GENEALOGIES OF KOREAN ADOPTION:
AMERICAN EMPIRE, MILITARIZATION, AND YELLOW DESIRE

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SOOJIN PATE

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Roderick A. Ferguson, Advisor
Jigna Desai, Co-Advisor

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Dedicated to my daughter Sxela
and to Korean adoptees around the world

ABSTRACT

This dissertation traces genealogies of Korean adoption that disrupt the dominant narrative of Korean adoption as a) a humanitarian rescue project and b) a reproduction of white heteronormative kinship in order to track the subject formation of the Korean orphan and adoptee. It does so by situating the emergence of Korean adoption neither in the Korean War (1950-1953) nor in the postwar recovery efforts of the U.S. but within the context of U.S. military occupation of the southern portion of Korea that began in 1945—five years prior to the Korean War and ten years before the "official" beginning of Korean adoption. In so doing, I argue that the figures of the Korean orphan and adoptee have defined neocolonial relations between the U.S. and Korea, as well as fostered white heteronormative constructions of the American family and nation.

In **Chapter One**, I link the development of U.S. neocolonialism in South Korea to the neocolonial practice of Korean adoption by demonstrating how U.S. militarism and its policies of militarized humanitarianism became the precursors to this form of child welfare. I suggest that the Korean orphan ushered the arrival of what I call "American humanitarianism empire," which enabled the U.S. to promote the myth of American exceptionalism while, at the same time, participate in imperial activities in the newly decolonized Korea. In **Chapter Two**, I argue that the discursive practice of, what I call, "yellow desire" facilitated the inclusion of Korean orphans into the U.S. domestic and national family. Informed by the 1950s Cold War Orientalist policies of racial integration, yellow desire runs on the logic that differences can be absorbed through assimilation. I contend that yellow desire is what compelled average white Americans to

adopt Korean children during the era of Asian exclusion. In **Chapter Three**, I examine the process in which orphans became adoptees. As an institution of discipline and normalization, the orphanage as a "processing station" prepared the child to be incorporated into the white American home. It became the site where Korea's social outcasts were shaped into useful subjects for the state: economically profitable for Korea and politically beneficial for the U.S. In this way, Korean adoption can be regarded as a civilizing project of modernity that ensures its success as a racially integrative project. Finally, in **Chapter Four**, I argue that the figure of the Korean adoptee—upon entrance into her new American family—documents the excesses, limits, and contradictions of Korean adoption as a project of empire and as a project of white normativity. Even though the adoptee is disciplined in the orphanage to seamlessly assimilate into her new adoptive family, the very presence of the adoptee's body within the adoptive family disrupts the semblance of the all-American (read white) nuclear family. As a result, the adoptee's presence exposes the nonnormative, queer dimensions of Korean adoption.

Understanding the figures of the orphan and adoptee as geopolitical and socioeconomic constructions is significant because it not only denaturalizes Korean adoption but also illuminates the pivotal roles they played in building and preserving neocolonial relations between the U.S. and Korea. The dominant narrative of Korean adoption that depicts it as a "humanitarian project" or "rescue mission," however, makes illegible the material conditions that produced it. By reorienting Korean adoption as a project of empire, I make legible the material conditions of U.S. military intervention and occupation, war, neocolonialism, and militarized humanitarianism—the very conditions

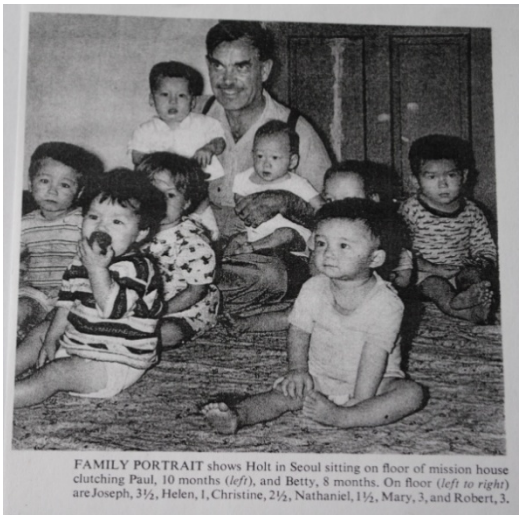
that enabled the emergence and persistence of Korean adoption, as well as the subject formations of the orphan and adoptee.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

PREFACE

Figure 1: GIs and the Orphans



FAMILY PORTRAIT shows Holt in Seoul sitting on floor of mission house clutching Paul, 10 months (*left*), and Betty, 8 months. On floor (*left to right*) are Joseph, 3½, Helen, 1, Christine, 2½, Nathaniel, 1½, Mary, 3, and Robert, 3.

Figure 2: Holt Family Portrait

Consider these two images. Both pictures were taken in South Korea. The first is a still image from a film produced by the Department of Defense on Christmas Eve in 1953, five months after the Korean War "ended" in a ceasefire agreement along the 38th parallel, or the DMZ (demilitarized zone).[1] It features three orphans held in the arms of servicemen from the IX Corps who have organized a Christmas Party for them. The second image was taken by a *Life* magazine photographer in 1955 to document the inauguration of Harry Holt as the founding father of Korean adoption via the unprecedented adoption of these eight Korean children. In many ways, this second image has become the public face and dominant history of Korean adoption—it primarily starting as a one-man humanitarian and it being about the rescue of Amerasian children. Indeed, historical accounts of Korean adoption tend to trace the genealogy of this enterprise back to Holt and his Holt Adoption Program.[2]

This dissertation offers an alternative accounting of Korean adoption that is rooted in the first image. When paired alongside the first image, Holt's "family portrait" becomes entwined in a complex set of historical and geopolitical conditions. To be sure, the first picture makes visible the militarized, gendered, racialized, sexualized, imperialist and queer dimensions of Korean adoption that the second photo elides through the depiction of adoption as not only a rescue project but also a reproduction of white heteronormative kinship building. What Figure 1 makes explicit that Figure 2 conceals is the direct relationship between U.S. military occupation and Korean adoption. But Holt's "family portrait" is no less implicated in U.S. militarism; rather, I contend that these images are simply two versions of the same thing: American empire.

This dissertation challenges readers to consider Korean adoption as an extension and continuation of the U.S. neocolonialism rather than a byproduct of the Korean War. In the same way that the DMZ signals the continued neocolonial relations between the U.S. and South Korea, I argue that America's imperialist fantasy to be a figurative parent to the Korean nation lives on through the practices of Korean adoption.[3] As the existence of the DMZ justifies U.S. military occupation and presence in the southern portion of Korea to this day, the persistent practice of predominantly white Americans adopting Korean children preserves the neocolonial relationship between the U.S. and South Korea.[4] And it does so through the figure of the Korean adoptee.

Taking into consideration the interminable nature of U.S. imperialist and geopolitical investments regarding Korea[5] not only alters our understanding of Korean adoption but also our understanding of the children pictured in the still photos: the

Korean orphan (as seen in Figure 1) and the Korean adoptee (as seen in Figure 2). Rather than perceiving these children as passive victims, I propose that they perform a valuable service for the U.S. nation-state.[6] Specifically, the figure of the Korean orphan facilitates neocolonial relations between U.S. and Korea and the figure of the Korean adoptee solidifies that relationship. The orphan fosters, while the adoptee preserves; the orphan promotes, while the adoptee sustains. So as it relates to these still images, I suggest that Figure 2 could not have existed without Figure 1: the predecessor of Holt's family portrait is the scene of the GIs with the orphans.

By linking these two images, I also want to signal the ways in which both militarization *and* humanitarianism have shaped Korean adoption. Indeed, militarization (as depicted in Figure 1) and humanitarianism (as depicted in Figure 2) are two sides of the same neocolonial coin. The project of American military occupation in the southern portion of Korea, along with the postwar humanitarian efforts by servicemen and civilians, created the conditions in which the transnational adoption of displaced Korean children by predominantly white Americans was conceived and implemented. Rather than perceiving them as opposing projects, I reveal how U.S. militarization coalesced with projects of humanitarianism to become the building blocks of not only Korean adoption but also, what I call, American humanitarianism empire.[7]

So far, I have used these pair of still images to frame my genealogical investigation of Korean adoption. But my dissertation is as much an exploration of Korean adoptee subjectivity as it is about the geopolitical dimensions of Korean adoption. Thus, this dissertation is also a genealogical investigation of the subject

formation of the Korean adoptee. After all, the same forces that produced Korean adoption also produced the Korean orphan and Korean adoptee. Indeed, the opening images not only make visible the militarized and humanitarian projects that underwrote Korean adoption, but they also make visible the transformation from orphan to adoptee. To be sure, there is a remarkable difference between the first and second picture in the ways that the Korean children are depicted. In Figure 1, the orphans are marked as Korean in their Korean traditional dress. In Figure 2, the Korean adoptees are marked as American not only through their attire but also through the new American-sounding names that have been assigned to them. Rather than seeing these children as the same (i.e., they're all orphans), my project explores the literal space between these two images by asking how the orphans in Figure 1 become the adoptees in Figure 2. By attending to the ideological and physical labor that transformed orphans into adoptees—from Korean children to American citizen-subjects—I disrupt the notion that the Korean orphan and the Korean adoptee are interchangeable identities; on the contrary, I suggest that they are discrete categories of identity that are informed by different logics and geopolitical demands.

I want to point out that in tracing the genealogies of both Korean adoption and the subject formation of the Korean adoptee, I am neither suggesting that Korean adoption is a homogenous practice nor am I suggesting that the experience of Korean orphans and adoptees are all the same. Rather, my goal is to identify the larger discourses and dynamics of power at play that have enabled the emergence of Korean adoption and the formation of Korean adoptee subjectivity. I suggest that there is a common set of

geopolitical and historical factors that have shaped Korean adoption and Korean adoptee identity. Both are implicated in a shared history of serving American neocolonial interests.

I begin my discussion of Korean adoption via Figures 1 and 2 because they encapsulate the basic terms of my project in visual form. In this particular pairing, we observe the hallmark themes that frame my dissertation: American neocolonialism, militarization, humanitarianism, desire, whiteness, and the transition from orphan to adoptee. Figures 1 and 2 also encompass the stories I want to tell. I am particularly interested in taking a behind-the-scenes approach to these two still images. As such, the first story provides the backdrop to Figure 1. The second story explains how we get from Figure 1 to Figure 2. And in the telling of these two stories, I end up culling forth the genealogy of the Korean adoptee whose subject formation begins with the production of the Korean orphan during the Korean War and ends in the present moment where adult adoptees are redefining the terms of Korean adoptee subjectivity. Taken together, all three stories work to complicate the dominant narrative of Korean adoption by providing alternative ways of knowing and understanding this phenomenon.

Notes

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[1] The Korean War is not officially over. In 1953, the 38th parallel became the DMZ upon signing a ceasefire agreement by both U.S. and Soviet forces. Currently, as the most heavily militarized space in the world (with about a million North Korean soldiers on the northern side of the DMZ and about a million South Korean and U.S. soldiers combined), the DMZ is a truly a misnomer.

[2] See for example Rosemary C. Sarri,Yenoak Baik, and Marti Bombyk, "Goal Displacement and Dependency in South Korean-United States Intercountry Adoption," *Children and Youth Services Review* 20.1/2 (1998): 87-148; Dong Soo Kim, "A Country Divided: Contextualizing Adoption from a Korean Perspective," in *International Korean Adoption: A Fifty-Year History of Policy and Practice*, eds. Kathleen Ja Soo Berquist, et al. (NY: Haworth Press, 2007): 3-23; and Catherine Ceniza Choy, "Institutionalizing International Adoption: The Historical Origins of Korean Adoption in the United States," in *International Korean Adoption: A Fifty-Year History of Policy and Practice* (NY: Haworth Press, 2007): 25-42.

[3] I use the plural "practice*s*" to suggest that the enterprise of Korean adoption is neither static nor homogenous. To be sure, the ways in which Korean adoption is *practiced* (i.e., based on protocol, procedures, etc.) has changed over time in light of political, economic, and socio-cultural changes undergone by both the U.S. and Korea. In addition, Korean adoption between U.S. and Korea is practiced differently than Korean adoption between Korea and other countries.

[4] I realize that U.S. relations with Korea have changed over time, as well as the practices and policies that have governed Korean adoption; however, despite the shifting geopolitical, economic, and social contexts that have informed Korean adoption, U.S. neocolonial relations with Korea continues to be preserved. My point here is that American neocolonialism is both flexible and accommodating so it can persist regardless of these shifts. For example, after the Cold War, Korean adoption was no longer justified through the discourse of humanitarianism but through Civil Rights discourse, the rhetoric of multiculturalism, and the logic of consumer capitalism. Consequently, the discourses concerning Korean orphans shifted from the rights of the *child* (the right to live and have a permanent home) to the rights of the prospective *adoptive parent*. Nowhere is this more evident than in the "Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996," wherein which section 1808 states that "race, color, or national origin of the adoptive or foster parent, or the child involved" cannot be a consideration of the adoption process. As Anthony Shui points out, this act was "designed to counter race-matching policies in adoption, shift[ing] the traditional concern over the rights of the child to concern over the supposed 'discrimination' that white parents could face when attempting to adopt a nonwhite child" (para. 12). See Shiu, "Flexible Production: International Adoption, Race, Whiteness," *Jouvert: A Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 6.1-2 (2001): 31 pars. http://english.chass.ncsu.edu/jouvert/v6i1-2/shiu.htm (accessed 3/10/05). The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was appropriated to legitimize the prospective adoptive parents' right to parent any child of any race or nationality. This, in turn, allowed prospective adoptive parents to participate in, what Kristi Brian calls, "the consumption of 'multiculturalism.'" See Brian, "Choosing Korea: Marketing 'Multiculturalism' to Choosy Adopters," in *International Korean Adoption: A Fifty-Year History of Policy and Practice* (NY: Haworth Press, 2007): 61-78; 62.

In addition, the logic of supply and demand increasingly naturalized transnational adoption, as the *demand* of American citizens to become parents apparently gave them the right to access the seemingly endless supply of nonwhite children overseas. It is precisely the combination of Civil Rights discourse and capitalist logic that created what Anthony Shui calls the "consumerist privilege" of the prospective adoptive parent that facilitated a "paradigmatic shift from the 'due regard' of the child to an international crusade in support of international adoption" (para. 7, 11). So although the discourse of multicultural consumerism that developed in the post-Cold War era has come to replace the discourse of humanitarianism, U.S. neocolonial relations with Korean continues to be preserved through Korean adoption.

[5] I realize that Korea is divided into two nations: The Republic of Korea (South Korea) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). Given the fact that the focus of this dissertation is solely on transnational adoption between the U.S. and South Korea, I use "Korea," as shorthand for South Korea.

[6] They perform a valuable service for the Korean nation-state, too, in that they help maintain smooth relations between the U.S. and Korea. In addition, they bring in at least $15-20 million/year, based on 1988 figures. See Matthew Rothschild, "Babies for Sale: South Koreans Make Them, American Buy Them," *The Progressive* (January 1988). Rpt. in Transracial Abductees, http://www.transracialabductees.org/politics/progressive.html (accessed 5/7/07). While it remains unclear just how much money the Korean government has made from sending their children overseas for adoption, Jane Jeong Trenka points out that each Korean child, "if sent overseas for adoption, suddenly becomes worth 9,500,000 won [about $8,500] to the facilitating agency." Trenka also points out that with a GDP per capita of $27,000, Korea is the only country with a transnational adoption program among countries with a similar GDP. See Jane Jeong Trenka, "Structural Violence, Social Death, and International Adoption: Part 3 of 4," *Conducive Chronicle* (March 21, 2010). *Conducive Magazine*. http://cchronicle.com/2010/03/structural-violence-social-death-and-intl-adoption-part-3-of-4/ (assessed 3/22/10). Furthermore, with the return of adult Korean adoptees, the Korean government is trying to reintegrate them as global ambassadors, as they are considered "valuable assets" who play an important role in "bridging Korea with the global community." See Eleana Kim, "Our Adoptee, Our Alien: Transnational Adoptees as Specters of Foreignness and Family in South Korea," *Anthropological Quarterly* 80.3 (Spring 2007): 497-531; 506-507.

[7] I want to thank Jigna Desai for suggesting this phrase. I discuss this concept further in my Introduction and Chapter 1.

INTRODUCTION

A Brief Background on Korean Adoption

Since the Korean War began in 1950, up to 200,000 Korean children have been adopted by families in Europe, Australia, Canada, and the United States.[1] Over fifty percent of these children have been adopted by U.S. families, making the United States the top receiving country. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the Korean American population is about one million. Considering these numbers, nearly ten percent of Korean Americans residing in the United States are adoptees. Korean adoption officially began in Korea in 1954, with the presidential order that established Children Placement Services (currently known as Social Welfare Society).[2] One year later, Harry Holt made his infamous trip to Korea and adopted eight mixed-race orphans, who were the progeny of American GIs and Korean women. A year after this event, Holt Adoption Program was established, institutionalizing Korean adoption in the United States.

Initially, nearly 90% of the children adopted between 1955 and 1957 were of mixed-race background[3]—despite the fact that mixed-race children made up less than 1% of the entire war orphan population.[4] In 1958, the numbers dropped to nearly 70%. A year later, children of full Korean parentage outnumbered mixed-race children, so that 60% were full Korean vs. 40% who were mixed-race.[5] By 1970, nearly all of the children placed for adoption were of full Korean parentage—either relinquished due to changes in familial structure (separation, divorce, or death of a spouse) and/or abandonment by the birthfather.[6] Today, the racial makeup of children (who are now

mostly infants) placed for adoption and the circumstances in which they are relinquished remain the same as the 1970s.

While it is outside the scope of the dissertation to provide a comprehensive legal history of Korean adoption, it may be helpful to outline the legal provisions that allowed Korean children to enter U.S. borders during the period of anti-Asian immigration with which Korean adoption overlapped. Between the 1924 Immigration Act[7] and the 1965 Immigration Act (which abolished quotas), the immigration of peoples from Asian countries were highly restricted. For Korean children, they needed a special law to help them bypass the anti-immigration acts in place. In 1953, Congress passed the Refugee Relief Act that not only allowed American couples to adopt Korean children (only two children per couple) but also legalized the practice of proxy adoption,[8] for which Holt Adoption Program was infamous.[9] Because the Refugee Relief Act was about to expire on December 31, 1956, new legislation had to be created to enable the immigration of Korean children into U.S. homes. As a result of Harry Holt's successful lobbying, Congress passed the Orphan Bill in 1957, which exempted Korean orphans from immigration quotas. In so doing, this bill, according to Tobias Hübinette, "secur[ed] the future for international adoption from Korea to the U.S."[10] Four years later, the Immigration and Nationality Act was amended to give transnational adoption from Korea a permanent place in American law by codifying and making permanent the laws that admitted adopted children from overseas.[11] This 1961 amendment also ended the practice of proxy adoptions.[12]

Although this project is historical, I want to stress that this dissertation is not about explicating the history, historiography, or the institutional development of Korean adoption; [13] rather, I interact with history in order to trace the "numberless beginnings" of Korean adoption.[14] As a genealogical investigation of Korean adoption via the genealogical study of the Korean orphan and Korean adoptee, this dissertation engages history in order to "recognize the events of history, its jolts, its surprises, its unsteady victories and unpalatable defeats—the basis of all beginnings, atavisms, and heredities," as Michel Foucault puts it.[15] In other words, an engagement with history will reveal the multiple starting points—"numberless beginnings"—rather than a single origin of Korean adoption. In this way, for the genealogist, history becomes necessary to "dispel the chimeras of the origin."[16]

Thus, rather than working to find the "origins" of Korean adoption, this dissertation seeks to locate the "emergences" of Korean adoption, the various moments in which the figures of the Korean orphan and the adoptee arise and arrive. Borrowing again from Foucault, "emergence" is not the same as "origins"; rather, "emergence is always produced through a particular stage of forces…[It is produced by] the struggle these forces wage against each other or against adverse circumstances, and the attempt to avoid degeneration and regain strength by dividing these forces against themselves."[17] Thus, emergences are produced through conflict, tension, contradiction, and the attempt to resolve these moments of crises. Within this context, I examine how particular moments of crisis, conflict, and contradiction constituted the emergence(s) of Korean adoption and the figures of the orphan and adoptee, especially as possible solutions to

certain geopolitical and social problems. Furthermore, I'm interested in how the logics and discourses of a particular moment of crisis not only produced the conditions in which Korean adoption emerged but also enfigured the Korean orphan and adoptee. Attending to the *emergences* of Korean adoption rather than the *origins* of Korean adoption enables me to locate beginnings other than Holt and his rescue mission and to tease out the various discursive terrains that have shaped Korean adoption and its orphans and adoptees.

Korean Adoption Scholarship

Since Letitia DiVirgilio, Caseworker for Children's Aid Association, published her study "Adjustment of Foreign Children in Their Adoptive Homes" in the November 1955 issue of *Child Welfare*[18] and Margaret A. Valk, Senior Case Consultant for the American Branch of International Social Services (ISS-USA), [19] presented her paper "Adjustment of Korean-American Children in American Adoptive Homes" at the 1957 National Conference on Social Welfare,[20] much has been written about what happens to the adoptee after he or she has been adopted. Historically, the majority of Korean adoption scholarship falls into three categories: issues related to adjustment (e.g., assimilation, acculturation), identity formation (e.g., self-esteem issues, racialization) and legislative policies. In the past decade, however, adoption research has experienced a paradigm shift as scholars examine Asian transnational adoption with regards to globalization, kinship, culture, and political economy.[21] Recently, the editors of *Outsiders Within: Writing on Transracial Adoption* (2006) and the editors of

International Adoption: Global Inequalities and the Circulation of Children (2009) have collected essays that address the unequal relations of power (regarding race, gender, class, and nation) apparent in the transnational adoption industry.[22]

Although these works provide some of the most interesting examinations of Asian transnational adoption to date, they all focus on the post-adoption phase of the adoptee's life. No study exists that considers *how* the Korean child *becomes* an adoptee. Rather than asking, "What happens to Korean children after they are adopted?"—which has been the underlying question behind studies on adjustment, identity formation, and kinship—I ask, "How does the adoptee become an adoptee?" Asking this particular question disrupts the notion of an adoptee identity that is predetermined, fixed, and essential. Asking this question challenges the presumption that the adoptee is ahistorical in terms of always already existing, as being outside of history with no genealogy. Thus, I am interested in the subject formation of the adoptee both *prior to* and after adoption. In other words, I am just as invested in the figure of the Korean *orphan* as I am in the Korean *adoptee*—perhaps, even more so. Without the orphan, there is no adoptee; hence, there is no Korean adoption. As a result, the Korean orphan becomes a key figure in examining the subject formation of the Korean adoptee.

The figure of the Korean orphan is also significant in terms of identifying other beginnings of Korean adoption. Because the majority of Korean adoption scholarship has been organized around the central figure of the *adoptee*, historical accounts of Korean adoption almost always begin with Harry Holt's adoption of eight mixed-race Korean children. Notable exceptions include Tobias Hübinette's *Comforting an Orphaned*

Nation (2006), where he situates Korean adoption within the context of the Korean War and within a genealogy of transracial adoption in the U.S., Australia, Canada, and Europe;[23] Jodi Kim's article "An 'Orphan' with Two Mothers: Transnational and Transracial Adoption, the Cold War, and Contemporary Asian American Cultural Politics" (2009), where she situates Korean adoption within U.S. Cold War military interventions in Korea;[24] Arissa Oh's dissertation, "Into the Arms of America: The Korean Roots of International Adoption" (2008), where she revises the myth of Holt as the originator of Korean adoption by situating it in the rescue efforts of American missionaries and GIs during and after the Korean War;[25] and Eleana Kim's working paper, "The Origins of Korean Adoption: Cold War Geopolitics and Intimate Diplomacy" (2009), where she, like Oh, also revises the Holt myth by examining the adoption of Korean children by U.S. servicemen, which preceded Holt's adoption.[26] Interestingly, in all four of these texts, the Korean *orphan* is discussed in some way. The relationship between reorienting the beginnings of Korean adoption and the presence of the Korean orphan is telling. If we want to reconsider the emergence of Korean adoption, we must take into account the figure of the orphan.

My project participates in this most recent effort to locate alternative starting points regarding Korean adoption; however, this dissertation departs from these previously mentioned projects in three significant ways. First, rather than taking for granted that Korean adoption emerged from the tragic and devastating conditions caused by the Korean War, I challenge this assumption. I do so because if Korean adoption emerged as a natural consequence of war, then why does it still persist 50 years later? If

it was a byproduct of postwar conditions, then it should have ceased considering that South Korea is no longer a developing country.[27] Instead, the adoption of Korean children by Americans continues long after the war-like conditions have subsided. Thus, I suggest that rather than a natural consequence of war, Korean adoption emerged from the neocolonial relations between the U.S. and Korea.[28] And this relationship did not begin in 1950 with the formal start of the Korean War but in 1945. So rather than situating Korean adoption within the context of the Korean War (1950-1953), I situate it in light of U.S. military occupation of southern Korea that began as early as 1945.

Second, while my discussion of the orphan also includes how the Korean orphan is legally produced (as addressed in Jodi Kim's article) and how the image of the Korean orphan was constructed by the U.S. media (as addressed in Eleana Kim's article),[29] I am particularly interested in the genealogies of the Korean orphan: the orphan's emergence, production, and transition into an adoptee. I contend that it is impossible to understand the complex conditions that produced Korean adoption without attending to the figure of the orphan because it is the orphan (rather than the adoptee) that makes visible the militarized and neocolonialist conditions of Korean adoption. As such, the orphanages in Korea that were engineered, financed, and constructed by U.S. Armed Forces—which to date have been unexamined and undocumented in scholarly writings—become a key site in not only proposing another emergence of Korean adoption but also locating the arrival of the Korean orphan as a militarized subject.

Finally, my work departs from current scholarship that oftentimes conflates orphan and adoptee by presuming that being an orphan is the only prerequisite to being

adopted. Just because a child is an orphan does not mean that he or she will become an adoptee. On the contrary, it takes innumerable resources, people, and institutional support to make an orphan adoptable. Thus, this dissertation also attends to the process in which orphans become adoptees.

To date, no study exists that proposes the 1945 U.S. military occupation of Korea as one possible beginning of Korean adoption. Neither is there a detailed study on the specific ways in which U.S. militarism militarized Korean orphans during and shortly after the Korean War.[30] In addition, a rigorous study on the emergence of orphanages in postwar Korea, as well as a thorough investigation of the mechanisms that made orphans adoptable remains absent in the field of Korean adoption studies. It is in these specific ways that I broaden the field and expand the scope of the current discussions taking place considering the construction of the Korean orphan and the emergence Korean adoption.

On the Importance of Korean Adoptee Cultural Production

The purpose of tracing the genealogy of the Korean orphan is to track the subject formation of the Korean adoptee. As stated earlier, much of the scholarship on Korean adoption has been organized around the figure of the adoptee. And the primary methods used to study this figure have been predominantly quantitative methodologies of social science, which focus on issues of identity and adjustment. To reiterate, the first published study on Korean adoptee adjustment was in 1956. In her *Child Welfare* journal article "Adjustment of Foreign Children in Their Adoptive Homes," Letitia DiVirgilio observed the adjustments of twenty-four children (twelve from Greece, seven from

Korea, and one each from Austria, Germany, Japan, Lebanon, and Turkey)—sixteen of whom were placed through ISS—in their new American homes.[31] She concluded that all the children made smooth transitions into their home: "None of these children have displayed overt signs of emotional disorder…All of them seemed to show evidence of being glad to be here."[32] Margaret A. Valk made similar conclusions in her 1957 paper for the National Conference on Social Welfare entitled "Adjustment of Korean-American Children in American Adoptive Homes." Drawing from a sample of 93 Korean children whose ages ranged from infancy to ten years old,[33] Valk concluded that the majority of the children "have been able to adjust to their adoptive homes with such comparative ease" despite the period of struggle and conflict during the initial period of adjustment.[34]

Nearly twenty years later, Dong Soo Kim completed the first nationwide, longitudinal study concerning the adjustment of Korean adoptees in the United States. Between 1975 and 1976, Kim collected data through the use of mailed questionnaires. Unlike the two earlier studies that based their findings on participant-observation, interviews with adoptive parents, and reports written from social workers, his subjects included 406 Korean *adoptees*—which consisted of nearly the entire pool of adolescent adoptees placed through Holt Adoption Program (which later became Holt International Children's Services)—and their adoptive parents. The adoptees ranged from twelve and seventeen years of age and were divided into two groups: the "Early Group" being those who were adopted at a year old or earlier, and the "Later Group" being those who were adopted at six years of age or older.[35] His major findings were as follows:

> As a whole, their self concept was remarkably similar to that of other American people as represented by the norm group. Their self-esteem and certainty about

> self were virtually the same…In short, the Korean adoptive children were like other American teenagers in many respects, and they were doing as well as or better than others, although they seemed to have some initial adjustment difficulties.[36]

He also concludes that the adoptee's racial background had little or no impact on the adoptee's concept of self.[37] For Kim, these findings proved that the practice of placing Korean children in American homes was "successful" in terms of producing happy, well-adjusted, well-developed adolescents.[38] As a result, he recommends that "intercountry adoptions" such as Korean adoption "should be continued and or even expanded elsewhere."[39] Interestingly, nearly 25 years after Kim's study, Rita Simon and Howard Alstein conducted their own study of 168 adult Korean adoptees (again from Holt Adoption Program) who were adopted by 124 white families between the late 1960s to 1970s and came up with similar findings. Based on phone interviews with Korean adoptees (ranging from high school aged to middle-aged adults), they concluded that "Korean transracial adoptees are aware of their backgrounds but are not particularly interested in making them the center of their lives. They feel good about growing up with the families they did. They are committed to maintaining close ties with their adopted families and are supportive of policies that promote transracial adoptions."[40]

Based on the empirical studies of Korean adoptee identity formation by social workers, case consultants, and social scientists, a dominant discourse concerning Korean adoptee identity has emerged: a narrative that posits that race is not a significant factor in their formation of identity and that the process of assimilation and adjustment is smooth and easy as long as there is an abundance of colorblind love. However, in the past twenty

years, Korean adoptees have spoken out against such neat and tidy conclusions about adoptee identity and experience. Through their literature, film, and visual art, adult Korean adoptee artists are providing a more complicated and complex narrative of Korean adoption than the one told by social scientists.

Since the 1990s, a body of cultural work produced by Korean adoptee themselves—including literary and cinematic personal narratives, visual art, fiction, poetry, and mixed-genre artwork—has flourished. This flowering of Korean adoptee cultural production, as explained by adoptee filmmaker Nathan Adolfson, can be attributed to the fact that "a lot of those children who came in the early '70s are in their mid-20s or early 30s, and they're coming of that age where they're starting to question who they are and where they come from and [they're] old enough to articulate that."[41] This blossoming of artistic expression by Korean adoptees is significant considering that for much of the history concerning Korean adoption studies, adoptees have been spoken for by nonadoptees. Indeed, as the editors of *Outsiders Within* point out, "Over the past fifty years, white adoptive parents, academics, psychiatrists, and social workers have dominated the literature on transracial [and transnational] adoption. These 'experts' have been the one to tell the public—including adoptees—'what it is like' and 'how we turn out.'"[42] Having reached a critical mass, adult Korean adoptees—most of whom are college educated—are "talking back," speaking for themselves through their literary and cinematic productions. Indeed, in *Seeds from a Silent Tree* (1997), the first published anthology of Korean adoptee writing, editor Tonya Bishoff explains the purpose of this path-breaking volume:

> With this anthology, we seek to break a certain silence—silence from our land of origin, silence from the lands we now inhabit—tongues tied by racism, some external some painfully internal; tongues tied by social mores, codes, and contradictions; tongues tied by colonialist myths of rescue missions and smooth assimilations. We hope to shatter these illusions, sowing new seeds for future generations not be silent—to seek out themselves and each other, to define, re-define, explore, and question.[43]

Since the publication of *Seeds from a Silent Tree*, a wave of personal narratives by Korean adoptees—in both literary and cinematic form—have been published, providing an alternative epistemology of Korean adoption that is rooted in their own experiences and perspectives.[44] Some of the most popular and critically acclaimed works include Korean adoptee memoirs *Ten Thousand Sorrows: The Extraordinary Journey of a Korean War Orphan* (2000) by Elizabeth Kim, *A Single Square Picture: A Korean Adoptee's Search for Her Roots* (2002) by Katy Robinson, and *The Language of Blood* (2003) by Jane Jeong Trenka; and documentary films *Passing Through* (1998) by Nathan Adolfson and *First Person Plural* (2000) by Deann Borshay Liem. Several anthologies have also been published since 1997, including *Voices from Another Place* (1999) edited by Susan Soon-Keum Cox; *After the Morning Calm: Reflections of Korean Adoptees* (2002), a collection devoted to the voices of adolescents and young adults edited by Sook Wilkinson and Nancy Fox; and most recently *Outsiders Within: Writing on Transracial Adoption* (2006), a collection of academic essays, poetry, visual art, and personal narratives edited by Jane Jeong Trenka, Julia Chinyere Oparah, and Sun Yung Shin.

What these works reveal that past quantitative studies on Korean adoptee identity do not address are the complex ways in which racial, cultural, and national differences affect adoptee identity. Rather than depicting the experience of Korean adoption as

smooth, peaceful, and progressive, the literary and cinematic narratives by Korean adoptees present a much more complicated, fraught, painful, and melancholic picture of adoption and identity formation. By highlighting the contradictions of Korean adoption, these personal narratives act as counterhegemonic narratives.

It is for these reasons that I juxtapose the historical pieces of my project with these contemporary enunciations of Korean adoption. The literary and cinematic narratives of Korean adoptees, as noted by Eleana Kim, offer an unofficial history of Korean adoption, "one in which histories of dislocation and displacement reveal the possibilities for counterhegemonic reimaginings of social relations."[45] These adoptee narratives—because they address histories of imperialism, immigration, racialized exploitation, and gendered commodification—are a rich source to confront the contradictions of transnational adoption and to examine alternative understandings of Korean adoptee subjectivity.

In putting contemporary Korean adoptee cultural production in conversation with archival documents, I also want to illustrate how the geopolitical and neocolonial conditions that produced Korean adoption also informed the subject formations of Korean adoptees themselves. It is through these contemporary enunciations by Korean adoptee artists that we see how certain neocolonialist and geopolitical activities have affected the adoptee. If the figure of the orphan enables us to get at the historical dimensions of Korean adoption, then the figure of the adoptee allows us to get at how history informs the present. I am not suggesting that the "orphan" is a historical subject and the "adoptee" is a contemporary one. But given my research questions, I use archival

materials to investigate the formation of the orphan. And because I believe that any study on Korean adoptee identity formation should include these current works by adult adoptee artists, my examination of the adoptee draws from these contemporary writings. Thus, the time it takes for adoptees to "come of age," for adult adoptee voices to reach critical mass, and for the publishing world to take notice and validate their work all contribute to why there is a large historical gap between my primary sources.

On the Importance of Korean Adoption in Asian American Studies and American Studies

This dissertation has been very much informed by the transnational and postcolonial turn in American Studies and Asian American Studies.[46] My project participates in the call spearheaded by scholars such as Amy Kaplan, Lisa Lowe, Jenny Sharpe, Erika Lee, and Cathy Choy who ask us to think about how American activity "over there" has affected phenomenon "here."[47] Rather than treating transnationalism and postcolonialism as separate phenomena, I take seriously the interrelated and intersectional relationship between them as elucidated by scholars in these two fields.[48] For example, in *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History*, Asian American historian Cathy Choy illuminates the direct connection between transnationalism and U.S. imperialism. By analyzing the flow of goods, services, images, and ideas that criss-crossed between the U.S. and the Philippines, she demonstrates that implicit in this transnational process is the colonial relationship between these two nations. Colonialism is the very impetus for the transnational movement of Filipino

nurses. Specifically, U.S. imperialist activities in the Philippines created the conditions for Filipino nurse migration to the United States.[49] Jenny Sharpe even posits that "Asian emigration to the United States cannot be understood without explaining United States imperialism in Hawaii, Vietnam, and the Philippines."[50] Since then, numerous scholars have elucidated how the very conditions of colonialism and postcoloniality lead to transnational migration.

If the postcolonial and transnational turn in *Asian American Studies* has resulted in a "more rigorous critique of the social, cultural, intellectual and symbolic making of the American Empire" via the presence and labor of Asian bodies, as articulated by Lingyan Yang,[51] the postcolonial and transnational turn in *American Studies* has not only implicated the United States as an imperial power but has also exposed the imperial origins of American Studies as a field. Employing both transnational and postcolonial methods, Amy Kaplan, in her seminal article "'Left Alone with America': The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture" (1993), analyzes Perry Miller's expedition to the Congo and puts forth a provocative claim: that "The field of American Studies was conceived on the banks of the Congo."[52] This claim disrupts the myth of American exceptionalism—that it is exceptional because it has no imperial ties to other nations (unlike Europe) and that it is inherently anti-imperialist because of its independence from European colonialism.[53] Her thesis also disrupts one of the central tenets of American historiography: that there is no American Empire.[54] Incorporating postcolonial theory and transnational methods in American Studies has ushered in a wave of scholarship that addresses the "multiple histories of continental and overseas expansion, conquest,

conflict, and resistance which have shaped the cultures of the United States and the cultures of those it has dominated within and beyond its geographical boundaries."[55]

My project in many ways aligns with the current trends taking place in Asian American studies and American studies concerning transnational and postcolonial methods and approaches to the study of U.S. culture, history, and national formation. Like Choy's project, my dissertation reveals the specific ways in which American neocolonialism precipitated the migration of over 100,000 Korean children into U.S. homes. In this sense, Korean adoption is not unrelated to other Asian migrations that were sparked by U.S. imperialist activities in the Philippines and Vietnam, for example. In addition, my project disrupts notions of American exceptionalism by revealing the simultaneous dependence and disavowal of American imperialism upon which the U.S. nation is built. I do this by explicating the ways in which the U.S. government implemented the tactic of humanitarian rescue and recovery of Korean War orphans as a way to assuage the explicit colonial practice of U.S. military occupation before, during, and after the Korean War. This relationship that developed between military intervention and humanitarian rescue ushered in a new kind of American neocolonialism: what I call, American humanitarianism empire. Through this particular form of neocolonialism, the U.S. is able to preserve its myth of exceptionalism while, at the same time, invest in empire-building activities in the Pacific. In other words, through American humanitarianism empire, the U.S. is able to engage in empire building under the auspices of an altruistic humanitarianism.

While scholars in both American Studies and Asian American studies have linked global capitalism to the expansion of U.S. empire in the Pacific,[56] my research suggests that U.S. empire is spread through other obvious and less anticipated ways. These other elements at play in the production and development of American neocolonialism are the twin projects of U.S. military occupation *and* humanitarianism. As two sides of the American neocolonial coin, my dissertation fleshes out not only the ways in which military intervention and humanitarian efforts have compelled Asian immigration but also how militarized humanitarianism became a key strategy in building U.S. empire under the geopolitical and ideological demands of the Cold War. What Korean adoption does for American studies and Asian American studies then is a) expand the geographical sphere of American empire by locating Korea as one entry point concerning the development of American neocolonialism during the Cold War; b) reveal the nuanced manifestations of American empire and empire-building tactics (i.e., not all neocolonialisms are the same); c) uncover the co-constitutive relationship between projects of dominance and benevolence; d) assess the creative ways in which the project of empire disguises or redirects itself in less overtly violent forms; and e) illuminate how certain figures are employed to (seemingly) resolve the contradictions of U.S. imperial expansion.

Methodology

A central objective of my dissertation is to investigate the subject formation of the orphan and the adoptee. Tracing their genealogies is a complicated affair because their

formations are implicated in a vast web of historical, geopolitical, economic, and cultural processes that shift and change over time. Their genealogies can neither be contained by a single story nor can the nuances be fleshed out with a single disciplinary approach or theoretical framework. Therefore, retelling the story of Korean adoption through these two figures not only requires multiple theoretical frameworks but also multiple methodologies pulled from various disciplines and interdisciplines. Thus, the overarching methodology that frames my project is interdisciplinarity.

As a project that relies on an unlikely mix of primary sources that covers a wide historical scope in order to track the multiple discursive terrains that have shaped Korean adoption, I rely on interdisciplinarity because it, according to Lisa Lowe, "makes use of a varied constellation of critical apparatuses that refuse univocality, totalization, and scholarly indifference."[57] In addition, interdisciplinarity helps us to "theorize, in a critical, dialectical manner, the relationship between cultural artifacts and the social groupings by which they are produced and which they, in turn, help to produce."[58] Rather than using cultural artifacts—which, for me, includes not only conventional artifacts (texts, film, etc.) but also historical events (such as the military occupation of Korea, the Korean War, etc.) and figures (such as the orphan and the adoptee)—to weave together a singular history of Korean adoption or construct a unified picture of Korean adoptee subjectivity, I juxtapose these artifacts in such a way as to theorize the discursive and material conditions in which they were produced and to highlight the moments of dissonance, tension, and ambivalence that emerged from their production. It is in these moments where we can observe the investments, particularly on the part of the U.S.

government, concerning the production of the Korean orphan and the adoptee and the continuation of Korean adoption.

As an interdisciplinary study of Korean adoption, my dissertation employs historical methods and cultural studies methods. The archival research I conducted resulted in a collection of primary sources that includes U.S. congressional reports and military documents from 1945-1950, film reels produced by the U.S. Department of Defense during the 1950s (which to date have been unanalyzed in scholarly writings), newsreels from the 1950s, newspaper and magazine articles from the 1950s and 1960s, and administrative files and newsletters of adoption agencies from the 1950s to 1970s. In addition, I engage with the contemporary literary productions of Korean adoptees. Quotes from their literary and cinematic works are embedded throughout the chapters, along with a literary analysis of the memoir *The Language of Blood* by Jane Jeong Trenka in my final chapter.

I analyze these primary sources through a "constellation of critical apparatuses" that include historical materialism; Foucauldian analysis; and postcolonial, transnational, women of color feminist, and queer theories and methods. In his "Theses on the Philosophy of History," Walter Benjamin delineates the difference between historicism and historical materialism. Historicism is characterized by universalism and is unconcerned with the theoretical. It approaches history as "homogenous, empty time" that is waiting to be filled by data collected by historians.[59] Historical materialism, on the other hand, is characterized by particularity and heterogeneity and situates history as a "theoretical armature" of the present.[60] Indeed, history becomes deployed to make sense

of the present.[61] In this way, the job of the historical materialist is not to narrate a progressive, linear history that follows the "sequence of events like the beads of a rosary"[62] but to seize the "moments of danger" in the past in order to "bring about a real state of emergency" in the present.[63] It is within this spirit of attending to "moments of danger" that I locate the multiple emergences of Korean adoption. Furthermore, by attending to the contradictions and silences that have gathered around American empire building in Korea, I reveal how Korean adoption has become the theoretical armature for American humanitarianism empire.

As a theory and critique, I employ "postcolonial" as an entry point to examine the *continual* cultural, political, and economic effects of colonialism,[64] neocolonialism,[65] and imperialism[66] and their impact on one's formation of identity, as well as the socioeconomic, political, and cultural conditions of the present. Borrowing the words of Kandice Chuh, "Postcolonial…bears a silent but insistent question mark, serving as an inquiry rather than a description, an evaluative entry point rather than a conclusion."[67] Postcolonial critique is also productive for this project because it, according to Jigna Desai, "attempts to identify and to deconstruct the universalizing Eurocentric discourses of colonialism, nationalism, and modernity through challenging universalist narratives of history, critiquing the form of the nation, and interrogating the relationship between power and knowledge."[68]

I use *transnational* to connote both an analytical framework and methodology that uncovers and examines the intersections among racialization, gender, global capitalism, migration, nationalism, and U.S. imperialism. Such a framework, as demonstrated by the

transnational shift in Asian American Studies and American Studies, illuminates certain relationships—such as the interdependence between the transnational and the national and ties between immigration and U.S. imperialism—that are hidden or ignored by purely nationalist and domestic frameworks. As a methodology, I employ transnationalism to investigate the flow of people, politics, services, money, images, and ideas exchanged between the United States and Korea.[69]

I employ intersectionality—a methodology rooted in women of color feminism—to get at the racialized, sexualized, gendered, classed, and imperial dimensions of Korean adoption. The intersectional analysis for which women of color feminisms are known is crucial to my investigation of the orphan and adoptee because their *subject* formation is dependent on the interlocking relationship between the *social* formations of race, gender, sexuality, class, and empire.

Finally, I juxtapose Foucauldian analysis (Chapter 3) with queer critique (Chapter 4) to explore what I consider to be the primary paradox of Korean adoption: it being a nonnormative formation of kinship disguised as normative. I utilize Foucault's theory of discipline and biopower to examine the ways in which the policies and procedures of the orphanage work to normalize the Korean orphan into an adoptee. If U.S. military activity in the southern portion of Korea provided the conditions in which the Korean orphan emerged, then the disciplinary walls of the orphanage produced the figure of the adoptee through a taxonomy that distinguished between unadoptable and adoptable orphans. Thus, it is here where the adoptee becomes enfigured as "normal." In this way, the technique of discipline becomes a technique of normalization; however, this project of

normalization falls short because despite being characterized as "normal," the bodily presence of the adoptee—upon entrance into her new white American family—transgresses the white heterobiological nuclear family.

Therefore, what queer critique does for my project is help me situate Korean adoption as a regime of the normal, as well as attend to the contradictions that emerge from structuring Korean adoption as a normative kinship formation. Although some scholars are employing queer critique to promote Korean adoption as a queer formation of family,[70] I use it to investigate how the labor that is expended to make Korean adoptees "normal" and normative ends up queering the adoptee. In other words, I am less interested in how Korean adoption paves the way for nonnormative conceptions of family and more interested in how its investments in white heteronormativity effect the subject formation of the adoptee. By queering Korean adoption in this way, I reveal the nuanced ways in which heteronormativity coalesces with whiteness and middle-class respectability to cover up anxieties concerning racial, cultural, and biological difference within structures of kinship. Thus, I employ queer criticism to uncover not only the normalization of the adoptee but also her queering.

It is important to note that because of the breadth and diversity of my primary sources, it is impossible to use these varied theoretical frameworks all at the same time or sustain the use of each one throughout the entire dissertation. Because this project is interdisciplinary at its core, I see the methods and theoretical frameworks listed here as merely tools in my analytical kit. A single tool cannot be used for all tasks. What results is a weaving in and out of a particular theory or methodology; thus, I may depend heavily

on a particular theory for one chapter but it may be less visible or altogether absent in subsequent chapters. Despite the seemingly disparate nature of my analytical tool kit, taken together, the methods and methodologies that make up my critical framework of analysis reveal my scholarly and political investments in deconstructing and combating hegemonic notions of history and subjectivity through the production of alternative epistemologies by attending to new subjects, objects of inquiry, and points of entry.

Summary of Chapters

As previously stated in the Preface, this dissertation is interested in telling three interconnected stories. The first story provides the backdrop and setting that eventually led to the intimate encounter between American servicemen and Korean War orphans that is depicted in Figure 1. It is here where we can see how Korean adoption enters the field of American humanitarianism empire. The second story explains the process in which Korean orphans are made adoptable—the process that turns Korean orphans into Korean adoptees—via the technologies of discipline and normalization that were instituted in Korean orphanages. And finally, the third story—which overlaps with the first two stories—follows the Korean adoptee to the U.S. in order to narrate the contradictions, traumas, and violences that accompany such a migration. Thus, my dissertation is organized to reflect these three stories.

Chapter One, "American Humanitarianism Empire: Rethinking the Emergence of Korean Adoption," provides the geopolitical and historical context in which the transnational adoption of Korean children emerged. I situate Korean adoption within

Cold War politics and attend to the geopolitical function that the southern portion of Korea played in America's empire-building project. In addition, I reveal how U.S. military intervention and occupation militarized not only Korea's social welfare system but also the war orphans themselves. The highly racialized, gendered, and sexualized process of U.S. militarization transformed these children into militarized subjects, who ended up serving the imperial interests of the U.S. Thus, I argue that taking care of Korea's children during and after the war facilitated neocolonial relations between the U.S. and Korea, establishing American humanitarianism empire. This chapter draws on archival research I conducted at the National Archives and features Congressional reports from 1945-1950 and film reels produced by the Department of Defense during the 1950s.

Chapter Two, "Yellow Desire and the Mass Production of the Korean Orphan," examines how Asian stereotypes, Orientalist fantasies, and commodity culture during the era of Cold War Orientalism coalesced to create a discourse of desire that motivated Americans to imagine and welcome Korean children as a part of their national and private family in an era of Asian exclusion. Relying on 1950s newspaper articles, newsreels, and, again, film reels from the Department of Defense, I discuss how the images of the "visual iconography of rescue" concerning the Korean orphan interpellated a would-be rescuer, leading to the "visual iconography of rescuing." These visual iconographies of rescuing motivated both average Americans and large corporations to act on behalf of displaced children in Korea. I argue that the public and cultural discourses swirling around Korean orphans at this time—along with the mass produced

image of the orphan as Oriental doll—facilitated the entrance of Korean children into American homes.

While the first two chapters are primarily concerned with the subject formation and integration of the orphan, the last two chapters of my dissertation are primarily focused on the subject formation and integration of the adoptee. **Chapter Three**, "From Orphan to Adoptee: Normalizing the Adopted Child," examines the orphanage as a site of Foucauldian discipline that works to normalize Korean children in order to make them "adoptable." In addition to helping Korean orphans meet the legal standards that enabled their entrance into the United States, the orphanage served as a "processing station" that prepared Korean children for life in the U.S. I argue that it is here, in the orphanage, that the subject formation of the adoptee is forged. I use Holt Adoption Program's Il San orphanage as a case study to investigate the ways in which making Korean orphans "normal" and, therefore, adoptable, became a civilizing project of modernity. I suggest that Korean orphanages—organized as an institute of normalization—attempted to ease the very visible disruption that the adoptee's nonwhite body would cause in his or her new American home. This chapter draws from Holt Adoption Program newsletters, along with administrative files and letters from other adoption agencies (all from the 1950s and 1960s) that were collected from the research I conducted at the Social Welfare History Archives.[71]

If Chapter Three explicates the ways in which Korean orphans are disciplined to become normative subjects, then my final chapter reveals the limits and impossibilities of such a project through the figure of the racially aberrant Korean child in the white

heteronormative American home. **Chapter Four**, "The Queer Foundations of Korean Adoption," serves as a response to the normative project of Korean adoption as explicated in Chapter Three. I juxtapose Holt Adoption Program's newsletter adoption updates (from the 1960s and 1970s) that portray Korean adoptees as model minorities *par excellence* with Jane Jeong Trenka's memoir *The Language of Blood* to expose the nonnormative foundations of Korean adoption. While the newsletters work to promote Korean adoption as a white heteronormative kinship formation (which makes assimilation compulsory for the adoptee), Trenka's memoir exposes the violences and traumas that come with such a project. I argue that in realizing the impossibility of assimilation, the protagonist Jane experiences a "coming to," which enables her to revive the queer possibilities of Korean adoption.

