason for believing that this tangible way of expressing true Christian love is having a wholesome effect."[144] This statement reveals the Cold War mindset of American Christian missionary agencies that viewed Christianity as the antithesis to communism. Through the spread of "Christian love," which here involved proselytizing to orphaned boys, not only were such agencies helping displaced populations but at the same time partook in the fight against communism.

As intercountry adoption became popularized through letter, magazine, and newspaper campaigns, foreign missionary agencies that were previously working to spread Christianity through orphanages, churches, and prisons, now participated in efforts to send orphans, especially mixed-race Korean children, abroad.[145] Numerous letters addressed to charitable organizations doing work in Korea asking how to adopt a Korean child abounded. The decade of

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[142] Mary R. Hill to Rev John C. Smith, 26, May 1949, Folder 43, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Ibid.

[145] I am using intercountry, international, and occasionally transnational adoption interchangeably. The latter is a contemporary term so I primarily use the first two to engage these terms contemporaneously.

1954-64 was perhaps the most formative in the development of intercountry adoption in Korea, setting the stage for a permanent process of transnational adoption from South Korea to the U.S. and Europe. Yet proxy adoptions, which were the primary method by which thousands of mixed-race children as well as “monoracial” children had migrated during this decade, were not accepted without question by Christian missionary agencies. As mentioned earlier, the bulk of proxy adoptions during this time were undertaken by Harry Holt, the evangelical Oregon farmer, and his aides. However, various Christian agencies, as well as the ISS (International Social Service)—the U.S.’s primary governing body on intercountry adoption—had doubts as to the effectiveness and ethical nature of the process.[146]

For instance, in a letter to Dr. Edward Adams, a long-standing missionary to Korea and chairman of the Presbyterian Mission Executive Commission, Reverend John C. Smith, secretary of Board of Foreign Missions to Korea, relates the concerns of a recent meeting involving representatives from Church World Service.[147] The meeting, held in January of 1955, months before Harry Holt would make headlines for adopting eight Korean orphans and bringing four more through the proxy adoption process, pertained to whether intercountry adoption could help solve the problem of Korean war orphans. The topic was one that had been batted about over a few years but was at a standstill because of the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 that limited Asian immigration to the United States.[148] With the passing of the Refugee Relief Act of 1953, which

[146] From 1954-1957, the ISS began working with Korean Child Placement Service (CPS) to process children for international adoption, and by 1957 developed a Korean branch to help expedite their red tape. See Bowman et.al., *Children of Tragedy,* 37.

[147] Church World Service began in 1946 as a cooperative humanitarian ministry comprised of a number of Christian denominations and communions.

[148] The McCarran-Walter Act, otherwise known as the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, was a Cold War response to the threat of communist infiltration. It retained a quota system that heavily limited immigrants from Asia. At the same time, it abolished racial restrictions (that was primarily aimed at Asian immigrants) to citizenship that had been in place since the Naturalization Act of 1790, which maintained that only white immigrants of “good

included an orphan clause that allowed up to 4,000 orphaned children under the age of ten to be adopted and to immigrate to the United States, intercountry adoption became a more plausible method with which to "save" mixed-race children.

However, the relaxation of immigration laws did not immediately translate into a unified wholesale effort by Christian humanitarian organizations to further international adoption. As Smith writes, "I was still confronted by the question which I myself am not able to answer … is it still true that the best possible solution for children of 'mixed blood' in Korea is for them to be brought to the United States and adopted by American parents here?"[149] For Smith, there were several considerations to factor in, "To what extent are the 'mixed blood' children discriminated against in Korea or to what extent are they likely to be discriminated against in the future? Is there any other solution within Korea than that which might normally be followed within the orphanages where the 'mixed blood' children are part of the total Korean orphan problem? Is their coming to the United States an 'idealistic' solution which might result in them feeling a sense of frustration and discrimination in an American community? All of this, I think, we have to take into consideration."[150] Unlike Harry Holt, whose focus on the bare life of mixed-race Koreans superseded everything else, the concerns laid out in this correspondence reflected the moral quandary of international adoption that nagged figures like Smith within the Presbyterian Church.

In response to Smith's questions, Elfrieda A. Kraege, secretary to Edward Adams, writes, "The mixed-blood babies are the main problem; I think that is generally agreed upon by the

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character" can be naturalized as U.S. citizens.

[149] John C. Smith to Edward Adams, 26, January 1955, Folder 43, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[150] Ibid.

missionaries I talk to … There is certainly discrimination, partly because of the mixed-blood, partly because the mothers of such children are despised by the community. Any child like this is far worse off in this respect than pure Korean orphans, and the best solution appears to be to get them into a society where mixed blood is a little more common, even though the society itself is discriminatory to some extent, as it is in the U.S."[151] Kraege's comments reflected a general consensus within the Presbyterian missionaries and other denominations involved in Church World Service in that the best and most expedient resolution was to get mixed-race children out of Korea, as the alternative—which ranged from discrimination to death—posed far worse.

Even so, Presbyterian missionary agencies in Korea were not directly involved in matching children with adoptive parents. Rather, their involvement was limited to funding orphanages that were deemed reputable and needy, something that required explaining to those interested in adopting a Korean child, "We prefer to send funds which are available to the groups administering the aid in Korea and allowing them to use it for the greatest need. For example, it might be that an orphanage in one part of the country is getting particular help either from the government or from Church World Service or from the Christian Children's Fund or from some G.I. group in Korea and does not need our aid. We, therefore, channel our aid at the decision of the group in Korea for a more needy place."[152] Indirect involvement, however, did not mean lack of involvement. In fact, the scrutiny with which the Presbyterian Church went about assessing child welfare needs in Korea pointed to the kind of behind-the-scenes biopolitics of care that helped further Korea's social welfare infrastructure.

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[151] Elfrieda A. Kraege to John C. Smith, 22, November 1955, Folder 43, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[152] John Coventry Smith to Frank Tremel, 20 June, 1958. Folder 43, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

There were two primary factors for the Presbyterian missions' indirect involvement in the international adoption process, which, as the passage above illustrates, required collaboration amongst a number of humanitarian groups in Korea. First, the economics, or the cost and manpower of actually matching children with potential parents was one primary consideration. Second, was their attitude towards humanitarian aid in Korea, which stressed local participation, as relayed in a correspondence to a potential donor:

> You should know that we have a continuing orphanage responsibility in Korea and that it is primarily based in the Korean Church and with Korean leadership. What we try to do is to be ready to assist in times of emergency for particular aid when Korean resources are not available. We try to avoid becoming committed to full subsidy for an orphanage over a long period of time because we believe that that removes the orphanage from the natural framework of its association in Korea and also commits us to something that we would not be able to carry on over such a period.[153]

At least on paper, aid was meant to assist local efforts rather than establish and direct orphanages that may or may not accord with local ways of being and handling such circumstances. This latter point is important because unlike Holt's evangelism, Smith and others of the Presbyterian Church saw the value of working with and maintaining indigenous methods, despite or perhaps because of the deeply rooted presence of the Presbyterian Church in Korea, which benefitted from decades of missionary experience in Korea.[154]

Moreover, because of their method of support, the Presbyterian Church's experience working with both the ISS (International Social Service), the U.S. governmental body that regulated adoption domestically and internationally, as well as with the Holt Adoption Program

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[153] John Coventry Smith to Brock R. Westbrook, 12 November, 1958. Folder 43, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[154] Smith writes that "most of the orphanages have a connection with the Presbyterian Church of one kind or another." See John Coventry Smith to Davitt S. Bell, 29 August, 1958. Folder 43, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

(founded in 1956), and other agencies and clinics including the ROK's Ministry of Social Affairs & Health, Seventh Day Adventists, Welcome House, and the American Seoul Clinic, gave them perspective on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of each agency's adoption procedures. Yet, their stance was malleable depending on the information received. For instance, the Church had initially directed interested parties to reach out to the ISS. Yet the red tape surrounding the process resulted in a mere eight Korean and seven Japanese orphans that were able to migrate between 1953-1955. This figure does shift, however, because by 1958, the ISS approximated 200 children. In contrast, from 1953-58, the Holt Adoption Program had processed a whopping 1,070 children, with the Ministry of Social Affairs & Health coming in second with 508 children.[155] Based on these numbers, the Church supported Holt's efforts, recommending the program, along with others that they perceived as effective.

However, the Presbyterian Church's support for Holt was not without contention, as evidenced in this correspondence:

> We have defended Harry Holt but International Social Service … has given us evidence that Harry Holt's placement of the orphans in this country has been very amateurish and is open to considerable criticism. For example, there is evidence that the only kind of check that he made on a good many of the families who wanted children was to find out through a credit bureau as to whether they were 'good credit risks.' This was done at a total expenditure of $15 per couple. He did more than this in many instances, but the evidence is that in some instances he did only this.[156]

At the rate that Holt was migrating Korean children out of the country, it is no surprise that checks and balances were inconsistent. With quantity being more important than quality, Holt, according to Soojin Pate, ultimately "pioneered the institutionalization of Korean adoption in the

[155] K.J. Foreman Jr. to Dr. Baird and Dr. Smith, 15, December 1958. Folder 43, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[156] John Coventry Smith to Mrs. Braxton Drummond, 30 March, 1959. Folder 43, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

United States" by the sheer number of proxy adoptions he processed.[157] The point here is that the Presbyterian Church took a very measured stance when it came to international adoption. Their limited involvement situated them as astute observers of the gains and pitfalls of sending children abroad within the postwar context of Korea even as they continued to condone the process through recommendations and financial contributions.

What is remarkably clear is that the development of international adoption in Korea was firmly rooted in the perceived need to move mixed-race children out of Korea as discussed by John Smith to Richard Baird who was the Commission Representative in Korea at the time, "In our discussions last night on the adoption problem, we came face to face once again with the problem of orphans in Korea. Obviously the answer to the problem of orphans is not adoption in the United States. This is an emergency adoption program for children of mixed blood. But Korea herself cannot afford to have her own pure blooded Korean children adopted in the United States."[158] Written in 1959, when the proxy adoption process was well under way, Smith highlights how international adoption in Korea at this time was essentially a method to save mixed-race Koreans. International adoption at this time was not aimed at sending "monoracial" Korean children, as they were not in danger of extreme ostracism and were viewed as Korea's responsibility in ways mixed-race Korean children were not.

In response to Smith's letter, Richard Baird writes, "The interest here is only in the adoption of mixed-blood babies. These are discriminated against in Korean society, especially the negroes … An illegitimate child of pure Korean blood can in later life escape the stigma of

[157] Pate, *From Orphan to Adoptee*, 105.

[158] John Coventry Smith to Richard H. Baird, 13 January 1959. Folder 43, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

its origin but not a mixed blood baby … No one that I know of here in Korea is concerned about a general program of adoption for pure blood Korean children."[159] This standpoint is not only from the Presbyterian Church but rather, a collection of viewpoints Baird had gathered in replying to Smith's concerns. Baird's language is irrefutable in that international proxy adoption at this time was aimed at moving mixed-race Korean children out of the country. From the perspective of humanitarian agencies, proxy adoption was a method of "saving" these children, while for the Korean government, it offered a convenient solution to the problem of mixed-race Koreans whose presence challenged the Republic of Korea's rhetoric of ethnic nationalism.

For missionaries of the Presbyterian Church and others involved in the discourse, intercountry adoption was the most pragmatic method of solving what they defined as a mixed-race Korean crisis. Doubts that had been raised about the morality of sending children overseas were allayed with the observation that even if basic needs were met, the possibilities of social life (as opposed to social death) within Korea were nonexistent for mixed-race Koreans. The concerns over quality control in the case of the Holt Adoption Program were superseded by this paternalism that rested within what Michael Barnett calls the "paradox of emancipation and domination," in that "any act of intervention, no matter how well intended, is also an act of control."[160] The humanitarian intervention of missionary agencies not only played a major role in the structures that were put in place for Korean international adoption, but helped portray Korea as intolerant. This depiction offered space for a Cold War logic of rescue.

Humanitarian intervention then, functioned at numerous levels and as the discourse

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[159] Richard H. Baird to John Coventry Smith, 9 February, 1959. Folder 43, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[160] Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 19.

amongst Presbyterian Church missionaries illustrates, direct intervention was not the only method of involvement. The recommendations and monetary contributions to orphanages and adoption agencies played a large role in shaping the trajectory of intercountry adoption. Sending mixed-race children overseas was, in essence, an emancipation from a bigoted Korean society, while at the same time turning them into productive, God-loving American citizens. Whatever hesitancy that may have been voiced was quelled by the belief that the children's welfare would be vastly improved upon their arrival in their fatherland.

III. Taking Stock: Reassessing Child Welfare in Korea, 1961

As the above section demonstrates, the humanitarian intervention of mixed-race Koreans required an assessment of contemporaneous conditions that helped rationalize intercountry adoption as part of a logic of care. In 1961, the report, *Children of Tragedy* was published by Church World Service, an organizational body of the National Council of Churches, in which a three-member survey team went to Korea and Hong Kong to better assess the child welfare situation in each country. The primary aim of the team was to evaluate the level of "Christian involvement in intercountry adoption," the efficiency of the ISS program, offer solutions to the U.S. legislation involving international adoption, suggest alternative solutions for needy children who will reside in country, and to do so in a manner that points to a clear rationale and stated principles.[161]

While the report was to address the current child welfare system in Korea, they were most concerned with, "mixed-blood children in Korea, sons and daughters born out-of-wedlock to United Nations' troops."[162] The focus on mixed-race children is not surprising considering the

[161] LeRoy Bowman, Benjamin A Gjenvick, and Eleanor T.M. Harvey, *Children of Tragedy: Church World Service Survey Team Report on Intercountry Adoption* (New York: Church World Service, 1961), xii.

[162] Ibid, xi.

publicity that surrounded this group by figures like Holt whose "rescue" of mixed-race children and persistent lobbying of orphan and immigration laws made headlines, and Pearl Buck who had written articles and books concerning the subject. Based on the frustration experienced by prospective adoptive parents, part of the study was to assess how intercountry adoption may be even more streamlined, "The frustration has been compounded by the continuing reports from eye witnesses of abandoned and undernourished children, and of children rejected in the land of their birth because, obviously, they were not of full Oriental heritage."[163]

The team reported that from 1948-1958, the orphanage population spiked dramatically from 7,000 to 54,000, reaching its current state in 1961 of 60,500 children who were housed in more than five hundred orphanages, while approximately 25,000 wandered the streets. Of these numbers, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs stated that as of September 30, 1960, there were approximately 1,518 white, Black, and Asian mixed-race children, of which 260 were in the care of ISS, HAP, SDA, and CPS.[164] Confirming Soojin Pate's discussion of the imbalanced nature of child welfare in Korea that accounted for a large proportion of aid coming from overseas, government subsidies of orphanages were only at twenty two percent of operating costs.[165] Considering the ceaseless increase of orphans and orphanages, combined with a disproportionate amount of aid coming from foreign agencies, one of the first overarching suggestions made was to ultimately eliminate institutionalization, "Resorted to on such a massive scale in Korea, it [institutionalization] cannot but have serious consequences for individual development, and for the future stability of family and community life in that nation."[166]

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[163] Ibid.

[164] Ibid, 36.

[165] Ibid, 27.

[166] Ibid, 21.

Institutionalization was considered a temporary bandage for the serious issue of homeless, hungry children. Many orphanages did not have the staff or finances to properly care for each child and institutionalization was already proven to produce long term psychological issues for children who then carry them into adulthood. Their interest therefore, was in finding better solutions in order that such children can either be integrated into Korean society as productive citizens or given similar opportunities overseas. The irony in all of this was that modern orphanages and the institutionalization of children were a Western phenomenon that began in the nineteenth century with Catholic and Protestant missionaries.[167] However, as noted above, by the time of the report, orphanages had become the immediate solution to the issue of displaced children.

The anti-institutional solution, at least in the case of non-mixed-race Korean children, was in local home placements that came in the form of foster care or local adoption. Foster care was believed to provide the individualized attention and care necessary to raise healthy children. Examples of successful foster care was a night program that involved widows bringing home infants for the night from the orphanages, sleeping with and feeding them. Local adoption had its limitations because of the stigma of raising a child that is not a blood relation. In addition, according to the report, foster children had been used as servants or been married off to a handicapped person for the purpose of their caretaking.

At the time of the writing, it was noted that World Vision, one of the major humanitarian Christian child aid agencies in Korea at the time, had a policy that actually did not accept international adoption of non-mixed-race Korean children. Processing mixed-race children out of Korea was seen as a moral directive within Christian humanitarian circles as they believed they

[167] See Jung-Woo Kim and Terry Henderson, "History of the Care of Displaced Children in Korea," *Asian Social Work and Policy Review 2* (2008): 13-29.

were literally rescuing the children from starvation and violent ostracism. Moreover, because "monoracial" Korean orphans could more easily physically assimilate, they were viewed by the larger community and government as part of the nation, and were therefore less prioritized for overseas adoption, except in the case of physically or mentally disabled children, or special instances of girls who were being abandoned more often than boys. For the general populace of needy Korean children, the answer lied in, "an improved Korean economy, a nationally applicable public assistance program, foster home care and adoptive placement of children in Korea, and birth control measures," because "Children have a right to their national heritage and their own parents."[168] While overseas adoption was not exempt for non-mixed-race Korean children, the logic of ethnic belonging played a stronger role in retaining them for the nation.

For mixed-race Koreans, as reiterated earlier, departure from Korea was considered the ideal solution. The team writes that the ostracism, especially in school, was so severe that there was also talk of creating segregated schools.[169] Living overseas, therefore, presented a better option, and even a right that had been denied this demographic, "From the standpoint of their parentage, mixed-blood children belong as much to the country of their non-Korean parent as they do to Korea."[170] Here, the same logic that reasoned for the retention of monoracial Korean children argued for mixed-race Korean children's right to both nation states. At the same time, ostracism was not always the case because some were able to "pass," while others got on, "because there are kindly people in every culture who reach out to fellow human beings in need."[171] The ideal solution lay in the prospect of Korean society accepting mixed-race children,

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[168] LeRoy Bowman, Benjamin A Gjenvick, and Eleanor T.M. Harvey, *Children of Tragedy*, 36.

[169] There was in fact at least one such school in Seoul, see my section on ECLAIR.

[170] LeRoy Bowman, Benjamin A Gjenvick, and Eleanor T.M. Harvey, *Children of Tragedy*, 34.

[171] Ibid.

which could be accomplished through local leadership coupled with "outside" support.

Such outside support would be in the form of Christian institutions, "Surely Christian churches in Korea have a special responsibility to interpret to the once Hermit Kingdom the fact that God 'made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the whole earth.'"[172] Christianity then, is not merely saving Koreans as a whole through conversion, but is transforming them into civilized beings through their ability to accept difference. It was the ultimate civilizing mission that tied sympathy to humanity. In this scenario, the Korean attitude towards mixed-race Koreans was treated as a specifically indigenous "heathen" problem rather than recognizing that exposure to Western attitudes and practices towards race contributed, especially in the treatment of Black Koreans.

With the immediate future of mixed-race Koreans in Korea represented as grim, compounded by the need to develop better foster and institutional care for all needy children in country, the conclusion for the time being was for foreign agencies to continue to support Korea with an eye towards shifting that responsibility to the Korean government. The team viewed it as a matter of developing a self-sustaining infrastructure of modern public welfare, which Korea had little experience with. As they write, "The ancient and simple methods of caring for destitution within the family or by giving a hand-out to a beggar are thoroughly inadequate as a country tries to emerge from war into economic reorganization and industrialization. The example of experienced private agencies will be vital as background for the organization of an effective public welfare system."[173] Ignoring the fact that the child welfare system in Korea was influenced by Western missionaries since the late 19th century, continued foreign involvement

[172] Ibid, 35.

[173] Ibid, 30.

was seen as necessary to solve the issue of orphaned children.[174]

In addition, written during the height of the Cold War, child welfare was not only about a humanitarian Christian need to save children but was very much about fighting communism through benevolence, "When the North Koreans peek through into a country where Americans have power and influence, do we want them to see thousands of babies abandoned because their mothers cannot feed them, thousands of people out of work, sixty thousand children deprived of homes and the love of parents, living on and on in institutions because Korea has for them neither homes nor jobs?"[175] The business of child welfare in Korea was at the intersection of geo- bio- and necropolitics in which management and movement of orphaned or needy children were deeply tied to U.S.-Korea Cold War politics.

What the report helps explicate is that by 1961, intercountry proxy adoption for mixed-race Koreans was no longer questioned as moral or immoral. Instead, the question resided in how to further streamline the process. The comprehensive assessment of Korea's social welfare situation that reviewed the role of fostering, the benefits of intercountry adoption, the dangers of institutionalization, and the general lack of indigenous infrastructure produced knowledge about Korea—knowledge required to rationalize humanitarian intervention. Reports such as these were necessary to justify the continued presence of foreign missionary agencies in Korea, without whom—it was implied—conditions would further deteriorate. Knowledge production therefore, was integral to rationalizing a form of foreign governance over Korea's most vulnerable populations.

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[174] For more information, see Young Sun Park, "Rescue and Regulation: A History of Undesirable Children in Korea, 1884-1961" (PhD diss., USC, 2018).

[175] Ibid, 82.

IV. ECLAIR and In-Country Support for Mixed-Race Koreans, 1964-1971

Even though intercountry proxy adoptions were the prioritized method, proxy adoptions could not neatly solve the conundrum of mixed-race Koreans, or rather, expunge every mixed-race Korean out of Korea. By 1964, the social welfare committee of KAVA (Korean Association of Voluntary Agencies) had written a statement based on a recent meeting on how to aid mixed-race Koreans residing in Korea.[176] First, in identifying the issue, KAVA noted that "racially-mixed" children were on the rise, despite the persistent work of adoption agencies placing children overseas via proxy adoptions. The reason behind this "influx" was because not all mixed-race Koreans were placed in orphanages and in fact resided with their mothers or other relatives. The fact that hundreds (if not thousands) of mixed-race children were cared for by their own mothers or relatives was at odds with the humanitarian discourse that depicted mixed-race Koreans as abandoned and requiring care.

While the assumption of abandonment was not entirely without merit, the point was that from the perspective of the social welfare committee of KAVA, there were still children who fell through the cracks, so to speak.[177] Based on these circumstances, they predicted that, "By 1967 these children that are not adopted overseas will provide a seriously shocking and visible social problem as they will be entering their middle-teens. For those that remain in prostitute

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[176] KAVA began in 1952 with seven voluntary agencies and grew to include seventy-seven member agencies by 1976. The agencies involved were primarily Christian humanitarian agencies but not all and included local and foreign. See *Oewŏn sahoe saŏp kigwan hwaldongsa* [*40 Years History of KAVA*] (Seoul: KAVA, 1995): 245.

[177] There were certainly documented cases of mixed-race children in orphanages who qualified as abandoned. However, as Susie Woo explains, administrators from Holt Adoption Program, ISS, and other organizations regularly looked for mixed-race children in camptowns and attempted to convince the mothers to relinquish their children; camptown doctors even informed ISS which women were expected to deliver; and, there were even instances of physical violence. So, the reality of how many were actually abandoned (and even this framework is questionable since mothers who "chose" to relinquished their children did so under a heteropatriarchal system that made it impossible for them to keep them), rather than coerced is debatable. Susie Woo, *Framed by War: Korean Children and Women at the Crossroads of Empire* (New York: New York University Press, 2019), 160.

compounds there is little hope of a life other than one of physical and moral degradation."[178] At the same time this pessimistic prediction was allayed by the observation that Korean society had become more accepting of mixed-race children, offering a sliver of hope that, "these children may someday be accepted in the land of their birth."[179]

In an effort towards this transition, the social welfare committee of KAVA (Korean Association of Voluntary Agencies) presented several action items, which included: offering funds for older children to finish their education, creating shelter facilities for those being processed for adoption, providing medical care and shelter for girls late in their pregnancy, developing programs and methods to assimilate mixed-race children into the Korean educational system, supporting the Korean government in its efforts to develop "prostitute rehabilitation centers," and somehow including servicemen in this process, considering they are the major instigators of this issue. As they write, "While the Social Welfare Committee of KAVA can only encourage that the armed forces develop programs to diminish the rate of children born out of wedlock, a practical suggestion is that information be disseminated through out the armed forces about practical steps a serviceman can take if he knows of a pregnant girl, a racially-mixed child in need of help, or if he has any personal problems in this area that a social work agency can help him with."[180]

This multi-pronged measure was in response to the potential "social problem" the social welfare committee of KAVA expected to materialize in only a few years. As the statement indicates, the overall proposal could not be successful without the cooperation of servicemen,

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[178] "The KAVA Resolution on Children with Racially Mixed Parentage, Adopted on January 22, 1964," Folder 44, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[179] Ibid.

