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AMBIVALENT GLOBALIZERS, VICARIOUS COSMOPOLITANS:  
SOUTH KOREAN “GEESE-DAD” ACADEMICS

BY

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in East Asian Languages and Cultures  
in the Graduate College of the  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2014

Urbana, Illinois

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the shifting subjectivities of contemporary South Korean professors, the most prominent, symbolic group of South Korean intellectuals, focusing on the experiences of “geese-dad” professors who respond to the challenges of globalization in both private and public realms. I explore how these professors engage in the globalization process both through raising their children abroad and through their university roles as campus globalizers. Through ethnographic field research (2009-2010) on twenty eight Seoul-based geese-dad professors, I identify the transformative (cosmopolitan) qualities of their transnational experiences and argue that their experiences reflect the larger landscape in which South Koreans are creatively responding to the challenge of globalization and unwittingly training as cosmopolitans in the process.

These geese-dad professors are ambivalent about raising their children abroad. In this vein, they often mask their privilege and motivations through the rhetoric of inevitability. They are at once proud of being competent fathers with a pioneering spirit, but also critical of themselves as self-wounded intellectuals whose practices are often seen as individualistic efforts at social reproduction -- efforts at odds with the social ideals of critical, respectable, and nationalist intellectuals. I demonstrate, however, that this seemingly apparent contradiction itself is also unstable. Their experiences in fact challenge longstanding South Korean binaries of private/public, individualistic/collectivistic, national/global -- binaries that are increasingly blurred today.

Despite this ambivalence, these fathers in fact vicariously nurture their own desires for cosmopolitan and autonomous liberal subjectivity through their children’s study abroad experiences. Moreover, many of these professors undergo a paradigm shift in their thinking

about the nation and the global as they negotiate the process of raising their children abroad. Further, these transformations also affect and are affected by the roles that they play as agents in the imperative to globalize their universities. They emerge as both cynical consumers of and critical players in globalization projects in South Korean higher education. In the midst, they also develop new ideas about the role of professors and their responsibility as intellectuals in South Korean society. Still, they are caught between the nostalgia for the yesteryear professor who enjoyed the aura of respectable, privileged intellectuals and the new ideals of autonomous professionals who are unrestrained by traditionally imagined collective identity.

This study thus not only analyzes the veritable transformation of the ethos of the professoriate in South Korea's aggressively globalizing society and higher education sector, but also offers a rich window on larger cultural and social struggles and paradigm shifts in South Korea. Further, my study offers a broader window on intellectuals' struggles in a transforming East Asia and developing countries; even more broadly it offers a portrait of how South Koreans today carve out lives in the face of globalization.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation was made possible only through the generous support and guidance of many people and institutions. First of all, I am deeply grateful to all my informants, those professors who shared their time, thoughts, and such honest stories of their own experiences with me. Without their kindness and sincerity, this research would not have been possible.

At the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, I am most grateful to the four members of my doctoral dissertation committee. My overwhelming debt is to Professor Nancy Abelmann, who is my remarkable mentor, the chair of my committee, my dissertation advisor, and my long-time dear friend. Without her keen and insightful scholarly guidance, unfailing support, and warm encouragements, it would have been much harder for me to both complete my study and manage my life, especially as a study abroad student who returned to education in her later life with two children. She has been an inspiration and also a role model for junior scholars to emulate in terms of how a good scholar simultaneously could become a great teacher and mentor, with her commitment, enthusiasm, and humanity toward scholarship and people. I also cannot express enough gratitude to Professor Jungwon Kim, who is no longer at the University of Illinois but is now at Columbia University. She has greatly influenced me through her wonderful courses and scholarly insights and I am grateful for her scholarly guidance and constant support. I also deeply appreciate Professor Poshek Fu who has genuinely shown his interest in my project from my early research proposal to the defense with warm encouragements. He gave me invaluable comments to improve my dissertation with attentive reading. I am also very grateful for having Professor Robert Tierney in my committee. I appreciate his close reading of my dissertation and giving precious insights and comments from a different field.

Through the course of my graduate studies, I count myself as extremely fortunate to have met and worked with these amazing, insightful, warm, and encouraging professors.

Many institutions generously supported my study and dissertation research. I am very grateful that the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) Korean Studies Dissertation Workshop gave me a great opportunity to be more prepared for my field research and dissertation writing with productive feedback and comments by mentors and colleagues. During my dissertation research in South Korea, I had greatly benefited from the Institute of Cross-Culture Studies at the Seoul National University as a visiting researcher. I am especially indebted to Professor Hwang Ikjoo and Professor Park Myoungkyu at the SNU. My thanks also go to the Korea Foundation (Fellowship for Graduate Studies) and the Graduate College (Dissertation Completion Fellowship) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, both of which helped me to focus on dissertation writing with the generous funding. I would also like to acknowledge the generous financial support and great opportunities that I have received during my graduate studies through the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Illinois, including numerous teaching assistantships, grants, and tuition and fee waivers.

At the University of Illinois, I have benefited from the friendship and collegial support of many people. I am especially grateful to the members of both Professor Abelmann's weekly advisee group meetings and Korea Workshop throughout my graduate career. Our advisee group meetings in particular have afforded not only intellectual stimulations through constructive comments but also emotional support for each other. I am indebted to all previous and current members, however among them I would like to particularly thank Heejin Kim, Yoonjeong Shim, Josie Sohn, John Cho, Sujung Kim, Dohye Kim, Agnes Sohn, Yoonjung Kang, Kyou Ho Lee, Alex Lee, Hee Jung Choi, Yu-Kyung Kang, Wei Li, Ga Young Chung, So Jung Kim, Jeongsu

Shin, Jonghyun Park, Chungwoong Park, Soo-Yeon Yoon, Audrey Chun, and Noelle Easterday for their insightful comments and warm friendship.

Finally, I would like to thank my family. I thank my mother Kim Sungwook for her lifelong support and love. Special thanks are due to Sangryong Lee, my husband, dearest friend, and my love. I cannot thank him enough for his support, encouragement, understanding, patience, and love. And I am boundlessly grateful to my loving sons, Hyunbin and Eubin, who are my source of joy and happiness. Without your love and support, how could I keep studying and finish this work? I am truly grateful.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

The sociological imagination enables its possessor to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals. [...] [It] enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two with society (Mills 1959, 5-6).

Illustration I: On a cold day at the beginning of March, 2010, I am in the midst of my fieldwork in Seoul, meeting up with old friends of mine who graduated from the same department in the same university — for South Koreans this sort of consociate is marked with its own name, *taehak kwa tongch'ang*. It was a regular monthly lunch meeting that I was returning to after a number of years of study abroad in the U.S. I felt apologetic, both for not having joined them earlier in my fieldwork and for having been only sporadically in touch with many of them over the years. After the initial delight at seeing each other, I quickly became aware of, and was surprised by the fact that, all five of us gathered there shared the experience of having educated our children in the U.S., although our children's paths were all somewhat different: whether for study abroad before college (early study abroad/ESA/*chogi yuhak*), or in “geese family” (*kirŏgi kajok*)<sup>1</sup> arrangements, or just for college study abroad. Further it was pretty clear that all of us enjoyed middle or upper middle class lives with professional husbands: doctors, professors, or corporate executives or high-level managers. This encounter alone brought home the extent to which education in the U.S. (and more broadly transnational education abroad) had become a typical and ideal path for children in the South Korean middle class. At the time of this gathering,

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<sup>1</sup> “Geese family (*kirŏgi kajok*)” originally refers to “wild geese family,” which means the transnational-split family for children's pre-college education abroad. However, in this study I use “geese” as the abbreviation for “wild geese.” “*Kirŏgi* (wild geese) are iconic birds in Korea: The birds are known for natural devotion to their spouses and offspring. And these geese families are thought as one of symbolic examples of Korean parent's absolute unconditional devotion to their children, especially sacrificing themselves to give their children more advantages.

most of my friends' children were already college students in the U.S. in step with many of their class and generation.

Illustration II: After lunch, my friends looked for a coffee shop to continue our conversation. The first coffee shop we stepped inside was already full, so we set out to find another one. But the next coffee shop was similarly crowded. One of my friends urged us to stay there, insisting that it would be much the same no matter where we went. After we gathered chairs to squeeze in, I was surprised to look around and see that nearly all the customers in the coffee shop were middle-aged women sitting in small groups. I could not help asking my friends, “Why are there so many serious-looking middle-aged women (*simgakhae poinŭn ajummadŭl*) gathered here?” My friends laughed, “You don’t know anything about this, do you?” And a friend jokingly let me know that these days children’s educational success depends on the “strength of mothers’ information, fathers’ indifference, and grandfathers’ wealth.” My friends continued that the coffee shops in the neighborhood in which we were gathered are famous Kangnam<sup>2</sup> spots for the exchange of educational information about college entrance exams or (early) study abroad. It was only then that I realized that I was in the vortex of the so-called “educational fever” of Kangnam – even as some of the mothers gathered there were from other Seoul locales.

The mothers in these coffee shops were using their social networks to collect and check more educational information for their children — to control their children’s educational path and thus to ensure their social reproduction. Their “concerns both about getting it right and doing the right thing are engendered and reinforced within social networks” (Ball 2003, 171). As many

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<sup>2</sup> Kangnam is the specific area in south side of Han River (*Han’gang*) where is considered as a privileged residential space for the rich and upper-middle class in Seoul. It is frequently said that the residence of Kangnam itself has become a “status symbol” (Hong 2010, 123). Mothers in Kangnam are also often symbolized as aggressive “manager mothers” of their children’s education. For more information of “manager mothers,” see Park (2006); and especially for the spatial stratification for education, see Park’s chapter four.

scholars have noted, South Korean mothers have become “educational manager mothers.” Indeed, mothers’ cultural and social resources as well as economic abilities have become more and more important into the present; it is particularly appreciated that mothers must be skilled at mobilizing social networks to collect and evaluate information (Park 2006). There I was, in my own peer group, and all around me I could see just these practices.

After parting from my friends, I found myself struggling with my own complex, mixed feelings as a mother. I was torn about how to understand or even evaluate my own position as a “geese” mother who had left two sons back in the U.S. for my own one-year-long field research. During my fieldwork, my younger son was a junior in high school, a period appreciated as critical for taking major exams for college application; South Koreans would easily recognize this as a critical moment and indeed there are terms to denote “(college entrance) exam-taker.” My older son who was an undergraduate at the same university where I was pursuing my advanced degree had agreed to stay home with his younger brother and commute to school (i.e., to help with his brother). Meanwhile, there I was -- living with my husband, who had been a geese dad for years, so as to conduct field research. I couldn’t help but periodically ask myself, ‘While other mothers are enthusiastically doing their best by exerting enormous energy for their children to succeed in the college entrance exams, what am I doing?’ or ‘While other mothers are sitting up late with their children as they study for exams, how can I not even prepare meals for my sons for an entire year?’ In fact, these were issues that had been bothering me long before my research in Seoul had begun. But in Seoul I was truly confused, unsure whether I should be happy, thankful, proud, or sorry that my life had taken a turn away from those of the women at the coffee shop; Was I, I worried, a negligent, selfish mother sacrificing her duty for the sake of her own study?

Nonetheless, at the same time, even as this direct witnessing of the vividness and intensity of the South Koreans' parental desires for children's educational success evoked such complicated feelings in me, I became more confident in the significance of my study: its examination of what propels geese families or early study abroad; and of what kinds of individual and social meanings are being fashioned through this practice. I wanted to know that if it could be valid to simply encapsulate these parental desires of bringing up their children abroad in the three words, "excessive educational zeal," which have been so easily vilified as a social ill or an extreme instrumental familism. Moreover, this practice was regarded as more likely mothers' projects because of the explicitness -- as seen above -- of mothers' role, but I was increasingly interested in fathers' active role undergirding this transnational practice -- a role that came to life through my field research in which I interviewed geese dads. I came to think that the scene that I just illustrated above might not explain the entire phenomenon. I was actually in the midst of a process of recognizing and thus becoming more confident that there was more to all of this than mothers. Somehow I found solace in this line of thinking for the remainder of my field research period -- aware that I was observing a veritable historical juncture for Korean families and society. Although my research interlocutors were men and settled professors, I easily imagined that my own complicated ruminations perhaps echoed their own mixed feelings as professors and university employees, on the one hand, and as fathers who had removed their children from the South Korean educational system, on the other hand.

#### **I. "History and Biography": Why "Geese-dad" Professors at This Historical Juncture?**

Broadly, this dissertation examines the shifting subjectivities of contemporary South Korean professors -- the most prominent, symbolic group of South Korean intellectuals -- in the

face of globalization. I focus on the experiences of “geese-dad” professors, in the midst of their response to the acute challenges of globalization in both the private and the public realm. “Geese dads (*kirŏgi appa*)” are fathers who sent their young children and wives abroad (mostly to English-speaking Western countries) for pre-college education, while they remain alone in South Korea to financially support this venture. This trend emerged as a popular middle-class educational strategy to raise children as global citizens through the mastery of English and the acquisition of Western education, beginning in the mid-1990s. I take geese-dad professors’ position to be unique, but also to reflect the larger landscape in which South Koreans are creatively responding to globalization and also unwittingly training as cosmopolitans. These professors are also unique because of their seemingly active geese dad’s role which is against the general images of “passive” and “pathetic” geese dads in the phenomenon -- and “indifferent” South Korean fathers in general -- who are often under their wives’ control when dealing with children’s education.

I began my dissertation project with my personal intellectual curiosity of geese-dad professors, while observing many geese-dad professors and seeing my husband’s struggles as a father. As myself a geese mother who had to continuously make small and big quotidian, often unexpected, decisions (often in consultation with my husband) and sometimes felt challenged by my/our decision makings while raising my children in the U.S., I was interested in how these geese-dad professors perceived their own private practice of educating/raising their children abroad, separated from their families. I was curious to know if their motivations for this practice only reflected the father-side parental desires of class reproduction as was generally thought and if there was a correlation between this transnational practice and their own study abroad experiences. I also wondered if it would be possible to sustain geese-dad lives up to ten years --

in some cases -- only for instrumental reasons, in the context of considerable public discourse about and often critique of the geese-family phenomenon. I asked: Is there no other effective way to achieve their goals rather than this practice? Are the returns the ones that they anticipated from the outset? Do they have any regrets? Especially, how do they navigate the possible tension and ambivalence of being both an active geese dad and a socially respectable professor and negotiate their roles while they manage their daily lives, continuously making micro decisions for the family abroad? At the same time, most importantly, I thought that their practices as geese dads could not be fully comprehended without an understanding of their personal-life-experiences and the larger socio-cultural context surrounding them; their practices might reflect ongoing struggles and the changing ethos of the South Korean professor/intellectual community.

This line of thinking then pushed me to ask further: What are the inner landscapes of South Korean intellectuals today, at this 21st century historical juncture, in which powerful neoliberal, globalizing forces meet South Koreans' escalating desires for freedom, autonomy, and a developed democracy after the democratization? South Korea was at the critical juncture: that is, South Koreans yearned foremost for a society that could nurture its citizens' desires for the equal opportunity of every individual to successfully achieve their liberal dream, and cosmopolitan yearnings – desires born in the aftermath of the long winter of authoritarian regimes, the democratization of 1987, and the Economic Crises in 1997 and 2008 and following neoliberal regimes. I asked this question since these geese-dad professors were faced with an especially vexed moment in which intellectuals' private lives had become ever more public through the visibility of their children's early study abroad and their geese-family practices; some observers and media sources had charged that this transnational educational strategy was foremost an individualistic/selfish effort at social reproduction, forsaking the efforts for

collective wellbeing. At the same moment that they were accused of this instrumental cosmopolitanism, however, these professors were also called upon to aid in the globalization efforts of their universities, efforts that were part and parcel of the profound neoliberal transformation of higher education in South Korea, in step with global trends.

Furthermore, there had been another discourse surrounding South Korean intellectuals. As I discuss in chapter two, entering a new century, many critical voices had asked whether South Korean intellectuals -- privileged people who had enjoyed honor, respect, money, and power -- were in fact really contributing to Korean society today. On the one hand, these critics proclaimed the “death” of the yesteryear intellectuals who were able to contribute “conscious and visible fundamental notions of a society” (Eyerman 1994); other critics had aggressively called for “new intellectuals” (*sin-chisigin*) who could both adapt well to and actively create added value for a knowledge-based global economy, particularly after the Economic Crisis in 1997 (Chön 2006, D. Kim 2000; Kyunghyang Shinmun T’ükpyölch’wijaetim 2008; Shin 2003). It was in the context of this conversation that so-called geese-dads professors became an issue. This transnational educational strategy has become especially popular among professors who themselves have studied abroad, mainly in the U.S., i.e., professors who are more likely to compose the mainstream of South Korean academics/intellectuals. Among professors, a popular joke goes that a certain department in an elite university holds faculty meetings in the U.S. during summer and winter breaks because they are all there visiting their children there. It is clear that geese-dad professors, in some sense ridiculing themselves with this joke, are indeed ambivalent about the very widespread strategy of sending their children and wives abroad for pre-college education.

I asked, then: Why do these professors struggle over this strategy? Do geese-dad professors necessarily betray the tradition or mission of intellectuals by sending their families abroad in this way? What are the implications of these struggles for both individuals and the society? Having asked these questions, based on 10 months of ethnographic field research in Seoul metropolitan area in South Korea, I investigated the experiences of geese-dad professors, focusing on their engagement in the globalization process both through their children's transnational education and their university roles as campus globalizers.

Indeed, in sum, these geese-dad professors were ambivalent about this practice of raising their children abroad. They were both proud of being competent fathers with pioneering spirits executing personalized globalization project for their children, but also somewhat critical of themselves for being self-wounded intellectuals whose practices were often seen as individualistic efforts at social reproduction. It is so because their transnational strategy for their children is at odds with the social ideals of critical, respectable, and often nationalist intellectuals – who are often thought as more “authentic intellectuals,” who care more about collective wellbeing. However, in this dissertation, I show that this seemingly apparent contradiction itself is also unstable and the longstanding private/public, individualistic/collectivistic, national/global binaries may not hold control today in South Korea. Despite the ambivalence and struggles, I found, these fathers in fact vicariously nurtured their own desires for cosmopolitan and autonomous liberal subjectivities through their children's study abroad experiences. Moreover, many of these professors underwent a paradigm shift in their thinking about the nation and the global while continuously adjusting themselves as fathers through this process of raising their children abroad. Whatever their initial motivations were, many of these fathers kept transforming. Further, these transformations also affected and were affected by the roles that these geese-dad

professors played as agents in the imperative to globalize their universities. They were both a cynical consumer and a critical player of globalization projects in South Korean higher education. I thus analyze the veritable transformation of the ethos of the professoriate in South Korea's aggressively globalizing society and higher education sector.

My study is founded on what C. Wright Mills (1959) called the "sociological imagination" which allows us "to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and the external career of variety of individuals" by enabling us "to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society" (5-6). This study also began from "the urge to know the social and historical meaning of the individual in the society and in the period in which he has his quality and his being" (7). Therefore, in this study I delve into the inner landscape of individuals to understand both the ultimate social meaning that my informants produce through their biographies and the impact of the larger society on these individuals.

To comprehend changing subjectivities of these geese-dad professors as South Korean intellectuals, I also consider, as one of basic theoretical frameworks, that the intellectual occupies an "emergent role" (Eyerman 1994, ix). That is, the role of intellectual is not fixed, but constructed and constantly reinvented in parallel with various historical, social, and cultural contexts through the actions of individuals of various intellectual generations (Boggs 1993; Eyerman 1994, Gramsci 1987, 1998; Hall 2003). With this perspective, I argue that South Korean intellectuals indeed have a unique history and distinctive tradition and legacy; their identities and roles have formed and continuously shifted in accordance with different historical contexts and historical specificities. It is from this perspective that I explore how contemporary South Korean intellectuals navigate and in some cases reinvent their tradition in the face of globalization at this historical juncture.

As I discuss in detail in chapter two, defining the “intellectual” is difficult. Although intellectuals (*chisigin*) are defined neither by class nor by occupation, I suggest in this study that the professor community in particular is a focal community of intellectuals in South Korea and works symbolically as an important reference group in a country which still sustains a strong Confucian-inspired legacy of respecting and valuing scholarship and scholars. Although I appreciate that professors are a heterogeneous group, nonetheless I claim that broadly they are held up as middle-class exemplars; they are imagined to be paragons of social consciousness, modernity, and high-culture (Chön 2006; Chöng 1992; Etzioni-Halevy 1985; Eyerman 1994; Hong 2010; Kang 2001; Melzer, Weinberger and Zinman 2003; Rieff 1969; Said 1994). In this regard, my study on geese-dad professors as a symbolic subset of contemporary intellectuals shows not only ongoing shifts of ethos and paradigms among South Korean intellectual community, but also offers a rich window on larger cultural and social struggles in South Korea by providing vivid examples of shifting subjectivities and negotiation of the global-local. Diverting from most of scholarship on Korean intellectuals to date that focuses exclusively on ideology or historical biography, as the first ethnography with in-depth interviews of the private lives of contemporary South Korean intellectuals, this study contributes a unique and dynamic ethnographic reading of contemporary intellectuals who have long been imagined as a static collective, often with the image of nation-building nationalist intellectuals. Further, my study offers a broader window on intellectuals’ struggles in a transforming East Asia and even more broadly in developing countries in the face of globalization.

Thus my work is situated at the intersection of globalization, transnational studies, and interdisciplinary ethnographic studies of contemporary South Korea. As Jonathan Friedman pointed out already in 1990s, global studies and especially globalization studies had become

somewhat of a “bandwagon” and the global “second nature” to many (1994, 1). There also have been vigorous debates on nation-states and cultural citizenship in our transnational world as well as on assimilation effects and local forms of resistance against the destructive effects of globalization with increasing transnational mobility of people from the end of 1980s (Appadurai 1996; Basch et al. 1994; Bauman 1998, Beck 2000; Cheah and Robbins 1998; Friedman 1994; Held and McGrew 2003; Jameson and Miyoshi 1998; Ong 1999; Smith 1995). This study contributes not only a case study of the micro-processes of globalization in a specific local context by showing that how globalization challenges individuals’ lives and transforms their subjectivities in a society, but also an example of current scholarly debates on the transforming meaning and life of nationalism in the era of globalization. In addition, this research also adds a critical perspective to understanding of the effect of globalization on higher education as it shows how professors in South Korea experience the changes in their profession in the face of globalization and respond to their role as agents of internationalization in their universities in particular (Currie and Newson 1998; Sidhu 2006; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004).

As briefly aforementioned, my study locates the recent development of geese-dad professors and the question of what it means to be an “ideal” intellectual in a changing world in the context of South Korea’s mid-1990s rapid democratization and globalization processes, and escalating neoliberal social and economic reforms, especially after the Economic Crisis (Kang 2000; D. Kim. 2000; S. Kim 2000; Shin 2003). Most research to date on “geese families” in South Korea, however, has tended to focus on familial crisis, namely on the financial and psychological effects on family members, and tended to problematize geese families as the practice of giving up family values and integrity for instrumental purposes (Ch’oe 2005; Kim 2009; S. Kim 2006; Kim and Chang 2004; Kim and Kim 2009; Ŏm 2002). As the phenomenon

has drawn more attention, there has been scholarship considering familial and social reproduction desires, relating these to the impact of globalization and the Economic Crisis; yet nearly uniform in this literature is the critique of the fetishism of English and the educational crisis (Cho 2002; Cho 2004; Cho and et al. 2007; Chung 2008; Finch and Kim 2012; Kim 2010; Kim and Yoon 2005; Lee and Koo 2006; O 2008; Son 2005; Yi 2008; Yi and Paek 2004). More recently, a few scholars have begun to look into South Korean cosmopolitan desires through this geese-family phenomenon (Abelmann and Kang 2014; Abelmann, Newendorp, and Lee-Chung 2014; Ahn 2009; Lee 2010).

Scholars generally have agreed with that the commonly shared motivations of ESA/geese family strategy (transnational split families for education in other East Asian countries as well, e.g., in the cases of the “astronaut” or “parachute kids” syndrome of Hong Kong and Taiwan) are most likely to converge into the parental desires of social reproduction or upward class mobility with their children’s acquisition of symbolic and cultural capital, English/foreign languages in particular (Ahn 2009; Cho 2002; Cho 2004; Cho and et al. 2007; Chung 2008; Finch and Kim 2012; Huang and Yeoh 2005; Kim 2010; Kim and Yun 2005; Lee and Koo 2006; Ley and Kobayashi 2005; Mitchell 2004; O 2008; Ong 1999; Skeldon 1994; Son 2005; Waters 2003, 2005; Yi 2008; Yi and Yu 2008). Because the neoliberal transformation in the shock of aftermath of the Economic Crisis almost coincides with the liberal humanist project of democratic individual freedom and rights at the post-authoritarian historical moment after democratization in South Korea (Shin 2011; Song 2010), the desire toward ESA/geese family was often uniformly thought of as parental education zeal, originating from social reproduction intention. In fact, the experience of the Economic Crisis, along with widespread discontent at educational system, was the most important impetus driving many South Korean parents to seek ESA because of intense

anxiety about their children's future. After being shocked by the sudden collapse of economy, which was accompanied with unemployment, downward class mobility, and widening gap in wealth, and experiencing the hope of rosy future of democratized developed country shattered, it looks as if South Korean people -- the middle class in particular -- found themselves in a vortex of seemingly eternal competition, destined to make endless efforts to not fall behind in this neoliberal transformation especially with the state-leading rhetoric of globalization (*segyehwa*) and strong emphasis on competitiveness in global economy. Consequently, the interpretation of ESA/geese family practice as foremost a social reproduction effort seems quite reasonable. And it is undeniable as I delineated the intensity of South Korean parental efforts for their children's future at the beginning of this chapter. Indeed, I began my study with this sort of approach. However, I argue that this interpretation does not encompass all the meanings of ESA/geese family phenomenon and fails to grasp both the transformative power of individuals' transnational experiences and their ongoing longer-term effects.

## **II. My Parallel Transformative Intellectual Journey**

I turn now to the ways in which my thinking about and perspectives on this dissertation project have transformed over the course of my field research. I think to share this transformation because of the way in which it parallels the transformative quality of my informants' experiences. As aforementioned, my research on geese-dad professors began with my intellectual curiosity about how geese-dad professors manage the tension and ambivalence of being both: intellectuals who are asked to be socially responsible subjects (i.e., for both their university and the nation) and fathers who are mobilizing seemingly highly individualistic instrumental social reproduction/mobility strategies through educational migration. This means, I confess, that my

research was founded in the general, often value-ridden, social critique of the geese family (and its presumed accompanying educational zeal) as an individualistic/selfish strategy. Hence, I initially approached the topic with the perspectives of social reproduction and hegemony of the Establishment, drawing on Bourdieu, Althusser, and Gramsci's theories. In this sense, my study probably could become another critique of the geese-family phenomenon, mostly critiquing both neoliberal regimes undergirding the phenomenon and intellectuals who integrate and follow this trend in order to sustain their cultural hegemony and class status. Of course, I do not ignore these issues and I still draw on those theories -- for example, Bourdieu's reproduction theory and habitus -- since these geese-dad professors are mostly typical members of the middle class and also struggle with parental desires for children's success like most South Korean parents in this rapidly changing social environment regardless of how they define "success" itself.

However, what I found during my field research reached beyond these aspects: some of these geese-dad professors' experiences went beyond the issue of intellectuals' struggle for hegemony. Rather, I came to think that their experiences revealed certain paradigm shifts -- ones that the individuals themselves were not always aware of. The more I conducted interviews with geese-dad professors, the more the transformative quality of geese-dad experiences stood out. The transformation happened when these fathers began to become aware that they were actually navigating uncharted water -- a unfamiliar territory -- of raising their children abroad, in contrast to their expectations and the confidence that they had enjoyed at the outset as "better prepared" fathers who themselves had studied abroad (mostly in host countries of children's ESA). What they overlooked was that their young children would also develop their own aspirations and their own thinking about their lives for having grown up in foreign countries. These fathers were often baffled by their children's post-national thinking in particular and came to realize that the

children did not have same references at all. Whether they started this transnational family project with an intention of social reproduction or not, through the quotidian struggles and micro-decisions of raising children abroad as fathers, I came to see that these professors themselves were adjusting and transforming in this process as fathers -- and even changing their own paradigm as South Korean intellectuals. Naturally, my interview questions had to be adjusted and expanded in order to learn more about whether those transformations exert an influence on or play a role in their professional lives.