Finally, I want to explain my use of embedded images and texts throughout the chapters. Inserted still images, poetry, and artwork serve to highlight particular tensions that emerge from recounting history through "moments of danger."[72] In the words of Benjamin, "Thinking involves not only the flow of thoughts, but their arrest as well. Where thinking suddenly stops in configuration pregnant with tensions, it gives that configuration a shock…."[73] In a similar way, the disruption that is caused by my interruption of "history" through these blocked images and texts work to produce a shock by highlighting particular repetitions, atavisms, and paradoxes that emerge when history is constructed through the present. I arrest the flow of thought in order to feel the fullness of each dangerous moment.

Let me return to the two images that framed the Preface. Understanding the figures of the orphan and adoptee as geopolitical and socioeconomic constructions is significant not only because it denaturalizes Korean adoption but also because it illuminates the pivotal role they played in building and nurturing neocolonial relations between the U.S. and Korea. Indeed, the practice of Korean children being adopted into white American homes continues to foster dependency between these two nations. However, the dominant narrative of Korean adoption that depicts it as a "humanitarian project" or "rescue mission" makes illegible the material conditions that produced it. By reorienting Korean adoption through the figure of the Korean War orphan, I make legible the material conditions of U.S. military intervention and occupation, war, neocolonialism, and militarized humanitarianism—the very conditions that enabled the emergence of the orphan and adoptee.

Notes

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[1] Despite the global reach of Korean adoption, this dissertation is focused on Korean adoption in the United States. I focus on the U.S. not only because it is by far the largest receiving country but also because of its key role in conceiving, creating, implementing, and eventually institutionalizing Korean adoption.
[2] Sarri et al., 92.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Korean War National Museum, "Holt Foundation," *Korean War Children's Memorial*, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/orphanages-8-Holt.htm (accessed 10/25/09). The reason for this can be attributed to the fact that, as the "founder" of Korean adoption, Harry Holt promoted the adoption of mixed-race Korean children over children of full Korean parentage because, according to him, they were the most pitiful and desperate category of the postwar orphans. I discuss this further in Chapter 3.
[5] Sarri et al., 94.
[6] Ibid., 94-95.
[7] This immigration act is also called the Asian Exclusion Act. It established a quota system in which only 2% of the foreign-born people living in the U.S. in 1890 could immigrate. This, along with the provision in the National Origins Quota of 1924 (which stated that people ineligible for citizenship could not immigrate into the United States), restricted people of Asian descent from entering the country.
[8] Tobias Hübinette, "Korean Adoption History," in *Community 2004: Guide to Korea for Overseas Adopted Koreans*, ed. Eleana Kim (Seoul, Korea: Overseas Koreans Foundation, 2004), 1-15; 3. Rpt. in www.tobiashubinette.se/**adoption**_history.pdf (accessed 3/25/10).
[9] In proxy adoptions, a representative of the adoptive parents travels to Korea and completes the adoption in the foreign court. Consequently, adoptions are completed "sight unseen" between the adopted child and adoptive parent, in order to speed up the adoption process. This practice was criticized by licensed social welfare agencies because it eschewed the minimum standards of adoption: investigation, supervision, and probation. See The Adoption History Project, "Proxy Adoptions," http://www.uoregon.edu/~adoption/topics/proxy.htm (accessed 4/18/10). The supervision and probationary periods were particularly important because it provided both parties a trial period in which the child lived with his or new family before the adoption was finalized. Proxy adoptions eliminated these safeguards which led to abuses and risky matches. I engage in a more detailed discussion of proxy adoptions in Chapter 3.
[10] Hübinette, 5.
[11] U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, "Legislation from 1961-1980," http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/Legislation%20from%201961-1980.pdf (accessed 4/1/8/10). See also The Adoption History Project, "Timeline of Adoption History," http://www.uoregon.edu/~adoption/timeline.html (accessed 4/18/10).
[12] Hübinette, 5.
[13] For a preliminary look into the institutional history of Korean adoption, see Choy, "Institutionalizing International Adoption," 25-42. This article is based on her book-length project concerning the institutional history of Korean adoption.
[14] Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, and History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. D. F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977): 139-164; 145.
[15] Ibid., 144.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid., 148-149.
[18] Letitia DiVirgilio, "Adjustment of Foreign Children in Their Adoptive Homes," *Child Welfare* (November 1956): 15-21. ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children: Adjustment of Foreign Children," Social Welfare History Archives (SWHA), Minneapolis, MN.
[19] ISS-USA is an organization whose mission is to "improve the lives of children, families and adults impacted by migration and international crisis through advances in service, knowledge and public policy." See International Social Services-United States of America Branch, Inc., homepage, http://www.iss-

usa.org. They seek to provide social services to children and families separated by international borders. During the first half of the 20th century, ISS-USA focused on migrants, refugees, and displaced persons from Europe. After the Korean War, however, they began participating in placing Korean orphans into American homes. See Choy, 26-27.

[20] Margaret A. Valk, "Adjustment of Korean-American Children in American Adoptive Homes," National Conference on Social Welfare, 1957. ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Adjustment of Korean-American Children," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.

[21] See David Eng, "Transnational Adoption and Queer Diasporas," *Social Text* 21.3 (2003): 1-37; Toby Alice Volkman, ed., *Cultures of Transnational Adoption* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005); Sara Dorow, *Transnational Adoption: A Cultural Economy of Race, Gender, and Kinship* (NY: New York University Press, 2006).

[22] See Jane Jeong Trenka, Julia Chinyere Oparah, and Sun Yung Shin, eds., *Outsiders Within: Writing on Transracial Adoption* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2006) and Diane Marre and Laura Briggs, eds., *International Adoption: Global Inequalities and the Circulation of Children* (NY: NYU Press, 2009).

[23] Tobias Hübinette, *Comforting an Orphaned Nation: Representations of International Adoption and Adopted Koreans in Korean Popular Culture* (Seoul: Jimoondang, 2006): 34-49.

[24] Jodi Kim, "An 'Orphan' with Two Mothers: Transnational and Transracial Adoption, the Cold War, and Contemporary Asian American Cultural Politics," *American Quarterly* 61.4 (December 2009): 855-880.

[25] Arissa Oh, "Into the Arms of America: The Korean Roots of International Adoption" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2008).

[26] Eleana Kim, "The Origins of Korean Adoption: Cold War Geopolitics and Intimate Diplomacy," Working Paper Series (Washington, D.C.: U.S.-Korea Institute at SAIS, 2009): 1-25.

[27] George E. Ogle notes that by 1987, Korea had achieved the world's tenth-largest economy, making them an "economic miracle." See *South Korea: Dissent within the Economic Miracle* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Zed Books, 1990): 29.

[28] The fact that the practice of sending Korean children overseas for adoption has not ceased—despite multiple pronouncements made by the Korean government to do so—also confirms that factors other than the Korean War are at work. In the early 1970s, North Korea accused its southern neighbor of "selling Korean offspring for profit to Westerners." See Hübinette, *Comforting an Orphaned Nation*, 68. In response to this accusation, Korea's Ministry of Health and Welfare announced that they would eliminate international adoption by 1981. Ironically, it was the years following 1981 (1984-1988) that U.S.-Korean adoption peaked, topping off at about 9,000 children being sent to American families. See Sarri et al., 95. The most well-known pronouncement came in response to Western journalists' critique of U.S.-Korean adoption during the Seoul Olympic Games in 1988. See Hübinette, *Comforting an Orphaned Nation*, 71-72. In 1988, Korea's Ministry of Health of Welfare again claimed that foreign adoption would indeed end—this time, by 1996. But in 1994, the Ministry revised the date to 2015. To date, nearly 2,000 children are sent abroad every year. See Hübinette, "Korean Adoption History," 11. Korea continues to be a leader in transnational adoption, moving from first place to being the fourth largest sending country (after China, Ethiopia, and Russia). See Jane Jeong Trenka, "A Million Living Ghosts: Truth and Reconciliation for the Adoption Community of Korea (TRACK)," Book Tour, Asian American Studies Program, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 11 Feb. 2010.

[29] I discuss both these aspects of the Korean orphan in Chapter 2.

[30] This is not to say that studies that situate Korean adoption within the context of U.S. militarism are absent. On the contrary, two recently published works attend to the militarized dimensions of Asian transnational adoption. See Patti Duncan, "Genealogies of Unbelonging: Amerasians and Transnational Adoptees as Legacies of U.S. Militarism in South Korea," in *Militarized Currents: Toward a Decolonized Future in Asia and the Pacific* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 277-307 and Jodi Kim, *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010). In "Genealogies of Unbelonging," Patti Duncan argues that the continued presence of Amerasian children born to camptown prostitutes and the unidirectional flow of these children into American homes can be attributed to U.S. military occupation in South Korea. In addition, she explores the ways in which

U.S. militarism has stigmatized both groups (camptown prostitutes and their offspring), producing "genealogies of unbelonging." In *Ends of Empire*, Jodi Kim devotes two chapters (Chapter 4 and 5) in which she locates the transnational and transracial adoption of Korean and Vietnamese children within Cold War military interventions in Korea and Vietnam.

[31] DiVirgilio, 15.

[32] Ibid., 20, 21.

[33] Valk, 4. Of the 93 children, 75 were Korean-Caucasian, fourteen were Korean-Negro, and "four are probably of Korean-Mexican or Korean-American Indian." These descriptors are hers and not mine. Identifying four of the children as "probably Korean-Mexican and Korean-American Indian" reveals the slippage of racial categories. It also suggests that the fathers were unknown in these cases, so Valk is probably "guessing" what their parentage is based on appearance which, again, indicates the inadequacy of racial categorization and, perhaps, the inaccuracy of these numbers.

[34] Valk, 18. Because both DiVirgilio and Valk associate the adoptees' successful adjustments to following adoption protocols and legislative procedures, these case workers were trying to denigrate Holt and other private adoption agencies who dealt with proxy adoptions.

[35] Dong Soo Kim, "Intercountry Adoptions: A Study of Self-Concept of Adolescent Korean Children Who Were Adopted by American Families" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1976), 62.

[36] Ibid., 165.

[37] Ibid., 166. Kim does admit that as the adoptees grow older and have more interaction outside their family and communities, their racial difference may play a more significant part in their sense of identity (172).

[38] Ibid., 170-171.

[39] Ibid., 171.

[40] Rita J. Simon and Howard Alstein, *Adoption across Borders: Serving the Children in Transracial and Intercountry Adoptions* (Lanham, Md: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), 106.

[41] Jun Kim, "A Reel Reflection," *KoreAm Journal* 11, no. 5 (May 2000): 17.

[42] Trenka et. al, *Outsiders Within*, 1.

[43]Tonya Bishoff and Jo Rankin, eds., *Seeds from a Silent Tree: An Anthology by Korean Adoptees* (San Diego: Pandal Press, 1997), 2.

[44] This isn't to say that prior to 1997 there were no artistic productions by Korean adoptees. On the contrary, notable works include Kim Su Theiler, dir., *Great Girl* (NY: Women Make Movies, 1994); Me-K Ahn, dir., *Living in Halftones* (NY: Third World Newsreel, 1994); and Ahn, dir., *Undertow* (NY: Third World Newsreel, 1995).

[45] Eleana Kim, "Wedding Citizenship and Culture: Korean Adoptees and the Global Family of Korea," in *Cultures of Transnational Adoption*, ed. Toby Alice Volkman (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 49-80; 53.

[46]These shifts have been well rehearsed. For a detailed accounting of this transnational shift in Asian American Studies and American Studies, see Jonathan Y. Okamura, "Asian American Studies in the Age of Transnationalism: Diaspora, Race, Community," *Amerasia Journal* 29.2 (2003): 171-194; Shirley Hune, "Asian American Studies and Asian Studies: Boundaries and Borderlands of Ethnic Studies and Area Studies" in *Color-Line to Borderlands: The Matrix of American Ethnic Studies*, ed. Johnnella E. Butler (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 227-239; John Carlos Rowe, ed., *Post-Nationalist American Studies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); and Shelly Fisher Fishkin, "Crossroads of Cultures: The Transnational Turn in American Studies—Presidential Address of the American Studies Association, November 12, 2004," *American Quarterly* 57.1 (2005): 17-57. For more information about the postcolonial shifts in these two fields, see Jenny Sharpe, "Is the United States Postcolonial? Transnationalism, Immigration, and Race," *Diaspora* 4.2 (1995): 181-199; Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease, eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993); Lingyan Yang, "Theorizing Asian America: On Asian American and Postcolonial Asian Diasporic Women Intellectuals," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 5.2 (2003): 139-78; and Viet Thanh Nguyen and Tina Chen, eds.,

Special Issue on "Postcolonial Asian America," *Jouvert* 4.3 (2000). http://social.chass.ncsu.edu/jourvert/v4i3/ed43.htm (accessed 27 November 2005).
[47] See, for example, Amy Kaplan, "'Left Alone with America': The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, eds. Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993): 3-37; Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996); Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); and Cathy Choy, *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History* (Durham: Duke University, 2003).
[48] See, for example, Lowe; Jigna Desai, *Beyond Bollywood: The Cultural Politics of South Asian Diasporic Film* (New York: Routledge, 2004); and Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States* (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1994).
[49] Choy, 5.
[50] Sharpe, 195.
[51] Yang, 145.
[52] Kaplan, 3. See part I of her essay for a fuller accounting of her argument.
[53] Ibid., 5,12.
[54] Ibid., 11. Here, Kaplan is referring to William Apple Williams who states that one of the central themes of American historiography is that there is no American Empire.
[55] Ibid., 4. See, for example, Melanie McAllister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945-2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001) and Shelley Streeby, *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).
[56] Laura Hyun Yi Kang, for example, links U.S. interest and occupation in the Pacific with transnational economy when she suggests that global capitalism is "intimately bound up with the postwar ascendance of the United States as a political, economic, and military international superpower." See *Compositional Subjects: Enfiguring Asian/American Women* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 166. David Palumbo-Liu, in examining the "American frontierism" in the Pacific Rim, also makes a direct correlation between transnational economy and American interests and occupation in the Pacific. See *Asian/American: Historical Crossings of a Racial Frontier* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1999), 341-342. Colleen Lye states that as an "empire without colonies," American imperialism was "pioneered through U.S. Open Door policies in East Asia, which sought the benefits of 'free trade' without the burden of political governance." See *America's Asia: Racial Form and American Literature, 1893-1945* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 10. And David Leiwei Li claims that transnational corporations are the new guise under which colonialism is intensified: "ours is an age not of 'postcolonial' but of intensified colonialism under the unfamiliar guise of transnational corporatism." See *Imagining the Nation*: *Asian American Literature and Cultural Consent* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 200.
[57] Lowe, 40.
[58] Ibid., 41.
[59] Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (NY: Schocken Books, 1969): 253-264; 262.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid., 262-263.
[62] Ibid., 263.
[63] Ibid., 257.
[64] My definition of colonialism comes from Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford; Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2001). Colonialism is traditionally defined as the conquest and direct rule of other people's lands; it involves the acquisition and control of a territory and its people and resources. While these are good general definitions, I prefer Young's definition of colonialism. If imperialism is the concept or logic behind colonization, then colonialism is the practice (16). He also

distinguishes between two forms of colonialism: a) domination for the purposes of settlement (e.g., white settlers in North America or Australia) and b) domination for economic exploitation without any significant settlement (e.g., India, Philippines, Puerto Rico) (17). What sets Young's definition apart from the traditional definition is that his definition implicates the U.S. as participating in colonialism.

[65] Young describes neocolonialism as "economic hegemony" wherein which control is maintained through economic means rather that direct military force or coercion (45). In the case of Korea, however, the neocolonial relations between the U.S. and Korea began with direct military rule. Therefore, I prefer E. San Juan's definition of neocolonialism. The newly independent state has the appearance of sovereignty when, in reality, it continues to be ruled by the economic and political policies of the former colonizer. Consequently, "neocolonialism designates the persistence of economic ascendancy and cultural hegemony underneath the mask of political independence." See E. San Juan, Jr., "Establishment Postcolonialism and Its Alter/Native Others: Deciding to be Accountable in a World of Permanent Emergency," in *Postcolonial America*, ed. Richard King (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 171-197; 173-174.

[66] Imperialism, according to Young, is an ideological project that involves the "practice of power through facilitating institutions and ideologies" (27). It encompasses the political, economic, and administrative machine of conquest (26). Put simply, imperialism is the ideology that justifies economic and/or political domination.

[67] Kandice Chuh, *Imagine Otherwise: On Asian Americanist Critique* (Durham: Duke University, 2003), 120.

[68] Desai, 10.

[69] Transnationalism as a methodology has its roots in the field of anthropology. Anthropologists Basch, Glick Schiller, and Blanc-Szanton used transnationalism to examine how "immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" and how "many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders" (7). Their definition of transnationalism as both a process and methodology emphasizes social relations (rather than cultural flows) in order to highlight migration.

[70] See Eng, for example.

[71] Holt Adoption Program newsletters, memos, and administrative papers that I examined were part of the historical records of International Social Service, United States of America Branch, Inc. (ISS-USA). These records are held at the Social Welfare History Archives at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, MN.

[72] Benjamin, 255.

[73] Ibid., 262.

CHAPTER ONE

American Humanitarianism Empire: Rethinking the Emergence of Korean Adoption

If Korean adoption began as a solution to this postwar crisis, then why does it continue to exist? How is it possible that Korean adoption persists today when war orphans and war-like conditions have ceased? After all, the adoption programs that were created to help find homes for post-WWII orphans in Europe were terminated after the postwar crisis ended.[1] Situating Korean adoption within the Korean War elides certain geopolitical factors that explain the reasons why the adoption of Korean children by predominantly white middle-class Americans continues to exist. This chapter proposes that rather than a natural consequence of the Korean War, Korean adoption emerged from the neocolonial relationship that the United States forged with the southern portion of Korea in 1945 when it set up the United States Army Military Government (USAMG)[2]—five years prior to the official start of the Korean War and ten years before the "official" beginning of Korean adoption.

How the American government chose to deal with Korea in the years leading up to the Korean War had far reaching consequences. The neocolonial relationship that the U.S. established with the southern portion of Korea during this time not only created the conditions that made transnational adoption *the* solution to the war orphan crisis but also solidified American neocolonialism in South Korea. To be more specific, this chapter argues that the U.S. military occupation of southern Korean from 1945-1950 compelled a particular form of neocolonialism: what I refer to as American humanitarianism empire. And it is this imperial project that constituted Korean adoption.

American humanitarianism empire is empire-building under the auspices of altruistic humanitarianism. It depends on U.S. military occupation and/or intervention because this provides the occasion for humanitarian expressions on the part of both the U.S. military and ordinary American citizens. Thus, militarization (occupation and/or intervention) and humanitarianism become the axis upon which American humanitarian empire is forged and upon which it thrives. This new form of empire building was especially important and necessary considering the ideological and geopolitical demands of the Cold War. Despite the fact that white settler colonialism precipitated the formation of the U.S. nation-state, the U.S. has a long history of proclaiming anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism.[3] Indeed, this is the myth of American exceptionalism: that U.S. history is void of imperial activities and that there is no such thing as American empire. Within the context of the Cold War, the promotion of this myth became especially important as the United States vied for world power against the Soviet Union. In the era of post-WWII decolonization, the U.S. sought to form new relationships with these newly decolonized nations in an effort to "win" them on the side of democracy. In the case of the newly decolonized Korea—whose decolonization from Japan was secured ironically with the help of U.S. forces—this new relationship would be in the form of an American neocolonialism invested in a militarized humanitarianism. Thus, through American humanitarian empire, the United States is able to preserve this myth of American exceptionalism while, at the same time, invest in imperial activities overseas under the new geopolitics of the Cold War.

The first two sections of this chapter are organized around the two axes of American humanitarian empire. The first section focuses on militarization. It focuses on the five years leading up to the Korean War (from 1945-1950) in order to establish how U.S. military intervention in Korea during WWII and eventually the occupation of its southern portion became justified through Cold War politics. I explain how the occupation of southern Korea established the first side of the American neocolonial coin: military intervention and occupation. In addition, I suggest that this five-year period also implemented a modus operandi of dependency between the two countries so that Korea's political and social problems would be solved by American money in exchange for Korea pledging allegiance to democratic ideals. Still images, poetry, and artwork are inserted in this first section to remind the reader of how U.S. military presence from 1945-1950 is directly tied to Korean adoption. Juxtaposed against the history of U.S. military occupation in Korea, these images and texts act as "flashforwards" and signal the ways in which U.S. occupation from 1945-1950 is linked to the advent of Korean adoption.

The second section of this chapter focuses on the other side of the neocolonial coin: humanitarianism. In this section, I examine how U.S. military forces, along with Christian American missionaries, came to be on the frontlines of battling the orphan crisis at the end of the Korean War. As the political and economic scene in Korea became increasingly militarized, so, too, did Korea's social welfare scene. The U.S. government's primary solution to this crisis was to build and fund orphanages, which also became a strategy to rehabilitate the waning image of the U.S. as anti-imperialist. In rehabilitating the Korean nation by taking care of its children through these humanitarian

initiatives, the U.S. government tried to rehabilitate its image of itself and its military by fostering an image of benevolent helper rather than neocolonial occupier; however, I argue that these humanitarian projects—despite their attempts to alleviate the image of U.S. as an imperial force—actually fortified American neocolonialism in Korea. By taking care of displaced children after the Korean War, American soldiers and missionaries set up transnational adoption as Korea's primary method of child welfare and social services. In so doing, neocolonial relations between the United States and Korea became preserved through this practice. Together, these two sections work to link U.S. neocolonialism in the southern half of Korea to the neocolonial practice of Korean adoption by demonstrating how U.S. militarism and its policies of militarized humanitarianism became the precursors to this particular form of child welfare. Furthermore, the combination of these two sections works to establish the direct connection between American humanitarianism empire and the emergence of Korean adoption.

While there is a substantial and exciting body of scholarship that considers how Korean military prostitutes nurtured neocolonial relations between the U.S. and Korea through the services they provided American serviceman, there is a lack of scholarship that considers the figure of the Korean orphan within this same context. The path-breaking work of Katharine Moon and scholars such as Ji-Yeon Yuh, Grace Cho, and Sarah Soh who have built on Moon's thesis have cogently articulated how U.S.-Korea relations have been organized around the figure of the military prostitute.[4] I would contend, however, that neocolonial relations between the United States and Korea have

also been dependent on the figure of the Korean orphan. More specifically, the Korean orphan has been configured as a tool of American humanitarianism empire.

Therefore, I end this chapter by investigating the ways in which the figure of the orphan not only comes to symbolize American humanitarianism empire but also reproduces neocolonial relations by replicating the culture of militarized prostitution. To be clear, this final section explains how the culture of U.S. militarism materialized on the bodies of Korean orphans and turned them into militarized subjects. The military culture of camptown life seeped into the orphanage and informed the ways in which these children were interpreted by American soldiers. Consequently, the process of militarization reproduced the key players in militarized prostitution: for male orphans, becoming militarized refigured them as American soldiers, while female orphans were recast as Korean military prostitutes. Thus, the militarization of postwar orphans evokes the culture and discourse of militarized prostitution. Furthermore, this section teases out what I refer to as the "militaristic gaze" that is produced by the spatial intimacy between Korean children and U.S. military men. I use the "militaristic gaze" to get at the racial, gender, sexual, and colonial dimensions of U.S. militarism and occupation. This act of looking and desiring becomes another form of military invasion and intrusion. Interestingly, it, too, is informed by the logic of American humanitarianism empire as the "militaristic gaze" attempts to occupy the Korean bodies of children under the auspices of altruism.

Laying the Foundation for American Humanitarianism Empire, 1945-1950

Towards the end of WWII, the Soviet Union and the United States worked together to fight off the Japanese in Korea. Because the U.S. didn't have enough forces to defeat the Japanese troops, they solicited their Russian allies to help push out the Japanese colonizers in Korea. As a way to evenly distribute the work, Korea was divided arbitrarily at the 38th parallel by two U.S. colonels using a National Geographic map. It was decided that the Russians would be responsible for the northern half, while the U.S. concentrated on the southern half. Working together, the Soviet Union and the U.S. defeated Japan in 1945 and brought independence from Japanese colonization to Korea for the first time in 40 years. However, Korea's independence was short lived, since neither of the super powers left; rather, each occupied their half of the divided peninsula.

The postwar politics of WWII quickly shifted into Cold War politics. Cold War ideology transformed these once allied powers into bitter rivals. What was initially a temporary division became more and more permanent as the Soviets and Americans during the Joint Commission proceedings failed to agree on the terms for accomplishing the goal of establishing a sovereign and independent Korean government. Until an agreement was reached, the Soviets continued to set up a Communist nation in the northern half, while Americans modeled the southern part after Western democracy. The institution of these political systems under the sponsorship of these two foreign powers turned this Asian nation into a battleground between the Soviets and the Americans. Thus, as Korean social historian Dong Choon Kim argues, the initial splitting up of Korea among these two nations became the "de facto beginning of the Korean War. In this

respect, the Korean War might be interpreted as the logical extension of the U.S. and Soviet occupation policy."[5]

Excerpt from "She Considers the 38th Parallel" (2008)
By Katie Hae Ryun Leo

We are stone, dirt, mortar broke
off from the body after the body

was divided. Feel the river rise
against the levee of your soul.[6]

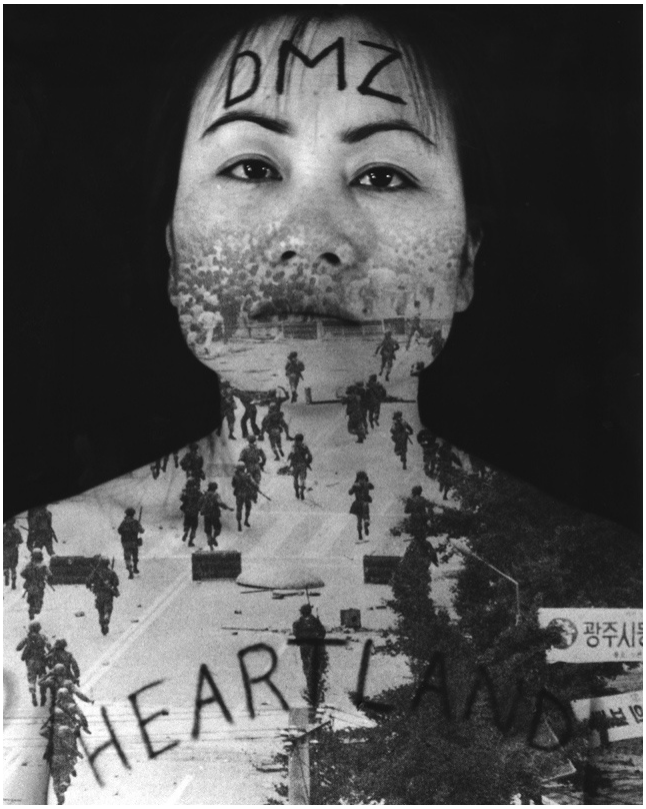

Figure 3: Photo Montage. ***Defining Moments 4/6*** **(1992) by Yong Soon Min. Permission granted by artist.**

The line that was drawn at the 38th parallel in 1945 became the DMZ (demilitarized zone) in 1953, signaling a ceasefire between U.S. and Soviet forces and "ending" the Korean War. In her ruminations about the DMZ, Korean adoptee poet Katie Hae Ryun Leo

considers adoptees as the fallout from such a division. As the U.S. occupation of Korea left the country divided, so, too, did it leave the adoptee dismembered from her country and native tongue. Although Korean American artist Yong Soon Min is not an adoptee, the division of Korea is also a defining moment in her life. Indeed, this photo montage could be read as a visual representation of Leo's poetic lines. It (part 4 in a six-part series) powerfully captures the ways in which the Korean War continues, waging still in the minds and bodies of Koreans and Korean Americans.

For geopolitical and ideological reasons, the U.S. remained invested in Korea at the end of WWII. Upon first glance, Korea doesn't seem like a country that would be in the middle of a fight between the two greatest super powers of the time. A country slightly larger than the state of Minnesota, Korea is a mountainous peninsula with seemingly few resources to offer the United States. However, its location—its close proximity to the Soviet Union—made Korea extremely important to the U.S. According to the Interdepartmental Committee on Korea (ICK), a committee who made policy recommendations to the Truman administration,[7] Korea was too close to the Soviet Union, making it "vulnerable to Soviet influence."[8] Korea was also important because it was the only place in the world where the U.S. and the USSR "stand face to face alone. It is a testing ground for the effectiveness of the American concept of democracy as compared to Soviet ideology."[9] Therefore, the Committee believed that if democracy wasn't established in Korea, "other peoples and countries throughout the world will instinctively question both the effectiveness and virility of the United States and its form of government."[10] They believed that if U.S. forces left Korea, it would strengthen communist ideology around the world, while a firm "holding the line in Korea" would

strengthen democracy.[11] South Korea, for these reasons, became the "first place in the postwar world where the Americans set up a dictatorial anticommunist government."[12]

The American government also justified their military occupation of southern Korea through the rhetoric of independence. According to ICK, the U.S. "has long been interested in the progressive development toward independence of dependent and suppressed peoples in the Far East."[13] As such, the Committee believed that fighting for Korean independence (ironically via American military occupation) would not only demonstrate this commitment but also increase "the confidence of dependent peoples in the United States and enhanc[e] our position in the Pacific. Failure fully to live up to our Korean responsibilities would result in immediate damage to our position in dependent areas and those regions immediately subject to Soviet pressure, a development which would seriously affect our interests throughout the world."[14] Here, the Committee sets up Korea as a metonym for democracy, so that "winning" in Korea means defeating Communism not only there but also around the world.

However, being "caught in the grinder of the United States-USSR political ideological war," as the USAMG military governor General John R. Hodge so vividly wrote in a memo, left the Korean people to suffer physically.[15] Louise Yim, the first Korean delegate for the United Nations (from1945-1948), reported in 1947 that the negotiations between the Soviet Union and the U.S. over the "unification for Korea" or the "Democratization of Korea" was, ironically, stalling Korea's process of becoming democratic or independent. In their attempt to reach an agreement, "Koreans starve as

their economic life disintegrates" and are "frustrated because they cannot govern their own land."[16]

Korea was undergoing a severe economic crisis at this time. Because the USAMG was under the responsibility of the War Department, it was the War Department that took over the government and relief efforts in Korea. Therefore, the industrial economy became militarized as the War Department funded and oversaw the relief efforts to rejuvenate the Korean economy. The U.S. military's hand was in all the various parts that made up a nation's economy: agriculture, energy, raw materials, consumer products, food, imports, exports, and employment. Through their efforts, the military government worked to increase food production, rebuild industries in agriculture and fishing, raise employment, bring up the operational capacity of industrial plants (which were operating at only 10-20% capacity), improve the accessibility and distribution of materials and goods, and train qualified Koreans to replace the supervisory and technical roles which were first held by the Japanese and now by Americans.[17] Despite these attempts, however, inflation had ballooned prices so that food cost ten times as much as it did in 1944. Textiles cost 15 times as much, and building materials were up 30 times as much.[18] The cost of rice, which was a staple of the Korean diet, along with being the main crop and chief source of income, probably had the most damaging impact on Koreans. After less than a month in Korea, the USAMG inaugurated a new rice policy in October 1945 that established a free market on rice, abolishing the former Japanese food control system that prohibited private ownership over rice.[19] Making rice a neocolonial and market-regulated commodity led to food

shortages, inflated prices, and widespread hunger. According to Korean-U.S. diplomatic relations historian Jinwung Kim, after rice was made private, hoarding was to such a degree that one could not even buy rice in the black market.[20] Prior to the infiltration of the USAMG, rice cost 9.4 yen/bushel. After the establishment of USAMG, rice cost 2,800 yen/bushel. It is for this reason that Jinwung Kim claims that one of the greatest failures of the American military occupation was its rice policy.[21] Indeed, Bertram Sarafan, an attorney for the USAMG, stated that "as a result of its handling of the rice problem, the Koreans arrived at a complete loss of faith in the Military Government."[22]

The tedious Joint Commission proceedings also created an atmosphere of distrust among Korean civilians and government officials towards the American government.[23] Disagreement between the two powers (USSR and U.S.) meant that Korea would have to wait even longer to act upon the independence they gained. In December of 1945, the Soviet Union and the U.S. made an announcement that a five-year trusteeship would be set up for Korea, under the guardianship of the U.S., the USSR, Great Britain, and China. This announcement sparked immediate anger and rioting among the southern Koreans because their plan for trusteeship resembled the protectorate relationship that the Japanese set up in 1905.[24] To the newly independent Korean nation, trusteeship was simply another manifestation of foreign rule rather than independence. Political conflict was fueled further by the fact that the U.S. military government kept in place Japanese-trained military leaders and police rather than removing them after the demise of Japanese rule in Korea.[25] This decision, along with plans for trusteeship, caused many

Koreans to doubt the United States' commitment to Korea's postcolonial independence from Japan.

By 1947, many Korean civilians were distrustful and fed up with the American government and its promises for Korean self-government. General Hodge exclaimed in July 18, 1947: "the Korean people [are] rapidly losing faith in American promises either implied or actual and we are nearing the point of complete distrust of and hostility to the United States."[26] American Sergeant Harry Savage also questioned how helpful the American presence had been in Korea when he wrote, "I for myself cannot see that the American army has done too much to help those people."[27] In a letter written to President Harry Truman, Sgt. Savage informed the President of the mistreatment suffered by the Korean people. He described how restoring law and order during riots involves "keep[ing] our machine guns blazing" and seeing "dead bodies lying all over the streets."[28] In addition, he explained how the Korean police (or Military Police) tortured and killed civilians on suspicion of Communism. The mistreatment, torture, and killing of civilians by the MPs—under the direction of the American military—all led to an atmosphere of fear and mistrust towards the American government. As General Hodge stated in a memo to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "I feel that the situation here is reaching…the point of explosion."[29] The American military government was quickly losing its status as liberator and bringer of democracy among the South Korean people. Congress knew it had to do something to quell the situation and regain the support of South Koreans. So they increased their economic aid program as a way to solve political problems through economics.

Excerpt from "The GI's Give a Hand to the Koreans"
(*New York Times Magazine* 1953)

The men who saved a nation on the battlefield are pouring out their energy and money to heal its wounds of war.

...the G.I.'s affection and respect for the Korean people have been reflected in an astonishing display of generosity. The men of the U.S. first core and at least three of its major units, the twenty fifth U.S. division, seventh U.S. division and the first Marine division have spontaneously donated nearly half a million dollars toward the building of hospitals, orphanages, schools, churches and institutions in the devastated hills and valleys of former battle area.
And yet, recently, Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, Commander of the Eighth Army, in a broadcast over the Armed Forces radio network, asked the men in his command to give all possible assistance to help Korea to rebuild and rehabilitate.[30]

Stories such as this appeared in popular magazines and newspapers shortly after the war culminated in a ceasefire agreement and worked to rehabilitate the image of the U.S. as a benevolent force in Korea.[31] If South Koreans had lost faith in the U.S. military prior to the war, the U.S. military tried to rebuild the trust of Koreans through the literal act of rebuilding the war-devastated country. These stories of generosity and goodwill worked to regain their faith and trust in the U.S. government. Not only did these stories try to construct the U.S. military as saviors (saving southern Korea from Communism) but also as healers. Thus, through these stories, the U.S. news media tried to depict American presence and occupation in Korea as beneficial rather than harmful to Koreans.

Although the United States established an economic assistance program after occupying the southern half of Korea in 1945,[32] it was primarily done in the spirit of providing war relief after the devastation caused from fighting the Japanese in WWII. Through the Government Appropriation for Relief in Occupied Areas (GARIOA), the U.S. assisted Korea with nearly $5 million in 1945 and $50 million in 1946.[33] However, with political and economic unrest increasing, the U.S. government realized that more aid needed to be sent to Korea. In an attempt to stop the Korean situation from becoming worse, ICK made some specific recommendations to both Congress and the President on

how to solve the Korean problem. By March 1947, the recommendations they made in February were drafted into a document called "Justification for a Grant-in-Aid Program for the Rehabilitation of South Korea Covering Fiscal Years 1948 through 1950."

In this document, members from the War and State Departments offered three different foreign policy strategies in an effort to squelch the explosive atmosphere in Korea. The first was to withdraw completely from Korea, including the troops and all financial and political assistance. The second was to maintain the military occupation, as is. And the third was to carry out a "positive political and economic program in our zone."[34] This political and economic program was the Grant-in-Aid program, and it was conceived to "promote the establishment of a stable economy and a free and independent government for Korea."[35] Here we see that political and economic interests merged for the first time in America's dealings with Korea. Capitalist economy (despite the botched 1945 rice policy) becomes the means to establish democracy. Indeed, the underlying belief behind this program was that building up the Korean economy would lead to political cooperation from the Korean people: "If sufficient funds can be made available it is believed it will be possible to halt this present trend toward economic disintegration which is causing the Korean people to become daily more antagonistic toward military government, toward U.S. objectives in Korea and even toward the U.S. itself. There have already been riots and loss of life."[36] Solving Korea's bankrupt economy, members from the War and State Departments claimed, would "create the basis for a friendly and democratic Korea" and help the U.S. military government "obtain the cooperation of the Korean people."[37] Under this program, the President would have available $540 million

to spend over a three-year period (1948-1950) to help jumpstart the economy. "It is confidently believed," according to the members pushing the bill, that this money would "transform Southern Korea from a food deficit to a food surplus area," restart local industries, increase production, increase the number of trained technicians, and eradicate illiteracy.[38]

Although this program was supported by the "top echelons of the army"[39] and promoted by the American news media,[40] this bill was never passed by Congress because it was simply too expensive; however, the logic behind the justifications for increasing economic assistance were adopted by GARIOA. Indeed, 1947 and 1948 were the years in which the U.S. government provided the most financial assistance to Korea: $175 million and $180 million, respectively.[41] This was a significant increase, considering that a total of $55 million was spent in the two previous years. In addition, on December 1948—four months after Syngman Rhee became President of the Republic of Korea—the first "government-to-government pact" was signed between the two nations.[42] Entitled the ROK-US Agreement on Aid, this document outlined the stipulations under which Korea would receive funds from the U.S. Although these stipulations were cited as safeguards to prevent funds from being mishandled, the terms of the agreement worked to secure American influence in Korean political and economic affairs. As an aid agreement with "strings attached," it set up a contentious donor-recipient relationship between the United States and Korea as it required the Korean government to follow certain economic policies and capitalist practices set up by the U.S. government.[43]

Consequently, despite "winning" independence from the U.S. in 1948, U.S. economic aid assistance to Korea kept intact U.S. neocolonial power over the Korean nation.

The five years leading up to the Korean War were significant for a variety of reasons. It is within this period that American humanitarianism empire began to percolate. U.S. military occupation in the southern portion of Korea threaded American militarism into the national fabric of Korean politics, economics, and society. Furthermore, the implementation of the economic assistance programs created a modus operandi that would be utilized after the Korean War: political and social problems would be solved with money and rehabilitation efforts of the U.S. military. This style of solving problems worked to secure a relationship of dependency between the U.S. and Korea. As the U.S. depends on Korea to hold allegiance to democracy and vilify Communism, Korea depends on the U.S. for military, political, and economic support. Indeed, Korea received a total of $585 million in aid from the U.S. from 1945-1950. An additional $456 million was sent during the war so that U.S. economic assistance to Korea totaled $1.2 billion between 1945-1953.[44] From 1953-1962, the U.S. spent nearly $2 billion in economic aid and $1 billion in military aid, making Korea one of the largest recipients of foreign aid.[45]

So at the conclusion of the Korean War, when the crisis of war orphans arose, past solutions were used to solve this new problem. Programs like Armed Forces Assistance to Korea (AFAK) and Korea Civil Assistance Command (KCAC) that were created shortly after the war "ended" provided money and rehabilitation services to alleviate the orphan crisis. In addition, as the industrial economy became militarized

under the USAMG, social welfare would also become militarized through AFAK and KCAC as American servicemen would take center stage in the engineering, construction, and funding of Korean orphanages. Unlike the economic assistance programs, however, the activities of the AFAK and KCAC were framed as humanitarian projects, which ultimately wedded militarization with humanitarianism.

Militarized Humanitarianism and the Erection of the Orphanage

Prior to World War II, less than 2,000 orphans resided in Korean orphanages. These orphans were primarily the products of Japanese colonization.[46] During the period after Korea gained its independence from Japan, however, the number of orphaned children steadily increased due to armed combat (from 1945 and 1950) and the refugee movement from North Korea. By 1950, at the beginning of the Korean War, 7,000 orphans lived in Korean orphanages. Three years of combat, grenade throwing, and napalm and bomb dropping destroyed entire cities and villages and killed over 1 million civilians. The destruction left in its path 2 million refugees, 300,000 widows, and 15,000 amputees.[47] In addition, 100,000 children were left without homes and separated from their families so that by the end of the war, over 40,000 orphans resided in orphanages.[48] Less than a hundred orphanages existed in Korea prior to the Korean War. However, by 1954—just one year after the war ended—there were over 400 registered orphanages in Korea housing 50,936 children.[49]

So what accounted for this exponential rise in the construction of orphanages? The simple logic of supply and demand is one possible answer (i.e., more homeless

children = more orphanages); however, this logic naturalizes adoption as the only possible solution to the war orphan problem. There are other factors at work. According to Korean adoption scholar Tobias Hübinette, the settlement of American missionaries in Korea during the late 19th century was "an absolute precondition for the following mass migration of Korean children."[50] Prior to American missionary settlement, an evolving system of policies and laws were developed during the Chosun Dynasty (1392-1910) regarding orphaned children. During this 600-year period, various methods were created to take care of displaced children during times of war, famine, and social unrest. These methods included: a) kinship care (children taken in by relatives); b) foster care; c) domestic adoption; and d) taking in the child as a slave or servant.[51] In addition, community compacts were set up where members of an entire village would pool their resources to take care of young orphans or destitute families unable to support themselves.[52]

This all changed, however, with the entrance of western missionaries. According to social welfare scholars Jung-Woo Kim and Terry Henderson, American missionary activity in Korea at the turn of the 20th century modernized the system of child welfare: "The foundations of the modern child welfare system in Korea were introduced by Western missionaries. Both the Catholic and Protestant missionaries and their non-profit sector activities in social care exerted a significant influence on the formation and maintenance of systems that, to this date, form the response to the care of displaced children."[53] The primary system of care they established was "congregate care" (i.e., orphanages), or the mobilization of orphans into facilities where this population could be

more easily managed and where care could become more standardized.[54] The first Western-style orphanage in Korea was set up by missionaries during the 1890s.[55] Thus, the practice of assembling parentless or homeless children into orphanages can be seen as a western import that was introduced by American missionaries. Because this form of child welfare was already established, it seemed fitting that the crisis concerning orphans at the conclusion of the Korean War would be solved through the building of more orphanages. In this way, the westernization and modernization of Korean child welfare laid the groundwork for Korean adoption.

In addition to the importation of a western child welfare system, I suggest that the neocolonial relationship that was forged between these two countries is another reason why the Korean government relied on American intervention to solve the orphan problem at the war's conclusion. First of all, the Korean government had no infrastructure in place to handle a crisis of this magnitude after the devastation of the war.[56] In addition, because the development of the modern child welfare system was undertaken by foreign missionaries, it significantly hindered the Korean government from developing its own indigenous response to this postwar dilemma.[57] There was a lack of trained Koreans who could work in the area of social services precisely because social welfare work in Korea had been predominantly handled by American missionaries. Furthermore, by the war's end, the Korean government was much more concerned about building its military than providing social services. In 1954, 75% of the Korean national budget went towards building and maintaining the army. That left only 25% for Welfare, Health, Reconstruction, Agriculture, Forestry, and other federal departments.[58] These factors not

only resulted in Korea's dependence on foreign aid and relief efforts after the war—a reliance that was established between 1945-1950—but they also led to its dependence on the U.S. government to come up with a solution to the war orphan problem. The American government's solution was this: to set up programs that focused on rehabilitation—specifically the building of orphanages and the taking care of orphaned children.

Initiated in October 1953 (3 months after the armistice was signed),[59] the Department of Defense organized a response unit called Armed Forces Assistance of Korea (AFAK). The primary objective of the AFAK program was to help rehabilitate Korea's infrastructure in order to provide public benefit and community good to the Korean people. AFAK "provide[s] assistance to the people of Korea in rehabilitating their country. This assistance is in the form of construction or reconstruction of community-type projects by units of the armed forces stationed in Korea, utilizing immediately available U.S. materials diverted to this program from other less urgent requirements."[60] In 1954 alone, the Department of Defense allotted $15 million to AFAK.[61] With this money, churches, schools, and roads were rebuilt; however, the building of orphanages held special importance to U.S. servicemen. In 1954 alone, AFAK built 115 orphanages to house the thousands of orphans left behind.[62] Under the purview of the U.S. military, the orphanages became militarized. In fact, not only did the military help build orphanages, but almost every U.S. military unit "adopted" an orphanage, allotting large portions of their pay to support the maintenance of orphanages and the care of orphans.[63] Some military units even founded orphanages, naming them

after their own units. 10th Brigade Orphanage, 1st Marine Air Wing Orphanage, and 5th Air Force Orphanage are a few examples. By the 1960s, more than 400 Korean orphanages were built and repaired by American servicemen.[64]

It has also been estimated that soldiers contributed an additional $2 million in the form of cash and materials towards the support of orphanages.[65] Orphanage administrators reported that over 90% of their aid came directly from American servicemen, which kept their orphanages running.[66] In this way, the soldier became a pseudo-missionary. Missionaries and military men, according to General Roy Parker, the U.S. Chief of Chaplains, are not incongruous.[67] Rather, Parker claims that the "best missionary" is the "good soldier." In an article entitled "Military Help to Korean Orphanages," William Asbury of Christian Children's Fund details the contributions of the "good soldier" in helping to take care of the orphan population. He argues that the Korea Civil Assistance Command (KCAC), which is a military agency "designed for a military operation of preventing unrest as a necessary function of war," has been the single largest source of help to orphaned children in Korea.[68] This agency's mission was to prevent disease, starvation, and unrest. One way they accomplished these things was by providing food, milk, clothing, blankets, and building materials to orphanages.[69] The second greatest source of support, Asbury claims, came from American soldiers themselves.[70] They not only donated money to support orphanages and sponsor orphans, but they also engineered, built, and repaired orphanages. Through programs such as KCAC and AFAK, the U.S. military became entwined with Korean social welfare services and humanitarian projects. In effect, through these programs of militarized

humanitarianism, American humanitarian empire took shape, enabling U.S. military intervention and occupation in Korea to persist under the guise of humanitarian relief and rescue projects.

Participating in these efforts to rebuild the country by taking care of the children displaced by war became a crucial way for the U.S. military to rehabilitate its image of itself in the eyes of Koreans and the rest of the world. Indeed, the AFAK Program Director stated that AFAK's effectiveness depended as much on the "realization by the Koreans and other free peoples of the nature of our intentions as on the beneficial physical result produced."[71] What greater way to show the benevolent nature of the U.S. military's intention then to focus on the welfare of Korea's most vulnerable and innocent population: its displaced children. In an effort to communicate these intentions with the rest of world, the U.S. Department of Defense engaged in marketing strategies. Specifically, AFAK units utilized motion pictures—along with posters and photographs—to publicize the military's benevolent intentions and effectiveness in rehabilitating the war-devastated country.[72] As such, in these films, we see U.S. soldiers engaged in activities such as building orphanages, rescuing displaced children off the roadside, providing medical attention, and sorting through donated toys and clothing. Constructing orphanages and meeting the basic needs of these children sent a powerful message to Koreans and other "free peoples" of the world of the generosity and goodwill of the American military and government. In this way, the building of orphanages remedied not only the war orphan problem but also the American government's image problem.

Interestingly, the overwhelming majority of the AFAK film reels show soldiers throwing Christmas parties for orphans (in 1953 alone, 481 parties were given by Army personnel)[73] and handing out candy and cookies. Grace Cho points out that the distribution of food, clothes, candy, and Christmas gifts "rests on a mutually lived-out rescue fantasy constructed not just through ideological impositions but also through sensory experiences that register at the level of affect."[74] These relief goods—especially the sugary kind—were not only used to help relieve (if only for a moment) the desperate conditions in which the orphans lived but also to help relieve the image of a ruthless American military.[75] These charitable acts of humanitarianism worked to rehabilitate the image of an imposing U.S. imperial power by not only erasing state violence but by propping American soldiers as rescuer rather than colonizer, relief worker rather than occupier.

Figure 4: Still Image. 1962. An American sailor helps an orphan put on a donated sweater.

This newsreel features a story on "Operation Hand Clap," where thousands of tons of food, clothing, blankets, medical supplies, and toys were distributed to Korean orphanages by the U.S. Navy. By helping to take care of Korea's most vulnerable population (its displaced children), the U.S. military advertised itself as a force of goodwill and humanitarianism which, like the article "The GI's Give a Hand to the Koreans," fostered an image of benevolence rather than imperialism, assistance rather than occupation.

Through these performances of humanitarianism and charitable kindness, the myth of American exceptionalism could be kept intact. It must be noted, however, that military occupation provided the occasion for this show of humanitarianism. Dominance provided the occasion for benevolence. Without dominance, acts of charity and other forms of benevolence would not be necessary.[76] Thus, American humanitarianism empire relies on the interlocking and interdependent relationship between militarization and humanitarianism.