[180] Ibid.

whose off-duty actions resulted in the mixed-race Korean issue. Furthermore, these measures anticipated that local agencies and the Korean government will ultimately take responsibility and operate independently, "The Social Welfare Committee of KAVA adopts the position that any comprehensive, future program must be based on the assumption that this is a problem to be handled in the future by Korean rather than Western agencies. The proper role of a Western agency is to assist the Korean government or other national welfare agencies to develop their own programs."[181] At an organizational level, transitioning responsibility to local agencies and the Korean government are practical and ostensibly ethical objectives, yet the statement assumes that the "social problem" is a Korean issue, even as it was created by Western military presence. For the foreign agencies involved, the options to aid mixed-race Koreans were either international adoption—still considered the better option—or integration into the local society through a combination of state and foreign welfare aid.

The action items were based on the ECLAIR (Eurasian Children Living as Indigenous Residents) program, spearheaded by George P. Whitener in 1964, who was the field treasurer for the United Presbyterian Mission in Korea and a representative member of the social welfare committee of KAVA. As Whitener describes, the idea for the program began sometime in 1963 when he was invited to join a group of social workers to visit a "front-line prostitute area," where he met a mixed-race sixteen year old sex worker whose tragic story, which involved lack of education and support system, resulted in her current situation.[182] Rather than attempt to "rescue" her and others like her from sexual slavery, Whitener believed a more efficacious solution resided in working with school-age mixed-race children *before* they reached an age when social

[181] Ibid.

[182] George P. Whitener, "The ECLAIR Concept," 17 June, 1965, Folder 27, Box 6, RG 197, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

welfare could not have the impact it could have when children were still impressionable.

Education was a key component to this plan as, "It had been assumed by everyone that these were unwanted children who would be sent abroad anyway, so there would be no purpose for preparing them for the highly competitive middle school examination."[183] The realization that this was not the case, and that there are and will be mixed-race youths who have and will remain in Korea, provoked Whitener to take initiative. The future for mixed-race youths was uncertain, and the possibility of their lives echoing those of Black Americans was large in Whitener's projections, "If America could only have known the consequences of the course it took in race relations a hundred years ago how differently our American reputation might appear today. This struggle is top news every day, and it touches the lives of almost every American in such a needless way … Korea has the opportunity now to reverse this same trend, and avoid this same mistake. Those of us who are involved in ECLAIR believe that the groundwork has been laid toward that end."[184]

Written in 1965, when the U.S. was in the midst of nationwide social unrest due to the civil rights movement, the "ECLAIR Concept" related the plight of mixed-race youths to America's own racial history. Whitener's portrayal was that of an underclass of "beggars and prostitutes" that could create social unrest in a mere decade once these youths come of age. Whitener's comparison related race and class as key components to future social turbulence, one that could be allayed through early intervention through education.

With a pilot program that began the year before with fourteen mixed-race middle-schoolers, Whitener was hopeful of the positive changes to come, "Within weeks reports were

[183] Ibid.

[184] Ibid.

coming to us that none of the social rejection we had expected was materializing. In fact, several of the children were almost immediately elected to positions of class leadership by their fellow students. By removing the evidences of poverty their foreign features seemed to become an asset, rather than a liability!"[185] Removing the evidences of poverty meant providing for student's "entrance fees, tuition, books, uniform and clothing, medical care, transportation and incidentals."[186] As I have argued elsewhere, local attitudes towards mixed-race Koreans were thereby not necessarily rooted in xenophobia per se but in the conditions that produced mixed-race Koreans, many of whom were the result of U.S. militarism and postwar poverty that was rampant at this time. With the initial pilot of fourteen, the program had expanded to forty by the time of the statement, which included students both inside and outside of Seoul with the hope of further expanding to the over five hundred documented mixed-race youths in Korea.

Integration was the ultimate aim and a key concept for the ECLAIR program. Whitener was aware that educating mixed-race Korean students beyond primary school would not eliminate the issues they face. As he writes, "Integration involves not only the racially mixed person's adaptability to society. It also involves the adapt[a]bility of society to the racially mixed people."[187] Prior to the development of the ECLAIR program, the Seoul City Board of Education had established a separate school and administered segregated classes at Yonghwa Primary School.

According to Kim Won-Kyu, Superintendant of Schools in the Seoul Metropolitan Government, segregation was initially viewed as a satisfactory solution to the management of

[185] Ibid.

[186] Youn Taek Tahk, "An Outlook of the Racially Mixed Children Projects in Korea," 17, June 1965, Folder 27, Box 6, RG 197, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[187] Whitener, "The ECLAIR Concept," 17 June, 1965, Folder 27, Box 6, RG 197.

mixed-race Korean children until he was approached by George Whitener, who argued that integration was necessary because, "in all likelihood, a great many of them will live their lives as citizens of this republic."[188] Kim goes on to confirm Whitener's comments that integration had been smoother than expected, "Children, being what they are, seem to adjust to each other without much of the difficulties anticipated."[189] Within the framework of social welfare and betterment, the concept of integration itself appeared as a natural and alternative solution to segregation. Integration, thus far, had been a relative success but for Kim, the financial future of the program was still uncertain as much of the funds came from members of KAVA and other foreign agencies.

While Whitener had initiated the program, his tenure was brief as he returned to the United States soon afterwards. Child Placement Services (CPS), a government arm of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, took over the program, with two caseworkers working full-time in 1965. Youn Taek Tahk, Director of Child Placement Services, states that by the end of the year, they expected to establish a branch office in Pusan, and by 1966 additional offices in Taegu, Taejon, and Kwangju, "where there are still quite a number of racially mixed children."[190] The success of the program required that it branch out to other areas with a high concentration of mixed-race Koreans—presumably areas that were adjacent to U.S. military bases. Yet, expansion required funds. Even as a government agency, CPS still relied on foreign aid for the ECLAIR project. According to Charles Chakerian, a social welfare consultant who, in 1968, reported on

[188] Kim Won-Kyu, "School Integration - Anticipated Problems and Gained Experiences," NO DATE (though I presume it was 1965), Folder 27, Box 6, RG 197, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[189] Ibid.

[190] Youn's name is not spelled in Korean nor romanized properly so my best guess is in McCune Reischauer, the name is Yun T'aek-t'ak or Yŏn T'aek-t'ak. Youn Taek Tahk, "An Outlook of the Racially Mixed Children Projects in Korea," 17, June 1965, Folder 27, Box 6, RG 197.

the conditions of child welfare in South Korea, major sources of financial support for the project came from Foster Parents Plan, United World Mission, along with Korea Church World Service, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, and individual Korean donations to a lesser degree.[191]

With the primary aim of the ECLAIR program being that of integration, much of its work was in removing the financial and administrative obstacles that prevented mixed-race children from accessing public education beyond elementary school. As noted earlier, this meant support through tuition, living expenses, housing, vocational training programs, as well as connecting them with individual sponsors for correspondence. Integration then, could not be achieved without basic needs being met first. The second and key aspect to integration was, as Whitener had noted earlier, for Korean society at-large to accept mixed-race Koreans into the polity. This meant recognizing that South Korea is not a provisional or interim space for mixed-race youths but rather that it is their home.

This perspective on mixed-race children and youths as temporary sojourners was noted in the brochure of the program, "As it was accepted that they would be leaving the country, no need was felt to prepare them for the competitive examinations for the already over-crowded Middle schools."[192] This mainstream attitude was internalized by mixed-race youths who, by one account had a, " … growing tendency of anti-society."[193] Moreover, many youths also assumed an orientation towards the United States as the ultimate goal or final destination at which point their lives would be turned around. Integration then, meant opening up or offering space for mixed-

[191] Charles G. Chakerian, *From Rescue to Child Welfare* (New York: Immigration Services Church World Service, 1968), 33.

[192] *ECLAIR: Eurasian Children Living as Indigenous Residents*, (Seoul: ECLAIR, nd). I estimate it was published in 1965.

[193] Child Placement Service, Inc. "Report on ECLAIR Program," June 1971, Folder 27, Box 6, RG 197, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

race youths to be counted and in turn for these youths to envision a future in Korea.

The disdain and even disgust directed towards mixed-race youths were partially due to the assumption that every mixed-race child was born of prostitution. According to a 1971 report by CPS on the ECLAIR project, for those whose mothers were involved in sex work and continued to work with G.I. clientele, mixed-race children experienced a wide variety of family life that ranged from living with their mothers, relatives, or foster mothers. In the case of siblings, some did not have the same father, or come from the same racial background, or had non-mixed-race Korean siblings. In such cases, the report states that, "The relationship between the children are comparatively good when their different fathers are of same color, while those who are Korean and mix-blooded living together are not smooth in relation though a few examples are good in relation."[194] What appears to be rather neutral observations of family relations in fact furthered the pathologization of mixed-race Koreans and their mothers in which siblings with different fathers or no fathers reflected an inherent deviance that required intervention.

Reminiscent of Hortense Spillers' critique of the 1965 Moynihan Report that pathologized the Black family as inherently broken, mixed-race Koreans as a whole were similarly stereotyped within humanitarian discourse. That is, Spillers identifies how Black women have been persistently scapegoated as the source of the dispossessed Black family; she illustrates how narratives like Moynihan's puts into question Black motherhood by erasing the legacies of chattel slavery that had dehumanized and ungendered Black women into objects of reproduction.[195] While Korean women certainly do not share in this history of slavery, my point

[194] Ibid.

[195] See Hortense Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," *Diacritics* 17, no. 2 (Summer 1987).

is that they were similarly incriminated as the source of mixed-race pathology. Korean mothers whose livelihood depended on sex work were dehumanized for keeping their children; one writer states that the women's reasons were to "get more sympathy and more pay from their longer-term customers."[196]

Eliding the structural conditions that compelled Korean women into sex work and to continue in it, Korean mothers of mixed-race children were blamed for birthing, keeping, and poorly raising their children. Anne Davidson of the ISS offers a similar sentiment couched within a context of Western capitalism, "Our western culture here in Korea, has raised the standard of living of the local prostitutes so that they are in a position to hire a servant, or an old grandmother to care for the baby, and the mother can go on using the child for years as a means to blackmail the putative father, for financial support, or a promise to divorce his own wife and return to Korea to her. This practice of using a child for selfish ends is not right."[197] The rationale that U.S. military prostitution allowed for a higher standard of living that thereby allowed a woman to keep her own child only for the purposes of money or marriage reveals the racist attitudes of American social workers and missionaries who appeared not to entertain the idea that women kept their children because they loved them. The single-mother homes of mixed-race Koreans were therefore often (though not always) viewed as problematic and requiring intervention.

Returning to the 1971 report, it summarized that the non-normative family makeup and racial background of mixed-race youths made it difficult for many to form close friendships with

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[196] K.J. Foreman, Jr. "Proxy Adoption is Doing the Job," January, 1961, Folder 44, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[197] Anne M. Davison to Henry Little, Jr., 16 August, 1961, Folder 44, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

their monoracial Korean peers. Their experience being teased and bullied prevented many from disclosing personal information that would leave them vulnerable. Perhaps one of the more concerning issues was the (im)possibility to marry and start one's own family. Because of the shame surrounding mixed-race Koreans of this period, marriage, a major and expected eventhood that signals one's entry into adulthood, was difficult if not impossible for mixed-race youths—at least to non-mixed-race Koreans. Instead, sexual relationships, according to the report, were primarily between mixed-race youths themselves, with American G.I.s, or with camptown sex workers. The ECLAIR team had no particular solution other than identifying the issue. What remains apparent is that the connection to prostitution not only stereotyped and shamed mixed-race youths but deeply informed their attitude towards and ability to form social and sexual relationships beyond the camptown.

The racism and segregation within the U.S. military bled into the camptown, and the broader Korean community. As Katharine Moon documents, "Both Koreans and Americans familiar with kijich'on life also noted that Koreans had learned and imitated racist language and behavior toward blacks from the white soldiers in Korea since the mid-1940s."[198] The repercussions of this learned behavior were that attitudes towards white vs. Black mixed-race Koreans differed, with Black Koreans often receiving the poorest treatment, "The Caucasian children find it easy to get adoptive parents overseas, and they are generally well treated by Koreans here … In the case of the Korean-Negro mixed blood, these children as well as their Korean mothers are leading miserable lives, coldly treated and utterly despised by their Korean neighbors, as being 'cursed by Heaven.'"[199] While mixed-raceness in and of itself, regardless of

[198] Katharine H.S. Moon, *Sex among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 72.

[199] Youn Taek Tahk, "An Outlook of the Racially Mixed Children Projects in Korea," 17, June 1965, Folder 27,

one's racial background, was already an obstacle in Korean society, the ostracism faced by Black Koreans led many to drop out of school, further foreclosing economic and social opportunities.

Another major aspect to the ECLAIR project that differed from other humanitarian programs was its stance against institutional care as an impediment to integration, "ECLAIR's principle is to help mix-blooded children make well-adjusted to Korean society and our thought is that institutional care in groups bars integration to Korean society or at least slow it down."[200] In the eyes of ECLAIR, segregation from society at-large through institutionalization hindered integration. In addition, many ECLAIR students also received support from more than one organization, such as the United World Mission, which had established a couple of group homes, one of which—located in Kimpo—was exclusively for girls.

However, ECLAIR expressed that institutionalization not only segregates mixed-race youths from society at-large, but could also serve as a site where youths could be swayed by a few "bad eggs" in the mix, "The experience from the two group homes proved the mass accommodation of mix-blooded children not proper in another sense. It was that a few ill-mannered juvenil[e]s influenced many good live-togethers in bad ways. Their subconscious anti-society and consciousness of the same kind easily lead them to the bad influence."[201] Yet, even with their anti-institutional viewpoint, ECLAIR worked alongside other established programs like Holt and the Pearl Buck Foundation, as it did not have the funds to fully support or access every mixed-race student.

With the primary aim being that of funding education and helping integrate mixed-race

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Box 6, RG 197.

[200] CPS, "Report on ECLAIR Program," June 1971, p5, Folder 27, Box 6, RG 197, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[201] CPS, "Report on ECLAIR Program," June 1971, p5, Folder 27, Box 6, RG 197.

youths into Korean society, the ECLAIR program attempted to address five additional and connected aspects affecting mixed-race Koreans: 1) foster care, 2) vocational training and job placement, 3) rehabilitation for mothers of mixed-race children, 4) romantic relationships, and 5) emigration. First and foremost, ECLAIR promoted foster care over institutionalization in cases where children were exposed to sex work through their mothers or generally unstable home lives. The priority was to help shape the children's experiences before their attitude towards society became fixed. With the notion that a child's character is formed before reaching four or five years old, ECLAIR stated an urgency in reaching young mixed-race children, "Thinking of the fact that anti-society character[istics] are formed in not small numbers [in] ECLAIR children and [who] commit endless misdeed[s], proper foster care service to the mix-blooded children during pre-school age is thought to be very important."[202] While finding foster homes was not difficult, whether the home itself offers the best environment for the child, especially in the case of one that needed extra care and discipline, was less certain.

Future employment was a perennial issue that reflected the racism and classism experienced by mixed-race youths. While on the one hand, their background and physical appearance limited their access to work, on the other, the report stated that they had an advantage in the field of entertainment or sports, "Their particular appearance and inherent talent on such sports, music, etc. and close tie between Korea and America can be more benefit to them on getting jobs than pure Korean youngsters."[203] Even as the same report recognized how early care can shape a child's attitude towards society, the concept of nurture appears to end there. Instead, mixed-race Koreans were stereotyped to possess a natural aptitude in singing, dancing, and

[202] Ibid, 9.

[203] Ibid.

sports, areas that highlighted one's physical appearance, strength, or stamina. This assumption was widespread in that the Pearl Buck Foundation also offered programs to youths that would develop entertainment skills over academic ability. Another major concern that was brought up was the difficulty of cultivating a work ethic in a population that had relied on welfare for much of their lives. CPS states, "… but they, who got support from social work agencies for long period, couldn't recognize how much it was difficult to earn living. Accordingly moral attitude of the mix-blooded children is most important prior to job placement and social workers should pay careful concern on it."[204] Dispossessed from birth, and treated with both pity and suspicion, mixed-race Koreans who received aid were situated between a rock and a hard place, so to speak, as their treatment led to a passivity and hopelessness regarding their future. Work here can be assumed to be menial work that would offer little sense of worth or future beyond survival. Under such circumstances, the youths' work ethic and principles were questioned, ironically perpetuating the segregation ECLAIR so adamantly wanted to avoid.

The rehabilitation program for mothers of mixed-race children proposed by ECLAIR was framed by two concerns: the first being that some mothers involved in sex work were becoming too old for the profession, and the second being that the withdrawal of U.S. troops from parts of Korea was affecting the camptown economy, forcing those who worked for G.I. consumers to migrate to other camptowns or to work in the red-light district in mainstream Korean society. The options either way, were limited and grim, but CPS's perspective on the matter is equally troubling, "Prostitution as a job is immoral but is an easy job to earn living compared with other jobs such as peddlery, or jobs that require hard and rough work with income of non-round sum

[204] Ibid.

because many mothers don't want to engage in hard work."[205] The description of prostitution as being an "easy job" erases the very difficult, dangerous, and dirty components to sex work.

As Katharine Moon reports, "The overwhelming majority of the prostitutes have experienced a combination of poverty, low class status, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse even before entering the kijich'on world … Having lost their virginity and not having much family connections or education to fall back on, these women often expressed that there was not much else they could do; they were already 'meat to be slaughtered on the butcher's block' (*toma wi e innŭn kogi*)."[206] The implication that these women are somehow too lazy to bother working menial jobs and are *choosing* to work in a trade that offers more money than a street peddler first reveals a lack of awareness on the part of CPS as to the dire circumstances that lead women to sex work; it also negates the fact that camptown sex work is often the result of poverty that is made even worse by previous experiences of abuse; and, importantly, erases how U.S. military sex work was a necessary component of U.S. militarism on the Korean peninsula.

What ECLAIR/CPS labeled as "Marriage" as the fourth issue that needed to be addressed can otherwise be understood as love relationships amongst mixed-race youths, which as noted earlier, had been organized into three categories: 1) relationships between mixed-race youths, 2) relationships with G.I.s, and 3) relationships with camptown sex workers. Recognizing that it was difficult for mixed-race Koreans to foster serious long-term relationships with non-mixed-race Koreans, the report had no particular solution to the problem but recognized the need to address it.

Emigration as a long-debated topic concerning mixed-race Koreans was the final point in

[205] Ibid, 10.

[206] Katharine H.S. Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 23.

the report, and like the rest of the concerns did not have a clear solution. ECLAIR/CPS observed that many mixed-race youths, once they had reached maturity, have a strong desire to leave Korea because of their experiences of being a second-class citizen in Korea. Hope, encapsulated within the possibility of departure was in immigrating to the United States. However, the report noted that the Korean government had not offered financial or administrative support towards this end. Adoption, which had been the ideal solution for infants and young children, was not feasible for older children and young adults. The report also compared a program in Hong Kong run by ISS that sent orphaned Chinese youths to Canada for vocational training with the purpose of returning to Hong Kong once training was complete. ECLAIR/CPS reasoned that similar programs did not exist in Korea because mixed-race Koreans had no intention of returning to Korea if given the opportunity to leave. Instead, the report noted that the requirement for military service in Korea may in turn be exempted, replaced with the possibility of developing a program that would train mixed-race Koreans to be skilled workers who could then emigrate to a Western nation.

With the realization that intercountry proxy adoption would not solve the mixed-race “problem,” the ECLAIR program came into being as a way to support mixed-race Koreans in country. By likening South Korea’s foreseeable future to the contemporaneous racial strife in the U.S., the social welfare committee of KAVA and others believed integration was key to a dark future of social unrest. Intercountry adoption was now not the only method of managing mixed-race Koreans. Instead, the possibility of integration existed *alongsid*e removal. However, measuring the program’s success was another question. Still, from 1964-1971, ECLAIR supported 708 students, with approximately 103 of those students moving on from the program due to a variety of life circumstances including: adoption, studying abroad, emigration,

graduation, and employment. Other more adverse reasons included: missing, "hopeless case," aging out of the program, or entering into prostitution.[207] The program was unable to fully prevent every ECLAIR student from embarking on a downhill trajectory, but their support of hundreds of students over the years remains significant to the history of mixed-race Koreans of this period.

Unlike the discourse I have documented earlier in this chapter, this section provides evidence that Western humanitarians and local social welfare representatives also searched for *in*-country solutions to assist mixed-race Korean children. The establishment of the ECLAIR program demonstrates how humanitarian governance was not only limited to intercountry adoption but extended to supporting the welfare of older children and young adults whose possibilities for immigration were limited. As the next section illustrates, the social welfare committee of KAVA and those involved in the ECLAIR program were not the only agents interested in the benevolent in-country care of mixed-race Korean children.

V. The Pearl S. Buck Foundation Korea and the Sosa Opportunity Center, 1965-76

Amongst the major figures of humanitarianism in Asia during the Cold War, Pearl S. Buck is perhaps the most recognized and respected within these circles. Buck had a very long and prolific life as a writer and humanitarian, as evidenced by the many projects and agencies she developed for disadvantaged children around the world. Having grown up in China herself as a child of missionary parents, her bicultural missionary experience deeply informed her attitude towards neglected mixed-race children of the early decades of the Cold War. As such, her humanitarian efforts did not stop at Welcome House—her adoption agency, but took the form of numerous published articles and books, such as the influential, *Children for Adoption* (1964),

[207] CPS, "Report on ECLAIR Program," June 1971, p5, Folder 27, Box 6, RG 197.

wherein Buck discusses the conditions under which "unwanted" children were born and existed, including a chapter on mixed-race Korean and Japanese children.

Welcome House is relevant to mention as it was the first intercountry adoption agency in the US, which was started in 1947.[208] After being approached to place two of U.S.-born mixed-race Asian American children at adoption agencies, Buck began Welcome House out of frustration when one adoption agency after another rejected the children, stating that they were "unadoptable."[209] The organization then, was created in direct response to the abandonment of mixed-race children. Headquartered in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, Welcome House also worked with mixed-race Asian children in Japan and Hong Kong. As one report states, "Welcome House pioneered in the placement of the part-Asian child, and its happy experience in this field has made a notable contribution to American adoption policy."[210] While the Holt Adoption Program had a numerically larger impact on Korean intercountry adoptions compared to any other program or agency, Buck's influence was significant in her connections, access, and worldwide campaign in helping mixed-race and later, disabled children; and, especially as the first American figure to highlight the plight of mixed-race Asian orphans.

In 1965, the Pearl S. Buck Foundation founded its Korean branch in Bucheon, Korea—a location just south of Seoul. In July of 1967, the Korean branch established the Sosa Opportunity Center. The Center helped fill a social welfare gap for South Korea, which heavily relied on

[208] See Theodore F. Harris, *Pearl S. Buck: A Biography Vol.1* (New York: The John Day Company, Inc., 1969), 298. Welcome House was merged with Pearl S. Buck International in 1991. "Pearl S. Buck," last modified February 24, 2012, accessed May 29, 2019, https://pages.uoregon.edu/adoption/people/buck.html. In addition, according to the Foundation's website, Welcome House/Pearl S. Buck International was entirely phased out in 2014 due to "changes in international adoption regulations." "Welcome House Search Information," last modified 2019, accessed May 29, 2019, https://pearlsbuck.org/welcome-house-search-information/.

[209] Peter Conn, *Pearl S. Buck: A Cultural Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 313.

[210] LeRoy Bowman, Benjamin A Gjenvick, and Eleanor T.M. Harvey, *Children of Tragedy: Church World Service Survey Team Report on Intercountry Adoption* (New York: Church World Service, 1961), 44.

foreign aid partly because of the infrastructure already created through foreign support and partly because capital was typically funneled into Korea's military defense system as the nation's priority. The Center helped "Amerasians" living in Korea by giving them access to education and workforce skills. The numbers are rather inconsistent but the impact of the Foundation can be observed. According to one newspaper article, by 1967, 829 of about 1600 mixed-race Koreans were registered with the foundation.[211] However, according to the Pearl Buck Korean branch's report, by 1967 it had supported 2000 mixed-race youths.[212] The Foundation worked in concert with the Korean government, such as the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in Seoul, as well as the Social Section of the Gyeonggi-do Provincial Government. Yet, as I have illustrated, it was not alone in its efforts to support mixed-race Koreans in-country, nor was it clear whether the Korean branch was initially on board with supporting mixed-race youths for the purposes of integration into Korean society, "… I have heard through friends in Korea that Foundation representatives in Korea are actually in opposition to that idea, even to the extent of trying to convince the Korean Government that the long established ECLAIR Department in Child Placement Service should be abolished in favor of a return to an exclusive inter-country adoption program."[213] Even so, by 1967, with the opening of the Sosa Opportunity Center, the Foundation's Korean branch was, for all intents and purposes, supporting mixed-race Koreans for a viable future in Korea.