In this process, I came to realize that it was best to treat and understand their practices as revealing cultural phenomenon rather than objects of social critique. I realized the importance of asking how it was that what had begun as the fringe cultural practice for a few (for mostly the rich) had become a mainstream cultural phenomenon of the middle class. Over time I became critical of the prevailing analytical lens that could only apply a monolithic neoliberal framework to the geese-family phenomenon (i.e., considering individuals' desire as only promoted and governed by state-leading neoliberal governmentality) while overlooking South Koreans' yearning for cosmopolitan liberal selfhood with individual freedom and autonomy. Clearly, it seems that the South Korean state has controlled its citizens' cosmopolitan liberal desires for its sake. On the one hand, it has mobilized globalization (*segye-hwa*) discourses toward its citizens, often promoting "flexible citizenship" (Ong 1999), in order to raise its global competitiveness especially after the Economic Crisis; at the same time, however, the state has demanded loyalty from its citizens by both engineering neoliberal governmentality and emphasizing a sense of national belonging and responsibilities in the face of globalization. However, as I discuss in chapter four, it seems that some citizens like my informants are developing their own ideas about cosmopolitan and liberal selves, sometimes unwittingly. By "liberal," I do not mean liberal

political system or economy, but rather based on philosophical liberal principles of liberty, individuality, dignity, equality, tolerance etc., more specifically I mean to refer to the notion of a “liberal” self with freedom and autonomy (Appiah 2005). Moreover, some of my informants revealed their thought that national identity could no longer represent a curb on the freedom and autonomy of individuals anymore in this globalizing world. They yearned, especially for their children, for the freedom to be able to identify themselves as they want; to choose their own way of life; and the right to decide what is good or bad for themselves.

Based on Foucauldian notions of governmentality, many scholars have repeatedly discussed the relations between modern liberal technologies of the self and neoliberal governmentality in contemporary societies (Foucault 1988, 1991; Hoffman 2006, 2010; Rofel 2006; Song 2010; Yan 2003). As Jesook Song (2010) points out, “It is historically inaccurate to assume that liberalism is inherently more benign than neoliberalism” (133). Indeed it is difficult to discern between liberal and neoliberal attempts, and people’s yearning for a liberal self could be often exploited/appropriated by neoliberal regimes, as Song discusses in her study that single South Korean women, who pursue independent liberal selves, become “engineers of optimizing Korean neoliberal markets without being aware of the connection between the liberal ethos and the neoliberal market” (133-134). Especially, in South Korean case, it is much harder to distinguish one from another since the liberal humanist project after the democratization was rapidly replaced by the strong neoliberal transformation after the Economic Crisis, even before the emergence of South Koreans’ yearning for liberal self and democratic society with individual freedom, right, and autonomy which only started to spring up after the democratization but was not yet achieved. However, why is it not possible to interpret conversely: that is, instead of thinking that the liberal subjectivity is appropriated by neoliberal capitalism and people passively

or unwittingly assimilate to it, some people, at least, try to resist – wittingly or unwittingly -- neoliberal regimes, pursuing the liberal subjectivity? Is this a too naïve trial? What I want to emphasize here is that whether my informants’ practices were born in liberal or neoliberal motivations, some of them were actually transforming.

In fact it is a difficult, if not impossible, task to separate those two (liberal vs. neoliberal) elements from my informants’ accounts, although it seems like that my informants were also torn between neoliberal ethos of the society in general and their profession and their personal liberal yearning for their children and themselves. Yet, in this study I try to show that there is something more than the desire just to meet the neoliberal demands in their transnational educational practice. And I especially pay attention to the accompanying transformative quality of the practice while exploring what makes my informants willing to go beyond their existing paradigms, based on their own accounts. Some might make choices and actions assimilating to neoliberal logics, but some might resist to it, often seeking for alternative way of living for their children although sometimes they looked as if seemingly identical. However, even if it does not happen to the all of my informants, the “transformation” itself that they showed in the process is too significant to be ignored. Ralph W. Emerson puts it, “Society is a wave. The wave moves onward, but the water of which it is composed does not. The same particle does not rise from the valley to the ridge. Its unity is only phenomenal” (1993(1841), 37). Seemingly the identical does not mean the actual identical, but each particle makes the wave. Also this finding may be applied to understand other transnational cultural practices which are getting increasingly common in South Korea, among young people in particular, such as study abroad, backpacking abroad, and the practice of working holidays, etc. This approach may be useful more broadly in order to comprehend possible ongoing or future socio-cultural changes in South Korean society. And

further I wonder to what extent growing transnational experiences of people and their transformative qualities have potentiality as an impetus to bring the changes in individuals and society.

Therefore, in this study, I set it as an ultimate goal in a broader sense to find a clue of that potentiality through the experiences of geese-dad professors' engagement of global processes. If one keeps the fact in mind that intellectuals are the people who lead social ethos and also whose paradigms are hardly changed by others, witnessing their paradigm shifts may signify the possibility of changes to come in the society. In addition to the deeper understanding of subjectivities of South Korean intellectuals today, I hope this study contributes to better comprehension of transnational cultural phenomenon occurring in South Korean society these days, paying more attention to the process that South Koreans develop their cosmopolitan liberal yearning and its eventual effects on their thought and patterns of behavior.

### **III. Methodologies and Positioning as a Researcher**

For this study, I conducted 10 months of ethnographic field research from September 2009 to June 2010 in South Korea. My field research included twenty eight in-depth oral interviews with geese-dad professors, participant observation, textual research, and media and public discourse analysis. My field research focused on Seoul-based professors: Seoul is South Korea's capital and largest city and arguably represents one of the world's greatest cases of the centralization of cultural, social, educational, and political resources in a single city; thus in a sense, becoming Seoul-based professors often signify their established status in South Korean academic community and society in general. The 28 informants primarily are/were geese dad professors at the time of the interviews, who sent their own children abroad for pre-college

education and who also studied abroad themselves primarily in the United States (except for one who studied abroad in England and one in Canada). Seven fathers have already completed their geese-dad lives (I paid attention to the fact that there might be differences between the accounts of fathers who already finished the family project and those who are still doing it); most fathers have sent their children abroad in 2000s, except five fathers in 1990s; and most of their children resided in foreign countries at the time of interviews. The duration of most family separation ranged from four months to close to 10 years -- with one informant's separation from family reached 17 years. They are employed by twelve universities -- from top-tier to lower-tier universities -- in the Seoul metropolitan area, except one who works at a provincial national university. My research subjects represent seven academic areas: humanities (7), social sciences (7), natural sciences, (5) engineering (5), business (2), and one in education and one in sciences of sports. They ranged in age from the early 40s to the early 60s at the time of interview, and in academic position from newly hired assistant professors to four deans.

My informant pool has a few exceptions in light of my initial plan that targeted Seoul-based geese-dad professors who had studied abroad: more accurately speaking, it included five professors who were not geese dads but sent only their children abroad for pre-college education (i.e., their wives remained in South Korea) and one geese-dad professor who works at a provincial national university. I included them because they rather gave me an opportunity to compare them to my standard informant pool and I found that their motivations or patterns of practices were not much different from the other geese-dad professors. Yet, among those five who sent only their children abroad, one professor who himself had not studied abroad provided me with the critical opportunity to compare the cases between fathers who had studied abroad and who had not, as I introduce in chapter three.

The face-to-face in-depth oral interviews were conducted in Korean taking two hours on average and consisted of semi-structured open-ended questions. Most interviews were carried out in participants' offices, although a few were held at conference rooms, participant's home, and coffee shops at their request. One interview was conducted in a college town in the U.S. when the geese dad visited his family. I digitally recorded all the interviews with the consents of the interviewees, later transcribed them in Korean, and finally translated into English. Thus all the translations in this dissertation are my own unless otherwise noted. Participants were assured of their anonymity, and pseudonyms have been used throughout. In addition to pseudonyms, for their anonymity I try to avoid revealing specific university names or disciplines by using broader indication, e.g., Professor Kim (humanities, 49) in a top-tier university.

I contacted my informants using my personal networks as well as snowball sampling in which the researcher asks participants to recommend other individuals. Although I tried to compose my informant pool in as an inclusive manner as possible, I should acknowledge the possible limitation that they might have allowed for the interview because they were somewhat satisfied with or had more positive feelings on their own transnational educational projects for children. Also, despite the fact that this study is related to the geese-family phenomenon; that mothers usually play more roles as an educational manager closely keeping track of children than fathers as I illustrated at the beginning of this chapter; so mothers usually accompany with their children when they go abroad, in this study I do not deal with the gender (with an omission of mothers' role and perception) and familial issues in-depth.<sup>3</sup> I focus more on the discussion of my informants' shifting subjectivities as fathers and also professors/intellectuals while they engage with the geese-family phenomenon and their university roles as campus globalizers – I hope I can discuss those issues that I could not deal with in this dissertation in-depth in my future study.

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<sup>3</sup> See Ahn's dissertation (2009) for the recent scholarly discussion focusing on geese mothers' practices in English.

I used in-depth oral interviews as my primary fieldwork method because I was convinced that the interview format would constitute a powerful and feasible research method for my research. I envisioned that the interview format would allow my research subjects to express their inner thoughts about being geese dads that might otherwise be difficult to express given the social ambivalence about the practice, and some interviewees seemed to grasp the situation “as an exceptional opportunity offered to them to testify, to make themselves heard” (Bourdieu 1993b, 615). Indeed, after the interview, one of my informants appreciated that he could learn more about himself by organizing and expressing his own thought through the interview: of what he actually thought and felt about his own experiences as a geese-dad professor and some aspects that he could not fully realize before they were uttered as his words during the interview. During the interviews I especially paid close attention to apparent contradictions both within single speech acts and over time, contradictions that were often lost on the interviewees themselves (Strauss 2005). I also paid attention to “implicitness” and “assumptions” in their accounts in order to understand the social meanings that they produce through their words (Fairclough 2003).

In order to avoid the “dangers of misinterpretation” of my informants’ accounts while doing this study, I tried to be aware of the possible performative aspect of interviews or cover-up rhetoric/masking of interviewees since interviewees as well as the researchers can feel anxious about “making *private* words *public*” through interviews (Bourdieu 1993a, 1). In a sense, this aspect is what I worried the most before I conducted the interviews since my informants are not only highly intelligent people but also very well connected professionals in particular so that the interview led many of my informants to worry about the confidentiality.

Here, I feel obliged to introduce my position as a researcher to help the reader to better understand the kind of subjective lens that has informed this study and how I built rapport with

my informants. Ravinder Sidhu notes, “How researchers receive, interpret, and transmit the findings of their work is mediated by individual histories and positioning” (2006, xviii). Moreover, the importance of positioning and establishing a rapport with informants is an issue of trust between researcher and research subjects. Researchers have often expressed concern over how researchers should overcome their research fallacy and dilemmas including ethical issues, generated from the different positions between researchers and their research subjects in terms of race, gender, and class (Duneier 1999; Twine 2000; Stacey 1991; Yan 2008). Mostly they worry about the researcher’s exploitation of research subjects, caused by unequal relationship between researcher and research subjects. With self-awareness to avoid danger of ethical pitfall, it is important to build the trust between a researcher and research subjects for a successful ethnographic research.

However, unlike the research utilizing participant observation as a primary method, which a researcher can gradually build up a rapport with informants with repeated contacts during relatively longer period, one-time interviews like mine usually do not allow enough time to build rapport with informants. So before starting my fieldwork, although it may sound funny, in addition to the basic concerns about recruiting interviewees, I especially worried about unequal relationship between a researcher (me) and research subjects (my informants) in a different way: what if I would be controlled or manipulated by my own informants with their ability to control the conversational situation and their language skills because, above of all, my informants were all well-established “professors” who were highly intelligent and I was a graduate “student”? What if they would test me or evaluate my performance as an interviewer as I am conducting an interview, especially, when my informants themselves are social scientists?

In a sense, it is a kind of the reversal hierarchical situation between researcher and research subjects! With my somewhat shy personality, I felt a bit intimidated and uneasy as a researcher.

Yet, I found myself in a unique position as a researcher and it helped me to overcome those anxieties during the interviews: despite my gender difference, we actually had a great deal in common. Their stories are almost mine, my husband's, and my family's story. I am one of those geese mothers in same generation as most of my informants; I study abroad to attain a PhD degree in the U.S. as my informants once did; and as an academic, I am aspiring to be a professor and ultimately to live as an intellectual. As the researcher who shares some degree of similar experiences with my informants, I am part of the world being studied/those who are studied and not a detached observer/researcher (Yan 2008). During interviews, it seemed my informants gradually knew that I understood what they said, what they felt, and what they meant. Sometimes, I was surprised by my informants' very earnest answers that I had really hoped for but did not imagine could be realized. From time to time, it was indeed a challenge to keep a firm objective position as a researcher while I shared their experiences and emotions and oftentimes could empathize with them. This presents some limits but also at the same time some advantages. A strength also can be a weakness, as a coin always has two sides. My own similar, familiar experience and understanding of informants and also my concerns over their privacy sometimes hindered my ability to delve into some issues with greater depth and in greater detail. Because I thought that I already knew about it or I should not ask about it, I sometimes missed some details. Yet, overall, I believe that my subject position allows me insight and helps me to examine and interpret the people/the world that I study by bringing me more closely "into the heart of" their world (Geertz 1973, 18).

While writing this dissertation, I especially try to be aware of “how a topic or theme is named and developed can implicitly privilege some voices and perspectives and exclude others” (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 1995, 173-4). As I already mentioned above, my research has evolved based on the data that I got from the interviews and I have tried to maintain objective scholarship and to be fair to the people in this study. As Bourdieu puts it, the worst way of reading text would no doubt be “the moralizing reading” (1977b, X). I hope my readers also understand that I have zero intention to either moralize or justify/celebrate their stories (their ideas and practices) through this study.

#### **IV. Overview of Contents/Chapter Outline**

The structure of this dissertation is as follow. Chapter 2 discusses the legacy of South Korean intellectuals through historicizing how collective identities have been formed and transformed through different historical contexts. It also examines the socio-cultural location of contemporary South Korean intellectuals, more specifically professors, at this historical juncture of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in terms of with what kinds of challenges that they have faced over last two decades; what has made possible the emergence of geese-dad professors. In this chapter, I try to establish the basis for understanding why I identify both professors with intellectuals and a group of geese-dad professors with a symbolic subset of South Korean intellectuals in this study, while offering the context of the emergence of “geese-dad” professors and giving a brief account why the phenomenon is out of ordinary in light of the tradition of South Korean intellectuals.

Chapter 3 examines professoriate geese families’ normative course of early study abroad and geese-dad professors’ own accounts of their educational strategy. I suggest that, with the significant advantages they have, professoriate geese families have been at the forefront of the

geese-family phenomenon -- their example has served as a veritable template for this trend. However, many of these professors tend to differentiate their own “geese-family making” from that of others -- a tendency that, I argue, works to mask their own privilege and efforts for social reproduction. They consider their own “geese-family making” and their practical advantages in its execution as an “inevitable” and “natural” outcome of their own study-abroad experiences rather than a privilege that elites enjoy. It is clear that the father’s own study-abroad experience and occupation as a professor function as the source of this sense of inevitability and privilege; and these are the most significant cultural capitals that allow them to make their family project possible and relatively more successful from start to finish. Geese-dad professors have thus emerged as ambivalent figures: as simultaneously competent fathers who can be proud of their pioneering spirit and as self-wounded intellectuals whose practices with an individualistic social reproduction strategy seemingly run against the social imaginary of respectable professors.

Chapter 4 explores how these professors go through the experiences of “personalized globalization,” raising their children abroad and how new meanings are being fashioned in this process. Their “geese-family making” was something larger than mere familial social reproduction through the accrual of cultural capital or the making of flexible citizens who can survive the changing global political economy. I found that many of these professors undergo a paradigm shift in their thinking about the nation and the global via their experiences of raising children abroad. Their thinking develops as they negotiate the gap between the ideals and reality of nurturing and identifying with their children abroad. These fathers are often baffled by their children’s post national thinking in particular and torn between their own nationalist sentiment and cosmopolitan desire for children to live a meaningful life as well-rounded, competent cosmopolitans. However, I argue that these fathers also vicariously nurture their own desires for

cosmopolitan and autonomous liberal subjectivities through the adventurous globalization project of their children.

Chapter 5 looks at these geese-dad professors' role as campus globalizers. I argue that the professors also experience ambivalence about the impact of globalization on their profession. South Korean universities have striven for arguably one of the world's most aggressive state-mobilized globalization programs for universities and they demand professors to play a role as agents in the imperative to globalize their universities. Faculty, especially those with international pasts, such as these geese-dad professors, are mobilized to activate their own international networks and skills in the service of the internationalization and capitalization of higher education. Although most of these geese-dad professors, who often feel that they cannot go against the current, play critical roles as campus globalizers by actively contributing to the internationalization of their own universities, they nonetheless struggle with ambivalent feelings about the intense neoliberal demands imposed in their profession and the uniform directions of internationalization from both their institutions and the state. How they perceive, embrace, or resist their newly given role as campus globalizers is varied, but for some professors the reluctance came from their perception that the internationalization of higher education operates according to a very centralized metric-driven instrumentalism, focusing on competitions and showiness, rather than by the cosmopolitan ideals of genuine internationalization.

Chapter 6 concludes with a discussion of the identity crisis that these professors are going through in transforming South Korea today. I suggest that the professors develop new ideas about the role of professors and their responsibilities as intellectuals in South Korean society. As I introduce through the chapters, they struggle to negotiate the challenges they face as fathers and professors especially in the face of globalization. While the society still considers and expects

them to act as a group of intellectuals, who are supposed to be paragons of social consciousnesses and play a leadership role in their society, based on traditional paradigm; many of these professors instead define their role more as that of a professional. Nonetheless, they are not free from those expectations and responsibilities. I argue that they are caught between nostalgia for the professor who enjoys the aura of respectable, privileged intellectuals and new ideals of the autonomous professionals who are unrestrained by collective identity and freely pursues their individual academic excellence and personal goals, while contributing to the society with their professional knowledge, which would in turn allow them new authority/hegemony.

## CHAPTER TWO

### CAUGHT IN BETWEEN: THE LEGACY OF SOUTH KOREAN INTELLECTUALS AND THE EMERGENCE OF “GEESE-DAD” PROFESSORS

Examining the path of education for their children chosen by elite university professors in humanities or social sciences with U.S. doctorate would bring very intriguing results. Majority of them raise their children in the U.S. There is even a joke that a certain department in a university has faculty meetings in the U.S. during [summer or winter] breaks because they all end up visiting the U.S. to see their children every break. Asking professors about a mission of intellectuals sounds rather ludicrous in this context. The so-called mission more appropriately serves the geese dads. (Kyunghyang Shinmun Team of reporters for special coverage 2008, 76)

In 2007, *Kyunghyang Shinmun* (Kyŏnghyang Sinmun), a daily news paper in South Korea, published a special feature series on South Korean intellectuals, “20 years after Democratization, the Death of the Intellectual (*Minjuhwa 20nyŏn, chisigin ūi chugŭm*).”<sup>4</sup> The series asked whether South Korean intellectuals -- privileged people who enjoyed honor/respect, money, and power — were in fact really contributing to society. Further, the series proclaimed the “death” of intellectuals in South Korean society. In particular, it problematized intellectuals’ -- in fact mostly professors’ -- pursuit of power and politics after democratization, captured by the neologism “polifessor (*polipesŏ*).” Although there had been sporadic criticism of intellectuals, this series drew enormous attention both inside and outside of the intellectual community, especially because of its timely publication, coinciding perfectly with the various moves of intellectuals in the on-going presidential election at that time.<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile, another move of a certain group of professors, in a different vein, was drawing attention within the professor community. Becoming a so-called “geese-dad” has

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<sup>4</sup> This series of seventeen feature articles was originally published in *Kyunghyang Shinmun* from April to July 2007, but later they were published in book form, which I use here. See *Kyunghyang Shinmun Tŭkpyŏlch’wijaetim* (Team of reporters for special coverage) (2008).

<sup>5</sup> This tendency has not changed much even after the election; rather Koreans find similar moves of professors again in 2012, the year of another presidential election. Quite a number of professors campaigned in each camp for presidential candidates.

become a newly developing trend within the professor community. This educational strategy of Korean professors to send their young children and wives to Western countries for education while they stay alone in South Korea has become especially popular among the professors who themselves studied abroad. The excerpt above is a professor's comment on the commonness of geese-dad professors these days, cited in one of the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* feature articles I mentioned above. When this professor told the story above to the reporter, who had asked him about the mission of intellectuals, he had called it a "heartbreaking story" (*kasŭm ap 'ŭn iyagi*). His comments clearly reveal the professor community's self-deprecating, ambivalent sentiments about geese-dad professors. Yet, certain questions immediately arise. What is the rationale behind this criticism? Why do geese-dad professors necessarily betray the mission of intellectuals? Which actions of geese-dad professors are presumed to run against intellectuals' mission? Further, we can ask: what is then the expected mission of South Korean intellectuals today? How do intellectuals themselves perceive these expectations? Are their subjectivities extending beyond existing paradigms? What are the implications of these struggles to both individuals and the society? These are the questions I engage in this dissertation.

Regardless of how thorough these journalistic analyses were and whether the ongoing criticism of professors (as a prominent subset of South Korea intellectuals) was convincing, they certainly presented contemporary South Korean intellectuals with painful critiques. Further, they also suggested that something must be going on inside of South Korean intellectual community.

The death of intellectuals, however, is certainly not novel ground. In the West, volumes of writing about the intellectual proclaimed his or her death decades ago. Today in the West the death of the intellectual has become something of a platitude, and it seems that the "intellectual"

himself no longer draws the special attention of the public.<sup>6</sup> For South Korea, I ask, why does the intellectual matter *now* and why is his death *still fresh*? What makes some or many contemporary South Koreans believe or at least suspect the death of intellectuals? And in so proclaiming, what kind of images of the authentic intellectual do they draw in their mind? What are the “imagined” identities and the social-cultural location of South Korean intellectuals in their society? And what are intellectuals’ self-perceptions?

I suggest that South Korean intellectuals face challenges in figuring out their new location in a changing society at this historical juncture. In this chapter, I first explore how the collective/imagined identities and legacies of South Korean intellectuals have been formed and transformed through different historical contexts. I next examine the social context that has challenged the socio-cultural location of contemporary South Korean intellectuals over the last two decades and that has made possible the emergence of “geese-dad” professors. At the same time, I discuss why I identify professors with intellectuals and consider a certain group of geese-dad professors (my informants) as a symbolic subset of South Korean intellectuals. I also ask how intellectuals’ individual/personal “geese-family” practice can be perceived and interpreted in different ways in light of South Korean intellectuals’ legacies.

## **I. The Intellectual’s Emergent Role**

I contend that the intellectual occupies an “emergent role” (Eyerman 1994, ix). That is, the role of the intellectual is not fixed but constructed and constantly reinvented in parallel with various historical, social, and cultural contexts “through the actions of individuals of various

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<sup>6</sup> Jean-François Lyotard, in his article “Tombeau de l’intellectuel” (The Fall of the Intellectual), argues that intellectuals do not exist anymore in the postmodern condition (1993). For more discussions on intellectuals in the postmodern era, see also Zygmunt Bauman (1987). There have been many discussions of intellectuals’ death or disappearance: see Régis Debray (2001); Frank Furedi (2004); Melzer, Weinberger, and Zinman (2003).

intellectual generations” (x).<sup>7</sup> With this perspective, I argue that South Korean intellectuals, indeed, have a unique history and distinctive tradition; their identities and roles have formed and continuously shifted in accordance with different historical contexts and historical specificities. Before introducing the distinctiveness of the South Korean intellectual tradition and how it has been molded, it is necessary to look at the general definitions of the intellectual, especially those which have influenced the South Korean intellectuals’ identities – on defining who is an “authentic” intellectual, although they mainly originate from Western societies.

#### A. *Who is an Intellectual?*

“There has been no major revolution in modern history without intellectuals; conversely there has been no major counterrevolutionary movement without intellectuals (Said 1994, 10).”

Who, then, are intellectuals?

Ever since the term “intellectuals” as a new social identity first appeared in the Dreyfus Affair<sup>8</sup> in France at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, defining the term has been challenging. Many scholars have thus tended to characterize the term as controversial, vague, and inconsistent because there are so many different intellectual functions and complex meanings. Indeed, it is hard to observe objective or pre-existing boundaries of the activities and category of intellectuals (Barber 1998; Bauman 1987; Nettle 1969). One can just grasp the vague idea that intellectuals “actually deal with and often conflate” knowledge, the different types of ideas and symbols

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<sup>7</sup> Also see Carl Boggs (1993); Antonio Gramsci (1987, 5-23; 1998, 210-6).

<sup>8</sup> The Dreyfus Affair as a political scandal broke out in France in 1894, when Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French Army, was convicted of espionage for Germany. The incident polarized French politics and society (and other European countries) in two: people took sides either for or against Dreyfus although it eventually turned out to be a false accusation a few years later. During the incident, Emile Zola, a famous French writer, played the role of the main defender of Dreyfus by refuting the evidence of the charge as forged by anti-Semitic officers and also calling upon justice and human rights. In the aftermath of the Dreyfus Affair, ‘intellectuals’ became a term in popular use. Also, the French intellectual tradition was molded after Zola (Eyerman 1994, 53-63).

(Barber 1998, 5). Thus, not only is it nearly impossible to review all the definitions of and views on intellectuals that have been made, but it is also beyond both my capability and the purpose of this chapter. More importantly, as Zigmunt Bauman points out, the category of intellectuals can never be “definitionally self-sufficient” (1987, 18). Still, looking into a few of the definitions here, which have been generally regarded as influential perspectives of classical/traditional role of intellectuals and also have had strong impacts on South Korean intellectuals’ consciousness, provides some meaningful insights into the nature and function of intellectuals for future discussion in this study.

To define intellectuals, some scholars, Lewis Coser and Edward Shils among them, take the phenomenological approach that emphasizes the natural qualities of intellectuals as gifted individuals of unusual quality (Eyerman 1994; Shils 1969). However, many more others take a structural approach in defining intellectuals by considering social structure and function at the same time. For instance, Antonio Gramsci thinks that intellectuals are historically and generationally formed. According to him, everyone could be an intellectual from the viewpoint of human potential, but who actually becomes an intellectual depends only on social conditions. In his view, intellectuals are not just elites or leaders of a movement, but people who use their minds and cultural heritage to make judgments and act politically. He formulated the new concept of the “organic intellectual” who works consciously to develop/organize the cultural and political capacities of his or her own class (Eyerman, 82-3; Gramsci 1987, 5-23). In the 1980s in particular South Korean intellectuals were strongly influenced by Gramsci’s notion of the “organic intellectual.”

Especially in the European intellectual tradition, being an intellectual also means taking social responsibility and political stances in addition to engaging in creative mental activities.

Julien Benda, Karl Manheim, and Jean-Paul Sartre all call upon intellectuals to act in specific ways. In the 1920s Benda (1928) attacked his contemporary intellectuals (“clerks” in his term) who abandoned intellectuals’ moral responsibility and universal values, succumbing to the cult of nationalism and political passions. Manheim, with utopian vision, developed the notion of the “free-floating intelligentsia” armed with self-consciousness, that is, “a social stratum relatively free of economic class interests, capable of acting as a creative political force in modern society,” and “providing society with an interpretation of itself” as its salient social task (Eyerman 1994, 87-91). According to Manheim, the new intelligentsia transcends partisan knowledge and class interests (Barber 1998, 19). Sartre, on the other hand, created the role of the “resistance-intellectual” by taking an active stand on politics as he attempted to maintain his intellectual activities for freedom through writings and also with spoken words based upon intellectual reflection and conviction under foreign occupation. Sartre recreated the classic role of actively engaged and critical intellectuals in post-war society and became a role model in the “movement intellectual” tradition (Eyerman 173-5; Sartre 2007). Sartre, in particular, had a huge impact on the formation of critical intellectuals in South Korea in the 1960s. Many South Korean intellectuals in their specific historical context admired him as a symbol of intellectuals and, from then on, the role of critical intellectuals has been seen as a predominant characteristic of the South Korean intellectual tradition as I examine below.

However, Michel Foucault (1991b, 68-70) interprets intellectuals more politically and devalues intellectual authority. He claims that discourses of knowledge are in fact expressions of power relations and embodiments of power. Thus intellectuals and their discourses of knowledge are not politically pure. According to Foucault, “the universal intellectual” like Sartre, who spoke for a universal and abstract idea of human rights mostly through writing, is no longer a

politically acceptable role. Rather Foucault argues that “the specific intellectual” who uses specialized knowledge for a social purpose is the appropriate example for our time. Foucault’s post-modern notion of intellectuals will give some insights later when I discuss contemporary South Korean intellectuals in chapter six.