Ultimately, the settlement of western missionaries during the late 19th century, the formation of neocolonial relations between the U.S. and Korea during the mid-20th century, and the U.S. government's desire to rehabilitate its image immediately after the Korean War culminated to create conditions that made the erection of orphanages *the* prescription and remedy to the war orphan problem. The building of orphanages and the taking care of orphans also became the remedy to the image problem of the U.S. This humanitarian mission—which was made possible by U.S. military occupation and intervention—not only enabled the U.S. to preserve the myth of American exceptionalism while establishing its imperial presence in Korea, but it also served to solidify neocolonial relations by creating the conditions in which transnational adoption

would become the fundamental form of child welfare in Korea. To be sure, the adoption of Korean orphans by foreigners, as a form of child welfare, was virtually nonexistent in Korea prior to U.S. military occupation.[77] Without their military presence, Korean adoption would most likely never have existed. Indeed, while it is commonly believed that Harry Holt started Korean adoption with the adoption of eight mixed-race war orphans, the first people to actually adopt Korean War orphans were military men.[78] Transnational adoption was an American import that shaped Korea, just as significantly and powerfully as the American imports of democracy and capitalism.

Militarization, Gender, and the "Militaristic Gaze"

American militarism—in choosing orphanages as the solution to manage the rising number of homeless Korean children at the war—inadvertently created a new subject: the militarized war orphan. I end this chapter by explicating the ways in which this subject is informed by the militarized atmosphere of orphanages. I attend to the racialized, gendered, sexualized, and imperial structures of American militarization in order to investigate the ways in which the figure of the militarized war orphan comes to symbolize neocolonial relations between the U.S. and Korea and facilitates the expansion of American humanitarianism empire.

In addition, throughout this section, I attend to the strategies of resistance that war orphans utilized to critique U.S. military occupation. Although the purpose of the AFAK film reels was to display the benevolent nature of their (U.S. military forces) intentions, the film footage also caught moments of resistance wherein which orphans protested

aspects of American military intervention. Identifying these instances of resistance is important because it not only disrupts the image of orphaned children as passive victims, but it also reveals how the project of American humanitarianism empire is never complete. No matter how much the U.S. government and its armed forces believed that they were providing beneficial services to these children, the actions on behalf of some children proved that these services were unwelcomed and ineffective. Thus, these moments of resistance and critique displayed by these war orphans can be read as a precursor to some of the contemporary artistic expressions in which Korean adoptees "talk back."

Cynthia Enloe in her book *Globalization and Militarism: Feminists Make the Link* states that "anything is on its way to becoming militarized if it is increasingly coming under the control of a military—of a military's rules, its budget, its command structure."[79] To be militarized means having a direct relationship with the Department of Defense or to be in some way supported by the defense bureaucracy.[80] Under this definition, the Korean orphan emerged as a militarized subject because the majority of the orphanages that were built after the war was orchestrated and financed by the U.S. Department of Defense through programs such as the AFAK and KCAC. In addition, as I cited earlier, many of the orphanages were supported by military units themselves. Reconfiguring the postwar orphan as a militarized subject is significant because it recuperates the history of U.S. military occupation and neocolonialism in South Korea—a history that is elided when we conceive the orphan as a priori. Furthermore, the actual phrase "orphan as militarized subject" suggests the close proximity of child and soldier. I

use this semantic intimacy to get at the literal spatial intimacy between Korean children and American serviceman during and after the war.

Watching the AFAK film reels (the majority of which are silent), one witnesses the highly involved nature of the military in the lives of orphans. At every stage, the military is present: from the initial identification of the orphanage site, to the drawing of the blueprints, to the groundbreaking, to the actual construction and dedication of the orphanage.[81] In other AFAK film reels, we see GIs evacuating war orphans;[82] picking up children off the roadside;[83] vaccinating and providing medical care;[84] loading and unloading building materials;[85] transporting orphans, supplies, and donations (food, clothes, etc.);[86] sorting through donations;[87] throwing Christmas parties;[88] and handing out candy and cookies.[89] These scenes not only portray the military as generous and kind-hearted, but they also indicate the military's wide reach in terms of influencing and impacting the lives of orphans. And because most of the Korean orphanages were under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Defense, the orphans themselves became militarized.

"Militarized relations," as Patti Duncan observes, "are always already gendered, sexualized, and racialized forms of contact."[90] It is not surprising, then, that a key component of turning orphans into militarized subjects involved the active reproduction of gender roles. And these gender norms resembled American gender norms, since U.S. military forces and American missionaries were the two groups that spearheaded the relief projects concerning the war orphans. In the case of male orphans, the militarization process constructed them into child soldiers. In the film footage taken at the Heimyung

Children's Home and Orphanage, Mrs. Syngman Rhee (the Korean President's wife), along with other important government and military personnel, inspect and pass out clothing and toys donated by the American First Lady (Mamie Eisenhower) and American soldiers.[91] In the seemingly innocent act of giving, strict gender roles are reinforced through the types of clothes and toys that are donated. In one scene, orphan boys dressed in fatigues—surplus uniforms donated by the U.S. military[92]—assemble themselves into military formation. Organized into rows, Mrs. Rhee disperses the toys. What she hands them are toy rifles.[93]

Figure 5: Still Image. Korean First Lady Rhee hands out toy rifles to the male orphans. The two girls squatting on the ground play with a blond doll that crawls and a sewing machine.

If we didn't know that this was an orphanage, we could easily mistake these orphans for a children's army. Indeed, in other film reels, male orphans dressed in fatigues march and move into military formation. Their attire, their stance, and their weapons all suggest the military world.

Figure 6: Still Image. 1952. Under the tenure of U.S. military occupation, the orphanage became a site of militarization as these Korean orphans were disciplined to resemble child soldiers.

While orphan boys are given toy rifles to play with, orphan girls are handed much less violent items. In the over 60 films I viewed, I never saw a female orphan shooting or playing with a toy gun. Instead, they were given dolls and other feminine toys. As Mrs. Rhee hands out the toy rifles to the boys, we see two girls on the ground playing with a baby doll that crawls and a toy sewing machine.[94] The gender roles have been strictly carved out simply by the toys that are being disseminated. In playing with these toys, children play out their expected gender roles. This scene reinforces the patriarchal notion that a boy's place is in the battlefield of war, while a girl's place is within the domestic sphere. Even the positioning of their bodies, along with their attire, reinforces their specific gender roles. The male orphans act as protectors of females as they stand at attention with rifles in hand, while the young girls in sweater sets and skirts play on the ground with their new toys.

In the next shot, the camera zooms in on a chaplain (who is also a lieutenant) with a young boy (who looks to be about three or four years old) sitting on his knee. This tender vision is disrupted when we see the boy's chubby, dimpled hands grasping a toy rifle. He inspects it closely as the chaplain shows him how to pull the trigger. His hands are so tiny that it takes four fingers to grasp the trigger.

Figure 7: Still Image. A GI teaches a young boy how to pull the trigger on this toy gun.

Later, we see the older boys shooting at pretend targets in the air. What is ironic about these scenes is that through the act of imitation, these orphaned boys—as young as two or three years of age—are mimicking the very activities that caused them to become orphaned in the first place. The violence that U.S. (and ROK) soldiers enacted on Koreans during the war destroyed the families of the very children they are teaching to shoot—even if they are just "playing."

Figure 8: Still Image. Young boys play with donated toy rifles.

Although these children are playing with toy rifles and assembled in pseudo-military formation, it becomes troubling to see these soldiers passing on to them the very behavior that led to their status as orphans.

Military violence finds its way into the camera lens in the most unlikely places. During a Christmas party, a small boy forms his hand into the shape of a gun, points to the camera, and shoots.[95] His actions reveal how gun violence has become naturalized among male orphans because of what they've witnessed from the war and from soldiers interacting with them in such a way as to reinforce military violence. But his actions could also be read as a form of critique. For example, although most of the AFAK film reels are silent, a segment of the Christmas party in Do Bong has sound. In this scene, we are given a rare glimpse into the verbal interaction that took place between American soldiers and Korean orphans. As we see GIs passing out candy to the orphaned children, we hear a soldier say, "Huh? Number 1, huh?"[96] We cannot hear the children's voices; however, his question implies that he is most likely responding to the orphans calling out,

"Number 1!" According to Paul Dickson in his study of American war slang, "Number 1," which is listed in the chapter "The Code of the Korean Conflict," means "the best."[97] It was a common phrase used by American soldiers during the Korean War to assert themselves as a new world power and leader after emerging from WWII victorious.

Of all the English phrases they could have learned, it is this one that emerges from the lips of these Korean children. Or rather, to be more precise, it is this phrase that is repeated by the soldier. Silencing the children's voices while making the soldier's voice audible could be read as another instance of the U.S. military enacting violence against these children; however, we could also read this as an instance where the excesses of neocolonial contradiction are dumped on the solider. As "the best," American military domination over the southern portion of Korea is the very reason why these Korean children are displaced and gathered into orphanages built by U.S. Armed Forces; being "Number 1" has relegated these children to their orphaned status. Furthermore, it is this very domination that created the conditions for this show of charity and humanitarianism. But even more than this, this scene reveals that no amount of candy, cookies, parties, and orphanages can erase the violence perpetrated by the state against these children.

Thus, this scene illustrates just how inadequate acts of benevolence are when followed by acts of dominance. The bodies of these children prove the limits of benevolence when it has been paved by the road of state violence. The soldier wielding sugary sweets (rather than a gun) embodies the limits of charity work as the children—in calling out "Number 1"—see him for who he really is: military power even though he is "cross-dressing" as a humanitarian. Interestingly, the soldier in this footage seems to be

somewhat aware of this. From his response, he seems uncomfortable being assigned this status by these children, as it is incongruous for these orphaned children to be hailing U.S. military power in the very moment that the soldier is trying to assuage that very power. But it is also incongruous for a man dressed in military garb to pose as a humanitarian. So consciously or not, intentionally or not, these inconsistencies are precisely what the Korean orphans are exposing when they say "Number 1" rather than "Thank you" (or, in the previous example, when the boy fires back at the camera with his gun/finger). Taken aback from this unexpected response, the soldier asks, "Huh? Number 1, huh?" These questions are not so much for the children as they are for himself. And they're not so much questions as they are reminders. They remind him that the children can see through his act, that this strategy of covering up state violence via candy and parties is not fooling anybody—especially not these children who have become byproducts of war. And they remind him that masking military power via charitable acts of humanitarianism actually highlights it.

The grooming of young boys as soldiers extended beyond the walls of the orphanage as American servicemen adopted some of the boys. For example, a *Life* magazine article entitled "A New American Comes 'Home'" tells of Chief Petty Officer Vincent Paladino adopting Lee Kyung Soo, a young Korean orphan he had seen begging in the U.S. naval mess halls of Inchon, Korea. Paladino had watched over him for a year when he was reassigned back to the States. Unwilling to leave the little boy, he decided to adopt him after finding out that Lee had no family. The pictures that accompany the story are quite revealing. On the cover page, Lee, who looks like the miniature version of

Paladino, is dressed in full uniform. He has even adopted the swagger of a military man, as captured in the cover photo that shows him walking with his adoptive father around the Alameda naval base in California.[98]

Lee's story, in some ways, parallels the previous stories we have seen and heard concerning the "helping hand" that American GIs extended to postwar Korean orphans. Lee's transformation from a distraught postwar orphan into a confident mini-soldier is offered as evidence of the positive impact that American forces are having in Korea. Unlike the previous stories where the Korean children remain orphans, this *Life* magazine article takes America's power of influence a step further: American presence and occupation in Korean can turn its youngest and most vulnerable charges into Americans. U.S. military presence turns unproductive surplus (orphans) into productive citizen-subjects (Americans). To be more precise, American intervention makes Korean boys into American men. As Michel Foucault's soldier *par excellence*, Lee serves as proof of the transformative powers of military discipline.[99]

But perhaps even more significant than becoming an American man is that the Korean boy becomes remade in the image of the American *soldier*. In *American Tropics: Articulating Filipino America*, Allan Punzalan Isaac points out that the project of building American empire involved "turn[ing] the colonized brown youth into youthful versions of masculine violence that the occupying power symbolized."[100] One of the first places to test out this method of empire building was in the Philippine archipelago, after it was incorporated as a U.S. territory in 1902 at the conclusion of the Philippine-American War. Isaac explains that the U.S. colonization of the Philippine archipelago

began to recast its inhabitants in America's image.[101] Thus, the colonized natives became the "offspring of benevolent assimilation."[102]

Almost 50 years later, Korea becomes another stage where this imperial drama of molding brown youth into the image the U.S. is enacted. Indeed, the before-and-after pictures that are included in the article are literally pre- and post-assimilation. Once a shy, timid boy who was considered "the smallest, the loneliest, the one most easily pushed aside by others," the "after" pictures reveal a confident, self-assured, and commanding Lee. While he tries on a three-piece suit, he scolds the clerk by saying, "Whattsa matta with you? Too Big." After being asked the same question more than once, he admonishes the reporter: "Whattsa matta? You ask that before."[103] And to prove what a young man he is, Lee, as described by the journalist, "manfully downs" an ice cream cone despite his complaints that it is "Too cold, too cold."[104] Despite being just four-and-a-half years old, Lee commands authority and carries himself like a Chief Petty Officer that his adoptive father is. Lee has been recast into the patriarchal image of his American sailor/father and, thus, made in the image of the United States—becoming the offspring of not only the U.S. empire but also the U.S. Armed Forces.

The figure of the Korean male orphan turned American soldier comes to symbolize America's hopes and dreams for the Korean nation itself. Indeed, we could read this figure as a stand-in for the Korean nation. In the same way that this Korean orphan has been adopted by an American military man, Korea—treated by the U.S. as if it, too, is an orphan—has also been adopted by the American military government. The U.S. nation becomes the adoptive father to Korea. Reframing U.S-Korea relations in this

way works to displace not only the colonial and military origins of this relationship but also its genealogical ties to other territories (such as the Philippines) that have been occupied in the name of U.S. expansion in Asia and the Pacific. Reframing U.S-Korea relations in this way also makes the United States the parent of Korea, which works to legitimize U.S. authority. Consequently, Korean adoption both preserves and maintains American neocolonialism. And similar to Lee, it is believed that Korea will become more modern, civilized and, simply, more American under the tutelage of the U.S. The hope is that Korea will be made into the image of the U.S. as smoothly and successfully as the process shown here through Lee's story. And the fantasy is that Korea will strive to imitate and mimic its parent nation with as much ferocity as Lee imitates his adoptive father.[105]

There is, however, an unintended critique that arises when portraying the Korean orphan as an American soldier. In Lee's imitation of this naval officer turned adoptive father, the Korean orphan becomes enfigured as a *veteran* of war, which is altogether different than being a *byproduct* of war. To be a veteran denotes that one has served in the military. So in the cover photo of this issue of *Life* magazine, there is not just one Korean War veteran represented here: there are two. Reading the orphan as war veteran recuperates the ways in which Korean orphans served in the Korean War in various capacities. It is unknown how many male orphans became unofficial members of the U.S. Armed Forces. But it is certain that Korean orphans—both boys and girls—served as mascots for the Armed Forces.[106] Being a mascot meant that the child was informally "adopted" by a unit.[107] Military units would end up developing relationships with the

children they picked up along the roadside. Sometimes, these children were placed in an orphanage; other times, a unit would pay a "mama-san" to take care of the child.[108] Those that ended up staying with the unit (usually because they refused to remain at the orphanage) became "adopted" and served as the unit's mascot. They participated in the troop's daily activities, ran errands, and performed daily chores. Some even became full-fledge members of the U.S. Army. One mascot called Chocoletto worked his way up to become a sergeant in the U.S. Marines. He proved to be invaluable to the regiment by providing intelligence about the enemy.[109]

Figure 9: Cartoon. 1951. Like the rest of the male orphan population, Jimmy has his head shaved. Notice how the shaved head signifies the military.

Perhaps the most famous mascot was Pon Son See, aka Jimmy Pusan. After his family was killed during the war, the Military Police (MP) took him to the refugee

stockade in Pusan. On his way there, two American sailors who were drawn to him persuaded the MP to release the boy to them. He spent the day with them on the ship, until they dropped him off at S.O.S. Orphanage. Jimmy, who ran away from the orphanage, came to the ship the next day and "indicated that he was ready to 'turn to.'"[110] From then on, the sailors of USS Whitehurst "adopted" him. Initially considered the mascot of the USS Whitehurst, Jimmy, as crew members called him, quickly became an honorary seaman. He engaged in all the activities that other sailors did; he performed all ship drills and exercises, swept decks and shined shoes, and even became a member of the gunnery department.[111] Excelling in his duties, he bypassed some his older crew members, receiving more stripes than they did.

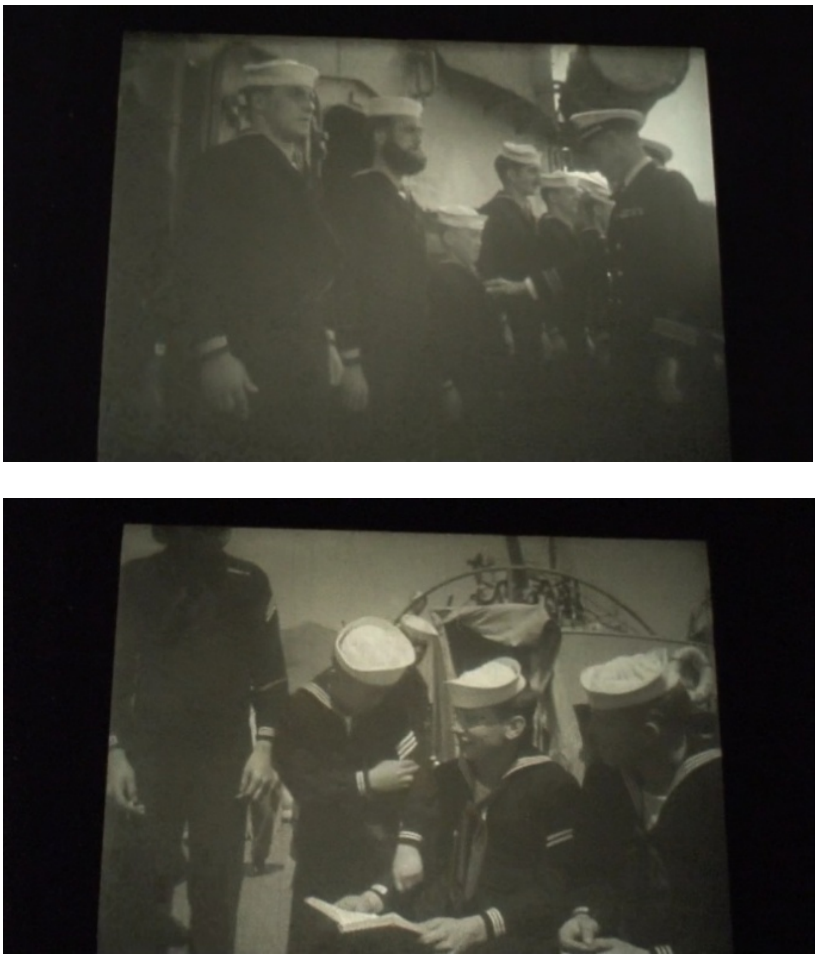

Figure 10: Still Images. 1951. Jimmy Pon Son See lines up at inspection. He is also shown bragging to his fellow crewmen about having earned one stripe more than them.

And like Chocoletto, Jimmy became very valuable to the navy because he, too, acted as a spy for the U.S. military.[112] There is suspicion that both female and male orphans were used as spies for the American government, providing intelligence about the whereabouts and strategies of Communist Koreans.[113] According to Korean War veteran and sailor Andy Bisaccia, "Several of these Korean orphans, boys as well as girls, were used for [spy work]. They could pass, unnoticed, as grimy little rug rats, to be pitied and ignored."[114]

Thinking about Korean orphans as veterans and not just byproducts of war implicates the U.S. military in using child soldiers. The UN considers child soldiers as boys and girls under the age of 18 who either engage in armed combat or serve as spies, informants, couriers, or sex slaves.[115] According to *Child Soldiers: Implications for U.S. Forces*, a seminar report written and published by the Center for Emerging Threats and Opportunities (CETO), a think tank for the U.S. Marine Corps, the phenomenon of the child solider is considered a post-Cold War epidemic.[116] Indeed, the majority of scholarship written about the child soldier centers on armed military conflicts post-Cold War era.[117] And in writings from the perspective of the U.S., such as the report by CETO, child soldiers are considered to be employed by nations and countries outside the U.S. [118] In other words, it is considered to be a phenomenon in other countries—not in the United States. The stories about Korean orphans turned mascots turned child soldiers, however, forces us to rethink the phenomenon of child soldiers as a) primarily a post-Cold War practice and b) a practice that is engaged by everyone else except the U.S.[119] Thinking about the Korean orphan as an American veteran places the child soldier inside U.S. troops, at least since the first "hot war" of the Cold War. As a result, the Korean War veteran—refigured in the body of a young Korean boy—revives a history in which the U.S. military engaged in the production of child soldiers. [120] In this way, one could posit that the genealogy of the current child soldier crisis may be traced back to the Korean War (or earlier), [121] where U.S. military forces employed Korean orphans as spies, informants, couriers, and sex slaves.[122]

If Korean boys are modeled after the image of the heteropatriarchal American nation, then Korean girls are constructed in the image of the exotic Korean nation. In her seminal article "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," Laura Mulvey not only reveals how cinema replicates the male gaze by "highlighting the woman's to-be-looked-at-ness" but she, more significantly, exposes how cinema *becomes* the male gaze by "build[ing] the way she is to be looked at."[123] In other words, "cinematic codes create a gaze, a world, an object, thereby producing an illusion cut to the measure of desire."[124] I want to use Mulvey's insights on the relationship between cinema and the fetishization of women to tease out the relationship between American military culture and the objectification of Korean girls both during and after the Korean War. Specifically, I argue here that the code of militarized prostitution creates a gaze and culture that constructs female orphans in the image of the *kijichon* (camptown) women (i.e., Korean military prostitutes), thereby turning the child into an object of pleasure and desire.

According to Korea scholar Bruce Cumings, the system of militarized prostitution is "the most important aspect of the whole relationship (between the United States and South Korea) and the primary memory of Korea for generations of young Americans who have served there."[125] While this aspect of U.S.-Korea relations has been studied in respect to the figure of the *kijichon* woman and *yanggongju* ("Yankee whore" or "Western princess"),[126] more work needs to be done on the explicit and implicit ways in which militarized prostitution enfigures the Korean orphan (that goes beyond an acknowledgement of the procreation of mixed-race orphans). I offer one way of addressing this gap in scholarship through my analysis of the female Korean orphan.

As young Korean boys in the orphanage are modeled after the image of soldiers, young Korean girls are groomed to be entertainers and hostesses. Based on the AFAK film reels, it is evident that orphan girls do most of the entertaining when American military personnel visit the orphanages. Scenes of orphan girls dancing and singing for American troops far outnumber scenes where orphan boys sing and dance. In most of the performances, the girls dress in *hanboks* (Korean traditional dress) while singing and dancing traditional Korean folk songs.[127] Not only do they entertain, but they also act as hostesses, or the welcoming/"thank-you" committee. Along with the image of little girls dancing and singing for GIs is the all-too common sight of orphan girls presenting guests and other important military men with a bouquet of flowers.

Figure 11: Still Images. A little girl presents Brownson's Congressional Committee with flowers in 1953. In the second image, the young girl offers a bouquet of flowers to a U.S. colonel after a groundbreaking ceremony for a new orphanage constructed by the AFAK in 1954.

It is unclear how the girls who served as part of the welcoming committee were chosen. Perhaps the most appealing girl of the group was picked. What is clear, however, is that extra effort is made to highlight, in the words of Mulvey, their "to-be-looked-at-ness." A viewer can almost always identify the designated hostess(es) because she stands out from the rest of the orphan population. Extra care is taken to make her especially eye-catching: her hair is accessorized with a ribbon or bow or barrette; she wears the more

formal-looking *hanbok* reserved for special occasions; and sometimes her face is painted with some lipstick and blush. All this is done to attract her intended audience: the very important military man or men in attendance. To be sure, almost always the little girl ends up in the arms of a GI, signaling her success at getting his attention.

Presenting flowers and singing and dancing for white men can be seen as another extension of the kind of services that Korean sex workers provided at this time: giving pleasure and entertaining foreign servicemen. To be sure, Katharine Moon in her groundbreaking book *Sex Among Allies* explains that *kijichon* women were viewed by both governments (Korean and American) as nurturing friendly relations between the two countries by keeping U.S. soldiers happy.[128] As America's comfort women, *kijichon* women became a fundamental aspect of American military culture in Korea. Ji-Yeon Yuh in her study of military camptowns in South Korea explains that "For many American soldiers, Korea is synonymous with the proverbial rock 'n' rolling good time, and Korean women—treated as playthings easily bought and easily discarded—are essential to that experience."[129] Despite efforts to eliminate prostitution in military bases around Europe, Yuh notes that the "United States adopted a 'boys will be boys' policy toward camptown prostitution in South Korea.[130] They were able to justify this policy by linking military prostitution to issues of national security. The Eighth U.S. Army concluded in their 1965 study that "fraternization" (in the form of prostitution) "endears Korea to the soldiers, making them more willing to fight."[131] Thus, *kijichon* women became a crucial aspect of not only military culture but also of national security issues in

that the services they provided lifted the morale of American soldiers during times of war.

Figure 12: Photograph. 1952. Female Korean orphans dance for sailors aboard the U.S.S. Mt. McKinley.

Although these children did not provide sexual services like the *kijichon* women, female orphans worked to lift the morale and spirits of American GIs by performing similar roles as entertainer and hostess. Indeed, *kijichon* women were euphemistically called "hostesses" and "special entertainers."[132] And as hostess and entertainer, the female orphan's primary duty was to make the soldier feel honored, happy, and appreciated by ensuring that he was the focus of attention and that he had an enjoyable visit. Not only does the female orphan resemble the *kijichon* woman through her duties as hostess and entertainer but also through her role as an ambassador. In her reading of the figure of the *yanggongju*, Grace Cho points out that camptown sex workers became

diplomats during postwar Korea by "fulfilling her duties to the nation by keeping U.S. interests engaged."[133] She goes on to say that as a symbol of Korea's national security, her "body became a site of control as well as a playing field for negotiating international relations."[134] One could argue that female orphans served to keep U.S. interests engaged, too, by charming them through their dancing and singing.[135] As stated earlier, without the financial support provided by GIs themselves, many of the orphanages would have shut down. Singing, dancing, and making the soldiers feel special were not only gestures of gratitude but also strategies to keep the donations coming. In this way, the girls were presented as offerings to the soldiers in exchange for their financial support and national security.

In contrast to the male orphan as American soldier, the female orphan preserved her Koreanness in the militarization process. Preserving her ties to Korea was particularly important if she was made in the image of the *kijichon* woman. As a symbol of the nation, the body of the *kijichon* woman also represented all that was feminine, mysterious, strange, and dangerous about this virtually unknown county to American GIs. Her national identity as Korean and her racial identity as Asian must be kept intact in order to preserve the aura of the exotic and erotic. In addition, feminizing Korea through the figure of the *kijichon* woman worked to subordinate this country under U.S. domination. In a similar way, race and gender combined to facilitate the Orientalist fantasy of the exotic and subservient female orphan.

If male orphans (like Lee Kyung Soo and Jimmy) were molded in the image of the American soldier, then female orphans were recast in the figure of the *kijichon*

woman. This becomes apparent in the stories that were woven around GI encounters with female orphans. For example, the *Pacific Stars and Stripes* article "Redlegs Adopt Korean Pin-up" is about Chun Jea Lee, a four year-old orphan who was brought to the 57th Field Artillery to be transported to a refugee camp; however, "the men fell in love with her and decided to keep her with them until she could be nursed back to health." They bathed, fed, and dressed her. They even collected money to "buy her a complete feminine wardrobe." Under their care, this "battalion sweetheart" was named "Miss 57th Field Artillery," or "pin-up girl of 1951."[136]

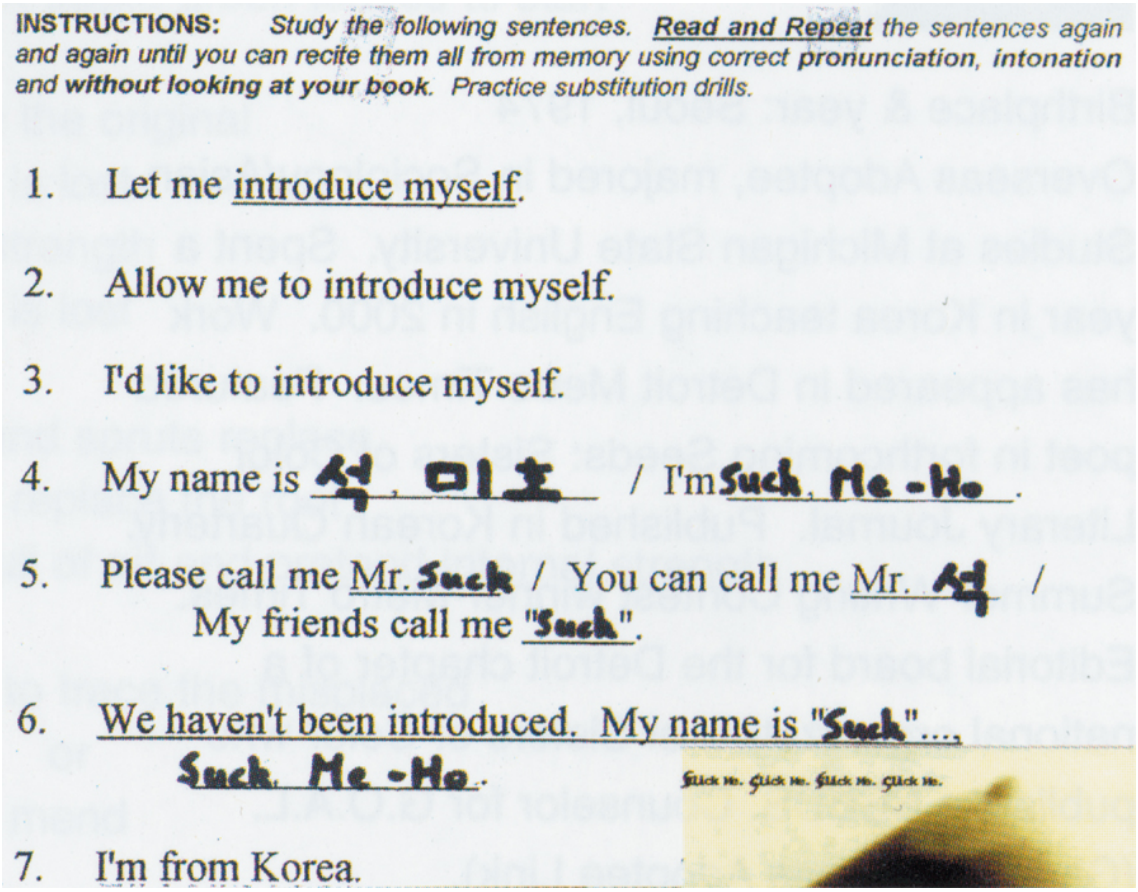

Figure 13: Collage on Paper. "Suck Me-Ho's First English Lesson" (1999) by Mihee-Nathalie Lemoine. Permission granted by artist.

Mihee-Nathalie Lemoine, a multimedia artist and Korean adoptee activist from Belgium, exposes the ways in which western encounters with Korean female bodies is highly racialized, gendered, and sexualized.[137] The fact that this is an English lesson (and not a French lesson) and that the English language is used to name and enfigure the speaker as a prostitute works to implicate the role that the U.S. military has played in constructing Korean women as solely sexual objects in the service of western males. This English lesson has a double meaning, though, in that it could also be interpreted as producing the adoptee subject. The "Ho" in "Suck Me-Ho" could be read as "whore" or "whole." As "Suck Me-Whole," this work of art becomes a critique of Korean adoption in the sense that it engages in a process that swallows the Korean child whole, enveloping him or her in whiteness in order to assimilate the Korean body as completely as possible. The adoptee body is figuratively "sucked whole" upon entrance into his or her new family and country, as Korean culture, identity, and nationality are replaced by an American one. In this way, Lemoine exposes the ways in which the subject formation of the Korean woman as prostitute and the Korean child as adoptee are both implicated in U.S. militarism and how they both labor in service of western heteropatriarchy. She reveals the slippage between the Korean female as prostitute and the Korean female as adoptee.

In another article by *Pacific Stars and Stripes* entitled "'Adopted' Korean Girl Loves Officer, Now Happy," the journalist writes, "The lieutenant…and Baby-san[138] fell for each other the minute they met on a street in Suwon last April."[139] After several weeks together, however, the lieutenant reached the conclusion that "she had to go" because "Baby-san didn't fit into the military picture." As a result, the story that began with "love at first sight" ended with the lieutenant dropping Baby-san at an orphanage. If the reader failed to see the word "Adopted" in the title, one could quite easily mistake this story to be about a *kijichon* woman and a GI rather than a six-year-old girl and a lieutenant. Indeed, the setting and plot are same: street meeting leads to a period of infatuation which eventually leads to male abandonment. And the abandonment scene is so dramatic that it is captured on film and shown across the world. The article continues: "But the time to leave finally came, and again Baby-san didn't like it. As she clung to

[Lt.] Doernbach, crying and trying to stop his departure, newsmen's cameras caught the scene. For a few days she was the most popular Korean child in the United States."[140] Even the gifts he gave her were items that were popular among *kijichon* women. When he visited Baby-san in the orphanage, he gave her "Stateside shoes, a dress and stockings."[141] Articles such as these illustrate the ways in which the racialized, gendered, and sexualized dimensions of militarized prostitution extended to the orphanages and disciplined the Korean female orphans. More significantly, however, these articles verify that militarized prostitution structured the way she was seen, interpreted, and consumed by the soldier's gaze. The still image photo below vividly demonstrates how the code of militarized prostitution became encoded on the bodies of postwar female orphans.

Figure 14: Still Image. The girls, in stark contrast to the men holding them, stare solemnly at the camera. Not once do they smile. Even when the soldiers talk and smile at them, even when they are introduced to General MacArthur's Chief of Staff, General Hickey—the girls stare blankly and sadly into the camera.

Here we see three white soldiers each holding a young girl, propped up in his arms. These girls are wearing special-occasion *hanboks* and have ribbons tied in their hair. Although they don't look older than five years of age, they have makeup on their faces. They look like porcelain Oriental dolls, with their painted faces and rosebud lips. Despite the sexual innocence that a doll conveys, their positioning, along with the highly charged political and historical context, eroticizes this doll-like image. The pairing of these exoticized Asian female bodies next to the white militaristic male body conjures up militarized prostitution. Indeed, these girls, despite their very young age, look like they could be sexual partners to these men. With grimaces on their faces, each white soldier proudly props up his girl, as if on display. The GIs hold them like they are accessories—trophies—and look upon them with desire.[142]

This look of desire is what I call the "militaristic gaze." The militaristic gaze is an imperial male gaze that emerges from the close encounters between foreign servicemen and Korean orphans and the cultural codes of militarized prostitution.[143] It is "militaristic" precisely because the gazer himself—along with the environment—is militarized. The militaristic gaze is a look that is fraught with contradictions. Shrouded in Orientalism[144] and paternalism, it is a gaze mixed with the desire to possess and the desire to save. It is a look that pities the child and, at the same time, wants to conquer the child; to care for the child and also to dominate the child; to be both father and lover. On the one hand, this gaze objectifies the orphan in order to bolster the identity of the soldier. On the other hand, the militaristic gaze works to assuage military might and imperial power by projecting the soldier as a humanitarian. Thus, the militaristic gaze becomes a

technology of American humanitarianism empire. The orphan—who is constructed as helpless, hungry, and innocent—becomes a conduit through which the masculinity and humanity of the GI is fortified. The orphan's mere existence provides the GI with the opportunity to demonstrate his patriotism, manhood, and virility—as well as his softer, sensitive side—by helping the "little waifs." In short, the orphan becomes the vessel through which the GI becomes both a military hero and humanitarian.[145]

Although one can gaze from afar, the militaristic gaze almost always engenders physical contact between the soldier and child. Gazing leads to touching. And it—the touching—is almost always done in the spirit of giving. The handing out of sweet treats, the trying on of donated clothes, the distribution of toys, the administering of medicine—these all provide the occasion for the soldier to be close and to touch the child. Charity becomes the stage in with the militaristic gaze is activated. This spatial intimacy—along with the pervasive culture of militarized prostitution—leads to the eroticism of innocence, which is another condition of the militaristic gaze. In *Erotic Innocence: The Culture of Child Molesting*, James Kincaid posits that the modern child was constructed in tandem with modern sexuality.[146] The modern child, who he argues was formulated in the 18th century, was assigned the Romantic virtues of innocence, naturalness, and even divinity.[147] The child became antithetical to the adult, packaged as "free of adult corruptions: not yet burdened with the weight of responsibility, mortality, and sexuality."[148] Constructing children as innocent and pure was not the problem. What became dangerous, as Kincaid points out, is that we also assigned the same qualities to what is sexually desirable: innocence, purity, sweetness, etc. Consequently, we came to

see “the child” and “the erotic” as coincident, or similar in nature.[149] This is how innocence became erotic.

Figure 15: Still Images. The militaristic gaze is activated as the GI looks at the young girl with desire during a Christmas Party and as Mr. United States (Col. Dean Hess) admires an orphan from Hope Inc. Orphans’ Home of Korea.

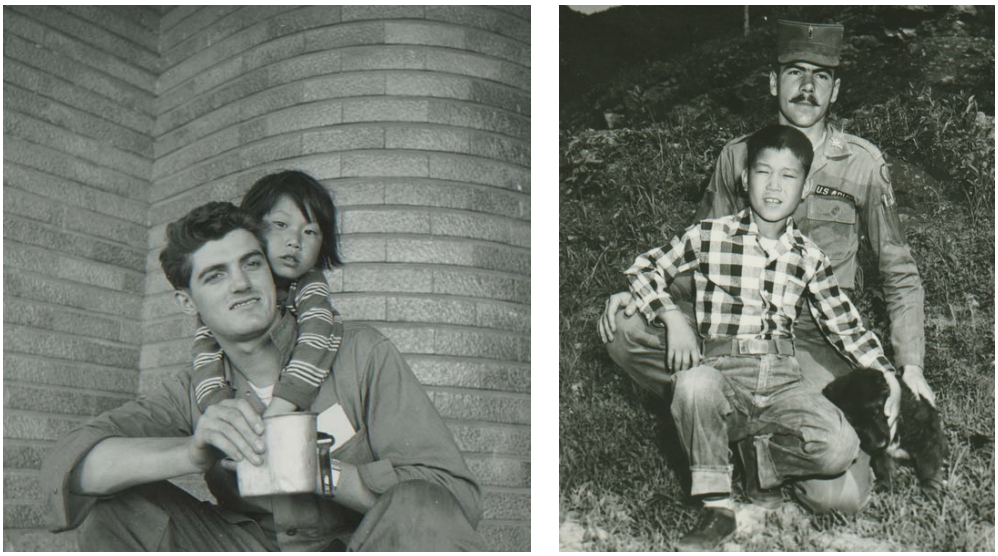

Figure 16: Photographs. In the first photo, Kim Kum Soun, or “Dotty” as she is called by members of the 7th Cavalry, is draped over a GI. She is the mascot of K Company. In the second photo, Korean orphan “Rocky” crouches between the legs of Lt. Robert W. Field, who solicited his parents to adopt the young boy.

The pictures above indicate the erotic dimensions of innocence and the militaristic gaze. According to Kincaid, the vacant, hollow look of the children makes them all the

more appealing to the viewer because it signifies their innocence.[150] In addition, the way these orphans are intimately positioned against the soldier—propped up in the GI's arms, standing eye to eye, draped across the GI's neck and shoulders, and crouching between the GI's legs—along with the look of desire on the soldiers' faces infuses the partnership with eroticism. However, Kincaid's thesis can take us only so far in analyzing these children because he focuses predominately on images of white children. Although the bodies of the Korean War orphans are prepubescent bodies, Orientalism further infantilizes the Asian body, making the orphan hyper-innocent. Furthermore, because they are the victims of war, the sense of injustice that is enacted upon them is heightened precisely because they are children. The hyper-innocence, along with the heightened sense of injustice, made these children almost irresistible under the gaze of GIs because the fantasy of rescue animates the militaristic gaze. It is the combination of these two qualities that enables the militaristic gaze to embody both erotic desire and the heroic impulse to save.[151]

Clothed in the rhetoric of democracy and freedom, American GIs invaded the homes, bodies, and minds of the Korean people. The militaristic gaze continues to do the same kind of violence, yet it comes across as less harmful and destructive because it is veiled in the desire to save, to care for, and most importantly, to love the orphan. As a technology of American humanitarianism empire and an extension of the physical occupation of the U.S. military on foreign soil, the militaristic gaze continues to invade the space and bodies of Korean children. And one of the primary ways it does this is

through the camera. This is dramatically captured in an AFAK film reel entitled "Epidemic Control Unit."

This three-part series documents the activities of the epidemic control unit on the eastern island of Ullong-do. After filming orphaned boys having their blood drawn and getting rectal exams and smears, the next shot is of a little boy running naked into the East Sea, where there are other young boys swimming and playing on an inner tube. It seems puzzling that a video about containing sickness and disease on an island would include long clips of naked boys frolicking in the sea, but that is just what we witness. Although there are about just as many boys on the beach who are fully clothed (based on the background shots), the camera lingers on the bodies of naked young boys and foregrounds them in this one-minute scene. The cameraman zooms in on nude boys sitting and standing on the beach and running into the sea. Their small, lean bodies are tossed about in the crashing waves of the sea, which heightens the already homoerotic quality of the footage. Furthermore, as groups of young boys play, their bodies become entangled and wrapped around each other as the waves push them together.[152] In this scene, frontal nudity is also captured. Under the militaristic gaze, this scopophilic series of shots become eye-candy for the gaping soldier. Their innocent play becomes eroticized for the sheer pleasure of the looking adult male. This one minute footage of naked young male bodies tossed about the waves seems completely out of place in a video about epidemic control; however, as I mentioned earlier, the militaristic gaze appears whenever an orphan shares space with a serviceman.

Similar to the physical occupation of Korea by U.S. forces, the intrusion of the gazing soldier and the eye of the camera hold the boys captive. The camera lens not only captures the image in terms of preserving a moment, but it also literally captures the child, seizing the child within its frame so that the viewer, too, can gaze. Thus, the camera acts as an instrument of the militaristic gaze. Objectified by the eye of the camera and cameraman, the young boys are subordinated to the whims and will of the imperial male gaze. The man behind the camera chooses which orphan(s) to focus his attention. The camera itself serves as both eye and hand, as it caresses the object held in its frame. And once the cameraman has had his fill, he moves onto the next child that catches his eye.

There is indeed a voyeuristic quality to this footage, as if capturing the children in a private moment. For example, towards the end of this scene, a little boy is caught by surprise when he looks up and sees the camera lens staring straight at him. In the series of shots below, at the moment of recognition, he attempts to scurry away from the camera's eye.

Figure 17: Still Images. The young boy attempts to run away from the militaristic gaze of the camera.

The camera, however, continues to follow him. Unable to get away, the little boy surrenders and smiles shyly at the camera.

Figure 18: Still Image. The boy surrenders.

Then, in a final act of defiance, he looks straight into the camera and points his finger, as if to say, "I see *you*. I can gaze back, too."

Figure 19: Still Image. The boy "fires" back.

At this moment, the cameraman quickly cuts back to a wide shot of the boys swimming in the water, which marks the end of the scene.

All the elements of the militaristic gaze come together in this one scene: invasion, captivity, objectification, (pre)occupation. The militaristic gaze of the camera invades the boy's private, personal space.[153] And, like American military occupation, it holds the boy captive. But what is unexpected in this scene is that the boy challenges the gaze—not only by running away but, more importantly, by gazing back. In *Colonial Harem*, Malek Alloula indicates that, for the Algerian woman, the veil not only functioned as a "closure of private space" (the woman's body becoming a "no trespassing" zone to the colonial eye of the Western camera)[154] but also became her own personal camera in which to gaze back at the colonial photographer:

> …the feminine gaze that filters through the veil is a gaze of a particular kind: concentrated by the tiny orifice for the eye, this womanly gaze is little like the eye

> of a camera, like the photographic lens that takes aim at everything. The photographer makes no mistake about it: he knows the gaze well; it resembles his own…Thrust in the presence of a veiled woman, the photographer feels photographed; having himself become an object-to-be-seen, he loses initiative: *he is dispossessed of his own gaze*.[155]

We can read the Korean boy's defiance in the same way: he dispossesses the militaristic gaze of the cameraman by returning the gaze. The cameraman feels "shot" not only by the boy's focused stare—which mirrors the hard stare of the camera lens—but also by his pointed finger, which could be taken to symbolize a gun. As a tool of colonial domination, the camera, as Ella Shohat points out, was referred to as a gun "precisely because the camera has been used as a gun by colonial powers" and because of its "gunlike apparatus."[156] The child's response evokes this history by fighting back in kind. He defends himself with his "gun" (finger) in response to being "shot" by the GI's "gun" (camera). Having become the "object-to-be-seen," the cameraman not only "loses initiative" but also loses his possession of the little boy and moves onto less threatening territory (wide shot of naked boys swimming) where he can reassume his role of gazer.

If we track the boy's movement from the first frame to the last frame, we discover that the boy returns the gaze only when he is in the company of fully dressed compatriots. In his attempt to escape the militaristic gaze, he moves the eye of the camera from nude male bodies to fully clothed orphans. The boys' clothing—like the Algerian women's veil—acts like a protective barrier against objectification and occupation. Indeed, in this footage, fully dressed boys are of no interest here; the militaristic gaze is only interested in nude boys in this particular scene. So the enclosure created by the group of fully clothed boys acts like a safe zone, a "no trespassing" or "no gazing" zone, for the fleeing

child. And once there, with the support and protection of his mates, the little boy is able to stand up to his intruders: the camera, the cameraman, and the militaristic gaze. In so doing, he not only protects himself, but he also offers reprieve from the objectifying eye of the camera for the other nude boys who were captured in the same frame with him just moments ago.

The flexing of American GI muscles in the southern half of Korea, combined with the charitable efforts of both Christian missionaries and U.S. military forces, facilitated the emergence of American humanitarianism empire. Building, funding, and supporting orphanages; taking care of orphaned children; and throwing Christmas parties all worked to reframe the actions of the military as acts of charitable humanitarianism. These activities not only militarized the social welfare scene of Korea but they also militarized the orphans themselves. As militarized subjects, Korean orphans naturally appealed to other military subjects (i.e., GIs and other serviceman). However, other than the soldiers themselves, the image of orphans as militarized subjects had little appeal to the civilian population. Because these children were ultimately designated for transnational rather than domestic adoption, militarized orphans underwent some changes to make them even more appealing to foreigners, particularly white Americans. The next chapter focuses on these changes, along with the strategies that were used to inspire average Americans to act on behalf of Korean War orphans halfway across the world.

Notes

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[1] During and after WWII, several adoption programs emerged to help facilitate the adoption of European war orphans into homes in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Scandinavia; however, unlike Korean adoption, these programs were terminated after the postwar crises ceased. See Rosemary C. Sarri,Yenoak Baik, and Marti Bombyk, "Goal Displacement and Dependency in South Korean-United States Intercountry Adoption," *Children and Youth Services Review* 20.1/2 (1998): 87-148; 91. See also Arissa Oh, "Into the Arms of America: The Korean Roots of International Adoption" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2008). Oh examines other reasons why European adoption halted. For example, some European countries had laws that stipulated that children be adopted by adoptive parents with the same nationality. The majority of children available were Jewish and many Jewish agencies found homes for them in Europe or repatriated them to Palestine (6). In addition, Germany, which had the largest number of displaced postwar children, eventually stopped overseas adoptions to the U.S. because of negative press indicting them for "selling" their children to the "highest bidder" (10-11). American interest in European adoption also waned because most of the children were older boys (since the Nazis killed infants and young children who were too young to work) (6). This, along with the fact that many German birthmothers refused to relinquish their babies (10), led to a shortage of the "type that American adoptive parents wanted"—namely, blond-haired, blue-eyed baby girls (6).

[2] The USAMG ruled from September 1945-August1948, although it didn't formally organize until January 4, 1946. The U.S., however, began to set up military occupation of Korea as early as September 1945. It is from this September date that I'm counting. It ended in August 1948, when Korea gained independence from the U.S. after Syngman Rhee became the new president of the Republic of Korea. The U.S. changed the title of administration from "Government-General" to "Military Government" because the former denoted a colonial status. See Jinwung Kim, "A Policy of Amateurism: The Rice Policy of the U.S. Army Military Government in Korea, 1945-1948," *Korea Journal* (Summer 2007): 208-231; 210. While the appellation may be different, many Koreans came to realize that the name change meant very little.

[3] See, for example, Jenny Sharpe, "Is the United States Postcolonial? Transnationalism, Immigration, and Race," *Diaspora* 4.2 (1995): 181-199 and Amy Kaplan, "'Left Alone with America': The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, eds. Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993): 3-37.

[4] See Katharine Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1997) and "Prostitute Bodies and Gendered States in U.S.-Korea Relations" in *Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism*, eds. Elaine Kim and Chungmoo Choi (NY: Routledge, 1998): 141-174; Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (NY: NYU Press, 2002); Grace Cho, *Haunting the Korean Diaspora* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2008); and Chunghee Sarah Soh, *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

[5] Dong Choon Kim, "Forgotten War, Forgotten Massacres—the Korean War (1950-1953) as Licensed Mass Killings," *Journal of Genocide Research* 6.4 (December 2004): 523-544; 525.

[6] Katie Hae Ryun Leo, "She Considers the 38th Parallel," *Attempts at Location* (Georgetown, Kentucky: Finishing Line Press, 2008), 17.

[7] In February 1947, the Truman administration assembled this committee, which "included representatives from the State and War Departments and the Bureau of the Budget, to make recommendations on Korea." See William Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War: A New Diplomatic and Strategic History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 45.