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[211] "Han'guk chŏnjaenggoarŭl wihan pokchisent'ŏŭi 「saengilssŏnmul」ŭl an'go…. naeil naehanhanŭn p'ŏlbŏk yŏsawa kŭ chaedan. saŏp pŏrinji 4nyŏntchae," *Chosun Ilbo*, May 25, 1967.

[212] "Sahwae bokchibŏpin hanguk pŏlbŏk chaedan gwanrŏn sahang," (Bucheon-si, Korea: Pearl Buck Foundation Korea, 2017).

[213] George P. Whitener to Myra Scovel, September 28, 1965, Folder 45, Box 16, RG 140, Guide to the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations Secretaries' Files: Korea Mission, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

According to a 1967 *Chosun Ilbo* article, the Sosa Opportunity Center was based on constructing four primary units to serve their constituency.[214] The Opportunity Center was to provide: 1) an Aptitude Analysis Unit, which would examine and determine the skills and aptitudes of already registered students; 2) a Tutoring Unit, which would work with children who were lagging behind academically; 3) a Proficiency Unit, which would, under the guidance of a Max Ellenov, determine whether students had entertainment skills that could be further cultivated, and 4) a Rehabilitation Unit which would train the mothers of mixed-race students or those who had already reached adulthood in foreign dressmaking, typing, switchboard operation, and other such specialized jobs.[215]

While the first two units seem unremarkable in their design and intention, the last two units reveal the unique circumstances of mixed-race Korean youths of this time period and highlights the direction and attitudes of nongovernmental organizations like the Sosa Opportunity Center in managing their welfare. Even as mixed-race Koreans required academic and workforce support, the inclusion of an entertainment unit reflects the perception that mixed-race Koreans, based on their physical appearance, have a natural or potential aptitude in this arena. Moreover, the additional unit to assist the mothers point to the conventionalized understanding that mixed-race children were part of a single parent family. The assumption was that the mothers made a living doing unskilled labor (including sex work), and required job training.

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[214] I am unclear why the CEO of the Yuhan Corporation, which I believe either leased or sold land to the Foundation, is involved in the planning of the center. At this time, I do not have additional information regarding the inner workings of the development of this center.

[215] "Han'guksŏ 75hoe saengil majŭn p'ŏlbŏk yŏsa. 「kihoesent'ŏ」 kŏllip palk'yŏ. manp'yŏng taejie sŏul honhyŏra ŭi yangji," *Chosun Ilbo,* June 3, 1967.

The Center's legitimacy came into question when, two years after this initial article, the *Chosun Ilbo* reported on a sit-down strike by mixed-race students. One hundred forty-eight mixed-race students had been demonstrating for a week against corruption and money laundering occurring at the center. The article revealed a number of transgressions, which came to a head when a mixed-race woman called out a Korean staff member for loose behavior at a nearby club in a U.S. army base. When the accuser was dismissed instead, students had had enough and began to protest. This catalyst ripped open a number of indiscretions and egregious behaviors including the fact that the American staff had censored and doctored students' letters to their overseas sponsors that revealed that they had never received their money for living expenses. Instead, the money had been stolen by American staff members and used for frivolous expenses, including the purchase of tailored suits and vacations in Pusan. In addition to legal debates regarding the ownership of the Sosa Opportunity Center going to the Korean branch vs. the Pearl Buck Foundation in Philadelphia, perhaps the most egregious charge was that of a staff member, who in plain sight of Pearl Buck herself, sent two mixed-race girls to the local army club to entertain soldiers.[216]

Such scandalous charges threatened to shut down the Center by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, which had jurisdiction over the land and building that housed the children. In a 1970 letter to the Ministry, Reverend Sveinung J. Moen, who was just hired in 1969 as the director of Sosa Opportunity Center, admits that, "Unfortunately, the [s …] program has not been able to be on level due to circumstances which was [not] under the control of the Foundation, such as personal conflict, power-struggle and direct playing with parts involved to

[216] "Temoro p'okparhan honhyŏraŭi hang ŭi. p'ŏlbŏkchaedan han'gukchibu kihoesent'ŏŭi naemak," *Chosun Ilbo,* May 20, 1969.

take over the opera[tion]."[217] In an effort to prevent the closure, Moen reaffirmed the original purpose of the Pearl S. Buck Foundation in Korea, "This Center is set up to give Amerasian children an opportunity to […] and become good citizens."[218]

Created to offer educational and vocational learning for mixed-race Koreans, the Center's aim in producing "good citizens" who contribute to the welfare of the state and beyond works in concert with its humanitarian aim of supporting these youth. Its aim was to fill the gaps in education faced by mixed-race children, which also included those mentally disabled or with attention deficiency issues, "We also have a set up fo[r] retarded children or children who are not able to follow normal school [pro]gram. We give them an advanced tutoring and our statistic shows rather marvelous results even here. Many children have been able through thi[s] advanced school program to attend and catch up with their schools either primary—middle or high school."[219] Moreover, the Center also offered opportunities for youths to study abroad as well as offer stipends for children to cover their school fees.

Moen moreover attempts to appeal to moral sentiments, "I find it irresponsible to try to quench a work like this which virtually keeps a thousand of people alive and give mentally, physically and educationally aid to such an underprivileged group of people as the mixed blood. Regardless of what the mother might do or not do. It is not the question about the mother—but the CHILD."[220] Based on his language, Moen views the child as innocent, regardless of the profession of the Korean mother. Moen's perspective embodies a paternalistic attitude that views

[217] Ibid.

[218] Letter, Pearl Buck Foundation to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in Seoul, February 24, 1970, Folder BA0173850, p6-26, National Archives of Korea.

[219] Ibid.

[220] Ibid.

children as innocent, regardless of the sins of their parents. Yet, even as the child must not be blamed for their mother's sins, mothers are once again elided within this savior narrative. In addition, the Center is presented as a space where mixed-race children can not only access educational and social services but as a space of mental uplift. He asks the Ministry to recognize mixed-race Koreans for what they are, namely subjects requiring the help of the government. He shifts the focus away from the scandal and instead, emphasizes a Christian responsibility towards the individual, who by all counts deserves attention and care.

Along this vein, Moen stressed the humanity of the mixed-race child as an empty slate ready to be molded, "The child is born—tabula rasa—latin, means empty, and it [is] our task to write something on that soul. It is our job to foster the child and give it the best and only the best is good enough. And never can it be considered human to deprive a child from its right to become a human. To hamper or to close this Foundation will be to strangle an idea which already is Internationally known and accepted as a necessity to meet and cope with the problem of this particular group of people."[221] In stressing the importance of the Foundation's work for mixed-race children, Moen directly ties the looming shut down of the Foundation with depriving mixed-race children of their rights to an education, a key element to becoming human. This appeal to humanity assumes that the Korean government is in line with this explicitly Christian moralistic thinking around the construction of the human being as one that values all humans equally, especially those categorized as "innocent," of which children fall under. Ultimately, the Sosa Opportunity Center persisted until 1976, when its doors permanently closed.

Whether the Sosa Opportunity Center began because the Foundation recognized a need, or because it feared a loss of sponsorship funds against the ECLAIR program is currently an

[221] Ibid.

unanswered question. Regardless, the Center, through its scandal, existed for nearly a decade providing social services for mixed-race Korean youths. The Pearl Buck Foundation in Korea, like the Holt Adoption Program, maintained a legacy in Korea that continues to this day. While it was in communication with other contemporaneous humanitarian agencies, and later, a member of KAVA, it operated independently. The Foundation was a major player in the support of mixed-race Koreans, reflected in its longevity as an organization and in the publicity in Korean newspapers reporting on Pearl Buck's activities or Buck herself writing on the subject.

However, as I have tried to demonstrate, the humanitarian aid of mixed-race Koreans, whether via adoption, or via in-country support, involved a number of players. The Pearl Buck Foundation, along with the Presbyterian Mission, U.S.A., Holt Adoption Program, ISS, CPS and countless other agencies both local and foreign, contributed to the humanitarian management of mixed-race Koreans of the Cold War era, helping shape the discourse of need and care within a logics of compassion. In the final section, I analyze Moen's detailed study of mixed-race Koreans, which—in critiquing South Korea's racism while concurrently racializing mixed-race Koreans—encapsulates the liberal humanitarian perspective espoused by many of the writers I have discussed.

VI. Evaluating the "Amerasian" Issue, 1974

Moen's time as the director of the Sosa Opportunity Center resulted in his 1974 study, *The Amerasians: A Study and Research on Amerasian Children.* In it, he discusses two potential solutions to the "Amerasian" issue, one that echoed earlier narratives of either moving overseas or remaining in Korea. Moving overseas for mixed-race Koreans had two possibilities: adoption or emigration. Adoption was the preferred solution since many of the "Amerasians" Moen had worked with could, "get what they had been deprived of, the security of a family, love and

understanding, even though it might in some cases come late in their lives."[222] While he does not discount in-country adoptions, at the time of his writing, such cases were rare while overseas adoption had a proven record of "success" for over a decade.

At the same time, although he does not quote any statistics or describe case studies of failed adoptions, Moen recognizes that intercountry adoption was not the best solution for every individual, "There are a few cases that have not suc[c]eeded and even though these are more the exception than the rule, it proves, that the adoption is not always solution to every mixed race situation, though it remains one of the best ones."[223] Moreover, based on Korean adoption laws at the time, once a child grew past the age of fourteen, adoption was no longer a possibility. Youths above this age would need to consider emigration, but this option demanded other factors to be in place that mixed-race Koreans had little control over.

For instance, emigration to an overseas location often required diplomatic ties between two countries. South Korea, at that time, had ties with several South American nations as well as with West Germany and other Scandinavian countries to provide much needed labor in the form of farmers, engineers, nurses, coal miners, and other technicians. However, mixed-race Koreans, many of whom had grown up on welfare assistance, rarely had the skills necessary to qualify for such overseas placement. The other possibility within emigration was sponsorship, either in the form of the biological father confirming the status of the child in order to process American citizenship, or through a sponsor. Again, the likelihood of these options coming to fruition was low considering the number of mixed-race Koreans "stuck" in Korea was precisely because they could not legally prove their connection to their delinquent and absent fathers; and, the chances

[222] Rev. Sv. J. Moen, *The Amerasians: A Study and Research on Interracial Children in Korea* (Seoul: Taewon Publishing Company, 1974), 80.

[223] Ibid, 81.

of finding a sponsor who was sympathetic and financially capable of full support were also slim. Another alternative for Moen was for the U.S. Army to recruit able-bodied mixed-race males. The Army could not only assist in their gaining citizenship but also provide skillsets for future employment opportunities.

In reality, many of Moen's suggestions, other than that of intercountry adoption, were recommendations for policymakers rather than realistic avenues for mixed-race Koreans. While remaining in Korea was often less of a choice than a reality for many mixed-race Koreans, Moen addresses this "option," as a potentially good alternative if society's attitude can be changed, "I feel that instead of launching a mass exportation program, Korea ought to build up a sentiment of acceptance towards the Amerasians and assimilate them into the society."[224] In a chapter called "Acceptance and Integration into Korean Society," Moen first questions the role of humanitarian organizations like the Pearl Buck Foundation in exacerbating the situation, "By continually pointing out their different physical appear[a]nce versus the pure Korean and thinking that the only solution to their social problem will be to take them out of the country, we are probably widening the gap between the Amerasians and the Koreans instead of narrowing it."[225] The statement hangs in the air as he asks, "Should we rather drop the whole question of support from abroad and let the mixed race children remain in the society, give the society time to adapt itself to the new situation and let the Amerasians be absorbed by the community?"[226]

Much like previous discussions, Moen argues that the backing of the Korean government is necessary, along with a non-segregationist attitude that would integrate mixed-race Koreans

[224] Ibid, 86.

[225] Ibid, 88.

[226] Ibid.

first through access to education, which would ultimately open future doors. Accepting mixed-race Koreans as desired members of society was integral to the process. On the other hand, Moen believed that the attitudes of "Amerasians" also needed changing so that instead of internalizing years of ostracism, they must somehow move past this and become productive members of society. Ending on a hopeful note, Moen believed that over time, "People will learn to judge each other not by the color of the skin but the contents of the heart."[227]

Moen's seemingly practical solutions for departure was yet another mode of benevolent governance by Western humanitarians. While mixed-race Koreans experienced ostracism and what often amounted to social death, the *narrative* of an intolerant Korean society helped justify humanitarian intervention. What began as a temporary solution in the 1950s via intercountry adoption irrevocably changed the social landscape so that departure—whether through intercountry adoption or emigration—became a permanent solution. At the same time, by questioning whether Westerners like himself only worsened the situation by "continually pointing out their different physical appear[a]nce … thinking that the only solution to their problem was to take them out of the country," Moen hints at the equivocal nature of the narrative itself.[228]

For those who could not (or would not) leave, assimilation was offered as the second-best solution, which not only required government support but changes in both society's and mixed-race youths' respective attitudes towards each other—easier said than done. Moen's "practical" solutions illustrate how imperial imaginaries of benevolence and assimilability furthered a civilizing discourse framed around the well-being of the mixed-race subject. Whether through

[227] Ibid, 91.

[228] Ibid, 88.

departure or assimilation, the concern for mixed-race Korean youths was a concern for the human being, positioning Moen and others like him as well-meaning and even necessary agents in helping Korea's needy population.

VII. Conclusion

As symbols of defeat and foreign occupation, mixed-race Koreans of the Cold War period presented a model example for Western humanitarian aid. As children, they were naturalized as moral, depoliticized subjects to be saved from suffering and communism. Liisa Malkki explains, "The child is the principle of hope on which many futuristic utopias depend, and also a universalizing (but not universal) standard of a certain basic purity, and pure suffering."[229] The image of the innocent child, the *tabula rasa,* played a large role in the humanitarian movement that led to international adoption and in-country sponsorship.

In parsing out the differences between 19th century colonialism and missionary humanitarianism, Barnett writes, "in contrast to ideologies built on biological theories of race, they [Christian missionaries] believed in a fundamental unity of humankind. Because all were children of Christ, all could be saved."[230] This color-blind logic motivated the narratives of many of the writers analyzed in this chapter through the idea that all children were children of God. Western intervention seemed the morally right thing to do to save mixed-race Koreans from an intolerant society—a civilizing discourse that operated as color-blind compassion.

While it is clear that mixed-race Koreans born during the war and immediately afterwards were targeted for mass removal by international adoption services like Holt—with the

[229] Liisa Malkki, "Children, Humanity, and the Infantilization of Peace," in *In the Name of Humanity: The Government of Threat and Care,* ed. Illana Feldman & Miriam Ticktin (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 77.

[230] Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011): 68.

explicit approval of the Rhee administration, adoption was not the only method for “saving” mixed-race Koreans. Depending on the objective of the humanitarian agent, mixed-race Koreans were viewed at times as an American responsibility through adoption, and at other times as a Korean responsibility through integration, both of which were instigated by Western humanitarian agencies. At the same time, the Korean government was complicit in this process as foreign aid offered a convenient solution to a problem South Korea had little stake nor infrastructure in rectifying.

Through letters, reports, and sponsorship publicity ads, Western humanitarian agencies narrated mixed-race Koreans as innocent "children of tragedy," which was needed to rationalize structural care. Moreover, even while there was discourse on the need for Korea to take ownership of its mixed-race population, there was little recognition that Korea’s social welfare infrastructure was deeply embedded in Western missionary practices and funding. Any effort to integrate mixed-race Koreans, like their initial removal, still required the support of the West. Stateless, and characterized as orphaned or destitute due to a racist, xenophobic society, mixed-race Koreans were ideally positioned as humanitarian subjects of care and compassion. While the narrative of mixed-race Koreans is often framed around their expulsion through international adoption, this chapter revealed the concerns around and techniques of in-country humanitarian governance enacted by missionaries, social workers, non-governmental and governmental agencies.

CHAPTER 3
MEMORIES OF THE *YANGGONGJU* IN COLD WAR KOREAN FILM

I. Introduction

This chapter analyzes three early-mid Cold War period Korean films that showcase the figure of the Korean military sex worker and her iteration from *yanggongju* to mixed-race bar hostess. As I have demonstrated in previous chapters, mixed-race Koreans of the Cold War era were associated with military prostitution, and this association played an integral role in their marginalization. Therefore, the metaphorical connection to the *figure* of the military "prostitute," or in Korean slang, the *yanggongju* ("Yankee princess"), is worth exploring. By examining how this figure has been represented on the silver screen, I historicize the *yanggongju* within the postwar Korean cinematic imaginary about U.S. militarism on the Korean peninsula, and trace her symbolic relationship to the mixed-race Korean.

I have selected *Hellflower* (1958), *Confessions of a Body* (1964), and *Black Woman* (1982) because they are three rare Cold War era films that portray a prostitute character in a lead role. In centering the prostitute, or the "fallen woman," these films highlight a marginalized yet familiar literary figure within the Korean postwar context. *Hellflower,* produced in 1958 and directed by the acclaimed Shin Sang-ok, revolves around a love triangle between two brothers and Sonya, a camptown sex worker. *Confessions of a Body*, produced in 1964, a little over a decade after the Korean War, tells the tale of a camptown prostitute and her three college-aged daughters in post-war South Korea. Finally, *Black Woman,* produced in 1982, narrates the story of a mixed-race bar hostess who works her way up to wealth in order to seek revenge upon her ex-lover.[231] I put

[231] While these earlier films center post-war poverty and the impact of American military presence as overarching themes, later ones like Jang Kil-su's *Silver Stallion* (1991), and Kim Ki-duk's *Address Unknown* (2001) tend toward hetero-masculine narratives of national rape through the body of the Korean woman, retaining a singular trope of national suffering that appears in the form of madness, depression, or suicide of the prostitute

these films in conversations with each other to demonstrate that even while there are similar threads that characterize each central female character, the *yanggongju* and her iteration as mixed-race bar hostess is not a fixed figure. Instead, the films reflect a variety of depictions that range from glamorous femme fatale, to sacrificial mother, to shrewd business woman. These shifting representations evince how the *yanggongju* is interpreted and reinterpreted to reflect Korean society's concerns on the effects of the U.S. military stationed on the Korean peninsula.

While this chapter focuses on the representation of this figure between the 1950s-80s, it was after the brutal 1992 death of Yun Geum-i, a U.S. military sex worker murdered by Kenneth Markle, an American soldier, that the *yanggongju* was politicized to mean a colonized, defeated, emasculated nation.[232] In that moment, rising anti-American sentiments had reached a head, causing protests and public discourse criticizing U.S. military intent and presence on the Korean peninsula. Importantly, Yun's death took on symbolic significance by nationalists who likened her body to that of the nation.[233] The issue of military prostitution thereby turned military sex workers into symbols. The now politicized *yanggongju* became a topic of debate amongst scholars and activists alike as her shadowy presence spoke to not only nationalistic concerns of foreign occupation but revealed the deeply gendered underbelly of the Korean polity in which native women represented the nation as either "in-tact" or plundered.[234] By focusing on a period

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and/or her mixed-race children.

[232] On October 28, 1992, Yun Geum-i, a camptown sex worker, was found dead, her body littered with bruises and blood, with a coke bottle in her vagina and an umbrella in her anus and detergent powder spread all over her corpse. U.S. Private Kenneth Markle was found guilty and sentenced to fifteen years of which he served thirteen before being released on parole. While violence against camptown sex workers was not unheard of, the grisly nature of this murder brought a growing anti-American sentiment to its head.

[233] See Hyun Sook Kim, "*Yanggongju as* Allegory of the Nation: The Representation of Working-Class Women in Popular and Radical Texts,*"* in *Dangerous Women: Gender & Korean Nationalism,* eds Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi (Routledge, 1998), 190-192.

[234] Scholarship on military prostitution is certainly not limited to Korean and Korean American studies. Cynthia Enloe's works, including her classic *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*

before the nineties, this chapter helps destabilize this figure to mean more than a raped nation, instead, as these films illustrate, the *yanggongju* contained a myriad of tropes in negotiating the trauma of the Korean War.

Like Lisa Lowe's work in calling attention to the "intimacies of four continents," the *yanggongju* illustrates the intimacies between the U.S. military and the South Korean government, which is disavowed in her construction as "prostitute" or as nation. The *yanggongju* provides a counter-narrative to the U.S. exceptionalist justification of militarization across the Pacific theater and of Korean anti-communist ethnic nationalist discourse. She is an assemblage of tensions: of colonial and imperial violences, of postwar trauma, and a "figure of perpetual exile" that has haunted Korea.[235] As Grace Cho's analysis of this figure attests, "the psychic figure of the yanggongju has been constituted by trauma and, through her very erasure, has also permeated the unconscious of the Korean diaspora."[236] While the legacies of this figure on the Korean diaspora are in many ways, more palpable in the history of Korean immigration to the U.S., I also want to underscore the *yanggongju*'s hermeneutics as a ghostly *and* material figure in the politics of Korean mixed-race subjectivity.

In other words, the *yanggongju* herself is an act of remembrance, for she functions palimpsestically as a paradigmatic figure of loss that came out of the various violences of the war and its aftermath. This loss is articulated in its postwar contradictions, reflected in the epistemic structure of U.S. empire and South Korea's complicity with this empire. Yet, these losses are not

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(1990) addresses U.S. military base politics through a feminist lens, and Sturdevant and Stoltzfus's *Let the Good Times Roll: Prostitution and the U.S. Military in Asia* offer some groundbreaking ethnographic study on this taboo topic. A decade later, works such as, Höhn and Moon's *Over There* (2010), and Shigematsu and Camacho's *Militarized Currents* (2010), centralized the issue of U.S. military empire, underscoring military prostitution as a key component of these gendered relations between nation states.

[235] Grace Cho, *Haunting the Korean Diaspora* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 136.

[236] Ibid, 17.

narrated as losses but as discourses of democracy and economic development. I argue that the select films illustrate these contradictions through the *yanggongju* character; and, that the *honhyŏla,* or the "mixed-blood" child, is part of this narrative. For, even though the *yanggongju* and the *honhyŏla* have typically been regarded separately, with one being an issue of gender and nation, while the other being a social predicament, the discourse on the *yanggongju* does not end with her and the discourse on mixed-race Koreans cannot begin without addressing the *yanggongju.*

Considering the nearly two decades-long gap between the production of these three films, the conditions under which they were produced differ significantly. *Hellflower* and *Confessions of a Body* was made during the "Golden Era" of Korean filmmaking—a period primarily highlighting the late-1950s and mid-1960s, whereas *Black Woman* was produced during the tail end of what has been referred to as the "dark" period of Korean filmmaking. The early 1980s saw an era of "ero yŏnghwas" (erotic films), beginning with the 1982 screening of *Madame Aema* leading into an era of erotic film production under Chun Doo-hwan's (Chŏn Tu-hwan) 3S Policy (screen, sex, sports).[237] As such, while the film production quality and intended audience differ, the discourse on and representation of the *yanggongju* and her iterations connect these otherwise disparate films. Moreover, to underscore how the spectrality of the war manifests itself in the films, I apply theories of space and place to the first two sections, while examining the role of excess and racial melancholia in the final section. By spectrality, I evoke scholars like Grace Cho and Avery Gordon who help theorize the in-between spaces of presence and absence, life

[237] The 3S Policy was a directive by the Chun Doo-hwan dictatorship to steer the public away from political engagement—especially the fallout from the Gwangju Uprising during which local university students demonstrating against the harsh policies of the government were killed, inciting the Gwangju citizens to action, resulting in over 200 deaths. See Namhee Lee's *The Making of Minjung: Democracy and the Politics of Representation in South Korea* (2007) for more information.

and death, visibility and invisibility, which I find helpful in triangulating the Korean War, the *yanggongju,* and the mixed-race subject. As Gordon writes, "Ghostly matters are a part of social life."[238] We see the ghostly matters of trauma, loss, and shame appear and reappear in the films. *Hellflower* and *Confessions of a Body* articulate what is erased by imperialist and nationalist discourses of anti-communism, development, and progress by tracing the *yanggongju's* relationship to militarized spaces, the city and country, and the brothel, which serves as both a place of business and of home. *Black Woman* follows with the abject figure of the mixed-race sex worker and her melancholic response to loss. I frame this chapter with the question: how does the *yanggongju* operate as a technology of postwar memory and as a particular psychic structure that sets the stage for the *honhyŏla*?