In the U.S., functionalist Talcott Parsons (1969) tried to define the intellectual as a role in a particular social system. In his view, the intellectual is a person who “put[s] cultural considerations above [the] social in defining the commitments by virtue of which his primary role and position are significant as contributions to valued outcomes of his action” (3-4). In this respect, an intellectual is distinguished from organization executive or official expert whose work remains confined to institutions.

Edward Said (1994) also developed his own definition of the “true intellectuals” although it seems that his notion of intellectuals shares features of the ideas of Manheim, Benda, and Sartre. According to him, the true intellectual is the critical and totally independent dissenter who speaks truth to power, and so becomes exile and marginal. Intellectuals are people who confront orthodoxy and dogma and cannot easily be co-opted by governments or corporations. Said’s notion of the intellectual is, in short, the “pure ideologist,” and it is somewhat “utopian” definition of the intellectual (Barber 1998, 16-21). It seems that, to a great extent, the image of an “authentic” intellectual in South Korean imagination is close to Said’s notion of the intellectual. In some sense, the *Kyunghyang Shinmun* news articles that I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter are illustrations of an effort to redefine the “true” or “pure” intellectuals in South Korean society and the struggle to find out in which way intellectuals can play a contributing role for society at this moment.

The literature on intellectuals is endless, yet it seems that contrary to the phenomenological approach that focuses on individual quality and thus has difficulty saying anything about intellectuals as a group, the structural approach sees intellectuals as a general social category with particular political behavior and social roles and provides a more persuasive perspective. Instead of taking one side of these two positions, Ron Eyerman (1994) attempts to develop “a processual conception of intellectuals which is sensitive to both phenomenological and structural points of view.” He argues that “the idea of the intellectual itself has a history” and “how we understand the term *intellectual* depends to a great extent upon the cultural traditions alive in a society and the reasons for this” (3). As one of main theoretical frameworks of my research on South Korean intellectuals, I adopt Eyerman’s approach that is “sensitive to historical and cultural context” and that views the intellectual “as part of an historical process in which human actors reinvent cultural traditions in different context” (3-4). I do so because I believe that applying his approach allows for “a perspective on intellectuals that takes into account the historically structured constraints on the possibilities of action and the desires of individuals and collectives to redefine and reinterpret those constraints” (3). With this approach, I first examine how socio-political and cultural changes of South Korea of certain time-periods have transformed South Korean intellectuals’ identities and tasks, and how certain types of collective identities have emerged at particular moments. I start by describing how the tradition of state-engaging intellectuals in pre-modern Korea was drastically altered by the experiences of Japanese colonialism and how, since then, South Koreans have struggled to reinvent new intellectual traditions in a conflict-ridden contentious society while trying to redefine the role of “true” and “pure” intellectuals in each given historical context.

## II. Literati, the Prototype of Korean Intellectuals Today

Through the discussions above, we now understand that intellectuals are defined by neither a class nor an occupation. Rather, they are a social category of people performing the task of making fundamental notions of a society conscious and visible, as many intellectuals themselves argue. Their collective identity forms around other kinds of interests than those related to social position or social status, although it is true that some particular occupational groups like writers, professors, scholars, journalists, and artists are more likely understood as intellectuals in practice (Bauman 1987, 1-2, 21; Eyerman 1994, 6). Then, what has the social category of intellectuals meant in Korean society? Where did it originate from? Who are the ones who have been most likely to perform this role?

Even though the idea of intellectuals is a relatively modern concept or a “rather late arising Western phenomenon” (Melzer, Weinberger, and Zinman 2003, xi), I prudently suggest that one can still identify people who performed intellectuals’ tasks in traditional Korean society. Although the colonial experience severed Korean modern intellectuals from this tradition, in the pre-modern Chosŏn period (1392-1910), literati (*sadaebu* or *sŏnbi*) in general performed roles similar to those of modern intellectuals, as both scholars and government officials, without any conflict. There certainly was the stipulation that they should be inheritors of yangban<sup>9</sup> status in order to be literati, unlike modern intellectuals who are not limited by social status. Chosŏn literati, as elites, strove to become capable politicians and also idealistic moral men with excellent scholarly achievements. They followed Neo-Confucian ideals and practiced the Neo-

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<sup>9</sup> Yangban literally means “the members of the ‘two orders’ of officialdom who served as civil or military officials” (Eckert et al. 1990, 108). As many scholars point out, it has been a difficult problem clarifying which specific criteria determined the membership of yangban. However, yangban were at the top of the social pyramid as a ruling class and they were the people who inherited their status and prestige like land, wealth, education, and public office from their forebears. As elites of Chosŏn, they constituted not more than ten percent of the total population (Eckert et al. 1990; Deuchler 1992; Kawashima 2002; Palais 1991).

Confucian righteousness and politics in the public sphere while also attempting to become *kunja* (moral men) who kept their integrity in their personal lives. To them, ideally, the world should be a harmonious unity, in which the public and private realms could not be separated by different standards. They had “the spiritual duty of providing leadership in society by promoting and observing the rules of propriety and rectification of names” (Sangbaek Yi, cited in Kawashima 2002, 6-7). They were not only political elites who shared power as officials, but also intellectual social elites (7). Although literati ideally pursued becoming government-official scholars, some did indeed become bureaucrats as a government official while others preferred to remain Confucian scholars without official appointments (Chōng 2000; Eckert et al. 1990, 98, 108-9; Ha 1998, 535-42; Kawashima 2002). Here, one might ask: how could a bureaucrat be considered an intellectual? In order to answer, first it is necessary to pay attention to the characteristics of literati.

There was a difference between Korean intellectuals and Western intellectuals in pre-modern society in terms of intellectuals’ social meaning and status, although the modern category of intellectuals was not yet fully defined. While Chosŏn intellectuals, literati, in general played leadership roles as social, cultural, and political powerhouses and moral exemplars in society, Western intellectuals, on the other hand, were foremost functionaries (Bauman 1987, 21-37; Chōn 2006, 43-44; Eckert et al. 1990, 108-109; Ha 1998, 534). In pre-modern Western society, according to Mannheim, intellectuals served one patron after another, i.e., serving first the church, then the state, and finally being able to make a living with knowledge on the marketplace with the advent of modern education and the development of a collective social consciousness (Eyerman 1994, 89). Even within East Asia, there were differences in the role of the literati among countries. For example, the pre-modern Chinese bureaucracy was “an

instrument of the emperor who called himself the Son of Heaven” as an absolute ruler. Therefore, in China, the emperor controlled and ultimately replaced the independent-minded aristocrats with able bureaucrats, who were loyal to the throne through civil and military examinations (Kawashima 2002, 25).

In contrast, a king in Chosŏn was “subject to the moral and ethical standards of the Confucian kingship,” and, to yangban literati, the king was “first among equals, who deserved loyalty as long as he was good and benevolent” (Kawashima 2002, 22-25). Because kings were expected to be accountable for their moral action and the people’s welfare, the Censorate became a powerful organ maintaining checks and balance against the king, and kings were also subjected to daily loyal lectures by prominent scholar officials (Ch’oe 1975; Chŏng 2000; Haboush 1985; Kawashima 2002).<sup>10</sup> Chosŏn literati were thus in no way simple bureaucrats or functionaries who could be controlled exclusively by the king. When we consider that French intellectuals who consolidated the new social identity of intellectuals around both moral and political responsibility after the Dreyfus Affair (1894-1906), Chosŏn literati’s characteristics share similarities with these modern/Western intellectuals from the beginning, except for the fact that Chosŏn literati were at the center of politics.

In addition, Chosŏn literati, as scholar-officials, were neither merely scholars who pursued theoretical scholarship and knowledge, nor just bureaucrats. Chosŏn literati emphasized the importance of ethical living in accordance with Neo-Confucian doctrines and valued its realization *in action*. Governing others after moral training of oneself (*sugi ch’iin chi hak* 修己治人之學) was emphasized: that is, they recognized the importance of the study of government (*kyŏngse chi hak* 經世之學), but that it should be derived from the study of one’s own improvement (*wigi chi hak* 爲己之學) (Kawashima 39; Ha 536-538). “[A] substantial number of

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<sup>10</sup> See also Palais (1991) for the politics of the yangban elite; Haboush (1988) for Chosŏn Kingship.

the elite of early Chosŏn took a stern moral stance against what they saw as a political ethos of unbridled ambition and unprincipled pursuit of personal gain” (Eckert et al. 1990, 133). For instance, many literati adhered to high moral standards at the risk of their life when they thought King Sejo’s usurpation (1455) threatened Neo-Confucian moral principles. Sometimes their commitment to principle brought about literati purges (*sahwa*).<sup>11</sup> In general, Confucian literati were largely respected as the basis of governance, and especially after the mid-sixteenth century, the local literati in private academies (*sŏwŏn*) in rural areas also actively promoted their ideological visions and engaged in public activities through petitions, sometimes challenging royal authority (Koo 2007; Yi 1987).<sup>12</sup> To a great degree, their actions paralleled those of modern critical intellectuals.

On the other hand, by passing the Civil Examination, a scholar could become a government official, who played a central social and political role in society; their role as state officials also honored and rewarded their families. Their roles as both scholars and government officials were successfully combined in the intellectual’s role according to Neo-Confucian ideals.<sup>13</sup> Although I am not totally convinced by the argument that “‘yangban’ intellectuals in

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<sup>11</sup> For literati purges in Chosŏn, see Edward W. Wagner (1974). Literati, *sarim* scholars, often took a risk to lose their lives or to be exiled with an unyielding spirit of adhering to their Neo-Confucian political ideals and challenging the king or leading powers/the old guard. Although, regarding to the literati purges in Chosŏn, some scholars point out the shallowness of the issues raised by *sarim* scholars, to render a historical judgment, which is based on Neo-Confucian moral principles and great righteousness and clarification of names, was “the burning intellectual duty of the young scholars who were more and more deeply exposed to Chu Hsi’s historicism” (Park 1978, 12; Chŏng 2000; Yi 1999).

<sup>12</sup> In particular, Jeong-Woo Koo, in his article (2007), explores an East Asian parallel to the European public sphere and civil society by studying Confucian private academies and petitions of the Confucian literati in Chosŏn Korea from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The literati petitions usually consisted of six major categories: remonstrating, impeaching, argumentative, public policy, requesting, and advocating petitions. Koo argues that private academies “as the organizational core of nascent civil society” led to “the emergence of the public sphere in Chosŏn Korea” (383). For the relations between the state and private academies, also see Ch’oe (1999).

<sup>13</sup> This tradition, however, caused problems in late Chosŏn society when certain yangban families monopolized government posts. Many marginalized local elites were frustrated as the bureaucratic positions at the center were limited despite the growing numbers of yangban. The accumulated discontent of those yangban resulted not just from social, political, and economic limitation, but as scholars in Chosŏn history generally agree, it might also have

modern Korea represent the educated middle class that comprises a majority of Koreans today” (Kawashima 2002, 23), one can say that the tradition of literati as the ideal and prototype of intellectuals and the respect for scholars and officials as social elites still remains very strong in South Korean society today.

Nevertheless, modern Korean intellectuals have been separated from this Chosŏn literati intellectual tradition because of Japanese colonization. If World War I and its aftermath radically altered the condition of the intellectual in Western societies (Eyerman 1994), the experience of colonialism drastically changed the condition of Korean intellectuals.

### **III. The Legacy of Korean Intellectuals in a Conflict-ridden Society**

The role of the intellectual is constantly reinvented in different historical, social, and cultural contexts; indeed the role of Korean intellectuals has been constantly reinvented. Although the first modern intellectuals were more likely to emerge from the literati class, they could not keep the tradition of Chosŏn intellectuals engaged in the state in the face of Japanese colonialism. The Japanese colonial legacy, which created conditions for the separation of the nation and the state, not only severed modern intellectuals from the role of traditional intellectuals engaged in the state, but also created a strong division among intellectuals in terms of how to achieve national independence and resist colonial power. Even after liberation, because of the issue of collaboration and the newly formed anti-statist tradition in particular, the South Korean intellectual community has been divided, battling over who will play the role of “pure/authentic” intellectuals while they rebuild a modern nation under the master narrative of nationalism. The differences among intellectuals often stemmed from how to interpret the

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resulted from their frustration as intellectuals who were facing the reality that they were failing to successfully integrate their lives as both a scholar and government official according to the Neo-Confucian ideal.

relationship between knowledge and power and how to engage in reality. Whether they were called resistant intellectuals or critical intellectuals, nationalist intellectuals who positioned themselves against authoritarian regimes (including the colonial regime) were considered more “authentic” until democratization in 1987, even if they might have been outnumbered by state-engaging functionary intellectuals.

A. *Korean Intellectuals, “the Principal Bearers of Nationalism”*

The first formation of modern intellectuals in Korea appeared at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the country was threatened by imperial Japan and foreign powers. In contrast to Benda’s criticism of intellectuals’ abandonment of universal values and succumbing to the cult of nationalism and political passions, the ideology of nationalism, which was incited through threat of foreign imperial powers, became “the fulcrum of a new political consciousness” and “the most potent ideology” (Koo 1993, 238). At the same time, Korean intellectuals became “the principal bearers of nationalism” from this time on in Korea (238).

Korean intellectuals in this period tried to re-imagine and fashion national identity as an effort to preserve the country. As Henry Em (1999) and Andre Schmid (2002) discuss in their studies, writing national history in particular was one of the most effective ways for intellectuals to produce knowledge about the nation and it became an important part of the patriotic enlightenment movement. Influenced by geopolitical shifts, some intellectuals in Korea struggled to search for a new identity for the nation. The shift in attitudes toward and understandings of China and Japan was an integral part of Korean self-knowledge. Rethinking Korea and reconfiguring the nation meant first reevaluating China according to new knowledge and notions

of civilization; Korean intellectuals tried to proclaim their cultural independence by de-centering China.

At the same time, regional identity increasingly began to place Japan at the center of the East through Pan-Asian ideology. Korean self-knowledge during this period could not be separated from the Japanese production of knowledge about Korea. Not only did Japan emerge as a new model of the civilized country, but Korean intellectuals also often borrowed Western knowledge that was translated by Japanese in their nationalist discourse (Schmid 2002; Em 2013). Later, when imperial Japanese also co-opted and employed certain types of cultural representations from the Korean nationalist and enlightenment (*munmyōng kaehwa*) discourse, nationalist strategy shifted to the celebration of national uniqueness and authenticity of the *minjok* (nation), stressing its unity and continuity and moving away from state-centered definitions of the nation and toward a separation of state and nation. Historians like Sin Ch'aeho and Pak Ŭnsik were at the forefront of producing this spiritual knowledge of the nation. This approach became the origin and basis of later cultural nationalism in the 1920s and 1930s (Robinson 1988; Schmid 2002; Shin and Robinson 1999; Sō and et al. 2004). As a result, the *minjok* and nationalist paradigm came to hold hegemonic status throughout the post-colonial period. Moreover, as the states in both South and North Korea became the dominant producer of national knowledge in post-colonial Korea, nationalism has become the unchallenged “master narrative” in both Koreas (Armstrong 2003; Shin 1998).

### *B. The Legacy of Division within Intellectuals*

As many scholars have pointed out, modern Korea and contemporary South Korea have gone through incredible upheavals and social changes; the origin of many of these problems can

be found in the experience of Japanese colonialism (1910-45). The three variables of colonialism, nationalism, and modernity have interacted in complex ways to shape the consciousness of Korean intellectuals (Shin and Robinson 1999). Above all, colonial experiences left behind tremendous trauma and affected every aspect of South Korean society: not only politics, economy, culture, and scholarship, but also South Koreans' very ideas about intellectuals themselves. Because of the colonial legacy of separating nation from state, the anti-statist tradition became a deeply ingrained South Korean intellectual orientation (Koo 1993, 235-7).

Regaining national political independence became an ultimate goal for Korean intellectuals and the resistance against colonial power itself was seen as the legitimate role of intellectuals. Coercive Japanese rule and the intense anti-Japanese struggles among Koreans created a widening gap between the state and society. And as a result, the Chosŏn period tradition of intellectuals who were engaged in the state was not maintained. It seems that being and living as an intellectual in South Korean society has long been challenging because South Korea has been such a "conflict-ridden contentious society"; as Hagen Koo points out, at the core of the conflict-ridden contentious society has been the relationship between the state and society (231). Not only has the South Korean intellectuals' role been continuously affected by the dynamics of state-society relations, but also this image of intellectuals as dissidents has become a salient characteristic of South Korean intellectuals.

Korean nationalist intellectuals in the colonial period had the dual role of "the creation of a new national identity" and "the creation of a political program of institutional reform to maintain and strengthen political independence for the collectivity" (Robinson 1988, 12-13). However, among Korean intellectuals, nationalism was not a monolithic idea. Rather, different political ideologies -- that is, the different conceptions of nation, different approaches to political

tactics, and different positions on elite-mass relations -- divided nationalist intellectuals into two groups: cultural nationalists and radical nationalists (K. Kim 2006, 153; Chön 2004; Robinson 1988). Especially the ideological schism between them in the period of 1920-1925 shaped the rest of nationalist movement in the colonial period, deeply affected the Korean society after liberation, and consequently led to the long standing issue of intellectuals' "collaboration" in Korean society, with a tendency to label cultural nationalist intellectuals as collaborators (Robinson 1988). Indeed, collaboration has become "the original sin of Korean society" (De Ceuster 2001, 207).

The cultural nationalist movement failed because of its elitism, which regarded a small group of intellectuals as the core of a nation, and the gradualist view, which sought national development through cultural, educational and economic movements within limits of colonial rule (Robinson 1988). Under the influence of Western liberalism and social Darwinism, cultural nationalist intellectuals such as Yun Ch'ihō and Yi Kwangsu tried to separate the state from the nation in order to legitimize their apolitical approach, more emphasizing "moral values and spiritual integrity" (K. Kim 153-4; Robinson 1988).<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, radical nationalists, often socialists, criticized cultural nationalism "for its lack of an independent ideal and the leadership-mass interaction" (154). Contrary to cultural nationalists, radical nationalists were more interested in Marxism and the Russian revolution than Western liberalism; they identified the national contradiction with the class contradiction and viewed the Korean masses as the embodiment of the nation and the core of the future nation. However, they, too, not only failed to

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<sup>14</sup> Yet, "class identity might contest with national identity when the intellectuals' moral leadership was undermined by their economic interests" (K. Kim 2006, 155). Because of the fact that most cultural nationalists came from the yangban or landlord class, which was stripped of their traditional status and now totally dependent on the colonial government for their landholdings, their elitist stance, and their chances for advancement in colonial society while avoiding Japanese jails, they lost moral authority and their actions became an object of distrust and suspicion, often being named "collaborators" (Koo 1993, 234; K. Kim 154; Robinson 1988; Wells 1990).

form a mass-base movement but also were severely oppressed by Japanese authority because of its radical revolutionary stance (Robinson 1988).

In addition, it was in fact during the Japanese-colonial period that the concept of “intellectuals” was introduced through the term “intelligentsia” that had its roots in Russia.<sup>15</sup> After the Russian socialist revolution, socialist ideas of the intelligentsia were rapidly diffused among young Koreans through study abroad students in Japan. Many young Koreans in the colonial period were inclined to socialist ideology and aspired to become intelligentsia, and the term connoted a progressive nationalist and more often socialist combatant at the frontier of new era. Although the term intelligentsia was used only among a relatively small population during this period and was also often understood as broadly as intellectuals, nonetheless being called an intelligentsia (*intelli*<sup>16</sup> or *chisigin* in Korean) meant that one was considered a “resistant” intellectual, especially resistant against Japanese colonial rule, and aspiring for the independence of the country (Kang 2001, 186-8). It seems that this colonial historical context also left the legacy of division among Korean intellectuals, even as they all acted under the umbrella of nationalism. There has been a residual tendency to consider resistant intellectuals as superior or the more authentic of the nationalist intellectuals in Korean society.

The political situation after liberation (1945) made this schism among Korean intellectuals more visible. The problems that Korean intellectuals have faced can be summarized

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<sup>15</sup> Originally, intelligentsia referred to “a small group within the tiny Russian bourgeoisie which began to assume a collective identity during the reign of Peter the Great. The cornerstone of this identity was an education in and an orientation towards European culture, especially its science and its technology.” Yet, from “the beginning, the intelligentsia connoted more than a modern cultural orientation: bound up with the idea was a sense of mission, the desire and even the obligation to carry enlightenment into the darkness.” Later, the intelligentsia put real alternative ideas into practice and its alternative cultural orientation became politically radical. The notion of the intelligentsia came to convey the general idea that the intellectual is and should be in perpetual dissent, and it has attracted aspiring intellectuals (Eyerman 1994, 21-23).

<sup>16</sup> “*Intelli (intelri)*” originally meant intelligentsia or intellectuals, which corresponds to the Korean term “*chisigin*,” which was not yet a fully developed concept at that time. However, later, *intelli* was sometimes pejoratively used by the masses, referring to men who were explicitly seeking a Western-life style; it was similar to the word “New women” (*sin yŏsŏng*) for women.

into three issues: nationalism (unification), democracy, and class conflict (Choi 1993). With the sudden end of Japanese colonialism, Korean elites could not handle the new situation because the ideological conflicts were too severe. The nation was divided into South and North Korea under a trusteeship that was put into place in the interest of superpowers. A geographical boundary between two occupation forces (the United States and the Soviet Union) also came to “signify an ideological boundary dividing Korean society” (Pongu Kim, cited in De Ceuster 2001, 209). Intellectuals had to make a choice between two political, ideological systems and participate in the task of rebuilding the nation at the same time. Intellectuals had to reach their own decision as to which ideology to hold on to.

While resistant, socialist intellectuals reigned in the North, and in the South the conservative, reactionary regime of Syngman Rhee supported by the U.S. occupation forces reigned. As Hagen Koo points out,

With this development, both the colonial apparatus of coercion and the people who allied themselves with colonial masters and gained status under colonial rule were revived, in direct contradiction to the masses’ pent-up grievances and desire for radical change. Consequently, the state and society became alienated from one another again, and as before, the ruling power’s lack of legitimacy was the most sensitive element in state-society relation and a focal point of political consciousness among Korean intellectuals (1993, 239-40).

In South Korea, with more than a quarter of government officials who had a colonial career during the First Republic and without immediate legal justice against collaborators, “the task of uprooting the remnants of Japanese colonialism fell in due course on the shoulders of historians” and intellectuals (De Ceuster 2001, 214). Moreover, following the end of the Korean War (1950-1953), as Koen De Ceuster puts it,

Collaboration became a taboo subject that did not fit well with the task of national reconstruction in the wake of this devastating fratricidal war. Political manhandling made certain that historians would not venture into this forbidden land, but would keep scrupulously to the boundaries set by the authoritarian state and the master narrative it

produced. Not until political developments created a more liberal atmosphere did historians begin to probe this thorny issue (214).

Furthermore, intellectuals who remained in the South also had to deal with their own traumas surrounding collaboration and the division inside of the intellectual community.

South Korean intellectuals in this period (1950s) were often described as elitist, but also passive and “escapist intellectuals” (Kang 2001, 193). The subsequent impact of the Korean War was such that the Rhee regime decided to focus on national recovery, which shaped all state organizations and ideologies as well as the dominant patterns of state-society relations. After the Korean War, the anti-communist state system was consolidated by a master narrative of the resisting nation, which effectively banned the issue of collaboration. Anti-communist ideology became the foundation of the Korean political and social system and an ideological framework of capitalist industrialization; anti-communism effectively legitimized undemocratic systems (Choi 1993). With the Cold War ideology and the impact of the Korean War having never officially ended, the Rhee regime destroyed progressive forces and the leftist elements in Korean society, consolidated democracy under the hegemonic anti-communist ideology and the logic of survival, and oppressed opposition groups. As Koo notes, “[T]he war brought this ideological conflict to the level of daily experiences, to the level of individual psyches and social relationships” (1993, 240-1). As resistance or criticism of the regime was regarded as a threat to the political system and nation, for a while it seemed that intellectuals became passive. Thus the differentiation between the intelligentsia and the intellectual had almost disappeared. However, the geographical division still remains “a powerful reminder of the failed attempt at national unity and has been a source of constant challenges to the authority of the South Korean government” (De Ceuster, 216). Intellectuals looked passive more than ever before; however, “the intellectuals have not really forgiven the ‘original sin’ of the Rhee regime: its reactionary

character, its revival of the colonial structure, and its over-reliance on the United States for power maintenance” (Koo, 242).

### *C. The Formation of Critical Intellectuals*

Nonetheless, after liberation, intellectuals (*chisigin*) began drawing more public attention as a meaningful social category and social exemplars as the social function of knowledge was emphasized and more people pursued higher education. In the colonial period when the opportunity of higher education was very limited, the actual intellectual community was quite small, and thus the term “intellectuals” was not widely used among the public. The 4.19 (*Sailgu*, April 19<sup>th</sup>) Student Movement in 1960 brought a huge change in intellectual society: there was a new formation of critical intellectuals (*pip’anjök chisigin*). Throughout the event, educated members of South Korea, young students -- the new national society’s first generation – and professors, took to the streets to protest against electoral abuses perpetrated by the Syngman Rhee administration and gave voice to collective concerns about Korea’s historical course; it resulted in President Rhee’s resignation (C. Kim 2007). After 4.19, professors notably emerged as intellectuals, being considered a group which had the most critical consciousness.<sup>17</sup> Sartre’s notion of intellectuals had an especially large impact on South Korean intellectuals. Under his influence, intellectuals like Song Kõnho, one of the leading intellectuals of the time, emphasized intellectuals’ critical engagement with reality and called for their further participation in history (Kang 2001, 203-209). This first generation of critical intellectuals was often called the generation of the 4.19. In particular, the journal *Sasang’gye* (The World of Thought: 1953-1970), published by Chang Chunha, contributed to the formation of this critical intellectual generation

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<sup>17</sup> For example, in 1965, Hong Sũngjik argued that professors had the most critical political consciousness among the South Korean population, based on his empirical survey on the political consciousness of professors (Kang 2001, 203-4).

as a cultural medium. The issues of democratization, social justice, unification, and industrialization became serious social issues and the critical role and function of intellectuals was emphasized. In particular, there were strong controversies between mainstream intellectuals who upheld Rostow's economic development/modernization theory and critical intellectuals who advocated for unification (Chŏng 1992; Chŏng 2004, 167-9; C. Kim 1991; M. Kim 2007; Yi 2003). Although these intellectuals still showed some elitist characteristics and their initial efforts at democracy were soon frustrated by the 5.16 (*Oillyuk*, May 16<sup>th</sup>) Military Coup in 1961, the formation of a critical intellectual group in this period played an important role in establishing the collective identity of South Korean intellectuals.

As the military regime again reestablished "the strong state--weak society relationship," using the powerful instrument of coercion and ideological weapons of anti-communism and nationalism, and at the same time creating a "developmental state" (Koo 1993, 242), there was a strengthening of the collective identity of critical intellectuals. The military regime suppressed resistant forces and also blocked the debate over unification. From the beginning, the Park Chung Hee regime faced strong opposition from civil society, especially from intellectuals and students. This was because the Park regime was afflicted by a critical weakness: "its illegitimate birth stemming from the usurpation of power from democratic government by force, its harsh repression of civil right, and the close ties it developed with Japan in order to pursue export-oriented industrialization" (243). In addition, the issue of distributive and economic justice, related to rapid economic development, became a political and intellectual issue. South Korean critical intellectuals now had a common enemy: a military authoritarian regime that suppressed civil society in the name of anti-communism, for national security and the ideology of economic development. Acknowledging a common enemy facilitated the formation of a group identity

among critical intellectuals. Moreover, these intellectuals thought they could achieve the goals of democratization and modernization through the construction of civil society first, so they gave themselves the role of building that civil society (Chŏng 1992, 287-8; Kang 2001, 205; Koo 1993, 243).

A crucial aspect that we should be aware of in order to understand the South Korean intellectual community and its reorganization during this period is the change of the relationship between power and knowledge after the 5.16 Coup. This period (1960s) brought strong tension among South Korean intellectuals about how they viewed their role as intellectuals in society and how they should engage in politics and society. For the sake of legitimacy, it was necessary for the Park regime (1961-79) to mobilize intellectuals and their knowledge -- especially the academic community, which, as I have reviewed, had been traditionally the source of political authority in South Korean society -- in order to create ideologies, formulate policies, and activate modernization projects. A large number of intellectuals in fact participated in modernization projects as “an intelligentsia for modernization” (Kang 2001, 200-3).