[8] "Report of Special Interdepartmental Committee on Korea," February 1947, p. 17, Formerly Security-Classified Correspondence of Howard Peterson, Dec. 1945-Aug. 1947, Box 9, Folder 91—Korea, Modern Military Records, Record Group 107, Textual Archives Services Division, National Archives at College Park. This report served to provide policy recommendations concerning a general course of action in regard to Korea.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., 18.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Dong Choon Kim, 526.
[13] "Report of Special Interdepartmental Committee on Korea,"17.
[14] Ibid.
[15] General John R. Hodge to Joint Chiefs of Staff, memorandum,18 July 1947, p. 3, Formerly Security-Classified Correspondence of Howard Peterson, Dec. 1945-Aug. 1947, Box 9, Folder 91—Korea, Modern Military Records, Record Group 107, Textual Archives Services Division, National Archives at College Park.
[16] Louise Yim, "A Plea to the War Department and to the American People," 11 July 1947, p. 2, Formerly Security-Classified Correspondence of Howard Peterson, Dec. 1945-Aug. 1947, Box 9, Folder 91—Korea, Modern Military Records, Record Group 107, Textual Archives Services Division, National Archives at College Park.
[17] "Justification for a Grant-in-Aid Program for the Rehabilitation of South Korea Covering Fiscal Years 1948 through 1950," 27 March 1947, p. 12-15, Formerly Security-Classified Correspondence of Howard Peterson, Dec. 1945-Aug. 1947, Box 9, Folder 91—Korea, Modern Military Records, Record Group 107, Textual Archives Services Division, National Archives at College Park.
[18] Joungwon Kim, *Divided Korea: The Politics of Development, 1945-1972* (Cambridge: East Asian Research Center at Harvard University, 1976), 68.
[19] Jinwung Kim, 211-212.
[20] Ibid., 215.
[21] Ibid., 229.
[22] Qtd. in Jinwung Kim, 229.
[23] In 1948, after three years of continued disagreement, the United States finally let the United Nations deal with Korea. It was decided that UN-supervised elections would be held in May of that year. Syngman Rhee took office in August of 1948. See Joungwon Kim, 79.
[24] Joungwon Kim, 60.
[25] Dong Choon Kim, 526.
[26] General John R. Hodge to Joint Chiefs of Staff, p. 3.
[27] Harry Savage to President Truman, 22 April 1947, p. 1, Formerly Security-Classified Correspondence of Howard Peterson, Dec. 1945-Aug. 1947, Box 9, Folder 91—Korea, Modern Military Records, Record Group 107, Textual Archives Services Division, National Archives at College Park.
[28] Harry Savage to President Truman, 2, 3.
[29] General John R. Hodge to Joint Chiefs of Staff, p. 3.
[30] Howard Rusk, "The GI's Give a Hand to the Koreans," *New York Times Magazine* (October 11, 1953). Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/nyt-028Q.htm (accessed 12/9/09).
[31] See also Robert H. Mosier, "The GI and the Kids of Korea: America's Fighting Men Share Their Food, Clothing, and Shelter with Children of a War-torn Land," *National Geographic Magazine* (May 1953): 635-664. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://koreanchildren.org/docs/MAG-006.htm (accessed 12/30/09). Mosier, a Technical Sergeant of the United States Marine Corps, explains how witnessing and hearing about the charitable activities of the U.S. Marines, Navy, and Air Force during his stint as a photographer in the Korean War made him "feel pretty good to be an American."
[32] Young-Iob Chung, *South Korea in the Fast Lane: Economic Development and Capital Formation* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 307.
[33] Edward Sagendorph Mason, et al., *The Economic and Social Modernization of the Republic of Korea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 177. See Table 34: Economic Assistance to Korea, 1945-1953.
[34] "Justification for a Grant-In-Aid Program," 1.

[35] Ibid., 2.
[36] Ibid., 10. According to Dong Choon Kim, much of these riots and loss of life were attributed to the "rooting out" process spawned by anticommunist paranoia which abounded within the Korean army and the Military Police. In 1948, the mass killing of civilians reached its height. In total, between August 1945 and June 1950 (when the Korean War began) more than 100,000 Koreans were killed and 20,000 were jailed under suspicion of being communist (526). See Dong Choon Kim, 526-528.
[37] Ibid., 2, 10.
[38] Ibid., 2.
[39] Stueck, 49.
[40] Ibid., 51. Stueck states, "During late March and early April, numerous newspapers and radio commentators endorsed new aid for Korea."
[41] Mason, 177. See Table 34: Economic Assistance to Korea, 1945-1953.
[42] Ibid., 172.
[43] Ibid., 172-173.
[44] Mason, 177. See Table 34: Economic Assistance to Korea, 1945-1953.
[45] Ibid., 181, 165.
[46] William F. Asbury, "Military Help to Korean Orphanages: A Survey Made for the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Forces, Far East, and for the Chief of Chaplains of the United States Army" (1954), p. 4, *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/CCF-002.htm (accessed 11/2/07). Ashbury explains that as part of the Japanese Imperial Forces, Korean men became separated from their family, dying in battle, becoming POWs, or simply reported "missing." In addition, after Korea gained independence from Japan, half a million Koreans remained in Japan. Due to these various factors, families became broken and/or separated, which created this orphan population. In addition, one could also presume that some of these orphans were the offspring of Japanese soldiers and Korean comfort women. See, for example, Cho and Soh.
[47] Joungwon Kim, 48.
[48] Asbury, 1, 5.
[49] Ibid., 4.
[50]Tobias Hübinette, *Comforting an Orphaned Nation: Representations of International Adoption and Adopted Koreans in Korean Popular Culture* (Seoul: Jimoondang, 2006), 40.
[51] 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; 14-17.
[52] Ibid., 16. By offering up this history, Kim and Henderson dismantle the popular belief that Korea, as a Confucian society, could not imagine kinship formations outside of having direct blood ties.
[53]Ibid., 17.
[54] Ibid., 18-19.
[55] Hübinette, 40. Many of the orphanages in Korea after the war continued to be affiliated with a Christian denomination or missions work, donning names such as St. Francis Mission, Lady Kathryn Presbyterian Church School and Orphanage, and Children's Garden of Holy Mind Orphanage. See AFAK Command Construction Progress Reports, August-December 1954, Eighth U.S. Army Armed Forces Assistance to Korea (AFAK) Project Files 1954-1963, Box 2196, Folders "AFAK Project Completion Reports Sept. and Nov, 1954," Modern Military Records, Record Group 338, Textual Archives Services Division, National Archives at College Park.
[56] Asbury, 14.
[57] Kim and Henderson, 18.
[58] Asbury, 14.
[59] The official dates of the Korean War are from 1950-1953. The signing of the armistice signaled the "end" of the Korean War.
[60] AFAK Bulletin No. 1 (4 January 1954): 1. Eighth U.S. Army Armed Forces Assistance to Korea (AFAK) Project Files 1954-1963, Box 2201, Folder "AFAK Bulletins 1-9, 1954," Modern Military Records, Record Group 338, Textual Archives Services Division, National Archives at College Park.

[61] Asbury, 7.
[62] See AFAK Command Construction Progress Reports, January-July 1954, Eighth U.S. Army Armed Forces Assistance to Korea (AFAK) Project Files 1954-1963, Box 2195 and AFAK Command Construction Progress Reports, August-December 1954, Eighth U.S. Army Armed Forces Assistance to Korea (AFAK) Project Files 1954-1963, Box 2196, Modern Military Records, Record Group 338, Textual Archives Services Division, National Archives at College Park. Each monthly report also includes how much money each project cost, breaking down costs of labor, materials, etc.
[63] "Helping Koreans Help Themselves," *Life* 35.15 (12 October 1953), 48.
[64] Korean War National Museum, Home page, *Korean War Children's Memorial*, http://www.koreanchildren.org/index.html (accessed 7/7/07)
[65] Asbury, 7.
[66] Korean War National Museum, "Saving Lives," *Korean War Children's Memorial*, http://koreanchildren.org/docs/savinglives1.html (accessed 7/13/08).
[67] "Good Soldier Cited 'Best Missionary'," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 10 Dec. 1951. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/PSS-033-Q.htm (accessed 7/13/08).
[68] Asbury, 16.
[69] Ibid., 12.
[70] Ibid., 16.
[71] AFAK Bulletin No. 1 (4 January 1954): 1.
[72] Their footage became the raw materials for U.S. news outlets such as *Paramount News* and *Movietone News* and even the *Bob Hope Show* (his Christmas specials).
[73] Asbury, 7.
[74] Cho, 84.
[75] We might also see these charitable acts as attempts by soldiers to relieve their guilty conscience. After an eighteen day-long trip visiting U.S. Armed Forces units in Korea and seeing pin-up pictures riddling the bunker walls, Bishop Austin Purdue had this to say about the morals of American servicemen: "Charity covers a multitude of sins. And Americans in Korea are the most charitable services in the history of the world." See Ray Waterkotte, "Charity of U.S. Troops 'Fantastic,' Bishop Says," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 7 Feb 1953. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/PSS-676-WQ.htm (accessed 12/26/09).
[76] Novelist Chinua Achebe puts it another way: "Charity… is the opium of the privileged…. [L]et us not forget that the real solution lies in a world in which charity will have become unnecessary." See Acheba, *Anthills of the Savannah* (NY: Anchor Books, 1997), 143.
[77] Hübinette lists some exceptions, citing Antonio Corea, who is considered to be the first adopted Korean (adopted by an Italian salesman in the late 16th century), and Kim Kyu-sik. At six years of age, Kim Kyu-sik was adopted in the late 19th century by Horace G. Underwood, the American missionary who is credited for introducing Protestantism to Korea. See Hübinette, pages 36-37.
[78] Korean children displaced by the Korean War may have been adopted as early as 1950. Certainly, by 1952, formal adoptions of Korean children by U.S. servicemen were taking place. See Cpl. Peter Steele Bixby, "No. 1 Sargy, Sambo Plan Life Together," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 30 Oct. 1950. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/PSS-059-Q.htm (accessed 12/13/09) and Bill Purdom, "Officer Wins Fight to Adopt Lad, Korean Boy Starts For U.S.," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 23 Sept. 1952. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/PSS-101-Q.htm (accessed 12/13/09).
[79] Cynthia Enloe, *Globalization and Militarism: Feminists Make the Link* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007), 145.
[80] Ibid., 4.
[81] See, for example, "Construction of AFAK Orphanage, Seoul, Korea," 18 March 1954 and "Buk Han San Orphanage, Seoul, Korea," 5 April 1954, Department of Defense: U.S. Army Audiovisual Center, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 111, National Archives at College Park.

[82] See, for example, "Refugee Evacuation, Chunchon, Korea," 22 Oct. 1952, Department of Defense: U.S. Army Audiovisual Center, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 111, National Archives at College Park and "Korean Orphanage Supported by 502nd TAC Control Group," March-April 1952, Department of Defense: Department of the Air Force, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 342, National Archives at College Park.
[83] "War Orphans, Korea," 18-20 Sept. 1953, Department of Defense: U.S. Army Audiovisual Center, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 111, National Archives at College Park and "Korean Orphan Story," Reels 1 and 4, Jan.-Feb. 1952, Department of Defense: Department of the Air Force, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 342, National Archives at College Park.
[84] "Epidemic Control Unit (USN), Ullong-Do Korea," 8 July 1952, Department of Defense: U.S. Army Audiovisual Center, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 111, National Archives at College Park and "Korean Orphan Story," Reel 2, Jan.-Feb. 1952, Department of Defense: Department of the Air Force, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 342, National Archives at College Park.
[85] "Sec. of Army Robert T. Stevens at Orphanage Dedication, Seoul, Korea," 19 Jan. 1954, Department of Defense: U.S. Army Audiovisual Center, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 111, National Archives at College Park.
[86] "Korean Orphanage Supported by 502nd TAC Control Group," March-April 1952, Department of Defense: Department of the Air Force, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 342, National Archives at College Park and "Armed Forces Assistance to Korea Gifts of Clothing to Children, Yong Do (Pusan), Korea," 22 Dec. 1954, Department of Defense: U.S. Army Audiovisual Center, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 111, National Archives at College Park.
[87] "Korean Orphan Story," Reel 5, 18 Jan. 1952, Department of Defense: Department of the Air Force, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 342, National Archives at College Park and "Front Line Air Force Chaplain: Outtakes," no date, Department of Defense: Department of the Air Force, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 342, National Archives at College Park.
[88] See, for example, "Christmas Party for Korean Orphans, IX Corps, Kinsal, Korea," 24 Dec. 1953; "7th Division Christmas Celebration, Chorwon and Vijongbu, Korea," 11 Nov. 1953; "Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor Visits Kyum Sam Orphanage, Seoul, Korea," 20 Dec. 1953; and "Armed Forces Assistance to Korea Gifts of Clothing to Children, Yong Do (Pusan), Korea," 22 Dec. 1954, Department of Defense: U.S. Army Audiovisual Center, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 111, National Archives at College Park.
[89] "Korean Orphanage Supported by 502nd TAC Control Group" and "Christmas Party for Korean Orphans, IX Corps, Kinsal, Korea."
[90] Patti Duncan, "Genealogies of Unbelonging: Amerasians and Transnational Adoptees as Legacies of U.S. Militarism in South Korea," in *Militarized Currents: Toward a Decolonized Future in Asia and the Pacific*, eds. Setsu Shigematsu and Keith L. Camacho (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 277-307; 279.
[91] "304th BN Orphanage in Seoul, Korea," 27 March 1953, Department of Defense: U.S. Army Audiovisual Center, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 111, National Archives at College Park.
[92] "Sailors, Marine Unite to Garb Korean Tots," *Pacific Stars and Stripes,* 30 Nov. 1952. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/PSS-229-WQ.htm (accessed 7/13/08).
[93] "304th BN Orphanage in Seoul, Korea."
[94] Ibid.
[95] "7th Division Christmas Celebration, Chorwon and Vijongbu, Korea."
[96] "7th Division Christmas Celebration, Do Bong Orphanage," Reel 3, 11 Nov. 1953, Department of Defense: U.S. Army Audiovisual Center, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 111, National Archives at College Park.
[97] Paul Dickson, *War Slang: American Fighting Words and Phrases Since the Civil War* (Dulles, VA: Brassey's, Inc., 2004), 250.

[98] "A New American Comes 'Home,'" *Life* 35.22 (Nov. 30, 1953), 25.
[99] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, (New York : Vintage Books, 1995), 135-136.
[100] Allan Punzalan Isaac, *American Tropics: Articulating Filipino America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 49.
[101] Ibid., 75.
[102] Ibid.
[103] "A New American Comes 'Home,'" 28.
[104] Ibid., 27.
[105] Unfortunately for Lee Kyung Soo, who was renamed Lee Paladino after his adoption, fantasy did not become reality. In 1958, the *New York Times* published a follow-up story of Lee and reported that he had been handed over to the state welfare department after his bachelor father got married. Evidently, "friction" developed between Lee and his stepmother. He lived with a foster family until he became legally adopted by his grandparents at the age of nine. Qtd. in Eleana Kim "The Origins of Korean Adoption: Cold War Geopolitics and Intimate Diplomacy," Working Paper Series (Washington, D.C.: U.S.-Korea Institute at SAIS, 2009): 1-25; 8.
[106] The practice of incorporating local children into foreign military troops as mascots has, according to Arissa Oh, "existed at least since World War II," when Allied troops "adopted" European children as mascots (62).
[107] Oftentimes, an orphan's informal adoption as a troop's mascot would eventually turn into a formal adoption by a serviceman. The inevitable would happen: a GI's tour would end, bringing him back to the States. The possibility of being separated forever from the child forced the GI to make a decision: to leave the child behind or to take the child with him. Possible separation became the catalyst that propelled many GIs to adopt their mascot. See "Korean Lad to Leave for U.S.," *Pacific Stars and Stripes,* 23 Aug. 1952. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/SSS-377WP-Q.htm; "24th Div. Sergeant Plans Adoption of 'Wild Bill'," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 7 July 1954. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/SSS-321WP-Q.htm; and Sgt. Robert L. Brown, "Orphan, 7, Leaves Korea For New Home in Texas," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 15 June 1954. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/SSS-312WP-Q.htm.
[108] Korean War National Museum, "Adopting the Children," *Korean War Children's Memorial*, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/adoption.html (accessed 12/22/09).
[109] Peter Linden, "Chocoletto: A Korean War Orphan Joins the Marines," 14 April 1953. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/MAG-005.htm.
[110] Max Crow, "Pon Son See aka Jimmie Pusan," *USS Whitehurst*, http://usswhitehurst.org/Mascot.htm (accessed 7/10/08).
[111] Ibid.
[112] Andy Bisaccia, "Jimmie Pon Son See," *USS Whitehurst*, http://usswhitehurst.org/Jimmy.htm (accessed 7/10/08).
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid.
[115] CETO, *Child Soldiers: Implications for U.S. Forces*, Seminar Report, (Quantico, VA: Center for Emerging Threats and Opportunities, Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory, 2002), 7.
[116] Ibid.
[117] See, for example, P.W. Singer, *Children at War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Michael Wessells, *Child Soldiers: From Violence to Protection* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009); and Illene Cohn and Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, *Child Soldiers: the Role of Children in Armed Conflict* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1994).

[118] The publication of *Child Soldiers* was motivated by the killing of a U.S. serviceman (the first casualty of Operation Enduring Freedom) by a 14 year-old Afghan boy. This event spurred the U.S. Marines to discuss how U.S. forces should respond when confronted by armed children.
[119] CETO does acknowledge that child soldiers existed during WWII and the Vietnam War; however, they do so in a way that suggests that Germany and Vietnam used child soldiers and not the United States (10).
[120] It would be interesting to find out if the U.S. military's experience with Korean orphans as child soldiers informed or influenced its decision to employ Southeast Asian children during the Vietnam War. Korean children, like Hmong children during the CIA's "Secrete War" in Laos, made excellent spies and informants due to their ability to blend into the enemy's territory. Hmong and Laotian children also fought in armed combat, receiving pennies a day for their work. Edgar Buell, AID (U.S. Agency for International Development) official working with Hmong mercenaries, said in 1979: "Everyone of them (Hmong) that died, that was an American back home that didn't die." Qtd. in Richard S. Erlich, "CIA's Secret War in Laos," *Global Politician* website, 25 July 2006, http://www.globalpolitician.com/21970-laos-asia (accessed 12/30/09).
[121] This research is outside the scope of my dissertation; however, it may be productive to think about how the U.S. military's use of foreign children in past wars may have influenced the rise of child soldiers in countries with political ties to the U.S.
[122] Cho indicates that the birth of Korean military prostitutes can be traced back to the early days of the Korean War, when U.S. soldiers broke into private homes and raped the young girls living there (97). Many girls who were raped by American servicemen turned to camptown prostitution as a means of survival.
[123] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," in *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, 5th edition, eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 833-844; 843.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Qtd. in Yuh, 17.
[126] See Yuh, Cho, and Soh. See also Katharine Moon, "Prostitute Bodies and Gendered States in U.S.-Korea Relations," 141-174.
[127] See, for example, "Construction of AFAK Orphanage, Seoul, Korea," 18 March 1954 and "Sec. of Army Robert T. Stevens at Orphanage Dedication, Seoul, Korea," 21 Jan. 1954, Department of Defense: U.S. Army Audiovisual Center, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 111, National Archives at College Park.
[128] Katharine Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations*, 2.
[129] Yuh, 14.
[130] Ibid., 25.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Moon, 2.
[133] Cho, 107.
[134] Ibid., 108.
[135] See, for example, "Want to Lead a Band?" *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 11 June 1952. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://koreanchildren.org/docs/SSS-003-WPQ.htm (accessed 12/20/09). Orphans play "Boogie-Woogie Bugle Boy of Company B" with improvised instruments, endearing them to the soldiers. See also "Korean Children Entertain," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, no date. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://koreanchildren.org/docs/SSS-084WP-Q.htm (accessed 12/20/09). Two female Korean orphans are dressed up like sailors, dancing the "Navy Dance" during "Operation Santa Claus." Finally, see *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 16 Oct. 1954. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://koreanchildren.org/docs/SSS-104WP-Q.htm (accessed 12/20/09). A group of young Korean girls at Aerin Won Orphanage, dressed in hanboks, performed for Commanding General Richard S. Whitcomb as a gesture of appreciation for his "continued efforts and assistance in reconstruction and establishment of a number of the orphanage's buildings."

[136] "Redlegs Adopt Korean Pin-up," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 26 Feb. 1951. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/PSS-053-Q.htm (accessed 12/22/09).
[137] Mihee-Nathalie Lemoine, "Suck Me-Ho's First English Lesson," collage on paper, rpt. in *O.K.A.Y.: Overseas Korean Artists Yearbook*, vol. 1 (2001): 85.
[138] Devised by American soldiers stationed in post-WWII Japan, "Baby-san" was a term that "combined an American pick-up line ('Hey, baby') with an everyday Japanese title of respect ("san"). "Baby-san" became a popular cartoon character after being featured in Naval reservist Bill Hume's illustrated, semi-pornographic cartoon series in the Far East edition of the *Navy Times*. In these cartoons, "Baby-san" was depicted as a sex kitten. His first collected volume of cartoons *Babysan: A Private Look at the Japanese Occupation* was published in 1953 and was a bestseller among GIs in Korea. See Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 35, 36.
[139] "'Adopted' Korean Girl Loves Officer, Now Happy," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 24 July 1951. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://koreanchildren.org/docs/PSS-003-Q.htm (accessed 12/22/09).
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid.
[142] "Christmas Party for Korean Orphans, IX Corps, Kinsal, Korea."
[143] See E. Ann Kaplan, *Looking for the Other: Feminism, Film, and the Imperial Gaze* (NY: Routledge, 1997). According to Kaplan, "the 'male' gaze and the 'imperial' gaze cannot be separated within western patriarchal cultures" (xi). This is because the imperial gaze, which assumes the centrality of the white western subject, is almost always male or, at least, is structured by patriarchal norms and ideology (78). Militaristic gaze shares this same gaze structure by centering the white western male who, in this particular case, is a soldier.
[144] Orientalism, as originally theorized by Edward Said, is a system of knowledge that constructs the Occident (the West) as superior to the Orient (the East) so that the Oriental Other is imagined as inferior, irrational, feminine, and exotic, which is in direct contrast to the rational, modern, masculine, and civilized Occident. See Edward Said, *Orientalism* (NY: Vintage Books, 1979).
[145] See Korean War National Museum, Home page, *Korean War Children's Memorial*, http://www.koreanchildren.org/index.html (accessed 7/14/08). This website houses over 1,000 stories to promulgate the men of the Armed Forces as saviors, who "saved the lives of over 10,000 children and helped sustain over 50,000" through donations and material aid.
[146] In citing this work, I do not mean to imply that all interaction between GIs and orphans are pedophilic. But I am suggesting that their innocence is what made them desirable—sexually or otherwise.
[147] James Kincaid*, Erotic Innocence: The Culture of Child Molesting* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 53.
[148] Ibid., 15.
[149] Ibid., 14.
[150] Ibid., 17-20.
[151] George Drake and Al Zimmerman have devoted an entire book to the "love" between a GI and a Korean orphan in their book entitled *GIs and the Kids: A Love Story*.
[152] "Epidemic Control Unit (USN), Ullong-Do Korea," 8 July 1952. One wonders why these particular boys have been singled out. Perhaps because they are the most animated or because they look the most endearing and innocent.
[153] In the AFAK film reels, rarely do we see children inviting the camera to record them. Because the camera is usually an uninvited guest, we see many of the children stare blankly back, ignore, or repel away from the machine.
[154] Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 13.
[155] Ibid., 14.

[156] Ella Shohat, "Imaging Terra Incognita: The Disciplinary Gaze of Empire," *Public Culture* 3.2 (Spring 1991): 41-70; 68.

CHAPTER TWO

Yellow Desire and the Mass Production of the Korean Orphan

For the majority of American history, the United States' policy towards the presence of Asians in America has been one of exclusion. A series of immigration laws—such as the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and the 1924 Immigration Act—had, for the most part, barred the legal immigration of Asians into the U.S; however, WWII became a watershed year in terms of both shifting and contradictory policies the U.S. government had concerning Asians. By fighting the white supremacist Nazis in Germany, the United States began to lay the foundation in terms of positioning itself as a promoter of racial equality. As cultural historian Robert G. Lee explains, despite the segregation between whites and blacks on the homefront and in the military and the anti-Semitic policy of denying refugee status to European Jews, "the U.S. government condemned the Nazi's doctrine of racial superiority and identified the defeat of racism as one of the reasons 'Why We Fight.'"[1]

This new change in attitude greatly impacted the government's policy towards Asians both living inside and outside U.S. borders. For example, in 1943, the Magnuson Bill was signed, repealing the Chinese exclusion laws. According to historian Erika Lee, this repeal was "mostly a symbolic gesture of friendship to China (a wartime ally against Japan)" because the immigration quota only allowed 105 Chinese to enter per year;[2] however, it did signal a shift in policy from outright restriction to a gradual integration of Asian subjects into the U.S. citizenry.[3] To be sure, the Magnuson Bill allowed Chinese immigrants to become naturalized citizens. And the War Brides Acts of 1945 and 1947

enabled those alien subjects who fought for the U.S. military to bypass quotas and bring their foreign-born spouses and children into the U.S.[4] Even the issuing of Executive Order 9066 in 1942—which evacuated persons of Japanese descent into internment camps—could be perceived as a project of integration within this context. Indeed, Caroline Chung Simpson suggests precisely this when she argues that Japanese internment was not only about outright exclusion but also incorporation and reintegration of the seemingly unassimilable Asian body.[5] Simpson claims that the Japanese internment camps served as an experiment on American citizenship, testing the capabilities of Asians to assimilate into the U.S. national family and training them to be better citizen-subjects.[6] She writes, "…the internment itself was conceived as the first step in a program to make Japanese Americans more 'American' and thus less alien to non-Asian Americans."[7] The "experiment in racial integration" continued through the 1943 WRA (War Relocation Authority) Resettlement Project,[8] which worked to ease the smooth integration of Japanese Americans into public society (primarily by reintroducing only the most loyal Japanese Americans).[9]

These racially integrative projects such as repeal and Japanese internment and resettlement can be seen as preludes to another kind of racially integrative project: the inclusion of Korean orphans into predominantly white American families. Indeed, part of the reason why white Americans could perceive Korean children as potential family members via transnational adoption—despite the long history of Asian exclusion—is precisely because of these initial efforts to incorporate and integrate the racialized Asian body into the white American national landscape. The other reasons, as I argue in this

chapter, are the changing geopolitical relationship between the United States and Asia within the Cold War era, as well as the rising demands of global consumer capitalism.

This chapter attends to the various discursive strategies—and the political and socioeconomic contexts that informed those strategies—that constructed Korean orphans in such a way as to facilitate their inclusion into the U.S. domestic and national family. If the previous chapter examined the figure of the Korean orphan as produced in the fantasies of the U.S. military, this chapter analyzes the construction of this figure in the minds and fantasies of ordinary American civilians. I begin by providing the political and ideological setting of 1950s America. I rely on Christina Klein's theorization of Cold War Orientalism to help set the scene because I believe it effectively explains the ideological shift towards Asians—from racial exclusion to racial tolerance and inclusion—that took place during this decade. The prime metaphor that was used to envision the incorporation of Asians into American politics and life was that of family. In other words, the integrationist policies that emerged from Cold War Orientalism refigured U.S.-Asia relations in terms of familial relations. In order to become a part of the American family, however, the Asian body had to be stripped of his or her national affiliation. We see this play out in the construction of the displaced Korean child as a social orphan—an orphan whose familial and national ties are severed in order to reincorporate him or her into the American national and private family.

I then move on to talk about how the visual iconography of rescue led to the visual iconography of *rescuing*. While the visual iconography of rescue produced the image of the needy waif, the visual iconography of rescuing produced the image of the rescued child by American hands. The narratives that accompanied each image—

narratives that were strategically constructed by social workers, missionaries, and even large corporations such as Time, Inc.—successfully motivated ordinary Americans to act on behalf of Asian children halfway around the world. By contributing to the humanitarian efforts initiated by soldiers and missionaries overseas in Korea, average American citizens partook in the expansion of American humanitarianism empire.

The final part of this chapter discusses how Orientalism was employed to make the Korean child marketable and, therefore, consumable in order to facilitate their entrance into American homes. More specifically, I argue that an image of the Korean orphan as Oriental doll was mass produced to make the Asian body desirable and less threatening. Race and gender intersected to reduce the Korean child into an object, turning her into a target of yellow desire, which was integral to fostering a new vision of American family—both national and domestic—that included Asians.

Cold War Orientalism and the Production of the Social Orphan

According to historian Christina Klein, the geopolitics of the Cold War provided an occasion for an ideological sea change in the way Asians were perceived at this time: from exclusion to integration. In *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961*, Klein investigates the expansion of U.S. power during an era of global decolonization by examining how the U.S. dealt with this key question: "How can we define our nation as a nonimperial world power in the age of decolonization?"[10] Klein argues that Cold War Orientalism—produced by middlebrow Americans and policymaking elites—worked to resolve this paradox. Specifically, she asserts that through Cold War Orientalism, the U.S. government constructed an ideology that

justified its military and imperial expansion in Asia during the era of revolutionary decolonization via a politics of integration. If Orientalism, as theorized by Edward Said, was a discursive strategy that was used to legitimize Europe's coercive domination and colonial control of the Far East during the 19th century,[11] then Cold War Orientalism employed tactics of affiliation and interdependence to justify its expansion in Asia during the Cold War.[12] As Klein eloquently explains:

> Different kinds of expansion demand and produce different legitimating discourses. Because U.S. expansion into Asia was predicated on the principle of international integration rather than on territorial imperialism, it demanded an ideology of global interdependence rather than one of racial difference. The Cold War Orientalism generated by middlebrow intellectuals articulated precisely such an ideology.[13]

This ideology of global interdependence and racial tolerance underwrote a variety of projects that the U.S. created in order to assert its global power and expansion in Asia under the guise of anti-imperialism. One of these projects was the U.S.-funded humanitarian aid and relief effort to Korea immediately following the Korean War. Other projects included child sponsorship programs and the actual adoption of postwar orphans.

Klein indicates that the 1950s became a decade where the family became inaugurated as the prime metaphor for U.S.-Asian relations. Casting foreign relations as sentimental familial relations allowed Americans—for the first time—to imagine familial bonds between white Americans and nonwhite Asians. The family could be mixed-race; it no longer had to be defined through blood ties and biology.[14] But the familial bond imagined between the American and the Asian was not one of siblings or cousins; rather it was one of parent-child, with the white American as the parent and the nonwhite Asian

as the child. As it relates to postwar Korean orphans, recasting the family in this way helped white Americans to envision the Korean child as a son or daughter while, at the same time, securing the neocolonial relationship between the U.S. and Korea.

Perceiving the postwar Korean child as both a member of the national and domestic American family required the child to be stripped of his or her previous national and kinship ties. Consequently, all displaced Korean children—whether or not their parents were living—were categorized as orphaned. During the Chosun Dynasty (1392-1910), distinctions were made among children who were a) abandoned, b) lost, or c) orphaned. Orphans were described as "children who are left alone with no one to depend on after death of a [family] member."[15] It wasn't until after the Korean War that such distinctions were blurred. The distinction that marked a child who was abandoned (child with living parent(s)) from a child who was orphaned (child whose parents were deceased) quickly eroded during the chaos and confusion of war. Families ravaged by guerilla warfare and bombing left tens of thousands of children displaced. Many were indeed orphaned, as their families were killed. But many others were separated or lost during the chaos, unsure whether or not their parents were alive. The hectic circumstances, along with the sheer size of this new population of children, made it difficult to distinguish which children were indeed orphans and which were separated from their parents. The label *orphan*, as it was used after the war, was a misnomer because many of the war orphans had at least one parent living. In the case of mixed-race orphans, both parents were alive usually. Thus, the category of "orphans" included not only children who were orphaned but also those who were abandoned or lost.

This conflation of the abandoned or lost child with the orphaned child turned the displaced Korean child into a social orphan, an orphan in legal terms rather than in fact. According to Jodi Kim,

> The very production of the adoptee as a legal orphan, which severs the adoptee from any kinship ties and makes her an exceptional state subject, renders her the barest of social identities and strips her of her social personhood. This social death is paradoxically produced precisely so that the orphan can legally become an adoptee, a process that presumably negates her social death through a formal reattachment to kinship and thus a restoration of social identity and personhood.[16]

Here, Kim explains that the precondition for the Korean child's adoption—precisely because he or she was not an orphan in the strictest sense (i.e., losing both biological parents)—is social death. Severing family ties in Korea facilitates the child's ability to take on another alternative social and familial identity; however, I would add that given the close discursive relationship between family and nation, the severing of the Korean family also makes space for an alternative American nationality to be acquired. If the presence of family solidifies national identity, then the absence of family weakens national ties. Because family is closely weaved into the fabric of national identity, a child without a family is under threat of losing his or her affiliation with the nation. While the consequences of this may be unthinkable for some, this loss for the Korean orphan opens up new opportunities. Indeed, cutting *national* ties becomes necessary for the Korean orphan in order to become adoptable. In other words, "killing off" the Korean family (by conflating the lost or abandoned child with the orphaned child) inadvertently destabilizes the child's national affiliation to Korea, which is required for the Korean child to take on an alternative American national identity.

Norwegian scholar Signe Howell puts it another way. In *The Kinning of Foreigners: Transnational Adoption in a Global Perspective*, Howell argues that adoption across national borders is possible for the Korean child because the child is "socially naked." Howell explains: "The child is denuded of all kinship; denuded of meaningful relatedness…By being abandoned by relatives…and left for strangers to look after, the children are at the same time 'de-kinned' by them, removed from kinned sociality."[17] Here, Howell uses clothing as a metaphor for family and nation. Stripping the child of his or her family and, as a result, his or her national affiliation, the child becomes naked. This allows the child to clothe him- or herself with new raiment: "The nakedness enables the state to relinquish a citizen, and the new state to accept one, because she will not be naked in her new country. She enters it fully clothed in new relatives."[18]

Visual Iconographies of Rescuing the Korean Orphan

If social death facilitates the legal adoption of Korean children, then the prospect of literal physical death compels ordinary Americans to help and, eventually, adopt them. The figure of the Korean social orphan appeared in various popular media outlets during the 1950s, including newspapers, magazines, and newsreels. The American news media was able to recruit Americans to care about and care for Korean War orphans by weaving stories that capitalized on the possibility of their imminent death (if not for the intervention of Americans).

Stories that touted the tragic circumstances of Korean orphans were predominantly circulated by Christian missionaries, social workers, and American

soldiers who were directly involved in providing postwar relief services to the children, and by the journalists who covered their activities. For example, Harry Holt informs readers of *The Oregonian* that hundreds of orphans are "doomed to a life of misery and early death unless they could be brought to this country."[19] His message is clear: without the help of Americans, these orphans will die. Just in case his message gets overlooked, Holt's wife uses a more direct approach. One newspaper headline reads: "Mrs. Holt Says Korea Tots Dying."[20] The Holts were not the only ones to create a sense of emergency when it came to the plight of these children. Susan Pettiss, the director of International Social Services-United States of America Branch, Inc. (ISS-USA), also reports in a San Francisco newspaper that the situation in Korea is "extremely urgent" due to overcrowding.[21] It is precisely the frantic tone of urgency that was conveyed in these postwar accounts of the Korean social orphan that compelled many Americans to rescue these children in their state of emergency.

On the frontlines, American serviceman had firsthand accounts of the dire situation involving the Korean children, and they passed these stories onto their friends and families back home via the letters they wrote.[22]

"Yank's Appeal Brings Flood of Donations" (1955)

Figure 20: Photograph. Soldiers provide donated items to the young Korean boy.

HQ., U.S. 7TH DIV., Korea—A soldier's letter to his mother on behalf of needy Korean children has resulted in a flood of donations from the citizens of Ludington, Mich. "I have seen kids about five years old die from hunger and cold," wrote PFC William Lange. "I have seen them begging for food like dogs" and "go to the dump and pick for food."

The soldier, assigned to B Btry., 57th FA Bn., asked his mother to "please send CARE boxes to Korea—even if it's just a 10-cent can of soup or a pair of socks—but please give and the Lord will bless you for it." Lange's mother sent the letter to a newspaper in Ludington. When the letter appeared in the paper, Ludington citizens decided to do something about it. They formed an association, The Ludington Helping Hand for Korean Children. Housewives and businessmen made their homes and store collecting points for clothing, food and toys.

Soon after, Mrs. Gerald Heslipen, chairman of the association, wrote Capt. Wilfred C. Oelrich, Lange's battery commander, telling him of the town's response. She enclosed a photo of 22 boxes being mailed at the local post office. In addition to the boxes of needed items, the association ordered four large CARE food packages and 95 U.S. Food Surplus Holiday CARE packages. [23]

GIs were extremely skillful in soliciting help by sending pleading messages to their families back home. Highly dramatic stories about dead Korean children or starving children scavenging like animals for food created what Laura Briggs calls a "visual iconography of rescue," where images of needy children were constructed in such as a way as to draw attention away from the structural factors that caused their plight in the first place and, instead, mobilize ideologies of rescue and compassion that propped up white Americans as rescuers to nonwhite children.[24] Because the "visual iconography of rescue" produced the figure of the needy waif, then it also, according to Briggs, produced its counterpart: the "would-be rescuer."[25] In this way, we can see Figure 19 as a visual iconography of *rescuing*—wherein which the image and the narrative that accompanies that image compels the reader to participate in similar activities as the rescuers shown and discussed in the article. If one soldier's mother can mobilize an entire town to help, imagine what you, the reader, could do.

News programs such as *Paramount News*—considered to be "The Eyes and Ears of the World"[26]—were especially effective in deploying the visual iconography of rescuing by featuring stories of successful rescue missions. One news story entitled "Hand of Mercy…Canadian GIs Save Korean Orphanage"[27] proclaims that "300 Korean youngsters at a Seoul orphanage can sing and smile now" because men from the Royal Canadian Medical Corp supplied them—"in the nick of time"—with food and medical supplies. "Homeless, cold, and hungry," the voiceover continues, "the youngsters would be wanderers once more amidst the bitter backwash of war." After a dramatic pause in the music, the shot fades out of the classroom that the children are sitting in and fades in to the dining hall. The narrator enthusiastically says the next line: "But now you'd never

know there was suffering from sickness and malnutrition." Accompanied by these words is a shot of the children tightly packed in the dining hall. The camera zooms in on several boys eating from bowls that are overflowing with rice and vegetables. They open wide their mouths to take in the large spoonfuls of food. The news clip ends with the narrator reminding us that "A truly humane helping hand" is responsible for the temporary state of abundance we see here.[28]

Figure 21: Still Image. Orphans fill their stomachs full of food, thanks to the donations and help brought in by the Canadian soldiers.

It is no coincidence that so many of these stories concerning the Korean War orphan center on food: either the lack of it (the starving child) or the abundance of it (via Western intervention). Indeed, Klein explains that the narrative of the hungry child was popular during this time, as Cold War geopolitics linked hunger to communism: "hungry children are susceptible to communist promises of a better future; thus hungry children threaten the security of Americans."[29] The narrator in this newsreel alludes to this by

creating a causal relationship between "homeless, cold, and hungry" to "wanderers once more amidst the bitter backwash of war." As wanderers amidst the bitter backwash of war, these children become susceptible to Communist influence. This is why Dr. J. Calvitt Clarke, founder of the Christian Children's Fund (a child sponsorship program that was gaining in strength and popularity during the 1950s), claims that "The hungry children of the world are more dangerous to us than the atom bomb."[30]

Amidst tales of cold, starving, and dying orphans, stories such as the one in *Pacific Stars and Stripes* and this one appearing in *Paramount News* were particularly important because they provided evidence that small acts can make a big difference in the seemingly overwhelming war orphan crisis. These stories reassured those who were watching that ordinary people can effect extraordinary change. And witnessing others participate compelled readers and viewers alike to join in the relief efforts. In this way, the visual iconography of rescuing became just as powerful of a recruiting tool—if not more so—as the visual iconography of rescue because it offered visual proof that small gestures of humanitarianism, such as donating clothes or money or even a ten-cent can of food, can save lives.

Visual iconographies of rescuing persuaded not only individual Americans to participate in the cause for Korean orphans but also big corporations. In a 1953 *Life* editorial, the editor solicits businesses to donate money to take care of Korea's children. Leading by example, the author points out that Time, Inc., which publishes *Life* magazine, made a "substantial corporate gift" to American-Korean Foundation (AKF), a private agency that matches donors with certain rehabilitation projects in Korea. As an added incentive, the editor informs the reader that businesses can give up to 5% of their

net income to charities—tax-free. He explains why corporations should get involved: "the successful rehabilitation of Korea will be good for U.S. foreign policy, and therefore for American business." The editorial ends with this petition: "We urge corporate executives, as well as individuals, to get in touch with A.K.F. A hundred dollars will support one child in an orphanage for a year. A thousand will equip a 20-bed hospital ward."[31]

The *Life* magazine editor's invitation is not unlike the strategy used by the Christian Children's Fund (CCF) to get their readers to "adopt" a child. According to Klein, the CCF pamphlets and advertisements can literally be seen as an invitation to participate in Cold War international and domestic politics. For a mere $10/month, Americans "can purchase a child, protection from communism, and relief from a sense of political powerlessness."[32] In effect, rescuing the child from starvation became a foreign relations strategy and an issue of national security. Likewise, through his editorial, *Life* magazine editor recruited corporations to participate in the global politics of the Cold War. Neocolonialism, national security, and global capitalism coalesced in the rehabilitation of Korea through the figure of the Korean social orphan.

These invitations for political participation via the salvation of the Korean child were rampant among American popular culture—so much so that in 1955, *Look* magazine (subtitled as "America's Family Magazine") included a quiz entitled "Test Yourself! How many of these important messages have reached you?" The introduction states that "it isn't too surprising if your score on this quiz is pretty high. For the fact is that the public service projects shown on these pages are heavily advertised." These projects included the Red Cross, National Safety Council, and Ground Observer Corps.

Interestingly, of the nine quiz questions, one is about Korean orphans. Question/Box 7 reads: "This little Korean girl has just received a package from America. Can you fill in the letters on the box?"[33]

Figure 22: Illustration. "Test Yourself!"

The fact that this question is included attests to the high visibility the plight of the Korean orphan received in American popular culture. Indeed, tens of thousands of Americans responded to these powerful stories by sending relief packages through CARE, donating money to organizations such as AKF, and sponsoring Korean orphans through CCF. But more importantly, being able to answer, "Yes," to this question gives the reader not only a sense of satisfaction (by being "in the know"), but it also gives the reader who actually did send a CARE package a sense of pleasure by having participated in a cause that "America's Family Magazine" recognizes as important and worthwhile.

Perhaps the single most proof of the persuasiveness of the visual iconography of rescuing was the rising interest in the adoption of these children. The ISS-USA records are filled with letters from prospective adoptive parents (PAPs) who became interested in adopting because of what they saw in the media and heard from adoption organizations such as World Vision and Holt Adoption Program concerning Korean orphans. Indeed, ISS Senior Case Consultant Margaret Valk lists the following main reasons why Americans—who had never before been interested in overseas adoption—wanted to adopt a Korean child:

> …they [prospective adoptive families] were asking specifically for a Korean child because of their humanitarian and religious concern. Many have strong religious affiliations and had learned of the miserable plight of the children through the missionary groups in Korea. Others had read articles and seen pictures in the press or had been aroused by the reports of American servicemen who had given firsthand accounts of the devastation of the Korean War and the appalling conditions under which these orphans live and die.[34]

Clearly, the visual iconographies of rescue disseminated by the American media had a direct impact on fueling the adoption of Korean children. In addition, Harry Holt, considered to be the founder of Korean adoption, became interested in adopting Korean orphans after hearing Rev. Bob Pierce of World Vision, Inc., describe their plight. Thus, the construction of the Korean social orphan also produced its counterpart: the prospective adoptive parent. The desperate portrayal of the Korean War orphan, along with the success stories of relief and rescue, inspired Americans to permanently rescue these children through adoption. For ISS, adoptions increased by over 50%.[35] And Holt Adoption Program had so many applicants from PAPs that they stopped processing new applications, shortly after a year in the business.[36]

For many Americans, Korea hardly existed in their consciousness. According to Harold Isaacs who conducted a study of American perceptions of Asia, "vagueness about Asia" had been the "natural condition even of the educated American."[37] Eliminating this vagueness and disinterest towards Asia and Asians was accomplished using a variety of tactics. First, Cold War Orientalism paved the way in helping Americans imagine Asians as part of their family. Second, linking the plight of Korean orphans as an issue of national security worked to conflate familial obligation with political obligation. And finally, the visual iconographies of rescue and rescuing—and the stories that accompanied them—compelled Americans to come to the aid of Korean children. In this way, they also played a key part in maintaining American humanitarianism empire.

Projects of rescue, however, are quite uneven and, in fact, discriminatory in that not all people are considered to be worthy of rescue. As Briggs points out, ideologies of rescue "position some people as legitimately within a circle of care and deserving of resources" and position some people outsides this circle of care and resources.[38] Consequently, I argue that there is another element at work that made Asian bodies—specifically the bodies of Korean social orphans—especially suitable targets of American rescue and salvation: their gendered racialization as Oriental dolls.

"Isn't she a doll?"

Social death may have displaced the orphan's national identity as *Korean*; however, the child's gendered racial identity as *Oriental* was preserved through a nexus of interweaving demands and desires. The geopolitics of the Cold War and the discourse of Cold War Orientalism created a particular set of conditions that made the bodies of

Korean children highly desirable. These children were highly desirable because they were perceived as exotic and cute and because they were, perhaps, the least threatening group of Asians that the U.S. had encountered: they were children—many of whom were infants. In addition, undergoing social death severed their familial and national ties to Korea, which primed them to take on a new American identity. The aura of not being a threat was also fed by conventional Orientalist stereotypes, as the discourses that circulated around these children in the U.S. media constructed them as docile, submissive, and extremely compliant—assuring Americans of their successful assimilation.[39] Thus, Korean social orphans emerged as a prime group of candidates on which America's new policy of integrating Asians into America's national family during the Cold War could be tested.

An effective way to assure their compliance and docility was to fashion them into dolls. In *Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture*, Robert G. Lee identifies and examines the historical and political context in which the "six faces of the Oriental" emerged. They are "the pollutant, the coolie, the deviant, the yellow peril, the model minority, and the gook."[40] I suggest that another "face of the Oriental" became prevalent in American popular culture during the mid-twentieth century: the Oriental doll. Like the other "faces of the Oriental," the Oriental doll was produced under specific political, social, and cultural conditions and functioned to perform specific ideological tasks. Furthermore, the Oriental doll also arose from certain "transformations of the structure of accumulation."[41] Citing economic historians David M. Gordon and Michael Reich, Lee explains that "At each stage of capitalist development, new 'emergent' public spheres are constituted and new demands arise for participation in the dominant public sphere."[42] As

such, economic shifts produce the emergence of new "faces," new racialized, gendered, and sexualized constructions of the Asian. Given the economic shift towards consumer capitalism in the 1950s, I suggest that this particular change in the structure of accumulation provided the conditions in which Korean children as Oriental dolls became mass-marketed commodities for consumption.

"Isn't she a doll?"
Adopted (2009)

According to Korean adoptee Jennifer Fero, this was the first sentence in the letter to her adoptive parents from Holt Adoption Agency, regarding her adoption. It accompanied her photograph.[43]

Turning the child into an object not only made the orphan a commodity to be purchased in the burgeoning era of consumer capitalism but also a target of desire. The combination of traditional Orientalist stereotypes and Cold War politics of integration produced, what I call, yellow desire. Yellow desire is a discursive practice that exploits difference for the purpose of eradicating difference. It runs on the logic that differences can be tamed, managed, and controlled through assimilation. In other words, under yellow desire, the bodies of Korean children become desirable because of their *potential* to integrate successfully in American society and in their new American family. In this way, the burgeoning discourse of the Asian as a model minority during the 1950s also informed the ways in which the Korean child was read and conceived within the confines of the white American nation and domestic family.[44]

The first step in turning Korean orphans into dolls was to erase individual markers of difference. With over 40,000 orphans immediately after the war, the Korean government, under the guidance of American military personnel and Christian missionaries, organized this body into a manageable group. Like most surplus populations, the government worked to control and regulate this diverse population through techniques that homogenized and erased difference. One way, as previously discussed, was through taxonomy: conflating displaced and lost children with orphaned children and categorizing them all as "orphans." Another way was through physical appearance: making them appear indistinguishable from one another. With very few exceptions, all orphan girls have blunt bobbed haircuts cut at or just below the ear and all orphan boys have shaved heads. While some people attribute the shaved head as a precaution towards the spread of lice, this hairstyle is donned solely by male orphans because it connotes masculinity, discipline, and order.[45] (After all, girls are also afflicted with lice, but their heads are not shaved.) Their hairstyles are so similar that from the back, they all look the same. For example, in the *Paramount News* story about the Canadian GIs, a row of ten girls has their backs to the camera.

Figure 23: Still Image. Korean orphans congregate to eat food that was donated by Canadian soldiers.

They look exactly the same, since all you can see are the backs of their heads. Only the clothes they wear mark their difference. But sometimes, even their clothes are the same, so it becomes harder to distinguish the children individually.[46]

Erasing individual difference not only creates a semblance of order and management, but it also creates an aura of mass production. In *Children of Calamity*, John Caldwell recounts cables from CCF headquarters: "Rush me 500 orphans," "Need 200 Korean, 10 Japanese mixed-blood, 50 Chinese, 10 Arabs."[47] These requests sound like department store back orders, as Klein correctly describes.[48] Indeed, Caldwell reports one "memorable occasion" where the request from Richmond, VA, was for a whopping 2,400 Korean orphans.[49] As surplus population, the individual subject is discarded and, in its place, the individual orphan takes on a collective subjectivity. In this case, being a part of the collective reduces the orphan into an object or product that can

fill orders and be collected. In other words, the very language that is used to place these orders for orphaned children transfigures them from human beings into mass-produced products that can be dispersed when cabled and purchased by Westerners.[50]

Figure 24: Still Image. Prototypes of the Korean orphan: toy soldier and Oriental doll.

As previously explicated in Chapter One, the postwar mass production of Korean orphans configured the male and female orphan into miniature replicas of the GI and the *kijichon*, respectively. However, the doll-like visage of these children eventually reduced them to just that: dolls. Males became little toy soldiers, and girls came to resemble the Oriental dolls of the 20th century. Next to the Geisha doll, this less erotic, less physically mature, and less sexual version of the Asian female body has been readily visible in American culture. To be sure, Naoko Shibusawa claims that the "Japan Craze" movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century sparked Orientalist visions of Japan as a "toy-world" made up of people living in "doll-houses."[51] In addition, she

states that "The product that Americans and Europeans most associated with the Japanese was probably the handcrafted Japanese doll."[52] According to Shibusawa, the popularity of the "Jap doll" or "Jappie" (as it was "affectionately" called) "inspired westerners to objectify actual Japanese as 'dolls.'"[53]

The objectification of Asian girls as Oriental dolls was further fueled by the 1927 Doll Exchange between Japan and the U.S. As a way to decrease the political tension that was created after the Immigration Act of 1924 prevented the Japanese from entering U.S. borders, Dr. Sidney Gluick, a former missionary in Japan, formed the Committee on World Friendship among Children.[54] Its first project involved American children from every state, who sent over 11,000 blue-eyed dolls as ambassadors of goodwill and friendship to the annual Japanese Doll Festival.[55] In response, Japanese school children contributed one yen each to purchase 58 Japanese dolls to send to the United States in an effort to "let Americans know our true love and feeling" so that "there will be friendship between Japan and America."[56] The Japanese Friendship dolls—as they were called—toured the U.S., making appearances in museums and exhibits.