II. *Hellflower*—geographies of the *kijich'on* and of the *yanggongju*

I begin with the film, *Hellflower* (1958) as the three main characters *and* the setting operate allegorically to chronicle the postwar condition.[239] Landscape itself features prominently in highlighting the significance of space and place as an active character in the narrative. *Hellflower* narrates a love triangle between Sonya, Yŏng-sik, and his younger brother, Tong-sik. Sonya works as a military sex worker while Yŏng-sik works with local men to steal goods from the U.S. military base. Because he is stigmatized by his blackmarket connections, he accepts Sonya's sex work. Yŏng-sik is enamored of Sonya and wants her to marry him and leave for the countryside. However, with the arrival of Tong-sik, who tries to convince the prodigal Yŏng-sik

[238] Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 23.

[239] While the conclusion is slightly different, a substantial portion of this section was published in *Feminist Media Histories* in the Spring 2020 issue. Laura Ha Reizman, "(Re)mapping the Yanggongju and the Camptown in Shin Sang-ok's *Hellflower*," *Feminist Media Histories* 6, no. 2 (Spring 2020): 43-66. Please note that the film *Chiokhwa* can be translated as either *Hellflower* or *Flower in Hell.* The ambiguity of meaning has allowed for some flexibility in interpretation, and I have selected *Hellflower* as it better reflects Sonya's femme fatale character.

to return to the countryside to help care for their mother, a love triangle ensues as Sonya secretly pursues Tong-sik.

Produced merely five years after the Korean War, *Hellflower* juxtaposes what appears to be documentary footage of Seoul and of Tongduchŏn against a fictionalized narrative. In fact, much of the film is shot on location, interspersed with a few on-set scenes such as Sonya's room, and the restaurant where Tong-sik and Sonya have their last tête-à-tête. Locations range from Seoul Station and its vicinity, the shopping district in the camp town, to the less inhabited spaces of grassland, beach, and later the marshes where Sonya and Yŏng-sik meet their demise. The camera thereby moves from one habitus to another, from the hustle and bustle of city and camptown life to a desolate landscape of nature. By examining Sonya's peregrinations through these various spaces and places, I highlight how the affective presence of the Korean War—as portrayed through scenes of the city, the camptown, the base, and the surrounding fields and swamps—generates a sense of loss and displacement.

In understanding this loss, we must also evaluate the history of camptowns and their relationship to empire. Built around U.S. military bases, which occupied (and continue to occupy) allied lands like South Korea, Okinawa, and the Philippines, to name a few, camptowns have provided services and local goods for U.S. military personnel. Borrowing from Ann Laura Stoler, I propose that camptowns are "ruinations" of empire, here rendered as the "imperial debris" of Japanese colonialism and Cold War containment tactics wherein Asia becomes the off-site battleground for U.S. military might.[240]

Katharine H. S. Moon has documented how farms in South Korea, once deemed strategic military sites, were turned into R&R boomtowns by the mid-1950s, "For example, Tongduch'ŏn

[240] Ann Laura Stoler, *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).

sprouted from agricultural fields into one of the most notorious camptowns, having housed four different U.S. infantry divisions since the end of the Korean War … Similarly, Songt'an, which had been a small unknown farming village until the Korean War, grew to be the "darling" of U.S. Air Force (USAF) camptowns since the early 1950s."[241] In a July 23, 1962, article, the *Dong-A Ilbo* reported that "right after Liberation, Ŭijŏngbu, with one silk mill, was a quiet and secluded province of 10,000 residents. But with 6.25 [the Korean War] and the extended presence of U.N. troops, desperate hordes swarmed in from all over the country, including crooks looking to make a quick buck."[242] These statements attribute the destruction of former farming villages to the arrival of U.S. military bases. Crucially, they point to the sizable shift that happened as sleepy agricultural spaces transformed into spaces of global military capital and became extensions of the military base. The political economy of places like Tongduch'ŏn was turned on its head, as the land was no longer a source of subsistence or sustainability. Instead, locals became reliant on the U.S. military for their livelihoods, working in service economies that catered to U.S. military personnel and jockeying against the tide of transient, hungry Koreans "swarming" in for opportunities.

Here, I would like to turn our attention to a spatial politics that centralizes the "interconnectedness of material and metaphorical space."[243] In other words, what might an examination of these two dimensions of space reveal about the production of social meaning?

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[241] Katharine H.S. Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 28.

[242] Oh Sang-won, "Ch'ŏljogang chubyŏn Migunbudaech'on ŭi hyŏnsil: Ŭijŏngbu" ["In the Vicinity of the Barbed Wire Fence: The Reality of Ŭijŏngbu, a U.S. Military Camptown"], *Dong-A Ilbo*, July 23, 1962, 3. This article was brought to my attention by Moon's reference in Sex among Allies, although there the date is misquoted as July 22.

[243] Neil Smith and Cindi Katz, "Grounding Metaphor: Towards a spatialized politics," in *Place and the Politics of Identity,* eds Michael Keith and Steve Pile (New York: Routledge, 1993), 68.

For instance, the U.S. military viewed these areas as strategic sites of military defense and expansion. Koreans who lived in these parts viewed them as home. The distinction between space for the U.S. military and place for Koreans is one of many that become muddied in the landscape of the camptown. A local reporter discussed one such instance, "Most of the signage in the shopping quarter is in English. If you enter a 'Cabaret,' you'll see posted at the entrance to the toilet, 'U.S. Army Only,' as if you've set foot in a foreign country. This is what it is to live near those barbed wire fences, where such strange sights exist."[244] The camptown itself contains both epistemes, generating an in-between space of soldiering, sex work, capitalism, modernity, and the English language, all through the use of Korean bodies and on Korean soil. Ann Laura Stoler writes, "To speak of colonial ruination is to trace the fragile and durable substances of signs, the visible and visceral senses in which the effects of empire are reactivated and remain."[245] Behind the barbed-wire fence is a space of indistinction, of neither Korea nor America but also of both. The *yanggongju* is one such figure constructed from and tied to this indeterminate site, made indeterminate herself. Tracing Sonya against the postwar landscape helps decipher the process of colonial and neocolonial ruination wreaked on the Korean peninsula.

Hellflower's opening scene, reminiscent of Italian neorealism in its numerous on-location shots and scenes of everyday life, encapsulates a bricolage of postwar modernity as Plymouths, human-drawn carts, and military trucks pass by with regularity against a backdrop of traditional Korean thatched roofs, colonial buildings, and modern square structures. The story begins with Tong-sik, who, upon his arrival in Seoul Station is greeted by hoodlums who beat and mug him.

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[244] Oh Sang-won, "Ch'ŏljogang chubyŏn migunbudaech'on ŭi hyŏnsil: Ŭijŏngbu," 3.

[245] Stoler, *Imperial Debris*, 11.

He wanders the streets of Seoul searching for his brother, passing through crowded spaces of commerce, of fishmongers, snack sellers—even sitting with a fortune teller, to finally happen upon Yŏng-sik. The condensed nature of the city, both in spatial and temporal terms is out of sync with Tong-sik, wherein the city is portrayed as tough and heartless and the countryside as innocent.

Figure 1. A scene of postwar modernity in *Hellflower* (*Chiokhwa,* dir. Shin Sang-ok), 1958

Raymond Williams summarizes this stereotype well, "On the country has gathered the idea of a natural way of life: of peace, innocence, and simple virtue. On the city has gathered the idea of an achieved centre: of learning, communication, light. Powerful hostile associations have also developed: on the city as a place of noise, worldliness and ambition; on the country as a

place of backwardness, ignorance, limitation."[246] In *Hellflower,* these dualistic constructions help organize Korea's postwar disarray in which the countryside is imagined as undefiled while the city is viewed as a product of colonialism, occupation, and a fratricidal war. The binary of the city and the country is palpable in Tong-sik whose "simple virtue" cannot manage the sins of the city. As such, the virtuous Tong-sik finds his counterpart in Sonya. But in postwar Korea, the country-city binary cannot sufficiently account for Sonya's subject position because her worldliness is due not to her connection to the city so much as to the camptown.

The camptown functions as a kind of third space that, like Mbembe's third zone, exists in between two states of being—in this case between the country and the city, tradition and modernity, Korea and America. Derived from this third space, the *yanggongju* is made both familiar and strange. As Jinsoo An writes, films like *Hellflower* "feature *yanggongju* as fascinating objects of spectacle, exoticism, sexuality, and social dilemma."[247] As such, Sonya is made strange through her spectacularity, accentuated by soft-focus close-ups of her gazing directly at the camera and long shots of her in opulent dress against a backdrop of postwar poverty. Steven Chung describes how she exudes a glamor incompatible with the image of a camptown prostitute, "… everything in Ch'oe Ŭn-hŭi's embodiment of Sonia signals that she is something more than the yanggongju; she inhabits the seedy, makeshift brothel but is not of it, leaping out of that space with an abstract, lurid intensity. While Tong-sik and Yŏng-sik are entrenched in the brutal materiality of modern Seoul, Sonia is aloof from it."[248] Sonya's absent

[246] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 1.

[247] Jinsoo An, "Screening the Redemption: Christianity in Korean Melodrama," in *South Korean Golden Age Melodrama: Gender, Genre, and National Cinema,* eds Kathleen McHugh and Nancy Abelman (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2005), 82.

[248] Steven Chung, *Split Screen Korean: Shin Sang-ok and Postwar Cinema* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 51.

internal world is substituted by her spectacular filmic sexuality, mesmerizing the brothers and viewers alike. Often humming while doing mundane activities, she lives in the present, with little care for the future or her social status. Sonya, in fact, is made queer: without a past or a family, seemingly content with being a camptown prostitute and indifferent to getting married, Sonya's spectacularity is tied to her monstrous sexuality, one created through and by U.S.-Korea relations and contained within the margins of the camptown.

Figure 2. Sonya as spectacle in a close-up in *Hellflower* (*Chiokhwa,* dir. Shin Sang-ok), 1958

In their essay on spatial metaphor and materiality, Neil Smith and Cindi Katz explain, "'location' fixes a point in space … 'Position', by contrast, implies location *vis-à-vis* other locations … 'Locality' suggests a two-(or more) dimensional place, and area within which multiple and diverse social and natural events and processes take place … Notions like subject position, social location and locality borrow this concreteness of spatial definition to impose

some order on the seemingly chaotic *mélange* of social difference and social relations."[249] These points of contact between the subject and other subjects, locations, positions, and locales help trace the temporal and spatial relationality of postwar South Korea. In other words, Sonya's subject position is always *vis-à-vis* the camptown inhabitants, the U.S. military, and the larger Korean polity, which locates her in a kind of no-man's land reflective of the equivocal position of the camptown itself, "In a sense, kijich'on [camptown] prostitutes have represented a limbo-status that South Korea has witnessed since the Korean War and during its rush-attempts at economic development—a simultaneous uprooting from the past with uncertainty about its long-term viability and identity."[250] Sonya's lack of a past, a family, an inner dialogue, and refusal to adhere to gendered norms of being a proper woman contribute to her state of suspense. This "limbo status" is palpable not only in Sonya but in the landscape she inhabits, especially in the oddly desolate swaths of field that surround her ramshackle cottage and the neighboring buildings.

Portrayed as undeveloped, stark, and isolated, the fields are a site of both uprootedness *and* tranquility in which time seems to oddly slow down. The film does not contain any non-diegetic music, adding to the quiet mood. Reflective of the post-war landscape, we see emptied or demolished buildings, and gravel roads amidst untraversed fields. This devastation was the result of military initiatives that prioritized a victorious war. In her analysis of declassified materials concerning the use of napalm in the Korean War, Grace Cho writes, "Ultimately, the Pentagon recommended that U.S. forces in Korea stop documenting the bombing of villages and begin

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[249] Neil Smith and Cindi Katz, "Grounding Metaphor: Towards a spatialized politics," in *Place and the Politics of Identity,* eds Michael Keith and Steve Pile (New York: Routledge, 1993), 69.

[250] Katharine H.S. Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 8.

calling them 'military targets' in order to avoid negative press."[251] The U.S. military's erasure of this devastation forecloses acknowledgment of the trauma and loss Koreans experienced as their homes, lives, and relationships were destroyed. Before Vietnam, Korea was the staging ground for napalm bombings under a "scorched earth" policy that "dumped … 600,000 tons of napalm over the Korean peninsula … This was more napalm than had been used against Japan in World War II and more than would later be dropped over Vietnam."[252] The death, disfigurement, and displacement of millions of Koreans during this period reconfigured their relationship to their homes. Villages had transformed into military targets and back again. The end of the war enabled these spaces to repopulate and nature to slowly return but the bodies of survivors and the physical landscape of Korea embody the trauma and loss of this experience. The ambivalent character of Sonya and the bleak camptown topography reflect these transitions of the immediate postwar period, constituting the biopolitical degradations of imperial ruination.

As mentioned earlier, *Hellflower* was made in 1958, a time when postwar reconstruction was still underway and the ROK was under Syngman Rhee's rule. Seungsook Moon elucidates the characteristics of military prostitution of the 1950s, "First, a large number of freelance sex workers operated outside the perimeter of official control … Second, those women … enjoyed relatively more autonomy and more of a collective voice than their counterparts did in the later period."[253] The 1950s offered more latitude for women engaged in sex work, whereas the 1960s saw heavy regulation and consolidation of military prostitution under Park Chung-hee. This autonomy, so to speak, is demonstrated in Sonya's agency over her body—represented through

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[251] Cho, *Haunting,* 69-70.

[252] Cho, *Haunting,* 71. Cho draws from globalsecurity.org for this information.

[253] Seungsook Moon, "Regulating Desire, Managing Empire: U.S. Military Prostitution in South Korea, 1945-1970," in *Over There: Living with the U.S. Military Empire from World War Two to the Present,* eds Maria Höhn (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 57.

her unregulated movements in and out of her cottage and through her sexual relationships with foreigners and locals alike.

Medium and close-up shots of Sonya lounging in the field, lakeside, or beach with her lovers, or long shots of Sonya leisurely walking to and from her cottage while humming a familiar tune is interspersed throughout the film. This sense of leisure contrasts the forced idleness of the A-frame carriers in the city sitting around for work, the camptown shopkeepers waiting for the patronage of G.I.s, the manual laborers waiting for work, and even other sex workers waiting for their customers. The incongruity between Sonya and her landscape reflects a postwar discordance articulated in an early scene when Tong-sik sits with a couple of manual laborers at the city center:

> Manual Laborer 1: How many times has it been for you today?
> Manual Laborer 2: I barely made 500 pence. Food is not cheap, making money is hard —we're in real big trouble … In any case, this is a dizzying world.[254]

While those around her live in wretched idleness and shell-shocked by their post-war circumstance, Sonya appears oddly content. Moon's discourse on the autonomy of the 1950s not only speaks to the relative freedoms of sex workers of this period but also speaks to the lack of regulations and structural constraints of this nascent period of nation building. Sonya's autonomy then, is a product of the dramatic changes of a postwar society that is still searching for footing in a rapidly modernizing and militarizing world. As such, her ostensible satisfaction as observed through her relaxed movements inside her home/work space, her leisurely walking to and from her cottage, and her intimacies in nature, can be read as a response to the precarity of life during this period. She makes herself at home wherever she is because of the uncertainty of tomorrow. Sonya blurs the boundary between what would have been read as mere space—i.e., dirt paths,

[254] *Chiok'hwa* [*Hellflower/The Flower in Hell*], directed by Shin Sang-ok (1958; Seoul, Korea: Seoul Films Co. Ltd.), Film. McCune-Reischauer spelling of the director's name is Sin Sang-ok.

spaces of sexual labor, beaches and lakesides—into place, in other words, a space of meaning where she experiences a joie de vivre in the face of the unknown.

Sonya's nihilism is challenged when she encounters Tong-sik, who awakens a longing that had lain dormant in her with her current beau, Yŏng-sik. At first, Sonya's attraction to Tong-sik appears to be little more than sexual. However, it is soon evident that it is Tong-sik's youth and innocence, the city/country binary discussed earlier, that draws Sonya to him. The seaside rendezvous scene below, during which Sonya caresses Tong-sik's hair, elucidates this point:

> Sonya: How is it that your hair smells like corn?
> Tong-sik: Why? Are you making fun of me because I'm a country boy?
> Sonya: No, that's not it, for some reason I really like that fresh smell.[255]

Tong-sik represents a return to innocence, one that even Yŏng-sik's marriage proposal to Sonya cannot accomplish. Sonya's interest in running away with Tong-sik is rooted in this desire for a space and time that disavows the war, the camptown and the miserable conditions that follow. This space and time, symbolized by the countryside, not only represent prewar innocence but is also a site where marriage and family exist, without which a moral, traditional Korean society cannot exist. The inability of camptown sex workers to marry and "return" to the countryside is thereby akin to being denied humanity. We can observe this sentiment in the scene between Julie, another sex worker, and Tong-sik. Here, they are sitting by a lakeside in an undeveloped field, and Julie had just viewed Tong-sik's photograph of his family:

> Julie: If it wasn't for 6.25 [the war], I would've been married already.
> Tong-sik: Then your parents?
> Julie: They both died in the war.
> Tong-sik: Hm.
> Julie: Ha, what is the use of talking about the past? All we can do is just live as the wind blows, that's all.
> Tong-sik: It's not too late. You can quit this life and get married.
> Julie: Ha, how could a person like me get married?
> Tong-sik: Why, how could a kind and good person like yourself not be able to marry?

[255] Ibid.

> Julie: Then will you marry me Tong-sik?
> Tong-sik: …
> Julie: You see? You say these things but your expression says it all.[256]

Tong-sik's embodiment of tradition, innocence, and family values is deeply imbricated in the conservatism he displays when confronted by Julie. This embodiment is also heavily gendered within his heteromasculine subjectivity which not only allows him access to the countryside but also allows him to act as gatekeeper. His approval or disapproval could open or foreclose possibilities for the camptown women. Even within his dichotomous city/country position, Tong-sik, and even Yŏng-sik, possess a social and physical mobility denied to the two women. He may not feel at home in the unfamiliar space of the city and the camptown but he can stay, or go, whereas Sonya and Julie cannot legitimately leave the camptown space on their own.

In her short story, "Days and Dreams," Kang Sŏk-yŏng underscores the interrelated geography of the camptown and its sex workers:

> If you think about it, the camptown is like an island that stands between Korea and America. An island that is not part of the land or the sea, but is its own space, and the women of this island are just *yanggalbo*. They are temporary "honeys" for the GIs while their own motherland turns its back on them.[257]

While the countryside has stood for a pure prewar Korea, the camptown is viewed as a no man's land that houses Korea's social detritus, the *yanggongju.* Both Sonya's and Julie's laissez-faire attitude is rooted in the recognition that their lives in the camptown have little meaning beyond their value as sexual laborers. Leaving the camptown would mean achieving a spatial sovereignty camptown life cannot offer. Moreover, just as the camptown is viewed as an island, the bodies of the women are also displaced once they enter military sex work. They also exist as

[256] Ibid.

[257] Sŏk-yŏng Kang, "Nat kwa kkum," in *Supsok ŭi bang* (Seoul: Minumsa, 1986) 269. Also translated in the English as "Days and Dreams," in *A Room in the Woods.*

islands unto themselves as their corporeal bodies are no longer accepted or acceptable to the larger Korean polity. The spatial politics of the bodies of the female sex workers and the camptown are thereby imbricated with one another in their narratives of displacement.

The film concludes in the marshes, where Sonya and Yŏng-sik meet their demise. This area, in which light and fog seem to collide, and where silence resounds even as it inhabits a space off a main highway, serves as an extension of the indeterminate space of the camptown and a reflection of a post-war decomposition reified in the landscape and the characters. This is the last location in which all three characters interact with one another. In order to run away with Tong-sik, Sonya reports Yŏng-sik and his gang to the authorities. Upon getting wind of Sonya's plan, Tong-sik drives off to search for his brother and Sonya follows in pursuit. In the meantime, a drive-by shoot-out between Yŏng-sik's gang and the military police results in the gang's truck tumbling over the side of the road. Hurt, Yŏng-sik stumbles away into a small body of water. Sonya finds Tong-sik in the marshes searching for his brother and implores him to go away with her, but he shoves her away. Yŏng-sik hears Sonya's cries and limps over to find her fallen in the mud. After brief pursuit in which Sonya stumbles away from Yŏng-sik while pleading for her life, Yŏng-sik avenges himself by stabbing Sonya in the heart. Soon after, he collapses, succumbing to his own wounds.

Figure 3. Sonya and Yŏng-sik amid imperial ruins in *Hellflower* (*Chiokhwa,* dir. Shin Sang-ok), 1958

As one may have predicted, Sonya does not survive the narrative. Instead, the *yanggongju's* death meant a return to an order only characters like Tong-sik could provide. Leaving for the country, he invites Julie to come with him, as he sees the possibilities for her redemption through their marriage. Sonya's character is afforded no such opportunity as her subjectivity is tied too closely to the indeterminate space of the camptown that produces deviant women such as herself. Sonya as *yanggongju* embodies a paradoxical condition in which heteropatriarchal values, colonial influences, and militarized modernity commingle to construct a world that figures like Tong-sik reject. *Hellflower*'s depiction of the *yanggongju* and the spaces she traverses challenge the epistemological erasures created by the U.S.-Korea military alliance. Through her meanderings, we see how the militarized heterotopias of postwar Korea—the city, the camptown and the brothels, the fields, the lakeside, and the wetland—are entwined with

Sonya's subject position as war survivor, Korean, female, and sex worker. The trauma and loss of the war are ostensibly done away with, with the death of Sonya. In the next section, we look at another representation of the *yanggongju,* this time in the role of sacrificial mother, her body as a site of testimony, and her relationship to the space of the camptown brothel in illustrating loss and shame.

III. ***Confessions of a Body*****—mother/*****yanggongju*** **as a category of analysis**

While *Hellflower* portrays the glamorous and sexy character of Sonya, *Confessions of a Body* (1964) is especially interesting in its (re)presentation and emplacement of the *yanggongju* in the role of sacrificial mother. It narrates the tale of a mother working as a madam at a U.S. military brothel in order to put her three daughters through college. The majority of the narrative tension comes from the fact that the mother attempts to keep her secret from her daughters to avoid shaming them and possibly ruining their futures. With its focus on female suffering, it is a maternal melodrama centering the story of the "fallen woman" who ultimately achieves redemption through motherly devotion. The key character nicknamed, "President Mother," differs from the young, beautiful Sonya in *Hellflower*, in that President Mother is a middle-aged woman whose maternal subject position is in direct tension with her role as a sex worker.[258] In fact, her moniker, "President Mother," accentuates her maternity against the backdrop of military prostitution. Extending the question of the *yanggongju* as a technology of memory, this section queries how President Mother is constituted as a gendered, geographic subject in the face of rapid modernization and U.S. military presence. By geographic subject, I draw on Katherine McKittrick's work on Black women's geographies in the Black diaspora to help conceptualize

[258] This is compounded by the fact that the actress who plays President Mother, Hwang Chŏng-sun, is highly recognized for her maternal character roles so it would be natural for audiences to identify her as a mother, even in this film.

President Mother within the genealogy of the *yanggongju.* Kittrick writes, “I explore the interplay between geographies of domination (such as transatlantic slavery and racial-sexual displacement) and black women’s geographies (such as their knowledges, negotiations, and experiences).”[259] Likewise, I explore the interplay between the U.S.-Korea alliance and Korean women’s geographies as represented through the figure of the *yanggongju.* I pose a few questions to frame this section: drawing from the aptly named title, how does President Mother’s body act as a site of loss? What knowledges do the *yanggongju* body possess and how is it expressed in the framework of this film? How do the spaces President Mother inhabits, especially that of the brothel, the space of the brothel speak to the spectral connections between war, the *yanggongju* and the mixed-race subject?

First, the question of the body as an active site of testimony is interesting to ponder, especially when thinking through how women, in this case, Korean women, are a category of analysis that is deeply tied to a patriarchal, postcolonial kinship structure that foregrounds women as being located within the family. That is, the concept of woman does not exist outside the family that locates “woman” as someone’s daughter, sister, or mother, etc. However, as Chandra Talpade Mohanty writes, “It is the intersections of the various systemic networks of class, race (hetero)sexuality, and nation, then, that position us as ‘women.’”[260] It is these intersections and I might add spatialities, that I tease out in President Mother whose fractured subject position toes the line between transgression and orthodoxy. Moreover, President Mother vacillates between being oversexualized as a prostitute and desexualized as a mother. The

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[259] Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), x.

[260] Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 55.

multiple intersections and spatialities that construct the subject are elided, resulting in a prototypical portrayal of a "Korean woman," whose worth is tied to her maternity and reproductive potentialities. However, President Mother's body as a geographic, relational subject—by which I mean to highlight her genealogy, positionality, and humanity—tells a multi-layered narrative, one that reflects the conditions of postwar modernity.