As a result, during the period of Park regime, the intellectual community was again polarized into two groups. First were the functional intellectuals, who participated in the state’s economic development and modernization projects, offering knowledge as experts or bureaucrats/technocrats and consequently contributing to establishing the regime’s political legitimacy. Second were the critical intellectuals, who stood against the authoritarian state with anti-hegemonic *minjung* (common people/mass) ideology,<sup>18</sup> challenging the status quo with their critical minds (Chŏng 2004, 7-8, 167-176; Kang 2001; Lee 2007). The articulation between

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<sup>18</sup> According to Namhee Lee (2007), *minjung* signifies people “who are oppressed in the sociopolitical system but who are capable of rising up against it” (5). From the view of critical intellectuals, not only are they the common people as opposed to elites and leaders, but they are also supposed to be “the true subject of historical development and capable of social change” (2). *Minjung* ideology had become more influential especially in 1970-80s.

power and intellectuals, especially professors, was accelerated as economic development drove forward under the name of progress. Accordingly, the perspective that identifies intellectuals' roles with function and professionalism became extensively accepted.

Another significant factor in this story, which is especially relevant to my informants who studied abroad in the U.S. in this historical, social, and cultural context, is that intellectuals who studied abroad in the U.S. became a conspicuous majority of mainstream elites, especially those in the military and academia since the 1960s. From the Korean War until 1967, the number of Korean students who studied abroad in the U.S. was about 10,000, including around 3,000 people who participated in short-term training or education in the U.S. The majority of these people became power elites and also pro-American. According to one study, 51% of Seoul National University professors in the mid-1960s had study-abroad experience in the U.S., and the scholars who studied abroad in the U.S. had already become a majority in the academia by the end of the 1960s (Chǒng 2004, 162-6). When bureaucrats had study-abroad experience, their work tended to be related to the fields of policy, administration, or state ideology. It is not difficult to say that they were more likely to be pro-American and anti-communist (Chǒng 2004; C. Kim 1991). Increasingly, earning a degree from the U.S. was becoming a guaranteed way to reach success in South Korean society. In academia, in particular, the power and influence of the U.S. doctoral degree was evident.<sup>19</sup> It can be argued that intellectuals who studied abroad in the

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<sup>19</sup> According to a more recent statistic, in 2002, among professors who got a doctoral degree from foreign countries, two thirds (66.3%) of professors at large and 79.4% of Seoul National University professors had earned their degrees at U.S. institutions (P. Yi 2002). Other statistics also show how much South Korea society, especially academia, favors U.S. degrees over those from South Korea or other foreign countries. For example, according to *Kyosu Sinmun* (Professoriate Newspaper), among new faculty members recruited in the field of social sciences in the country's top three universities (Seoul National University, Yonsei University, and Korea University) in 2005, 80% received their doctoral degrees from the U.S. institutions (J. Kim 2011a, 110).

U.S. still constitute the majority of elites and exert influence not only on higher education but on South Korean society at large.<sup>20</sup>

In the 1970s, despite increasing articulation between intellectuals and power and strong state repression, the second-generation critical intellectuals, who emphasized the importance of intellectuals' connection to the masses, fiercely criticized economic inequality, opposed the authoritarian Restoration (*Yusin*) system (1972), demanded democratization, and raised the issue of unification (nationalism). Journals such as *Ch'angjak kwa Pip'yŏng* (Creation and Criticism) and *Munhak kwa Chisŏng* (Literature and Intelligence) as well as underground publications played an important role in the resistance movements, raising consciousness and offering room for discussion (Yi 2003, 204-212). As Eyerman puts it, "social movements are places not only where legitimate and legitimated intellectual labourers can seek and gain recognition in new areas and arenas but also where 'intellectual' can be made" (1994, 11). This is the period in which many critical/movement intellectuals, writers, journalists, and professors along with students, were expelled from their jobs and schools.

There was a clear demarcation between the progressive intellectual movement and the conservative intellectual movement in the 1980s. After the assassination of President Park (1979) and the breakdown of democratization in 1980 by the Chun Doo Hwan military regime, South Korean intellectuals, in general, still regarded their critical role against the government as the most important social role of intellectuals, and become more progressive and radical. Progressive intellectuals grew even more attached to nationalism, unification, and radical theories and Marxist ideology than before and also actively adopted Gramsci's concept of "organic

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<sup>20</sup> One of the most recent examples that clearly show this tendency is the presidential transition team of South Korean President-elect Park Geun-hye. When she selected her transition team in January 2013, 18 out of 24 appointees had foreign degrees and 17 among 18 studied in the U.S. (*Hankyoreh* January 7, 2013) Available online at <http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/politics/bluehouse/568636.html>.

intellectuals” along with class consciousness (Kang 2001, 239; Chŏn 2006, 54-57). Particularly, after the Kwangju Democratization Movement (1980), which demonstrated both the violence of the ruling power and the potential of the masses, students on college campuses discussed Marxism and socialist revolution (Chŏng 1992, 291-2). Yet, on the other hand, many intellectuals also newly engaged in the new regime, which sought brains for knowledge and ideology for the regime. In the mid-1980s, however, criticisms against critical intellectuals started to appear; the criticisms pointed out that critical intellectuals always used the logic of “black and white,” and that they were too “radical” (Kang 2001, 235-6).

The tension between the two different intellectual orientations of intellectuals’ involvement existed through another military regime until and even after democratization in 1987. Political legitimacy remained a powerful issue. The Chun regime, like the Park regime, also pursued economic growth and continuously mobilized intellectuals for the sake of the regime’s legitimacy. “[I]deological and cultural hegemony was, by and large, in the hands of the intellectuals” with the absence of bourgeois hegemony in South Korea (Koo 1993, 245). Shils’ remarks below are suggestive of South Korean intellectuals in this period:

It is practically given by the nature of the intellectuals’ orientation that there should be some tension between the intellectuals and the value-orientations embodied in the actual institutions of any society. [...] Rather it is the rejection by intellectuals of the inherited and prevailing values of those intellectuals who are already incorporated in ongoing social institutions. This intra-intellectual alienation or dissensus is a crucial part of the intellectual heritage of any society. Furthermore it supplies the important function of moulding and guiding the alienative tendencies which exist in any society (1969, 30-1)

In this period, the Korean intellectual community was highly politicized and also polarized in terms of how to engage with reality.

#### **IV. Another Challenge: Shifting Role of Intellectuals**

South Korean intellectuals soon had to face new internal and external challenges. There were two main historical events that were instrumental in breaking intellectuals' old frameworks of ideological orientation: democratization in 1987 and the Economic Crisis in 1997. These events hit the South Korean intellectual community hard. First, the democratization after 1987<sup>21</sup> and the collapse of socialist countries at the end of 1980s in particular brought enormous changes to South Korean intellectual society, freeing South Korean intellectuals from the master narratives of nationalism (unification) and modernization. The heat of ideological debates at the end of 1980s cooled down a bit and previous sources of social conflict were also somewhat reduced. Above all, the "question about political legitimacy and the nationality aspect of political power are no longer burning issues and are no longer powerful enough to politicize broad segments of society" (Koo 1993, 247). Rather, intellectuals had to find new roles and goals to fit the old/traditional framework of intellectuals for a rapidly changing society.

In the face of changes, it seems that the intellectual community became more differentiated and sectarian. After 1987, ideological differentiation became more pervasive because the common goal or enemy had disappeared. Unlike in the past, intellectuals had no clear common goal of democratization and thus began to differentiate from one another according to ideology. It became more important to offer concrete alternatives or plans to overcome social problems than to try to reach abstract common goals. Progressive intellectuals,

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<sup>21</sup> The year of 1987 was a major turning point for South Korean democracy. Massive demonstrations finally led to the surrender of the Chun Doo Hwan military regime and to open, direct presidential elections. Until then, South Koreans' democratic freedoms had been constantly limited by authoritarian governments in the name of national security and economic development. Although Rho Tae woo won the presidency with a mere plurality in the 1987 elections, public expressions of suppressed desires for freedom, human rights, and economic equity and justice were explosive (including aggressive labor movements). In 1992, Kim Young Sam was elected and became the first civilian president (1993-8); Later, Kim Dae Jung, who had been sentenced to death and barred from active politics under the Chun regime, eventually became president (1998-2003), making for the first peaceful regime change in post-war South Korea (See, Robinson 2007, 167-181; Eckert and et al. 1990, 347-418).

in particular, faced a huge ideological challenge with the collapse of Eastern European socialist countries. Consequently, some intellectuals became embarrassed about their attachment to socialist ideology and questioned whether the socialist ideal could be an alternative for South Korean society. Yet, their concern over *minjung* and unification had not vanished (Kang 2001, 240, 256-7).

On the other hand, diverse voices emerged from outside of the progressive intellectual community as well. The changes in the political and social environment after democratization as well as the changes in Eastern Europe opened up free spaces for speculation in intellectual community. There were reflections about and criticisms of the progressive intellectuals; their ideology-oriented tendencies and especially their strong attachment to Marxism were discussed. For instance, Chŏng Subok called for intellectual self-criticism and pointed out that there were still core unsolved issues in South Korean society: unification, democracy, and class conflict. He went on to argue that there were three new responsibilities for intellectuals in a new era: to mitigate their rigid orientation toward ideology, to overcome sectarianism, and to help actualize various social groups' demands in the social system (Kang 2001, 259-61; Chŏng 1992; Yim 2005, 95, 294-6). Many critics emphasized that the immediate empirical reality in this particular historical context was more important and necessary than obsolete ideologies.

For a long time, ever since the colonial period, (South) Korean intellectuals have been struggling with the task of modernization under the political situation of strong state, weak society. Democratization, equality, a unified nation, and industrialization are all tasks related to modernization. Their usual mode of action in dealing with these tasks has been resistance to power. At the same time, as Koo (1993, 244) notes, intellectuals have long been bound to nationalist ideology:

[N]ationalism played a dual, somewhat contradictory role in South Korea. On the one hand, it served as the state's ideology to mobilize people for economic development as well as to suppress the sectional interests of society; on the other hand, it was used by civil society as a means of multi-class social mobilization against the authoritarian state.

Gi-Wook Shin also compares the different interpretations of nation and national identity used both by the Park government (1961-1979) and *minjung* activists (1980s). These two discourses naturally differ in their rhetoric on national identity: the former stresses the "unity" of the nation and "modernization of the fatherland," whereas the latter highlights national "unification," "liberation," and "democratization" (1998, 160).

After democratization in 1987, South Korean society experienced many changes. The year 1987 was "a turning point in which the locus of the critical driving energy shifted to the civil society from the state" and the era of civil society came in Korea (Lee 1993, 359). As Koo points out, the essential idea at the base of civil society is "the Western liberal principle of 'free, self-determining, autonomous individuality with equal right to social justice and to attainment of satisfaction'" (1993, 238). The transition to civil society also revealed the necessity of democratization of both the members and the system of civil society. Intellectuals' role also changed as the relationship between state and society changed. The idea of civil society also made the rigid differentiation between intellectuals inside and outside of the political system meaningless (Yim 2005, 107).

Since the post-1987 transition to democracy, the increasing openness of the political system has allowed many intellectuals to participate in real politics beyond social movements or scholastic activities. The dynamics and sentiments inside the intellectual community have also changed. Now, intellectuals' involvement in politics and the political system are not utterly denounced, although they are not entirely welcomed either. As the clear common goal of democratization has disappeared and the relation between power and intellectuals has changed

from rivalry to relations of multiple dimensions, they are increasingly seeking for an individual intellectual subjectivity rather than a collective one. They are no longer bound by an image of resistance, which a highly politicized society imposed on intellectuals. Even inside the progressive intellectual community, there is “an intra-intellectual differentiation” according to the extent of their individual orientation toward reform or revolution (Yim 2005, 114-6).

For a better understanding of the shifting role of intellectuals and their relationship with the state and social movements, we should first of all pay attention to both the changing social circumstances that intellectuals are faced with and take a look at the inside of the knowledge structure. Yim Hyŏnjin (2005) once tried to explain the factors that affect contemporary South Korean intellectuals’ role and location. First, due to democratization, the most obvious object of their criticism disappeared and meta-narratives became invalid. As a result, intellectuals have become increasingly liberated from meta-narratives. Second, a trend of “professionalization” changed the knowledge structure. Society demands for intellectuals to intervene in society with professional knowledge rather than mere criticism and abstract discourse. Third, due to “informationization,” the relation between knowledge and society has changed; accordingly, the structure of the reproduction of intellectuals is also changing. In addition, the characteristics of social problems with which contemporary society is faced have been changed by globalization, accompanied with “time-space distancing” and “time-space compression” (Yim, 101-2).

Furthermore, the Economic Crisis of 1997 (the IMF *kyŏngje wigi*),<sup>22</sup> the rapidly changing competitive global environment, and the idea of global citizenship pose even greater challenges

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<sup>22</sup> In 1997, South Korea was hit by a full-scale financial crisis and had to ask the IMF (International Monetary Fund) for a bailout. It was a part of the Asian Financial Crisis, but the effect was especially profound in South Korea. For South Koreans, it was a traumatic experience of national humiliation with subsequent economic downturn and massive layoffs. As the Crisis revealed deep structural problems in the financial sector in South Korea, the government had to accelerate its financial reform and market liberalization.

to South Korean intellectuals. Globalization, which generally means the reorganization of capitalism through information and knowledge, is now one of the most important factors affecting South Korean intellectuals and South Korean society in general since the 1990s. South Korean intellectuals are not excluded from the effects of globalization. The pressure on their labor comes from market pressure as growing neoliberal tendencies demand competitiveness in the global environment; I discuss this more in chapter five. More and more intellectual labor has become controlled by external forces. The market for intellectual labor that forms intellectual space and the norms of the role of the intellectual has also changed. The changes in the function of South Korean intellectuals, professors in particular, are intricately related to the process of globalization, and intellectuals with “global consciousness,” which recognizes that issues in social and cultural affairs can be analyzed successfully in a framework of crossing borders, have to respond to each of the changes caused by globalization (Manning 2003, 163). As I examine in subsequent chapters, these changing environments, in fact, not only change the role of South Korean intellectuals but also critically affect their subjectivities in both the private and public sphere.

Nothing could teach South Koreans better about globalization and its formidable power than the ramifications of the Economic Crisis in 1997-2001, and the crisis greatly hurt the self-respect of South Korean intellectuals. Coincidentally, the Economic Crisis came right after the government announced its emphasis on the necessity of globalization and joined the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) in 1996. After experiencing the Crisis, which relegated South Korea “from being an economic miracle to an economic fiasco” in 1997 (Kim and Finch 2003, 120), Koreans acutely recognized global interconnectedness and the necessity of quickly responding to it. At the same time, the crisis has left “a residue of

uncertainty that has permanently altered the assumptions that South Koreans had about their economy” (120). South Korean intellectuals were deeply frustrated and embarrassed by the fact that they failed to provide society with advice and guidance about the future, and it gave them a sense of crisis. The Crisis was not just an economic crisis; rather it was considered a total crisis of South Korean modernization. Not only was this crisis related to the social system, but it was also seen as a problem of knowledge of survival in a competitive neoliberalizing world (Cho 2000; Chŏn 2006; Etzioni-Halevy 1985; Held and McGrew 2003; Yim 2005, 111-112).

Under the new order of the world economy, “knowledge generation and technological capacity are key tools for competition between firms, organizations of all kinds, and ultimately, countries” (Castelle 2003, 220). South Koreans, particularly intellectuals, who experienced the shock of the Economic Crisis, become aware of not only their insecurity, but also of the fact that only the one “with capacity to generate exceptional value added in any market enjoys the chance to shop around the globe — and to be shopped around, as well. [...] the market for the most valuable labor is indeed becoming globalized” (323). In the global labor market, the highly skilled are afforded high mobility and wages. The state cannot guarantee anything for the future of the people and suddenly the responsibility is solely placed upon individuals. Intellectuals, those in academia in particular, were not excluded from these enormous effects of globalization. Further, as a select group who were supposed to create knowledge, they were held responsible for reducing the knowledge gap that caused the crisis.

Into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the question of the “ideal” intellectual for a changing world has been a matter of public debate in South Korea. Under South Korea’s aggressive globalization strategy, knowledge, information, cultural creativity, and productivity have been especially emphasized as central to competitive strength. While the discourse of the “new intellectuals (*sin*

*jisigin-ron*),” who actively create added value using their knowledge and bring renovation with new ideas, has focused on the “knowledge-based economy (*chisik kiban kyōngje*),” the traditional idea of the intellectual that performs the task of “making conscious and visible the fundamental notions of a society” has been clearly weakened (Chōn 2006; Eyeman 1995, 6; D. Kim 2000; Shin 2003). It seems that at this moment South Korean intellectuals are torn between the opposing claims: those who mourn the “death” of intellectuals and want to keep the aura and traditional roles of authentic intellectuals, and those who stress the necessity of transformation into “new intellectuals” who can spearhead the survival of society in a knowledge-based economy, trying to figure out their location in a changing society in addition to grappling with the challenges that individuals face in a globalizing world.

## **V. The Emergence of “Geese-dad” Professors**

As shown above, South Korean society has faced the double pressures of democratization inside and globalization outside since the 1990s. The Korean state, which had, through the 90s, been a developmental state, was no longer a competent, effective, or adaptable state in the era of globalization, but rather a vulnerable and insecure one (S. Kim 2000). This crisis was completely recognized — even if it might not have been completely comprehended -- by South Koreans. The sense of crisis intensely penetrated people on an individual level, especially through the Economic Crisis of 1997.

Among new socio-cultural phenomena, which appeared in response to the sense of crisis in radically changing social, economical, and political circumstances, this study pays attention to the geese-family (*kirōgi kajok*) phenomenon, a transnational-split family for so-called early study abroad (*chogi yuhak*), in which the involvement of a certain group of intellectuals’ families

stands out conspicuously. On the one hand, this phenomenon powerfully demonstrates South Koreans' general struggles toward neoliberal competition, individualization, and survival in a global economy after the Economic Crisis. On the other hand, it also can be understood as the dramatic emergence of the expression of South Koreans' personal desires for the liberal principles of freedom and self-determining autonomous individuality after democratization. After the Economic Crisis, the liberal principle, which has been derailed by the nation's compressed modernity and authoritarian socio-political circumstances, is on the verge of being derailed again by neoliberal rhetoric and forces. Not only does this phenomenon, in general, clearly show how the South Korean middle class, which is considered the backbone of society, reacts to the impact of globalization and its concomitant neoliberalization, but professoriate "geese-family making," in particular, also fascinatingly and empirically reveals how South Korean intellectuals respond to their own sense of crisis in a changing world and make new meanings at the individual level at this historical juncture.

Through this section, by briefly examining how the unprecedented phenomenon of geese family has emerged and developed, I tried to lay the groundwork for the following chapters' discussions of professoriate geese-family making and its meaning. At the same time, I also consider whether the emergence of "geese-dad" professors is out of the ordinary in light of the tradition of South Korean intellectuals that I examined in this chapter.

#### A. *The "Geese-family" Phenomenon*

The geese-family phenomenon has been increasingly visible since the mid-1990s as a particular form of early study abroad (hereafter ESA), a middle-class and upper-middle-class educational strategy to raise children as global citizens through the mastery of English and the

acquisition of well-rounded Western education and credentials. The most prevalent geese-family pattern is that of a mother and her pre-college children who study abroad in English speaking countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand while the father of the family remains in South Korea and provides financial support. For many families, becoming a geese family is considered the best way to take full advantage of ESA (Finch and Kim 2012, 490). Before the era of ESA, study abroad was considered to be mainly for graduate (or sometimes for college) education and was monopolized primarily by very wealthy families or a limited cadre of intellectuals. Thus, the widespread middle-class transnational-split family, entirely devoted to children's pre-college education overseas, was not only largely unimaginable but was also very different from earlier transnational-split families caused by parents' or family breadwinners' labor migrations for economic survival, which leave families in less developed world while breadwinners work in the urban global North (Constable 2007; Massey et al. 2002; Parrenas 2001, 2005).

In the 1990s, although it was gradually becoming more visible, the number of ESA students (and accordingly the number of geese families) was relatively small. However, beginning in the 2000s, especially as the government removed restrictions on early-study-abroad regulations at the end of 1999 and the South Korean economy began to recover from the Economic Crisis, the number of ESA students escalated rapidly. While the number of primary and secondary school students leaving South Korea for study abroad in 1998 was only 1,562, by 2002 it had reached 10,132. And the number continued to rapidly increase, setting new records every year and peaking in 2006 at 29,511, an almost 45% increase over the previous year.<sup>23</sup> At

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<sup>23</sup> The actual numbers of ESA students are probably much higher than the official statistics. This is because the figures do not, for example, include the number of students who accompany their parents who are working or studying overseas although it is widely understood that it is in fact these students (families), who have the greatest possibility of becoming ESA students (geese families) later on. Indeed, according to a survey conducted in 2008

the same time, as the phenomenon was heading to its peak, the average age of ESA students grew younger since parents tended to think that it would be better for children to learn English as early as possible. The number of primary school students going abroad to study surpassed the numbers of middle and high school students in 2002; by 2006, the number of primary students who were studying abroad reached 13,814, showing an impressive 69.5 % increase over the previous year.<sup>24</sup> Thus, it is not difficult to imagine that the number of geese families also increased rapidly as this family format was considered to be the safer ESA option for younger children. According to *The Korea Times* article (January 2, 2006), it has been estimated that there were over 30,000 geese dads in South Korea in 2006.<sup>25</sup> The number of ESA students has gradually declined since it reached its peak in 2006, dropping to 18,118 in 2009 in the aftermath of the global financial crisis. However, it soon increased slightly to 18,741 in 2010.<sup>26</sup> Even though there are no official statistics for geese-families specifically, the geese-family phenomenon has become increasingly visible and also increasingly controversial in South Korea, as both an educational and social issue for well over a decade.

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with 1,000 ESA students, 51.7% of these ESA students answered that they had gone abroad accompanying their parents, who were working or studying overseas (from Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology [MOEST] 2009) (Ihm and Choi, forthcoming). Also according to a news article, “Since the government permitted early schooling abroad in 1999, about 150,000 children went overseas to study.” (*English Choson online news*, October 28, 2010)

<sup>24</sup> At the same time, ESA destination countries grew more diverse as parents in the lower socio-economic spectrum also sought ESA opportunities for their children (Hannum, Park, and Butler 2010, 10). Especially, China and South Asian countries like Singapore and Philippine have emerged as new destinations mostly because of their more inexpensive costs, their proximity, and learning opportunities for both English and Chinese as global languages. According to one study, even people whose average monthly income is below approximately \$2,000 are inclined to seek out ESA for their children and want to participate in it if they have the financial ability (Seo and Chung 2007).

<sup>25</sup> There is no exact official number of geese dads but there are several estimations. For example, the number of geese dad was estimated to be over 50,000 by the education field (*Segye Ilbo* January 25, 2008). However, others estimated the number to be between 30,000 and 50,000 (*Datanews* May 13, 2009). Sometimes it was estimated to be over 200,000 (*Segye Ilbo* September 24, 2008).

<sup>26</sup> The numbers presented here were collected from *The analysis of education statistics, annual report* (The Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI): <http://www.kedi.re.kr>) and other articles in several South Korean newspapers.

It is widely understood that what decisively drove the South Korean middle class to ESA and the geese-family phenomenon was the aftermath of the Economic Crisis. Most scholars -- both from educational or sociological approaches -- tend to agree that parents' basic motivation was the desire for social reproduction. As I already mentioned, after the Economic Crisis in particular, South Koreans experienced global interconnectedness more acutely than ever before both at the social and the individual level, while also facing the harsh reality of neoliberal competition for survival in the global economy. After the democratization of the 1990s, South Koreans increasingly clamored for the realization of the liberal principles of freedom and autonomous individuality; in parallel, the state yearned for the nation's membership in the modern, democratic, developed world.

It was, in fact, the Kim Young Sam government (1993-98) that first promulgated and mobilized an aggressive globalization regime, officially naming it "*seggyehwa*" (globalization) in 1995. As Samuel Kim (2000) notes, "*Seggyehwa* has been touted as no longer a matter of choice but one of necessity — globalization or perish!" (2). Globalization did not merely mean "economic liberalization," but was the unique concept which was meant to describe a more comprehensive effort "encompassing political, economic, social, and cultural enhancement to reach the level of advanced nations in the world" (3). After the Economic Crisis, indeed, the economic logic of laissez-faire capitalism seemed to be not only part and parcel of the new global hegemony, but also an unstoppable driving force in every aspect of South Koreans' lives under the prevailing discourse of globalization and neoliberalism (Cho 2005; Kang 2000; S. Kim 2000; Shin 2003). As Ulrich Beck (2000) puts it, "[Globalization] points to something not understood and hard to understand yet at the same time familiar, which is changing everyday life with considerable force and compelling everyone to adapt and respond in various ways" in South

Korea (20). As South Koreans witnessed both their country's fall and the bottoming out of the middle class<sup>27</sup> with massive unemployment, uncertainty clouded the bright futures that South Koreans had imagined for themselves as global citizens of a developed country. It resulted in intense class-reproduction anxieties for the middle-class. The state was not able to guarantee its citizens anything for the future and people increasingly felt solely responsibility for their own and their family's social and economic survival (Abelmann, Park, and Kim 2009; Anagnost 2004; Apple 2001; Borovoy 2004; Cho 2009; Park 2006; Park 2010; Song 2006, 2009). ESA and geese-family making was a distinctive way that the South Korean middle class quickly responded to the crisis with a new, seemingly innovative transnational strategy.

It is also worth noting that, in post-War South Korean society, education has long been the driving force of the nation's fast development and growth and also foundational to class structure. Along with the characteristics of Korean familism, which has a strong family-centered survival strategy (Ahn 2009; Chang 1997; Kwōn 2000; Lee 1994; Yi and Paek 2004; Pak 2004), education has been the most significant pathway for individuals (and families) to have a successful entrance into society, opening up opportunities for upward social mobility, especially with the waning of the old status system and in the context of fluid social conditions (Kim and Song 2007; Sorensen 1994). Also, as Koo (2007) notes, "Becoming part of the middle class is an

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<sup>27</sup> Defining the middle class has been always difficult and controversial for scholars and the economic definition is also unclear. As Koo (2007) points out, the middle class is "a notoriously elusive and ambiguous category" in most societies and there is also the difference between objective class position and subjective class identification (52). Particularly in South Korean society, in which people have strong desire for upward social mobility, people had shown the tendency of subjectively identifying them as middle class more often than their actual class position until the Economic Crisis. In social surveys before the Economic Crisis of 1997, typically 60-70 percent of respondents identified themselves as a middle class, but after the Crisis, the number drastically dropped to the 40 percent level (Koo 2007, 51-2; Hong 2005, 1-5. Also see Shin 2004; Han'guksaohakhoe 2008). There is a variety of terms indicating the "middle class" itself in South Korea; South Koreans more often use popular, journalistic term of the *chungsanch'ūng*, often generally indicating the people who are not rich but not poor. Recently, following the OECD's definition of the middle class, which defines a household as middle class if the household income is ranged between 50 % and 150 % of median household income, the Statistics Korea (*T'onggyech'ōng*) released the data that 65% of Korean household is middle class in 2012; however it was criticized that the data did not reflect the reality how people felt about their class position (Yi 2013). In this study, I often use the middle class as an interchangeable term of the *chungsanch'ūng*, often relying on my interviewees' self perception.

important criterion of social success for most ordinary people” (52). Thus, South Koreans’ strong desire for upward mobility or the maintenance of their middle-class status has been often expressed in terms of “education zeal” or “education fever” (*kyoyukyŏl*) (Seth 2002; O 2002, 2008).