About two decades after this event, the very popular Effanbee Doll Company created a doll named "Chinese Patsy," after the original Patsy became a bestseller.[57]

Figure 25: Photographs. Effanbee's "Chinese Patsy" (circa 1946) closely resembles Chinese adoptee Susie Skinner, who arrived to the U.S. in 1954 (from *Children of Calamity*).

With the exception of the bow in her hair and her attire, this doll closely resembles the Korean orphans we saw in the newsreel footage. Indeed, Susie Skinner, a Chinese girl adopted in 1954 by Americans, looks exactly like this doll when she arrives to the United States. She, like the doll, is put on display, as admiring eyes closely inspect and touch her.

Excerpt from "trafficked" (2004)
By Nabiya

we are commodities
sold by our own people
to western faces and western values
mail ordered to be cute, exotic, robust, and to act
as model subjects for our western masters.[58]

The "Japan craze," the Japanese Friendship dolls, and "Chinese Patsy" all served as precursors to imagining the Korean orphan as a literal doll. By the time that Korean adoption began, there was already a strong history of Americans perceiving Asian bodies as playthings, as curios, and as toys. And because Orientalism often conflated (and continues to conflate) Asian ethnicities, the Oriental doll became a universal Asian object. In other words, it often did not matter if the doll was Japanese, Chinese, or Korean. The only important feature was that the doll was racially marked as *Asian*. Therefore, while I suggest that the *Korean* orphan resembled the Oriental dolls of the first half of the 20th century, the same can be said about other Asian orphans. In the photos below, the similarities between Korean orphans and Chinese orphans are so strong that it is difficult to distinguish between them.

Figure 26: Photograph and Still Image. Pictured here are Chinese orphans in Hong Kong (from *Children of Calamity*) and Korean orphans singing at a Christmas Party in Kinsal, Korea.

In showing the likeness between Oriental dolls and Asian orphans through these images, I want to demonstrate the salient connection between the imagined and the real, the plastic and the human. The Japanese Friendship Dolls and the Effanbee doll invoked a popular image of Asian children in the minds of Americans. This plastic image was transferred onto the real bodies of Asian orphans, as we saw from the photo of Susie Skinner and from the shots captured on film by *Paramount News* and the U.S. Department of Defense. Transforming the Korean child into a commodity simultaneously turned her into a fetish. According to Karl Marx, the production of a commodity automatically leads to the production of a fetish; they are inseparable.[59] The fetishism of a commodity ends up disguising the product's relationship to its production, disguising the social relations between things—which ultimately gives the commodity a magical and, hence, desirable quality.[60] Likening the Korean female orphan to a doll transfers all the connotations that "Oriental doll" has onto the child herself, turning the Korean girl, to borrow Marx's words, into a "natural objec[t] with strange social properties."[61] Because the Oriental doll connotes femininity, exoticness, delicateness, silence, and docility, these very descriptions become assigned to the Korean female orphan. And as a fetishized commodity, these characteristics seem inherent and natural to the child rather than fabricated from racist and sexist notions about Asian female bodies. In short, the human child becomes confused with the plastic doll.

Figure 27: Still Images. The Korean doll standing on the floor of a concession stand on a military base looks just like the thousands of orphan girls we see in the film reels. They have the same exact haircut, the same round face, and same look of docility.

Given this conflation and the geopolitical context of U.S.-Korea relations, the Korean orphan as Oriental doll could be seen as the Korean version of the Japanese Friendship Doll. The Korean orphan as Oriental doll does similar labor as the Japanese Friendship doll in that she serves to ease political tension and build friendly relations between the two countries. In this way, she continues the work of the *kijichon* women but in a more palatable, G-rated way. Her labor becomes more palatable precisely because of her fetishized commodification. The Korean orphan as Oriental doll is more successful at disguising her relationship to her production (namely U.S. military intervention and neocolonialism) than the *kijichon* women—who by definition denotes American military occupation—not only because she is a doll (an object presumed to be ahistorical) but also because her consumption is framed within the context of kinship

building and caretaking. Thus, the Korean orphan as Oriental doll facilitates the expansion of U.S. empire though the guise of benevolent consumption/adoption by the American consumer/adoptive parent. In this context, the Korean female body—whether she be a military prostitute or orphan or Oriental doll—becomes the linchpin upon which neocolonial relations between U.S. and Korea are transacted and secured.

It is precisely the doll-like attributes and aesthetics that are assigned to Korean orphans that facilitate their consumption via transnational adoption. After all, a significant reason why Korean orphans—and not all needy children—are considered worthy of rescue is because they are depicted as highly assimilable, as potential model minorities. If the visual iconographies of rescue and rescuing spurred average, predominantly white Americans to act on behalf of Korean War orphans, then the celluloid images of dancing, smiling, happy, and simply cute orphans worked to reassure prospective adoptive families that their adopted child would be easy to parent. This became especially important in an era when the U.S. government was engaged in projects and programs that experimented with integrating Asian bodies into the national landscape of the U.S. The adoption of Korean children into predominantly white American homes became another racially integrative project to test out the viability of Asian assimilation. Depicting Korean orphans as model minority material assured average white Americans of their success. This is clearly seen in the *Paramount News* feature entitled "Party for 2,000…GI's Host to Korean Orphans."

This particular news segment works to recast the Korean orphan as a potential American family member by highlighting her cuteness and resilience and by naturalizing her physical connection to white American bodies. If there is a thesis that is being waged

here in this newsreel, it resides in this proclamation made by the voiceover narrator: "the small fry in Korea is like the small fry anywhere."[62]

Figure 28: Still Image. The facial expression on this little girl not only entertains but also makes her endearing—like a cute little doll.

We see the children sing and dance, play "Ring-around-the Rosie," make funny faces, stand in line for sack lunches, eat picnic-style and, after a long day of activities, fall asleep in the arms of an adult. We even see a group of orphans dressed like American girl scouts.

Figure 29: Still Image. Korean orphans dress in Girl Scout's attire. After receiving her bagged lunch from a GI, the female scout salutes him.

These scenes resemble a typical summer party that any middle-class white American child might attend. (A major difference is the presence of GIs and the overwhelming number of children in attendance compared to adults.) Seeing these Korean orphans engaged in typical children's activities—even participating in Girls Scouts—makes them more relatable to the predominantly white American audience watching this newsreel. Images like these narrowed the distance that many Americans may have felt towards the orphans due to differences in race, nationality, and culture. Film coverage like this fueled yellow desire by making their incorporation less threatening, portraying them as cute little dolls and marketing them to be "like the small fry anywhere." This was especially significant considering that, as Klein noted, Americans were slowly starting to reimagine an American family that included Asians. Depicting these children as if they could be any child made it possible for wary Americans to imagine them as their own: if the child is like *any* child, she could potentially be *my* child.

Even though the narrator acknowledges the fact that these children are different—that they have experienced tremendous trauma at such a young age—the focus is on the similarities that these children have to other (American) children. The voiceover narration is as follows: "Over 100,000 children lost both parents in a war that ravaged their country, but there's no sadness today because it's party day! ...Now off to the dance. And what they lack in fancy footwork, they make up in facial expressions. Happiness and play for Korean orphans. Their past tragedies temporarily forgotten."[63] The children's tragic circumstances are only mentioned to highlight the joy and carefree spirit of the children filmed. But even more significantly, they are mentioned to communicate to the viewer that these orphans are highly resilient. The message is clear: they are not permanently traumatized by the war; rather, their mourning/grieving time is short and, as a result, they can quickly move on with their lives. Thus, one can be assured that their adjustment period will be short and smooth, as well.

Excerpt from *Adopted*

Jacqueline Trainer (now adoptive mom to Chinese adoptee): "She did most of her grieving in China [3 days], which is remarkable and fast."

John Trainer (adoptive dad): "She made it so easy…She's adjusted so well."

Jacqueline Trainer: "Nobody believed that she cried…Yeah, we have a perfect child."[64]

Because the type of help solicited was gradually evolving from emergency aid (i.e., food, clothing, and shelter) to finding permanent American homes for these children, it became important to portray these children in a palatable, relatable way to

help average white Americans envision them as part of their family. Depicting them as cute little dolls and portraying them as "every child" were effective strategies. Displaying their supposedly high level of resilience through images of dancing and smiling orphans was another; however, just in case Americans had trouble imagining Asian bodies in their homes, newsreels such as this one did the work for them by showing Korean children in intimate contact with white American bodies. The newsreel ends with this final image. It is of a little girl, sleeping in the arms of a Colonel. The narrator remarks, "Little Miss, you've had a busy day."[65]

Figure 30: Still Image. A young girl falls asleep on the GI's shoulder after a long day of partying.

The queer dimensions of this still image (i.e., Korean adoption as a queer formation of family) are quickly elided as this image works to normalize the physical and, most importantly, *parental* bond between Korean child and white American adult. Although the white American represented here is a soldier, male and female viewers can both

identify with him because the heightened sentimental and paternal tone that their body composition evokes makes him less of a military man and more of a parent. Viewers are touched not only by his show of sensitivity and warmth but also by the image of the exhausted child seeking comfort and rest in his arms. The seeming ease in which she curls up and lays her head on his shoulder gives the impression that she belongs to him and he belongs to her. There are no walls—no racial, cultural, or national barriers—between them. No issues of attachment here. They seem natural together—like father and daughter. A newsreel that began by highlighting the Korean orphan as Oriental doll ends with a scene that recasts the Korean orphan as potential American daughter. Her racial and cultural difference is suspended as she is held like a daughter. For a split second, the Oriental doll has become an American child via the figure of the white American patriarch. Her humanization is brought out by the parental energy of this American. The seemingly effortless quality of this union between the Korean child and the American adult (parent) signals to the viewer that Korean orphans would fit in easily and naturally into their American homes. Thus, rather than a depiction of a queer kinship formation, the picture here suggests that Korean adoption could be made to resemble "normal" white American families.

The marketing of children to make them appealing to Americans only increased as the years went by. As the immediate crisis of the war orphans' plight began to wane and as American troops began to withdraw, more direct strategies were developed to inspire American citizens to adopt these children. Transnational adoption became increasingly promoted as the only way to provide permanent help to the orphans of Korea. And this project was spearheaded by Harry Holt. In the next chapter, I explain

how the adoption of Korean children flourished under Holt's leadership and how he came to institutionalize this practice. As a result of institutionalizing Korean adoption, increased attention was paid to make Korean orphans adoptable (i.e., American and normal) in the eyes of Americans. Thus, processes of Americanization and normalization replaced militarization, which became the new modi operandi within the walls of the orphanages. How these two processes turned unadoptable orphans into adoptable adoptees is the primary focus of my next chapter.

Notes

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[1] In addition, in 1946, on the eve of Philippine independence, Congress established immigration quotas from India and the Philippines, which commenced the dismantling of the Asiatic Barred Zone of 1917. See Robert G. Lee, *Orientals: Asian American in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 149.
[2] Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 245. Robert G. Lee also suggests that this repeal served to persuade China to help the U.S. fight the Japanese during WWII. See *Orientals*, 149.
[3] Robert G. Lee, 149.
[4] Erika Lee, 245.
[5] Caroline Chung Simpson, *An Absent Presence: Japanese Americans in Postwar American Culture, 1945-1960* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 43-75.
[6] Ibid., 53, 75.
[7] Ibid., 153.
[8] Ibid., 152.
[9] Ibid., 155-156. Simpson argues that it was precisely these earlier projects of racially integrating Japanese Americans—through internment and resettlement programs—that enabled the depiction of Asian Americans as model minorities to form during the 1950s and 1960s (164-185). For more information on the WRA Resettlement Project, see Simpson, 152-164.
[10] Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 9.
[11] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (NY: Vintage Books, 1979), 3-7.
[12] The evolution from Orientalism to Cold War Orientalism can be attributed to America's evolving ideas of race. Klein points out that Franz Boas' work shifted the concept of race away from biological difference to cultural difference, making the idea of a pluralistic model of society especially salient during America's fight against the Nazis in WWII. She goes onto explain that "Cold War ideologues mobilized this idea of a racially and ethnically diverse America in the service of U.S. global expansion" (11). As a result, racial tolerance and inclusion were key concepts in Cold War Orientalism. The primary distinction then between Orientalism and Cold War Orientalism is this: Orientalism denigrates and rejects difference, while Cold War Orientalism seeks to integrate difference.
[13] Klein, 16.
[14] Ibid., 144-146.
[15] 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; 16.
[16] Jodi Kim, "An 'Orphan' with Two Mothers: Transnational and Transracial Adoption, the Cold War, and Contemporary Asian American Cultural Politics," *American Quarterly* 61.4 (December 2009): 855-880; 857.
[17] Signe Howell, *The Kinning of Foreigners: Transnational Adoption in a Global Perspective* (NY: Berghahn Books, 2006), 4.
[18] Ibid., 5.
[19] "Mr. Holt 'Moves the World,'" *The Oregonian*, 9 April 1956. Newspaper clipping. International Social Service-United States of America Branch, Inc. (ISS-USA) papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1955-1957, Vol. 1," Social Welfare History Archives (SWHA), Minneapolis, MN.
[20] "Mrs. Holt Says Korea Tots Dying," *Oregon Daily Journal*, 24 July 1957. Newspaper clipping. ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1955-1957, Vol. 1," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[21] Eloise Dungan, "Orphan Homes: Mrs. Pettiss Tells of Adoption," *San Francisco News*, 20 Feb. 1956. Newspaper clipping. ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1955-1957, Vol. 1," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.

[22] Bob McNeil, "Good Samaritans in Uniform," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 15 Dec. 1953, p. 2. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/PSS-323-WQ.htm (accessed 7/13/08).
[23] "Yank's Appeal Brings Flood of Donations," *Pacific Stars and Stripes* (Yokohama edition), 11 Feb. 1955. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://koreanchildren.org/docs/SSS-574WP-Q.htm (accessed 12/29/09).
[24] Laura Briggs, "Mother, Child, Race, Nation: The Visual Iconography of Rescue and the Politics of Transnational and Transracial Adoption," *Gender & History* 15.2 (2003): 179-200; 180-181.
[25] Briggs, 184.
[26] This proclamation appears at the beginning of each *Paramount News* newsreel and serves as the opening shot.
[27] Although the Korean War is primarily discussed in terms of a war between the Soviet Union and the United States, the U.S. relied on the United Nations to help keep their enemies on the northern side of the 38th parallel. As members of the United Nations, Canada assisted the U.S. both during and after the war. Airing this news story not only informed U.S. citizens about the neighborly actions of their Canadian allies, but it may have also worked to inspire Americans to act, so as not to be outdone by their Canadian neighbors.
[28] "Hand of Mercy…Canadian GIs save Korean Orphanage," *Paramount News*, 6 Feb. 1952, PARA: Paramount Pictures, Inc., Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, National Archives at College Park.
[29] Klein, 154.
[30] Qtd. in Klein, 154.
[31] "Helping Koreans Help Themselves," *Life* 35.15 (October 12, 1953), 48.
[32] Klein, 152-159.
[33] "Test Yourself!" *Look* 19.1 (January 11, 1955), 56.
[34] Margaret A. Valk, "Adjustment of Korean-American Children in American Adoptive Homes," National Conference on Social Welfare, 1957, p. 3, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Adjustment of Korean-American Children," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[35] Dungan, "Orphan Homes: Mrs. Pettiss Tells of Adoption."
[36] Harry Holt, "Dear Friends," 27 December 1956, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1955-1957, Vol. 1," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[37] qtd. in Klein, 145.
[38] Briggs, 181.
[39] This was particularly important given the goals of Cold War Orientalism. Nonthreatening Korean War orphans in need of rescue provided a salve to the predominant Asian stereotype of the day: the yellow peril.
[40] Robert G. Lee, 8.
[41] Ibid., 11.
[42] Ibid.
[43]Barb Lee, dir., *Adopted* (NY: Point Made Films, 2009). DVD. I insert blocked quotes from this movie to illustrate how history continues to inform the present. To be more specific, I embed them in this section to reveal how certain discourses and ideologies that were created in first half of the twentieth century have remained unchanged in the discourses and ideologies swirling around Asian transnational adoption now.
[44] For more information on the 1950s production of the model minority, see chapter five in Robert G. Lee and chapter five in Simpson.
[45] And as previously argued in Chapter One, since male orphans were made in the image of GIs, they took on the aesthetics of the military, including the shaved head.
[46] "Hand of Mercy…Canadian GIs save Korean Orphanages."
[47] John C. Caldwell, *Children of Calamity* (NY: John Day Company, 1957), 29.
[48] Klein, 158.
[49] Caldwell, 29.
[50] Interestingly, as the direness of the situation recedes, the adoption of children becomes more precise; children become more individualized as PAPs send in requests for certain characteristics and can choose which child they would like to adopt. I discuss this further in Chapter Three.

[51] Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 23.
[52] Ibid., 23.
[53] Ibid., 23
[54] Museum of International Folk Art, "Miss Yamaguchi," http://moifa.org/collections/aboutcollectionsyamaguchi. html (accessed 1/27/10).
[55] Esther Singleton, *Dolls* (Washington, DC: Hobby House Press, 1962), 77.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Wechill, "Effanbee Patsy Dolls, Part I," Angelfire, http://www.angelfire.com/tx3/dollchat2/patsy1.html (accessed 6/29/08). After her debut in 1928, the original Patsy was called "Loveable Imp" and "Hit of the Year."
[58] Nabiya, "trafficked," rpt. in *O.K.A.Y.: Overseas Korean Artists Yearbook*, vol. 4 (2004): 83.
[59] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production*, vol. 1, trans. Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965), 72.
[60] Ibid., 72-73.
[61] Ibid., 82.
[62] "Party for 2,000…GI's Host to Korean Orphans," *Paramount News*, 22 Oct. 1954, PARA: Paramount Pictures, Inc., Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, National Archives at College Park.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Barb Lee.
[65] "Party for 2,000…GI's Host to Korean Orphans."

CHAPTER THREE

From Orphan to Adoptee: Normalizing the Adopted Child

In Chapter One, I traced the phenomenon known as Korean adoption back to the American military occupation of Korea that began in 1945. I argued that the militarization of the orphanages built in postwar Korea led to the militarization of the children living there. In this chapter, I focus on the normalization and Americanization of orphans. The withdrawal of American troops at the end of the war resulted in the waning imprint of militarization within the orphanages. The militarization process was replaced by processes of normalization and Americanization, as efforts to recruit Americans to become adoptive parents became increasingly prioritized.

While the first chapter investigated the political and socioeconomic origins of postwar orphanages and orphans, this chapter concerns itself with the functions and inner workings of the orphanage and its effects on the orphans. This chapter investigates what happens to the child after he or she arrives at the orphanage. How does an unwanted, abandoned *orphan* become a desirable Korean *adoptee*? I ask this question to suggest that the term "adoptee"—as I demonstrated in the first two chapters with the term "orphan"—is not a natural, transparent, and inherently knowable category of identity; rather, this chapter illustrates that it takes ongoing work, commitment, time, energy, and innumerable resources to construct an adoptee, to turn an orphan into an adoptee. It is here, within the walls of the orphanage, where the subject formation of the adoptee takes shape.

The images and the discourses that circulated around the Korean social orphan after the war—as discussed in Chapter Two—may suggest that the orphans in Korea were ready for adoption, as is. This chapter suggests otherwise, as I attend to the behind-the-scenes labor that was expended to not only turn orphans who were categorized as "unadoptable" into "adoptable" children but also to prepare "adoptable" children for American life. While the extra effort to make these children desirable may not have been necessary for servicemen who had pre-existing relationships with their adoptive children prior to their adoption, these added initiatives were necessary to spark and sustain the interests of strangers in the U.S. who did not have any prior contact with these children. Indeed, it was upon *seeing* and *touching* these children that prompted American GIs to adopt the orphans with whom they had contact.[1] Because the average civilian in the U.S. did not have access to these children in the same way that GIs did, more labor needed to be exerted to get civilians halfway around the world to bring them into their family. The extra care and effort to make orphans desirable and adoptable is the subject of this chapter.

I begin by explaining how the withdrawal of U.S. military forces opened up a new sphere of influence. If the U.S. Armed Forces assumed control of Korean orphans during and immediately after the Korean War, then American civilians like Harry Holt quickly took charge of the orphan situation during the postwar years. By establishing the Orphan's Foundation Fund and Holt Adoption Program in 1956, as well as working with legislators to change Asian immigration laws, Holt institutionalized Korean adoption in the U.S. He also built his own orphanage in Korea, which directly supplied his adoption agency with orphans for adoption. Because Holt's orphans were specifically slated for

adoption (rather than sponsorship) in the U.S., he implemented policies and procedures to help ready the orphan for travel to the States. Part of this had to do with visa requirements (e.g., passing medical examinations), but much of it had to do with making the orphan appealing to Americans and helping the orphan transition into American culture and lifestyle.

In the second section, I examine Holt's Il San orphanage as a "processing station" that prepares Korean orphans for adoption. To be more specific, I identify and examine the various techniques used to turn orphans into adoptees. These techniques—or technologies of power, as Michel Foucault calls them—are centered on processes of normalization.[2] The orphanage, as an institution of discipline, works to normalize the Korean orphan into an adoptee. Not surprisingly, the physical health and body of the child are the targets of scrutiny upon his or her entrance into the orphanage. The orphan's body is subjected to different methods of bio-power,[3] techniques and procedures that govern life and subjugate bodies, which work to protect the health and appearance of incoming orphans so that they may be made useful.

Because the end goal is adoption by Americans, the third section examines the ways in which the orphans' regulation is tied to the process of Americanization. The processing station of the orphanage not only turns unadoptable orphans into adoptable adoptees, but it also prepares them for life in the United States. Thus, the orphanage becomes the institution where Korea's social outcasts are manipulated and shaped into useful subjects for the state: economically profitable for Korea and politically beneficial for the U.S.[4] In this way, the work that Holt engages in can be regarded as a civilizing project of modernity. As hallmarks in the modernization and, therefore, civilization of

Korea, Americanization and Christianity are deployed to help transform what Holt calls the "discards of society" into productive citizens of the United States, ensuring the success of Korean adoption as a racially integrative project.

I end this chapter by examining how the subject formation of the adoptee is implicated in the politics of legitimacy. After all, the practice of transnational and transracial adoption organizes itself around a certain logic that situates the adoptive parent as being more fit to raise children than the birthparent. The process in which American adoptive parents gain legitimacy over the Korean birthmother becomes another aspect that reinforces the neocolonial relationship between the U.S. and Korea.

Harry Holt and the Rise of Korean Adoption

From 1950-1953, a total of 5,720,00 men from the American Armed Forces were sent to Korea.[5] With the conclusion of the Korean War in 1953, American soldiers were leaving the war-torn country by the thousands. As GIs exited Korea, so, too, did the money that they contributed to support and sponsor orphanages because, according to William Asbury, "the too-generous support of the military is impossible to maintain."[6] He explains the reasons behind the tenuous nature of GI support:

> The military support to orphanages in Korea…if it is sustained over any long period of time, depends upon the interest of one or a very few individuals in nearby military establishments. This highly personalized interest often ceases when the individual or individuals are transferred [or sent back home]. The highly mobile nature of military personnel render [sic] support to children's homes as anything but dependable.[7]

This "out of sight, out of mind" nature of soldier support resulted in the plummeting of GI financial contributions to orphanages after the war. John C. Caldwell even mentions

that while stories of Americans supporting orphanages and adopting children were commonplace during the war years, "such stories now are much less frequent" since the soldiers left. Caldwell even cites an Eighth Army public relations officer as saying that "it is frequently necessary now [1955] to improvise or to actually invent a good-deed story."[8]

As military aid to Korea decreased, government financial aid, surprisingly, increased steadily after the war. U.S. government aid to Korea rose rapidly each year by the millions from 1950 to 1957.[9] Beginning in 1958, economic aid began to steadily decline.[10] In spite of this, U.S. aid made up 52% of the total Korean budget in 1961.[11] Ten years later (1971), the U.S. government ceased providing economic aid to Korea, except for assistance in the form of loans.[12] Despite the increased funds allotted to Korea after the war, very little of that money was set aside to support orphans and maintain orphanages. To be sure, the Korean government allotted five won per month for each child residing in an orphanage.[13] At this time, five won equaled about half a cent. As one orphanage superintendent observed, "That is not even enough to buy the sugar to put in a cup of coffee!"[14] Even though the Korean government did very little to support its orphanages, it did not stop them from taxing these institutions. In 1955, the Christian Children's Home in Anyang paid 450,000 won in taxes—which was considered astronomical in the postwar economy.[15] These taxes, along with the majority of the American aid received, were used to support Korea's armed forces.

Because the Korean government, according to Asbury's findings during his survey of Korean orphanages in 1954, "cannot support the large number of orphanages it will be left with if the American and Allied military establishments leave Korea," other

solutions were created once the war ended.[16] For example, World Vision began a sponsorship program after collecting background information and pictures of 1,200 Korean orphans.[17] Christian Children's Fund (CCF) helped to offset the loss of GI support by assisting orphanages in Korea, helping them financially through their sponsorship program. In 1954, CCF took 104 orphanages under its wing, financially supporting 15,694 children.[18] By 1956, the number of orphanages that CCF supported rose to 140.[19] In addition, nearly 18,000 children were sponsored by 11,000 Americans that same year.[20] Although sponsorship succeeded in replacing GI aid, transnational adoption emerged as an increasingly popular method to take care of orphans after the support of the U.S. military dwindled in postwar Korea.

After hearing Rev. Bob Pierce of World Vision describe the dire situation of Korean War orphans, Harry Holt, a 50 year-old Oregonian farmer, decided to sponsor several orphans through World Vision. He, like thousands of Americans, sent $10 a month to the organization to help feed and take care of Korean children.[21] Sponsorship turned to adoption, however, during a visit to Korea on May 30, 1955. There, Holt observed over "2,000 GI-fathered and abandoned infants…in particular need of assistance."[22] During this trip, Holt came to conclude that adoption by American families was the best way to help these orphans. Indeed, he selected and adopted eight mixed-race Korean children, despite having six kids of his own, before he left Korea.[23] In becoming the ultimate figure of the Good Samaritan, he chose four girls and four boys who "[weren't] so attractive" and were the "least fortunate" of the group.[24] This act marked the birth of Korean adoption, as we now know it.

Upon his return to the States, Holt launched a full-fledged mission to find these Korean orphans homes in the U.S. Through the use of different media outlets, Holt promoted adoption as the best way to help Korean orphans rather than donating materials or sponsoring them. His adoption of eight Korean orphans gained much publicity. His story was especially sensational to the public because he adopted so many. Adopting eight children at one time was unprecedented. It was, in fact, illegal since the Refugee Act allotted only two Korean orphans per American couple. New legislation was created specifically for Holt in order to permit his adoption of all eight children.[25] His story appeared in newspapers all over the country. He was also featured in *Life* magazine.[26] *Paramount News* even documented his journey, beginning in Korea where the children were being prepared for travel and ending in the U.S. where the children were shown easing into their new life and home in Creswell, OR.[27] The media attention surrounding Holt's adoption led to increased interest in adoption by Americans. According to one newspaper article, aptly titled, "Mr. Holt 'Moves the World,'" "So heartening was the Holt story, that it brought appeals from 1000 additional American families willing to make homes for orphans."[28] Mr. Holt indeed was moving the world towards the transnational adoption of these children.

With the incorporation of the Orphan's Foundation Fund (OFF) and the establishment of the Holt Adoption Program (HAP) in 1956, Holt pioneered the institutionalization of Korean adoption in the U.S. OFF was a non-profit corporation that used funds from public and private donations to "pay expenses of hospitalization, housing, nursing, and care of Korean war orphans while they are being processed for adoption by Americans, and paying expenses relating thereto."[29] HAP was the

organization that oversaw the logistical and bureaucratic portion of matching Korean orphans with prospective adoptive parents in the U.S. Under this program, over 1,000 Korean children were placed in American homes from 1955-1958.[30] By 1960, almost 2,000 children had been placed through HAP.[31] Seven years later, that number doubled to 4,000.[32] In comparison, ISS averaged about 20 placements per year so that by 1960, the organization had matched about 100 Korean children with American families in the U.S.[33] By 1965, this number rose to 100 placements per year.[34] As ISS General Director Paul R. Cherney admits, Holt "place[d] many more children from Korea than all other agencies combined."[35] And as the largest adoption agency, about half of all Korean adoptees were place through HAP.[36]

The reason why Holt was able to achieve such high numbers (as compared to ISS, for example) is because he dealt with proxy adoptions. Because the Refugee Relief Act was about to expire on December 31, 1956, Holt used this unorthodoxed procedure to bring as many Korean orphans into the U.S. before the termination date. In proxy adoptions, a representative of the adoptive parents travels to Korea and completes the adoption in the foreign court. Consequently, adoptions are completed "sight unseen" between the adopted child and adoptive parent, in order to speed up the adoption process.[37] This practice was criticized by established social welfare agencies such as ISS and local state welfare departments because proxy adoptions did not provide a trial period wherein which the child lived with the new family before the adoption was finalized. This trial period was protocol among licensed adoption agencies because, according to social workers, it protects the child.[38] For HAP, getting the children to the U.S. as quickly as possible was more important than spending time to find the best match.[39] As

an independent adoption organization, Holt eschewed these minimum standards that licensed social service agencies and state welfare departments considered to be necessary. In many ways, Holt didn't feel like these rules applied to him because he believed that he received a prophecy from the Lord concerning the rescue of Korean children.[40] Holt felt that "man's rules" did not apply to him. Furthermore, reading and hearing stories of Korean orphans perceived to be at death's door legitimized his cutting of bureaucratic corners and becoming "impatient of any social agency procedures necessary to protect the children."[41] Indeed, John E. Adams, who took over as Executive Director of HAP after Holt's death, admits that the organization is "dedicated to placing as large a number of children for adoption from Korea, as they can possibly manage, with at least minimal protection."[42]

Despite the numerous criticisms Holt received concerning his adoption practices from social welfare agencies—including the threat of taking legal action against him—he was respected and admired by people all across the nation, especially by those with power. For example, the U.S. embassy—in its show of support—allotted Holt with special privileges. While most adoption agencies could only process adoptions on a certain day of the week, Holt was given a special desk at the Embassy and was allowed to process children on a daily basis.[43] The State Public Welfare Commission of Oregon also acknowledged Holt's favorable reputation: "We…believe that because of the favorable publicity and community support that Mr. Holt has received through this state as well as nationally, any attempt to take legal action would only increase his efforts and the public support accorded him."[44]

Not only did the American people embrace Holt's activities but so, too, did Korean President Syngman Rhee. As early as 1956, Holt "undoubtedly gained great status in Korea and ha[d] the cooperation of officials in that country."[45] According to Holt, ISS and other American social welfare agencies "lost face in Korea" because of "their slowness and lack of cooperation in adoptions."[46] Holt, on the other hand, proved to be efficient, sending several charter planes full of orphans back to the United States. In Spring 1957, Holt had established a receiving station that impressed Rhee with its speed and efficiency in processing children for adoption overseas.[47] According to ISS director William T. Kirk, the reason why President Rhee supported Holt and not ISS was because "They [the Korean government] are interested only in getting rid of the children by the quickest means and without concern for the long-run consequences."[48] Kirk recalls that Rhee had been quoted as saying "Get these children out of Korea" and "[I] don't care if they throw them in the sea."[49] These sentiments certainly were not held by Holt; however, for both parties, "speed was the most important factor in this situation."[50] HAP expedited the removal of orphans out of Korea faster than any other social welfare agency. And Holt was generously rewarded. In 1958, the Korean government bestowed him with the highest award given to civilians for his work with Korean orphans: the Medal for Public Welfare Service.[51] But perhaps the greatest reward came from knowing that the Korean government, according to one of his daughters, "would do almost anything he asked."[52] As proof, she recounts how the Korean government changed its zoning laws in order to accommodate the building of Holt's orphanage—despite its dangerously close proximity to a powder factory.[53] Furthermore, in 1961, the Korean government codified an adoption law that normalized proxy adoptions—the type of

adoption for which Holt was infamous.[54] (Ironically, the U.S. Congress banned proxy adoptions that same year, making the new adoption law in Korea inoperable.)

The building of another orphanage by Holt seems almost overkill in a country that tripled the number of orphanages after the war; however, the number of orphans was increasing rather than decreasing after the war. In 1955, 53,000 children were housed in 496 orphanages.[55] In 1965, approximately 67,000 children resided in over 600 orphanages.[56] The majority of these children in 1955 were indeed direct products of the war; however, this was not the case by 1961. Ironically, the practice of transnational adoption did not work to reduce these numbers. On the contrary, the rate at which Korean children were abandoned increased rather than decreased after the institutionalization of Korean adoption: from 715 abandoned children in 1955 to over 9,000 children in 1964.[57]

According to ISS-American Branch Director Paul Cherney, the exponential increase in child abandonment can be attributed to two factors: the devastated economy after the war and postwar financial support from Americans.[58] This second factor—American financial support of Korean orphanages and orphans—created a viscous cycle in which financial support fueled abandonment. At least 75% of the children in Korean orphanages were supported by Americans through sponsorship. The money not only supported the child being sponsored, but it was also used to take care of those who were not sponsored. As Cherney points out, "It is reported that many parents abandon their children to the orphanages knowing the children will *receive better physical care and education than the family can provide*. Whenever a sponsored child leaves the orphanage the income for his care stops so the incentive is to hold the children rather than try to

reestablish them with family or relatives."[59] Cherney seems to equate the orphanage as a place where abandoned children are housed, when clearly the intentions of many parents "leaving" their children do so with the confidence that they will receive better care there than at home. Abandonment implies that parents do not care about their children. Based on Cherny's words, the majority of the parents dropping off their children at the orphanage did so because they cared deeply for the welfare of their children. Thus, I want to reframe the discourse of "abandonment" around the discourse of separation. I believe "separation" is a more accurate term, since many of the children were separated from their parents rather than *abandoned* (in the literal sense of the word) by their parents.

There is another reason that fueled the separation from parent(s) and child: the Korean government's lack of prioritizing social welfare and family services. By 1976, over 40% of Korea's national budget was still allotted to the Defense.[60] Social Welfare and Social Service spending, on the other hand, continued to be given the lowest priority in the national budget.[61] Because of the Korean government's lack of financial investment in providing social services for its citizens, both the number of foreign orphanages and the number of children separated from their parent(s) rose. Consequently, Korean orphanages became social welfare and social service centers—rather than solely institutions of abandoned children—where struggling families went to get financial relief.

This reliance on American money—which supported Korean orphanages through sponsorship and adoption programs—fueled the separation of children from their families as it became the primary method of social welfare service and family planning offered to

single mothers and poor families. Ironically, what began as a mission to solve the orphan problem actually stimulated child separation and provided the Korean government with strong incentives to abrogate its social welfare responsibilities to westerners. Namely, Korean adoption, according to Patricia Nye's report on her visit to Korea in 1976, "brings substantial money to Korea" and it "sets a precedent of how Korea can transfer it welfare responsibilities to other countries."[62]

The Korean government's lack of interest and lack of financial aid in providing social welfare services to orphaned children, abandoned children, separated children, single mothers, and poor families—along with the exuberant financial support offered by Americans—created a perfect storm in which the number of orphanages and children residing in them would increase long after the Korean War. So when Holt broke ground to begin building his orphanage, it is difficult to say if he was meeting a growing need or fueling the separation of Korean children from their parent(s). Perhaps he was doing both. What is clear is that in constructing the Il San orphanage, he not only secured his very own supply of orphans (now composed of orphaned, abandoned, and separated children) for his adoption agency, but he also laid the foundation for a highly efficient system of processing orphans for overseas adoption.

By 1965, Il San Orphanage had developed into its own "miniature city" within the larger city of Il San.[63] As a self-sustaining city, it had its own "power, water, laundry, heat, fuel supply, warehouses, medical dispensary, kitchen and dining hall, offices, school and chapel" and eleven large buildings that housed the orphans.[64] It even had its own rice mill, soybean processing plant, and a macaroni manufacturing plant.[65] In contrast to the economically devastated and war-torn Korea in which this "miniature city"

existed, Il San orphanage distinguished itself as a productive, organized, and well-maintained facility that was prepared to receive and discipline abandoned children. Indeed, it was described by a journalist as a "processing station for children being adopted by foreign families."[66] In the next section, I examine the various techniques used to "process" orphans for adoption.

Making the Unadoptable Adoptable: The Docile Body of the Adoptee

Foucault's corpus investigates the relationship between technologies of power and the management of populations and the self. In scrutinizing the medical clinic, mental institutions, and prisons, Foucault gazes upon the margins of society in order to gain knowledge about the relationship between technologies of power and the operations of the self. By investigating this relationship, he ultimately explains how the normal is differentiated from the abnormal. As such, his theories are useful in examining how adoptable orphans are differentiated from the unadoptable. To be sure, not all orphans are considered adoptable; many are considered unfit and unsuitable for adoption by Americans. So what makes an orphan suitable for adoption? What is the difference between a child who is unadoptable and a child who is adoptable?

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault narrows in on one specific technology of power: discipline. Discipline is a method used to control whole populations by meticulously controlling the movement and operations of the body which "assure[s] the constant subjection of its force and impose[s] upon them a relation of docility-utility."[67] This relation—docility-utility—signifies the belief that the more obedient an individual

is, the more useful, skillful and, therefore, productive he or she will become. Discipline turns a useless, disobedient body into a docile body.

The following equation sums up Foucault's definition of a docile body: analyzable body + manipulable body = docile body. A docile body is not only one that can be examined and scrutinized but also one that can be "subjected, used, transformed and improved"; it can be shaped and trained for the purposes and uses of the state.[68] To make a body docile, then, is a project of national interests. The body, as it is disciplined, becomes docile—making it manipulable and useful for the purposes of the state which is to enhance, produce, expand, and contribute to the well-being of the state. This same logic of docility-utility permeates in the orphanage in order to improve the "useless" orphan (according to the Korean nation) and turn them into productive, useful citizen-subjects who can contribute to the state's economic expansion and well-being. Upon entering the orphanage, the orphan is "improved" in terms of hygiene, physical health and development, and overall physical appearance.

One of the first things an orphan receives after having arrived at the orphanage is a bath. In "Korean Orphan Story" a film produced by the Department of Defense, we witness the bathing ritual firsthand, as a young orphan boy is dropped off at the orphanage. Despite being staged (there are several "takes"), this scene is quite informative. As he enters through the sliding doors, he appears disheveled, with his hair sticking up in various directions.

Figure 31: Still Images. Integral to the "Korean Orphan Story" is the movement from filthiness to cleanliness.

His too large coat hangs on his small frame, and one of the sleeves are tattered. As he cowers in the corner, a young Korean woman prepares his bath, filling a small metal tub with water. She commences to take off his clothes. Before we see any nudity, the director says, "Cut." The next shot is of him already in the tub, his torso and arms lathered with Lux soap. (A large box of Lux soap is captured in the frame.) The Korean woman thoroughly scrubs his body with a washcloth. Then she passes the bubble-laden washcloth over his entire face several times, as he winces when soap gets in his eyes.

The next shot shows him standing outside of the tub, drying off with a towel and putting on a new set of clothes that fit him perfectly.[69] The fact that this scene is fictionalized underscores just how important this cleaning ritual is to the story they are trying to tell.

As this scene suggests, integral to the Korean orphan journey is the movement from being filthy and disheveled to becoming fresh and clean upon arriving at the orphanage. The message of the orphanage as a hygienic place that keeps the bodies of orphans clean is also stressed in HAP newsletters. Readers are told that after 10 month-old Lee Van arrived at Holt's Il San orphanage, he was promptly given a bath. [70] Lee Jeffie received the same attention after having arrived with "his hair stuck out all over" and "mixed with a good deal of dirt."[71] The orphanage as a site of cleanliness and order is reinforced by the story of Park Ok. Seven-year-old Park Ok had run away from the Il San Orphanage. He had been missing for three months until Betty, one of Holt's daughters, found him. The three months away significantly altered his appearance: "His hair was long, and he was filthy," recounts Holt's wife, Bertha.[72] He had also lost weight and contracted lice. Once he reenters the orphanage, however, his lice ridden hair is immediately cut off and he is given a bath. Clean and well groomed, he is apparently back to his "old self" (the self prior to running away). Within the walls of the orphanage, Park is able to rid himself of the filth and disease contracted from the world outside the orphanage.

Along with being bathed, orphans underwent medical testing. The physical examination of the orphan's body became a fundamental way of disciplining the orphans' bodies. The creation of a medical history for each child began the moment he or she stepped inside the orphanage. For practical reasons, children who were in dire need of

medical care needed to be identified so that they could be treated. But collecting medical information had as much to do with identifying and treating the sick, as it had to do with disciplining the orphan's body. Indeed, discipline requires the ability to differentiate between healthy and sickly bodies. In *The Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault explains how medical knowledge was utilized in a way that normalized the healthy body. Because the well-being of bodies became directly linked to the health of the government and nation, medicine was given the "splendid task of establishing in men's live the positive role of health, virtue, and happiness."[73] As a result, medicine was no longer confined to curing ills but was concerned with compiling knowledge of what it meant to be healthy. Physical health became normalized as medicine dictated and authorized, according to Foucault, "the standards for physical and moral relations of the individual and of the society in which he live[d]"; medicine became a system of knowledge about the "natural and social man": the normal man.[74] Medical knowledge concerned itself with normality (i.e., the standard functions of the body, organs, etc.), thereby normalizing physical health.

Physical health was not only a concern for doctors and medical professionals; it was also a concern for the state. The relationship between the state and physical fitness is acutely seen in American government standards for entrance into the United States.[75] Only healthy bodies are allowed to immigrate. According to Nayan Shah, "The immigration medical exam…sought to measure fitness and detect defects in a broad spectrum of the population."[76] Consequently, the medical exam resulted in the establishment of certain health norms, which became the criteria that determined who could and could not enter. Indeed, Shah states that politicians and immigration

authorities increasingly relied on medical doctors and medical knowledge to create immigration policy.[77] One's physical health increasingly determined one's entrance into U.S. borders.

Through the visa medical exam, Il San orphanage reproduced its own U.S. border as Korean orphans' bodies were regulated in terms of their physical fitness and health. In order to acquire a visa to enter the U.S., each child had to pass a physical exam according to U.S. government standards. The visa physical exam included "stool examination, blood examination, chest X-ray, TB skin test and a complete physical examination by the doctor."[78] Appropriately, these were the same tests that orphans at Il San orphanage were given, since the orphans there were groomed for immigration to the U.S.[79] Those who passed the exam were allowed entrance into U.S. borders, as they were categorized as "adoptable." Those who failed the test were denied access and, thereby, categorized as "unadoptable." (More work would need to done in order to move the unadoptable orphans into the category of "adoptable".) The visa standards of health immediately became the orphanage's standard of health, since a child could not be assigned to an adoptive family without having passed this physical exam. In other words, because U.S. government health standards determined which orphans were adoptable and which were not, these same standards became institutionalized in the orphanage. In this way, for Korean orphans, the inspection and regulation of these Asian bodies through medical exams and procedures began in the *Korean* orphanage not at the actual U.S. border. Thus, the visa medical exam transported the U.S. border to Korean orphanages. And because the exam results were valid for only six months, repeat examinations were

necessary. Consequently, the physical health of orphans was constantly scrutinized and tested.

Bio-power is a political technology of life where the knowledge-power dyad interjects itself into the realm of biology, into the realm of life. Gaining knowledge about the body, through disciplining and regulating the body, allows us to have power over the body and, hence, over life.[80] Similarly, in the orphanage, accumulating knowledge about an orphan's body through physical examinations facilitated the regulation of and control over that body. Having a standard of health informed orphanage workers with the correct type of information so that an orphan could be improved. Having orphans undergo a preliminary physical examination helped orphanage workers prescribe the appropriate methods for improvement. Holt explains the insights provided by a medical exam: "Sometimes he does not pass [the visa physical exam] because of a cloudy chest or some skin rashes or boils or infected eyes. It may take weeks, even months, to clear up these conditions; but the children are not allowed to come until they are well. Sometimes they arrive pitifully thin, but they soon blossom into beautiful children when they know they are loved and given proper food."[81] Knowing what is wrong with the child helps them to provide the child with the correct treatment. Boils, rashes, stuffy lungs, and infected eyes are all treatable and can be cured with the right medication. And if malnourishment is the only thing that is wrong with the orphan, proper diet and nutrition can cure that, as well. Knowledge is indeed power.

Without the medical exam, it would be very easy to misdiagnose a child. To be sure, Lee Van, who rolled up in a dilapidated City Hall truck with several other babies, stood out from the rest because he looked especially thin. Appearing in the HAP's 1960

newsletter, he looks to be extremely sick and diseased based on his picture and the accompanying description. He is described as looking like a "little old man with an animal-like face." In addition, "the corners of his mouth were cracked from vitamin C deficiency. His stomach was puffed out and his legs were skinny and knobby at the knees and so weak that he couldn't stand."[82] But during his physical exam, they found nothing wrong: "Tuberculin skin test was negative, and he had no intestinal worms. His chest X-ray was normal." He was just undernourished. All he needed, according to the newsletter, was "lots of food and some love and attention." In two weeks time, his stomach grew larger and "we could see that he was putting on a little meat over some of his bones." Indeed, he was described by his caretaker as "donk-donk" or fat.[83]

Although the child's physical health is a priority, the child's physical appearance also becomes the object of scrutiny within the walls of the orphanage. Ten-month-old Lee Jeffie is described as having arrived "quite thin, dirty, and dark-skinned from exposure to the sun during the summer." Holt goes on to recall the first time he saw him at his orphanage: "I remember noticing his big ears and how he looked, frankly, a little ugly…I felt sorry for poor Jeffie there, still with his big ears and dark skin. I noticed now, too, that his nose was pretty big."[84] Holt reveals his underlying racism against people of African descent as he equates dark skin with ugliness in this description of Jeffie. Even though Jeffie is not black, Holt describes his features as stereotypically African American—dark skin, big ears, big nose. These traits apparently jeopardized his chances of being adopted, since his appearance went against the white aesthetic.

Physical appearance becomes especially important for Holt because these children must attract rather than repel potential adoptive parents. From past experience, Holt had

seen prospective adoptive parents (PAPs) chose more physically appealing children over the less attractive ones.[85] Consequently, in the same newsletter, he makes a special effort to thank those who adopted ugly children: "We are thankful for the many wonderful Christian people who have accepted a baby whose pictures shows a thin, dark, unhappy orphan."[86] Here again racist logic informs the standards that adoption workers use to categorize the ugly from the beautiful. Consequently, dark-skinned children are considered ugly and harder to adopt, while light-skinned children are considered beautiful and easier to adopt.

For these babies, along with a thousand others, being at the orphanage transforms them into healthy, attractive babies. Regarding Lee Van, one orphanage caretaker stated, "I have been avoiding him all this time because I couldn't stand to bear the sight of him before."[87] But now that he has received some attention and food, Lee Van "is a wonderful baby boy and whoever adopts him will indeed be fortunate."[88] Lee Jeffie also blossomed under the care given to him at the orphanage. Holt no longer had to feel sorry for him because "Jeffie had suddenly, along with losing his dark skin and becoming fat, became beautiful."[89] Whereas previous PAPs had chosen other children over him, Jeffie—having undergone this transformation—finally had been adopted by an American couple by the time the newsletter was published.[90]

The HAP newsletters played a fundamental role in recruiting adoptive parents for the orphans residing at Il San orphanage. The newsletters functioned as an effective tool to "advertise" their "product," as descriptions of the child's personality would accompany their picture. As caseworker Letitia DiVirgilio points out, it was usually upon seeing the child's photograph and reading their social history that PAPs decided on an individual

child.[91] According to ISS Senior Case Consultant Margaret Valk, the photograph and the "picturesque quality of the descriptions" were extremely effective in soliciting interest from PAPs because they helped the child "come alive to the adoptive parents."[92] In this way, the photograph and the personality description served as a proxy of the child. Unable to see and touch the child for themselves (which GIs-turned-adoptive parents were able to do), the photograph and descriptive text worked to recreate conditions in which prospective adoptive parents could feel like the child was standing before their very eyes.

In addition to displaying the "before" picture of the child (i.e., the visual iconography of rescue) like World Vision and CCF, HAP included the "after" picture, the transformation photo. Juxtaposing the "before" image with the "after" image and accompanying this imagistic pair with a narrative of improvement created a visual progress report for Holt's readers. This visual progress report not only revealed the docile body of the adoptee but also acted as evidence that these children were malleable and, therefore, assimilable. For example, in the same newsletter that the stories of Lee Van and Lee Jeffies appear, there are three pairs of before-and-after pictures that show sullen, malnourished babies change into smiling, plump babies. The caption/narrative of improvement for these pictures reads: "The transformation of bewildered, undernourished abandoned children to healthy, happily adjusted boys and girls, is a joy to watch and a privilege which to have a part."[93] This visual progress report relies on the orphan's weakened condition prior to entering the orphanage. Highlighting the very worst qualities of the child as he or she enters the orphanage makes the changes they undergo during their stay at the orphanage all the more significant. In this way, the visual

progress report—a combination of the before-and-after pictures plus the narrative of improvement—served to double the impact of Holt's message.