Second, I analyze President Mother's dichotomous characterization of being simultaneously transgressive and orthodox as representative of the mutability of the ideological and epistemological alliance made between the U.S. and Korea. That is, she disrupts what is understood as fixed and stable, namely the Korean heteropatriarchy that subtends U.S. empire. As I have done with *Hellflower,* I underscore the material and metaphoric connections between the *yanggongju* and her surroundings to unscramble the deeply relational conditions that construct this figure. President Mother's dichotomous positionality challenges the hegemonic structures produced by the militarization of the Korean peninsula. Examining the spaces she inhabits and her relationship to those spaces helps reveal this instability and intrinsic loss that accompanies her construction.

The film takes place primarily in the southern port city of Pusan and its surrounding vicinity. Beginning with a scene of Korean bar girls running out to greet American naval soldiers at the pier, the film proffers various on-location and on-set scenes that include a dance hall, the brothel, a train station, the seamstress shop, the beach, the university that the girls attend, and various interior spaces including bars, teahouses, restaurants, and domiciles, all to conclude with a wide-angle shot of the funeral procession for President Mother along the ridge of a rocky hill. *Confessions of a Body* contains no establishing shots, therefore all of the brothel scenes begin and end indoors, and—unlike *Hellflower*—the film does not offer a sense of the surrounding

camptown. In essence, it makes it difficult for the viewer to determine what is located where, and how close or far places are to each other, which adds to the feeling of disjuncture relayed in the film.

The brothel is a two-story building with a dance hall and a bar on the ground floor and private rooms on the second. A long, staircase connects the two floors, with the second floor being partially visible through the mezzanine. The audience is introduced to the brothel's interiors as the camera depicts soldiers and Korean women dancing to a live band. Soon, boisterous behavior leads to a huge brawl. President Mother, dressed in a dark evening gown, appears from the upstairs balcony calling out "Stop!" The camera captures her limping down the stairs. After her slow and dignified descent, she berates the soldiers in English, remarking how instead of fighting communists they are brawling in her "home." This introductory sequence portrays the character of President Mother as a commanding figure whose limited physical movements, rather than detract from, enhance her authority. The brothel challenges the boundary between domestic and public space because it functions as a home for the bar women and President Mother, while at the same time it is a space of sexual labor and entertainment for American soldiers.

Figure 4. President Mother walks down the stairs of the brothel in *Confessions of a Body* (*Yukch'e ŭi kobaek,*

dir. Jo Keung-ha), 1964

In this configuration, the dance hall functions like a living room and thereby an extension of President Mother's home. Yet the fun and jovial atmosphere of the dance hall contrasts with the solemn mood in her bedroom. As President Mother reads a letter by one of her daughters asking for money, she is interrupted by an older Black soldier who comes bearing gifts in the form of a pearl necklace in exchange for sex. This is the most uncomfortable scene in the film as President Mother is shown reluctantly engaging in sexual labor. The camera cuts to a medium close-up of her lying prone on her bed in her black dress, then another close-up of her hand as she places the pearl necklace in a jewelry box above her head. The morning after, a medium shot shows her lying sideways with her back to the camera and a wist of smoke rising from her cigarette. Her non-diegetic voice narrates, "while morning brings hope, with morning comes evening.[261]" Her shame is evident in her reluctance in welcoming the coming of evening.

Figure 5. President Mother with her back facing the camera the "morning after" in *Confessions of a Body* (*Yukch'e ŭi kobaek,* dir. Jo Keung-ha), 1964

Based on this scene, the bedroom functions on several levels. First, it is a place of

[261] *Yukch'e ŭi kobaek* [Confessions of a Body/The Body Confession], directed by Jo Keung-ha (1964; Seoul, Korea: Dong Seong Films Co., Ltd.), Film. McCune-Reischauer spelling of the director's name is Cho Kŭng-ha.

comfort as it holds and displays material belongings that accentuate a sense of home. For instance, in the morning after scene, the camera rests on a framed photo of her three daughters on a table near the window. Getting up from her bed, President Mother limps over to the photo and asks, “Did you sleep well my cute lambs?” giving them each a kiss through her finger tips.[262] The photo provides President Mother comfort as she begins her day. The bedroom also operates as a place of rumination as it provides privacy for President Mother to dwell on her thoughts. In addition, it is a gathering space for the brothel women who smoke and chit chat with President Mother before they start their day. At the same time, it is also a space of sexual labor as evidenced in the earlier scene. The melding of leisure and labor creates a spatial discordance that reflects the paradox of President Mother’s dual roles as mother and sex worker—a double bind in which her two subject positions are in continuous tension with each other as evidenced in this scene and throughout the film.

In taking this analogy further, President Mother’s bedroom then, signifies a complex convergence of space, one that is further complicated by cohabitation arrangements commonly offered in camptowns, “Another situation is a kept or ‘key’ woman. A guy will rent a room with a bath and kitchen, and the woman will live there during his tour of duty. When he is posted elsewhere, the woman returns to the bars for work—or, perhaps be turned over to another guy.[263]” What might be considered an extension of colonial concubinage,[264] “renting” a room along with sexual labor displaces traditional notions of domesticity. Both a home away from

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[262] Ibid.

[263] Saundra Pollock Sturdevant and Brenda Stoltzfus, *Let the Good Times Roll: Prostitution and the U.S. Military in Asia* (New York: The New Press, 1992), 178. Seungsook Moon also mentions cohabitation arrangements in *Over There* (65), and Ji-Yeon Yuh in *Beyond the Shadow* (32).

[264] See Ann Stoler’s *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* (2002), *Race and the Education of Desire* (1995). Seungsook Moon also briefly mentions this connection in *Over There* (44).

home for the G.I. while a workplace for the female laborer, the bedroom as an extension of the *yanggongju* take on multiple and fluid meanings, "… symbolic and the literal are in part constitutive of one another. That meaning is never immanent, it is instead not just *marked* but also in part *constituted* by the spaces of representation in which it is articulated. These spaces of representation subvert the representation of spaces so that the ground we stand on becomes a mongrel hybrid of spatialities[265] …" In this instance, the bedroom contains multiple spatialities of capital, labor, coloniality, and of domesticity—spatialities that are informed by their relationship to the *yanggongju* who is herself constituted by and constitute the bedroom. The contradictions and relationalities of postwar modernity are articulated in this cohabitation/key woman arrangement, reflecting the gendered relationship between the U.S. and South Korea.

If the bedroom and by extension, the brothel, are spaces that are constituted by the *yanggongju* (and vice versa), the *yanggongju*'s presence outside of the brothel (and camptown) in turn generates narrative tension. This tension arises not only from the fact that she steps outside of her spaces of association but because of her attempts at concealing her connection to U.S. military prostitution in the process. From the train station where her daughters greet her, to the taxi, their home, the baseball field, a Western-style restaurant, and even at the beach, President Mother's attire and comportment "pass" as that of a respected mother of three college-aged women. In fact, she not only passes but embodies her motherhood, especially when she is dressed in *hanbok,* accentuating her traditional role as devoted mother. Yet, with every step away from the brothel, the possibility of being discovered remains an underlying tension throughout the narrative. There are three occasions in which President Mother's secret is either nearly exposed or indirectly addressed: 1) when she mascarades as the owner of a tailor shop in Pusan

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[265] Michael Keith and Steve Pile, "Introduction Part 2: The place of politics," in *Place and the Politics of Identity,* eds Michael Keith and Steve Pile (New York: Routledge, 1993), 23.

for the sake of showing her daughters where she works, 2) when the family goes to the beach and the daughters observe a woman and her mixed-Black child, and 3) when the family is eating at a Western-style restaurant and the wealthy young man who had been courting Dong-hŭi, the middle daughter, remarks that her mother looks familiar. In all three instances, the possible exposure of President Mother's secret creates tension, revealing the precarity of President Mother's multiple subjectivities. Dislocated outside of the brothel, President Mother navigates her local landscape by compartmentalizing her role as mother and as *yanggongju.* What these scenes reveal is the impossibility of maintaining her facade and of continuously negotiating these conflicting dualities in order to not be exposed. President Mother cannot be President Mother *and* also be a mother to her daughters as this upsets the order of things; or more specifically, the order of Korean life that is informed by heteropatriarchal notions of propriety and family.

The previously mentioned beach scene furthers this idea of President Mother's unbelonging through her figurative connection to the mixed-race subject. It is one of two scenes that discuss mixed-race Koreans and the only one that portrays a staged cameo of a mixed-Black child in the arms of her Korean mother. This scene is first preceded by a bedroom scene that depicts the bar women smoking cigarettes and getting ready for their day. They remark on how decent the President Mother is for helping one of the girls pay for the burial of her stillborn mixed-Black baby[266]. When President Mother enters, they ask about her daughters and the conversation segues into a flashback of when she went to the beach with her daughters. At the beach, a woman with her child walks by. Yang-hui, who just tumbled in the sand with her sister Dong-hui, is caught off-guard by the child and her mother:

> Yang-hui: Oh my!
> Dong-hui: That is called a t'wigi.
> Yang-hui: What is a t'wigi?

[266] *Yukch'e ŭi kobaek.*

> Dong-hui: Honhyŏla, a child born of relations between a Korean woman and a black man.
> Yang-hui: Can that happen?
> Dong-hui: Of course! You're supposed to be smart and you don't even know about that? There are a lot of cases like that in Pusan.[267]

The scene closes with a medium close-up shot of President Mother uncomfortably sipping her drink, and transitions back to the present with the bar girls as she notes how she felt her own face turning "black" in that moment. The girls pledge that they will do their best that her secret is never revealed to her daughters. Mixed-raceness in these two scenes is viewed as a deleterious result of sexual relations with foreigners. For the bar girls, it is a cautionary tale of what may happen in their line of work, while for President Mother's daughters it is visible evidence of miscegenation, an act they imply is degenerate. Dong-hui's use of the word, "that," to refer to a child illustrates how mixed-race Koreans are perceived as non-human. Recognized only as a consequence of aberrant Korean female sexuality, mixed-raceness in *Confessions of a Body* is not given any ontological space. Instead, it acts as a signifier of promiscuity for the mother in question while highlighting a Korean nationalist preoccupation with female chastity that relegates women in black and white terms as either proper or indecent. The narrative function of mixed-race Koreans in *Confessions of a Body* confirms President Mother's promiscuity and her location in the fringes of society.

In navigating her multiple subjectivities, President Mother, as per the title of the film, finally divulges her secret. The moment of actual confession occurs when President Mother returns from prison for smuggling, which she had engaged in in order to help pay for Dong-hŭi's anticipated nuptials. Arriving at the brothel two and a half years later a pauper, President Mother is recognized by one of the bar girls who welcomes her back with heartfelt emotion. As she sits

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[267] Ibid.

in her old room, which Maggie, the bar girl, had kept the same, President Mother gently touches the old photograph of her daughters and narrates her story: When her youngest daughter, Yang-hui, was still an infant, her husband went mad and killed himself, leaving her with three children to feed. She did whatever she could, including working as a seamstress, and as a housemaid, but under the circumstances she was unable to sustain the work. When she later worked at a construction site moving gravel, a huge wall fell on her, leaving her crippled. She wanted to kill herself but could not bear the thought of leaving her daughters without a mother so ended up in sex work. The narrative is framed so that the conditions under which President Mother struggled is depicted as simply circumstantial. The audience is assured that President Mother's involvement in sex work is due to necessity, and more importantly, that "defiling" herself was for the sake of her children.

Missing in this narrative is a critique of the international and domestic politics that exploit poor women into engaging in military sex work:

> Here is a list—probably an incomplete one—of the men whose actions may contribute to the construction and maintenance of prostitution around any government's military base:
>
> husbands and lovers
> bar owners, local and foreign
> local public-health officials
> local government zoning-board members
> local police officials
> local mayors
> national treasury or finance-ministry officials
> national-defense officials
> male soldiers in the national forces
> local male prostitution customers
> foreign male soldier-customers
> foreign male soldiers' buddies
> foreign base commanders
> foreign military medical officers
> foreign national-defense planners

foreign national legislators[268]

Cynthia Enloe calls our attention to the significant role men, governments, and militaries have in the development and maintenance of military prostitution, highlighting how this underground "woman's work" is in fact, part of a complex web of negotiations and relations between diverse actors and economies. *Confessions of a Body* does not reflect this reality but instead situates President Mother's story as a woman's narrative of ultimate devotion, one that her children realize only upon her death.

The body of President Mother, which underscores the entire film, is where her knowledges, negotiations, and experiences as a Korean widow who has faced wartime and postwar hardships are evinced. Her body is marked by the geographies of domination—of U.S. military prostitution backed by Korean governmental support. At the same time, she herself is a geographical subject as one who is positioned between, within, and outside of governments and militaries. Adrienne Rich writes, "Perhaps we need a moratorium on saying 'the body.' For it's also possible to abstract 'the' body. When I write 'the body', I see nothing in particular. To write 'my body' plunges me into lived experience, particularity: I see scars, disfigurements, discolorations, damages, losses, as well as what pleases me … To say 'the body' lifts me away from what has given me a primary perspective. To say 'my body' reduces the temptation to grandiose assertions."[269] The scars and disfigurements on President Mother's body are represented metaphorically through her limp, which embodies her physical impairment and psychic suffering. President Mother's two subjectivities map a gendered history that conclude

[268] Cynthia Enloe, "It Takes Two," in *Let the Good Times Roll: Prostitution and the U.S. Military in Asia,* eds Saundra Pollock Sturdevant and Brenda Stolzfus (New York: The New Press, 1992), 24-25.

[269] Adrienne Rich, "Notes Towards a Politics of Location," in *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader,* eds Reina Lewis and Sara Mills (New York: Routledge, 2003), 30.

with her demise. Korean women's geographies reflect a complex genealogy of postwar survival, of which *Confessions of a Body* offers one narrative of loss and devotion. Within the framework of this melodrama, her confession of her lived experience can only lead to a tragic ending. Like *Hellflower, Confessions of a Body* has no space for the *yanggongju*'s continued existence, which would indubitably contradict the heteropatriarchal imaginary of the nation.

The last scene is a medium shot of President Mother lying supine in an open coffin. The camera is level with her body, framing her from the torso up, fresh flowers covering her up to her neck with her head centered in the frame. In so doing, the viewer is confronted with her body, which takes up half the frame. A very slow dolly shot closes in on her head as the shot dissolves into flames. Her non-diegetic voice narrates her saying, "Burn me, burn this dirty body," as the flames then dissolve into a wide shot of her funeral procession.[270] President Mother's reconciliation can only come about through her literal destruction. The narrative forecloses the possibility of multiple embodiments while eliding the geopolitics of empire that is mapped onto her body.

Figure 6. President Mother in repose in *Confessions of a Body* (*Yukch'e ŭi kobaek,* dir. Jo Keung-ha), 1964

[270] *Yukch'e ŭi kobaek.*

The focus on the President Mother's corpse highlights the corporeal, material significance of the female body and its politics of location against the figure of the *yanggongju.* As Rich writes, "The politics of location. Even to begin with my body I have to say that from the outset that body had more than one identity … To locate myself in my body means more than understanding what it has meant to me to have a vulva and clitoris and uterus and breasts. It means recognizing this white skin, the places it has taken me, the places it has not let me go."[271] Similarly, *Confessions of a Body* is not merely a story about a good woman gone wrong but rather, it illustrates a politics of location that situates Korean women in precarious and multiple relationalities that navigate a postwar, patriarchal, militarized landscape.

President Mother as a female, mother, dispossessed, disabled, Korean, middle-aged, heterosexual, war-survivor, sex-worker, woman are all aspects that comprise her complex subjectivity of which only a couple are highlighted and ultimately laid to rest through her death and cremation. President Mother personifies the loss of the subject who is subsumed under the rigid mores of Korean society that, as Kang Sŏk-yŏng and Cynthia Enloe implied earlier, requires women like President Mother to do the work no one else wanted to do. She thereby contradicts other characters like her daughters who symbolize Korean modernity, or even characters like Tong-sik who symbolize a prewar, traditional Korea, both of which elide the colonial and neocolonial violences that the *yanggongju* manifests. This contradiction destabilizes *Confessions* even as it underscores a heteropatriarchal ideology of the sacrificial mother/woman through President Mother's narrative death.

In the next section, I transition to a discussion of *Black Woman,* which, like *Confessions of a Body* and *Hellflower,* showcases a lead female character in a sex worker role. However, this

[271] Rich, "Notes," 30.

character does not portray a *yanggongju* but a hostess servicing Korean businessmen. Moreover, racial difference is centralized, offering a dramatically different portrayal of the "fallen woman" narrative, which I analyze by unpacking how excess is used to express racial melancholia in 1980s South Korea. *Black Woman* adds to my analysis of the *yanggongju* by representing her *through* the mixed-race bar hostess whose literal and figurative connections to the *yanggongju* remain palpable, however ghostly.

IV. *Black Woman*—from *yanggongju* to bar hostess

While *Hellflower* and *Confessions of a Body* are concerned with the relationality of the Korean female subject through her postwar formation as *yanggongju*, *Black Woman* (1982) centers the narrative of the mixed-race woman whose trope of tragedy echoes and implicates the *yanggongju.* In *Black Woman,* the *yanggongju* is reinscribed as a spectral figure through the character of Nan, the mixed-race bar hostess. *Black Woman* combines melodrama and soft-core pornography. I use the concept of excess as a signifying practice of melodrama (by unpacking tearful scenes of sorrow or ecstasy) and racial melancholia as an internalized form of interpellation (i.e., as represented in the female protagonist as both sexually carnivorous and racially victimized) to unpack the larger condition of postwar haunting evidenced in the representation of Korean military sex workers and mixed-race subjects. Through the use of melodramatic excess and racial melancholia, the film underscores how the *yanggongju* remains a spectral presence in the mixed-race figure of Nan. Nan, like Sonya and President Mother before her, is a geographic subject situated within a genealogy of trauma, loss, and shame, and wherein the trope of the "tragic *honhyŏla*" erases the Cold War alliances that brought her into being. *Black Woman* helps to make clear the symbolic and material connection the Cold War mixed-race subject has to the *yanggongju,* by presenting Insooni, a Black Korean singer and actress, to

play the role of a mixed-race bar hostess, implicating the legacy of sexual labor that shifts from servicing U.S. military personnel to Korean businessmen.

Before discussing the film in detail, I offer a brief overview of hostess melodramas and *ero yŏnghwas* (erotic films), Korean film genres in which I situate the film. I look at how these genres reflect a specific period of Korean history in which industrialization, urbanization, and female labor in the form of domestic and sex work figure into the geography of the *yanggongju.*

The Hostess Melodrama Genre

Black Woman, directed by Kang Dae-sun (Kang Tae-sŏn), was produced in 1982. Following the model of hostess melodramas popular in the 70's such as *Heavenly Homecoming to Stars* (1974), *Young-Ja's Heyday* (1975), and *Do You Know Kkotsuni?* (1978), at first glance, *Black Woman* offers another erotic melodrama in which the female character is pathologized as a sexually deviant yet pitiable figure typical of this genre. Hostess melodramas had a short-lived popularity in the 70's when harsh film policies resulted in the repression of creativity and a reduction in the number of moviegoers. These factors, coupled with the increase in the number of television sets and popular rise of TV dramas led the already debilitated film industry to appeal to a new demographic, shifting its target audience from middle-aged women to men and youth. Working within the limited confines of the Motion Picture Law, hostess melodramas evaded censorship as they did not display overt political criticism of the current government.[272]

[272] The Motion Picture Law went through several iterations that began in 1962 and ended in the mid-1980s. The law was one of many policies initiated by the Park Chung-hee government and later maintained during Chun Doo-hwan's rule to control and censor film content that challenged the legitimacy of the military government. The central elements of the Fourth Revised Motion Picture Law (1973-84) were: "1) the establishment of a license system for film production and importation; 2) regulation of the number of released films through import quotas; and 3) strict censorship. As a result of the licensing system requirement, only twelve companies were afforded the privilege of releasing both domestic and foreign movies in 1973; the other companies were dissolved. The number of licensed companies increased to fourteen in 1974 and to twenty in 1981." The licensing system, quota system, and censorship resulted in what Korean film scholars call a "dark" period of Korean filmmaking, when "quota quickies" that along with Hollywood imports were the only films that passed these licensing and quota systems and censorship. Seung Hyun Park, "Film Censorship and Political Legitimation in South Korea, 1987-1992," *Cinema Journal* 42, no. 1

Figure 7. Poster of *Black Woman* (*Hŭk Nyŏ*, dir. Kang Dae-sun) 1982

(Autumn, 2002): 123. See also, Lee Young-il and Choe Young-chol's *The History of Korean Cinema* (Seoul: Jimoondang Publishing Company, 1998).

The early 1980's brought about drastic reorganizations for the film industry as certain policies were lifted and revisions to the quota system allowed for easier avenues in establishing film companies.[273] The Chun Doo-hwan government (1980-1988), also known as the Fifth Republic, enacted a "3S" Policy, which stood for sex, screen, and sports, in an effort to divert citizens' attentions away from the political.[274] It was in this climate that one of the most famous erotic films of South Korea, *Madame Aema* (1982) was produced.[275] Yun-jong Lee labels 1980s erotic films such as *Madame Aema* as *ero yŏnghwa*, differentiating them from their hostess precursors by noting that erotic films of the 1980s branched out from the hostess theme, or the "innocent urban girl turned prostitute" theme, to incorporating female characters who are not sex workers such as, "ordinary housewives, widowers, female college students, and even working women."[276] Still, film production during this era remained spotty as policies were constantly shifting due to the volatile political climate.[277] *Black Woman* appears to be part of this legacy of films in which a melodramatic narrative centering the sexual exploits of a female character are highlighted.

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[273] See Chapter 3 of Min, Joo, and Kwak's *Korean Film.*

[274] Since the founding of South Korea, each republic reflects a different governmental system—beginning with the United States Army Military Government in Korea (1945-48), which preceded the First Republic (1948-60) headed by Syngman Rhee. In 1983, the Fifth Republic headed by Chun Doo-hwan, while maintaining strict censorship control over the film industry (especially when it came to social critique), relaxed its restrictions on "overt sexual expression." Eungjin Min, Jinsook Joo, and Han Ju Kwak, *Korean Film: History, Resistance, and Democratic Imagination* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 58. Based on my research, there is no official policy called "3S" however, this is persistently referenced in a number of Korean film scholarship as well as generally acknowledged as a method of rule used by the regime.

[275] *Madame Aema,* about a married housewife who, while separated from her incarcerated husband, is lusted after by two separate men, succumbing to desire.

[276] Yun-Jong Lee, "Cinema of Retreat: Examining South Korean Erotic Films of the 1980s" (PhD diss., University of California, Irvine, 2012), 9.

[277] Including the Gwangju Uprising of 1980, see my footnote in the introduction to this chapter. The political volatility along with films laws that limited creativity and output, created conditions that made critical filmmaking difficult.

Returning to the 1970s, while very little in-depth criticism has been written on hostess melodramas, this sub-genre typically deals with the social shifts in sexual morality, with a young woman's fall from grace as a key trope reflecting the chaotic moment of rapid industrialization transforming South Korean society at this time. Hostess melodramas reflect the 1970's popular culture of hostess bars and clubs and were initially labeled as literary (as in adapted from literature) as many of these films drew from literary works on this subject.[278] This theme was spurred by the rise of hostess bar culture, wherein young women, often from poor countryside backgrounds, migrate to the city in search of work and end up as bar girls for male clientele. These migrations reflected the drastic industrial changes and economic shifts occurring in South Korea due to the rapid industrialization that was instigated by the Park Chung-hee government. Hostess films developed in this era of major societal shifts as more and more women not only sought work outside of the traditional boundaries of the home or the farm, but were in fact mobilized to do so for the greater cause of nation building.[279]

Reflecting this trend in and growing anxieties around feminized country-to-city labor, the affective, sexualized work of the bar hostess was glamorized in the hostess films of the 1970s. As Jin-Kyung Lee writes, "The bar hostess in 1970s South Korea really became the cultural symbol of commodified and commoditized female sexuality, through the cinematic and popular culture representations that glamorized them, but which were largely divorced from the economic realities of their working-class lives."[280] The primary difference in the portrayal of

[278] Such as the earlier mentioned *Heavenly Homecoming of Stars* (1974), *Young Ja's Heyday* (1975), and *Winter Woman* (1977).