However, after the Economic Crisis, the confidence in South Korean education nearly collapsed. Amid a rapidly spreading sense of urgency, knowledge, information, cultural creativity, and productivity have become increasingly emphasized as central to sustaining South Korea’s competitive strength for the future. And the post-industrial, knowledge-based global labor market is increasingly looking for high-skilled, competent professionals who are also capable of innovative thinking. English (as a global language) ability in particular has become increasingly considered among the most vital resources for determining one’s future marketability (Cho 2005; Chung 2008; Kang 2000; D. Kim 2000; S. Kim 2000; Lee and Koo 2006; Park 2010; Park and Abelmann 2004). What quickly emerged was public outcry over the educational crisis. The critics charged that the current education system failed to nurture any of the qualities deemed essential for children’s futures, whether abroad or at home. Thus, the ESA and geese-family phenomenon emerged as both an alternative strategy for success and a profound critique of South Korea’s failures, particularly in its educational system.<sup>28</sup>

Yet, because of public embarrassment, the phenomenon was often vilified as a social ill, emerging from excessive educational zeal, instrumental familism, and the fetishism of English and resulting in unreasonable familial sacrifice and costs. Both scholars and the media

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<sup>28</sup> As many scholars point out, there are some push and pull factors for the ESA/geese-family phenomenon: that is, on the one hand, there is dissatisfaction with public education, overheated competition in society including the college entrance examination, and excessive cost of private, supplementary education; on the other hand, there is the desire for the acquisition of fluent English in a globalized world, as well as the desire for a better educational environment and foreign credentials (Cho 2002; Cho and et al. 2007; Chung 2008; Kim and Yoon 2005; J. Kim 2010; Lee and Koo 2006; O 2008; Song 2010).

documented the phenomenon largely as an educational or familial crisis, focusing on its negative financial and psychological effects on family members and, at the same time, nearly unanimously criticizing their fetishism of English or collapsed educational system. In particular, many newspaper articles were published on family breakdown (e.g., financial hardship, divorce, fathers' loneliness or suicide, and mothers' extravagant life-style or infidelity abroad etc.) and the maladjustment of ESA children. Nonetheless the numbers of parents who wanted to send their children abroad continuously increased. It seemed that many people had a "latent motivation" to implement ESA for their children if their economic conditions allowed them to do so (Son 2005, 96).<sup>29</sup> It is ironic that although in the general public discourse ESA and geese-family phenomenon is more often vilified as an abrogation of the collectivist spirit of South Korea by selfish, narrow, and unreasonable familism toward class reproduction, there are also some implicit celebrations of the strategic choice of a nurturing education abroad that feeds transnational, entrepreneurial modes of citizenship, competence, and cosmopolitan desire.<sup>30</sup>

### *B. Professoriate Geese Families: Another Middle-class Exemplar*

Under these circumstances, however, a certain group of professors, namely those who have studied abroad in the United States (or other Western Countries), are in a somewhat privileged position to adapt themselves to these new challenges, often playing the role of

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<sup>29</sup> According to a survey conducted with 1,579 adults (aged over 20, nationwide) in 2001, 41.5% of respondents answered that they were willing to emigrate for their children's education (*Dong-A Ilbo*, September 11, 2001). And the public opinion poll, conducted by Dong-A Ilbo in 2005, also showed that 40.9% of parents in their 30s responded that they would choose educational emigration if they could, that 32.2 % of the same demographic would opt for ESA and 19.8% for a geese family arrangement (March 31, 2006).

<sup>30</sup> Abelmann and Kang (2014) examine the ESA memoir/manuals, which flourished with the popularization of ESA. They argue that although these memoir/manuals have somewhat of a celebratory tone about what ESA students can/could achieve, in fact they are also defending against negative charges about ESA and geese families by variously rearticulating maternal labor and humanizing the children. In the peak period of ESA, it was not difficult to find that some newspapers alternately offered articles either criticizing ESA or giving realistic information for successful ESA.

globalizing agents at South Korean universities as I examine it in chapter five, and also being able to afford early-study-abroad opportunities for their children. Their own study-abroad experiences and their occupation as professors make it possible for them to activate the transnational educational strategy for their children by mobilizing their own transnational connections. As I show in the next chapter, for many reasons, these professors also occupy a privileged position when it comes to becoming and managing geese-family life. Even though they are not always financial elites, most professors are financially stable middle-class members, and their past experience of study abroad plays a significant role as cultural capital as they make decisions and actualize their plans for their children's education abroad. Since professors are broadly considered to be "typical" middle-class exemplars and work symbolically as a reference group, they are often considered paragons of social consciousnesses, modernity, and high-culture. Other middle-class South Koreans without the same advantages busily watch these professors as exemplars and consider their strategies to be geese-family templates.

In this sense, their private lives have become ever more public through their transnational educational strategy, which is often charged as an individualistic social reproduction/mobility effort that drains the country of both human and economic resources. In addition to the crisis in their public lives, which have been torn between the opposite claims of the "death" of intellectuals and the necessity of transformation toward "new intellectuals," it seems that this private practice adds even more crisis, while foreshadowing what may become another "hot potato" in their lives as intellectuals. As I examined it in earlier part of this chapter, for South Korean intellectuals, both the nationalist consciousness and their sense of duty for building a modern developed nation have long been central to their public identities. Indeed, we can say that, to a great extent, these identities and duties continued to envelope personal lives and

aspirations through democratization in 1987 and possibly the Economic Crisis in 1997. I will suggest that intellectuals became trapped in an apparent contradiction between the collectivistic responsibilities and leadership of the professoriate (i.e., for both their university and the nation) and their seemingly individualistic naked desires. Thus, intriguing questions arise here: How do these professors navigate between private lives as fathers and public lives as South Korean intellectuals when they execute this transnational family project? How do they negotiate their individual/familistic values, aspirations, and cosmopolitan desires against the backdrop of collective/nationalist/social value? And, finally, how does this personal social-reproduction practice as well as their shifting professoriate role in the face of globalization eventually affect their own subjectivities? These are the questions that I explore throughout this dissertation.

## CHAPTER THREE

### “INEVITABLE” EARLY STUDY ABROAD

What a surprise! So many professors, including my colleagues, have already been choosing schools for their children around the globe. They choose the time and place for sabbatical year foremost considering children’s education. The phenomenon was not limited to just my colleagues in my university or only professors. Nearly all families of the middle class and above around me were agonizing over this issue and many families had already made the decision to execute “geese-family” lives. I only belatedly realized that I was the only one to have been indifferent to the issue. (Ryu, 2005, 39)<sup>31</sup>

One fine Saturday afternoon in the fall of 2009, when I stepped into the one-bedroom apartment of Professor Kang (humanities, 56) for an interview, the first thing that caught my eye was an array of socks that covered one corner of his living room floor. Unwashed dishes were stacked up in a small kitchen located on the other side of the living room. A little abashed but with a faint smile, he told me that he was drying his socks, and that he had fixed up his apartment to look better than usual because of my visit. When I saw a big projector screen hanging on a living room wall, I asked him if he liked watching movies. He told me, showing me his high-quality audio-system equipment, that he often watched movies when he felt lonely or bored. Professor Kang lived alone in one of the campus apartments funded by his university for professors like him who are working at the branch campus, located on the out skirts of the metropolitan area and distant from the main campus in Seoul. He had lived there for almost three years after he had become a geese dad when he sent his only son and wife to Canada. This was the only time that I visited an informant’s residence, but it gave me enough of a hint to form a picture of the daily lives of other geese-dads who live alone after sending their wives and children abroad.

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<sup>31</sup> This excerpt was taken from an essay in which a geese-dad professor wrote about his experiences as a geese dad, in *Jilly wa Chayu* (The Truth and Freedom), a journal published by Yonsei University. The publication of this essay in the university journal also shows how pervasive the geese-family practice is within the professor community. The translation is mine.

By 2006, when the early study abroad phenomenon had reached its peak, South Koreans, especially in Seoul metropolitan area, found themselves surrounded by geese dads. According to one national poll conducted in 2005 by *Dong-A Ilbo* (March 31, 2006), the respondents who answered that they had at least one family member or relative who had executed some kind transnational migration for their children's pre-college education was 46%, which could be divided up between those who emigrated for education (*kyoyuk imin*, 18.5%), those who sent their children for ESA (*chogi yuhak*, 16.4%), and geese dads (*kirŏgi appa*, 11.1%). As the excerpt at the front of this chapter shows clearly, if the survey had been made of the middle class or professor community only, the percentage would have likely been much higher.<sup>32</sup> For over a decade, professoriate "geese-family making" has become evident and almost ubiquitous in the professor community, especially among professors with U.S. doctorates.

As already mentioned in previous chapters, the commonly shared motivations for the ESA/geese family strategy -- transnational split families for education in other East Asian countries as well -- are most likely to converge into the desire for social reproduction or upward class mobility, especially through their children's acquisition of English/foreign languages (Ahn 2009; Cho 2002; Cho 2004; Cho and et al. 2007; Ch'oe 2007; Chung 2008; Finch and Kim 2012; Huang and Yeoh 2005; Kim 2010; Kim and Yun 2005; Lee and Koo 2006; O 2008; Ong 1999; Son 2005; Waters 2003, 2005; Yi 2008). Despite omnipresent parental desires for children's class mobility, the reason this social-reproduction strategy of South Korean middle-class families is seen as such a striking attempt is because of the boldness of middle-class parents who do not hesitate to take this apparently extreme measure because of their anxiety for their children's

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<sup>32</sup> According to a survey, conducted by High Family Association in 2006, among the occupations of 98 geese dads, professors were the most common (28%, 27 people), followed by businessmen (26 people), white-collar workers (18), doctors (14), lawyers (7), government officials (5), clergyman (1). (*Dong-A Online News*, June 7, 2006).

future at the “risk of dismantling the family structure” or some other unforeseeable end (Ahn 2009, 139).

Anthony Giddens, Ulrich Beck and other theorists see contemporary society as a risk society, that is, a “society increasingly preoccupied with the future,” which constantly generates the notion of risk (Giddens 1998, 27). Not just at the societal level, but also at the individual level, people have to make decisions in everyday life, facing the uncertainty of the future and its consequences. As Beck puts it, “The more risks, the more decisions and choices we have to make” (1998, 10). Among diverse and new forms of risks in our time, in a little different vein, Stephen Ball (2003) particularly pays attention to “the ‘mundane’ risks attached to the day-to-day processes of social reproduction in middle class families,” which arises from the engagements between the family and the education marketplace (164). He examines the social and emotional complexity of social reproduction in relation to educational institutions and the education of children through interviews with British middle-class parents, focusing on school choice. In his study, Ball argues that the risks are “embedded in the paradox wherein society becomes structurally more meritocratic but processually less so, as the middle class work harder to maintain their advantages in the new conditions of choice and competition in education” (164). Ball’s insight is helpful to understanding the recent middle-class struggles in relation to education and social reproduction in the South Korean context, which has been increasingly neoliberal and also polarizing in its wealth (Sin 2004).

As I discussed in chapter two, South Koreans abruptly faced more uncertainty of the future after the Economic Crisis in 1997. A generation of parents was laid off from their workplaces, which they had believed were life-long jobs, and the size of middle class which had been expanding all along drastically shrank. The shock and uncertainty of this parental

generation was transmuted into anxiety about their children's future in an ever more changing and competitive global economy. I already pointed out in chapter two how education has played a significant role for individuals and families in opening up opportunities for upward social mobility in South Korean society. A "rags to riches" (*kaech'ŏn esŏ yongnada*) story may sound too dramatic, but it best describes South Koreans' hope for upward class mobility in post-war society. In most of these stories, education allowed a person an opportunity to rise from a humble family. For a while, it looked as if society had become structurally more meritocratic because of educational expansion. Indeed, South Korea has achieved remarkable educational expansion within a single generation, not only at the primary or secondary, but at the tertiary level as well (Park 2007). The number of college students, in particular, rapidly increased due to an explosive increase in the number of universities in the mid-1990s. In 2010, 82 percent of high school graduates went to college and it was the highest rate in the OECD countries (*Choson Online News* May 24, 2011). However, as a result, the overproduction of academic qualifications has brought consequent credential inflation. As the overall attainment of a given level of education grows, qualitative differentiation, that is, which type of school the person attends, becomes more important for an individual's life chances (Park 2007, 185). In the past, the attainment of tertiary education easily led college graduates to considerably good jobs and middle-class status, but now there are no such guarantees because the number of college graduate has grown more rapidly than the number of suitable jobs. Not only does the success story of rising from a humble family become an obsolete story or a myth, but also the middle class in particular, whose reproduction has mostly depended on the attainment of education, becomes more vulnerable to struggles in sustaining their class status.

About the effect of the devaluation of academic qualification on middle-class social reproduction, Bourdieu notes:

When class fractions who previously made little use of the school system enter the race for academic qualification, the effect is to force the groups whose reproduction was mainly or exclusively achieved through education to step up their investments so as to maintain the relative scarcity of their qualifications and, consequently, their position in the class structure. Academic qualifications and the school system which awards them thus become one of the key stakes in an interclass competition which generates a general and continuous growth in the demand for education and an inflation of academic qualifications (1984, 133).

In this vein, the ESA/geese-family phenomenon is the consequences of intensified (inter-class as well as intra-class) competition and the investment for better or the best academic qualification for social reproduction. As South Korean middle-class parents intensely feel the fear of “falling” and sense the crisis that their children’s education and future is at stake, they become open to any possibilities for their children’s success, taking risks. As Ball puts it, “When it comes to children, parental responsibility has no limits and indeed seems to be continually expanding” (2003, 166).

It is in this context that this chapter examines South Korean professoriate geese families’ normative course and motivations of ESA for their children as well as geese-dad professors’ accounts of their educational strategies. I first examine how the professoriate geese dads have fashioned a normative geese-family trajectory that draws on their own cultural and social capital; I then show how these geese dads themselves reflect their own transnational family practice; and finally, I examine what kind of social meanings they produce through their own accounts of their practice. In doing so, this chapter endeavors to understand one facet of the subjectivity of South Korean intellectuals as middle-class fathers and individuals at this historical juncture.

Based on the data, I argue that with more practical advantages in its execution, these professors’ transnational practices have been at the forefront of the geese-family phenomenon, serving as a veritable template for this trend. Interestingly, however, my informants tend to

differentiate their own “geese-family making” from that of others in general, thus effectively erasing their own privileges. They consider their own geese-family making and their various practical advantages as an “inevitable” and “natural” outcome of their own study-abroad experiences rather than a “privilege” that elites enjoy. But as “natural” as it may seem, such outcomes in most cases in fact derive from carefully constructed plans. It is clear that the fathers’ own study-abroad experiences and occupation as a professor function as the source of both the “inevitability” and “privilege”; and that these are the most significant sources of “social” and “cultural capital” (Bourdieu 1977b, 1984) that have enabled their transnational family project and ensured its relative success. I further suggest that their emphasis on inevitability and its accompanying internal contradictions might come from their consciousness of the criticism that they have attended the phenomenon -- often vilified as an individualistic familial reproductive effort, since these are professors who are the most prominent group of intellectuals and also educators in South Korean society, which has one of the world’s deepest ideological commitments to equality of educational opportunity (Seth 2002; Abelmann, Choi, and Park 2011; Park 2007).

### **I. A Geese Family Template: The Normative ESA Trajectory**

In fact, the professoriate geese dads have fashioned a normative geese-family trajectory, which has served as an important template in the larger geese-family phenomenon. Through my interviews, I found that my informants made the trajectory of ESA mostly by either bringing their family overseas while using sabbatical leave and then dropping them (wife and children or children only) off in the host country, or in the case of children who were born overseas during their own study-abroad period, sending them alone. In both cases, these professors are in a

privileged position with many practical advantages when they implement this transnational educational project.

Their most crucial advantages come from their own earlier study-abroad experiences. They are apt to send their children to countries in which they themselves studied abroad,<sup>33</sup> nearly always English-speaking countries -- indeed, the most popular and seemingly ideal ESA destinations.<sup>34</sup> Thus, they are familiar with the language, culture, and system of host countries. Even most of their wives (and often their children as well) who “primarily take charge of the family project on the front line in transnational social space” (Ahn 2009, 37) can speak English at least to the level that they can manage their everyday lives overseas because they have shared life-experiences overseas with their husbands.

Furthermore, in many cases, their children have U.S. citizenship because they were born in the U.S. when their parents were graduate students. This is a very critical advantage that other children do not have while trying to figure out visa problems; it also reduces the financial burden of study abroad education because they can attend public schools (i.e., because they are legally eligible). In addition, professors usually use a sabbatical year to begin the geese-family trajectory, later leaving their family in the host country as the fathers return to South Korea, an occupational advantage that other professions seldom have. Another occupational advantage is the long summer and winter breaks that make it possible for these fathers to sustain family ties.

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<sup>33</sup> Among my informants, twenty-two professors sent their children to the U.S., three professors to Canada one professor to the U.K., one professor to both the U.S. and the U.K., and one professor to the Philippines.

<sup>34</sup> Despite the relatively more expensive cost, the English-speaking countries are thought of as the ideal ESA destination because acquiring English is one of the most prominent reasons for ESA. Among these countries, the U.S. is the most popular destination. *The Financial Times* reports that there is a world-wide trend, in which increasing numbers of middle-class parents send their teen-aged children for early study abroad to English-speaking countries. The report says that Korean parents are at the center of this phenomenon of educational fever. It goes on to point out that nobody can beat the educational fever and demands on Korean parents, quoting the comments from the personnel of private schools in English-speaking countries like the U.S., the U.K., and New Zealand etc. (*Dong-A Ilbo* February 28, 2008).

With these advantages, there does indeed seem to be a particular professoriate geese-family normative trajectory. As mentioned earlier, theirs has become a more general geese-family template, which many middle-class parents with similar economic conditions often want to emulate, believing “if they can do it, I must be able to do it, too” (Chung 2008, 63) and with the conviction that the ESA/geese family should not be monopolized by the rich although, in fact, they do not have all of the same advantages of professoriate families.

*A. Better Prepared: English and Sabbaticals*

Most of my informants in this study were, in a sense, fathers who were better prepared to become geese dads. Foremost, their study-abroad experiences were beneficial. With fluent English skills, transnational networks, and cultural familiarity with the host country, these professoriate geese dads made the best use of their own cultural and social capital to facilitate their children’s education overseas. I introduce Professor Shin, who himself did not study abroad, to illuminate the difference with an example which compares fathers who had study abroad experience and those who did not. Through a negative example, the case of Professor Shin, we can see how a father’s study-abroad experience can be crucial cultural and social capital that gives advantages throughout the entire ESA process.

Professor Shin (physical education, 49) was the only person I met who did not study abroad amongst my twenty-eight informants. Coincidentally, he was the only father who explicitly regretted sending his children to ESA. He was not a geese dad but reluctantly sent his two children abroad for pre-college education against his own will. At the time of the interview, his daughter was attending one of the most prominent Art colleges in the U.S. and his son was still at a boarding school in England. His daughter had been an exceptional student when she was

in Seoul and ESA was the fruit of her own strong will and her mother's even stronger support. Despite his reluctance about ESA and the fact that his wife had never considered becoming a geese mother, he had not been able to win his daughter and wife over.

Although his daughter has been excellent in her academic work throughout her high-school years in the U.S. beginning in 2003, her ESA experience — even into college — had been very difficult. While Professor Shin talked about her emotional and psychological hardships, including loneliness, depression, and other issues, which had become more serious over the years, surprisingly he told me that he and his wife have *never* visited their daughter except for at her high school graduation. His support for his children was, rather, more focused on the financial aspect and he had sometimes needed to ask his own mother for financial support for her grandchildren. When I asked him why the couple did not visit their children abroad despite his recognition of problems, at first, he told me that he did not feel that it was quite necessary since their children so frequently went back and forth during every break. However, later, he expressed his heavy heart at the very end of the interview emphasizing how he had been powerless to intervene in his daughter's predicament. It is worth noting what his confession below suggests: Cultural capital -- English skills in particular -- of at least one parent is crucial for a successful ESA project. He confessed:

I don't have overseas experience at all, neither does my wife. It means...you know...if, if I had studied abroad, or at least if one of us had experienced cultures over there before, we might be able to do a better job of dealing with her issues and solving the problems [with better understanding of their system and her situation]. You know, neither me nor my wife could control the situation. [Since we cannot speak English] how are we able to freely ask and discuss with [the people in] her school about her situation? It would be better for people like us to *not* send kids abroad.

Professor Shin's last words clearly express his own frustration and regret. Although he was a professor, he could not even utilize the typical advantages of a professor such as the sabbatical

year or breaks to visit his children abroad, which other professors I interviewed enjoyed, because ultimately he did not have study-abroad experience and communication skills in English.

Without a doubt Professor Shin's case is somewhat related to individual disposition in the face of challenges, and it does not necessarily mean that ESA implemented by parents who did not study abroad necessarily leads to negative results. Some parents, for example, rely instead on their own social networks such as relatives abroad. However, what is apparent from this account is that to a great extent the study-abroad experience itself serves as influential cultural capital preparing parents for ESA and geese family arrangements.

Not all middle-class parents, especially among those who have relatively limited financial resources, can execute ESA/geese family only because they wish for it. As scholars point out, parents' income level, educational attainment level, and occupation are all influential factors determining who is more likely to send their children abroad for ESA (Kang 2002; Kim and Yoon 2005; Son 2005). In addition to the importance of parents' high income, more education, or a white-collar job, parents equipped with proper tools and resources for this educational project have better chances of carrying it out successfully. For example, Cho Ŭn (2004) found in her research that the more proficient the mothers were in English, the more they tended to become geese mothers.<sup>35</sup> She goes on to argue that the basic structure of the geese family is the combination of a father who can afford it financially and a mother who can speak English, regardless of which route they may take. If they fulfill these conditions and their children are not afraid of life in a foreign country, people willingly enter the life of geese family at any cost.

Clearly, parents' English skill as well as children's is crucial cultural capital for this transnational educational project from the outset. Many South Korean parents (usually mothers)

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<sup>35</sup> Kim and Yoon (2005) also make the same argument, that when mother has few communication problems in foreign countries, it is more likely that families will decide to migrate overseas for their children's education.

generally seek help from study-abroad agencies (*yuhagwǒn*) when they prepare for ESA. From gathering basic information to making a decision, even after sending children abroad, many parents, particularly those who do not have any specific experiences or social networks (most likely relatives or friends) overseas, have no choice but to rely exclusively on these agencies (Yi and Yu 2008, 82). On top of language barriers that hinder ordinary parents from accessing necessary information, many parents are intimidated by their unfamiliarity with foreign educational and legal systems.<sup>36</sup> Whether sending children abroad alone or with the mother, from the beginning to the end, the whole process of preparation, decision making, and implementation of ESA is not only financially and emotionally arduous but also practically difficult for most ordinary middle-class parents to manage.

In contrast to the struggles of parents who do not have enough cultural or social capital, most of my informants showed different patterns. Their execution of ESA looked relatively much easier and many of the fathers were also enthusiastically engaged in the process. They meticulously conducted research for their children's ESA and also actively took advantage of their sabbatical years. For instance, Professor Kim (Humanities, 49), who had been a geese dad for two and half years for his daughters, articulated how much of an effort he made to find the ideal destination in the U.S. for his daughters. Although he chose California as the destination for his sabbatical year as a visiting scholar, a place where his relatives lived, he told me that living close to relatives was not his primary reason for choosing California. He said:

What I considered most was the educational environment. I did a great deal of research myself. I scrutinized every "school district" (in English) considering which "district" and

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<sup>36</sup> Hence, some parents rely on the package of "ESA management program (*kwallihyǒng yuahak*) as a popular option for ESA execution (Yi and Yu 2008, 82-83). This type of service has been getting popular. When parents cannot stay with their students in host countries, managers or guardians who are appointed by study abroad agencies systematically manage student lives. From students' school work to their private lives, these managers or guardians regularly report students' condition to parents. In addition, the service even affords systematic learning programs tailored to students' academic adjustment needs after returning to Korea.

school would be a better fit for my daughters. But, I didn't want a school with too many Korean kids. I calculated that if my daughters adapted well in a good school in a good "district," and in the school which didn't have too many Korean kids, that perhaps they could remain and keep studying there. If not, then, we would need to come back to Korea right away; that was my thinking.

He explained further about the many hours he spent investigating the school district's racial distribution, academic performance, and reputation, and even parents' educational attainment levels! He told me that he was able to find out everything he wanted to know through the Internet. His account also reflects the wishes of most South Korean geese parents: their preference for small- and medium-sized cities with better conditions for learning English including an education-centered social environment and fewer South Korean students (Ahn 2009, 11-12). Nevertheless, if the geese mother has language and cultural barriers and does not have any relatives or friends, options for locations become more limited to Korean-concentrated areas regardless of the family's wish, because they need to rely more heavily on Korean social networks from time to time (Chung 2008, 156; Finch and Kim 2012).

Another critical and practical advantage is the professors' sabbatical year, which often allows them to experiment with ESA during a time of proper legal status in the host country. Like Professor Kim, typically a professor uses his sabbatical year to initially visit the U.S. with his family, acquiring legal status as a visiting scholar (J-1 visa and J-2 for family) with the sponsorship from the university in the U.S., which is often his alma mater or a place where he has academic connections. The majority of my informants (16 out of 28) utilized their sabbatical years to start this transnational educational project. The exceptions were mostly cases where the wives led the ESA project or cases in which the fathers returned to South Korea for a job after getting degrees and left their families abroad. Even the cases in which professors did not use a

sabbatical year for the initiation of ESA, they still made use of it for visiting their family or children overseas.

Foremost, the sabbatical year allows families to “test” whether foreign education will work for their children or not for a year, rather than run a risk of first sending children (and wife) overseas. As Professor Kim mentioned above, if children adapt well in their schools while making good progress in their English skills, children could stay and keep studying abroad; but if not, their family could just return to South Korea all together. When we consider that children’s adjustment to life in the U.S. is “the least-predictable aspect” of this transnational family project, this makes for a very significant advantage (Finch and Kim 2012, 498). Professor Moon (social science, 47) talked about the decision-making process this way: “My son’s will was the most important. [...] But, at the back of my mind, I probably made a decision within two or three month as I watched how well my son was doing there. I had already made up mind that if he wanted to stay I would let him do it. Further, I actually hoped that he would decide to stay.”

#### *B. Returning Alone, Leaving Family There: U.S. Citizenship and Economic Burden*

When the sabbatical year approaches its end, the professor’s family faces a moment in which they must decide whether or not to continue foreign education for their children. Because the father has to come back to South Korea, he has to consider both the family members’ legal status and financial conditions. He either chooses to become a geese dad or to leave his child/children alone in the host country. When the father is going to be a geese dad, he often extends (two more years for the maximum) his J-1 visa status for their family’s legal status (J-2) despite his absence in the host country. It is indeed a very common practice among geese-dad professors, which is known as “drop and run” (to drop the family in the host country and run to

South Korea).<sup>37</sup> Other fathers, like government officials who have educational opportunities in the U.S. with J visas or employees who are assigned to a foreign position can also use this opportunity to drop their wives and children in host countries for ESA for more years and leave alone for South Korea (Ahn 2009; Finch and Kim 2012; Lee and Koo 2006).

However, these professoriate families' additional advantage was their children's U.S. citizenship (dual citizenship<sup>38</sup> in South Korea and the U.S.). In most cases, these professors' extension of visa status was for the purpose of securing their wives' legal status as a geese mother, rather than for their children, who already had U.S. citizenship. Even after the mother's J-2-visa expiration, she could still manage a geese-family life by going back and forth as long as the geese-family life did not last too long. Some mothers themselves studied as full-time students with F-1 visas, or stayed as research/visiting scholars with J-1 visas in host countries while raising their children. It is not too rare for geese mothers to study in host countries in general. In fact, many geese mothers try to secure F-1 visas for their children's education by enrolling in U.S. educational institutions, such as an English language institute, community college, undergraduate, and graduate programs.<sup>39</sup> Kyung Ju Ahn (2009), in her dissertation which explores geese mothers' subjectivities in the transnational social field, points out the importance

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<sup>37</sup> A university officer, who was in charge of the international scholar services in her university, argued that this practice of "drop and run" by South Korean visiting scholars was so pervasive that it became a headache for the office. (Practitioners' Forum in "Conference on South Korea's Education Exodus (*Chogi yuhak*): Risks, Realities, and Challenges," Asian American Studies, UIUC, March 28-29, 2008.)

<sup>38</sup> In recent years, there have been several changes in the Nationality Law related to dual citizenship in South Korea. South Koreans could only keep their dual citizenship until they become 18 years old, until the new Nationality Law (effective since 2005) did not permit multiple nationalities. Later, there was another revision of the law (effective from January 1, 2011) and dual citizenship became again possible but only after fulfilling compulsory military service for men. For more details, see chapter 4. See also Kim 2013.

<sup>39</sup> It is prohibited by South Korean law for elementary students to study abroad. As Ahn (2009) explains, "the only way that goose mothers can stay with their children legally in the United States is to get an international student visa (F1). Therefore, most goose mothers try to get admitted to an educational institution in the United States and then bring their children as dependents (F2), which is a good way to evade the Korean law, and to stay legal in the U.S. as well." It also means that they have to pay expensive education fees (approximately \$1700-\$7000 per semester as tuition fees) to stay in the United States (144). However, a mother's F-1 visa status also reduces the financial burden of the family by ensuring children's eligibility to attend public schools in the U.S.

of the legal status (F-1, J-1, and green cards / citizenship) of geese mothers; she argues that legal status “determines transmigrants’ life setting and their level of lifestyle, an indicator of their future” (171). Yet, not only is the legal status of mothers important, but also the children’s legal status is crucial in that it affects the whole family’s lifestyle, finance, and future as we will see more through this and other chapters.