The public face of HAP and the image of the orphanage as an institution of cleanliness, health, and progress are disrupted when we go behind the scenes, however. Published decades after Il San Orphanage was established, Bertha Holt's diary is filled with accounts of children dying in the orphanage. Her husband reasons that the high death rate at his orphanage is because "City Hall gave us only their dying children."[94] But there are other underlying causes that the HAP newsletters and annual reports fail to mention. For example, in an effort to lower operating costs, Holt cut his nursing staff. According to Bertha Holt's personal diary, "To save money, Harry discharged 19 hospital nurses so there were only two left. He brought in several teenagers to help, but they were not qualified or experienced to care for critically-sick babies."[95] This took place on August 4, 1961. For almost a year, only two nurses looked after the hundreds of sick children. By May 28, 1962, Bertha Holt was the only "nurse" (who was technically not a nurse) at the orphanage.[96] Even in the wake of increased infant deaths, Holt continued to discharge more and more employees.[97] Being understaffed, the Holts relied on the older orphans to help take care of the infants. This led to more deaths. Bertha Holt explains: "I drew a diagram of a throat, lungs, and stomach to warn them [the teenagers] to never leave babies sucking a bottle as they can strangle or inhale vomitus. Two had died recently from suffocation."[98] In addition, because they repeatedly forgot to disinfect dirty diapers, germs became widespread and resulted in more infant deaths. On one occasion, Bertha Holt recalls Harry yelling, "Murderer!" to the wash lady because she had "put a

load of diapers into the machine without washing out the stools or soaking them in disinfectant."[99]

Holt compromised the care of infants not only by dismissing qualified and experienced health workers but also by scrimping on baby food. Bertha Holt writes: "Harry decided to make formula from skim milk, corn oil and syrup to save money." His effort to economize proved to be disastrous as Dr. Lim, the resident doctor, informed the Holts that "so many babies were dying with bloody diarrhea" from Holt's improvised concoction.[100] The babies were eventually given whole milk fortified with vitamins, which reduced the number of illness and death. Stories such as these expose the contradictions between the public face of the orphanage and its private activities. They interrupt the narrative of progress that HAP promulgated in their newsletters.

Examining the intricacies of orphanage procedures concerning the bodies of Korean orphans dismantles the preconceived notion that all orphans are the same. The very process of discipline presumes heterogeneity, since discipline is used to regulate *diverse* (not homogeneous) populations. Within the pages of HAP newsletters and files, we witness children being funneled back and forth among categories such as "adoptable," "unadoptable," "handicapped," and "handicapped/adoptable." This becomes the new taxonomy of Korean orphans, developed from the knowledge-power dyad established by orphanage workers and adoption agents. The classification of orphans is a product of biopower. Because the "adoptable" category is the most profitable one for adoptive agencies, much time and energy is devoted to classify as many orphans under this category.

The primary goal of the orphanage is to transform unadoptable Korean orphans into adoptable Korean children. Making them adoptable is to make them "normal" by Western standards. As an institution of discipline, the orphanage is also a facility of normalization. After all, as Foucault points out, the regime of disciplinary power works to normalize.[101] Physical health becomes one marker to distinguish between the "normal" and "abnormal." The process of normalization turns a sickly body into a healthy one, as seen in the transformations undergone by Lee Van and Lee Jeffie. In addition, signs of progress and development at an average or higher rate are also qualities that make a child normal. HAP's 1965 newsletter notes that "Several, who formerly lay like vegetables have started to crawl or walk and talk." This is cause for celebration among the workers because the marked progress in physical development allows them to be considered normal and, therefore, adoptable.[102] Disability scholar Douglas Baynton explains that "normality was implicitly defined as that which advanced progress (or at least did not impede it). Abnormality, conversely, was that which pulled humanity back toward its past, toward its animal origins."[103] Walking and crawling are signs of normal physical development. Moving from vapidity to alert attention signifies advancement. Under the disciplinary power of the orphanage, Korean orphans are able to "shed" the animalistic features assigned to them and become normal children.

In defining the normal child, the handicapped or disabled child is also defined. The normal is produced in tandem with the disabled.[104] Because the normal child is a healthy child, defects and irregularities can often prevent a child from being adopted. Children with such irregularities are classified as "handicapped."[105] According to HAP, children labeled handicapped have qualities that include "paralysis or twisted limbs from

polio or other causes, birthmarks, short limbs (meaning crutches), malfunctioning eyes or slight harelips."[106] It may be puzzling to label a child with a birthmark or harelip as handicapped, but disability scholars have noted that one's appearance has historically been equated to one's function. Visible abnormalities were regarded as a sign of a hidden functional abnormality.[107] Furthermore, while a disability, as defined by the United Nations, is the restriction or inability to perform an activity due to an impairment (physiological or psychological), a handicap is the *disadvantage* that results from the disability.[108] Consequently, any defect in a child's appearance that made him or her look abnormal—and therefore disadvantaged the child from being adopted—marked the child as handicapped even though the superficial flaw did not affect the child from functioning normally.

Having a handicap, however, does not necessarily mean that the child is unadoptable. HAP has a category of children labeled "handicapped/adoptable."[109] "Handicapped" (unadoptable) orphans can move into the "handicapped/adoptable" category by undergoing corrective surgery. Children who may have a slight harelip undergo plastic surgery and those with malfunctioning eyes undergo eye surgery.[110] Orphans identified with orthopedic problems either undergo surgery or are fitted with braces, depending on the severity of their condition.[111] In *Replaceable You*: *Engineering the Body in Postwar America*, David Serlin discusses how technology became a normalizing tool by transforming, through surgery and other medical procedures, individuals who deviated from the norm. These procedures, because they worked to normalize the abnormal body, served as "tools of consensus building" around ideas of the normal body and ideals of beauty.[112] In his chapter concerning the Hiroshima Maidens

project, he discusses how—because "the Maidens' physical scarring from the bombing impaired their ability to appear normal"—cosmetic surgery restored their ability to lead "normal" lives.[113] Not unlike the Hiroshima Maidens who underwent plastic surgery to restore their natural beauty, plastic surgery is performed on these orphans in order to erase the aesthetic flaw that marked them abnormal and, therefore, handicapped.[114] Because physical appearance is given great meaning, the criteria used to determined whether or not a child was adoptable was based on whether they were seen as "improvable" or not, whether they seemed capable of being "cured." Harelips and birthmarks could be cured. In the case of Park Song Ja, her "handicap" was a burn scar on her face. Her narrative of improvement takes on the semblance of a classified ad:

> Park Song Ja #3135 (December 1, 1960) is one of our Lord's special jewels. Abandoned because she had a burn scar on her face, she was brought to our orphanage in March 1962. Though she was very shy at first, her pomo [orphanage caretaker] gave her special attention which caused her own gentle, loveable, kind nature to blossom. A year ago, surgery accomplished much to restore her natural beauty, but much more can be done for her if she were in this country. She is a friendly, active child, top student of her class, knows many songs and games and is happy with her roommates. She would bring immeasurable joy to the right family. [115]

This narrative suggests the power of surgery. While the burn scar led to the child's abandonment, surgery helped to restore her seemingly innate appeal. Surgery restored her *natural* beauty, while the loving care she received during her stay at the orphanage restored her "gentle, loveable, kind *nature*." In this short paragraph, we learn of Park Song Ja's transformation—her improvements—in two short years. Surgery, in addition to the normalizing procedures of orphanage care, helped her to overcome her handicap and has enabled her to thrive. Surgery also restored her Oriental doll-like qualities. She

is, therefore, ready to be adopted, as suggested by the advertisement-like quality of her story.

For those children whose handicap could not be erased with surgery, other factors determined their adoptability. For example, Koo Lendas is HAP's "Handicapped Child of the Month." This four-year-old mixed-race girl passed her visa physical; however, she is handicapped because she has "residual paralysis of both legs due to polio."[116] But she is considered adoptable because she has the potential for improvement: "She needs surgery, exercises, braces, etc., and, most of all, a home with parents who will give her lots of attention and affection."[117] Because Koo Lendas' handicap isn't so severe as to be completing debilitating, her physical disability can be improved. Furthermore and, perhaps, even more significantly, Koo Lendas is beautiful. Her beauty is mentioned several times throughout the ad, and the accompanying picture proves it. Despite the frown on her face, the viewer is aware of her classical beauty: she is fair skinned, with flowing tresses that fall along her face. Not only is she gorgeous, but she is also an "intelligent child who will do well in whatever her circumstances allow."[118] Beauty and brains is a powerful combination; they eclipse her handicap. In the same way, Lee Myung Hee, who has a "slight paralysis of the right arm and leg and therefore has a walking disturbance," is considered adoptable because she is "very pretty and bright."[119] The importance of aesthetics in determining able or disabled bodies has been pointed out by the disability scholar Martin Pernick. His work on eugenics literature describes how fitness has historically been equated with beauty and disability with ugliness.[120] For both of these girls, their beautiful appearance trumps their slight paralysis; they are pretty enough and their paralysis is slight enough for both of them to be placed in the category

of "adoptable." All they need, according to Bertha Holt, is an American family "to love and repair their troubles."[121]

Serlin posits that "physical rehabilitation became an allegory of national rehabilitation" in postwar 1950s America.[122] Using the Hiroshima Maidens project as an example, he explains how the U.S. took responsibility over the rehabilitation of 25 Japanese women who were disfigured when American Air Forces dropped the A-bomb in 1945. Ironically, ten years later, American Air Forces transported these women to the United States where a team of plastic surgeons awaited them at the Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City.[123] The project itself was perceived by many as a "shining expression of medical humanitarianism that attempted to repair some of the physical and political scars left by World War II."[124] In more blunt words, literary critic Edmund Wilson says, "We have tried to make up for our atomic bombs by treating and petting the Japanese women whom we disfigured or incapacitated."[125] In a similar way, Americans tried to rehabilitate the national image of the U.S. by rehabilitating the bodies that were injured as a direct result of American action during the Korean War. Both civilians and military men donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to amputee children. Prosthetics were even donated to orphans to help them function "normally." For instance, the Department of Defense recorded a Korean boy receiving an artificial leg from the Marines at the Catholic Orphanage in Pohang. When we first see him, he is shown walking around with a crutch. One pant leg is folded up, clearly showing his missing right leg. The doctor from the Marine Corps enters the frame with a full-length prosthetic leg outfitted with a sock and shoe. Upon removing his pants, the artificial limb is fitted over the boy's existing thigh; a belt that is attached to the leg is wrapped around his waist. Later on, we

see him fully dressed. He still has his crutch under his right arm, but he appears to be a "normal" two-legged boy because his pants hide the artificial leg. [126]

"Number One Cosmetic Surgery in Asia" (2008)
By Katie Hae Ryun Leo

We little-eyed Asian girls wanted
lids that close like graceful clams,
dreamed of pink translucent fields
to hide two blue eyes under.
I, too, torqued the mirrored muscle,
pulled the skin taut to the brow
till it creased, a paper doll fantasy,
and still this wasn't enough for some.
Some of us chose to cut ourselves,
wring the unnatural out of our bodies.
Some went to doctors schooled
in the West's successful practices,
willed the face in the bathroom mirror
to be somehow new, as though
land ravaged by war could emerge
whole in spite of the invasion.[127]

This poem reveals how the project of normalization has affected the desires and self-image of Asian girls. In particular, we see how plastic surgery, which was used to "normalize" the bodies of Korean orphans in the orphanage, is now being sought out by Asian girls to "improve" their appearance. Although Katie Hae Ryun Leo frames this popular eye-lid surgery as a pan-Asian phenomenon, this procedure is particularly meaningful in the context of Korean adoption. Korean adoptees, in an attempt to be "normal" seek out this surgery to "wring the unnatural out of our bodies"—the unnatural being the "Asian face" that doesn't coincide with the expectation to replicate whiteness. The quest to be "normal" (i.e., white) has evolved to such a degree that adoptees are literally altering their faces to appear more "white American." And by evoking the Korean War, Leo likens this surgical invasion of the Korean body to the military invasion of Korea. In so doing, she again locates the ways in which the Korean War manifests on the bodies and psyches of Korean adoptees.

Modern technology is used to "improve" Korean bodies to fit an American ideal of the normal body. Technology and Western medicine become the tools used to normalize the war-ravaged Korean body. The corrective and plastic surgeries that the children underwent at orphanages were completed by American surgeons and/or American-trained Korean doctors. But with these improvements, difference always remained. In case of the Korean boy with the prosthetic leg, the footage shows him walking more awkwardly with his new leg than without. Standing with his new leg, he looks normal. But once he begins to walk, his handicap becomes even more prominent as he relies not only on his crutch but also an orphanage caretaker. [128] So in this case, modern medical technology helps to give the boy the *appearance* of a normal body (one with two legs), falling short in helping him to *function* like a normal body.

On the other hand, in the case of a double-amputee girl at Il San Orphanage, prosthetic limbs helped her to function as if she had a normal body. Bertha Holt chronicles the story of this little girl in her published diary:

> [Harry] took a 3-year-old girl to the amputee center to have an artificial leg fitted. When she was able to use it easily, he ordered an artificial arm also. She was very *pretty and intelligent* and we prayed for a home for her. Years later I visited her near Portland, Oregon, and watched her run down the road and get on the school bus unaided. Her mother said proudly, "I forget that she is handicapped."[129]

Again, we see that her physical beauty and intelligence facilitated her adoptability. But unlike the Korean boy in the video, the prosthetic limbs erased her handicap. Time and practice allowed her to successfully manipulate her false arm and leg so she could move naturally.

"Fixing" the Korean child not only helped to rehabilitate the national image of the U.S. but it also repaired the Korean nation-state. The purpose of correcting abnormal, imperfect Korean bodies in the orphanage was so that they could be placed for adoption. The amount of resources it took to feed, clothe, care for, and prepare the children for adoption was significant. The longer the child stayed in the orphanage, the more expensive it was to run the orphanage. Adoption agencies cannot make money on unadoptable children. By turning unadoptable orphans into adoptable adoptees, adoption agencies would have the opportunity to recoup the money they invested into the child. In a correspondence between HAP and ISS, we learn how this particular financial investment can lead to possessiveness. In a 1967 letter, HAP tells ISS that they are reluctant to turn over a case involving twin girls to ISS for adoption: "We have already invested a lot in preparing these children for adoption. Our Korean office informs us that they were not in good condition when we received them. Therefore, we are somewhat reluctant to simply turn them over to another agency at this point."[130] Because the twins "were not in good condition when we received them," the twins needed more medical care and attention than the average orphan. This meant that HAP spent more money than usual to get them ready for adoption. HAP is hesitant to hand this case over to ISS because that would mean that they would lose money rather than make money or, at least, recoup the money they already spent on making these twins healthy and adoptable. While agencies such as HAP and ISS claim that they were never in the adoption business to make money, the foreign adoption of these children eventually became big business, bringing in millions of dollars. Improving the body of the Korean orphan became one way of rehabilitating the Korean economy. Indeed, the profits that came from the

purchasing of Korean children by westerners all helped to reinvigorate a fledgling economy so that by the 1980s, Korean adoption was bringing in $15-20 million a year, leading some to link Korea's "economic miracle" to the exportation of Korean children.[131]

Despite the application of Western medical practice and technology to improve orphans with disabilities, not all handicapped children could be fixed. These children fell into the category of being severely disabled or mentally handicapped. Being placed in the "unadoptable" category, however, did not stop them from undergoing the project of docility-utility. For example, in 1965 HAP installed new beds and organized their living quarters so that better care could be provided. [132] The home for handicapped children was even equipped with low toilets (so that the children could access them easier) and large tubs for water exercises.[133] These adjustments, along with a special diet, helped them to develop into more normal children. Emotionally disturbed children were also prescribed tranquilizers, making them "much calmer and far easier to care for."[134] By 1967, HAP had a resident psychiatrist at the orphanage who worked with the mentally retarded and had even more handicapped children undergo surgery.[135] Implementing modern medicine and techniques of care had some miraculous results: "We have been blessed to see a number of these children that were considered hopelessly unadoptable and mentally retarded, develop into seemingly normal children and we hope in the future will be adoptable."[136] For those whose results were not as transformative, medicine and medical technology still proved to be useful. Many of the orphans who were severely handicapped made improvements—such as no longer eating clothes or climbing walls—but not enough to be adoptable.[137]

There were some children with no apparent physical or mental handicap who were considered unadoptable. These children were of African American descent and older children. HAP explains: "Sometimes the handicap is nothing more than being an older child (most people want babies) or Negro (there is a shortage of Negro adoptive parents)."[138] These children could not be "fixed" or "improved" since one's age and skin color are not readily manipulable. But I suggest that there are other reasons why older children and children of African American descent were categorized as handicapped. In regards to age, HAP reasons that older children are handicapped simply because "most people want babies." I would also add that it is because older children are less improvable, less manipulable. In a 1962 newsletter, Holt explains to his readers the decision to curtail their program with teenaged orphan girls:

> We have so many that they have kind of formed a gang on us and we can hardly control them anymore…we feel that they have been in institutions too long and are not developing into normal women and have no opportunity to join in the normal social life of the Korean people. In fact, they even feel superior to the Korean people around them, which certainly bothers us and is probably our own fault.[139]

The problem, according to Holt, is that these teenage girls refuse to be "normal." Their abnormality comes from their unwillingness to be controlled. Even when HAP arranged marriages for some of the older girls, they refused. Their refusal to comply, in the eyes of HAP, proves their deviance. Their aloofness towards marriage—which is supposedly the hallmark of a *normal* woman—renders them abnormal and queer in the sense that they resist proper gender and domestic roles. Furthermore, these girls are apparently too old to be trained, too old to be disciplined. Holt continues to explain: "They are weak and undisciplined and untrained. We have done the best we could in the last two or three

years that we have had them, but training should take place early in life and it is pretty difficult to do it after they are older."[140] Because these teenagers are unaffected by the disciplinary power of Il San Orphanage, they become unruly and queer—rather than docile and normative—subjects. Consequently, they are ejected from the orphanage.[141] Their age (arriving at the orphanage too old, too late) becomes both a liability and disability not only because PAPs want infants but also because they are unaffected by the disciplinary powers of the orphanage. Entering the orphanage past toddler age thwarts the older orphan's ability to become docile subjects and, therefore, renders them unadoptable.

HAP states that "Korean-Negro" children are considered handicapped because there is a lack of "Negro" families wanting to adopt.[142] HAP's policy concerning Korean-Negro babies is that *only* Negro families can adopt.[143] While this may limit the pool of families wanting to adopt, application records show that many African Americans wanted to adopt; however, because adoption agencies included selection criteria that insisted that adoptive mothers not work outside the home, many black couples were rejected on this criteria alone.[144] Furthermore, black couples were scrutinized much more closely than white couples, especially when it came to their financial status. Consequently, black couples were rejected at a higher rate than white couples.[145]

HAP's explanation about why orphans of African American descent were considered handicapped also obscured the implicit racist belief that mixed-race children, especially those of African ancestry, were considered racially inferior. Selection patterns reflected the racial hierarchy of the U.S. that situated whites at the top, Asians in the middle, and blacks at the bottom: Korean-Caucasian children were the most desired

(because they were racialized as White)[146] and Korean-Negro children were the least desired (because they were racialized as Black).[147] Korean children who were not of mixed ancestry fell in between these two categories.[148] According to Adoption Case Consultant Eleanor Linse, "the features of the half Negro children seem to be predominately Negroid," which was the reason why the Korean-Negro children were considered Black.[149] And because half-white children had features that were closer to Caucasian features, Korean-White (or sometimes Korean-American) children were considered White rather than Asian. The way in which mixed-race orphans were categorized reveals the extent to which Korean orphans were understood through an American racial ideology. American race politics was exported to Korea right along with Christianity, social welfare procedures, and Western medicine. The black/white binary for which the United States is well-known was so influential that it had the power to elide the Asian race even in Korea.

To reiterate, orphans classified as unadoptable were those with "severe physical handicaps, mental retardation, Negro-Korean, etc" and those who were older.[150] Because these children often became the permanent responsibility of the orphanage (until they become 18 years of age), "they [were] therefore in need of constant campaigning for support plan."[151] This is why most of the children who were advertised in HAP newsletters were handicapped, mixed-race, and/or older children. Highlighting certain children in the newsletter proved to be an effective way to find homes for these hard-to-place children. For example, Yoo Sei Chun and Lee Johnny were adopted after their pictures appeared in the newsletter. "We had such a good response from those wanting to adopt these boys," Holt explains, that "we thought it well to let you know about others

who also need good homes."[152] It seems like a contradiction that children labeled "unadoptable" would appear in the newsletter as available for adoption. This inconsistency, along with the fact that children could move from "unadoptable" to "adoptable" status, suggests that being "unadoptable" did not necessarily mean a life-sentence at the orphanage. This category is not as fixed as it sounds; rather, it is quite fluid and dynamic. Children who fell in the unadoptable category simply required more work and more resources to get them adopted. They needed "constant campaigning," unlike the "normal" children who were readily adopted by Americans without direct advertising.

Based on these examples, a normal child is a healthy Korean-Caucasian or Korean child who exhibits qualities that show signs of progressive development such as being active, attentive, attractive, and relating well to others and his or her surroundings. Biopower and technologies of discipline depend on the logic of improvement: that the individual must and can constantly improve oneself. One's ability to improve, then, signifies normality—which indicates the potential for growth, progress, development, and facility. Because this is the standard under which orphans are evaluated, those who do not develop at an average or higher rate are deemed abnormal, unhealthy and, therefore, unadoptable.[153]

As the man who placed more Korean children in American homes than all adoption agencies combined in the decade after the war, Holt perfected the docility-utility relationship. He was also able to persuade civilians halfway across the world to adopt Korean orphans in the midst of waning interest in these children. He accomplished this through the presentation of visual progress reports that made use of the children's bodies.

In narrating the changes that a particular child underwent while at his orphanage, he was able to demonstrate just how manipulable and improvable these children could be.

The Americanization of the Adoptee

As a processing station that prepared orphans for transnational adoption, Holt's orphanage worked to normalize the body to make the orphan adoptable. This was indeed the primary goal of the orphanage. Along with improving the child's health to gain legal entrance into the United States, the orphanage also prepared the adoptee for American life. In this way, the processing center of the orphanage was also a center of Americanization where adoptable orphans were trained for life in the United States. Thus, preparation to be an American began in Korea, prior to the adoptee's entrance into U.S. borders.

Despite the fact that the orphanage resides in Korea, the diet of the Il San orphans resembled that of an American diet rather than a Korean one. Besides rice and kimchi (the standard Korean fare), their diet consisted of peanut butter and peanut brittle (made from the peanuts planted and harvested by the children), Jell-o, Boston baked beans, bread, pudding, sweet potatoes, cinnamon rolls, pies (especially pumpkin), cobblers, pork, and rabbit. [154] Korean babies and toddlers even sampled Gerber baby food—the iconic American baby brand—through generous donations made by the corporation.[155] The traditional Korean diet does not include baked goods because most Korean homes lack ovens; therefore, the eating habits of the orphanage were particularly American. As a result, Bertha Holt and her biological daughter Linda taught the Korean cooks how to bake and make traditional American fare;[156] however, as Homi Bhabha has successfully

argued, the process of mimicry always produces difference.[157] So we can assume that the Boston baked beans, pies, cinnamon rolls, and peanut brittle tasted "almost the same, but not quite" because the ingredients and preparation of the food cannot be exactly replicated.[158] Indeed, Bertha Holt boasts, "I have learned to make 24 pies at a time, without lard, eggs, or sugar. They even tasted like pumpkin pie and were a delicacy for children who had never tasted it before."[159] Here, Bertha Holt unwittingly reveals the limitations and ambivalence surrounding this project of normalizing the Korean child through Americanization. As she tries to reform these children by disciplining their taste buds to be the same as white Americans, the process of mimicry simultaneously produces difference.[160] The very fact that these Korean children cannot tell the difference between a "real" pumpkin pie vs. the imitation reveals that this project can never be complete and that difference will always remain. In this way, this event acts as a foreshadowing of what is to come for these children, as they enter white American homes in which they are expected to be white.[161]

I was convinced I was going insane because I felt so inauthentic. I did not feel white, as I had been raised. I did not feel Asian, as I clearly looked & was.[162]
—Mi Ok Song Bruining (1997)

When the body doesn't fit the mind
When the language doesn't fit the person
When the race doesn't fit the language
When the mind doesn't fit the person.[163]
—Mihee-Nathalie Lemoine (2001)

What I longed for was wholeness, for my body to be as white
and Northern Minnesotan as my mind.
I longed to be normal,
to not have to emotionally excavate myself to find my place.[164]
—Jane Jeong Trenka (2003)

All three quotes from these adopted Korean artists reveal the ways in which Korean adoption as a project of normalization creates ambivalence, fragmentation, and incoherence. All three quotes reveal the limitations of such a project.

Not only was diet targeted but also bathroom habits in the goal of preparing adoptable children for American homes. In a letter to adoptive parents to help their adopted children during the initial period of adjustment, HAP explained that while Korean toilet habits are "casual" (e.g., relieving themselves in public, not using flush toilets), their child has been taught "western toilet manners" in the orphanage; however, "if he forgets and urinates in public or outdoors, merely remind him quietly that in his new home the custom is to use the bathroom."[165] Worrying about the diet and bathroom habits of the orphans may seem a bit trivial, but discipline requires meticulous attention to detail. As Foucault reminds us, "Discipline is a political anatomy of detail."[166] Details are the foundation on which discipline flourishes. To neglect the little things would be dangerous because "little things lead to greater [things]."[167] Furthermore, the regulation of customs and habits related to health are integral components of biopower. As a result, the mundane is attributed great significance.

Although I have focused primarily on the policies and procedures of HAP and its Il San Orphanage, other adoption programs and orphanages participated in the Americanization of Korean orphans as a way to prepare them for adoption. For example, even though CCF is not an adoption agency, according to its founder J. Calvitt Clarke, CCF "has a section in one of its Korean orphanages devoted to the preparation of Korean children for legal adoption. They are prepared for life in America by some of the wives of the American Armed Forces who donate their time."[168] The specifics of this

preparation are unmentioned by Clarke; however, a report written by ISS may shed some light. Because ISS did not have orphanages of their own, they relied on other existing orphanages in Korea for the "pre-placement care" of orphans who were placed through them.[169] The two institutions that provided the most pre-placement care for children adopted through ISS were World Vision Reception Center and Choon Hyun Orphanage, a CCF orphanage.[170] Sometimes, children spent their pre-placement care with missionary families living in Korea who "t[aught] the children some English and prepare[d] them for living in an American home."[171] The preparation that these American missionaries provided for ISS was probably similar to the preparation that the wives of American military soldiers provided for CCF. The pre-placement care most likely included learning some English words and phrases; learning how to eat with a knife and fork; and becoming acquainted with sleeping in a bed, using a flush toilet, and eating at the dinner table while seated in a chair.[172] The Americanization of those children adopted through ISS and CCF does not sound as institutionalized as HAP; however, even their cursory attempts at preparing the child for American life demonstrate that the process of Americanization began in Korea and not in the United States.

In preparation for American life, Korean orphans were also raised to be Christians. Because Korean orphanages were predominately run by missionaries and religious organizations, the majority of the orphanages were concerned not only with the physical well-being of the children but also with their spiritual well-being. Bertha Holt says of her husband that "He was impelled by a vision from God to save Korea's lost children and God used him to give life to many."[173] Because Korea's children are "lost" physically (because they are unwanted) and spiritually (because they are pagan), "saving"

the Korean orphans takes place on both these levels.[174] Thus, in Holt's Il San Orphanage, the child's soul, as well as the body, is disciplined.[175] Through the physical "saving" of the Korean orphan (from poverty, sickness, and death), a spiritual "saving" takes place: "[T]he greatest miracle is the change He [Jesus Christ] made in the children, unwanted, discards of society, now translated into loving, secure, happy children growing up for our Lord's glory. Many of them have received the Lord as their Saviour and desire to be missionaries for Him."[176] The goal of disciplining the soul is to convert the orphans into Christians and prepare them for life with their new Christian families in the U.S.[177]

Like the body, the orphan's soul was under constant supervision and regulation at Il San orphanage. The activities of their soul were controlled and organized by a religious program that was developed by Holt and his personnel. It included "Sunday school and church services on Sunday, Bible classes throughout the week in school, and Child Evangelism classes conducted each Monday."[178] After Holt's death, the religious program continued because, according to the new Executive Director Louis O'Conner, Jr., "It is our feeling that more important than the physical needs of the children are their spiritual needs."[179] As a result, church services increased from once a week to three times per week. As the orphans underwent the religious program, they were "encouraged to make personal decisions for Christ, to give their testimonies, read their Bible, memorize scriptures and to pray daily."[180] Apparently, the religious program was successful because "many of the children have already made a decision for Christ."[181]

The indoctrination of Christianity at Holt's Il San Orpahanage may not be surprising, since Holt was infamous for his religious fervor. His was not the only orphanage, however, where Christianity was instilled. The *Pacific Stars and Stripes*

reported that the Air Force observed "children receiv[ing] Christian teaching" at the Korean orphanage they were visiting.[182] At Myung Chin Sa Orphanage, Eighth Army Captain H. R. Jones witnessed the children there singing "Jesus Loves Me" in English.[183] Eighth Army soldiers also recorded a children's choir at the Buk Han San Orphanage, singing the "Hallelujah Chorus."[184] And the Department of Defense film crew captured a prayer meeting that took place at a boy's orphanage.[185] Christian training even made its way into a refugee camp for orphans, as reported by *Pacific Stars and Stripes*:

> More than 100 hungry orphan children…marched quietly into the mess hall and seated themselves in an orderly fashion before a breakfast of milk, cereal, eggs, and fruit. But not a single child started to eat. Instead, each bowed his head and clasped his hands together in an attitude of prayer. Masking his surprise, Chaplain (1st Lt.) William G. Davanney, 24th Div. assistant chaplain, grasped the situation, bowed his head and repeated the words to the grace. With the 'amen,' the well mannered children began their repast.[186]

In this short article, we learn several things. First, Korean orphans are introduced to American-style cuisine prior to entering the orphanage. Second, the orphans here are not only well-disciplined, but they have successfully appropriated the Christian practice of praying before a meal. But more importantly, we learn that the Christianizing force that swirled around Korean orphans extended to places with seemingly no ties to missionaries or churches.

White Couples Saving Brown Children: The Politics of the Legitimate Parent

While the narrative of the white man saving brown women from brown men is prevalent in postcolonial studies, particularly subaltern studies, the narrative of the white couple saving brown children from a brown nation is less discussed.[187] I want to

conclude this chapter by exploring how this narrative reifies and naturalizes the neocolonial relationship between the U.S. and Korea. Informed by the politics of Cold War Orientalism, transnational adoption and the construction of the white couple as the legitimate parents of brown children is organized around two key concepts of Cold War Orientalism: family and racial tolerance.

During the era of Cold War Orientalism, family became the prime metaphor that was used to envision the integration of Asians into American politics and domestic life. If the notion of family facilitated the incorporation of Asian bodies into American homes, the idea of family also became the device to legitimize Americans as proper parents to Korean children. Indeed, at the heart of Korean adoption is the assumption that the white American couple can raise the child better—love the child better—than the Korean birthmother. As Holt himself says, "I have seen children just curl up and die for the lack of love, and I have seen what personal love can do for them…I can go in and take any child in the orphanage, no matter how bad off it is, and *love it right out of its physical condition* and make it well and happy."[188] Holt seems to imply that Korean children are dying because of the "lack of love" withheld from their biological parent(s) and their loveless reception from the Korean nation. Love, according to Holt, restores the orphan's humanity and, thereby, the child's life.

The language of love that Holt uses is really a metonym for the family. Foucault's explanation of the emergence of the clinic offers insight on how the family—even the semblance of family—became associated with healing powers. The clinic was created under the belief that the family was the "only possible locus for recovering from disease" or dis-ease because they provided the sick person with the "gaze of

compassion," which was to compensate for the pain and suffering. But what was to be done with those who had no family or whose family members had to work instead of care for their loved one? These people were sent to "communal houses for the sick," which became a substitute for the missing family.[189] At the beginning of the 20th century, the family was believed to heal the infirmed.

Although Korean orphanages are not the same as clinics or hospitals, in many ways, they functioned as such, healing sickly and malnourished orphans. Furthermore, many of the orphanages set up in postwar Korea were organized under this same principle that believed that family would heal the "discards of society"—both physically and spiritually. Orphanages run by CCF and HAP, for example, implemented techniques of institutional child care that integrated the aura of family life. CCF's Children's Home in Anyang, Korea, was the first orphanage built in Asia that was modeled after a cottage.[190] Rather than one large cement building that warehoused hundreds of children, the Anyang Children's Home consisted of individual cottages that housed a housemother and fifteen children.[191] Caldwell recounts his observations during his visit to the CCF orphanage: "The home has its own fields, raises its own livestock, harvests chestnuts from the grove that surrounds the property."[192] Based on his descriptions, this orphanage sounds more like a village community than a stark institution. Il San Orphanage was also modeled after the cottage-plan. The cottages (or cabins) had their own kitchen that each housed ten orphans and a housemother for "family-like living."[193] Some cabins even had a house-grandmother.[194] Each cabin also had its own Bartlett pear, peach, plum, and apple trees.[195] To compensate for the lack of family, these orphanages were structured as a family unit in order to replicate the love and care a family would give to a child.

Adoptive agents, social workers, doctors, nurses all believed that family or some semblance of family would "cure" the orphan.

Despite the familial atmosphere of these orphanages, orphanage life is not considered optimal for the child because it is transitory, unstable, and temporary. And here lies the rationale for why white American couples make better parents than single Korean mothers: because they can provide the child with a *permanent* home and the heteronormative ideal of family. Even Pearl Buck, who was not known to be religious, stated that "the 'crucial necessity in adoption is not similarity of religion or race,' but love."[196] Buck was a Pulitzer Prize-winning author who founded Welcome House, an international adoption agency that specialized in mixed-race adoptions. "Love," for her, was also code for a "permanent heteronormative family." And this family was not based on biology—arguing that "There is no magic in blood relationship"—but on the stability and commitment of the parents. In short, "Parenthood had to be earned," according to Buck.[197] Korean mothers and fathers, in Buck's perspective, did not earn the right to parent because they presumably gave up their parental rights. But Americans could gain the right to parent because, as *married* couples, they apparently had the resources, the commitment, and proper kind of love to raise a Korean child.

Legitimizing the practice of the white couple saving brown children from a brown nation also relied on the construction of Korea as a racist and morally backward nation, as opposed to the U.S. which was being internationally promoted at this time as a bastion of racial tolerance.[198] The denigration of Korea as racist was primarily fueled by stories that focused on the nation's treatment of its mixed-race children. Often the result of the union between a Korean woman and an American GI, the mixed-race Korean child was

considered a social outcast. Mrs. S.T. Pettis, a social worker for ISS, explains: "Korean cultural patterns have made acceptance of these Eurasian youngsters almost impossible there."[199] The plight of Korean-Negro orphans was much worse, as graphically explained by Adoption Case Consultant Eleanor Linse:

> This racial mixture has been unknown in Korea and these children are completely ostracised [sic] in the Korean culture. They are real outcasts and are discriminated against in the orphanages…The bodies of these children are often floating in the rivers or abandoned in the streets and in the garbage cans, so desperate is the plight of their mothers. Even if these children get through childhood, they face a future with no chance of education or employment…these children…will simply die if we do not find something for them.[200]

Whether this description of Korean-Negro children's plight is exaggerated or not, the belief that mixed-race Korean children having no future in Korea is commonly held. It is promoted not only to position the U.S. as a welcoming, tolerant nation beside the intolerant, backward Korean nation but also to portray seemingly non-prejudicial Americans as morally superior to racist Koreans. After all, what Americans could offer that Koreans refused to give was life—a chance for mixed-race Koreans to live full and productive lives. Consequently, Korea loses its right to these children, while the U.S. gains the right to care for these children because it will not discriminate against illegitimate or mixed-race orphans.

The depiction of the U.S. as a haven where mixed-race Korean orphans will be free from discrimination and hardship fails to address that this country also discriminated against illegitimate and mixed-race children. In *American Argument*, Buck argues that "'the most cruelly treated child' in *American* society was 'the so-called illegitimate child.'"[201] She writes about American parents abandoning their children and how

orphanages and foster homes labeled these children unadoptable because of their illegitimate status. Furthermore, she explains how mixed-race children in particular were "treated as outcasts, sometimes consigned to mental institutions because they were regarded as unfit even from orphanages."[202] Despite the similarities in how American and Korean society treated children born out of wedlock and mixed-race children, the belief that orphans living in Korea is comparable to a death sentence—and therefore, better served in America—was rampant in early Korean adoption discourse and sanctioned the practice of white couples saving brown children from a brown nation.

Even though less than one percent of all Korean orphans at the end of the war were mixed-race, the melodramatic narrative of mixed-blood Korean children literally dying in Korea because of racism and discrimination not only moved many Americans to adopt but also persuaded Korean mothers to give up their own children. Soon-ja's story serves as an illustrative example where the ideals of the heteronormative family and racial tolerance converged to uphold the parent-child relationship between U.S. and Korea and between American couples and Korean children. After reading a newspaper article about Holt and his work with Korean orphans, a Korean woman decided to place her three-year-old mixed-race daughter Soon-ja for adoption a) after her daughter experienced harassment and discrimination from classmates and b) when she realized that her GI lover had reneged on his promise of coming back for her and his daughter. This mother believed that "the promise of a permanent home for Soon-ja and the loving care that would be provided by new parents outweighed any other concern."[203] So she devised a plan to persuade her daughter to leave her:

> She would slowly introduce to her daughter that she was an American, as her father was an American military officer, and therefore she needed to go to the United States to live with him. She would emphasize that her father was an American, that America was a wonderful country, and there would be many beautiful things Soon-ja would receive from her father…So she spent the next few weeks talking to her daughter about her father in America and that she should live with him.[204]

The belief that marriage and life in America provides permanence and stability is resonant here. The Korean mother abnegates her own permanence in her daughter's life simply because she is a single mother. Furthermore, by equating Soon-ja's father with America, she naturalizes the neocolonial relationship between the U.S. and Korea. Her status as a single mother (which falls short of the heteronormative ideal of family) and citizen of a racist nation works to invalidate her rightful claim to her daughter; consequently, transferring that right to an absent parent and foreign nation appears to be the best decision she could make for her child.[205]

Despite the fact that the American birthfather abandoned his daughter and despite that fact that Soon-ja is not going to live with her actual birthfather, he is propped up as the legitimate and proper parent over the Korean birthmother who has thus far raised her.[206] The absent father becomes legitimized through the myth of the American dream. Because the American father is conflated with the "land of opportunity," he comes to represent stability, permanence, and hope for Soon-ja, even though he will remain absent in her life. The belief that America is a place where racial tolerance, gender equality, freedom, and opportunities exist for all is equally, if not, more effective in persuading Korean mothers to give up their children than the portrayal of Korea as a backward country. Thus, the strategy that Soon-ja's mother used to persuade her daughter to leave

her is identical to the strategy used to justify and naturalize the practice of white couples saving brown children from a brown nation. In pointing out this similarity in strategy, I do not mean to suggest that the interests or reasons behind using this strategy are the same; rather, my intent is to show how the narrative that posits Korean adoption as the only moral choice (i.e., the child will receive a better life in the U.S. with foreign parents rather than in Korea with his or her birthparent(s)) not only compels birthmothers to give up their parental rights but also sustains and normalizes neocolonial relations between the U.S. and Korea

The ultimate purpose of disciplining the body and soul of the orphan is to create an adoptee who will become a "proper" American citizen who integrates and assimilates seamlessly into American society and homes. In this way, the practice of white couples saving brown children from a brown nation is akin to a civilizing mission. Civilizing the "discards of society"—through the regulation of the orphan's body and soul—begins not when the child arrives on American soil but in the processing stations of orphanages in Korea. Once adopted into a white American Christian family (which is usually the case), this new family continues the process of normalization by erasing signs of racial and cultural difference and replacing them with middle-class, white American Christian values, beliefs, and ideology. As the next chapter will demonstrate, the adoptee, while accessorized to look like a heteronormative subject is, in fact, a queer subject. Even though the adoptee is made to perform like a white American subject, the adoptee will never be completely consolidated into the white heteronormative family because this structure is dependent on whiteness. That is to say, as a nonnormative subject, the adoptee—as she is being normalized and Americanized—transgresses the very

heteronormative boundaries of race, nation, and family. As a result, the adoptee's presence in her Western adoptive family will always disrupt the heteronormative ideal of the nuclear family. So even though the orphanage disciplines orphans into normative adoptees, it cannot do so completely.

Notes

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[1] In one ISS case, a soldier, who became "attracted" to a young orphan girl at a Christmas party, tried to get his parents to adopt her since he was single. (After finding out that the GI had romantic feelings for the girl, ISS rejected his request.) See Marcia Speers to Margaret Valk, 29 August 1957, ISS-USA papers, Box 42, Folder 8, SWHA, Minneapolis, MN. ISS case files are filled with accounts like this: a GI becomes "attracted" (not necessarily romantic) to an orphan boy or girl that he met at an orphanage or a GI-sponsored party and becomes interested in adopting the child. One U.S. ambassador reported that almost every day, he "received a letter from a returned Korean veteran who wanted legally to adopt a Korean child, or had a soldier still in Korea visit the Embassy who wanted to leave money for a child, or another who had returned [to the States] who wanted to send money back to a child." See William F. Asbury, "Military Help to Korean Orphanages: A Survey Made for the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Forces, Far East, and for the Chief of Chaplains of the United States Army" (1954), p. 3, *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/CCF-002.htm (accessed 11/2/07).

[2] See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, (New York : Vintage Books, 1995).

[3] Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, vol. 1, trans. Robert Hurley (NY: Vintage Books, 1990),140-145. Bio-power, as defined by Foucault, is power that deals with living beings so that life itself can be mastered (143). The disciplining of the body and the regulation of populations make up the two axes of bio-power (139, 145).

[4] The transnational adoption of these children helps Korea's fledgling economy by importing foreign currency and ridding the government's financial burden of taking care of orphans. Korean adoptees also serve the United States' politically because their adoption solidifies neocolonial relations with Korea and projects an image of anti-imperialism.

[5] Joungwon Kim, *Divided Korea: The Politics of Development, 1945-1972* (Cambridge: East Asian Research Center at Harvard University, 1976), 147.

[6]Asbury, 17.

[7] Ibid., 16.

[8] John C. Caldwell, *Children of Calamity* (NY: John Day Company, 1957), 78.

[9] Joungwon Kim, 147.

[10] Ibid., 160, 258.

[11] Ibid., 226.

12 Ibid., 280. During the mid 1960s, Korea began to take on private commercial loans and public loans from foreign nations, including the US (264).

[13] Caldwell, 78-79.

[14] qtd. in Caldwell, 79.

[15] Ibid., 80.

[16] Asbury, 17.

[17] Cathy Choy, "Institutionalizing International Adoption: The Historical Origins of Korean Adoption in the United States," in *International Korean Adoption: A Fifty-Year History of Policy and Practice*, eds. Kathleen Ja Sook Berrgquist et al. (NY: Haworth Press, 2007): 25-42; 30.

[18] Korean War National Museum, "List of Orphanages in Korea Supported by Christian Children's Fund, Inc., 1954," *Korean War Children's Memorial*, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/CCF-001.htm (accessed 7/26/08).

[19] Caldwell, 35.

[20] Ibid., 37, 83.

[21] "Creswell Man—Father of Six—To Adopt Korean War Orphans." Newspaper clipping. ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1955-1957, Vol. 1," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Holt became so invested in the plight of mixed-race orphans in Korea that some people believed that, as long as there was a single mixed-blood child in Korea, Holt would never leave the adoption industry. See

Margaret A. Valk, "Visit to Korea—November 21-30, 1956," p. 14, ISS-USA papers, Box 35, File "Reports and Visits to Korea, 1956—," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[24] "Creswell Man—Father of Six—To Adopt Korean War Orphans."
[25] Ibid.
[26] "'The Lord is Their Sponsor': Korean Octet Get a U.S. Home," *Life* 39.26-40.1 (December 26, 1955), 58.
[27] "Haven for Korean Orphans…12 Waifs Make Journey to U.S.," *Paramount News*, 19 Oct. 1955, PARA: Paramount Pictures, Inc., Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, National Archives at College Park.
[28] "Mr. Holt 'Moves the World,'" *The Oregonian*, 9 April 1956. Newspaper clipping. ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1955-1957, Vol. 1," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[29] "Articles of Incorporation of Orphan's Foundation Fund, Inc.," ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1958-1959, Vol. 2," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[30] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "1965 Annual Report," 11 March 1966, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[31] Ibid.
[32] ELH to WCK, Memo, 8 Nov. 1967, p. 2, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[33] Director of ISS (American Branch), "Report of Visit to Korea, June 18-July 13, 1962," 4 March 1963, p. 16, ISS-USA papers, Box 35, File "Reports and Visits to Korea, 1956—," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN. In total, ISS averaged about 60 placements per year, but only 20 were placed in the U.S. The other 40 children were placed with Americans residing in Japan, Okinawa, and Korea.
[34] Paul R. Cherney, "Report to the Board of Directors of ISS, American Branch," June 8-July 10, 1965, p.11, ISS-USA papers, Box 35, File "Reports and Visits to Korea, 1956—," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[35] Ibid., 15.
[36] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Annual Report 1969," p. 5, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1968-1972, Vol. 4," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[37] Harry Holt, "Dear Friends," No date, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1955-1957, Vol. 1," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[38] William T. Kirk to Rev. Eugene Carson Blake, 17 June1958, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1958-1959, Vol. 2," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[39] Privileging speed and quantity over quality led to numerous unsuccessful adoptions, especially in the first ten years of HAP. At times, ISS stepped in to deal with these case "breakdowns." The reasons for these breakdowns ranged from petty reasons (such as a child being returned because he had an ear infection) to severe reasons (such as an adoptive parent abusing the adopted child). Dr. Pierce of World Vision said that out of 600 families adopting through HAP, "he doubts whether one out of five adoptive couples would be suitable—they were either too old or maybe unstable." See American Branch, ISS, Inc., "Proxy Adoptions," no date, p. 6, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Proxy Adoptions, 1954-1956," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN. The Holts themselves were rejected when they applied to adopt through a licensed adoption agency in Oregon because of their age. Some people speculate that this was one of the reasons why Holt started his own adoption agency because no other agency would allow him to adopt these children. Interestingly, HAP became known as the agency that approved everyone, including families who had been previously rejected by other adoption agencies (5).
[40] Bertha Holt, *The Seed from the East* (Eugene, OR: Holt International Children's Services, 1956), 55.
[41] Raymond W. Riese to Paul Martin, 13 May 1958, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1958-1959, Vol. 2," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[42] ELH to WCK, Memo, 8 November 1967.
[43] Patricia Nye, "Report on Visit to Korea, March 23-26, 1976," p. 2, ISS-USA papers, Box 35, File "Reports and Visits to Korea, 1956—," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[44] Raymond W. Riese to Paul Martin.
[45] Andrew F. Juras to Susan T. Pettis, 4 May 1956, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1955-1957, Vol. 1," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.

[46] Ibid.
[47] State Public Welfare Commission to Carl Adams, 30 Aug. 1957, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1955-1957, Vol. 1," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[48] William T. Kirk to Rev. Eugene Carson Blake.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Dorothy M. Frost to Susan T. Pettis, Memorandum, 25 Nov. 1958, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1958-1959, Vol. 2," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[51] "Harry Holt, Who Found Parents for 3,000 Korean Orphans, Dies," Newspaper clipping. 29 April 1964, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[52] Dorothy M. Frost to Susan T. Pettis.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Director of ISS (American Branch), "Report of Visit to Korea, June 18-July 13, 1962," p. 14.
[55] Paul R. Cherney, "Visit to Korea—June 23 to July 9, 1965," 20 July 1965, p. 16, ISS-USA papers, Box 35, File "Reports and Visits to Korea, 1956—," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[56] Ursula M. Gallagher, "Field Trip to Korea," November 15-19, 1965, p. 3, ISS-USA papers, Box 35, File "Reports and Visits to Korea, 1956—," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN. These figures come from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in Korea. Unfortunately, we cannot be sure that these figures are accurate because the practice of orphanages "padding" their figures in order to gain larger government subsidies was rampant. It is estimated that 10,000-15,000 orphans were actually "ghost children."
[57] Ibid.
[58] Paul R. Cherney, "Visit to Korea—June 23 to July 9, 1965," p. 16.
[59] Ibid., 17, my emphasis.
[60] Patricia Nye, "Report on Visit to Korea, March 23-26, 1976," p. 2.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid., 3.
[63] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Newsletter May-June 1965," ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[64] Ibid, 1.
[65] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "1963 New Years Greetings," p. 2-3, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[66] "Harry Holt, Who Found Parents for 3,000 Korean Orphans, Dies."
[67] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 137.
[68] Ibid, 136.
[69] "Korean Orphan Story," Jan-Feb. 1952, Reel 4, Department of Defense: Department of the Air Force, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 342, National Archives at College Park.
[70] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "1960 New Years Greetings," p. 2, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Bertha Holt, *Bring My Sons From Afar* (Eugene, OR: Holt International Children's Services, 1986), 185.
[73] Foucault, *Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 34.
[74] Ibid, 34, 35. Medical knowledge and health also produces race and normative ideals of gender and sexuality. See Foucault, *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*; 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); Nayan Shah, *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco Chinatown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); and Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).
[75] The United States has had a long history of shaping their immigration policies based on norms created about the healthy body. See Shah and Douglas C. Baynton, "Disability and the Justification of Inequality in American History," in *The New Disability History: American Perspectives*, eds. Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umanski, (New York University Press, 2001), 33-57.

[76] Shah, 186
[77] Ibid.
[78] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "1965 Annual Report," 11 March 1966," p. 6, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN. The fear underlying this emphasis on physical health is that persons immigrating to the U.S. will become public charges if they are unable to take care of themselves. See Baynton, 45.
[79] "1960 New Years Greetings," p. 2.
[80] Foucault, *History of Sexuality,* 139, 145.
[81] Harry Holt, "Dear Friends," 27 December 1956, p. 2.
[82] "1960 New Years Greetings," p. 2.
[83] Ibid., 2.
[84] Ibid., 4.
[85] The process in which Korean orphans would be matched with PAPs took a variety of forms. One way included PAPs designating the age and sex of the child they desired. HAP would then match a child with the PAPs, send the PAPs a description of a child—along with a picture—and the PAPs would "phone back [their] approval or disapproval" (Harry Holt, "Dear Friends," 27 December 1956, p. 2). Another way involved flying a planeload of PAPs to the Il San Orphanage and having them choose which children caught their eye. Although the HAP was criticized for this practice (which highlights the commodified aspects of Korean adoption), it was a common practice among adoption agencies. See Ursula M. Gallagher, "Field Trip to Korea," November 15-19, 1965, p. 8, ISS-USA papers, Box 35, File "Reports and Visits to Korea, 1956—," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN. It is within these two contexts that Holt witnessed PAPs choosing the more physically attractive child over the less attractive one.
[86] "1960 New Years Greetings," p. 4.
[87] Ibid., 2.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid, 4.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Letitia DiVirgilio, "Adjustment of Foreign Children in Their Adoptive Homes," *Child Welfare* (November 1956): 15-21; 15. ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children: Adjustment of Foreign Children," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[92] Margaret A. Valk, "Korean-American Children in American Adoptive Homes," National Conference on Social Welfare, 1957, p. 3. ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Adjustment of Korean-American Children," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[93] Ibid, 1.
[94] Bertha Holt, *Bring My Sons from Afar*, 191.
[95] Ibid., 137.
[96] Ibid., 166.
[97] Ibid., 143.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid., 146.
[100] Ibid., 146.
[101] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 183.
[102] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Newsletter May-June 1965," p. 6, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[103] Douglas C. Baynton, "Disability and the Justification of Inequality in American History," in *The New Disability His*tory: American Perspectives, eds. Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umanski (New York University Press, 2001), 36.
[104] Ibid., 35.
[105] Today, these children would be labeled as disabled, as their "handicap" is a physical impairment.
[106] "Newsletter May-June 1965," p. 6.
[107] Baynton, 49.