[279] See Seungsook Moon's *Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

[280] Jin-kyung Lee, *Service Economies: Militarism, Sex Work, and Migrant Labor in South Korea* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 100.

female sexuality in hostess films compared with the films that came before, is that the hostess functions as an object of total consumption by a heterosexual male audience. That is, the hostess as a site of non-reproductive labor is commodified for her sexuality as a young, single female while at the same time detached from her potential as wife or mother. Paraphrasing Lee, their sexuality is relegated for double consumption at the bar, as well as through popular media, via "novelistic, cinematic, and tabloid representations."[281] Without her reproductive role, the glamorized figure of the hostess functions as male fantasy, as perversion, and displayed as bodily excess in these films.

Like the *ero yŏnghwa* genre, film critics have dismissed hostess literary films as candidates for serious appreciation. In their work, *Korean Film: History, Resistance, and Democratic Imagination,* Eungjun Min, Jinsook Joo, and Han Ju Kwak state that such "literary films without redeeming characteristics were classified by the government as quality films."[282] In addition, "Most of these films try to tell the story from the perspective of those women and blame their degradation on the men in our society. They mostly end in pessimistic ways, often with the suicide of the heroine. They did not exhibit any real analysis or criticism of society, nor did they expose the irony of a society that put the heroines in such situations; they typically showed it as 'natural.'"[283] As can be surmised, the hostess melodrama and *ero yŏnghw*a genres have suffered from limited analysis due to the tendency of Korean film critics to dismiss the potential value in these works. My analysis of *Black Woman* contributes to a new perspective that takes Cold War period on-screen Korean female sexuality seriously.

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[281] Ibid.

[282] Min et. al., *Korean Film: History, Resistance, and Democratic Imagination* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 52.

[283] Ibid, 55.

This brief history of hostess melodramas and *ero yŏnghwas* is meant to situate *Black Woman* within Korean film production. *Black Woman* is unique in that first, it is a rare film showcasing a mixed-race Korean person on the big screen and in fact, was a film debut for the rising pop star, Insooni.[284] Second, characterization of the lead actress differs in that she is imbued with a level of agency and resilience atypical of hostess melodramas, many of which feature women who have lost their innocence and have little control over their lives. Finally, as the last of the three films I have put in conversation with each other, *Black Woman* materializes the *yanggongju* through Nan's expressions of excess and racial melancholia, articulating the geographical and genealogical legacies of the Korean War that is passed down from Korean women to their mixed-race children.

Hŭk Nyŏ / Black Woman

Black Woman tells a tale of a mixed-race African American Korean woman who falls into the hostess business after being abandoned by her Korean fiancé. Like Sonya and President Mother, Nan also represents a complex convergence of spatial politics that reflects the Korean War, militarization, rapid industrialization, and gender politics. However, her subjectivity is further complicated by her mixed-race identity that act as a marker of difference, exoticism, and eroticism. I focus on how geographies of domination are expressed through Nan's body and conversely how her situated knowledge as a mixed-race Korean woman is articulated. As such, Nan's corporeality is a central focus throughout the film, as illustrated by the number of close-ups of her face and body. Beginning with the opening scene, Nan's body becomes a site of visual excess, made into a spectacle in full long shot, and clothed in a white sequin dress that

[284] Insooni debuted as part of a girl group called the Hee Sisters in 1978 and in 1981 went solo. In 1983, she produced a hit track titled, "At Night, Every Night." By the late 1980s, her music career slumped but had another revival in the mid-1990s and again in the mid 2000s. As a mixed Korean celebrity of an earlier generation, she is a rare figure in the Korean pop music industry as a well-respected soul music "diva" of South Korea.

accentuates her buttocks and displays her bare back. In fact, throughout the film she is often dressed in little more than slinky sequin gowns with scandalously low necks. Excess therefore, becomes important in Nan's portrayal.

In "Film Bodies, Gender, Genre, and Excess," Linda Williams explores excess as a significant mode in three seemingly disparate genres: the horror film, the melodrama, and the pornographic film. By critically analyzing the display of excess in each of these genres, Williams draws attention to the integral role excess plays in a film's generic structuring. Excess is what regulates these films and provides meaning, through tears, fears, and ecstasy. Furthermore, no particular excess aligns with a particular genre. Rather, each genre displays a jumble of visual and aural spectacles of sex, violence, and emotion. Among the major features of bodily excess shared by the three genres are, 1) "the spectacle of the body caught in the grip of intense sensation or emotion," 2) a focus on ecstasy or rapture, and 3) the female body as site of the "primary *embodiment* of pleasure, fear, and pain."[285] As both a melodrama and an erotic film, the excess in *Black Woman* vacillates between pathos and ecstasy, and between morality and perversion. Nan's embodiment of excess helps make sense of her misery and rapture that would otherwise remain gratuitous. Peter Brooks writes, "I would … contend that those melodramas that matter most to us convince us that the dramaturgy of excess and overstatement corresponds to and evokes confrontations and choices that are of heightened importance, because in them we put our lives—however trivial and constricted—on the line."[286] By highlighting moments that matter, excess connects the audience to the affective instances of the film in which Nan is experiences ecstasy or sorrow.

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[285] Linda Williams, "Film Bodies, Gender, Genre, and Excess," *Film Quarterly,* Vol. 44, No. 4 (Summer, 1991), 4.

[286] Peter Brooks, *Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and Mode of Excess* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), ix.

In *Black Woman,* excess begins with the camera's fetishization of Nan as she is captured in long, medium, and close-up shots that linger on her face and body as she is talking, walking, dancing, and consorting with men. *Black Woman*'s sexualized depiction of Nan speaks to Laura Mulvey's classic psychoanalytic work on women's "to-be-looked-at-ness" in cinema, which the pink nature of the film highlights further, "Women displayed as sexual object is the leit-motif of erotic spectacle: from pin-ups to strip-tease, from Ziegfield to Busby Berkeley, she holds the look, plays to and signifies male desire."[287] Nan's mixed-raceness on-screen satisfies a scopophilia already associated with mixed-race Koreans. In particular, there are two moments in which a male character's lustful gaze fixates on Nan: 1) when Kim Chŏn-mu, her soon-to-be lover lays eyes on her, and 2) when Boss Chŏn, a man she seduces for blackmail, meets her for the first time. In both instances, the men ogle her without reserve and the camera jump cuts from their faces to Nan's, who demurely looks away. However, even as she is primarily constructed for the male gaze, Nan is far from passive. Reminiscent of American blaxpoitation films of the 1970s, Nan is assertive and opportunistic. She looks to advance herself in both wealth and status as she deploys her sexuality to attract wealthy men who enter the bar. The opening scene is indicative of Nan's character as she fearlessly retorts to an angry bar customer, "didn't you know that a black pearl is the most expensive of all pearls?"[288] Even as Nan's filmic portrayal aligns with Mulvey's argument, her boldness actively capitalizes on her exotic "to-be-looked-at-ness."

Moreover, excess is expressed not only through the sexualized portrayal of Nan, but

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[287] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," in *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings,* eds Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (Oxford University Press: New York, 1999), 837.

[288] *Hŭk Nyŏ* [*Black Woman*], directed by Kang Dae-sun (1982; Seoul, Korea: Sam Young Films Co., Ltd.), Film.

through active moments of ecstasy and tears. As an ero/hostess film, there are numerous moments of carnal pleasure. However, I will focus on one key moment in which Nan's sexual elation illustrates a melding of excess and racial melancholia. The moment happens towards the end of the film when Hyŏn-sŏk, Nan's ex-fiancé now blind masseuse, is hired to work for Nan, whose identity is kept secret. Hyŏn-sŏk brings Nan a bowl of traditional Korean medicine but she purposefully moves her leg, forcing Hyŏn-sŏk to spill the liquid all over the floor and onto her legs. Nan's uncle, who had been giving orders to Hyŏn-sŏk, demands that he lick the medicine off, considering the labor and financial expense used to make it. Hyŏn-sŏk, as a dispossessed employee, begins to lick the floor and slowly moves onto licking Nan's feet, then her legs, getting tantalizingly close to between her legs. The uncle leaves the scene at this point, as Nan moans in delight, grabbing Hyŏn-sŏk's hair. At the same instance, she jerks awake in having realized her pleasure. Hyŏn-sŏk stops licking. Nan, in anger, slaps Hyŏn-sŏk hard in the face, once in both directions. The sound of the slap is loud enough for the uncle to come running back. Nan then calls out to her uncle as he embraces her in her chair as Hyŏn-sŏk sits deferentially on the floor with his legs tucked under him. Sad, non-diegetic music enters as Nan relates the story of her betrayal by Hyŏn-sŏk, describing how he threw her mind and body away because she was "mixed blood." Hyŏn-sŏk, finally recognizing Nan, pleads for her forgiveness. Sexual and emotional excess run high, with the release coming from an endless stream of tears from Hyŏn-sŏk, Nan, and her uncle.

Williams highlights three major features of bodily excess shared by the three genres discussed earlier, 1) "the spectacle of the body caught in the grip of intense sensation or emotion," 2) a focus on ecstasy or rapture, and 3) the female body as a site of the "primary

embodiment of pleasure, fear, and pain."[289] As both a melodrama and an erotic film, the excess in *Black Woman* vacillates between pathos and ecstasy, and between morality and perversion. It is through excess that the viewer can alternately identify with the lead character's misery and rapture. The connection between excess and the body is crucial to keep in mind as this corporeal link situates Nan within the geopolitics of postwar Korea/U.S. relations. That is, bodily excess represented on screen does not merely reflect generic sensibilities, but rather, Nan's material existence makes evident the geographies of domination that construct mixed-race Korean women. Excess here represents the loss of and desire for origins, for the love of the mother, the recognition of the father, and the acceptance from society that Nan is seeking. Excess also expresses the disarticulations of a society that had pushed past its postwar status into rapid industrialization. By embodying pleasure, fear, and pain, Nan's body not only functions as a source of hetero-masculine viewing pleasure but the narrative of her body—the story of her mixed-raceness through the expression of excess, complicates and unsettles the voyeuristic nature of the film.

Taking the spillage scene as an example, Nan is disrupted from her carnal pleasure as she jerks awake to her present reality. This disruption functions on two levels in that the camera suspends the voyeuristic pleasure of looking at Nan being pleasured and cuts to a reveal wherein Nan's relationship with her ex-fiancé is explained in full. Her anger and beneath it, her deep sorrow manifested as racial melancholia breaks the sexual fetishization surrounding her while shifting the narrative to Nan's ontological condition. Here, I turn to David Eng's discussion of the melancholic object, "The ability of the melancholic object to express multiple losses at once speaks to its flexibility as a signifier, endowing it with not only a multifaceted but also a certain

[289] Linda Williams, "Film Bodies, Gender, Genre, and Excess," 4.

palimpsest-like quality."[290] It is this "palimpsest-like quality" that resounds so deeply in Nan, whose loss of her lover reflects a much deeper loss—that of her mother and an absent father. Moreover, Nan's very existence is testament to the real historical conditions that led to U.S. and U.N. forces in Korea, this reality, embedded in her skin in both material and symbolic forms, employs her body as a palimpsest that harkens to the figure of the *yanggongju,* a figure that "vacillates wildly between overexposure and a reclusive existence in the shadows."[291] The ghostly presence of the *yanggongju* is intertwined with Nan's loss of origins, as expressed in an introductory scene when Nan, after returning home inebriated, is asked by her uncle to pay her respects to her deceased mother:

> Nan: Uncle [hiccups], why should I perform chaesa when I have American blood coursing through my veins?
> Uncle: Come now …
> Nan: How do I do it?
> Uncle: Bow fully twice and then finish with a half bow.
> Nan: Half American blood, half Korean blood [hiccups], then I just need to do one bow, right Uncle [giggles]?
> Uncle: Come on now[292] …

By referencing her "mixed" blood, Nan highlights the Korean focus on bloodline, which eludes her as a person of mixed-race. At the same time, the scene inadvertently highlights Nan's absent and unmentioned father, alluding to her possible camptown connections. In this way, Nan's connection to the *yanggongju* emerges more explicitly through her deceased mother's potential linkages to military sex work. The second connection to the *yanggongju* is made through her own night work as a bar hostess as a variation of the *yanggongju* to be found in the city. Her body therefore stands as a palimpsest of the *yanggongju,* whose figurative and material

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[290] David Eng and David Kazanjian, *Loss: The Politics of Mourning.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 5.
[291] Cho, *Haunting,* 33.

[292] *Hŭk Nyŏ.*

existence is based on the geopolitical conditions that brought U.S. and U.N. forces to the Korean peninsula.

Furthermore, I argue that *Black Woman* not only uses excess to center Nan's affective and corporeal registers, but unlike other Korean hostess films, racial melancholia plays a heavy role in the displays of excess exhibited by Nan. Melancholia, according to Freud, is a pathological manifestation of mourning in which one's self-esteem suffers.[293] Anne Anlin Cheng extends this concept to that of racial melancholia to address the psychological ramifications for racial minorities living in a racist society. She connects racial melancholia to a set of socio-structural inequities rather than an individual pathology, "When we turn to the long history of grief and the equally protracted history of physically and emotionally managing that grief on the part of the marginalized, racialized people, we see that there has always been an interaction between *melancholy* in the vernacular sense of affect, as 'sadness' or the 'blues,' and *melancholia* in the sense of a structural, identificatory formation predicated on—while being an active negotiation of—the loss of self as legitimacy. Indeed, racial melancholia as I am defining it has always existed for raced subjects both as a *sign* of rejection and as a psychic *strategy* in response to that rejection."[294] Cheng underscores the affective consequences for racialized minorities who must negotiate a dialectical relationship between self and society. That is, the very condition under which they find themselves is also the method with which to negotiate their racialized world.

[293] Sigmund Freud, *The Penguin Freud Reader*, ed. Adam Phillips (New York: Penguin, 2006), 310.

[294] Anne Anlin Cheng, *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation, and Hidden Grief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 20.

Moreover, Linda Williams writes that the "melodramatic weepie is the genre that seems to endlessly repeat our melancholic sense of the loss of origins—impossibly hoping to return to an earlier state which is perhaps most fundamentally represented by the body of the mother."[295] For *Black Woman,* this loss of origins is complicated by Nan's racial melancholia, one that is demonstrated through a spectacle of ecstasy and tears. Hence, it is in the final scene where Nan drags Hyŏn-sŏk out in the pouring rain that racial melancholic excess reaches its peak. Hyŏn-sŏk crawls around, putting on his soaked white shirt while Nan clings to the side of her house, heaving with tears. Hyŏn-sŏk calls out to Nan, desperately asking for her forgiveness, exhorting that it doesn't matter whether he dies now. He fumbles around for his blind walking stick, gets up and begins to walk away. Nan tearfully cries out, "Why didn't you just go and die, why are you crying like a fool? Why can't you tell me you love me?" referencing the tragic mulatto trope—a figure of the pitiable mixed-blood, a product of war, and a creature of perpetual *han.*[296] She runs after Hyŏn-sŏk as he clumsily trudges away into the darkness. This final scene is not only remarkable for its excessive display of racial melancholia but harkens to Peter Brooks' earlier quote on melodrama, that it is through these displays of excess that we see moments that matter.

In *Black Woman,* moments that matter are intimately tied to moments of excess in which Nan expresses her marginalized condition through ecstasy and tears. Nan's display of racial melancholic excess speaks to the geographies of domination that condition the lives of mixed-race Korean girls and women of this time period where U.S. militarism, Korean patriarchy, and local racisms intermingle producing a racialized and gendered subject. As Anne Anlin Cheng

[295] Williams, "Film Bodies," 10-11.

[296] Han (한), is a term used to describe a kind of deep sorrow. This term is often related to what Korea as a nation has had to undergo particularly as it relates to colonialism, war, and occupation. It can also be used to relate generational, class, and gendered sufferings.

writes, "An understanding of melancholia as experienced by the raced subject must extend beyond a superficial or merely affective description of sadness to a deep sense of how that sadness—as a kind of ambulatory despair or manic euphoria—conditions life for the disenfranchised and, indeed, constitutes their identity and shapes their subjectivity."[297] Nan's melancholia can be perceived as a form of transgenerational haunting that is manifested at a somatic level. Her body, centralized in a manner distinct from Sonya or President Mother, communicates by sashaying, shuddering, or shaking in order to negotiate a world that limits the possibility of its being. Her body as a tangible, material reminder of the war accordingly bears a spectral connection to the *yanggongju,* whose presence in this film is best felt through the erotic/melancholic story of Nan.

V. Conclusion

The phantom which returns to haunt bears witness to the existence of the dead buried within the other.

-Nicolas Abraham[298]

This chapter discussed three Cold War era Korean films that center the figure of the *yanggongju*, in both its material and symbolic forms. I have argued that the *yanggongju* functions as a spectral figure of the Korean War, as a reminder and remainder of a colonial and gendered violence that produced mixed-race Koreans. Because discussions on military sex work are often individuated and do not include mixed-race Koreans or vice versa, these subjects and subjectivities are often perceived discretely. I have attempted to bring them in conversation with one another first by analyzing the gendered and marginalized conditions of the *yanggongju* against the camptown landscape, to consider her body as a geopolitical site in and of itself, and

[297] Cheng, *Melancholy,* 23-24.

[298] Nicolas Abraham, "Notes on the Phantom," in *The Shell and the Kernel: Renewals of Psychoanalysis, Vol.1,* Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 175.

finally to connect the *yanggongju* and the *honhyŏla* through the story of the mixed-race bar hostess. I employ spectrality to think through the corporeal, material, and psychic spaces the *yanggongju* inhabits. To this aim, I used concepts of space and place to connect the *yanggongju* to the camptown, the brothel, and her body, together articulating a Korean female subjectivity that speaks to the gendered violence that produced mixed-race Koreans.

In contrast to the dominant discourse of development, industrialization, and modernization as productive outcomes of a fratricidal war, the *yanggongju* and her kin have been relegated to the margins of Korea and outside of national history. By analyzing Korean-made films that center the *yanggongju*, I emphasize her significance in postwar discourse. As Avery Gordon writes, "The ghost is not simply a dead or a missing person, but a social figure, and investigating it can lead to that dense site where history and subjectivity make social life."[299] Likewise, whether it is the ghost of war that lives on in the *yanggongju* or the ghost of the *yanggongju* inhabiting the mixed-race Korean, *Hellflower, Confessions of a Body,* and *Black Girl* demonstrate how this figure is utilized as a technology of postwar memory that locates her on the margins of history. I have attempted to re-situate the *yanggongju* as a key figure in the genealogy of mixed-race Koreans and as part of a larger discourse on postwar memory-making.

[299] Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 8.

CHAPTER 4
SELF-NARRATIVES AND THE POLITICS OF RACE IN SOUTH KOREA: 1960s-1970s

I. Introduction

> At twenty-two, she was probably beautiful and stylish. No one could have predicted the future that lay in wait for her and her son based on her pretty, plump face and fine body. This thing called 6.25 was not something one wished to think about again but for them, that heartbreaking ordeal charted a life of great hardship.[300] Because of this chaos called war, and because Korea was driven to weakness, the young woman carried the child of a black soldier against her will.
>
> -Sandy Kim, 1974[301]

Written by Kim Bok-ch'ŏn, otherwise known as Sandy Kim—a popular Black Korean singer in the 1970s and whose work I will analyze later in this chapter, Kim refers to his mother in the passage above, and at the same time offers an origin story of himself. The narrative is inextricably tied to the Korean War (1950-53), as it becomes a genealogical point of origin for mixed-race Koreans.[302] By acknowledging his birth as a result of war, Kim's account reinforces what has been implied in previous writings about mixed-race Koreans—that they *were* born of violent or questionable circumstances. In this instance, the connection to the Korean War, regardless of its veracity, delimits the understanding of mixed-race Koreans within these two options. In doing so, the framework of pity, deviance, and care within which mixed-race Koreans

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[300] June 25, 1950, the beginning of the Korean War.

[301] Sandy Kim, *Sŭlpŭn haengjin hŭgin honhyŏl Saendi Kim ŭi sugi, nanŭn gŏmchiman jarangsŭrupta* [*Sorrowful March: The Autobiography of a Mixed-Blood Black Singer Sandy Kim, I am Black but Proud*] (Seoul: unknown publisher, 1974), 11.

[302] Again, USAMGIK occupied the southern half of Korea beginning in 1945 until 1948, and as I have discussed in my first chapter, mixed-race Koreans were discussed even prior to the official start of the war. However, the Korean War is often the historical point from which discourse around mixed-race Koreans is centered, and I count writing on mixed-race Koreans during the occupation as part of that discourse. In fact, one newspaper article states that Sandy Kim's mother was raped in 1947 so Kim's own conception would have been prior to the war. Kim Sŏk-ha, "Honhyŏl kasu Han'guk 1sedae Saendi Kimssi 'kŏmŭnp'ibu pŏtkiryŏ moraero pakpak mirŏ'" [First Generation Mixed-Blood Korean Singer Sandy Kim, 'I Tried to Strip Away My Black Skin by Scrubbing with Sand'], *Chaeoe Tongp'o Sinmun,* February 12, 2006, http://www.dongponews.net/news/articleView.html?idxno=7585.

have often been discussed is also reinforced. Autobiographies by mixed-race Koreans offer an interesting counterpoint to the deluge of narratives by non-mixed-race Koreans. Through testimony, Kim is able to challenge but also reinforce the stereotypes and misperceptions held by mainstream Korean society about mixed-race Koreans. Importantly, unlike biographical, statistical, or anthropological accounts, the autobiography offers a space for self-making.

This chapter addresses the construction of the mixed-race subject in South Korea through a close reading of two autobiographies written in the 1960s and 1970s. One by Pak Ok-sŏn, a white Korean camptown sex worker in the early 1960s, and another by Kim Bok-ch'ŏn, a Black Korean entertainer in the early 1970s. I turn toward the autobiography as a form of subject-making as it provides a discursive space in which mixed-race Koreans may speak for themselves. These autobiographies then, offer the reader the perspective of the "I," and provide an intimate look at what it is like growing up mixed-race in South Korea in the 1950s and 1960s. I pose the question: what kind of subject is being produced in an autobiographical project? In other words, how is the concept of *honhyŏl* expressed and interpellated by the authors of these autobiographies?

In analyzing these writings, the autobiographical genre is a counterpoint to the camptown literature genre, which has commonly depicted mixed-race Koreans (if they appear) as scourges of society, or as pitiful, caught between two worlds, comfortable in neither—akin to the tragic mulatto character in African American literature.[303] Camptown literature written in the 1960s and

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[303] While this list is in no way comprehensive, earlier works such as "The Quadroons," (1842) by Lydia Maria Child, and *Clotel, or the President's Daughter* (1853), by William Wells Brown set the stage for the tragic mulatto archetype. Most notable are Nella Larsen's *Passing* (1929), and Fannie Hurst's *Imitation of Life* (1933), which was adapted to the screen in 1934 starring Claudette Colbert, and again in 1959 with Lana Turner. Other significant works include *The House Behind the Cedars* (1900) by Charles W. Chestnutt, and *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (1912) by James Weldon Johnson. Although the stereotype of the tragic mulatto/a figure persists, there is plenty of debate around the oversimplification of this literary figure. I am only pointing out one recognized aspect to this character and its connection to the mixed-race figure in Korean literature. For further reading, Werner Sollors' *Neither Black Nor White Yet Both: Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature* (New York: Oxford University

1970s tended to employ the figure of the military prostitute as a metaphor for U.S. imperial domination over Korea, while later works in the 1990s have attempted revisionist narratives that decenter this heteromasculinist nationalist allegory to the perspectives of those living in the camptowns. For instance, Jin-kyung Lee writes that, " 'Land of Excrement' (1965) and 'The Scream of a Yellow Dog' (1974) are arguably the most famous and representative examples of camptown fiction as masculinist national allegories of military prostitution," whereas later works such as *The Camp Town at Camp Seneca* (1994), *Mudflats* (1995), and *Memories of My Ghost Brother* (1996), "deconstruct the dominant mode of representing camp town from the earlier decades, that is, the masculinist national allegory."[304]

According to Lee, these last three works challenge the earlier texts by positioning the more marginalized perspectives of camptown working-class patriarchy, female military sex workers, and the multiracial child, respectively, front and center. Amongst these works, *Memories of My Ghost Brother* is the first English language memoir that provides a much-needed perspective by a biracial individual on "the history of the South Korean working class and the U.S. empire in South Korea."[305] However, it is also the only work in Lee's analysis that is a memoir, written in English, and is categorized as Asian American literature. Lee's inclusion of this English-language work suggests the dearth of texts by multiracial Korean authors. Nevertheless, it is important to flesh out the limitations of comparing Korean language and English language literature on camptowns and miscegenation, as well as that obscure line between fiction and autobiography. These crucial points of difference must be acknowledged in

Press, 1997) provides an excellent overview.