When children with U.S. citizenship had to stay alone without their families, it was usually arranged for them to live with a legal guardian who was often their relative or a friend of their parents in the host country; they would then continue to attend public school. Even when the children were sent alone for ESA directly from South Korea without using their fathers’ sabbatical opportunities, the process was also much easier and simpler if the children had U.S. citizenship. Professor Lee’s (Natural science, 50) case, which I introduce in more details later in this chapter and also chapter four, shows this in a somewhat shocking way. To our surprise, his wife secretly sent their son to the U.S. for ESA despite Professor Lee’s strong opposition while he was participating in an international conference overseas. His wife planned and executed it alone, so Professor Lee realized the fact only after his returning from the conference. After realizing what had happened, he was so upset that he had a difficult time with his wife for a while. He explained: “I didn’t realize that it was so simple. My son didn’t even need I-20 because he was a U.S. citizen. He already had both U.S. and Korean passports and it was arranged for him to be in our relative’s home. Thus the process was so simple [i.e., to the extent that I didn’t know my wife’s preparation].” This contrasts sharply with the difficulties and complications that make other parents seek study-abroad agencies. Usually, children without U.S. citizenship have to get into expensive private schools in order to stay legally, even if they live with a legal guardian there. At the worst, if parents cannot find a proper guardian for their

children, the last resort is the more expensive boarding schools, although some parents do voluntarily seek boarding schools because of their quality of education.

Children's U.S. citizenship also made this transnational family project much cheaper. It critically reduced fathers' economic burden by allowing the children to keep attending public schools without paying tuition. It was in fact one of the most central reasons that allowed most of my informants -- who were obviously middle class in economic terms -- to keep managing their geese-family lives for several years without being over-burdened, at least until their children got into college. When middle-class families take part in the phenomenon, their financial, personal, marital, and familial costs are, in fact, enormous. Especially when it becomes a long term project reaching ten years, the costs are vast. One study revealed that most geese dads sent 50-100% of their family incomes to their families overseas and experience strong financial pressures (Kim 2006, 149-150). They often sell their own real estate, move to much smaller living quarters, and invest everything for their children while sacrificing their own retirement funds. It has been expected that it costs families roughly \$28,700 to \$76,500 annually to support their children (150; *The Korea Times*. October 31, 2005). Professor Lee, whom I introduced above, said that ESA would have been economically burdensome without his son's U.S. citizenship. A few years later, after sending his son to the U.S. and managing geese-family life with his wife's travelling back and forth, he was satisfied with the returns on his son's ESA. However, when his wife badgered him again into sending his youngest daughter in middle school to the U.S., he rejected the idea outright. It was not because she was a daughter, but because she did not have U.S. citizenship. He told me, "I said to my wife, 'Didn't you say we don't have money?' I cannot send her because I don't have enough money. Of course, we might send our son because we could finance it. But actually we didn't spend a lot for him because he attended public school while staying

with our relatives. But my daughter is not a U.S. citizen unlike him and it will cost a lot. I cannot manage it.” Even within a family, having U.S. citizenship matters in determining a child’s opportunities.

### *C. I Am Not a “Penguin Dad”: Regular Visits for Family Bonds*

Beyond just the sabbatical year, geese-dad professors have a number of advantages that allow them to be more proactive fathers who can maintain family bonds. These professors certainly are in a better position to sustain their family ties, intimacy, and stability by regularly visiting the host country, taking advantage of long summer and winter breaks with more flexibility. Most middle-class geese dads, even those in higher-earning professions, rarely share this privilege of periodic long family reunions.

Maintaining geese-family life is both economically and emotionally tough as the mass media has frequently pointed out with the phrases “the drain of national wealth” or “family breakdown.” In particular, it is difficult to sustain family bonds over vast geographical distance; the negative effects on family members’ emotions and relationships have been frequently discussed by both scholars and in media discourse. Geese dads often feel that they are alienated from their own family and their family relationship becomes a little bit awkward (Ahn 2009; Ch’oe 2005; S. Kim 2006; K. Kim 2009; Kim and Chang 2004; Kim and Kim 2009; Ŏm 2002; Yi 2008). Ahn (2009) describes the typical geese-family reunion overseas in this way: “Wives and husbands’ face-to-face meetings once or twice a year are not always successful, because for the first three or four days, they feel unfamiliar with each other; and when they start to get used to each other, it is time for the husband to leave” (2009, 94). Geese families often become estranged from each other because of lack of face-to face interaction and shared experiences. As

a result, fathers in particular discover that they are strangers to the family and, as a scholar expresses, experience a sort of “anomie of inner world” through which their “symbolic cosmos” collapses (K. Kim 2009). Thus, the geese family is called the “moratorium family,” a family that sacrifices family of the present for the sake of children’s future by giving up family intimacy or father’s presence (Ch’oe 2005, 248).

The hardships that are most repeatedly reported by domestic media are also those of geese dads. Particularly as the geese-family phenomenon spreads out to the lower-middle class, the geese dads who do not have enough financial resources and mobility have to face the harsh reality of seldom seeing their family and all the various problems that come with this reality. Although most geese families try to maintain their emotional ties through advanced communication technologies like the Internet or phone calls, creating a “virtual context of ‘co-presence’” (Ahn 2009, 8), the virtual presence never matches the physical presence of family. Thus, the media often portray the geese dad as a “poor dad” who is left alone. In these depictions, the father becomes a “money-making machine” and is thrown into awful circumstances of loneliness, alienation, depression, a heavy drinking habit, a poor diet, sickness, and/or sometimes divorce. Further, the media intermittently delivers more shocking news of geese dads who eventually commit suicide because they cannot overcome economic or emotional hardships, or geese dads who are unexpectedly found alone with chronic illness and without family care. Even a major life insurance company used a lonely geese dad who sent his wife and children to the U.S. as the main character of a TV commercial in order to deliver the message that people need to prepare for family futures with life insurance.<sup>40</sup> According to one survey of 98 geese dads in 2006, many geese dads in fact experienced physical or emotional difficulties and also felt a sense

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<sup>40</sup> This is one of a TV commercial series, aired by Samsung Life Insurance Company in 2009. This indicates how pervasive the image of the geese family is.

of shame. And 10% of geese dads responded that they currently were not able to adapt to geese-dad lives (*Dong-A Ilbo* Jun 7, 2006). However, while generalizing and victimizing all geese dads as the father who gives up a sound (marital) life by succumbing to excessive educational zeal and overly-selfish familism, the media tends to ignore the geese-dad's agency as a father who is a caring father and also a competent educational consumer. The media, in presenting geese dads this way, easily vilifies geese families as a social ill and in an attempt to prevent the proliferation of the geese family phenomenon. However, these images do not represent the entire spectrum of geese dads.

In contrast, I found that my informants often appeared to be active fathers who tried to control the split-family situation by taking advantage of all the characteristics of their occupation.<sup>41</sup> In addition to routinely using communication technologies like the Internet, Skype, and phone calls, they regularly traveled at least twice a year to host countries and stayed with their families for periods of time that ranged from several weeks to several months at a time, usually using their long summer and winter breaks from their universities. Some of them made extra visits to their families by using the mid-term period or adding a few more days onto their international conference visits in host countries. Some stayed with family in host countries using their sabbatical year and restored family bonds which might have been somewhat weakened without it.

There are South Korean social slang terms expressing geese dads' mobility which also imply fathers' different economic ability and social status: there are penguin dads (*p'enggwin appa*), geese dads (*kirŏgi appa*) and eagle dads (*toksuri appa*). Penguin dad refers to a father in the lower-middle class who seldom (less than once a year) visits his family because of lack of

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<sup>41</sup> Lee and Koo (2006) also found in their study that the fathers were not only as active as the mothers but also often the initiators of their geese-family arrangement and strategy.

money and time. As penguins cannot fly although they have wings, penguin dads cannot freely fly and are stuck at home, constrained by their work and finances. Eagle dads have the best mobility, with enough money and flexible time. Unlike the average geese dad who visits his family once or twice a year mostly by using yearly vacation, eagle dad can fly overseas like an eagle whenever he wants to go or whenever his family needs him.

None of my informants' situations made me think of them as penguin dads. Some professors openly admitted that they were eagle dads. It is also true that there was a disparity among my informants in terms of individual financial circumstances. Some could visit their families more often than others. However, they all enjoyed family reunions at least more than twice a year, sometimes adding the variation of having the family visit South Korea. Most of my informants made comments like this one: "If I were not a professor and I didn't have time to visit my family like other salaried men, I am not sure if I would ever make the same decision." For this reason, they seemed relatively more confident and satisfied with their transnational family project than others because of their more stable families and marital relationships despite transnational distance. Although these professors mostly emphasized their time flexibility as the crucial factor that made their regular family reunions be possible, it should also not be ignored that these reunions were also possible because of their comparatively upper-middle-class status, which was relatively free from monetary worries.

Until now, I have examined how geese-dad professors developed a normative trajectory of this transnational educational project with many advantages, establishing a template for the geese-family phenomenon which other families sought to emulate. As discussed above, they were in a privileged position to implement the geese family with their cultural, social, and economic capital which mostly came from the combination of previous study-abroad experience

and their present occupation as professor. I was intrigued, however, by the fact that many of my informants asserted that their geese family was not the fruit of their privilege, but rather an “inevitable” or “natural” outcome of their own study-abroad experiences.

## **II. Special Circumstances: “We Are Different” from Other Geese Families**

During the interviews, many of these professors showed a tendency to differentiate their own ESA/geese family from that of others in general and distance themselves from the phenomenon when they were talking about their ESA circumstances, motivations, and management. They narrated their own distinctiveness, often replacing the advantages that they benefit from with the “inevitability” of the situation. While defending their own practices as “inevitable,” “natural,” and somewhat “different” from others, they emphasized their children’s ESA success as a result of their children’s own competence rather than a result of unfair privileges (Abelmann and Kang 2014; Park 2010). They seemed to express that they were somewhat entitled to the privileged position of being social elites, overlooking the issues of unequal educational opportunities and social class related to ESA. In this process, they also often revealed contradictions between their actual active involvement in this family project and the rhetoric of inevitability, which downplayed their own agency.

In my informants’ accounts, I often found that inequality of access to ESA (more broadly, access to educational opportunities) was erased. Some studies are particularly insightful in shedding light on why these geese dads are often tempted to erase their privileges as social elites in their ESA practice and rather naturalize the opportunity as what they or their children may deserve. They might say something like, “Because my children adapted and performed very well in U.S. school, I dropped them there” or “I knew my child was smart, so he would excel in the

U.S.” Joseph Park (2010) analyzed “success stories” of English learning in the South Korean conservative press and found that, in those stories, the linguistic competence of the successful learner was imagined as “deeply grounded in subjective, human qualities of the learner” rather than as “rooted in the learner’s social provenance of institutional privileges” (23). Through this “naturalization of competence,” he goes on to argue that the “class-based constraints on access to English” and inequality are obscured; the process of both erasing privilege and highlighting competence “ultimately rationalizes and justifies the neoliberal logic of human capital development” while reducing the underlying complexity (22). And such naturalization serves as “the fundamental ground for justifying the position of the privileged class” (34).

Pierre Bourdieu (1984) investigated how the making of cultural distinctions by dominant groups legitimates the power and control deeply rooted in economic inequalities and is used as a means of social reproduction. Bourdieu points out that, in order to accumulate cultural capital, people need resources -- considerable time, effort and expense — which are not equally available to all; economic conditions that are distant from necessity is the precondition of accumulation of cultural capital. Yet, professors are a group of people whose “reproduction mainly depends on cultural capital” more than “economic capital” (115). It seems that because the characteristic that most of my informants mainly rely on for this family project is their cultural capital more than economic capital, it tends to make them look differently on their own practices. In this process, they showed contradictory attitudes. On the one hand, in keeping with the media, they tended to treat others’ practices collectively, regarding others’ practices as coming from either wealth or overeager parents, while on the other hand, they hoped that their own practice would be respected as an “inevitable” individual “choice.”

As I discussed in chapter two, South Korean professors are an important symbolic reference group as both social elites and moral exemplars, intellectuals who are considered paragons of social consciousnesses, modernity, and high-culture in South Korean society, which still sustains a strong Confucian legacy of respecting and valuing scholarship and scholars (despite the fact that most professors are actually economically middle-class). In this vein, I cautiously interpret this differentiation of geese-dad professors as a conscious/unconscious effort that comes from a desire to both hold onto their self dignity as intellectuals and to maintain their identity as social elites who usually do not want to assimilate to popular trends because “social identity is defined and asserted through difference” (Bourdieu 1984, 172).

*A. Not Privileged, but Inevitable/Natural*

First of all, many of my informants tended to think of the “choice” they made to become an ESA/geese family as the inevitable outcome of their own study abroad. Further, they thought the naturalness of the phenomenon came about as much from their children’s foreign citizenship, explaining that they had just followed the life trajectory which their study-abroad experiences and their occupation brought about. These fathers frequently talked about the special circumstance that they had. Indeed, the words, “special circumstance” (*t’ũksu sanghwang*), came up during a number of my interviews. Although each special circumstance was somewhat different, they commonly attributed the particular circumstance to their previous study-abroad experiences.

Professor Kim (humanities, 49) also claimed that his family was in a special circumstance when I asked him how he ended up becoming a geese dad. Professor Kim has exited from his geese-dad life a few years earlier at the time of the interview. As I introduced him in the previous

section, he used his sabbatical year to visit the U.S. when his older daughter was in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. His older daughter, who had lived in the U.S. in the past when her father studied for his doctoral degree, had many memories of the life in the U.S., but she did not have U.S. citizenship because she was born in South Korea. In contrast, his younger daughter was born in the U.S. but actually did not know much about U.S. life. When a year of sabbatical in the U.S. ended, Professor Kim extended his J visa for his older daughter's legal stay in the U.S. until she got into college. At the time of the interview, his older daughter had already graduated college and just gotten into a graduate school in the U.S., and his younger daughter was attending an international school in Seoul.

When I asked him why he thought that their circumstance was “special,” he assertively spoke, “We don't have the financial condition to send kids for ESA as others do, and we didn't plan ESA for our daughters.” However, I felt that his argument was somewhat contradictory to his account of how he carefully planned and prepared this family project using his sabbatical year while meticulously researching schools in California for his daughters and having it in mind to test whether the U.S. education would work for his daughters or not. He went on:

Well, it is more reasonable to say that we were led by a *special circumstance* rather than that we created it. It was not like that we had an intention for ESA from the outset. Rather, it came from my [older] daughter's natural experience of the life in the U.S. in the past. So we didn't start it with saying like “let's educate our daughter in better educational environment.” Rather, as I said, it only emerged and was decided in my sabbatical year. And it actually came from...you know... the change that my previous study abroad caused. [...] If I hadn't studied in the U.S. so that my daughter wouldn't have lived and attended elementary school there, we probably wouldn't have become a geese family.

He emphasized that not only did it start from his sabbatical year without a pre-made decision but that his family's action was also taken to resolve the special circumstance that resulted from his previous study abroad. Professor Kim explained it in this way: He thought that his older daughter

would well adapt to South Korean school life when his family returned to South Korea after he got his doctorate because she was still young (nine-years old). He went on:

Although she didn't speak out much about it, it seemed that she had gotten through the cultural shock after she came back to Korea. She couldn't adapt well to the Korean educational system. Actually it was not a real issue whether she academically performed well or not in school. She was emotionally very dissatisfied while wanting more to read English books than Korean books and missing the environment in the U.S.

What he implies in his account is that his choice was not totally voluntary because of the special circumstances. His daughter happened to live in the U.S. because of her father; she experienced some difficulties as an outcome of it; then an opportunity was given to them that offered the possibility of dealing with the problem. It was easy for him to think of it as inevitable. And many spoke similarly of inevitability.

Some professors claimed that they indeed had not wanted to be a geese family at all but felt that there was no choice. According to them, their inevitable situations resulted from their own or their wives' study or their extended stay in foreign countries for post-graduate careers as post-doctorate fellows or researchers. Once their children began to attend middle or high schools, they did not feel that they could insist that their children come back to South Korea with them since they could imagine the difficulties that their children might be faced with. Rather, they witnessed the cases of other fathers who decided to return to the U.S. despite their decent work positions in South Korea because their children failed to adjust to the South Korean school system, competitive learning environment, and peer culture. And they were even persuaded by others who asked them why they tried to bring them back to South Korea when other parents went to desperate efforts to send children abroad.

On the other hand, some professors thought that their geese families were "different" from others' although there was no apparent inevitability or urgent reason that made them unable

to resist. A few professors even thought that what they were doing for their children now was not ESA. Professor Kwon (business, 55) was one of them. Professor Kwon has been a geese dad for about three years for his second and third daughters who have U.S. citizenship. His interview with me was occurred right after his wife returned from the U.S., after his third daughter was accepted into college. When I started asking in earnest about his motivation for his children's ESA, he surprised me with this first response: "Ah! Ours actually is *not* ESA." So I had to remind him that I was interviewing him because he was geese dad. Then he denied it again, replying, "Yes, I've been geese dad about three years, but my case is somewhat *different* because ... well, in fact I don't think our case is ESA." He even thought that his daughters were not so young to be doing what was called "early" study abroad. He then started to explain why his case was different. According to him, his geese family experience started during his second sabbatical. He had already spent his first sabbatical year in 1999 in the U.S. when his first daughter, who does not have U.S. citizenship but spent a substantial period of her early years in the U.S., was in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. At that time, their family came back to Seoul together, without the slightest hesitation, although his oldest daughter had a difficult time for a while in Korean high school. However, fortunately, his oldest daughter managed well, got into a top college in South Korea, and eventually got into a U.S. graduate school.

When he had his second sabbatical in 2006, his family went again to the U.S., to a college town in New York. This was when his second and third daughters had finished 10<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade respectively, but he thought that the family would return to South Korea like they had after his first sabbatical despite the expected future difficulties of his daughters in South Korean schools. Yet, he decided to return to Korea after his sabbatical alone since his daughters "adapted well" in U.S. schools, and he became a geese dad. He said, "I neither thought of nor intended

ESA at that time as people think of ESA. I just thought I could see how the situation would turn out. And they adapted well...” Although he denied his intention to pursue ESA, as the interview proceeded, it revealed that the trajectory of his geese family was very typical of the route that many other geese-dad professors took. And later he somewhat admitted that he, to some extent, considered the possibility of becoming a geese family when he brought his family to U.S., saying, “Um... well, now that I think about it, it may be true that at that time the intention of leaving my daughters there might have been stronger. But if they couldn’t adapt well, there was no reason to leave them there. Still it was not like we should do it *because other families do.*” Even though Professor Kwon said that they did not do it because other families did it, it is plausible that they might have decided to do it more easily because others did it. Making the decision to stay in the U.S. in 1999, even given that his oldest daughter had U.S. citizenship, would have been more difficult than in 2006 when the geese-family phenomenon was pervasive and at its peak.

Yet, for some fathers, the geese family is not only inevitable, but also very “natural.” Professor Chon (natural science, 51) was especially convinced himself of the naturalness of whole procedure of his geese-family making although there were certain moments in which he clearly initiated the process. He has been a geese dad for five years at the time of the interview. He did not use his sabbatical to start his children’s ESA, but rather sent his two children who have U.S. citizenship to the U.S alone. He first sent his daughter in 2001 and his son in 2003 to his wife’s close friend in Maryland when the friend offered to take care of them. Later, his wife also joined their children in the U.S. when her friend expressed that she had some difficulties taking care of the Chon’s two children in addition to her own children. Professor Chon said that there was *no special reason whatsoever* for his family to do ESA and neither did he “make up his

mind” to do so. It was a matter of every condition naturally lining up such that the process was smooth. He described:

You know, the whole procedure was so *natural*, so my “wife” (in English) believes that God guided us while preparing it for us. Indeed, there was a specific circumstance in front of us that we could make a certain “choice” (in English), so we simply asked our children, “Do you want to go there?” We planned nothing. This whole situation happened with God’s guidance. That’s what we believe. We never thought we should send them abroad for their success or said to them, “Go and learn English.” Not at all! It so naturally happened as if water flows (*mul hūrūdūsi*).

The specific circumstances that he means are primarily the combination of his children’s U.S. citizenship and the voluntary offer from his wife’s friend to take care of his children. Professor Chon’s family had lived in the U.S. for ten years including his extended post-doctoral years until his daughter was in second grade. In addition, his children had regularly visited the U.S. during summer vacations because their relatives were there.

Contrary to his previous assertion, through the interview, I found that this ESA project was hardly a natural occurrence, but initiated by him through his repeated questioning of the children if they wanted to go there. However, he kept talking about how his decision, as well as his daughter’s and son’s decisions was natural. When I asked him if he gave a thought to the possibility of eventually being a geese family when he sent children to the U.S., he replied:

There was no special thought about it, no. “Let’s think about what happens ‘in the future’ in the future,” was how I thought. I didn’t give a thought that I might become a geese dad if I sent my children or I would never have become a geese dad. [...] As I told you before, simply there was an opportunity to make a “choice” (in English). If my kids didn’t have the U.S. citizenship, they would definitely stay here since we never had an intention for ESA.

To Professor Chon, as children’s U.S. citizenship was the natural outcome of his study abroad, the whole process of becoming a geese family was doubtlessly natural because everything worked in concert, especially with God’s help. And what I found in his account was that his agency naturally slipped away and he took his advantages for granted.

These professors often said that they just wanted to use the opportunity, but the opportunity itself was not the purpose. As many of these professors pointed out, the geese family project was possible because of the merit of their occupation and also their children's abilities to adapt to the U.S educational system, and not mainly because they had enough money. Since it was not mainly based on their financial ability, they tended to obfuscate those advantages, not admitting to them as privileges. They underscored that their previous study-abroad experiences and their sabbatical years brought them special circumstances and, in doing so, argued that their geese families were inevitable, natural, and different. Yet, what they did not recognize was that the so-called inevitability was in fact no more than their special advantages that ordinary people were envious of. They did not recognize that they had a certain privileged mechanism that enabled the mobility and stability of their families.

*B. Excessive Educational Zeal? Not Us!*

As these professors busily differentiated themselves from others, there certainly were some differences between my informants and other geese parents in general in terms of the procedure, circumstances, and family stability. What these professors expressed in their differentiation also often converged with the idea that they were not overzealous parents, but good parents. To a great extent, the rhetoric of inevitability is not different from an implicit expression of it.

Although my informants also shared the general parental concerns that there were negative push factors in South Korean education such as dissatisfaction with public education and overheated competition, many of them were somewhat reserved in their overt complaints about those issues and rarely said that they also followed the trend of ESA because of these

issues. Also, only a few of my informants candidly expressed their bafflement when they had to decide on their children's ESA as a very practical strategy to overcome difficult situations, especially when they expected that their children might not enter elite universities in South Korea despite their firm belief in their children's capabilities. These fathers or their wives believed that their children could have more opportunities in the U.S. (or other countries) and have a successful return to South Korea. However, in general, I sensed that they did not want me to misunderstand their family project as "escape ESA" (*dop'ihyǒng chogi yuhak*), which was an alternative route that was pursued when children could not adjust to the rigors of the South Korean educational system and parents had either enough financial resources or excessive educational zeal to send them abroad. They also seemed to want to assert that learning English also was not their ultimate purpose -- unlike the typical ESA project.

South Korean parents' educational zeal for their children is already well known and in fact familial expenditure on education in South Korea is among the highest in the world (Park 2007). It is not an exaggeration anymore to describe that South Korean students prepare for their college entrance examination beginning in kindergarten and that a family's daily schedule is focused around the students in the family. It is probably not easy to find a nation like South Korea, in which educational issues are discussed so frequently and appear in the mass media so often throughout the entire year, and in which the governmental offices and companies delay their work time for hours for the transportational convenience of students taking the college entrance examination. The psychological pressure from the competitiveness that both parents and students feel is enormous across the board in South Korean society. The reason why the educational strategy of ESA/geese family, once confined to the upper classes, can now be seen across the socio-economic spectrum is because parents seek assurance of a competitive future for

their children, especially as South Korean parents increasingly recognize English as critical cultural capital for competition in the global economy (Cho 2005; Chung 2008; Park 2010, 2011; Park and Abelmann 2004; Song 2010).

However, many of my informants distinguished themselves from others, explicitly emphasizing that their motivations of ESA were not born from excessive educational zeal or blind desire for English learning as in the case of other parents. It seemed that they, by and large, were not happy to admit their participation in the phenomenon. They frequently denied that they were following the social trend, in contrast to geese mothers in other studies who saw themselves as “being driven by external influences” which could be called “trend” or “current.” However, the geese mothers in these studies are in fact active agents driving this phenomenon (Chung 2008, 106).

For example, Professor Chon (natural science, 51) expressed his indifference to the ESA/geese family phenomenon by stating that he never heard about the social commentary about how ESA was the manifestation of excessive educational zeal. He emphasized that his children’s ESA was not based on such “excessive zeal” (*kwayǒl*). Further, Professor Chon said that he had never speculated about other parents’ motivations for ESA although he knew many people were talking about English. He went on to say that it was only the occasion of our interview that got him thinking about what would be the advantages or disadvantages of sending his children overseas. Shockingly, he said, “This is *the first time* I’ve thought about it, really!” According to his account, he simply made practical life choices for his children following his own value system and others’ gaze did not matter to him.

Of this denial, Kayoun Chung, in her dissertation (2008), illustrated a mother who lived in a college town in the U.S. with her husband and young children during her graduate education.

The mother distinguished herself from other zealous (geese) mothers who temporarily migrated there for their children's English education. Similar to my informants, the mother tended not to think she was part of the Korean English fever (*yŏng'ŏ yŏlp'ung*) phenomenon although others still considered her family to be there for their children's English education. Chung argues that the boundary between motivations for children's English education and parents' education is not clear and that each family takes seemingly different paths (87). Chung also points out that geese mothers do not see their own practice as anything extreme; she argues that parents, who think of preparation of children for globalization and cosmopolitanism as good parenting, validate their choices of temporary migration to the U.S. for their children's English education and normalize their seemingly extreme practice by envisioning their children's future happiness.

In a similar vein, a study also shows that South Korean middle-class mothers have a tendency to minimize their investment in their children's education by saying things like "what I do for my children is not special" although they in fact invest a lot. To explain this attitude, Minkyŏng Yi (2007) draws on François de Singly's ideas of "official indifference." According to Singly's argument, which resonates with Park's "naturalization of competence" (2010, 22) above, this attitude comes from mothers' desire to emphasize that their children's achievement comes from their children's own ability, not from their investment. Underneath mothers' psychology, there is an intention to interpret the "cultural" as "natural." Yi goes on to argue that, in the South Korean context, this sort of mothers' attitude is also a defense mechanism activated by their consciousness of the negative connotations surrounding excessive educational zeal (172-3).

Many of these geese-dad professors thought that the words "excessive educational zeal" (*kwayŏldoen kyoyungnyŏl*) could be applied to some of the other geese parents, especially those

who sent children to expensive boarding schools, spending almost a hundred thousand dollars a year; yet they did not apply the phenomenon to themselves. These professors often said, “I am *not* in that category.” They said that they rather often felt a “big gap” between themselves and the parents who had “enough” money to send their children overseas. If they did not have the conditions they did (which I discussed in the previous section), they would have “never even dream of it.” Some professors in fact complained of financial difficulties they have had especially after the global financial crisis in 2008 and its concomitant effects on the exchange rate, sometimes saying that they were in debt or they might have to sell their apartment soon to keep supporting their children’s education, especially when their children went to college.

Some fathers pointed out that all ESA could not be identically treated as excessive educational zeal. Professor Kwon (business, 55) elaborated it in this way:

I have no intention to defend the people who choose ESA, but as you know it, the educational cost is already huge even if parents raise their children in Korea. [...] We may call it as “excessive,” but we cannot simply say that parents who send children overseas are excessive and parents who keep children at home are not. It is just a matter of which measures they take. The very reality that even parents who do not have money have to spend so much money for education is truly excessive, isn’t it?

Professor Kwon also stressed that he did not send his children abroad because of the maladaptation to or avoidance of something wrong in South Korean education, since he thought Korean education also had its own strengths. Rather, he did so because they had an opportunity and he thought, based on his experience – his own study abroad and previous sabbatical stay in the U.S. etc., that education abroad could give his children something more. For example, it could give them different experiences and broader, cosmopolitan perspectives.