[108] Susan Wendell, *The Rejected Body: Feminist Philosophical Reflections on Disability* (NY: Routledge, 1996), 13.
[109] "1965 Annual Report," p. 3.
[110] Ibid., 5.
[111] Ibid.
[112] David Serlin, *Replaceable You*: *Engineering the Body in Postwar America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 3.
[113] Ibid., 17.
[114] Ibid, 57-110.
[115] "Newsletter May-June 1965," p. 11.
[116] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Newsletter July-August 1967," p. 11, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Newsletter October and November 1962," p. 5, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[120] See Martin Pernick, *The Black Stork: Eugenics and the Death of "Defective" Babies in American Medicine and Motion Pictures Since 1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).
[121] Bertha Holt, *Bring My Sons From Afar*, 197.
[122] Serlin, 2.
[123] Ibid., 78, 59.
[124] Ibid., 62.
[125] Qtd. in Serlin, 62.
[126] "Presentation by Marines of Artificial Leg to Korean Boy," 22 April 1953, Department of Defense: Naval Photographic Center, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 428, National Archives at College Park.
[127] Katie Hae Ryun Leo, "Number One Cosmetic Surgery in Asia," *Attempts at Location* (Georgetown, Kentucky: Finishing Line Press, 2008), 20.
[128] "Presentation by Marines of Artificial Leg to Korean Boy."
[129] Bertha Holt, *Bring My Sons From Afar*, 184, my emphasis.
[130] Holt Adoption Program to Mr. Vasey, 30 Nov. 1967, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[131] Matthew Rothschild, "Babies for Sale: South Koreans Make Them, Americans Buy Them," *The Progressive*, January 1988, Rpt. in Transracial Abductees, http://www.transracialabductees.org/politics/progressive.html (accessed 3/8/08).
[132] "1965 Annual Report," p. 4.
[133] Bertha Holt, *Bring My Sons From Afar*, 199.
[134] "1965 Annual Report," p. 4.
[135] John Adams, "Dear Friends," 18 May 1967, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[136] "1965 Annual Report," p. 4.
[137] Ibid.
[138] "Newsletter May-June 1965," p. 6.
[139] "Newsletter October and November 1962," p. 5.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid.
[142] I use the terms "Korean-Negro" and "Negro" here because this is what the adoption administrators used to refer to African Americans. While the term "Negro" is derogatory and offensive, I replicate its use here to stay true to the language used in the newsletters.
[143]Harry Holt, "Dear Friends," 27 December 1956, p. 1-4.

[144] Kori A. Graves, "'No Future in Their Country': African-American Families and the International Adoption of 'Negro-Korean' Children," Andersen Library Research Forum and the Social Welfare History Archives, (Minneapolis, MN), November 7, 2007.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Again, this descriptor "Korean-Caucasian" is not my own; it is the terminology used in the newsletters.
[147] Eleanor Linse to Lorraine Carroll, 11 March 1957, p. 1-2, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1955-1957, Vol. 1," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[148] Harry Holt, "Dear Friends," no date.
[149] Eleanor Linse to Lorraine Carroll.
[150] ELH to WCK, Memo, 8 Nov. 1967, p. 3.
[151] Ibid.
[152] "Newsletter October and November, 1962," p. 4.
[153] Although normality seemingly denotes the average, usual, or ordinary, in actuality, as Baynton explains, it "function[s] as an ideal and exclude[s] only those defined as below average" (36). Abnormal then really signifies the *sub*normal.
[154] "Newsletter October and November 1962," p. 1-2.
[155] Ibid., 8. See also Bertha Holt, *Bring My Sons From Afar*, 140.
[156] Ibid., 3.
[157] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 85-92.
[158] Ibid., 86.
[159] "Newsletter October and November 1962," p. 1.
[160] Bhabha states that "colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other…that the discourse of mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference" (86). In other words, the project of mimicry is not to create an exact replication. Not only is this an impossible task, but it would also defeat the purpose of colonial discourse, as mimicry relies on a reformation that assures that the Other remains recognizable. This demand for recognition (to be recognized as different) is what feeds mimicry, as the recognizable difference of the Other justifies the continued reformation and discipline of the Other.
[161] I develop this idea further in Chapter 4, where I examine the processes that make the Korean adoptee almost the same, but not quite; almost the same, but not white.
[162] Mi Ok Song Bruining, "A Few Words from Another Left-Handed Adopted Korean Lesbian," in *Seeds from a Silent Tree: An Anthology by Korean Adoptees*, eds. Tonya Bishoff and Jo Rankin (San Diego: Pandal Press, 1997), 66.
[163] Mihee-Nathalie Lemoine, "Statement," *O.K.A.Y.: Overseas Korean Artists Yearbook*, vol. 1 (2001): 82.
[164] Jane Jeong Trenka, *The Language of Blood: A Memoir* (St. Paul, MN: Borealis, 2003), 207.
[165] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Dear Adoptive Applicants," no date, p. 2, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Independent Adoptions, 1968-1972, Vol. 4," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[166] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 139.
[167] Ibid, 140.
[168] J. Calvitt Clarke to Harry Holt, 30 April 1959, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1958-1959, Vol. 2," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[169] Pre-placement care is a phrase used by ISS. ISS procedures varied significantly from HAP. For example, after the birth mother signed the release form, the child remained with his or her birth mother until the final stages of processing. During this final stage, the child left his or her birth mother and was placed in an institution for pre-placement care. Pre-placement care involved the last-minute preparations that equipped the child for his or her journey and new life overseas. It lasted for about two weeks.
[170] Paul R. Cherney, "Visit to Korea—June 23-July 9, 1965," 20 July 1965, p. 17.
[171] Ibid.
[172] The Korean-style of eating consists of sitting on the floor and eating with chopsticks and a spoon.
[173] "Newsletter May-June 1965," p. 5.
[174] "1963 New Years Greetings," p. 10.
[175] In Christian discourse, the soul and body reflect each other. Indeed, Richard Dyer points out that Christianity is a "religion whose sensibility is focused on the body." The body attains significance because

it functions as the vessel in which the spirit, or soul, resides. Therefore, the meticulous regulation of the body is congruent with the meticulous governance over the orphan's soul. See Richard Dyer, *White* (London: Routledge, 1997), 15, 16.
[176] "1963 New Years Greetings," p. 10.
[177] Since the beginning of his program, Holt's policy was "to place as many children as we can in truly Christian homes." See "Newsletter May-June 1965," p. 2. In order to ensure that only *Christian* parents adopt, HAP required prospective families to fill out a form entitled "Family Information." At the bottom of the form, it reads, "If you are Christians, please give a brief statement of personal faith on back of card." See Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Family Information," ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1955-1957, Vol.1," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN. This strict policy of placing orphans in only born-again Christian homes became more lax as the years went by. See John Adams, "From Mr. Adams" in "Newsletter July-August 1967," p. 8, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes, Harry Holt, 1960-1963, Vol. 3," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[178] "1965 Annual Report," p. 3.
[179] Louis O'Conner, Jr., "From the Director's Desk" in "1966 New Year's Greetings," p. 2.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid.
[182] "6122nd Wing Revisits Korea Orphanage," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 16 Dec. 1951. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/PSS-037-Q.htm (accessed 3/10/08).
[183] "Letter Home Helps Warm Tots," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 18 Nov. 1952. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/PSS-226-WQ.htm (accessed 3/10/08).
[184] "Color TV Used to Aid ROK Waifs," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 3 Nov. 1953. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/SSA-690W-Q.htm (accessed 3/10/08).
[185] "Epidemic Control Unit (USN), Ullong-Do Korea," 13 July 1952, Department of Defense: U.S. Army Audiovisual Center, Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Record Group 111, National Archives at College Park. After some of the boys distribute Bibles, they sit on the ground, two rows deep and in the shape of a large rectangle. They bow their heads in prayer. Later on, we see the boys stand up, as they take turns quoting scripture. Although this film is silent, the context of the scene and the brevity in which each child stands to talk suggest that they are probably reciting a short verse of scripture they memorized.
[186] "First Faith, Then Food for Waifs," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 4 Dec. 1953. Rpt. in *Korean War Children's Memorial*, Korean War National Museum, http://www.koreanchildren.org/docs/PSS-311-WQ.htm (accessed 3/9/08).
[187] See Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak," *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271-313.
[188] Harry Holt, "A Letter from Harry Holt" in "1960 New Year's Greetings," p. 7, my emphasis.
[189] Foucault, *Birth of the Clinic*, 39-40.
[190] Caldwell, 81.
[191] Ibid., 82.
[192] Ibid.
[193] Bertha Holt, *Bring My Sons From Afar*, 149, 161.
[194] Ibid., 185.
[195] Ibid., 184.
[196] Qtd. in Peter Conn, *Pearl S. Buck: A Cultural Biography* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 314.
[197] Ibid., 314. Interestingly, Buck queers the concept of family by eschewing biological ties while, at the same time, reclaiming the white heteronormative ideal since the majority of her clients were middle- to upper-class white couples. Furthermore, discarding the significance of blood ties allows her to normalize the white parent/nonwhite adopted child formation. I explore further this paradox in my next chapter.
[198] Korean adoption was particularly important in fostering this image of the U.S. Adopting Korean children came to symbolize America's acceptance of nonwhite peoples, which advertised to the world the

racial harmony of the United States in the midst of increased political and racial tension at home during the Civil Rights era. HAP even believed that the adoption of Korean children would change white Americans' attitudes "towards minority racial groups within our own country and towards other countries like Korea." Adopting Korean children became proof "that white Americans were ready to accept and love non-white children as their own." See Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Annual Report 1969," p. 5.

[199] Eloise Dungan, "Orphan Homes: Mrs. Pettiss Tells of Adoption," *San Francisco News* (February 20, 1956), p. 8.

[200] Eleanor Linse to Lorraine Carroll, 11 March 1957, p. 1-2.

[201] Qtd. in Conn, 312.

[202] Ibid., 312.

[203] David H. Kim, *Who Will Answer…* (Eugene, OR: Holt International Children's Services, 2006), 2.

[204] Ibid.

[205] To this day, many Korean adoptees believe that their Korean birthparent(s) gave up them up in order to give them a better life in America because this is the explanation promulgated by social workers and adoptive parents and agents.

[206] Soon-ja is not returning to her literal father. After all, the birthmother asks David Kim, Holt's assistant, to send her to the "nicest family in the United States" (3). The lie about going to live with her father is told to facilitate Soon-ja's acquiescence.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Queer Foundations of Korean Adoption

Point of Entry: A Queer Recipe

In her award winning and highly celebrated memoir *The Language of Blood*, Korean adoptee writer/activist/organizer Jane Jeong Trenka theorizes Korean adoptee identity by way of a recipe. She writes:

> Home chef, the modern alchemist, starts not with base metals but old chicken hearts and livers, broken backs and flightless wings…Extract the undesirable parts; accent the desirable flavors. Serve up consommé, chicken liver pâté with toast and apple rings, aspic in half-globes with carrot flowers suspended in amber.
>
> Consider another recipe: Start with a girl whose blood has been steeped in Korea for generations, imprinted with Confucianism and shamanism and war. Extract her from the mountains. Plant her in wheat fields between the Red River and the Mississippi. Baptize her. Indoctrinate her. Tell her who she is. Tell her what is real.
>
> See what happens.
>
> Witness a love affair with freaks, a fascination with hermaphrodites and conjoined twins, a fixation on Pisces and pairs of opposites. Trace a dream that won't die: a vision of an old woman slumped on a bench, her spirit sitting straight out of the body, joined to the corpse at the waist.[1]

Framing the formation of Korean adoptee identity within the confines of the kitchen laboratory, Trenka exposes the experimental qualities of Korean adoption. She implies that Korean adoption is an experimentation with identity, whose base ingredient is Korean children. Like most scientific experiments, Korean adoption is an experiment with highly controlled variables set in place ("Indoctrinate her. Tell her who she is. Tell her what is real.") in order to achieve the desired results: to make her normal. But it turns out that the recipe didn't quite produce the intended effect: the Korean adoptee—who is now fascinated with freaks—is not normal. You can almost hear the whispers of

orphanage personnel, social workers, adoptive agents, and adoptive parents in the observation suite: How did this happen? What went wrong?

The task of this chapter is to propose some answers to these questions in a way that doesn't demonize "freaks" or those who are not considered "normal." Rather than assuming that things went "wrong" with the experiment, I am more interested in teasing out why the architects and endorsers of Korean adoption are so invested in constructing it as a project of normativity. By centering the discussion on these investments, I offer those people sitting in the observation suite an unlikely answer. The primary answer and, therefore, argument that I make in this chapter is this: the foundations of Korean adoption are nonnormative. Thus, this chapter is devoted to investigating the nonnormative components that make up Korean adoption and how these components shape Korean adoptee subjectivity and identity through the lens of queer critique.

Queering Korean Adoption

In the previous chapter, I examined the processes of normalization and Americanization that orphans underwent in order to become categorized as "adoptable." Holt Adoption Program's Il San Orphanage became a case study in which to examine this transformation, wherein which the orphanage became a site of Foucauldian discipline that normalized "abnormal" and "handicapped" bodies in order to make them adoptable by Westerners. In this chapter, I follow the adoptee to the U.S., where we observe the strategies used to normalize the child become more varied and prolific (rather than ceasing altogether) inside her new American home. Why are the practitioners of Korean adoption constantly laboring to normalize the adopted child? The answer, I believe,

resides in a core anxiety concerning the racial, cultural, national, and biological difference between the adopted child and her adoptive parents. Even though the adoptee is disciplined in the orphanage to seamlessly assimilate into her new adoptive family, the very presence of the adoptee's body within the adoptive family disrupts the semblance of the all-American (read white) heterobiological nuclear family. This is the great paradox of Korean adoption: as a project of normalization, it produces a queering; namely, it queers the Korean adoptee. It does so because Korean adoption is a queer formation.

In his article "Transnational Adoption and Queer Diasporas," David Eng indexes Asian transnational adoption (such as Korean adoption and Chinese adoption) as part of the queer diaspora, a diaspora that is defined in terms of "queerness, affiliation, and social contingency" rather than "ethnic dispersion, filiation, and biological traceability."[2] Asian transnational adoption becomes the locus in which Eng theorizes emerging forms of queer kinship, a family formation that challenges conventional organizations of kinship where families are chosen rather than a unit they are born into.[3] For Eng, it becomes a site to envision, what he calls, a "new global family" with space for two mothers and, perhaps, even more.[4]

While I agree that Korean adoption is queer because it eschews the biological imperative of family-making, I contend that it is also queer because it poses as an institution of white normativity despite the visible presence of nonwhite bodies. Indeed, it is precisely that Korean adoption tries to simulate a white normative kinship formation—and, therefore, interpellate Korean children as white—that makes this particular form of transnational adoption queer. Thus, I suggest that Korean adoption is a queer formation cross dressing as a normative formation of kinship and whiteness. By

queer, I do not mean to imply an identity;[5] rather, I employ queer to signal to the ways in which the normal and normativity are transgressed. I use queer as both a process and critique to investigate regimes of the normal in Korean adoption. Thus, I use queer to frame Korean adoption as a regime of the normal.[6]

The very effort of posturing as a white heterobiological kinship is what makes Korean adoption queer. (This is quite different from Eng's assessment that Korean adoption is queer because its challenges normative constructions of family.) To be clear, much of my dissertation has demonstrated that the practitioners of Korean adoption are not trying to challenge normative constructions of kinship; on the contrary, they are trying to make Korean adoption normal and normative.[7] They are trying to fit Korean adoption into the model of heteronormative kinship rather than radicalize family—at least in its original conception. The goal for adoptive families during much of the fifty-year history of Korean adoption has been to be the *same as* other "normal" (read white, middle-class, and heterobiological) families rather than subvert or challenge this standard. However, the very effort and energy expended to promote transnational adoptive families as no different from white heterobiological families exposes its nonnormative foundations.

From Eng's deployment of Asian transnational adoption, it becomes clear what transnational adoption does for queer. I'm more interested, however, in what queer does for adoption. Specifically, I'm less interested in how Korean adoption queers conventional structures of family and more interested in how the regulatory codes of the white heteronormative family queer the Korean adoptee. In other words, I'm interested in fleshing out the heteronormative investments within queer formations. What queer can

do for Korean adoption, then, is illuminate the ways in which the nonnormative is recuperated by the heteronormative to absorb nonnormative bodies (e.g., the Korean birthmother, Korean adoptee). Put another way, queering Korean adoption enables us to see the ways in which the normative is deployed in order to assimilate the nonnormative. And it does so via the axes of race, gender, class, and normative heterosexuality.

By queering Korean adoption, I hope to bring to the fore how heteronormativity coalesces with whiteness and middle-class respectability as a way to cover up anxieties concerning differences in race, culture, and biology. What I am suggesting here is that heteronormativity is not only a sexual discourse but also a racial, gendered, and classed discourse, as well. In "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?" Cathy Cohen complicates the definition of heteronormativity as simply heterosexual privilege by illustrating the ways in which heteronormativity is defined in and through structures of race, gender, and class, as well. The particular ways in which heterosexuality intersects with these other structures is what produces the heteronormative. According to Cohen, heteronormativity is not only rooted in heterosexuality but also in white supremacy and dominant middle-class values and norms.[8] Linking heteronormativity to whiteness and middle-class sensibilities is particularly significant for me because Korean adoption has tried to gain legitimacy as a normative kinship structure not only through heterosexual formation but primarily through the reproduction of white middle-class norms. Indeed, as this chapter will illustrate, upholding white middle-class norms becomes the path to heteronormativity—not only for Korean adoption (as a familial structure) but also for the Korean adoptee. The anxieties concerning racial, cultural, and biological difference are assuaged through a

cleaving to white heteronormativity. As the excerpt from Trenka's memoir that opened this chapter indicates, the presence of the nonwhite Korean body in the white American family is always already a reminder of how shaky the façade of Korean adoption as a normative kinship structure is. As a result, the adoptee herself enables the queering of Korean adoption. Because the presence of the adoptee is what queers Korean adoption and the white American (adoptive) family, the regulation of the adoptee's racial, gender, and sexual normativity is incomplete and, therefore, ongoing. Thus, what Korean adoption does for queer is reveal a partnership between heteronormativity and queerness that is cyclical, mutualist, and enabling. Furthermore, Korean adoption becomes a useful site to examine the multiple ways in which heteronormativity and whiteness are mutually constitutive.

So far in my dissertation, I have tried to provide an alternative genealogy of Korean adoption that attends to its geopolitical history and function. By situating it within the context of American neocolonialism during the era of Cold War politics, I uncovered how Korean adoption—proposed as a humanitarian mission—was really conceived from American military domination and quickly became an arm of American empire. In this chapter, I situate Korean adoption within the field of queer studies to provide yet another genealogy of Korean that is rooted in projects of both normativity and queerness. The language of queer studies opens up a new vocabulary in which to discuss Korean adoption. Specifically, for this chapter, words like *heteronormativity*, *normative*, and *nonnormative* are not only used to reassess Korean adoption and Korean adoptee subjectivity but also to reexamine the relationship between adoptees and their adoptive parents.

So what does a queer reading of Korean adoption and Korean adoptee subjectivity reveal? One of the first things it exposes is the anxiety produced by the presence of difference. Because the architects of Korean adoption (state- and national-level officials, social workers, adoptive agents, and adoptive parents) are so invested in projecting Korean adoption as a heteronormative kinship structure, this very investment suggests that Korean adoption is not so normal. For example, their repeated efforts in trying to make racial difference a non-issue reveal that race *is* an issue: the denial of race calls up race. The first part of the chapter, then, focuses on the anxieties surrounding Korean adoption and how these anxieties are assuaged by the assimilation imperative as seen in the pages of Holt Adoption Program newsletters from the 1960s and 1970s.

The second part of the chapter not only continues to examine the ways in which heteronormativity is deployed to hide the queer dimensions of Korean adoption but also investigates the psychic and emotional effects of forced assimilation—or compulsory white normativity—as experienced by the adoptee protagonist Jane in *The Language of Blood* (2003). These psychic and emotional effects become queer reminders—not only reminding the Korean adoptee that she is not white but also reminding the adoptive parents that Korean adoption is not a normative formation of kinship. For Jane, these queer reminders facilitate her process of "coming to," or achieving awareness of the queer foundations of Korean adoption.

I end this chapter by talking about how Jane's "coming to" via her Korean birthmother revives the radical queer politics of Korean adoption. Jane resuscitates the queer figure of the Korean birthmother and the Korean adoptee to labor on the side of Korean adoption as a queer formation of kinship rather than a pseudo form of the white

heterobiological nuclear family. Through the composition of her short story, "A Fairy Tale," Jane presents a vision of Korean adoption that is organized by an "ethical multiculturalism."[9] This fairytale serves as a blueprint for how Korean adoption can reach its full potential of becoming a radical form of queer kinship.

A Note on Primary Sources

As I explained earlier in my introduction to this dissertation, a large body of knowledge has been produced about the Korean adoptee by nonadoptees (e.g., social workers, adoptive agents, case consultants, social scientists, and adoptive parents). This body of literature has depicted the adopted Korean as a model minority *par excellence*, who easily and seamlessly assimilated into his or her white American family and into mainstream American society. A key figure who promoted this image of the Korean adoptee was none other than Harry Holt. As we saw in the previous chapter, the Holt Adoption Program newsletters served as recruiting tools by advertising—through the visual progress report—the docile bodies of Korean orphans. The visual progress report communicated to potential adoptive parents just how manipulable and malleable they were.

The newsletters (composed primarily by Bertha Holt) also informed readers (adoptive parents, prospective adoptive parents, and religious and social organizations who were on their mailing list) of the "many miracles" that God accomplished through Harry Holt and the Holt Adoption Program (HAP) as a way to encourage people to participate in the activities of program (e.g., become adoptive parents, provide donations, help recruit other families to adopt). Inside these pages, one could read about the

expansion of the program, the hiring of new staff members, or get the latest information on adoption procedures and policies. One could also learn about Korean customs and language, educating both present and future adoptive families about the culture of the orphaned children displayed within their pages.

In short, these newsletters focused on the growth and successes of the program in order to assure its readers that HAP was making a positive difference in the lives of Korean children. As the adopted children of HAP grew up to become graduating high school seniors or married couples, the updates on Holt's adoptees served as visible evidence of the successful, assimiliated model minority Korean adoptee. These updates became another manifestation of the visual progress report—this time in regards to the improvement and normalization of the *adoptee*. If Holt's Il San orphanage was an institution of normalization that *worked* to normalize Korean orphans prior to their immigration, then the newsletters updates served as *proof* that Korean adoptees were normal and "like other American teenagers in many respects," as Dong Soo Kim concluded in his study.[10] As a result, in the same way that Holt's Il San orphanage was a prime site in which to investigate the normalization of the Korean *orphan*, the HAP newsletter updates becomes a key site in which to investigate the normalization of the Korean *adoptee*. It is for this reason that I examine these newsletters.

The cultural production of Korean adoptees, on the other hand, offers a more nuanced and complicated narrative of identity than the one touted by HAP. As I mentioned earlier, the cultural production of Korean adoptees is often created in direct response and, usually, in opposition to the body of literature authored by nonadoptees. They act as counterhegemonic narratives as they challenge mainstream notions of

adoptee identity. Therefore, I juxtapose my examination of HAP's newsletter updates with the Korean adoptee memoir *The Language of Blood* not only to illuminate the different investments in each but also to expose the queer foundations of Korean adoption. What the newsletter updates elide, Trenka highlights; what the newsletter updates attempt to deny and hide, Trenka exposes and brings to light. As a result, we must attend to these contemporary writings by adult Korean adoptees in order to peel back the layers of heteronormativity that conceal the radical queer politics of Korean adoption.

I selected Trenka's memoir because it is one the most well-known and celebrated adoptee memoirs to date. *The Language of Blood* has been praised not only because of its literary aspects (such as prose style, narration, and the fluid movement across genres),[11] but also because of its insight on identity formation, on transnational and transracial adoption, and on concepts such as home and family. A typical review, like this one from *Booklist*, states,

> Adoption memoirs are not rare, but *this one stands out* because of the *quality of the writing* and because of the *aspect of adoption it portrays*….The author interweaves the account of her life, already tangled in time and place, with legends and plays, creating an *incredibly introspective and moving piece*. Perhaps not a comfort to transcultural adoptive parents, but *thought-provoking reading on an important issue*."[12]

As a memoir that stands out because of its high literary quality and thought-provoking insights into the world of one Korean adoptee, scholars have analyzed this book in the context of diaspora, racial violence, racial melancholia, and generational memory.[13] Because Trenka employs a variety of genres and interweaves multiple storylines to illuminate the layered and complex dimensions of Korean adoption, the scope and range

of scholarship around this memoir is expansive. While *The Language of Blood* certainly does provide compelling insights concerning diaspora, melancholia, and memory, I am more interested in how the assimilation imperative of Korean adoption affects the adoptee's sense of identity. In other words, it is Trenka's keen theorizations regarding the effects of compulsory white normativity on adoptee consciousness and identity that interest me here.

In using Trenka's memoir to tease out the complexities and contradictions of Korean adoptee identity, I am neither suggesting that her story is the experience of all Korean adoptees nor am I suggesting that she speaks for Korean adoptees everywhere; however, despite the particularities of her experience, there are aspects of her story—certain themes, experiences, events—that are typical of the Korean adoptee experience: particularly the expectation felt by the adoptee to assimilate into white American family and society. It is precisely because her story resonates with so many Korean adoptees worldwide that her book has received so much attention in the global Korean adoptee community. The emblematic quality of her memoir is another reason why I chose this text among other Korean adoptee memoirs.

Finally, the distance in publication dates between the HAP newsletters (1960s-1970s) and *The Language of Blood* (2003) may suggest that there is a large historical gap between my primary sources. On the contrary, because Jane, the protagonist in the memoir, was adopted in the early 1970s, her story is historically situated in a similar moment as the Holt adoptee updates on which I focus. To be sure, the ideology of colorblindness and compulsory white normativity has structured Korean adoption for nearly fifty years. Only since the 1990s has a slow ideological shift taken place, in which

the discourse of multiculturalism has been promoted in conjunction to colorblindness. The rising number of Korean culture camps, Motherland trips, and "roots" tours attests to this shift, as the adoption industry tries to re-educate adoptive parents about the importance of nurturing cultural and racial identity that takes into account Koreanness. The adoptees I examine (in HAP newsletters and *The Language of Blood*) were adopted and raised before this shift, which locates them in a similar moment in Korean adoption practice and policy.

Coming to Terms

Before I delve into analyzing my primary sources, I want take a moment to define some of the more significant terms that frame my analysis: *normal*, *normative*, and *normativity* (and their relationship with each other); *white normativity*; *heteronormativity*; *heteropatriarchy*; and *nonnormative*. In her instructive article "Queer Is? Queer Does? Normativity and the Problem of Resistance," Janet R. Jakobsen unravels the complexities within "the regime of the normal" by articulating the distinctions between norms, normativity, and the normal: "Normativity is a field of power, a set of relations that can be thought of as a network of norms, that forms the possibilities for and limits of action. Norms are the imperatives that materialize particular bodies and actions…The normal could be simply the average, the everyday, or the commonsensical, but norms and the normal can also become hooked together so as to make the average not only normal but normative."[14] Normativity acts as a rubric in which norms and the normal have become infused with power. Put another way, norms are actions, behaviors, practices, etc. that have been codified as normal (taken for granted, obvious, natural) through "disciplinary

apparatuses" and "technologies of government."[15] This entire process—wherein which the normal becomes normative—is called normalization. And the regime of power that sanctions all this is called normativity. Indeed, when Michael Warner discusses the "regimes of the normal" in his introduction to *Fear of a Queer Planet*, he is referring to normativity.[16] I define white normativity, then, as the field of power that sanctions whiteness as the norm, making whiteness the standard upon which everything else is judged. Heteronormativity is normative heterosexuality, and it becomes normative through its (heterosexuality's) relationship to whiteness and middle-class values and norms.[17] Heteropatriarchy is composed of heteronormative and patriarchal discourses.[18] It is a system of heterosexual male domination that privileges and works to normalize heterosexuality in and through male authority and power. Nonnormative refers to actions, behaviors, practices, etc. that are outside the purview of the normative and goes "against the grain" of established norms; in addition, it destabilizes normativity.

Assimilation Stories: Holt Adoption Program Newsletters

Korean adoption is a queer construction of family. As a result, there is a constant effort to naturalize and normalize Asian transnational adoption, which reveals an anxiety around this particular kind of kinship. This anxiety is assuaged not only through the construction of Korean adoption as heterosexual reproduction (only married heterosexual couples are allowed to adopt)[19] but primarily through the obliteration of racial and national difference. More specifically, it replaces nonwhiteness with whiteness; it replaces Korean identity with a white American one. This is most poignantly demonstrated in the section where adoptive families provide updates of their adoptive

children in the newsletters published by Holt Adoption Program, Inc. In effect, these updates serve to illustrate the seemingly smooth and successful assimilation of the adoptees.

Along with a new family comes a new American name and identity. So in the May-June 1965 newsletter, we see names such as "Nancy Ferridino" and "Betty Birosel" attached to the pictures of two Korean-American women.[20] They both have stylish hairstyles that represent the era, and they appear happy. They look completely assimilated into American culture, as captured by their high school graduation pictures. "Graduations and weddings in the Holt families' children will be of great interest to all of us in the years ahead" is the line that concludes their update. Choosing to highlight graduations and weddings is significant because these two events symbolize not only successful assimilation but also the attainment and perpetuation of heteronormativity. Graduations signal a future wherein which adoptees will become respectable middle-class citizens: for women, it is the first step to becoming a good wife; for men, it is the initial step that will propel them to landing a good job, making them good husbands. Weddings signal the active reproduction of heteronormative unions and family-making. Accomplishing these markers eases the anxiety that queer kinship—that is Korean adoption—will produce unassimilated, nonconforming members of society.

Adopted Korean Jeanne Wickes is also the picture of successful assimilation, graduating with honors from Wheaton Academy. Her article "The Day My Faith Meant Most to Me" granted her a $500 scholarship award. According to the newsletter, her "helpful parents and faith in God" led her to achieve these scholastic accomplishments.[21] And while her handicap of being blind may have prevented her from achieving similar

accomplishments in Korea, it didn't stop her from becoming successful in the U.S. Bertha Holt, in recalling her trip to visit "happy parents of contented adopted children in Iowa," describes the transformative power of adoption. She writes, "It was a joy to see the pride of the parents and the transformation that has taken place in the children. They have changed from frustrated, love-hungry babies to secure, satisfied, and adorable children."[22] Bertha Holt's account, along with Ferridino's, Birosel's, and Wickes's update, attempt to prove that transnational adoption is effective: it has led to the successful normalization of once lost Korean orphans. Indeed, their stories and pictures appear alongside the story and picture of Park Song Ja, the little Korean orphan with a burn scar. The strategic placement of her among those who have already been adopted sends a message to readers that she could be like any of these successful ladies, if only she were given the opportunity (via adoption).[23]

While these updates do indeed serve as a recruiting tool to potential adoptive parents who may be reading these before-and-after accounts, the newsletter updates also function to cover up Korean adoption's nonnormative structures. This is accomplished by highlighting and celebrating normative gender roles and sexual relations in an effort to forgo racial difference altogether. By the 1970s, the updates in Holt Adoption Program newsletters became more elaborate and were formally organized under the heading, "Grandma's Brag Book" (the "Grandma" being Bertha Holt).[24] The Korean adoptees who are featured in this section are successful in school (honors students, high school graduates, college bound), in religion (practicing Christians) and, to paraphrase a line from *Flower Drum Song*'s starlet Linda Low (played by Nancy Kwan), successful in their gender.[25] For example, in the January-February 1973 newsletter, siblings Marsha

and Dennis Rudder are featured. The "Report on the Ruders" begins this way: "A happy, busy, productive life is the story of Marsha and Dennis Ruder."[26] This brother and sister pair, however, are busy and productive in quite different ways. Along with receiving all A's, playing first-chair clarinet in her high school band, and winning a state competition in piano, Marsha is also described as "an excellent home-maker, and a knitting champion."[27] Dennis, like his sister, is also accomplished but his future is quite different. A member of the National Honor Society for two years running, he sings and plays piano, is a member in the Drama Club, writes for the school newspaper, and plays football. But, unlike his sister, law school is what lies in his future.[28] Even the photos that accompany this report reify white middle-class gender norms: Marsha looks very feminine with her soft smile and long, flowing hair. She wears a simple turtleneck and vest, adorned with an understated necklace. Her photograph gives off a friendly, warm vibe. Dennis, on the other hand, looks like the picture of heteropatricharchy with his thick-framed glasses, well-groomed hair, and suit and tie. His edges are much sharper than his sister's, as his unsmiling face and demeanor evinces an attitude of masculine authority and seriousness. They both look the part: she the housewife and mother, he the lawyer.

Like Marsha and Dennis, the Korean adoptees who make it into "Grandma's Brag Book" are so successful in their gender and in their new American lives that one could possibly forget that they are not white. (Or, if one can't forget, it doesn't matter because they are so "normal" in other ways.) Their hypernormativity acts as a substitute for their racial lack (i.e., whiteness). The narratives that the updates provide are so thoroughly codified in white American norms that it becomes difficult to *not* see them as white. But this is precisely the point, after all. By focusing entirely on the seemingly smooth and

easy assimilation of Korean adoptees in white American homes, Holt Adoption Program overcompensates in the area of gender and sexual normativity to hide the nonnormative racial foundations of Korean adoption.

It is important that Korean adoptees be successful in their gender because gender normativity is a central component of heteronormativity. The women whose accomplishments are highlighted in the newsletters could be classified as "good girls" primed for marriage: they are attractive, obedient, and talented. They are interested in feminine work such as nursing or candy-striping at a nursing home. Likewise, the men who are featured could be categorized as good husband material. They are handsome, ambitious, and interested in masculine occupations such as serving in the military or becoming doctors and lawyers. It is certain that these soon-to-be professionals will easily provide their future families with a financially stable home. Indeed, these updates have the quality of personal ads, in which readers can envision and locate potential wives and husbands in their perusal of this section. But thinking about these adoptees as marriage partners is quite different from thinking of them as good students and obedient children. Indeed, it is when one envisions Korean adoptees as sexual partners that race starts to become an issue, that racial difference is taken into account.

In the context of marriage, the issue of race is revived. One only needs to look at who is and who is not getting married: the wedding announcements primarily show *female* Korean adoptees getting married. And they aren't getting married to other Korean adoptees or other men of Asian descent; they're marrying white men.[29] Within the context of compulsory assimilation, this is quite logical. After all, if complete assimilation is the goal, then marrying another Korean adoptee would defeat this

purpose—no matter how assimilated the Korean adoptee is. Whiteness is the goal not only in terms of identity but also in marriage. But there are some unintended effects that arise with this particular pairing. In the wedding pictures, the presence of the white male body next to the Asian female body doesn't make her more white; it makes her less white. In the presence of whiteness, her nonwhiteness becomes more apparent. In addition, this particular partnership—while it could be read as evidence of successful assimilation—evokes multiple histories that belie such a reading. First, militarized sexuality is cited, framing this union as another byproduct of the Korean War. If we took these wedding pictures outside the context of the Holt Adoption Program newsletter, the couple would more likely be perceived as an American soldier with his Korean military bride than an assimilated Korean adoptee with her white American husband.[30] Second, it recalls the history of the uneven ways Asian bodies have been racialized and gendered in the U.S. The racialized and gendered fantasy of the Asian female as simultaneously hypersexual and docile, erotic and submissive, positions Korean adoptee women into the status of prime marriage partners. In the contemporary context of the rising power of the white women's liberation movement, the fantasy of the sexually attractive, docile Asian women becomes even more desirable.[31] In contradistinction, Asian men have historically been constructed as "yellow perils" who threaten national security, or have been cast as feminine and asexual. Neither characterization makes for good marriage material. The overachieving Korean adoptee men who emit masculinity and heteropatriarchy in the pages of the newsletter, it seems, cannot compete with these stereotypes of Asian men; they are simply too powerful. It is because of these uneven histories of war, sexuality, race, and gender that have made the partnering of Asian women with white men more

common than Asian men with white women. Put simply, in marriage matters, race matters—which is one reason why racial difference cannot be as easily displaced by heterosexual union as it was by gender normativity. The other reason is because, as previously explicated, normative heterosexuality is co-dependent on whiteness; consequently, it is more difficult for Korean adoptees to achieve heteronormativity through marriage than through the attainment of normative gender roles.

These narratives and photographs that highlight white normativity, gender norms, and heteronomativity work to alleviate the racial aberration that is Korean adoption. These stories seem to indicate that despite the queer construction of white Americans parenting nonwhite foreign children, white adoptive parents have nothing to worry about because adoption will transform these children into successful and responsible Americans with all the accoutrements of white middle-class values and norms. Furthermore, the assimilation project is not complete without the component of entering into normative gender roles and heterosexual relations with white Americans. White heteronormative reproduction becomes another way to mitigate—albeit to varying degrees—the anxieties concerning the queer dimensions of transnational adoption.

Queer Reminders in *The Language of Blood*

In stark contrast to the stories promoted by Holt Adoption Program, Korean adoptee narratives disrupt the picture of seamless assimilation as conveyed in the newsletters. By sharing their experiences of growing up and being raised in predominately white communities, Korean adoptees expose the contradictions that emerge from white normative projects that try to suppress difference. Adopted Koreans

reap the contradictions that erupt from projects that try to deny or elide difference in the quest for sameness. Because adoptees live with and within these contradictions, their personal narratives address rather than repress difference. As a result, their narratives attend to the queer foundations of Korean adoption.

Despite the accounts from adoptive agents and adoptive parents that suggest that "all it takes is love to make a family. Race doesn't matter," accounts from Korean adoptees suggest otherwise.[32] In *The Language of Blood*, we see the systematic regulation of the adopted child's identity—especially racial identity—which suggests that race does indeed pose a problem for the white adoptive family. The anxieties concerning the Asian body in the white family emerge even before the child physically enters into the family. For the Brauers, Jane's adoptive parents, the seed of Korean adoption—like for many Americans—was planted by their local pastor. Pulling out a brochure entitled "Every Child is Precious in His Sight," he shows them a picture of a sad Korean girl and tells them:

> These children could have been aborted, but their mothers chose life for them. Often the mothers are prostitutes or teenagers, and they cannot take care of their own children. But these babies need homes and parents who love them, and they need to be brought up in the love of Jesus Christ our Savior. It is the work of the Holy Spirit through our church that God has blessed us with the opportunity to help these children in need.[33]

Despite linking adoption to a spiritual calling, the Brauers are hesitant: "There was something *strange* about the thought of adopting from Korea."[34] While Mr. Brauer is open to starting a family, his wife wonders if *Korean* adoption is the right solution. Revealing her doubts about adopting a nonwhite foreign child, she responds to the Pastor's sales pitch by asking, "But from overseas?" Knowing exactly what she is

referring to and anticipating this concern, the Pastor reminds her: "God does not see the color of our skin. He made us all the same in His image. He sees only souls. Open your heart to Jesus's love of all his little children. Let him work His miracles through you."[35]

This exchange is significant for several reasons. The fact that the Brauer's first response to the idea of creating a family via Korean adoption is "strange" reveals that prospective adoptive parents know intuitively that this particular brand of kinship is queer; however, rather than seizing Korean adoption for its potential radical queer politics, the practitioners of Korean adoption promptly work to reduce the "strangeness" of Asian transnational adoption by glossing over the very thing that makes it queer: racial difference. Because the idea of a mixed-raced family is a real source of anxiety for prospective white adoptive parents, proponents of Korean adoption work to alleviate this anxiety through the active denial of racial difference, which is accomplished via the rhetoric of colorblindness fueled by Christian love.

> Families are responding to our racial crisis in this country by seeking the experience of family love across this most distressing of barriers—they are seeking to become "color blind."[36]
>
> —Holt Adoption Program (1969)

The problem of strangeness (or queerness) that comes from racial difference is solved by the ideology of liberal humanism as proponents of Korean adoption educate the public, informing us that kinship-making is not about race but about humanity, not about skin color but about providing every child with a home.

After visiting with their Pastor, the Brauers decided they would adopt. But they would adopt a white boy. A white boy, however, was unavailable, so they reread the brochure that the Pastor sent home with them:[37]

> Lutheran Adoption Service focuses on both the child and prospective parent. They believe every child has a right to permanent parents who can provide an atmosphere of love, acceptance, and supportive care. Each child should have the security of family life experience, the opportunity to grow in Christian faith, and to develop his special endowment. They also believe married couples who desire to share of themselves in helping a child should have the opportunity to experience the satisfactions and responsibilities of parenthood.[38]

This re-education concerning the basic ingredients to make a family (married couples willing to provide needy children—regardless of skin color and nationality—a permanent and loving home) may sound like an effort to radicalize normative kinship structures; however, its reproduction of and reliance on white heteronormativity not only forecloses the possible radical queer politics of Korean adoption but also hides the queer dimensions of Korean adoption. It does so by framing Korean adoption as a white heteronormative formation of family. Based on the requirements of the brochure, the prospective adoptive parents have to be married Christians. In addition, the financial responsibility it takes to not only adopt/purchase the child but also to raise and support her presumes at least a middle-class standing. And while whiteness is not a written requirement, the overwhelming majority of adoptive parents are white—not just in the U.S. but also in Canada, Europe, and Australia—because "this style of family-building," according to Kristi Brian, is "cost-prohibitive for low-income families."[39] Significantly, the criteria to adopt Korean children reflect the main components of heteronormativity: whiteness,

middle-class values and norms, normative gender roles, and normative heterosexual practices.

In stark contrast to the presumably financially-stable married couple with Christian values and middle-class sensibilities is the figure of the Korean birthmother who is depicted as either a prostitute or an unwed teenage mother. Her supposed sexual deviance from a prescribed norm—in this case, exchanging money for sex, being unwed at the time of pregnancy, and/or having sex at an inappropriate age—deems her unfit to take care of her own children.[40] The Korean birthmother, according to the Pastor's narrative (which is also the narrative promulgated by adoptive agents), falls short of being a "proper" woman and mother. Juxtaposed against this nonnormative heterosexual figure is the married white American couple who beam gender and sexual normativity—even though they are unable to reproduce. Their heteronormative lifestyle gives them the *right* to "experience the satisfactions and responsibilities of parenthood" (partly because marriage supposedly signifies permanence and stability), while the nonnormative heterosexual lifestyle forfeits the Korean birthmother's right to parent. Consequently, the white American couple is presumed to be the best choice and, eventually, the natural choice to take care of these Korean children.

What becomes evident here is that white heteronormativity not only becomes the tool to elide the queer dimensions of Korean adoption, but it also becomes the alibi used to situate white Americans as more fit for parenthood than Korean birthparents. Here we see how heteronormativity becomes dependent on nonnormativity. Despite the fact the Jane's mother was neither a prostitute nor an unwed teenager, framing Korean adoption as a heteronormative formation of family relies on the presence and labor provided by a

nonnormative subject: in this case, the supposedly deviant Korean birthmother (rather than the infertile American couple).[41] Fabricated or not, the figure of the Korean birthmother as prostitute or unwed teenage mother becomes the key to help legitimize the parenthood of childless white middle-class couples.[42] The figure of the Korean birthmother as sexual deviant also performs another kind of specialized labor: she takes on the queer dimensions of Korean adoption; queerness gets displaced on her, so that she—rather than Korean adoption or the adoptive parents—becomes nonnormative. In other words, in an attempt to disappear racial difference from the discourse of Asian transnational adoption, the focus turns to the nonnormative heterosexual practices of the Korean birthmother. Put another way, in trying to jettison racial anxiety in Korean adoption, this anxiety becomes displaced on the supposed gender and sexual improprieties of the Korean birthmother. Gender and sexual nonnormativities replace the "strangeness" of an Asian child entering the white familial sphere in an effort to squelch the racial anxiety that structures transnational adoption. Thus, Korean adoption as a normative kinship formation (rather than a queer kinship formation) is constructed in and through the figure of the queer Korean birthmother.

Another way that practitioners of Korean adoption try to cover up the nonnormative dimensions of Korean adoption is by framing it as a bastion of heteronormativity, where "at risk" children who may be doomed to replicate the lives of their nonnormative birthmothers are "saved."

Many end up as child-servants or as teen-age concubines.[43]
—Holt Adoption Program (1971)

We were told we should be grateful to them for adopting us…It if wasn't for them, we would either be dead or be prostitutes on the streets of Korea.[44]
—*Searching for Go-Hyang* (1998)

The construction of the Korean birthmothers as gender and sexually deviant, along with the perceived danger that these traits will be passed onto the child, works to launch the adoptive parents to Christ-like status—not only in their absolution of the mother's "original sin" but also in "saving" the child. As Jane explains, the rhetoric of adoption says that she had been "rescued by adoption; had I stayed in Korea, I would have been institutionalized, after which I would have turned into what Asian girls tend to turn into if left to their own devices: a prostitute."[45] For Jane, adoption would not only provide her with proper parents but also "save" her from prostitution.[46] Korean adoption is propped up as a training ground where "at risk" (of becoming prostitutes) Korean children turn into "good" girls. Within the domains of Asian transnational adoption, Korean children who are born from supposedly sexually perverse behavior and fated to repeat this cycle of deviance are given the chance to become normative sexual subjects; their deviant sexual past can be erased through the normative powers of transnational adoption. Thus, Korean adoption gains legitimacy as a normative formation of kinship through its reproduction and reinforcement of middle-class norms and values concerning sexuality and gender.

So far we have seen that the construction of Korean adoption as a normative kinship formation depends on both the queering (i.e., figuring her gender and sexually deviant) and disciplining (i.e., taking away her parental rights) of the Korean birthmother.

But there is another queer figure that requires discipline: the Korean adoptee. As I mentioned before, the disciplining of the Korean child does not end after she leaves the orphanage; on the contrary, the adoptee's entrance into her new white American family destabilizes the semblance of the conventional white nuclear family so that her body becomes a site of even more scrutiny and regulation. New circumstances require new tactics of discipline. Because the goal is to make Korean adoption a heteronormative structure of kinship, the regulation of the adopted child's sexuality and race becomes the tools to elide the queer dimensions of this new family.

As they enter the sphere of their new adoptive family, Jane and her sister Carol undergo rigorous regulation of both their sexuality and race—albeit in different ways. For example, caught masturbating during the dead of night in their bedrooms at the age four and eight respectively, their adoptive mother is thrown into a frenzy about the girls' supposed rampant sexual energy.[47] The older sibling Carol is especially targeted because she was "pretty, popular, and smart—right from puberty."[48] Assuming her "wickedness" from the start, Mrs. Brauer refers to her eldest adoptive child as a slut and a whoring sinner. She even solicits a house call, asking the Lutheran pastor for divine intervention to keep Carol on the straight and narrow.[49] But Carol had not deviated from the straight and narrow path and, so, the good reverend leaves their house unalarmed. Despite the lack of evidence that Carol is a "slut" or "whore," the adoptive mother continues to obsess and worry about her seemingly sexual improprieties;[50] her vigilance is round-the-clock. It seems that the stereotypical construction of Asian women as whore, along with the fabricated narrative that made her birthmother a prostitute (even though she wasn't),

is too powerful an image to forget. Consequently, the regulation of the adoptee's sexuality becomes an important aspect of normalizing the adopted child.

The degree to which Jane's adoptive parents are diligent in upholding racial and sexual normativity reveals the unstable nature of the normative façade of transnational adoption. They must invest in this continued regulation because it could collapse at any moment. If the regulation of Jane and Carol's sexuality resulted in the adoptive mother's hyperawareness of their sexual activity, the regulation of their race entails quite the opposite. Schooled by the practitioners of Korean adoption at this time, the Brauers try hard to make race a non-issue.

> [Holt Adoption Program] sees him as a child and human being first, and as being of a particular nationality or race as secondary.[51]
> —Holt Adoption Program (1971)

After rereading the adoption agency's brochure, the Brauers decide to disregard the racial difference of the Korean child and adopt: "Yes, they did want to help a child. Yes, they did want to give a child a home. Yes, they wanted to give a child the opportunity to grow in Christian faith…Yes, they wanted to be parents."[52] Despite proving to themselves that race did not matter—that they could see beyond race—race, however, is the first thing they see when they pick up their newly adopted children at the airport. Their response to seeing race is to *not* see race; their response, like the entire industry's response to racial difference, is to be colorblind—that is, blind to every shade except white.

The regulation of the Korean adoptee's racial difference hinges on the ability to de-race her: to erase the racial, cultural, and national characteristics that mark her different in an effort to make her white.[53] This de-racing process takes place in the form of assimilation and requires recruitment. The play "Highway 10," which is embedded in Trenka's memoir, can be read as an instance of interpellation.[54] Through this play, Trenka reveals the relationship between the ideology of adoption and the subject formation of the adoptee as one that de-races the subject. Sounds of airplanes taking off and landing open the play.[55] After ten minutes, the scene transitions into a rural highway. Sitting in the car are Fred and Margaret (the adoptive parents) and their newly arrived adopted children Mi-Ja and Kyong-Ah—who instantly have been renamed Carol and Jane. Four-and-a-half year old Carol sits alone in the backseat, while Margaret holds Carol's baby sister Jane in the passenger seat. The entire play consists of just three lines: two questions and an assertion.