[304] Jin-kyung Lee, *Service Economies*, 134 and 145.

[305] Ibid, 145.

order to recognize that representations of multiraciality, especially during the Cold War period, have historically been very limited within Korean literature. That is, in Korean language literary works, little if any has been specifically written about and by mixed-race Koreans.

In the works I analyze in this chapter, I focus on the use of language. Language is the tool with which discursive power is wielded and in the case of mixed-race Koreans, rationalizes mainstream society's attitudes and policies towards them. By examining how their mixed-race identities are discursively represented, I unpack how difference is constructed through language. The use of racial terminology such as "Asian," "black," "white," "bi-racial," "mixed-race," "mixed-blood," "Amerasian," "Eurasian," and *honhyŏl*, perpetuate distinctions between legitimate and illegitimate subjects of the nation. I thereby explore the dialectical relationship between racial purity and impurity and its role in constructing the mixed-race subject. Hence, my use of these terms is not a reflection of an a priori understanding of race but an acknowledgement that such a relationship is embedded in the very words that interpellate the racialized subject. By examining how writers in this chapter use and discuss racial and racist language, I highlight how language itself is deployed to interpellate the subject while also challenging yet reinforcing the binary between "mixed" and "pure." In so doing, I argue that Pak Ok-sŏn and Kim Bok-ch'ŏn negotiate the concept of *honhyŏl* on their own terms, and contend their humanity through and against the existing stereotypes of "mixed-blood." In the next section, I discuss the autobiographical genre and consider its emancipatory potential in the discursive construction of the mixed-race Korean subject.

II. Autobiography: αὐτός-*autos* self + βίος-*bios* life + γράφειν-*graphein* writing

How is the autobiography classified in literary studies, and in the field of Korean literature? While this generic terminology is at best a method of categorization, what is perhaps

worth noting is the focus on the "I" as both subject and author. Other terms that fall into this sphere are, "life writing," "life narrative," "memoir," "diary," "journal," "autoethnography," "psychobiography," "testimony," "confession," each of which denotes a definition that is particular enough to elicit a specific understanding yet still open to debate and interpretation by writers and literary scholars from diverse disciplines. Rather than partake in the taxonomic pedantries of what is considered "self / life / writing," I will refer to this mode of writing as "autobiography" following Western scholars of the past three decades whose study of the autobiography has become a field unto itself.[306]

As a form of self-narration, the autobiography is most often associated with the Enlightenment tradition of constructing a master narrative of the sovereign self. While Augustine's *Confessions* was written well before the period of Enlightenment, its gaze towards the inner self marks this work as representative of Western autobiography and often as its first. Centuries later, Rousseau's *The Confessions* continues this tradition through the perspective of the secular individual in which self-revelation is acquired through man's own efforts without appealing to God. On Rousseau's relationship to his writing, Linda Anderson argues, "His autobiography is less an attempt to remember the past, to memorialize the life he led, than to make others recognize the inner truths about himself that he already knows through the unique access he has to his own feelings."[307] According to this interpretation, the twelve volumes that gave rise to his autobiography are the product of a masculine enlightened subject whose self-knowledge compels him to convey the utmost transparency of this self to his readers and ultimately of his unique individualism.

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[306] George Gusdorf, James Olney, Paul Eakin, Sidonie Smith, Julia Watson, and Leigh Gilmore, to name a few.

[307] Linda Anderson, *Autobiography, 2nd Edition* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 42.

Within this tradition, the slave narrative posed a new perspective on the "I," for the authorial voice shifts from the enlightened, civilized male subject to its supposedly primitive counterpart. Slave narratives were not written as part of a literary tradition that illustrated man's domination over himself.[308] Instead, they demonstrated the humanity of the slave in a world that viewed the Black individual as an animal. For Henry Louis Gates, Jr., this demonstration was possible through "the production of 'literature,'" which became a kind of testing ground for enlightenment, "Black people, the evidence suggests, had to represent themselves as 'speaking subjects' before they could even begin to destroy their status as 'objects,' as commodities within Western culture."[309] That is, it was through the act of writing that the Black slave could prove that he or she possessed reason, the fundamental element by which Western philosophy distinguished man from other living creatures. Literacy itself was a measure of this humanity, which is complicated by what was considered the Black voice and the Black vernacular, facets that are further examined in African American literary studies.[310] In essence, while both forms of writing center the "I" as subject and author, the slave narrative functioned quite differently from the European autobiography in that it was a political project to end slavery.[311]

Likewise, in the field of postcolonial studies, the autobiography produces a similar political project, one that demands acknowledgment of the colonial subject's humanity. As Julia

[308] *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (1789), *The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave Narrated by Herself* (1831), and *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845), to name a few.

[309] Henry Louis Gates, Jr. "James Gronniosaw and the Trope of the Talking Book," in *Studies in Autobiography* ed. James Olney (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 53.

[310] See also Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism* for further details on the function of the Black vernacular and Signifyin(g).

[311] This was not the only function of the slave narrative but here I am merely pointing to one of its stark distinctions compared to the European autobiography.

Watson and Sidonie Smith write, "the colonial subject inhabits a politicized rather than privatized space of narrative."[312] Through the self-narration of the colonial subject, the autobiography becomes a "potential site of decolonization."[313] At the same time, Watson and Smith recognize its limitations, "But the power of cultural forms to recolonize peoples cannot be underestimated. All of which is to suggest that the relationship of the colonial subject to autobiographical inscription is indeed troubled."[314] Lisa Lowe's analysis of Equiano's autobiography expands on this notion by reading his narrative not as a linear progress of overcoming slavery but rather, as constantly negotiating its freedoms between liberalism and slavery, while paralleling *and* contradicting the emergence of liberal economics and political philosophy of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Her analysis is attentive to the genealogy of the autobiography, "It is the modern narrative expression of the individual subject providing evidence of not only the imperatives and privileges of liberal subjects, but also its aesthetic form. Attention to the autobiography's form, as well as to narrative contradictions and contesting voices, suggests methods for reading the subjugated histories that inhabit the narratives of individual rights and democratic freedoms."[315] She thereby argues that in the process of claiming his past, Equiano (or more precisely, the autobiographical genre as a whole) contributes to "… the 'forgetting' of the collective subject of colonial slavery, a heteronomous subaltern collectivity necessary to colonial slavery and its abolition."[316]

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[312] Julia Watson and Sidonie Smith, "Introduction: De/Colonization and the Politics of Discourse in Women's Autobiographical Practices," in *Decolonizing the Subject: The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), xxi.

[313] Ibid, xxii.

[314] Ibid.

[315] Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 46-47.

[316] Ibid, 50.

When it comes to the writings of Kim Bok-chŏn and Pak Ok-sŏn, their autobiographies, or *sugi* position themselves in ways that both challenge canonical understandings of Koreanness and Korean literary aesthetics[317], and also subscribe to the narrative limitations of the autobiographical form. In Korean literary history, autobiographical writings can be traced as far back as the Koryo period (918-1392).[318] Typically written in classical Chinese by male scholar officials, such works were not stories of conversion as in the early Christian tradition nor were they psychological inquiries of the self as in the Enlightenment tradition, but a way of recording for posterity. This intent is especially apparent in writings by scholar officials of the Chosŏn period (1392-1910). Rather than delving into the subject's interiority, they served as records of life events such as marriages, career advancements and the like. In the mid-fifteenth century, with the invention of *hangŭl* (the Korean script), writing became accessible to women of the upper class, including courtesans, court ladies, and women of aristocratic pedigree. The epistolary form was most common for it not only served as a form of written communication between women but that of social and cultural expression.[319] It is also notable that the "I" is inherent in the epistolary form and that the addressee could be one or many.

In modern Korean literature, the closest comparison to the literary autobiography is the *sasosŏl* (circa 1920s), or the autobiographical novel, and later the *shinbyŏnsosŏl* (circa 1930s), a

[317] This term is not commonly used in contemporary literary discourse. The word *jasŏjŏn* appears to have replaced it, but I will stick with *sugi* as it is used in the titles of the two works and I suspect was the standard term during the 1960s and 1970s.

[318] See David McCann's brief introduction to his *Early Korean Literature: Selections and Introductions* in which he discusses the works of Yi Il-lo.

[319] Yet, it was the several memoirs of Lady Hyegyŏng, written during the turn of the nineteenth century and notable for their experimentation with various genres and for the divulging of the interior self that proved of scholarly interest to pre-modern scholars. See Ja Hyun Kim Haboush's *The Memoirs of Lady Hyegyŏng: The Autobiographical Writings of a Crown Princess of Eighteenth-Century Korea.*

derivation of the Japanese *shishōsetsu,* also known as the "I-novel."[320] The *shishōsetsu* was very popular during the Taishō period (1912-1926), making what appears to be a significant contribution to Japanese letters. Similarly, the *sasosŏl's* relevance in modern Korean literature is most notable in Yi Kwang-su's *The Heartless* (1917), considered to be Korea's first modern novel. For our purposes, it is important to note that in the early years of the twentieth century writers experimented with this form of writing that centered the "I," both in first person and third person perspectives. The *sasosŏl* was a marked departure from its pre-modern counterparts in its psychological and stylistic approach to the individual within modern society.

When it comes to the contemporary autobiography, the current South Korean book market is rife with the *supil* (essay) and the *jasŏjŏn* (autobiography). In its earlier iteration in the 1920s and 1930s, the *supil* was authored by those considered to be reputable writers or scholars. It was a space to reflect on one's social, political, and/or personal view of society. More recently, the *supil* has come to mean self-narratives by a variety of authors such as entertainers, businessmen, and popular bloggers who have a materially successful story to recount. Likewise, the *jasŏjŏn* comprises of self-narratives but this category is reserved for those in highly regarded positions such as heads of state, renowned writers, scientists, and notable foreigners such as Hilary Clinton or Steve Jobs. As part of the *mentoh yŏlpung* (mentor fire) that had swept the

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[320] Modern Korean literature is chronologically distinguished as works from the turn of the twentieth century and onwards. The *shishōsetsu* is referred to as the *sasosŏl* in Korean. Considered fictional yet based closely on the author's life, the *shishōsetsu*, according to Edward Fowler, is "more concerned with state than with process," whereas a forward-moving plot structure is integral to a successful narrative in the Western novel. The self is also approached quite differently in that the protagonist is not depicted as a hero confronting society but as socially disconnected or separated from it. Edward Fowler, *The Rhetoric of Confession: Shishōsetsu in Early Twentieth-Century Japanese Fiction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) xxi. Furthermore, while Fowler is discriminating the Japanese autobiographical novel from its Western counterpart, he is not discounting Western influence. Instead, he makes this distinction to challenge previous scholarship that appears to disavow the impact of indigenous literary and social customs.

nation, these self-narratives have been quite popular how-to's toward a successful career.[321] The theme of success is key to the popularity of these works, without which these publications lack validity. Such works are read purely for the content, and consumed for tips on how to achieve one's professional ambitions. All this to say that compared to its Western contemporaries, the autobiography is a relatively new form of writing that centers the "I" in a manner that did not exist before the twentieth century.

Pak Ok-sŏn's *My Forsaken Star: The Autobiography of a Mixed-Blood White Prostitute,* and Kim Bok-chŏn's *Sorrowful March: The Autobiography of a Mixed-Blood Black Singer Sandy Kim,* do not fall under the theme of success carved out in the *supils* and *jasŏjŏns* of today, nor do they belong to the Korean literary tradition of memoirs, epistles, and *shinbyŏnsosŏls* of yesteryear. Nor are they camptown literature in that the accounts incorporate more than the space of the camptown, and their self-narratives render an authorial agency lacking in literature labeled as such. Rather, I situate them closer to slave narratives and postcolonial autobiographies in that they are political projects of self-declaration and self-making. At the same time, as Lowe has illustrated with Equiano's writing, reading these works only as moments of self-declaration limit their possibilities. As the narratives function more like testaments to Pak's and Kim's humanity as *Korean* people, paying attention to how they conceive of themselves as *honhyŏl* through their use of racial language complicates these writings as part of the nexus of conversations on mixed-race Korean subjectivity. In the next section, I provide a brief background and summary of each of the narratives before moving on to my close analysis. The summaries highlight how each of the works introduces the authors through the trope of the Korean War and the omen of tragedy

[321] Successful career in this context refers to powerful individuals such as Steve Jobs, or Lee Kun-hee the chairman of Samsung. It is the desire to be someone who possesses intellect, innovative ideas, and business savvy that can be translated into a multi-billion-dollar corporation.

that follows.

III. Narratives

My Forsaken Star: The Autobiography of a Mixed-Blood White Prostitute (1965) begins with Ok-sŏn reflecting on her first memory—the sound of planes and gunshots. It is written in flashbacks as she lies in bed with a G.I. for she is a military prostitute. As the G.I. slumbers with his arm around her waist, the moon pushes the clouds away, spilling its cold light onto the bed. It is the cold, blue light of the moon that takes her back to her childhood.

In the flashback, she is about five years old walking with her mother and grandparents along a ridge between rice paddies. They walk in a line with countless other refugees trying to escape the devastations of war. Her mother never holds her hand. Having trudged from daybreak to night, she collapses onto the dirt road. Her grandfather coaxes her to get up but she does not. After watching her pathetic condition, her mother declares they ditch the "yankee whelp," but her grandfather suggests she drop one bundle and carry her. To this, her mother retorts, "Isn't a bag of rice more valuable than this yankee whelp that's ruined my life? If we don't have rice we're going to starve to death on this road!" In response, her grandfather mutters under his breath that this "yankee whelp" is also her daughter, and releases one bundle, lifting Ok-sŏn onto his back. Pak reflects on this moment, conjecturing that had she been left on that road that night, she would have gone to heaven and not suffer the indignities of the present. As she ruminates, the G.I., who had woken up, begins to take off her chemise.

With this powerful opening scene, Pak reflects on her circumstance as a "mixed-blood" military prostitute before returning to the past. Her early years are spent in the port city of Pusan with her mother and grandfather, who helps raise her while her mother worked. Her grandmother occasionally visited. Little Ok-sŏn is rarely allowed to leave the house as her mother did not

want her being seen by others. It was out of pure boredom that one day, at the age of seven, Ok-sŏn secretly follows her mother to see where she worked. Hiding in the crowded bus, Ok-sŏn gets off behind her mother and discovers that she works at a bar where she is assigned a number. When the number is called, her mother disappears from her sight. As Ok-sŏn waits outside, she is approached by a young man who, after luring her to his shanty house with promises of cookies, rapes her.[322]

The psychic repercussions of this event, combined with Ok-sŏn's relationship with her mother, make up the bulk of the first section. The second part of the narrative recounts her intimate relationships with men and her present condition as a prostitute. The figure of the mother in *My Forsaken Star* is a strong presence throughout. As might be surmised from the earlier description of the refugee scene, their relationship is contested and complicated. In *My Forsaken Star,* race, gender, and sexuality become embroiled in the very act of prostitution for *both* mother and daughter. This autobiography is not a story of a full life for it ends with Ok-sŏn at nineteen years old, searching for some meaning in her life.

In *Sorrowful March: The Autobiography of a Mixed-Blood Black Singer Sandy Kim, I am Black but Proud* (1974), it is not prostitution but rape that informs the introduction and remains as a spectral presence. As I have written in the introduction to this chapter, *Sorrowful March* begins with Kim Bok-chŏn's origin story, which is his violent conception. During her pregnancy, Kim's mother meets a man over twenty years her senior who is willing to marry and take care of her and her unborn son. Kim, who merely refers to this man as his father, never sways in his respect and love for him. His childhood is replete with poverty and prejudice, but his relationship to his parents and siblings are stable and loving. Still, both he and his mother face the sneers and

[322] Annie Park, *Naebyŏrŭn ŏnŭhanŭrae paekin honhyŏla yanggongjuae sugi* [My Forsaken Star: The Autobiography of a Mixed-Blood White Prostitute] (Seoul: Wangja Chulpansa, 1965), 33.

contempt of the locals who spit out a range of slurs like *yanggongju,* and *kkamdung-i*.[323]

His mother plays a part in the narrative, but the focus is primarily on Kim's relationship to society rather than with his family. In his early childhood, his father makes a living as a middleman selling cattle while his mother binds him to her back and peddles goods in a neighborhood close to the city of Taegu. By and by his mother gives birth to his sister and he notes that it was not until he turned five that he came to recognize the cruel remarks thrown at him. From this point, Kim's life is governed by his confrontation with mean-spirited classmates who he constantly fights with. From this inauspicious start, Kim relates the travails of his youth leading up to his success as a pop singer and TV star of the early 1970s, concluding his narrative at the tender age of twenty-four.

Both autobiographies follow similar trajectories in that the Korean War is either directly or indirectly implicated in the births of the authors. For Pak and Kim, their immoral conception marked them as outsiders and was further reinforced through name-calling, or other more subtle gestures of ostracism. The narratives confirm their conception as violent and shameful but ask that the reader keep reading. The reader is thereby expected to move past the charge of shame and to recognize the writers as human beings that have experienced suffering beyond the "average" Korean living in postwar times. The writings reveal that the world of U.S. military prostitution is not merely lurid and fascinating, but a system of sexual slavery; and, that being Black and Korean is not strange and beastly but is a series of societal rejections that consumes the subject. The autobiographies help construct the meaning of "mixed-blood" beyond its stereotypical associations and ask that the reader reflect on Korean society's treatment of individuals labeled in this manner. Next, I look at how names and epithets have functioned to

[323] *Kkamdung-i* is a highly derogatory term that translates as "blackie," but suggests a much stronger epithet.

interpellate the mixed-race subject and how Pak and Kim have challenged or subscribed to such language in conceptualizing themselves.

IV. What's in a Name: The Making of a Racial Subject

> In order to grasp what follows, it is essential to realize that both he who is writing these lines and the reader who reads them are themselves subjects, and therefore ideological subjects …
>
> -Louis Althusser[324]

Althusser's great contribution to Marxist theory lies in his formulation of ideology as integral to constituting the subject. For Althusser, state power relies not only on repressive means such as the police, the courts, the prison, and the army, but functions through ideological apparatuses such as churches, schools, the media, etc.[325] It is this combination of repression and ideology that allows for the state to control its citizens and to maintain class hierarchy through hegemony. The key to this control remains in the state's ability to transform the individual into a subject through interpellation, or hailing. For Althusser, "The existence of ideology and the hailing or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing."[326] Therefore, "individuals are *always already* subjects, and as such constantly practice the rituals of ideological recognition, which guarantee for us that we are indeed concrete, individual, distinguishable and (naturally) irreplaceable subjects."[327] While the latter half of this quote references the Western idea of the individual, if we are to expand this overall concept of ideological recognition to the work at-hand, what are we to make of the individual who is

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[324] Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," from *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 171.

[325] Ibid., 143.

[326] Ibid, 175.

[327] Ibid., 172-173.

interpellated as *honhyŏl*, or as *t'wigi* or *kkamdung-i*?[328]

Before we delve into this question, let us consider that while Althusser views state power and the role of interpellation from the perspective of class struggle, subject-making should not be confined as only a state/ruling class to working class relation. Interpellation functions at the level of the local. That is, those considered mixed-race are not only interpellated as non-Koreans by the state's decree on paternal lineage, but the local community's interpellation of those considered racially aberrant must also be taken into account. Too many times to count, Kim Bok-chŏn turns and fights every boy who calls him a *kkamdung-i,* while Pak Ok-sŏn refers to herself as *t'wigi* without irony. In another moment, Bok-chŏn stands frozen in the middle of the soccer field when, during a match, a member of the opposing team yells out "stop that *kkamdung-i*!"[329] For Ok-sŏn, remarks made by passing strangers such as, "Ah, she's a *t'wigi,*" had little meaning for her until she entered elementary school when her peers derisively called out "*t'wigi*! *t'wigi*!"[330] It was then that she realized its hurtful nature, one she recognized herself as the subject of.

Judith Butler's work on hate speech further delineates the issues at hand and builds on Althusser's original concept, "For the measure of that constitution is not to be found in a reflexive appropriation of that constitution, but, rather, in a chain of signification that exceeds the circuit of self-knowledge. The time of discourse is not the time of the subject."[331] In other words, discourse goes beyond both the hailed subject and the hailing subject. Language's derivative properties make it so. Therefore, when a subject is hailed, the power lies not only in the speaker

[328] *T'wigi* is a highly derogatory term meaning half-breed, connoting an animal mix.
[329] Sandy Kim, *Sŭlpŭn haengjin,* 38.

[330] Annie Park, *Naebyŏrŭn ŏnŭhanŭrae*, 3.

[331] Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech* (Routledge: New York, 1997), 31.

per se, but also in the speech act itself. Yet, without a speaker and a subject, the speech act remains impotent. This dialectical relationship is what enables interpellation.

Thus, in the case of racist speech, Butler writes, "The subject who speaks hate speech is clearly responsible for such speech, but that subject is rarely the originator of that speech. Racist speech works through the invocation of convention; it circulates, and through it requires the subject for its speaking, it neither begins nor ends with the subject who speaks or with the specific name that is used."[332] Language's power to both validate and threaten the subject is especially apparent in the use of racist speech for it brings about a particular kind of social existence to bear upon the subject while disavowing others.

The power of language to determine life by making legible some subjects while undermining others manifests early on in Kim Bok-chŏn's life through his exposure to the term, *kkamdung-i*. Having experienced numerous moments of being called this epithet throughout his young life, Kim finally gains respect amongst his peers when he joins his elementary school's soccer team and proves himself to be a skillful player. However, he is once again interpellated as *kkamgdung-i*, this time during a soccer match against an opposing school team:

> "Hey guys block that *kkamdung-i*!"
> I had been running without pause when I froze. Like someone who'd lost his mind, I just stood there staring at nothing. The ball rolled towards me but I kept standing in a daze. We lost that match. The coach gave me a scolding but I couldn't tell him why I played so poorly. It had been such a long time since someone called me that. Hearing that again, the sadness I had buried deep inside of me came rushing out.[333]

Rather than being inured to the term, each time Kim hears it, he is shaken. Here, Butler's discourse on linguistic community is apt, "The speaker who utters the racial slur is thus citing

[332] Ibid, 34.

[333] Sandy Kim, *Sŭlpŭn haengjin,* 38.

that slur, making linguistic community with a history of speakers."[334] Racial slurs hurt precisely because they participate in a linguistic community that has defined itself as the gatekeeper of the human from which the object of the slur is expelled. Every time a slur is uttered, it sanctions its continuance and validity within this extended community. Kim's humanity is called into question with every utterance of *kkamdung-i.*

Not only does language wield power in the immediate moment, but more insidiously, we see its cumulative effects in *My Forsaken Star.* There is a moment when Pak encounters a sickly gentleman at a Buddhist temple who initially mistakes her for an American. In response, she replies, "Mister, I'm not an American … I'm a *t'wigi.*"[335] Pak not only accepts her aberrant status, she preempts the gentleman from identifying her as such. Unlike later generations of mixed-race English-speaking Koreans, Pak cannot identify with her American heritage. Being *t'wigi* and being American represent two different subject positions for Pak, where one means "half-breed," likened to an animal, and the other, a legitimate version of a human. Consequently, Pak's resigned view of herself as *t'wigi* does not simply reflect a deeply oppressed subject position but speaks to the force of language in bringing about a particular social existence for the subject in question.

Even as racial slurs possess the power to interpellate, no word is fixed, as evidenced in this scene in *Sorrowful March* when *kkamdung-i* becomes a term of endearment between Kim and his friend, Su-nam:

> "*Kkamdunga*!"
> "Yeah?"
> "It doesn't hurt your feelings for me to call you *kkamdung-i*, does it?"
> "That's ok. When I was younger I would get into fights with people who called me *kkamdung-i* but strangely enough, when you call me *kkamdung-i,* it doesn't bother me and I feel closer to you, brother."

[334] Butler, *Excitable Speech,* 52.
[335] Annie Park, *Naebyŏrŭn ŏnŭhanŭrae*, 68.

"I'm glad to hear that."
"If anything, I feel grateful that you brought this up."
"Haha."
"Hehe."[336]

This scene reveals a rare moment in the narrative when racial epithets are directly addressed as a topic of serious conversation. Kim does not go so far as to appropriate the term for himself but allows his friend to call him *kkamdung-i* in acknowledging their close friendship. The term, *kkamdung-i* (or rather, *kkamdung-a*) a highly derogatory word that references those with darker skin, is turned on its head in this context by connoting intimacy rather than difference. Yet, the original meaning and intention of the word is meant to denigrate and injure. As per the earlier discussion on linguistic community, by calling Bok-chŏn *kkamdung-i,* Su-nam is an active participant. At the same time, because he uses it as a friendly moniker, *kkamdung-i* departs from its intended use and is instead reappropriated to validate and affirm the racialized subject. Moreover, it is only with Bok-chŏn's consent that the term can be transformed from an epithet to a term of endearment. Epithets are thereby revealed to be equivocal, dependent on the intention of the speaker and the reception of the addressee. As such, "If utterances bear equivocal meanings, then their power is, in principle, less unilateral and sure than it appears."[337] Su-nam's re-appropriation of *kkamdung-i* does not negate the original intention of the word but with Kim's consent, the transformational possibility of *kkamdung-i* ruptures the linguistic community if just a little. The process of interpellation then, is further complicated as such occasions offer a space for negotiation for the mixed-race subject.