In a similar vein, Professor Park (engineering, 49) rejected the collective judgment of ESA/geese families. He spoke: “It is an individual choice. And everyone has his/her own reason and thought to do so. Since I think it is not right to just lump all of them, different individual

cases, together as identical one, I don't care what others say about it. And it doesn't have an impact on me." He said that his children's ESA started from his hope to give his children a right to make a choice for their own future. Like Professor Park, my informants often showed a strong orientation toward individual freedom and parental desires to give their children the opportunities to make a choice for their own lives. It seems that some of them certainly pursue the liberal ideas of personhood beyond the competition and fixed framework of success, as I will discuss more in depth in chapter four. Some fathers showed optimism for their children's happiness as the most important gain abroad, saying that they did not expect only instrumental returns – returns on the symbolic and economic value of foreign education and credentials -- for their transnational family project. This also seemed to be another reason they believed that they were different from others.

### **III. Inevitability, the Manifestation of Internal Struggles**

As I examined, although these fathers took part in the ESA/geese phenomenon, and to a large extent played a leadership role in creating a normative course for this transnational project, in sum, they were reluctant to be identified as "typical" geese families. Through the interviews, they stressed individual choice, boasting their pioneering spirits and abilities as a competent father, but at the same time highlighted the circumstances, belittling their own agency of choice and erasing privileges. Also they did not want to be seen collectively, but they still kept distance from other geese families, treating others collectively.

Some scholars who have researched geese families have often confessed that they are faced with the difficulty of recruiting interviewees since many geese mothers and fathers usually are "not enthusiastic about being interviewed." This is because they are "angry about how they

are portrayed in both the mass media and academic articles” (Finch and Kim 2012, 495). They are also fear that “they might appear too frank or shameless” (Chung 2008, 105) or that their stories might become an object of “blame and judgment” (Ahn 2009, 26). These groups of interviewees, which include my interviewees, often feel that the media and scholarship sensationalize their situation by distorting the truth; thus they naturally try to keep their distance from these negative, vilified general descriptions of geese families.

In addition to these general concerns, it seems that my informants’ contradictory attitudes come from their self-recognition as professors, whose occupational prestige index is one of the highest in South Korean society, and the struggles that come with this recognition (Hong 2010, 65). They probably recognized the instrumental characteristics of the transnational family project and did not want their practice to be seen as something that runs against the social imaginary of respectable professors, even in the case of those professors who do not care about others’ gaze. Indeed, Professor Kim (humanities, 49) unconsciously unlocked a fragment of his inner thoughts at one point in the interview. He stated: “I was sometimes cautious to talk about my own geese family. Professors usually are not rich enough to send children abroad, still most people cannot send children abroad, you know, so there might be an issue of social disharmony (*sahoejök wiwhagam*). So I was a little cautious...” Professor Kim’s concern over the “social disharmony” might come from his awareness of an “inequality of chances of access” to better education, the mechanism which transmutes social inequality into educational inequality or inequality of success in Bourdieu’s terms (1977b, 158).

Sociologists have argued that not only is a person’s socio-economic origin indicated by parental education and occupation, but also educational capital is closely related to social origin (Bourdieu 1984; Park 2007). Especially in South Korea where individuals take on the brunt of

the cost of education with little public support, “advantaged families [with more resources] are more likely to succeed in sending their children to qualitatively different, better placements at a given level of education” (Park 2007,185-186). In terms of socio-economic origin, indeed, among my twenty-eight informants, twenty four professors self-defined their socio-economic origin as middle class and over; based on my informants’ accounts, fifteen professors were from the middle and upper-middle class, nine professors were from the upper class, and only four professors were from the lower class. Most of these professors are the first in their families to study abroad; only seven professors have immediate-family members (parents or siblings) who had study abroad experiences. In a sense, these professors are those who can successfully preserve their class status and achieve upward social mobility as social elites through education, more specifically through study abroad.

For over a decade, the polarization of educational opportunities has become a serious social concern. As I mentioned above, it has become more and more difficult to find people who rose from a humble family only through education with their own talent and diligence. An editorial in *Kyunghyang Shinmun* raised the issue of educational inequalities by making a contrast between children who go to ESA and those who cannot even pay tuition for secondary education (13 October, 2006); ESA has become a typical symbol of educational inequalities. My informants are parents who are “able to use economic, social, cultural and emotional capitals at moments of crisis or key moments of transition to ensure access to privileged trajectories or to avert calamity” as I have shown above (Ball 2003, 169). Moreover, their experiences appear to contrast with those of lower-middle-class geese parents, especially those whose children get stuck in Singaporean public schools, unable to return to South Korea because they face unexpected demotion and other difficulties (Kim 2010). What Jeehoon Kim clearly demonstrates

in his study is that transnational schooling does not necessarily operate evenly favorably for participants from different class backgrounds, despite their similar parental aspiration for the betterment of their children's future. It shows that parents' abilities in dealing with the unforeseen consequences of schooling overseas were deeply shaped by class.

Professor Hong (natural science, 52) also revealed his discomfort toward the ESA/ geese-family phenomenon in general, which he took part in as a result of his family decision, especially due to his wife's study. He spoke, "It [the phenomenon] is like 'someone is cutting in line.' It exposes the mentality that everyone wants to cut in line for his/her own interest instead of thinking together about a better solution to make a shorter line for all." What his remark implies is that he perceived the phenomenon as coming from a competition for who can climb up the ladder of success first. However, what he also wanted to express through his account was that this was not his own family's motivation.

Ball points out that some British middle-class parents experience social guilt about their choice of private schooling for their children over state schooling; which makes them judge themselves (2003, 171). Likewise, it is plausible that these geese dads might undergo similar experiences, perhaps more intensely, as both middle-class fathers and educators in the higher education sector. These geese-dad professors are ambivalent about their practices. There have been two different sentiments within the professor community reflecting this sort of conflict: on the one hand, the geese-dad are proud of being competent fathers with pioneering spirits and abilities, but they are also critical of themselves for being self-wounded intellectuals whose practices are often seen as individualistic efforts at social reproduction to sustain class status and cultural hegemony as members of the Establishment, which is at odds with the social ideals and public identities of intellectuals that I discussed in chapter two. The embarrassment of these

geese-dad professors stemmed from the fact that their practices were seemingly identical with others' because they are/were in fact at the center of the phenomenon. Thus, the rhetoric of inevitability might come from these frustrations over identification since they believe that their geese-dad experiences are not so simple to be just efforts at social reproduction. They were also greatly experiencing ongoing struggles to navigate the uncharted territories of raising their young children abroad, as I will examine in the following chapter. Their conflicts, ambivalence, or guilt, if they have any, may be more intense than that of ordinary parents since it also comes from their self-awareness as professors (or intellectuals) who are supposed to be socially respectable figures in South Korean society.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PERSONALIZED GLOBALIZATION, VICARIOUS COSMOPOLITANS

‘Globalization’ is on everybody’s lips; a fad word fast turning into a shibboleth, a magic incantation, a pass-key meant to unlock the gates to all present and future mysteries. For some, ‘globalization’ is what we are bound to do if we wish to be happy; for others ‘globalization’ is the cause of our unhappiness. [...] We are all being ‘globalized’ – and being ‘globalized’ means much the same to all who ‘globalized’ are. (Bauman 1998, 1)

South Korean “geese-dad” professors are, in a sense, unexpectedly and also unwittingly getting trained to be cosmopolitans through the experiences of raising their young children abroad as global citizens. To a greater or lesser degree, it seems that they have undergone a personal transformation through their experiences, even if they do not fully realize it yet. For many of them, sometimes, the process and accompanying experiences of raising children abroad is not exactly what they expected from the outset when they planned and initiated the transnational educational strategy for their children. It is clear, however, that the more they believe that they made educationally right choices for their children, the more voluntarily they embrace their own transformative experiences as fathers. Surprisingly, it seems that both their children’s experiences abroad and the outcome of transnational education are so worthy to pursue that they are willing to endure personal hardships and internal struggles as geese-dads and even to accept their own paradigm shifts as intellectuals.

As I examined in previous chapters, the reasons individuals send their young children abroad for education is not only related to personal, familial desires and circumstances but also intertwined with wider, complex socio-cultural and even global structures. Despite their efforts at differentiation, however, the most crucial and fundamental motivation for “geese-family making” of these professors and Koreans at large is undoubtedly the desire for familial and social reproduction in a competitive South Korean society in which neoliberal social and cultural

regimes call upon people to devote themselves to their own social and economic survival (Abelmann and Kang 2014; Abelmann, Park, and Kim 2009; Apple 2001; Park 2006; Song 2010). The desire of social reproduction through the accrual of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984) is certainly a powerful driving force for ESA or geese family although most professors that I interviewed rarely acknowledged it openly. However, it is too simplistic to consider the project as solely “instrumental” since there are other motivations such as pursuing their children’s happiness with the liberal ideas of personhood, as I briefly pointed out in chapter three. In this chapter, I will go even further and suggest that these geese-dad professors’ accounts reveal that these fathers activated their own cosmopolitan liberal yearning as well.

“Cosmopolitan yearning” here is not only about desires for children’s global citizenship or what Aihwa Ong (1999) described as the capital accumulation strategy of Chinese “astronaut families” and “satellite kids” (which are very similar to that of South Korean “geese families”).<sup>42</sup> Here, I rather pay attention to the transformation of these fathers’ own subjectivities through the process of raising their children as global citizens. Johanna Waters (2003) criticizes Ong’s and other scholars’ accounts of Chinese transnational dispersed families for placing too much emphasis on the functional efficiency of the family unit, underestimating “the ways in which individual, personal experience may undermine overall ‘cultural capital’” (223); she goes on to argue that “the ‘satellite’ experience has involved a sense of personal transformation, perhaps related to a newly emerging sense of citizenship, although clearly divorced from the sense of strategy underpinning the initiation of these circumstances” (229). Likewise, the individuals (children, mothers, and fathers) of these South Korean transnational

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<sup>42</sup> Ong conceptualizes “flexible citizenship” as “the cultural logics of capitalist accumulation, travel, and displacement that induce subjects to respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions.” She argues that “[t]hese logics and practices are produced within particular structures of meaning about family, gender, nationality, class mobility, and social power” (1999, 6).

families each experience their own personal transformation.<sup>43</sup> I will argue that the transformation of these geese-dad professors is often closely related to cosmopolitan ideas: “the freedom to create oneself” and a new sense of citizenship as “a citizen of the world” (Appiah 2005, 2006).

Based on ethnographic evidence, this chapter explores how South Korean geese-dad professors personally experience globalization and undergo a transformation of subjectivity through their children’s transnational educational experiences. I start this chapter by illustrating how geese-dad professors’ own study abroad experiences had an impact on their lives and how it was later connected to the motivations to implement ESA for their children. Next, I show how fathers evaluate the outcome of their family project, how they envision their children’s future, and how their own cosmopolitan liberal dreams are animated in this process. Then, I examine how children’s post-national thinking, one of the results of ESA, brings these fathers unexpected challenges. In doing so, I argue that many of these professors in fact undergo a paradigm shift in their thinking while raising their children abroad. Their thoughts and practices demonstrate how South Korean intellectuals themselves are transforming in response to globalization that is beyond traditional norms and boundaries, e.g., the nationalist consciousness and the sense of duty for building a modern developed nation, which have formed their public identities as intellectuals, as I examined in chapter two. In other words, in this chapter, I show how globalization becomes a “personalized” experience for these professors<sup>44</sup>; how their cosmopolitan thoughts and desires emerge and develop in this process; and how they are

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<sup>43</sup> Despite recent growing literature on South Korean geese-family phenomenon, there are not many studies on geese-family members’ subjectivities, as I mentioned it in my introduction. However, there have been a few recently-conducted studies or studies in progress on the subjectivities of geese-family members, especially the subjectivities of mothers and children. For research on the personal transformation of geese mothers, see Kyung Ju Ahn’s dissertation (2009); for children’s, see Mun woo Lee (2010); Hyunjung Shin (*South Korea’s Education Exodus*, Lo et al., forthcoming book).

<sup>44</sup> I call this experience “personalized globalization” in the title and will elaborate on it later in the chapter.

transformed into vicarious cosmopolitans while juggling and negotiating their competing aspirations as both fathers and intellectuals in South Korea.

### **I. Fathers' Own Study Abroad**

As I discussed it in chapter three, professors' own study abroad experiences as well as their professional lives are closely connected to their geese family lives. Their own study abroad experiences, however, provide much more than practical advantages to their transnational educational projects for their children. Rather, these experiences often subtly affect the entire process of raising children abroad; in this way fathers play a critical bridge role in the making of future cosmopolitans. Their own experiences abroad seem to inevitably make them want to push their children to go abroad, hoping that they might have similar or even better experiences there. My informants often confessed that they were deeply impressed by experiences of their own study abroad and underwent some (sometimes unexpectedly huge) changes in their perspectives on their scholarship as well as on life or society at large. The impacts came from not only their classroom experiences in graduate school but also from their direct contact with Western developed societies. Metaphorically, theirs were the experiences of "frogs in a well" (*umul an kaeguri*), i.e., those who were confined to a small existence who come out into the bigger world.

Jongyoung Kim's recent studies (2011a, 2011b) offer insight into understanding the impact of studying abroad. While he analyzes the learning and cultural experiences of South Korean graduate students in the U.S. in the 2000s, Kim argues that South Korean graduate students, who are in an inferior position in the hierarchy of knowledge and language in a global educational environment, tend to accept the moral, cultural leadership and global hegemony of American universities through their study-abroad experiences. According to Kim, these students

have a tendency to view the United States as the center of the world and describe the excellence and superiority of American universities by comparing them to their experiences at South Korean universities. Furthermore, he argues, not only do Korean students suffer from psychological shock which comes from a new self-image as an inferior being because of their transnational positioning and lack of English skills, but these emotional experiences also reinforce the global hegemony of U.S. education.

My informants often expressed similar characterizations of American universities. The excellence of American scholarship, access to prominent leading scholars, a more democratic environment, and richness of academic resources were repeatedly mentioned through the interviews. They also experienced psychological, cultural shock, but tended to describe them in rather positive terms and more often expressed strong satisfaction and envy than frustration. Even when they were talking about difficulties or frustration caused by language barriers in the initial stage, heavy work load, or racism they encountered, they treated these hardships in a very casual manner in contrast to the students in Kim's study. Some informants described the experience as "one of the happiest moments" in their lives in a great academic and living environment.

One may ask why the impact of study abroad could be so strong and why the perception of the experience was also so positive for most of my informants. First of all, we can contextualize the specificity of the time and space of their lives as young intellectuals, although we cannot ignore personal dispositions. As young men in South Korea (usually college students), they found themselves in an undemocratic, authoritarian, and somewhat chaotic South Korean society in the 70s and 80s, a period which often produced strong inner conflicts in the minds of

young intellectuals.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, it was a time when the U.S. was still seen as a symbol of freedom, democracy, excellence, and a place of dreams in general.

And if there are some differences between students in the 2000s (in Kim's study) and my informants in terms of intensity of frustration about the same event of studying abroad in U.S. universities, it might be related to their different chronotopes.<sup>46</sup> With the concept of chronotope, Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) stresses the necessity of understanding experience in terms of the relation of people and events to time and space. First, from the perspective of my informants, their study abroad was carried out in more democratic, and seemingly more ideal societies (in the U.S., the U.K., and Canada), especially because the social and academic environment in South Korea was relatively so much more undemocratic and authoritarian. In addition, their study abroad was already successfully completed a while ago in the past. Moreover, to the generation of my informants, studying abroad meant greater potential for upward mobility in a still-expanding job market and at that time it actually secured their jobs, in contrast to Kim's informants who are now struggling with both the ongoing practical problems of studying abroad and the uncertainty of the future in a more neoliberalized world. In addition, my informants, who were relatively less exposed to global experiences before studying abroad, might have accepted their hardships in foreign countries more positively than students today because they

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<sup>45</sup> 1970-80s is the period when South Koreans' struggles for democracy and social justice were at their height under the developmentalist dictatorial government. Although the ardent involvement of college students in democratization movement is relatively well known, on the other hand, it is also true that more college students than self-claiming dissident students were actually struggling with these social and political issues as well, being torn between the ideal and reality of their actions, sometimes even dealing with a sense of shame and guilt.

<sup>46</sup> I use the concept of chronotope here to contextualize and interpret different study abroad experiences between different generations. Although Mikhail Bakhtin never clearly gave the definition of this neologism, *chronotope* (literally, 'time space') is a concept that expresses "the inseparability of space and time" and also a way to understand experience in terms of the relation of people and events to time and space (Bakhtin 1981, 84). According to Bakhtin, "Actions are necessarily performed in a specific context [which is shaped fundamentally by the kind of time and space]; chronotopes differ by the way in which they understand context and the relation of actions and events to it" (Morson and Emerson 1990, 367). That is, "different social activities and representations of those activities presume different kinds of time and space" because "time and space vary in *qualities*" (367). Chronotopes are not only "*historical*" but also "*dialogic*": they may change over time in response to current needs with variety and multiplicity; and chronotopes compete with each other both in society and in individual life (369).

regarded it as an inevitable but necessary cost of “coming out to the (new) world.” Their actual experiences and the chronotopes that they had as study abroad students at that time may differ from the experiences and chronotopes that these professors recall now because these professors were in different life-stages (different time and space). One should bear in mind that these professors now reflect on their own study abroad experiences with different chronotopes and subjectivities, creating different meanings, reading past events somewhat differently when they recall them as memories. Likewise, what we should not miss is that these professors tended to draw a picture of their children’s ESA based on their own impressions and recollections.

In the latter part of this chapter, I will discuss how the transnational educational project for children turns out to be somewhat different from fathers’ expectations and often brings both ironic results and unforeseen challenges. Fathers might approach it with a logic similar to that of their own study abroad experiences, imagining a parallel but more intensive project. Unlike the study abroad experiences that the fathers experienced in their adulthood, experiences which were constantly reflexive, reformative, deeply tied to South Korea, and which eventually led them to return to South Korea, their children’s experiences are totally different from theirs because children have lost all the references that their fathers had as adults, and they have developed post-national thinking while living abroad from a young age. The children’s experiences are not a replica or mimesis of their fathers’ at all because they live in different chronotopes. Thus, to understand these dynamics better, I first examine the fathers’ own study abroad experiences and their impacts.

A. *A Real Starting Point*

These professors experimented with certain ideas that they got from their own study abroad experiences in the past with their children. In many cases, the very impact of their own study abroad and their positive impression of Western societies covertly works as a starting point for imagining the geese-family project for their children's transnational education. Yet, even in the case of some fathers who seek to reproduce the effects of their own study abroad, I learned that the process of sending their children abroad often gave them new notions for what it means to have the chance to leave Korea.

*"It gave me the confidence to live my own life as a human being"*

Not a few professors enthusiastically expressed how their individual liberal desires, which were often deprived by the compressed modernity and authoritarian social climate in South Korea at the time, were somewhat fulfilled through their study abroad experiences.

Professor Park (engineering, 49) was one of them. He spoke:

Of course, [studying abroad changed my life] a lot! For instance, when I grew up in [South] Korea, I often could not help but feel, "something is off, this is not right." But I could not figure out exactly what was wrong, so I unwillingly accepted things that I couldn't agree with, anyway...feeling what's wrong with me at the same time. Then, I directly saw and realized that not every society did things the same way as we [South Korean] did when I went there [the U.S.]. There actually was a normal (*chöngsangjögin*) society where things happen in a way that people would expect. Not just abnormally forced "norm[s]" (in English). So I finally felt confident in myself. Ah! We can live like that. I gained way more confidence and eventually felt that I could live even in Korea having such confidence in myself, following my own heart. For me, the impact of that realization was immense.

Professor Park was a one-time geese-dad (for three years) and was sending both his son and daughter to a prep school on the East Coast in the U.S. at the time of interview. An engineering professor at an elite university in Seoul who had studied abroad in the mid 1980s with a

prestigious fellowship, Professor Park surprised me when he explained that his own study abroad was motivated foremost by his dislike of South Korea, and not by a desire for a PhD degree or future success. He told me that he valued freedom so much and was eager to live in the developed world -- in open (*yŏllyŏ itnŭn*) societies which had more freedom and choice. And to my surprise he added, “Actually, I meant to emigrate rather than just to study abroad from the outset. My intention was not necessarily to go to America but just to go somewhere else so as to leave Korea. Studying abroad was the easiest and only way for me legally to leave Korea at that time.” I was surprised because it was an unexpected account that I rarely heard from a promising future elite at the time. And indeed, his experience in U.S. society exceeded his expectations in all respects. Above all, he actively interacted and made good relationships with people there as if he was “a native who had finally returned home (*kohyang*).” He went on:

Every day was so comfortable and joyful in spite of language barrier. Like...making close friends in the same age group in shorter time than in Korea and easily sharing the same taste for trivial things, etc.... It hit me that ah! I belong here, but I have lived in the wrong place for twenty-something years. And strange as it may sound, I asked myself, “Was I American in my previous life (*chŏnsaeng*)?” haha [laughter]. It was such a comfortable feeling from beginning to end...the feeling that people can have when they have finally returned home after straying in strange places.

Despite all these extraordinary experiences, he could not help but return to South Korea because his wife -- he had married right before he left for study abroad -- didn't want to immigrate and was against living in the U.S. after he got his degree. However, according to him, he could come back to South Korea only because he became so confident in himself and his way of life that he could live the life he wanted after all. He felt that he could live anywhere in the world with that confidence. That confidence was the most important thing he gained from his study abroad experience.

Professor Park was thus able not only to prepare for his career but also to realize that his own aversion to South Korea's undemocratic and authoritative culture and politics at the time was warranted. He was able to affirm the legitimacy of his strong inclinations for freedom and autonomy. Building the confidence to live his own life as a "human being," he solidified his own worldview, a universalistic vision of self and cosmopolitan desires – convictions that would play largely in his vision for his children's study abroad, as I discuss below.

*"I experienced a 'New World'"*

In a similar vein, Professor Han (humanities, 58) also spoke about the impact that the study abroad experience had on him. Unlike Professor Park, for whom it reinforced his own belief in himself, Professor Han experienced an unexpected paradigm shift as an intellectual.

It [the shock] was huge! I experienced a "New World" (in English)! The U.S. made me realize that there really is this kind of world. [...] Above all, I was really impressed by the American "system" (in English), especially by the "system," which makes discussions possible for everything like a debate for "confirmation" (in English) in the "Supreme Court" (in English) and also debates in colleges. I was lucky in terms of my experiences in America. I had so many good relationships with professors that I could *never* have imagined in Korea. It was an experience that *completely* changed the old me. To put this in Christian terms, it was a sort of rebirth (*saero t'aeõnan*) experience for me... so to speak, I rediscovered everything from nature to culture, system, and even my own "character" (in English) as a human being.

Before going to the U.S., Professor Han had already worked as an assistant professor at a provincial college. He went to the U.S. for his PhD degree in 1980, but he had a more urgent reason for going to the U.S: he was a progressive intellectual who had been actively involved in the democratization movement, that is, he was a dissident at that time. After the Kwangju Democratization Movement<sup>47</sup> in 1980, he had to find a refuge so as not to be arrested, and his

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<sup>47</sup> The Kwangju Democratization Movement occurred in May 1980 in the Southwestern city of Kwangju. It started as a student protest against military regime in the beginning, but it escalated into an armed civilian struggle. The ten-day struggle ended with brutal military suppression. For details, see Jai-cui Lee (1999), Gi-Wook Shin, and Kyung

older sister in California invited him to U.S. with a green card for his safety. He went to the U.S. with his wife and eventually earned a PhD degree at one of the Ivy League schools.

Professor Han told me that he had been a passionate nationalist before studying abroad.

He spoke:

Nation (*minjok*) used to be *really, really* important to me. But I came to think that nationalism is not necessary, while I studying in the U.S. [...] I came to think that from now on the way in which I contribute to our society should be through my own fine scholarship with universality, rather than taking part in particular social issues as an activist as I had done before under the name of the state or nation. Especially because my discipline is the scholarship of universality, I should go this way...

In this account, we clearly witness the change that a passionate critical intellectual of South Korea had undergone after directly experiencing the American ideal of liberal democracy through his study abroad experience. Ironically, when many South Korean intellectuals and college students in the 1980s, especially after the Kwangju Democratization Movement, were awakened from the illusion that regarded the U.S. as a Good Samaritan and more inclined to anti-Americanism (Lee 2007, 7-8), Professor Han became assured of U.S. society ideals and universal values. Although he was a U.S. green card holder, found a job as an assistant professor in a U.S. college, and changed his thinking considerably, he eventually returned to South Korea in the early '90s, leaving his wife and son in the U.S. He left his family there mainly because at that time he could not find any suitable school for his son in South Korea, even among private schools. He has now lived as a geese dad for seventeen years. When I asked him why he returned to South Korea and if he ever imagined that it would become seventeen years, he replied that he could never have imagined it at all.

I was too “naïve” (in English). I have always lived with the sense of calling (*somyōnggam*). [...] I still felt responsibility to democratize the academies (*hagwōn ūl minjuhwa haeya twendanŭn*) at that time and also thought I should play the role as an

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Moon Hwang (2003). Also see Namhee Lee (2007) for details of the involvement of students and intellectuals in the *minjung* (common people's) movement in South Korea in the 1970s and 1980s.

intellectual in my country along with my commitment to scholarship. So I thought I had to come here fulfilling my responsibility although my family was there... and it has become this long!

Yet, he made up his mind not to adapt himself to negative aspects in South Korean society when he returned. He confessed, “[After returning South Korea] I ran into trouble in every situation (*sasa kkōnkkōn*). Hahaha [laughter]. I have been troubled with...um... I have remained committed to change in this society rather than adapting myself. However, when it became more than ten years, I found that I had somewhat adapted myself. And I am not happy about that.”

Professor Han told me that when he decided to leave his son in the U.S. for education, he hoped that his son could develop a spirit of goodwill for the world with a better/more ideal U.S. education. His son graduated from a prestigious university, found a promising job, and now lives a successful life in the U.S. as an adult. However, Professor Han expressed his frustration by somewhat disapprovingly saying that his son seemed to be only interested in worldly success. He gave me the feeling that this was not exactly what he wanted when he left his son in the U.S. and ended up living as a geese dad for seventeen years -- although he by no means thought of it as a total failure.

*“Studying abroad gave me a chance to broaden my perspective”*

In addition to the impact on their personal belief systems, many of my informants spoke about how much they could broaden and deepen their (scholarly) perspectives through studying abroad. For example, Professor Choi (humanities, 56) who had studied abroad from the end of '70s talked about the external and internal merits of his studying abroad. According to him, if taking advantage of a U.S. PhD degree in the job market was an instrumental move, broadening his academic perspective was the intrinsic merit of his having studied abroad.

Studying abroad made me realize that our own [South Korean] historical scholarship was too narrow-minded. After liberation [1945], our history scholarship has had only nationalist, anti-Japanese, even chauvinistic tendencies. I started to see history with broader perspectives and also rethink about Japan as well while I was studying in America [...] In fact, I had not learned anything about Japan in Korea. We could only be told media discourses asserting that Korea was better than Japan, so we would catch up Japan within ten years... that was all we had heard. But after I studied about Japan there, I could notice there was a deep cleavage between the views on Japan from outside and inside of Korea. Studying abroad gave me a chance to overcome narrow-mindedness in my scholarship... otherwise I would be under the spell of nationalism because of our nationalist history education.

Many other professors shared similar experiences of broadening their scholarly and intellectual perspectives. Professor Cho (social science, 51) was thankful for what he learned through rigorous training from his graduate school in the U.S. It brought him confidence as both a scholar and a teacher to the extent that he thought he could not continue his job if he did not study abroad, especially, in this era in which old knowledge is disappearing so quickly. Professors also frequently spoke about how they were stimulated by a vibrant American intellectual community which had a stronger sense of excellence (*illyugwan*), freedom, and openness. They were often deeply impressed by these academic, social, and intellectual environments and also envied them.

As shown so far, the study abroad experiences of many of these professors were not confined to acquiring tangible academic capital, i.e., “professional knowledge, an advanced degree (cultural capital in institutionalized form), English (cultural capital in embodied form) and academic competence” even though it made up the bulk of their motivation for studying abroad (Kim 2011b, 457; Bourdieu 1986). In addition to academic capital, some of them had (unexpected) opportunities to think about more intangible things like, namely, the meaning of becoming an autonomous liberal subject as an individual or living in a more ideal form of society. As I have shown above, they often realized that “something” had been missing from their lives and South Korean society in general while directly watching and experiencing, seemingly, a

more ideal society and bigger world. Starting from this personal, intellectual development and somewhat vague cosmopolitan yearning, the influences they were once exposed to during their studying abroad still lingered not only on their scholarship and profession as professors but also on their lives as fathers, often making them play the role of the bridge for the next generation of study abroad and future cosmopolitans.