Fred:

[*Looks into the rearview mirror to see* Carol.] How you doin' back there?

[Carol *continues to scan audience*]

Margaret:

[*Pats baby gently but constantly, like a nervous tic. Turns head to look at* Carol *but is unable to see her. Speaks over her shoulder*.] Are you okay?

[*Long pause*]

Fred:

[*Louder*] Your mother asked you a question.

[Carol *does not look at* Margaret *but searches the faces in the audience, looking for a Korean face, any Korean face. Finding none, she closes her eyes and decides to forget*.][56]

In this scene, the "colorblind" Father and Mother interpellate Carol as their adopted child. More precisely, heteropatriarchy—as a stand in for the nation-state—hails Carol, while the white mother plays a supporting role. Even though Carol does not understand English and, therefore, does not comprehend the actual words that are spoken, she does recognize that the words are meant for her. Specifically, she knows intuitively that they are recruiting her to be someone else: not Mi-Ja, a Korean girl but Carol, an American girl whose identity and life are just beginning. We know that *she* knows that she is being recruited to transform not by the words she says (she remains silent for the entire duration of the play) but by the internal decision she makes. Her response: "she closes her eyes and decides to forget." She understands that the words spoken by her adoptive father and mother are not only directed at her but are also soliciting a response that requires conversion.

Louis Althusser admits that the interpellation process seems inexplicable since even with a whistle, "the one hailed always recognizes that it is really him who is being hailed."[57] However the reason why we respond to the hail, according to Althusser, is because "individuals are always-already subjects."[58] Even before birth, a child has always-already been configured as a subject via the expectations created by the familial ideology: "Before its birth, the child is therefore always-already a subject, appointed as a subject in and by the specific familiar ideological configuration in which it is 'expected' once it has been conceived."[59] These expectations are rooted in ideology. So in the case of Carol, the ideology of adoption—the core of which is colorblindness and assimilation—has always-already interpellated her as a de-raced adopted subject. Despite that fact that she is four-and-a-half years old, the ideology of adoption states that

she is reborn as an American child and into a new family. "The existence of ideology and the hailing or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing," according to Althusser.[60] That is why there is no time-lag between the construction of Mi-Ja and Carol. Fred and Margaret expect Carol not Mi-Ja to arrive at the airport; they hail *Carol* not Mi-Ja, thereby producing an adoptee subject.

This transformation from Korean to American girl is neither without violence nor trauma. As the newly formed family makes the trek from the airport to their rural American home, the audience not only feels what Carol feels but also witnesses Carol's transformation on a historical, cultural, and emotional level. The play is organized in real time: it is four hours long, the time it takes from the airport to Carol's new home. Like Carol—who is trapped in the car for the entire time—the audience is also trapped. Once the play begins, all the theater exits are locked, preventing anyone from leaving until all four hours of the play are completed. By recreating similar physical and temporal conditions, Trenka replicates in the viewer how Carol must have felt: anxious, scared, confused, overwhelmed, and reticent. In so doing, Trenka dismantles the picture of adoption (as promoted by adoption agencies and social workers) as a smooth, seamless process of assimilation; rather, the audience begins to understand the kind of psychic and emotional violence that takes place when a child is expected to forget the past in order to begin anew.[61]

Indeed, later on in the memoir, Jane recalls a memory from her childhood that captures the graphic violence of assimilation projects. The scene is the annual slaughter and processing of chickens on her grandparent's farm. As she witnesses the beheading of

chickens, Jane's contempt for her own face turns masochistic when she fantasizes about chopping it off with her Grandpa's ax:

> I wanted my head to be removed, a metaphor so strong that only later did I realize that it was not a death wish at all. I dreamed about it, fantasized about it, imagined the mercy of a guillotine. My body was separated from my mind in a dualism so ridiculous that I almost flew apart at the shoulders.
>
> What I longed for was wholeness, for my body to be as white and Northern Minnesotan as my mind. I longed to be normal, to not have to emotionally excavate myself to find my place. I wanted to be like my normal cousins who took after their normal parents or grandparents, who inherited the family colons and noses…[62]

By reframing her assimilation process as a literal beheading, Jane critiques the assimilationist project. The assimilation story is most commonly understood as a teleological narrative that moves the alien or foreign subject from darkness into light; from savagery into modernity; from an uncivilized life into civilization. Furthermore, it is depicted by those in power as a smooth, peaceful project. Jane's re-memory of her assimilationist fantasy, however, revises this progressive, nonviolent journey of assimilation by capturing the violence that accompanies such a project. If taken literally, assimilation leads to death not life. The graphic violence of this scene becomes the critique. Seen another way, Jane, through this shocking tale of memory, provides the backstory to the seemingly smooth and painless stories of assimilation recounted in Holt Adoption Program's newsletter updates. The psychic violence that compulsory white normativity entails is made explicitly clear in this remembering.

In "Highway 10," we witness the assimilation story of Carol. By using reel-to-reel home video footage, Trenka enables the audience to observe Mi-Ja's transformation into Carol. To be sure, the home video is a visual representation of the psychic effects of

the assimilation imperative. After she "decides to forget"—which is her response to the hail—a reel-to-reel home movie is projected above and behind the car. It consists of scenes from Mi-Ja's (Carol's) life in Korea, ranging from playing with her sisters and friends to sleeping with her mother to saying goodbye—less than 24 hours ago—to her family at Kimpo Airport. Eventually, the memories of her past life in Korea become "blank frames and white noise."[63] The process of assimilation is put on fast-forward as we observe the name, language, family, and history of one Korean child diminish into complete erasure. The ideology of adoption necessitates this de-racing process in order for her conversion from Korean child to Korean adoptee to take place: "Carol has willed herself to become a girl with no history and is now ready to start her new life."[64]

But Carol isn't completely without history. Trenka seems to have miswritten because the movie turns into a series of "illuminated scratches and other imperfections" rather than a blank screen. Scratches and imperfections are not nothing. In this case, they are the etchings that remain from her past. In the same way that a pencil's imprint on paper cannot be completely rubbed away with an eraser, four-and-a-half years of life experience cannot be wiped out so thoroughly. Even if on the surface the pencil marks have been wiped away clean, the grain of the paper's pulp has been forever changed. On the surface, it may look like Carol has completely erased her past. But deep in her psyche, her life in Korea has made an impression that cannot be undone. For example, although Carol "assimilated well, just as Mom and Dad were promised she would," she "spoke one Korean word repeatedly and for no *visible* reason."[65] That word was *apun* or pain. Significantly, Carol uses Korean to identify not a physical pain but a psychic pain. For many Korean adoptees who undergo processes of historical erasure, traces of their

Korean past reside in the psychic world rather than the material or physical world.[66] According to Judith Butler, this is because the psyche houses the price that is paid for normative, coherent subjectivity: "every ritual of conformity to the injunctions of civilization comes at a cost, and that a certain unharnessed and unsocialized remainder is thereby produced…This psychic remainder signifies the limits of normalization."[67] In Carol's case, *apun* is a psychic remainder that signifies the limits of transnational adoption as a normalizing process. This slip of the tongue signals the impossibility of complete assimilation. Jacqueline Rose contends that "the unconscious constantly reveals the 'failure' of identity—'failure' is something endlessly repeated and relived…It appears not only in the symptom, but also in dreams, in slips of the tongue…which are pushed to the sidelines of the norm."[68] For Carol, it is the slip of her Korean tongue that signifies the failed de-racialization of adoptee identity. For Jane, it is within her dreams where this failure manifests itself.

Jane's psychic remainders are housed in her dream world. After reuniting with her birthmother in Korea and living with her for a week, she begins to dream in Korean:

> Although I couldn't understand it, there it was—a full-fledged Korean language dream complete with Korean women talking and me having no idea what they were saying. And then something quite extraordinary happened: *the dream seemed to dissolve, although I didn't wake. And what was left was a kind of heightened reality*, from which there emerged a very loud voice that asked, "What is your name?" And I said to it, "My name is Kyong-Ah. It never used to be, but it is now. My name is Kyong-Ah."[69]

Her ability to dream in Korean—her first language—proves the limits of the normalizing powers of transnational adoption. But even more significant than this is the new level of awareness she achieves about herself. In this "heightened reality," Jane experiences a

"coming to" in which she comes to consciousness about her Korean identity—an identity that has been squelched and rescinded since her adoption. Taking back her Korean name "Kyong-Ah" is remarkable considering that she used to check "white" on all her college forms. [70]

If the psyche, as Butler suggests, is where the excesses of normativity are housed, then it is also in psychic space where queerness takes its first breath. Butler argues that transforming into a normative subject comes at a cost, and this cost is accounted for in the unconscious, in the psyche. There is another way we can interpret this: in conforming to the injunctions of normativity, queerness gets displaced in the psyche. Psychic remainders become queer reminders. And these queer reminders are consciousness-raising. For both Carol and Jane, their psychic remainders remind them that they are *not* white. And this particular queer reminder aids Jane in "coming to" identify as Korean rather than white.

Korean adoption makes whiteness compulsory, creating closet-like conditions. [71] Because the Brauers are committed to portraying Korean adoption as a conventional structure of family, Jane tells us that she was raised in a house where "The a-word, adoption, was not mentioned in our house. Neither was the K-word, Korea."[72] The "a-word" and the "K-word" are unmentionable because they would expose the secret that Jane's adoptive parents are so committed to locking away: namely, the secret that Jane is different from them—racially, culturally, and biologically. These unmentionables would shatter the dream of raising them "the way they were supposed to—like we were their own."[73] Jane becomes complicit in trying to keep this secret and tucks away her Korean self behind a bulletin board: "I took down the bulletin board in my bedroom and with a

thumbtack scratched my Korean name (which I had cunningly memorized years before) into the paint on the wall and then replaced the bulletin board so I would not be found out."[74] She also engages in a variety of activities to "whiten" her appearance: from bleaching her hair blond, to altering her face with makeup, and to dating only white men.[75] But after she returns from her Korean trip where she "came to," she begins to see herself no longer as "Jane the Twinkie, the Pan-Asian fraud."[76]

Jane describes the process in which she affirms her nonwhite Korean identity as "coming out of the closet."[77] Even though Jane herself uses the discourse of the closet to frame her renewed sense of self, I provide an alternative discourse to understand this event. Rather than reproducing the problematic logic of the closet that has organized much of canonical queer theory, [78] I suggest that Jane engages in a process of "coming to" rather than "coming out."[79] Because the "coming out" narrative creates strict binaries such as closeted/visibility, secrecy/disclosure, and oppressed/liberated, the narrativization of the "coming out" process produces a teleological narrative of identity where the subject moves from "inauthentic" self to "true" self. The process of "coming to," however, evokes an altogether different trajectory of identity. Unlike "coming out," the phrase "coming to" is less teleological, more fluid, and eschews binary production. Not only does it connote a coming to awareness or consciousness—which is emblematic in Korean adoptee personal narratives—but it also evokes a movement towards something or some person. Because the "to" is left open-ended, "coming to" connotes multiple directions, which signifies that identity formation is multiply inflected, multidirectional, multifaceted, and continuous. In short, "coming to" is not so much about declaring or achieving some end result (like "coming out" implies) but about confronting one's

circumstances and conditions in order to achieve a more nuanced and complex understanding of oneself. By refiguring Jane's narrative of identity as "coming to," I not only offer an alternative to the "coming out" narrative that is less teleological, normative, and essentialist but also provide a more accurate rendering of the Korean adoptee's relationship to identity formation.

In a family and community that perpetually try to de-race her, Jane re-races herself by "coming to." In a letter that she writes to her now dead Umma (*mom* in Korean), she recounts the ways in which she has reclaimed a Korean identity: being able to read Korean, dream in Korean, cook Korean food, and engage in Korean rituals to properly mourn her passing. By filling herself with these aspects of Korean culture, she proclaims, "I take you back, and I take back all the things that were stolen, back inside my body." She even signs the letter—for the first time—with her given Korean name: "Your daughter, Kyong-Ah."[80] Here, Jane recovers what was taken away during the interpellation process via the Korean mother. She reverses the losses associated with heteropatriarchy's hailing of Kyong-Ah as Jane through the figure of her Umma.

By pointing out the ways in which Jane has recovered her nonwhite identity via her "coming to," I am neither suggesting that Jane's formation of identity is "complete" nor am I suggesting that she is a "whole" person because she has reclaimed her "origins." To be sure, her sister Carol also returned to Korea on a separate trip, and she had no such "coming to" experience.[81] I am suggesting, however, that Jane's "coming to" is significant because it not only proves the limits of Korean adoption as a heteronormative project but also revives the radical potential of Korean adoption as a queer formation of family—one where at least two mothers of different races can coexist and one where an

"ethical multiculturalism that rejects the model of white heterobiological nuclear family" becomes the organizing principle.[82]

It is interesting that Jane's "coming to" is facilitated by her reunion with her birthmother. It seems fitting that the very subjects who have been queered and disciplined by Korean adoption are the very subjects to radicalize Korean adoption. It is through them that the radical possibilities of Korean adoption are revived. However, the queer possibilities of Korean adoption become forestalled when Jane shares her new awareness with her adoptive parents.

Despite the sense of pride and validation that Jane feels upon achieving this new level of self-understanding, Jane realizes that "coming to" may destroy her relationship with her parents because that very relationship has been founded on the belief that she is not (racially) different from them. Her validation of her Korean identity names that difference and, in so doing, disturbs the white normative world in which she lives. She ponders the situation of revealing to her adoptive parents her newfound awareness of self:

> I know that announcing "Mom, Dad, I'm K-K-Korean. No you don't get it, I mean, I'm *Korean*," is a lot more difficult than deciding to become a pianist. And after I acknowledge that I'm Korean—or at least an adopted one…I am not going to magically "move on" or become "normal."[83]

Here we see that part of Jane's "coming to" process requires an act of enunciation, where she proclaims her Korean identity in the hopes of having it recognized and acknowledged by her adoptive parents. This recognition by her adoptive parents is particularly important if the radical queer politics of Korean adoption is able to reach its full potential; however, just as the white heteronormative standard of Korean adoption has regulated the adopted child, so, too, has it disciplined the adoptive parents. So

predictably, when Jane proclaims her affiliation with Koreanness over the phone, she is met with hostility and then silence. A year and a half passes before they speak again; it is to tell them that she is getting married.[84]

When Jane introduces herself to her adoptive parents as Korean, she doesn't say directly "I'm K-K-K-Korean" as she rehearsed in her mind; rather, she relies on the reclamation of her Umma to signify her new identity as Korean to her adoptive parents. After receiving news from Korea that her Umma died from brain cancer, Jane decides to organize a memorial service in her honor, since she cannot attend the funeral in Korea. She contemplates whether or not to invite her adoptive parents for fear of getting hurt if they reject the invitation. In the end, her optimism wins over, and she asks her parents. She telephones her adoptive mother and says, "It would mean a lot if you would come."[85] Her adoptive mother says she's planning a shopping trip to Wal-Mart that day. Jane pleads with her, "Mom, please come. I want you to come. It would mean so much to me." This time, her adoptive mother is more direct: "*not interested*" is her answer to Jane's pleas.[86] At this moment, Jane takes stock of the situation:

> She [Mom] is unaffected by my mother's death; it didn't happen, *she* didn't happen. In my mom's mind, I don't come from somewhere else, I don't have a birth mother, I don't, I don't.
>
> I take another deep breath and weigh my choices. I can continue the charade or I can be true to myself. I opt for the latter. I'll say it. I'll name this illusion, this intractable lie.
>
> …"Can't you fucking come for the woman who gave you your children?"…
>
> "*Say*."[87] She snaps it like a whip across my face…
>
> She has done it again. She can cow me into submission with a single word. I politely tell her, voice shaking, that I will not talk to her for a while. Good-bye.[88]

Jane, in uttering the words "the woman who gave you your children," is evoking the unmentionables—the "a-word" and the "K-word"—at the same time. She is, in fact, exposing the illusion of Korean adoption as a normative formation of family in order to shatter it. Because the dominant ideology of Korean adoption depends on making the Korean birthmother disappear, it is not surprising that her reappearance (even as a corpse) threatens the façade of Korean adoption as a white heterobiological structure of kinship. What is unexpected, however, is that Jane uses her Umma to signify her "coming to" Koreanness: "Can't you fucking come for the *woman who gave you your children*?"[89] By aligning herself as the child of the newly deceased Korean woman, Jane resuscitates the disappeared Korean birthmother and re-employs her—this time—to disclose Korean adoption as a *queer* kinship formation.

Upon first glance, the adoptive mother seems to be more incensed by Jane's use of profanity ("fucking") than the actual meat of her words ("the woman who gave you your children"). Indeed, when Jane tries to solicit sympathy from her adoptive father—"Please come to the memorial service, even if Mom doesn't. Do you remember how sad you were when your mom died? I feel like that now. That's why I would like you to come"—his only response is, "You swore at my wife. We're not coming."[90] I wonder, however, what is more obscene for the Brauers: the word "fucking" or Jane identifying herself as Korean? Or perhaps even more profane than both these things is being outed by Jane: Mrs. Brauer is *not* the natural mother. This may be obvious; however, the dominant ideology of Korean adoption tries to construct the adoptive mother as the natural mother, as the "real" mother, since she is the one raising the child.[91] Korean adoptee filmmaker Deann Borshay Liem has noted that there simply is no room for two

mothers in the adoptee's mind.[92] The rhetoric of Korean adoption doesn't allow for more than one mother to exist at a time because having two mothers would make visible the queer dimensions of Korean adoption. Consequently, each mother's role is regulated in such a way so that only one emerges. In this case, the adoptive mother gains the status of the "real" mother. The Korean mother is displaced so that the white American woman can assume her "rightful" role as the maternal figure. So by evoking her Korean mother, Jane shatters the fantasy that allows her adoptive mother to imagine herself as the natural mother and, thereby, allowing Korean adoption to be seen as a white heterobiological structure of kinship. Put another way, through her reclamation of her Umma, Jane not only queers her adoptive mother but also Korean adoption.

Perhaps this is why the Brauers choose not to get past the single swear word: the variation of the word "fuck" is an obscenity they can handle; it doesn't threaten to destablize the white heteronormative foundation of their adoptive family unlike the "obscenity" of Jane's "coming to" and the queer reminders that come with it. But what precisely are those reminders? Jane ends up reminding her adoptive mother that she, Jane, has another mother. And that if it weren't for this mother, Mrs. Brauer may have never become a mother. In this way, Jane reminds her adoptive parents of their infertility: "We [Jane and her adopted sister] are reminders that something is wrong with someone's womanhood or someone's manhood. We are reminders of inadequacy, or incompleteness."[93] Furthermore, because the birthmother is Korean, Jane also reminds her adoptive mother that she is not white: "Mom, I am not from you; I will never be fully yours. I will never have peachy skin or blonde hair; I will never see the world through blue eyes," writes Trenka as she reflects on the viability of repairing their relationship

after a year-and-a-half long silence that started with her phone call.[94] All these reminders work to dismantle an ideology of adoption that is founded on white normativity, colorblindness, and assimilation; an ideology that privileges white motherhood over Third World and nonwhite mothers; and an ideology that disappears the nonwhite mother in an effort to make Korean adoption a pseudo-biological kinship formation as a way to make it appear normal and natural. By "coming to" via her Korean mother, Jane stops the cycle of racial, cultural, and maternal violence that is done for the sake of upholding the standard of white heteronormative kinship structures. Preserving white middle-class norms will no longer be at the expense of Jane's sense of identity and well-being. The suppression and repression of her racial and cultural identity is no longer a valid form of payment for keeping up appearances and keeping alive the "adoption is wonderful" rhetoric.[95]

"A Fairy Tale": Reviving the Radical Queer Politics of Korean Adoption

As I stated earlier, it is apt that the very subjects who have been queered and disciplined by Korean adoption are the very subjects to radicalize Korean adoption. Rather than being employed to normalize Korean adoption, their presence and labor are now being redeployed to revive the queer politics of Korean adoption. Even though Jane's parents refuse to recognize and acknowledge Korean adoption as a queer formation of kinship, the radical possibilities of Korean adoption that were resuscitated with Jane's "coming to" are not entirely foreclosed. Instead, they are rerouted and reinvested in herself rather than in her adoptive parents.

Because so many non-adoptees consider the reclamation of a Korean identity as an act of rejection (of whiteness or Americanness), Jane is often asked by strangers and friends, "Would you rather have been raised in Korea?"[96] As a way to answer this question for herself, Jane composes a fairytale that is at once "completely plausible and also completely false."[97] Entitled "A Fairy Tale," Jane begins her story with a mother who loved her two Korean girls very much but could not take care of them. So she sends them to people who have the resources to support them. The people who adopt these girls help them to become healthy and strong. But more importantly, they raise them to be conscious of their Korean past:

> [T]hey honored the girls' Korean heritage as they grew, helping them to remember the things they had forgotten. Together they rediscovered Korean language and food, clothing and customs. They proudly displayed in their home the gifts sent by the Korean mother. Most importantly, they talked about the Korean family and made them a part of their own family. In their prayers at the dinner table, they asked God to bless their food, their family, and their extended family in Korea.[98]

Rather than eliding or ignoring the material realities of racism, this tale tells of local school children calling these girls hurtful names. In Jane's fairytale, however, an effective solution is created: the adoptive parents collaborate with the school teacher to implement a curriculum where a different child's heritage would be learned and celebrated each month. The fairytale continues: when the two girls are old enough to travel back to Korea, their adoptive parents join them. And when their birthmother becomes sick and dies, the adoptive mother holds a memorial service for her, honoring the ways in which these two families—that have now become one—are bound together

through her. In effect, in this story, "The two girls never felt ashamed of their heritage. They felt proud to be both American and Korean."[99]

It matters very little if this story is true or false, or based on facts or fiction. As Jane points out, there are many kinds of truth: partial truths, covered truths, emotional truths, and multiple versions of truth.[100] Obtaining the "truth" about her personal history or identity is neither her intention nor the goal because the quest for "truth" is always-already marked by impossibility and incompleteness. What matters, instead, are the creative possibilities that blossom by garnering fragments and pieces of "truth"—both factual and fictional. In this case, Jane weaves both fact and fiction to rewrite the dominant script of Korean adoption. Though her fairytale, Jane provides an alternative blueprint for kinship where there is room for two mothers and space enough for two families of different races, nationalities, and cultures to coexist and even become one. In effect, she embraces the queer dimensions of her family by disidentifying with a notion of kinship (i.e., Korean adoption) that makes assimilation compulsory, that privileges whiteness over nonwhiteness, that privileges the adoptive mother over the Korean mother, that privileges sameness and homogeneity over heterogeneity, and that privileges the normative over the queer. [101]

Interestingly, the queer possibilities provided by her fairytale vision present her with the opportunity to recycle and reuse her names in a way that befits her new vision of family.[102] After she gets married, Jane is given the opportunity to select whatever name she wants and, thus, to "*choose* who I wanted to be."[103] She considers reclaiming her given, Korean name: Kyong-Ah Jeong. Or keeping her given, American name: Jane Marie Brauer. Or combining her American name with her married name: Jane Brauer

Trenka. She finally decides on "Jane Jeong Trenka: one name from each family."[104] She explains:

> I wear it like a scar and a badge, the same way others wear their names, adapting language to reflect reality. I deliberately choose my name, my clan, my place in the world as it has borne me and created me. I choose to wear my joy and my pain in these words that signify me, and from this name you will know who I am.[105]

Perhaps the fairytale she envisioned is not so much a world of make believe than it is reality. To be sure, Jane's fairytale has "come true"—despite her fraught relationship with her adoptive parents—via her new name. She has come to embody the ideology constructed by her fairytale through her new identity. Put another way, her invented tale has carved a path towards an identity that is composed of her Korean heritage, her adoption experience, and her marriage to a white American man. These raw materials are recycled to embody an identity that encompasses her past, present, and future—all at the same time. Rather than discarding the trauma and pain that has informed much of her adopted life—extracting the undesirable parts—she incorporates them and invests them with new meaning; she wears her pain and struggle like a badge to signal her strength, her growth, and her perseverance rather than failure, shame, and guilt. Like her fairytale, her chosen name makes room for her white adoptive family, her Korean family, and this new family that she is creating with her husband.

Within this new context, the results of the kitchen laboratory experiment that introduced this chapter is far from being a failed experiment with undesirable results; on the contrary, new discoveries and insights have been made through these unintended effects. These new insights have become the very ingredients for a new recipe: it is

called “A Fairy Tale.” With the new list of ingredients and directions offered by her fairytale, Jane has created an ideology of Korean adoption that is organized by the vision of an ethical multiculturalism. And perhaps, hopefully, this modified recipe that is formulated by Jane will become the new set of instructions that Korean adoptee practitioners and policy makers—those in the observation suite—will follow instead and, thus, bring to fruition the radical queer politics of Korean adoption.

Notes

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[1] Jane Jeong Trenka, *The Language of Blood: A Memoir* (St. Paul, MN: Borealis, 2003): 118.
[2] David Eng, "Transnational Adoption and Queer Diasporas," *Social Text* 21.3 (2003): 1-37; 4.
[3] Ibid., 3-4.
[4] Ibid., 3, 33.
[5] While there are indeed Korean adoptees who identify as gay, lesbian, or queer, they are not the subject of this chapter. In this chapter, I use queer to signal a process and a critique rather than an identity.
[6] Michael Warner, ed., *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), xxvi. According to Warner, that is why *queer* in *queer theory* gains its "critical edge" because it "defin[es] itself against the normal rather than the heterosexual" (xxvi).
[7] It is precisely the successful history in which Korean adoption has been able to emulate the white heterobiological nuclear family that has allowed nonnormative couples to achieve a semblance of a "normal" family through Asian transnational adoption. Indeed, Eng points out that Asian transnational adoption has enabled white lesbians and gays access to normative structures of family and kinship through the Asian child—thus allowing them to engage fully in robust citizenship (7-8).
[8] Cathy J. Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?" *GLQ* 3: 437-485; 453-457.
[9] Eng, 33. Ethical multiculturalism negotiates difference in a way that does not privilege or prioritize whiteness, middle-class values, and heteronormativity.
[10] Dong Soo Kim, "Intercountry Adoptions: A Study of Self-Concept of Adolescent Korean Children Who Were Adopted by American Families" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1976), 62.
[11] Alison McGhee, a reviewer for the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, writes, "Trenka has structured her book in a delightful, spiraling collage of prose forms…[which] are woven into a language-rich tapestry." See "Review: 'Language of Blood' is a poetic pastiche of longing," *Minneapolis Star Tribune* (Sept. 7, 2003), http://www.startribune.com/viewers/story.php?template=print_a&story=4065535 (accessed 11/22/03).
[12] Danise Hoover, Rev. of *The Language of Blood*, *Booklist* 100.2 (Sept. 15, 2003): 199, my emphasis.
[13] See, for example, Eun Kyung Min, "The Daughter's Exchange in Jane Jeong Trenka's *The Language of Blood*," *Social Text* 94 (Spring 2008): 115-133 and Seo-Young Chu, "Science Fiction and Postmemory Han in Contemporary Korean American Literature," Special Issue on Alien/Asian, *MELUS* 33.4 (Winter 2008): 97-121.
[14] Janet Jakobsen, "Queer is? Queer Does? Normativity and the Problem of Resistance," *GLQ* 4.4 (1998): 511-536; 517.
[15] Ibid., 517-518.
[16] Warner, xxvi.
[17] Cohen, 453-457.
[18] Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 7, 10.
[19] Although some adoption agencies allow gay and lesbian couples and, in some circumstances, single parents to adopt children from overseas, the prevailing standard for nearly the entire history of Asian transnational adoption has been that only heterosexual married couples could adopt. Holt Adoption Program, as the agency that founded Korean adoption, was adamant about this point and set the example for other agencies to follow. At present, Korean adoption continues to require heterosexual married couples to adopt. See Kristi Brian, "Choosing Korea: Marketing 'Multiculturalism' to Choosy Adopters," in *International Korean Adoption: A Fifty-Year History of Policy and Practice* (NY: Haworth Press, 2007): 61-78; 67.
[20] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Newsletter May-June 1965," p. 10, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes: Vol. 3 (1960-1963)," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[21] Ibid, 11.
[22] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Newsletter October and November 1962," p. 1, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Children—Independent Adoption Schemes: Vol. 3 (1960-1963)," SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.

[23] The strategic placement of photos is powerfully illustrated in Bertha Holt's published diary *Bring My Sons From Afar*. On one page, we see Harry Holt holding an emaciated baby that looks near death. The caption alongside this photo is, "Harry with the Gibb's [sic] baby" (38). On the next page is a photo of an attractive married woman (the wedding band on the left hand is clearly visible) with a healthy, beaming little girl in her arms. The caption alongside this photo reads, "Now the Gibb's baby has one of her own" (39). The success of Korean adoption seems undeniable here with this pairing of before-and-after shots of the "Gibb's baby." And to refer to this mother as "the Gibb's baby" helps to preserve the aura of the miraculous, making her transformation from emaciated infant into a beautiful mother all the more astounding. The markers of success are evident: the adoption of the Gibb's baby has paved the path to marriage and motherhood. See Bertha Holt, *Bring My Sons from Afar* (Eugene, Oregon: Holt International Children's Services, 1986).
[24] As Grandma Holt explains, this section draws from the numerous photos and letters that their office receives from adoptive parents. As a result, it becomes a "picture gallery of smiling faces from far and near" that reveals "the straight A students, the basketball, swimming, and track champions, music and art talents, the first tooth, the date at the prom, the Eagle Scouts, and the summer jobs. We are delighted with each detail and recall the history that brought about these happy results." See Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Holt Adoption Program Newsletter," XV.1 (Jan-Feb. 1972), p. 8, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Independent Adoptions: Vol. 4 (1968-1972), SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[25] *Flower Drum Song* (Universal City, CA: Universal Pictures, 1961). VHS.
[26] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Holt Adoption Program Newsletter," XV.7 (Jan-Feb. 1973), p. 3, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Independent Adoptions: Vol. 4 (1968-1972), SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] See, for example, the following issues: "Holt Adoption Program Newsletter," XV.5 (Sept.-Oct. 1972), p. 3 and "Holt Adoption Program Newsletter," XV.6 (Nov-Dec. 1972), p. 2 in ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Independent Adoptions: Vol. 4 (1968-1972), SWHA, Minneapolis, MN. I was unable to read every newsletter from this period; however, from the newsletters available to me, this was the trend. I contacted the offices of Holt Adoption Program, which is now Holt International Children's Services in Eugene, Oregon, to examine the newsletters missing from the Social Welfare History Archives collection. They, in so many words, refused my request for a research visit. Because a staff member would have to be present with me at all times during my research, they said they didn't have the manpower to escort me. In addition, they would have to find "someone we can trust" to get the materials and make copies. These two things, along with the fact that the newsletters were stored in a secured vault in a separate, climate-controlled building, made it "time-consuming" and inconvenient for them to have me conduct research at their facilities.
[30] For more information about the relationship between U.S. military occupation in Korea and militarized sexuality, see Grace M. Cho, *Haunting the Korean Diaspora: Shame, Secrecy, and the Forgotten War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008); Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); and Katharine H.S. Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).
[31] The musical *Flower Drum Song*, again, illustrates this point nicely. Linda Low proclaims, "I Enjoy Being a Girl," at the exact same moment when white feminists are demanding gender equality.
[32] Trenka, 113.
[33] Ibid., 24.
[34] Ibid., my emphasis.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Holt Adoption Program, Inc., "Executive Director's Report," 9 Feb. 1969, p. 6, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Independent Adoptions: Vol. 4 (1968-1972), SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.
[37] According to Rita Simon and Howard Alstein, "Social changes regarding abortion, contraception, single parenthood, and reproduction in general had reduced the number of white children available for adoption, leaving nonwhite children as the largest available source." See *Adoption across Borders: Serving the*

Children in Transracial and IntercountryAdoptions (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000): 3. This increasing shortage of white children available for domestic adoption made prospective adoptive parents—who were initially not inclined to adopt nonwhite children from overseas—reconsider Korean adoption as a viable option for family-making. It also had a reputation for being speedy and efficient in processing adoptions, making it quite appealing. See Brian, 66-67.

[38] Trenka, 24.

[39] Brian, 67. She goes onto say: "Thus, the promotion of KAA [Korean-American adoption] is primarily 'targeted' to white, middle-class, heterosexual couples."

[40] The practice of delegitimizing nonwhite mothers in favor of reproducing white motherhood has its roots in colonial projects. Beginning with the forced removal of native children from their indigenous communities, race, gender, class, sexuality, and nation have intersected to perpetuate the construction of nonwhite mothers as "unfit"—not only for reproduction but also for mothering. See Margaret Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009); *Outsiders Within: Writing on Transracial Adoption*, eds. Trenka, Oparah, and Shin (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2006); Twila Perry, "Transracial and International Adoption: Mothers, Hierarchy, Race, and Feminist Legal Theory," *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism* 10 (1998): 101-164; and Diane Marre and Laura Briggs, eds., *International Adoption: Global Inequalities and the Circulation of Children* (NY: New York University Press, 2009).

[41] The infertile white couple is also nonnormative because their inability to reproduce puts them outside the established gender norms; however, unlike the figure of the Korean birthmother, focusing on their nonnormativity would not strengthen the case of Korean adoption as a normative kinship structure.

[42] This narrative that situates single Korean mothers as unfit to raise their babies is also used to persuade Korean birthmothers to give up their children. Indeed, Jane Jeong Trenka of TRACK (Truth and Reconciliation for the Adoption Community of Korea) notes that the Korean government makes transnational adoption the easiest choice for unwed Korean birthmothers to make. Of the twenty-seven unwed mothers' facilities (hospitals) that exist in Korea today, thirteen of them are run by international adoption agencies. This direct line between hospitals and adoption agencies has produced, what Trenka calls, "baby farms," as these facilities directly supply adoptive agencies with babies from unwed Korean mothers. See Jane Jeong Trenka, "A Million Living Ghosts: Truth and Reconciliation for the Adoption Community of Korea (TRACK)," Book Tour, Asian American Studies Program, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 11 Feb. 2010.

[43] John Adams, "Annual Report for 1971," Feb. 1972, p. 3, ISS-USA papers, Box 10, File "Independent Adoptions: Vol. 4 (1968-1972), SWHA, Minneapolis, MN.

[44] Tammy Tolle, dir., *Searching for Go-Hyang* (NY: Women Make Movies, 1998). VHS.

[45] Trenka, 198. Ironically, it is precisely the ways in which the Asian female body has been figured as a prostitute that made Jane susceptible to racialized sexual violence in the United States. For example, Jane describes being propositioned by an Asiaphile at the grocery store in the canned goods section (86). She even discusses at length the semester in which she was stalked by a fellow college student (70-83). During their first encounter, he tells her, "You're nothing but a Korean in a white man's society. You're a gook, you're a chink" (73). Several months later, he was caught with a "Rape and Murder Kit" (80) and confessed that "he purchased video camera equipment so that he could record his exploits of raping and killing the intended victim so that he could further enjoy the experience again and again later on" (76). According to Eun Kyung Min, "This was a terrifying riposte to her adoptive parents' failure to acknowledge her racial difference" (128).

[46] Trenka, 121, 198

[47] Ibid., 121-122.

[48] Ibid., 121.

[49] Ibid., 122.

[50] In spite of her adoptive mother's paranoia, Carol was and turned out to be the picture of proper sexual behavior. In high school, Carol dated just one boy: a son of the carpenter who built the Brauers house and

who was pre-approved by her parents. And upon college graduation, she married a coworker, moved to the suburbs, and had a baby (122-123).
[51] John Adams, "Annual Report for 1971," Feb. 1972, p. 3.
[52] Ibid., 25.
[53] Yellow desire is precisely what makes this a viable project. Historically, the process of "de-racing" has been seemingly more successful for Korean children than, say, for African Americans or American Indians. To be sure, the popularity of Korean adoption hinges on this fantasy that Asian bodies are more assimilable into the body politic than these other racialized bodies. The racial hierarchy in the U.S. has worked to naturalize the racial order wherein which East Asian bodies are perceived as more readily able to achieve honorary whiteness than black Americans, for example. This is why Korean children, and now Chinese children, are considered more suitable for this project.
[54] Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)," in *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (NY: Monthly Review Press, 1972). Althusser defines interpellation or "hailing" as an operation of subject formation: "ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called *interpellation* or hailing" (174). He goes on to construct a "theoretical theatre" that reveals the process of hailing: a person (usually behind them) yells out, "Hey, you there!" Inevitably, an individual turns around knowing that the hail was for him or her, recognizing that "Hey, you!" was directed towards him or her (174-175). In recognizing and answering the hail, the subject is formed (175).
[55] Trenka, 16.
[56] Ibid., 17.
[57] Althusser, 174.
[58] Ibid., 176.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid., 175.
[61] For more examples on how projects of normalization and assimilation have enacted and justified all sorts of violence on nonwhite communities, see Brenda Child, *Boarding School Seasons* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2000); Anne Anlin Cheng, *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation, and Hidden Grief* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2001); Gustavo Pérez Firmat, *Tongue Ties: Logo-Eroticism in Anglo-Hispanic Literature* (NY: Palgrave Macmillian, 2003); Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987); Roderick A. Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black*; and *Rabbit Proof Fence* (Burbank, CA: Miramax Home Entertainment, 2003). DVD.
[62] Trenka, 207.
[63] Ibid., 17.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid., 27, my emphasis.
[66] See for example, Deann Borshay Liem, *First Person Plural* (San Francisco: National Asian American Telecommunications Association, 2000). DVD; Me-K Ahn, *Living in Halftones* (NY: Third World Newsreel, 1994). VHS; and Helen Lee, *Subrosa* (NY: Women Make Movies, 2000). VHS. In all three of these films, disjointed memories and images from the Korean adoptees' past life in Korea, as well as Korean words, erupt in their dream world or subconscious.
[67] Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 88.
[68] qtd. in Butler, 97.
[69] Trenka, 118, my emphases.
[70] Ibid., 113.
[71] I describe the conditions as "closet-like" because Korean children who are adopted by white adoptive parents are forced and *expected* to become white. A recent study by Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute concluded that nearly 80% of Korean adoptees have either identified as white or wanted to be white at some point in their lives. See Ron Nixon, "Adopted From Korea and in Search of Identity," *New York Times* (Nov. 8, 2009), 1. NYTimes.com. http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/09/us/09adopt.html (accessed

11/11/09). Despite the incorporation of multiculturalism in the 1990s, this recent study suggests the limits of multiculturalism in nurturing an adoptee identity that is not rooted in whiteness. Multiculturalism—through Korean cultural camps and roots tours—is not enough because this particular kind of multiculturalism preserves whiteness as the normative center. See Joyce M. Bell and Douglas Hartmann, "Diversity in Everyday Discourse: The Cultural Ambiguities and Consequences of 'Happy Talk,'" *American Sociological Review* 72 (December 2007): 895-914. In addition, Kristi Brian points out that adoption agencies practice a brand of multiculturalism where race becomes conflated with culture, which allows both adoptive agents and adoptive parents to evade racial politics and white privilege. See Brian, 71.

[72] Trenka, 35.

[73] Ibid. Based on the new study that came out from the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, the institute hopes that "their work would guide policymakers, parents and adoption agencies in helping the current generation of children adopted from Asian countries to form healthy identities" by exposing the dangers of assimilation and treating these children "without regard for their native culture" (1). See Ron Nixon, 1-2.

[74] Trenka, 59.

[75] Ibid., 59-60.

[76] Ibid., 66.

[77] Ibid., 190.

[78] Queer of color theorists have repudiated the epistemology of the closet and its corresponding discourse of "coming out" by identifying the ways in which they privilege the experiences of the western white gay male. For example, Martin Manalansan reveals how the closet narrative presupposes a Euro-American liberal subject whose identity formation is situated within a "Western-centered developmental teleology, with 'gay' as its culminating stage" (488). In addition, Gayatri Gopinath points out that because "coming out" relies on an economy of visibility, the closet narrative produces normative, Western, and imperialist understanding of queer identity. See Martin Manalansan, "In the Shadows of Stonewall: Examing Gay Transnational Politics and the Diasporic Dilemma," *Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital*, eds. Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 485-505 and Gayatri Gopinath, "Homo-Economics: Queer Sexualities in a Transnational Frame," *Burning Down the House: Recycling Domesticity*, ed. Rosemary Marangoly George (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), 102-124.

[79] I want to thank Jigna Desai for suggesting the phrase "coming to" in theorizing Jane's response to the regulatory codes of Korean adoption.

[80] Trenka, 193.

[81] Carol recounts to Jane that even though she was four-and-a-half years old when she left Korea for adoption, her visit back to Korea revived no memories: "I couldn't believe I didn't remember places or people or anything. You'd think I would; four-and-a-half-year-old kids have memories…And our mother was so mad at me! She couldn't understand why I didn't speak Korean, she was mad because I didn't like the kimchi that she said I used [to] beg her to make…And I didn't know how to use chopsticks, so she took them and flung them across the room" (123-124). The search for origins and identity is never resolved, even in the more "positive" experience that Jane encountered.

[82] Eng, 33.

[83] Trenka, 191.

84 Ibid., 201. Interestingly, the ultimate symbol of heteronormativity does the work of reuniting Jane with her adoptive parents. Also, her marrying a white man may have made her more acceptable in her parent's eyes, or perhaps signaled to them that Jane was reclaiming whiteness and, therefore, claiming back her adoptive family.

[85] Ibid., 167.

[86] Ibid.

[87] This single word is an abbreviation for the phrase, "Watch what you're saying." It is a popular and useful tactic used by parents in the Midwest to simultaneously shame and discipline the child speaker when he or she has overstepped the perceived line of respect between parent and child.

[88] Trenka, 167.

[89] Ibid., my emphasis.

[90] Ibid., 175.
[91] Fifteen year-old Korean adoptee Vicki Olds, who is vying for the title of Miss Teenage Sacramento, puts it this way: "Your real parent is one who loves you and takes care of you." See "Holt Adoption Program Newsletter," XV.7 (Jan-Feb. 1973), p. 3.
[92] Deann Borshay Liem, *First Person Plural*. See Min, "The Daughter's Exchange," 117-125 and Eng, "Transnational Adoption and Queer Diasporas," 23-33, for a psychoanalytic explanation for why this is the case.
[93] Trenka, 180.
[94] Ibid., 202.
[95] Ibid., 181.
[96] Ibid., 198.
[97] Ibid. 204.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid., 204-205.
[100] Ibid., 203-204.
[101] See José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999). Muñoz defines disidentification as "a strategy that works on and against dominant ideology. Instead of buckling under the pressures of dominant ideology (identification, assimilation) or attempting to break free of its inescapable sphere (counteridentification, utopianism), this 'working on and against' is a strategy that tries to transform a cultural logic from within, always laboring to enact permanent structural change while at the same time valuing the importance of local or everyday struggles of resistance" (11-12). Disidentification is not about picking and choosing. It's not about identifying with the productive aspects of dominant ideology and counteridentifying against the harmful aspects of dominant ideology (12). Instead, it is about reworking and reinvesting new life into something that is already present. Thus, disidentification is about revision rather than rejection, recycling rather than disposing (31).
[102] My use of the terms "recycle" and "reuse" is informed by Muñoz's theorization of disidentification.
[103] Trenka, 208, my emphasis.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.

CONCLUSION

In "Nietzche, Genealogy, History," Michel Foucault theorizes the role of the genealogist and his or her relationship to history. He argues that each concept has a genealogy, a history, and it is the task of the genealogist to examine its "numberless beginnings" rather than to search for "truth" via the identification of a singular "origin."[1] As a genealogical investigation of Korean adoption, this dissertation has offered multiple beginnings, entry points, and divergences concerning the discourses that have shaped Korean adoption. In an attempt to fragment the dominant narrative of Korean adoption as a natural consequence of the Korean War and as an institution of normalization and successful assimilation, I situated Korean adoption within militarized humanitarianism, the geopolitics of Cold War Orientalism, and the radical politics of queer kinship formations.[2] By attending to the shifting political, economic, and social conditions that have shaped Korean adoption, I not only destabilized its relationship to the Korean War but also disrupted the perception of the Korean orphan and adoptee as ahistorical figures. Attending to the shifting discursive and ideological forces that have enfigured Korean orphans and adoptees illuminated the multiple ways in which they have been constituted by empire- and nation-building projects, revealing the important roles they have played in fortifying American humanitarianism empire and white heteronormative constructions of family and nation.

Tracing the numerous discursive strands that have shaped Korean adoption via the figures of the Korean orphan and adoptee is also important because it is precisely here—on their bodies—where the conditions, effects, affects, and contradictions of American

humanitarianism empire materialize in visual form. Foucault explicates the importance of the physical body to the project of genealogy: "Genealogy, as an analysis of descent, is thus situated within the articulation of the body and history."[3] This is because the "body manifests the stigmata of past experience and also gives rise to desires, failings, and errors."[4] As descendents of American humanitarianism empire whose bodies have been inscribed by particular crises, tensions, and conflicts, Korean orphans and adoptees do indeed serve as markers of certain critical moments and shifts in history. And while their bodies have also been used to build and strengthen American neocolonialism in Korea, they have also articulated the excesses, shortcomings, and paradoxes of empire. The Korean orphan who called out "Number One!" instead of "Thank you"; the postwar orphans who ran away from orphanages and, instead, became mascots and spies for the U.S. military; the boys who "fired back" at the militaristic gaze of the camera; the little boy who returned the gaze; the teenaged girls who refused to be disciplined and domestically "tamed" during their residence at the Il San orphanage; the infants who accidently died because of Holt's cost-saving measures; and Jane, the adult adoptee, who fantasized about beheading herself—these bodies all signaled the slippages, discrepancies, and failings of the seemingly totalizing power of empire and projects of discipline and normalization.

Furthermore, investigating the genealogies of the orphan and the adoptee also helped us to illuminate the ways in which the past continues to persist and shape the present. While I, for the most part, agree with Foucault's theorization of genealogy, I do not fully agree with what he says about genealogy's relationship to the past and present. Foucault states that it is not the project of genealogy to "demonstrate that the past

actively exists in the present, that it continues secretly to animate the present…."[5] Given the fact that the dominant narrative and image of Korean adoptees—which has framed them as well-assimilated model minorities—has become a strategy to efface the national memory of U.S. militarism, occupation, and racialized sexual violence in Korea (projects that continue to this day), it becomes an important task to blast through the past in order to understand why Korean adoption continues and why it may now be expanding.[6] It is precisely the silences and contradictions that have continued to gather around the bodies of orphans and adoptees that signal our need to examine the relationship between "moments of danger" in the past and the "state of emergency" in the present.[7]

In framing the U.S. military occupation of Korea in 1945 and the projects of militarized humanitarianism that followed as sites of emergence, I identified the ways in which humanitarianism—and not just militarism—became a crucial arm of American empire. Exploring the ways in which neocolonial relations between the U.S. and Korea emerged at the nexus of militarism and humanitarianism not only helps us to understand why Korean adoption continues to persist today but also illuminates the flexible ways in which empire disguises itself in benevolent forms. Korean adoption is just one of many sites in which this particular form of American neocolonialism has become legible. The building of American humanitarianism empire can be seen in U.S. relations with Iraq, Afghanistan, and Haiti, for example. Although this is outside the purview of my dissertation, these additional sites may become an important part of my future research.

In using history as a theoretical armature of the present, I have sought to provide reasons for why Korean adoption continues to exist today. If in blasting through the past, we are better able to make sense of the present, I have also suggested—through my

incorporation of Korean adoptee cultural production—that the contemporary works of Korean adoptee artists can endeavor to change the past as a way to alter the future. The imaginative recreation of Korean adoption via Jane Jeong Trenka's "A Fairy Tale" espoused a new discourse and ideology of adoption that embraced the radical queer politics of transnational adoption and, thereby, revealed the limits of constructing Korean adoption as a white heteronormative and pseudo heterobiological formation of kinship. Indeed, her "coming to" process exposed the material and psychic effects and consequences of such a project. By paying attention to the experiences, insights, and imaginative recreations of Korean adoptee artists, we may enter a future in which the "coming to" process is absent from the formation of the adoptee's identity. After all, the point is to create conditions in which the "coming to" process is altogether unnecessary.

The genealogies of Korean adoption are multiple and varied. By introducing new primary sources and reading against the grain of traditional history and hegemonic notions of Korean adoption, I have attempted to provide other sites of emergence, other points of entry in which to analyze the significance and persistence of Korean adoption. More work needs to be done in teasing out not only other genealogies concerning Korean adoption and its orphans and adoptees but also the ways in which militarized humanitarianism and yellow desire have shifted into other forms, wielded in different contexts, and dispersed to other sites. I hope that my work has served as one model for how this can be done.

Notes

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[1] Michel Foucault, "Nietzche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. D. F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 139-164; 144-145.
[2] Foucault argues that rather than "restor[ing] an unbroken continuity," genealogy "fragments what was thought unified" in order to reveal the heterogeneous and contradictory conditions in which discourses are created (146-147).
[3] Ibid., 148.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid., 146.
[6] This is outside the scope of my dissertation; however, it is important to note that a new Congressional bill was introduced on March 25, 2010, to facilitate the adoption of "stateless" North Korean children into American homes. Entitled "H.R. 4986—the North Korean Refugee Adoption Act of 2010," this act would legalize transnational adoption between the U.S. and North Korea. Interestingly, the discourse of humanitarian rescue, along with the availability of interested Americans, becomes the justification for why this act should be approved. As the bill states: "(1) thousands of North Korean children do not have families and are threatened with starvation and disease if they remain in North Korea or as stateless refugees in surrounding countries [and] (2) thousands of United States citizens would welcome the opportunity to adopt North Korean orphans." Here we see the atavistic return of Cold War, humanitarian, and consumer capitalist discourses that are now being used to legitimize Americans as the rightful parents to North Korean children. For more information about this bill, see "H.R. 4986—North Korean Refugee Adoption Act of 2010," OpenCongress, http://www.opencongress.org/bill/111-h4986/text# (accessed 4/18/10).
[7] The "state of emergency" being the persistence of Korean adoption after multiple attempts to end it and the ways in which U.S. military occupation and national division continue to effect the lives of Koreans all over the world. Although outside the scope of this dissertation, the "state of emergency" could also include the increased trafficking of nonwhite children into American homes under the auspices of humanitarian rescue (e.g., Haiti and now possibly North Korea) and the expansion of U.S. empire under the auspices of militarized humanitarian in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Haiti.

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