Furthermore, not only do epithets function as a mode of interpellation, but proper names come to have an important place in ideological recognition and in the formation of identity. Kim

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[336] Sandy Kim, *Sŭlpŭn haengjin,* 97.

[337] Ibid, 87.

Bok-chŏn is Sandy Kim. Pak Ok-sŏn is Annie Park. What does it mean to have a Korean name *and* an American name, and when is one used over the other? Can one name equal the other? "Kim Bok-chŏn" was not a familiar household name in the 1970s but "Sandy Kim" was. In fact, Kim never really refers to himself as Sandy except as a stage name. Nor does he explain who or how the name was chosen. Should we conclude that there is nothing more to this second name than that? If we were to place the name "Sandy Kim" in the context of the thousands of Korean immigrants in the U.S. who either chose or were given American names, how might this change its significatory possibilities?

Pak Ok-sŏn's relationship to "Annie" is more complex in that her American name is established early on but never used until she works as a U.S. military sex worker. Moreover, this gendered aspect is not limited to Ok-sŏn but to her mother, who is referred to as "Elena" early on in the narrative. For instance, when little Ok-sŏn is questioned by the young man as to what she is doing in that neighborhood, she replies that her mother Cho Chun-ja is working inside. When the man doesn't recognize the name, Ok-sŏn tells him that when number thirty-five was called, her mother had disappeared:

> "Thirty-five … ah I see," he seemed a little surprised. "Your mother must be Elena."
> "Elena? My mother is not Elena, she is Cho Chun-ja!"[338]

Ok-sŏn's insistence that her mother is Cho Chun-ja suggests more at stake than a case of mistaken identity. In being interpellated as Elena, Cho Chun-ja becomes an aberrant subject, a *yanggongju.* When her second stepfather enters their lives, Ok-sŏn likes him because, unlike the first stepfather who had called her mother Elena, this man calls her mother *yŏbo,* or dear. A gentle moniker used between Korean couples, *yŏbo* returns Ok-sŏn's mother to the respectable domestic sphere, a position denied "Elena." Similarly, years later when Ok-sŏn is working as a

[338] Annie Park, *Nae byŏlŭn ŏnŭhanŭlae*, 28-29. *Yongjugol* is the name of the camp town neighborhood.

camptown prostitute, her male friend Sŏng-gi*,* who works at the nearby flower shop, calls her by her Korean name. She responds with some bewilderment, "So there is someone in this world who would call me by 'Ok-sŏni.' Until then, there wasn't a single person in *Yongjugol* who called me by that name. I was overwhelmed by a strange feeling as I entered the flower shop."[339] Having lived as Annie for a few years, her identity as Ok-sŏn is nearly forgotten. Hailed as Ok-sŏn, she is returned to her old self, one that is distinct from her life as a prostitute, yet "Ok-sŏn" is no less racialized and gendered. The problem of being interpellated as both Ok-sŏn and Annie materializes once again when Ok-sŏn grieves for Sŏng-gi whose suicide is a result of their failed attempt at running away together. In her grief, Ok-sŏn rejects Dick, an African American G.I. who comes back for her. As Dick dejectedly walks away, she silently apologizes to him, "I can't be with you because I don't want to live as Annie, I want to live as Pak Ok-sŏn."[340] What does it mean to live not as Annie, but as Pak Ok-sŏn, to *internalize* Ok-sŏn but not Annie?

From these examples we can see how the name "Annie" inhabits a space and time distinct from the name "Ok-sŏn," as does the name "Elena" to "Cho Chun-ja." However, it is also evident that these distinctions are not entirely clear-cut because the two names in themselves reflect multiple subjectivities all of which inhabit one body. Both proper names and other forms of address such as slurs define and delimit a social relation in which the conditions of possibility for the subject lie in the excess of language. To return to Butler, language in its historicity, in its ability to precede and exceed the subject is also what both constitutes and injures the subject. At the same time there are "strange feelings" that are in excess of this constitution or injury and it is in these strange feelings, this inexpressibility of Pak's experience, that fall outside of the affects

[339] Ibid., 182.

[340] Ibid., 236.

and narratives of the "normative" human that mixed-race subjectivity is constituted.

A final aspect to the issue of names and naming is the strained subject of surnames. As discussed earlier, Korean citizenship at this time was based on paternal lineage. Without being placed under someone's *hojŏk*, the individual in question is stateless. Both Bok-chŏn's and Ok-sŏn's last names are taken from their respective stepfathers. The surname secures their inclusion in the Korean nation but only to a degree. In the eyes of the state, they are not nameless (read: stateless), but their existence continues to be questioned by the community at-large. Bok-chŏn is faced with such a moment when, during a little down time with his colleagues and music producer, he jokes around when he is asked what area the name "Kim" originates.[341] He replies that his name is from the same region as that of their teacher Kim as with the second syllable of their first names. While others laugh in good humor, one colleague questions the validity of this claim. Even when Bok-chŏn truthfully answers the young man, he is not satisfied, "Hey jerk, you're no 'chŏn,' your name should be American, like 'John,' or 'Henry,' or 'Tom.' Think about it objectively, how on earth can your name be 'chŏn?'"[342] In this blatant challenge, Kim is caught in a discomfiting gesture of having to validate himself. Yet, in a heteropatriarchal society that values racial purity, he can only be illegitimated. Without words to help defend himself, Kim responds with his fists. Like Pak's experience of a "strange feeling," Kim is also overwhelmed and unable to verbalize himself. That which is rendered linguistically illegible is articulated instead through violence.

Kim's resistance also suggests a begrudging acceptance. He embroils himself in a fight

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[341] Korean surnames can be specified by region. For instance, "Kim" from the southeast province is differentiated from "Kim" from the northeast. In addition, children in the same family often share either the first or the second syllable, so to speak. Such as "Yong-il," "Yong-ma," or "Myŏng Ja," and "Hyŏn Ja."

[342] Sandy Kim, *Sŭlpŭn haengjin*, 236.

with the young man because on some level, he recognizes his words as true. Or more precisely, because his words are irrefutable when they are constituted within an ethnonationalist patriarchal linguistic community. We can see this quite clearly in the earlier scene with Ok-sŏn and the stranger. After running away from her stepfather who tries to rape her at the age of about eleven or twelve, Ok-sŏn wanders into a Buddhist temple where she meets the gentleman who mistakes her for an American. In response, she replies, "Mister, I'm not an American … I'm a *t'wigi.*"[343]

Rey Chow refers to such moments of recognition as a "self-referential gesture," as something that can be compared to making a confession, "it is to say, 'Yes, that's me,' to a call and an invocation—'Hey Asian!' 'Hey Indian!' 'Hey gay man!'—as if it were a crime with which one has been charged; it is to admit and submit to the allegations (of otherness) that society at large has made against one."[344] Nevertheless, Chow suggests that the ethnic's owning of the ethnic reference is not a liberatory gesture but one that shackles the individual back to ideology—in this case the ideology of the ethnic. Unlike the ethnic figure of Chow's work, Ok-sŏn's admission and submission of, "I'm a *t'wigi*" is not a gesture towards self-determination. Her statement cannot be read as a liberal humanist rhetoric of minority rights and identity politics because she is well aware of her abject position. She does not own this word. Meanwhile, Kim Bok-chŏn's self-referential gesture lies in his rejection of such terms as *t'wigi,* and *kkamdung-i.* Yet, in his refusal he cannot help but participate in his own interpellation as an aberrant subject. For both Pak and Kim, they're relationship to these epithets result in an alternative definition of "self," one that positions them not entirely outside nor inside of South Korea's patrilineal ethnonationalist community.

[343] Annie Park, *Nae byŏlŭn ŏnŭhanŭlae*, 68.

[344] Rey Chow, *The Protestant Ethnic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 115.

V. For Posterity: Racism, Purism, Nation

> Above all, however, it means that racism constantly induces an excess of 'purism' as far as the nation is concerned: for the nation to be itself, it has to be racially or culturally pure. It therefore has to isolate within its bosom, before eliminating or expelling them, the 'false,' 'exogenous,' 'cross-bred,' 'cosmopolitan' elements.
>
> -Étienne Balibar[345]

Individuals such as Kim Bok-chŏn and Pak Ok-sŏn conveniently become the "false," "exogenous," "cross-bred," and "cosmopolitan" elements that post-war South Korea has tried to excise from its polity. An ethnonationalist nation cannot persist without a belief in racial purity; consequently, the *yanggongju's, t'wigi's,* and *kkamdung-i's* must be expelled. Miscegenation, the deviant act of their genesis not only hovers as a polluted past but is posed as an ominous future. In the context of both autobiographies, sexuality is tied to reproduction and the possibility of miscegenation. Kim Bok-chŏn's narrative rarely touches upon the topic of sex except in a few instances of youthful desire.

The topic of intimate relationships comes to a head during high school when, after hanging out with his buddies and their girlfriends, he realizes that it wasn't just about getting harassed for his skin color, it was about his value as marriageable partner, "Who would marry a *kkamdung-i* like me?"[346] Getting married, a very common and expected life event at this time, signifies entry into adulthood, to be completed by having children. Marriage wasn't about some bourgeois concept of finding everlasting love but about continuing the bloodline, about posterity. An inability to marry suggests that something is wrong with the person in question.[347] As I have

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[345] Étienne Balibar, *Race, Nation, Class Ambiguous Identities* (London: Verso, 1991), 59-60.

[346] Sandy Kim, *Sŭlpŭn haengjin*, 207.

[347] Historically, the "something wrong," reveals a mental or physical incapacity, but we can see how in this case mixed-raceness impairs Kim. Interestingly, the number of Korean working class men who have married foreign women in the last decade or so also speaks to this "something wrong." Cast as men who are too old, too poor, or mentally or physically impaired, these men are not desirable marriage partners to Korean women. They thereby turn

discussed in my first chapter, dating and marriage were very real concerns especially for mixed-race males who were expected to fulfill the role of provider and continue the patrilineal line. The limitations of a society centered on patrilineage and framed around ethnonationalism are most apparent in Kim's acknowledgement of his disadvantage in this sphere. Although his platonic male friends disregard his skin color, in recognizing that no respectable Korean family would ever allow their daughter to marry a "*kkamdung-i* like him," Kim recognizes his socially dead status.

Social death, as defined by Orlando Patterson, is a condition of slavery brought on by natal alienation, "Not only was the slave denied all claims on, and obligations to, his parents and living blood relations but, by extension, all such claims and obligations on his more remote ancestors and on his descendants. He was truly a genealogical isolate."[348] Kim Bok-chŏn and Pak Ok-sŏn, while certainly not slaves in the conventional sense, share similar patterns of genealogical isolation that can be observed in the anxiety surrounding their surnames, in their constant harassment, and in being denied any legitimate relationships, the last of which reflects a fear of miscegenation. They are racial pariahs and as such are granted certain freedoms while refused others.

In the case of Pak Ok-sŏn, she is literally denied marriage to Sŏng-ki, the love of her life, after their plans to marry are discovered by his parents. Her relationship to Sŏng-ki is quite different compared to the other men in her life as he desires a lawful nuptial commitment. She had met Sŏng-ki while he was working at the local flower shop the G.I.s frequented. During their

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to foreign women of lower socioeconomic status. These kinds of interpretations perpetuate the discrimination against foreign wives as money-grubbers and *tamunhwa* (multicultural) families as non-Korean families.

[348] Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 5.

brief rendezvous in Seoul, she discovers that Sŏng-ki had run away from a well-to-do home where he was pressured to live up to his parents' standards. Wanting his parents' blessing, Sŏng-ki asks Ok-sŏn to wait at a nearby motel while he talks to his parents. To Ok-sŏn's dismay, he never returns. Even before this tragic moment, Pak had doubted Sŏng-ki's assurances that his parents will give them their blessing, "I had no confidence. Even if I were to reject my past life as a *yanggongju*, I was forever marked as a daughter of one."[349] Her premonition, unfortunately, comes true, and she is dragged away by her pimp/landlady who had ratted out their plans to Sŏng-ki's parents.

VI. Naturally that Way: Sexuality, Gender, and the Mixed-Race Body

Both Kim and Pak are denied legitimate unions, yet their bodies are hyper-sexualized. The racialized discourse of desire surrounding Pak's body begins with her rape at age seven. Mesmerized by her European features, the young rapist stares at her remarking, "You are so pretty."[350] Upon entering sixth grade, Pak gains a third stepfather. Although she is expected to call him "father," she feels uneasy about this, "There was just something strange about the way Mr. Kim Su-il would look at me. Other girls didn't even have breasts or their first periods yet, but I was so much taller than everyone else, my hips had widened, and my breasts were noticeably swollen. I felt embarrassed."[351]

Such eroticized discourse is not limited to the mixed-race female body as illustrated by Kim Bok-chŏn's narrative. To make ends meet during middle school, Kim works as a taekwondo instructor. One day he overhears two students talking about him in the locker room, "I don't

[349] Annie Park, *Naebyŏrŭn ŏnŭhanŭrae*, 202-203.

[350] Ibid., 31-32.

[351] Ibid., 62.

know if it's because he has *kkamdung-i* blood, but that bastard's got a good build. I touched his bicep once and man it was hard as a rock!"[352] In another instance, Bok-chŏn's high school coach remarks as a matter of fact, "Black people are known for their skill in sports."[353] He then tests Bok-chŏn's physical strength by having him lift weights. Soon, a small crowd of high school athletes gathers around watching him with what appears to be awe and admiration. Kim is reified as the black savage, his body hypervisible in its superhuman, animalistic strength.

While both Pak's and Kim's bodies are described as overdeveloped and potentially oversexed, only Pak's narrative is replete with descriptions of sexual encounters whereas Kim's narrative mentions no such encounters. Gender plays a primary role in this distinction while race further complicates this framework. Ann Stoler's work on the Dutch East Indies offers a similar comparison in considering the exoticization of Pak, "In Dutch colonial novels, women of European status but of Indies birth, or of mixed-blood and common class origin appear as sensual, erotically charged beings, driven by passion in ways that 'pure blood' middle-class European women void and supposedly bereft of desire were not."[354] By depicting the non-European as sexually charged, European bourgeois sexuality is presented as civilized. In Pak's work, the acknowledgement and description of sex already prescribes her as an exotic "other," but this is complicated by the autobiographical nature of the writing. She both resists and is subsumed by her interpellation as "other," as can be observed in her sexual encounters with G.I.s and in her suicidal reflections on her life as a military sex worker. The heteropatriarchal regulation of sexuality allows for reading about the sexual domination and exploitation of a

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[352] Sandy Kim, *Sŭlpŭn haengjin*, 164.

[353] Ibid.,182.

[354] Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 183.

mixed-race woman to be considered acceptable compared to reading about a mixed-race man's sexual relations with a Korean woman. The scopophilic positionality of the reader is always that of a heterosexual non-mixed-race Korean male. Either way, gender remains a primary regulator in the discourse on mixed-race sexuality.

VII. Conclusion

This chapter explored how the genre of autobiography expands on the discourse on mixed-race Koreans, offering the alternative perspective of the "I." By examining the importance of language and its interpellation of the subject, the discourse around desirability, and the role gender plays in narratives of exoticism and eroticism, I have argued that *My Forsaken Star* and *Sorrowful March* construct a version of the self that diverges from the white liberal autobiographical subject seen in figures like Rousseau, Black subjects like Equiano, and neoliberal autobiographical accounts like in the Korean *jasŏjŏn*. Instead, mixed-race subjects like Pak Ok-sŏn and Kim Bok-chŏn narrate themselves *through* the racial and racist language used to objectify them. Pak and Kim do so not by reappropriating epithets like *t'wigi* and *kkamdungi* but by illustrating the intimacy between these words and their subjectivity. That is, their interpellation as *t'wigi* and *kkamdungi* position them as ideological subjects of Korean heteropatriarchy and ethnic nationalism, and it is their liminal status as *t'wigi* and *kkamdungi* that situates them within and without Korean society. From this positionality, they argue for their humanity as *honhyŏl.*

Their narratives also shed light on the eroticization of their bodies that draw on stereotypes of the "savage." Such stereotypes are reinforced by the authors as they confirm their rapid physical maturity or strength over the "average" Korean. At the same time, we see how these discourses are used to appeal to the reader to recognize difference as mere difference and

not necessarily an indication of promiscuity or savagery that such narratives intend. In contrast to the kinds of eroticized discourse surrounding their bodies, discourse on their (un)desirability as marriage partners highlight their status as the socially dead. Kim's inability to get married, and Pak's failed attempt at marrying her Korean boyfriend illustrate how mixed-race subjects were positioned outside of the Korean polity and thereby devalued. Furthermore, as they have addressed in their introductions, both Pak and Kim's *honhyŏl* subjectivities are tied to the violences that came about with the Korean War. Through these linguistic and material relationships, we can observe the triangulated link between mixed-race subjects, U.S. empire, and Korean heteropatriarchy and ethnic nationalism.

My Forgotten Star and *Sorrowful March* complicate the discourse on mixed-race Koreans through the unique position of the authorial "I." We can see how knowledge produced *by* mixed-race Koreans *about* themselves reflects a nuance and "structure of feeling" that journalistic, scientific, or anthropological accounts cannot. These works help unpack a complicated and understudied history and provide a rare discursive space for mixed-race Koreans of the Cold War era to speak for themselves.

EPILOGUE

In 2018, an anthology was published in the U.S. titled, *Mixed Korean: Our Stories*. Written in English, the book comprises of nearly forty stories that reflect the experiences and perspectives of mixed-race Koreans who were born in the postwar decades. Ranging in geographical and emotional scope, the essays address issues of identity, poverty, and loss as encountered by the writers in their childhoods and their resilience in managing family separation, erasure, and racism. Perhaps what is most remarkable about this collection is that it makes concrete the existence of community that has often been difficult to sustain due to mixed-race Koreans' particular history of diasporic dispersal. As the late Sue-Je Lee Gage writes in the foreword, "The significance of these stories is profound. One important contribution they make is to provide a certain sense of home in the knowledge that we are not alone."[355]

This sense of community is one of the key elements that was missing for mixed-race Koreans of the Cold War era. As my dissertation has illustrated, their marginalized position as shameful symbols of war and occupation, especially from within a society that reified heteropatriarchy and ethnic nationalism, severely limited their ability to live as legitimate members of Korean society. In addition, their tenuous legal status made it difficult to impossible to gain a measure of economic (and therefore social) independence needed to live freely. While the focus of this dissertation was primarily on Korea's treatment, management, and discursive representation of mixed-race Koreans, the heteropatriarchal and racial frameworks that limited the freedoms of mixed-race Koreans cannot solely be applied to South Korea. That is, the South Korean *and* U.S. military alliance together provided the basis under which military prostitution was sanctioned and promulgated, creating imbalanced conditions that shamed Korean women

[355] Sue-Je Lee Gage, "Foreword," in *Mixed Korean: Our Stories* (Bloomfield: Trupenny Publishing, 2018): xiii.

while relieving U.S. soldiers of responsibility. Moreover, through a combination of immigration laws (like the McCarran-Walter Act) that limited non-whites entry into the U.S., and by actively discouraging soldiers from marrying Korean women through red tape and reassignments, the U.S. government created structural barriers that implicitly stated their disinterest in taking responsibility for the births and lives of mixed-race Koreans.

Such barriers created a rife environment for Western humanitarians, including missionaries and adoption social workers, to enter the space left open by Cold War violences and alliances. As my second chapter discussed, humanitarian discourse on the state of Korean war orphans and in particular mixed-race orphans were framed to highlight their bare-life existence that required immediate monetary and later, kinship support through international adoption. With the backing of the Rhee government, which viewed Western intervention as a convenient aid to a problem it had little means nor interest in solving, relief came primarily in the form of international adoption programs that focused on getting mixed-race children out of South Korea.

For those who remained, joint efforts by Western humanitarians and Korean welfare agencies were made to provide programs that cultivated manual skills. Yet, many such programs were short-lived, and successful completion did not guarantee employment due to discriminatory hiring practices. All the while, the mentality of leaving Korea for America was very much imprinted on those who reached young adulthood in Korea, a mentality that was reinforced by Americans and Koreans alike. In fact, the trope of *honhyŏl* belonging to America and not to Korea was so powerful that it led one young mixed-race man to head to the airport in desperation, "Without a letter of invitation nor a passport, I just wanted to experience the feeling of going to America so I packed my things and went to Kimpo International Airport. All day

long I stood there holding my bags watching people come and go, crying for my tragic fate."[356]

Narratives of belonging also played a relevant role in the discourses of the Korean writing public. Concerned with the welfare of mixed-race Koreans, many wrote in an effort to bring attention to and to solve the "mixed-blood problem." Describing mixed-race Koreans as possessing Western features while also highlighting the mannerisms and thought processes of mixed-race Koreans as Korean, writers vacillated on their perspectives on mixed-race Koreans, at times suggesting they belonged to America and at other times to Korea. These fluctuating attitudes also informed their proposals for change, which ranged from recommending international adoption as the ideal solution, to demanding that Koreans change their attitude, or to asking for mixed-race Koreans to view themselves and society differently.

Importantly, this body of writings is proof that mixed-race Koreans *were* discussed during the 1940s, 50s, 60s, 70s, and 80s, contradicting the notion that narratives on multiraciality in Korea only began to appear in the 2000s with *tamunhwa* discourse. Mixed-race Koreans were indeed a topic of concern in the Cold War era, and their presence raised the question as to what kind of nation and society South Korea was and wanted to become.

As I have demonstrated in my first and third chapters, much of the concern around mixed-race Koreans was in their material and/or symbolic connection to the military sex worker. By examining films such as *Hellflower, Confessions of a Body,* and *Black Woman*, I bring attention to the connection but also the elision between the *yanggongju* and the *honhyŏla.* That is, in a fictional story centering the *yanggongju* whose "fallen woman" status stands in for "fallen nation," *honhyŏla* are disappeared as they are evidence of miscegenation, a topic often outside of the purview of woman as nation. Instead, I highlight these connections to situate both of these

[356] Kim Ch'ang-pae, "Sonjom tŭrŏ poseyo, honhyŏrin kŭdŭrŭi ŭisik kwa uri ŭi sigak e kwanhayŏ" [Please Raise Your Hand: Concerning the Consciousness of Mixed-Blood Persons and Our Standpoint], *Oedae* 17 (1982): 355.

figures as constructs of the postwar national imaginary. Through a close analysis of figures like Sonya, President Mother, and Nan, we can better understand how the different iterations of the "fallen woman," interpret U.S. military sexual violence and Korean complicity and the repercussions of those violences as they are embodied in the mixed-race subject.

Finally, after examining how mixed-race Koreans and military sex workers have been represented and narrated by others, I spent some time in my final chapter analyzing how mixed-race Koreans narrate themselves. Having been spoken for in journalistic, anthropologic, and scientific accounts; and, photographed, filmed, and narrated in the literary and visual productions, what is it to be able to speak to one's own lived experience? Both still young adults at the time of their respective publications, Kim Bok-chŏn and Pak Ok-sŏn provide testimonies of their lives as "mixed-blood," bringing into question the very nature of language and the linguistic community that interpellate them as "other." Pak's and Kim's internalization of racist language transforms them into ideological beings whose social relations are informed by their social death as mixed-race subjects. This contradiction positions them as *honhyŏl,* and it is from within this contradiction that they entreat their readers for understanding and compassion.

Through an examination of various media and discursive representations, this dissertation centers the story of mixed-race Koreans of the Cold War, a multivocal story elided by Korean ethnic nationalist narratives of progress and racial purity and American exceptionalist narratives of freedom and benevolence. "Mixed-race" materializes as a transnational regime of racialization that requires active discursive and material investments from both Korea and the U.S. As a result, mixed-race Koreans of this period encountered various fates. Some were abandoned and placed for international adoption, others were raised by their mothers, or raised by their mothers and Korean stepfathers, or grew up with both biological parents, or experienced their separation

later. Still others immigrated to the U.S. as young adults. Like any community tied by an understanding of identity, their stories are varied and impossible to narrate in any one work. This dissertation is one such attempt.

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