### *B. The Law of Inertia*

As I examined in chapter three, many of my informants consider their own geese-family making or ESA as an “inevitable” and “natural” outcome of their own study abroad. They tend to see it as a natural step in the continuing line of their life course rather than to consider it as sudden interference. It seems they always knew that at some point they would let their children study abroad and that it was only a matter of circumstance that it happened a bit earlier. The host country of ESA is also usually the place where the father had experienced crucial personal growth for his professional career. In a sense, their children’s study abroad may not be “the object of conscious estimation” but rather a natural or expectable educational chance in the “intuitive perception” of fathers who studied abroad (Bourdieu 1977b, 226). Like the law of inertia, although their own study abroad was done many years ago, the force and impact of past study abroad experiences still makes them move toward the study abroad of their children. Their views of studying abroad are often passed to their children and to their students as well. The more professors were influenced by their own study abroad, the more they tended to recommend it to their students.

Some professors told me that they feel the same about their students and their own children. Professor Park (engineering, 49) spoke:

Actually, it is rare these days that students want to study abroad only because they cannot study certain field in engineering that they want to pursue in Korea. [...] But I strongly recommend it, strongly. Go to the big world and see! In some sense, you can have more understanding of both Korea and Koreans. Also this is an era of globalization, you know. So I encourage them. We don't need to confine ourselves within one place. So I tell them, "Fortify yourself with competence and choose the place you want to live, internationally (*kukchejögŭro*)!" This is not the world anymore in which I should live only as a Korean under Korean government because I was born in Korea. People can also choose their government. If you don't feel Korean government is good enough for you, but you like American government, then live as an American. Or as a French. But in order to do that... if you want to choose, first you should get ready for that with global competence. Study hard and learn foreign languages...then you can live your life as a "global citizen" (in English). This is the era in which can do it. I encourage them this way.

And Professor Park told me that this is the exactly same reason why he sent his children for early study abroad. It began with his desire to give his children "the chance to choose" and his conviction that he should not raise them only in South Korea. In his accounts, we can see that his yearning for a liberal and cosmopolitan life is still alive.

Professor Choi (humanities, 56), who teaches in a lower-tier university in Seoul, echoed the cosmopolitan ideas that Professor Park expressed, but with a little different emphasis:

I recommend it one hundred percent. Because our [South Korean] market or stage is too small, isn't it? Not only our country but the whole world can be their stage these days and they can get a job in other countries. Besides, they can free themselves from a degree-caste system (*hakpŏl*), which is a pretty much pre-modern aspect of our society... [Getting an advanced degree abroad] is a good way they overcome it.

Professor Choi, who had been a geese dad for ten years and whose two children got into top universities in the U.S., added that he sent his children abroad for similar reasons. He thinks that because the whole world is their stage and it is wide open, their generation needs to learn other languages and live in other countries in order to survive in the world. He also said that he raised his children in the U.S. in order to avoid the "examination hell" (*ipsi chiok*) in South Korea, which does not allow second chances for children when they fail the college entrance examination. Recently the college entrance examination system has changed so that students

have more chances than ever before to take the exam, but I could imagine as a Korean how he had mixed feelings about the college entrance examination and his students in his lower-tier university. It is understandable that he would want to avoid the possibility that his children might have to retake the exam year after year to get into a desirable college, and that he is concerned about Korea's degree-caste system (*hakpŏl*) for his students.

The *hakpŏl* is a degree-caste system (or academic pedigree) in South Korea, which makes people evaluate a person according to which schools (usually colleges) he/she graduated from. South Korean society has heavily valued the prestige of college pedigree or college name-brand, which all exist in a hierarchy. Not only are one's lifelong earnings and social status dictated by *hakpŏl*, but also many other aspects of life like initial job, promotion, rank, social network, even one's value in the marriage market are influenced by it (Kim 2011b).<sup>48</sup> However, it is ironic that Professor Choi criticized *hakpŏl* as a pre-modern aspect of South Korean society on the one hand, but also suggested overcoming the system by getting a more advanced degree abroad (getting better *hakpŏl*) on the other.

Most professors recommended studying abroad if students had opportunities to do it because their study abroad experiences were valuable in so many ways besides just getting foreign degrees as I discussed above; so they hoped that their students could have similar experiences. However, although these fathers said that the fundamental reasons for recommending study abroad for their students and children were all the same, their children's

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<sup>48</sup> The credential of prestigious universities (*myŏngmun taehak*) is one of the most crucial cultural capitals in South Korean society. It usually works as a symbol of one's ability and future prospects. The keen awareness of these impacts of *hakpŏl* is an important virtual force driving many high school graduates (and their parents) to seek tertiary education, especially seeking for getting into limited high-ranked colleges that only a small minority can win. O Ukhwan (2002) also argues that South Korean education zeal is a phenomenon that comes from excessive competition of winning *hakpŏl*. For more understanding of *hakpŏl* in South Korea, also see Shin Kwangyŏng, "Beyond the Hakpŏl Society" (*Hakpŏl sahoe rŭl nŏmŏsŏ*], *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, August 27, 2007.

experiences abroad and its result might be much different from that of their graduate students because their children go abroad when they are young children.

## **II. Raising Children Abroad as Competent Cosmopolitans**

Through the interviews, I could witness that these fathers were actively developing and confirming new ideas of liberal personhood and global competence as cosmopolitans while they were raising their children abroad. For many of them, of course to varying degrees, the motivations for the transnational educational project for children came from these fathers' own liberal dreams, which were often reinforced by their own study abroad experiences in Western societies, as well as their instrumental strategies for competition and survival. As I examined above, through their abroad experiences, they directly learned that there were other possible ways of life. In this sense, their transnational projects could be understood as a sort of struggle originating from the conflict that the fathers felt between the real and the ideal: i.e., between the actuality that their children lived uniformly with unsolvable educational issues in South Korea and the ideal educational and living environment that these fathers really hoped to afford to their children for their children's personal, intellectual development by pushing the ideals of well-roundedness, freedom, and happiness. And interestingly it seemed that the more these fathers felt that their hope for their children's personal growth was realized, the more their cosmopolitan yearning for their children grew.

### *A. Liberal Dreams and Western Education as Cosmopolitan Ideals*

These fathers believed that they had made the right educational choices, choices that made their children confident and happy while also giving them more freedom, making them

more well-rounded and also more competent. Sometimes, even I could sense the delight and envy of these fathers when talking about the education that their children enjoyed in their youth. Some fathers felt that their children were “lucky” because they had been given the opportunity to be educated in ways that suited them. When I asked them if they would make the same decision for their children if they could do it all over again, with the exception of two fathers -- one who struggled with his daughter’s difficulties and the other who had just begun geese-family life and so was not sure about it -- they all said they would. I do not mean to suggest that all geese-dad professors or geese dads in general feel the same degree of satisfaction and confidence in this transnational family project as my informants. As I mentioned in my introduction, I do not rule out the limitation of my informant pool; it is certainly possible that they were willing to be interviewed because they were somewhat satisfied with their own project.

Many fathers believed that their children have/had an education that makes them more competent by not only affording an educational environment that allows for well-roundedness, but also by reinforcing their strengths rather than focusing on their weaknesses. As an informant expressed, it seems that most of these fathers share the thought that the U.S. educational system recognizes diversity so “they do not regard ‘difference’ as a ‘failure.’” They often asserted that Western/U.S. education affords a lot of opportunities for children to think and do something for themselves, and helps children cultivate their inner talents and broaden their perspectives through diversity, in contrast to the South Korean educational system’s heavy reliance on rote learning.

To these fathers, it seems that well-roundedness is, in a sense, a prerequisite for both a meaningful, happy life and for becoming a global citizen. On the one hand, it reflects these fathers’ own liberal dreams for their children’s personal growth, but on the other hand, it is also

associated with the acquisition of desirable qualities that make children likely to achieve social and economic success in the future, possibly making the world their stage. The problem is that it is hard to distinguish so-called “liberal” dreams from the “neoliberal” instrumental strategy to make children “the sole managers of their own biographies” because often these two are intertwined and look so similar that differentiating one from the other is far from clear-cut (Borovoy 2004). Not only are many contemporary South Korean parents already well-known for their educational zeal (or education fever, *kyoyungnyōl*) but also parents in other Asian countries, in fact, heavily invest in their children’s extra-curricular activities like musical instruments, art, sports, computer, and foreign language lessons. Although seemingly seeking well-roundedness or “high quality,” they mostly hope that these investments will increase their children’s competitiveness through cultural capital, especially increasing their likelihood of getting into desirable colleges and then eventually becoming winners of social and economic success (Anagnost 1997, 2008; Byun and Kim 2008; Fong 2007, 2011; Kipnis 2006, 2011; O 2002; Seth 2002; Sorensen, 1994).<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> However, the investment in well-roundedness does not always guarantee success in a competitive world, especially in the South Korean social context. In Byun and Kim’s study (2008), parental educational level and family income have a significant effect on parents’ and children’s cultural capital, but children’s participation in high-brow cultural activities has diminishing returns for academic achievement in South Korea. They explained that the South Korean education system and culture demands students, especially academic high school seniors, to spend most of their waking hours studying for university entrance examinations. As a result, students who spend their time participating in high-brow cultural activities may be academically disadvantaged by their lack of time to devote to study. However, in this study Byun and Kim measure children’s participation in high-brow cultural activities only by counting the frequency of cultural activities like visits to concerts, plays, museums, galleries, etc. rather than including more active and long-term cultural activities like learning to play musical instruments or taking art lessons, etc. Nonetheless, the study describes an educational environment in South Korea that forces student mostly to focus on academic attainment (especially preparation for entrance examinations) and excludes chances for other activities that could enrich children’s life quality.

According to a survey conducted by Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2011 (*Kyunghyang Shinmun*, December 14, 2011), the average sleeping time during weekdays for South Korean high school students was only 5.5 hours. It is generally expected that the time allocation of waking hours of students revolves around their study plans. Indeed, there is a well-known unwritten rule among South Korean high school students that the student who sleeps more than four hours cannot succeed in the college entrance examination (*sa-dang o-rak*).

It is also well-known that although the South Korean educational system has tried to emulate the Western educational system as an ideal for raising global citizens, it has failed to overcome exam-focused education and continued to measure students' ability mainly through their academic attainment for several decades despite repeated educational (policy) reforms. If one looks more deeply into why South Korean society does not overcome the educational focus on exam-taking skills, it will be soon realized that it is not just an educational issue; rather it is again related to the complicated, broader issues of class/stratification, upward class mobility, and the general public ethos of equality – it is about who can or cannot afford more opportunities for their children for the future (Fong 2007; Kipnis 2011; Park 2006; Seth 2002). Thus it is not a problem that can be easily remedied in a short period of time by merely changing some educational policies.

In this reality, to my informants, especially those who keep direct contact with Western/U.S. culture, Western education is more likely to provide opportunities to achieve their liberal dream for their children's growth. According to these fathers, what their children got from Western education were qualities that could not be easily acquired under the South Korean educational system. Professor Song (natural science, 47) who has been a geese dad for ten years described it this way:

Many people think that geese dads send their kids to learn English, you know. But I think the more significant reason is to learn advantages or virtues of American society or developed societies. Learning how to live and think is much more important than learning English itself. So, it is a mistake that some people send their kids to India or Malaysia for only English. To me, you know... it seems they even don't know the basic philosophy of what education is. Education is also learning through watching, feeling, and thinking as they are *living there*. On the other hand, we also need to rethink the nature of our education... of what would be the result when we confine our kids, who are in adolescence, within extremely narrow range of living experiences under the name of

education and...why many of our kids, who were graduated from specialized high schools and admitted into so-called Ivy League schools, tend to fail there.<sup>50</sup>

Professor Song's narrative shows that what he wants his children to acquire from U.S. education is not just English or foreign credentials. It is rather "the accumulation of cultural capital in the embodied state" (Bourdieu 1986, 244). Bourdieu notes that the accumulation of cultural capital presupposes "a process of embodiment" requiring "a labor of inculcation and assimilation" and time. Moreover, "it cannot be done at second hand" (244). Professor Song and many other fathers thought that U.S./Western education and culture would afford a better environment and living experiences for their children's personal growth and more desirable personhood.

### *B. The Outcome of the Transnational Family Project*

I turn now to a few detailed accounts that will help us to understand what kind of personhood these fathers imagine for their children and what their children have actually achieved from their transnational education.

As Professor Song mentioned above, contrary to what we might expect based on the literature, when these fathers were asked about what their motivations and goals for this family project were, acquiring English skills was seldom mentioned as a central goal (Cho 2004; Ch'oe 2007; Chung 2008; Lee and Koo 2006; Park 2010; Song 2009). Rather, in nearly every case they stressed affording a good environment for a well-rounded education (*chōnin kyoyuk*), global competence, and/or a meaningful (happy) life. And a well-rounded person was most often

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<sup>50</sup> In a news article in the *Huffington Post*, Samuel Kim points out that "44% of Korean students who enter 'top' American universities drop out before graduating. This is much higher than the dropout rate for students from China (25%), India (21%) and even the 34% dropout rate for American students at the same universities." It is often criticized that their years-long preparation with extra tutoring for college only prepares them for tests and not for acquiring a college education, so many Korean students perform poorly in top American Universities despite their high scores on the SAT, TOEFL and all the other entrance examination tests (Alan Singer, *Huffington Post* New York, November 24, 2009).

mentioned as an expected outcome of their education. That is, their goals were in parallel with the Western liberal educational goals of raising children as well-rounded selves “with great possibilities for self-fulfillment and personal development” (Mitchell 2003, 399). For example, Professor Park (engineering, 49) who now sends two children to a U.S. prep school said:

It is well-rounded education! That is the most significant. We can find it only in precepts for school discipline (*kyohun*) in our country, haha [laughter]. My children get well-rounded education there better than I expected. The American “system” (in English) is so wonderful that I cannot expect more. If my children don’t get one hundred percent from it, it is my children’s fault. [...] I often told my children, “Your school is like a nice buffet restaurant so you need to have diverse delicious food there, not just to have noodles that you like.”

He went on to talk about how their school not only affords an advanced level of learning but also teaches social skills. They naturally learn team work, sacrifice, service for others, and leadership through diverse interaction, sports, and other enriching activities that the school system provides. He was sure that all this would be impossible if he had raised his children in South Korea, where schools could neither provide “value-added service” nor create “added value.” He explained that some South Korean students in so-called specialized high schools (*t’ŭkmokko*) might be as excellent as American top students in terms of academic ability, but most of them missed a lot of other things for the sake of raising their academic ability, even though there must be other aspects that they should enjoy in their life other than academic achievement. He also did not miss pointing out that his children might also lose something because they could not live with their parents. For example, his daughter more often misses home than her older brother, who seems to appreciate these opportunities and try to maximize them. Professor Park, however, felt that what they gained and were gaining was much more than what they lost in total, intellectually, physically, in terms of their character, and also holistically for their lives.

Creativity, independence, and autonomy are also frequently mentioned positive qualities that their children get from education abroad. Most of these fathers think that the Western educational system and methods afford more opportunities for children not only to fully develop their personal character with more freedom, but also to foster children's creativity, sensibility, and potential abilities. Professor Yeom (social science, 47), who just started his geese-dad life after a year of sabbatical in the U.S., was quite impressed by the fact that his daughter in high school not only learned but actually enjoyed poems of Emily Dickinson in her English class. He expressed pleasant envious feelings, saying that it was an experience that even he, who had a PhD degree, could not have. Professor Kim (humanities, 49) especially appreciated that American education made children write a lot and thus boosted their creativity and ability to think. Interestingly, many fathers shared the same opinion and expressed much satisfaction and pride especially when they felt their children wrote well in English. It seemed that they regarded writing ability as evidence of both commanding English well and having the ability to think – important constituents of global competence.

Many of the children of these fathers were actively involved in extra-curricular activities in school such as playing musical instruments in bands or orchestras or participating in choirs, art, sports, theater, and debating clubs like most American/Western children do. While some fathers were slightly worried about how their children could balance these activities and their schoolwork — and were sometimes shocked by differences in school culture, like having a school concert the night before a test day -- some fathers told me that actually these activities were a part of reason they decided to educate their children abroad. They observed that in South Korea children can hardly sustain their interest of art, music, or sports in secondary school unless they have decided to major in these things in college.

Indeed, Professor Hong (natural science, 52), whose wife was a doctoral student and stayed with their two children in England, told me that he and his wife also wanted their children to keep fostering their musical talent and sensibility. However, it would have been too burdensome to financially manage geese-family life in England without the music scholarships that his daughter and son got from their private high school in England. Although his children were not English nationals (they have U.S. citizenship) and did not have the intention of majoring in music in college, they could still keep playing music which they liked because of the school's support. When he thought about how happy and how well his children were doing there and watched students of same ages as his children in South Korea, he often felt that his own emotional difficulties, like the loneliness that he had from time to time, were minor.

Some fathers were very happy to see that their children were growing up as independent, autonomous, and motivated persons. Professor Lee (natural science, 50), who initially strongly opposed to his wife's plan to send their son to middle school abroad, expressed satisfaction at how much his son in a U.S. public school had enjoyed discussions in classes and how much hard work he had done by himself, sometimes even voluntarily staying up all night to finish schoolwork. The process itself looked worthwhile to Professor Lee. He spoke, "One year after having sent my son to America, the thought struck me it was a good decision to send him." He claimed that his son, who was now sophomore in college, became much more responsible, autonomous, and independent and gained a sense of self-respect and self-confidence by overcoming difficulties by himself. He found a different side to his son that he could hardly recognize when compared with his son in Seoul — for example, he realized that his son had become a lot more motivated now.

Professor Yoo (social science, 47) echoed these sentiments by talking about how his only son, who lost some hair because of stress in South Korea, not only was cured but also became an independent, confident, and *happier* person through American education. His son, who had stayed in his relative's home for several years since middle school, surprised his father even more when he received the presidential award at his middle school graduation. Professor Yoo added that he knew the award did not mean his son was exceptionally intelligent whatsoever, but he was impressed by the fact that they appreciated his son's efforts for his own improvement and progress as an "achievement." However, needless to say, it helped his son to have more self-esteem and a positive attitude. Having watched his son, he realized again how harsh South Korean society was to children: "Once a child cannot well adapt himself to the unkind education system, he immediately becomes a loser." Talking about how he felt sorry for his son who did almost everything by himself because he was apart from parents, Professor Yoo also did not forget to point out how many students at his elite university in Seoul, especially from Kangnam, were controlled by their parents' detailed directions and still could not make a simple decision by themselves even in their senior year.

All these accounts show not only professors' satisfaction at the outcome of their own transnational projects, but also that the fathers' keen sense of the personhood that they imagine is also developing through their children's growth.

### **III. Cosmopolitan Desire, "Flexible Citizens," and Korean Identity**

Although these fathers expressed much satisfaction with their children's personal growth in their accounts, bringing up children abroad as cosmopolitan liberal subjects is not always a peaceful process. Their early study abroad affords the good education they expected for their

children, but it also brings some unexpected conflicts with their children. Surprisingly, it seems that many of these fathers were surprised that their children also developed their own aspirations and their own thinking about their lives for having grown up in foreign countries. Baffled by their children's post-national thinking in particular, some fathers started to realize only later that their children did not at all have the same references that the fathers themselves had as Korean adults during their study abroad period. In a sense, the real challenge that these fathers faced was the very awareness and acceptance of these differences. Starting from this realization, their real journeys of being vicarious cosmopolitans began, while they juggled their competing aspirations as both fathers who value individual freedom and choices and intellectuals who have to maintain a responsible collective identity in South Korea. Along the road, they were often torn between their own cosmopolitan desires and their Korean identity.

*A. He/She is Someone in the World*

Above all, I found that most of these fathers were in fact busy envisioning their children as someone in the world, emphasizing well-roundedness, autonomy, and happiness. Focusing on these positive qualities that their children had or would have, they came more and more to believe that their children's exposure to foreign cultures and languages would give them "freedom of choice" and help them to live as competent global citizens, as cosmopolitans. In some sense, it seems that the word "cosmopolitan" itself functioned as their mantra, opening a future for their children, alleviating their own anxieties about their children's identities, and also justifying their own choice for educating children abroad.

Interestingly, not all, but most of my informants assumed their children's stage was the world, not just South Korea. This contrasts with the fathers themselves who all eventually came

back to South Korea after their study abroad. If fathers wanted their children to come back to South Korea, it was mostly due to a father's concerns to keep children close for family intimacy. In a globalizing world, as if the world is no longer big and wide, some people, like my informants today, view the world as not merely a collection of states, "territorial units separated from one another," but an unlimited stage where every individual can pursue their own dream (Beck 2000, 21). As Ulrich Beck points out, "the notion of closed space has become illusory" in this world society (10), and my informants often expressed this globality in their accounts.

Professor Park (Engineering, 49) told me that he was open to wherever his children would choose to live as long as they were happy and self-fulfilled; but, he added, if they wanted to choose where they would live, they should possess suitable abilities. When I asked him what he thought of as "ability," he articulated his ideas like this:

So to speak, [it is the ability that] they can communicate well and feel comfortable wherever they go. The comfortableness is, I mean, of course they may need to be financially comfortable, but above all, they should be mentally and emotionally comfortable in such situations. If they could be comfortable because they were already exposed to and absorbed in diverse cultures, then they can have broader range of choice, the freedom of choice.

From these fathers' accounts, I could see that through their transnational practices, these fathers constructed a picture of children through images of cosmopolitans, who were equipped with multiple languages and the capability to embrace cultural differences. They believed that these abilities in turn would give their children flexibility to choose where to live and how to live. We especially remember that Professor Park was eager to live abroad when he was younger and that he felt as comfortable in a foreign country as he was in his hometown. Although he eventually came back to South Korea and lives there now, we can notice that his cosmopolitan yearning is not dead, but kept alive through his children.

Anyone can have the desire to be a cosmopolitan. Yet, not everyone who wants to be a cosmopolitan can actually live as a cosmopolitan. The degree of mobility -- freedom of movement -- is a key prerequisite for being a cosmopolitan. Zygmunt Bauman points out that “[access to global] mobility climbs to the rank of the uppermost among the coveted values – and the freedom to move, perpetually a scarce and unequally distributed commodity, fast becomes the main stratifying factor of our late-modern or postmodern times” (1998, 2). Needless to say, financial viability/wealth is the most important factor for determining who can move and who has the freedom to choose where to be. And as Bauman puts it, the hierarchy of mobility has polarized human experiences. These days, in particular, the new middle class, which is oscillating between those at the top and those at the bottom of the hierarchy, suffers from “acute existential uncertainty, anxiety and fear” (4). It can also be argued that these fathers, who are mostly economically middle class but also elites in their society — elites, who are “always more cosmopolitically inclined” and have “more in common with elites across the borders than with the rest of the population inside them” (12-3) -- in fact carefully prepare the ground for their children’s cosmopolitan life by creating opportunities to equip them with the ability to be mobile, with cultural capital like communication skills (including English) and with the ability to embrace diversity through their transnational educational projects. Particularly these fathers’ own mobility that mostly comes from their study abroad experiences and professor jobs (as I examined in chapter three) allows for more advantages for their children’s mobility, most conspicuously through the dual citizenship (passport).

### *B. Korean Identity and Cosmopolitan Desire*

As my interviews progressed, I found more and more that my interviewees were certainly nurturing new ideas of cosmopolitan citizenship that superseded national subjectivity especially when some of them envisioned their children's future. Yet, while some fathers without reserve displayed their own cosmopolitan desires through ESA, some fathers struggled more with the unexpected agonies beyond the financial or emotional hardships. The fathers often realized that their children have developed frames of reference and paradigms that were different from those of their fathers. And some informants were still torn between their own sense of collectivistic responsibilities for the nation or nationalist sentiment and their individual cosmopolitan desire for their children, especially when they faced their children's post-national thinking or transnational identities. They sometimes experience discrepancy in their own thoughts and attitudes when they were dealing with their dilemmas. In this process, they -- both fathers and children -- influenced each other in the process of trying to better understand each other. It seems that the more the fathers identified with their children, the more they unknowingly underwent changes in their thoughts and paradigms as we will see in their accounts below.

When ESA was not originally initiated by the father's own cosmopolitan desire, the father seemed to experience even more agonies. Yet, amazingly, rather than discontinuing ESA because it was the source of the problem, these fathers tended to adjust themselves to the situation by changing their own thoughts and attitudes about their children. Furthermore, fathers' own latent cosmopolitan desires were unexpectedly animated by children in this process. Professor Min's case demonstrates this.

Professor Min (Education, 48) has been struggling with a dilemma involving his personal and private interests as a loving father and his public interest as a scholar and educator in the

education field since he became a geese dad. From the outset, when he was about to conclude his sabbatical year in 2007 in the U.S., the thought of “geese-family making” for his only daughter’s education caused him to experience a severe conflict as a scholar, especially because he was a scholar who was actively engaged in educational policies in South Korea. He expressed:

This is a critical “minus” (in English) for me, and to a great degree, I also have to feel guilty about it as a scholar of education as I told my daughter and wife. I told my family that I did this solely for her, but I myself would become an object of social criticism. I knew it well. I don’t have a single word to defend this to my own students.

I could read the self-deprecating emotion on his face as he said to me, “It is not honorable at all.”

This was a moment of explicit honesty that I could rarely find among my informants. I could imagine how often he had to deal with this thorny issue in his own mind in everyday life as an educator and especially as an active professional in the education field. However, the impetus for beginning geese-family life was not his own yearning to raise his daughter as a cosmopolitan but rather his desire to follow his daughter’s ardent appeal and rescue his daughter from emotional trauma from her school experiences in South Korea and its physical side-effects. It was not until his sabbatical year that he and his wife learned why their daughter so often had a stomachache in South Korea; he had experienced changing understandings of her while raising her abroad.

Lately, I told this to my daughter. “If you have a bit of thought considering the “premium [advantage/value]” (in English) of U.S. degree in Korea while you are studying in America and if you are going to remain at that low level, you must not keep studying there but rather quit now.” And I told her like this too, “The whole world is given to you as your stage, and the most important thing is that you do whatever you want to do whether you go to Europe or Africa. Isn’t it meaningless for you to say that ‘I should go back to Korea’?” She also says same thing with me.

Here we can see that he expects her to live as a cosmopolitan. Interestingly, Professor Min differentiated his own study abroad experience from his daughter’s. He explained it this way:

In terms of that she thinks her stage is the whole world, it is... well, her study abroad experience is very much different from mine. I just thought I should come back to Korea after getting my degree at that time, you know. It looks like she naturally and smoothly

adapts herself to that culture, but I was shocked at that time . . . , it [my study abroad experience] was sort of a shock to me.

Having realized that her early study abroad experience was totally different from his in adulthood, he further argues that people who have the intention of coming back to live in South Korea do not need to go to early study abroad. In his opinion, if someone only considers his or her career success in South Korea, ESA is not the best option; rather, studying abroad for graduate studies would be a much better option in order to avoid possible identity problems or disadvantages in social networking/making connections (*inmaek hyönsöng*) in South Korean society. He added that the only reason why he was ashamed of himself as a geese dad is because he was a professor of Education — this means that the choice that he made as a father is not shameful at all; if he himself had the capability of doing something well in any foreign country, he would also go abroad without hesitation as his daughter and young people these days do. What we can see in his last words is that although his daughter brought him some inner troubles, her experience also animated his latent cosmopolitan desire.

In a similar vein, Professor Cho (51), who had been a geese dad for eight years and whose academic field is social science, has also somewhat struggled with feelings of contradiction between his own scholarly beliefs and his concern over his daughter's identity. His daughter was born in the U.S. when he was studying there and lived in the U.S. afterward with her mother, who had kept studying for her PhD degree after Professor Cho came back alone to South Korea with his degree. Later, when Professor Cho's wife got her degree and came back to South Korea, his daughter was sent to a boarding school in the U.S. since she resisted returning to South Korea. However, at the time of interview, his daughter was attending an international college in Seoul. According to Professor Cho, his daughter hardly had any conception of the idea of nation or state. He said, "When she was younger, if I asked her which nation's citizen you

were, she used to answer it by saying ‘I am Berkeley citizen.’” When I asked him how he felt about it, he told me that he also did not much care about it. However, he expressed some of his ambivalence:

There might be an interaction between me and my daughter in terms of identity. Sometimes I am so embarrassed because there is something vague and unsolved while I am raising my daughter. In fact, I myself have struggled with this issue though..., well...for me, theoretically the state and nation is the object to overcome, so when my daughter shows no sign of serious Korean identity, I have no intention to correct her. But...you know, on the other hand, in reality, from time to time I become somewhat uncomfortable about it by feeling it’s a bit off. Actually, it seems that I myself often send my daughter contradictory signals. It’s because...there is a conflict between theories and reality... And when I reflect myself on why I try hard to cross the boundaries of nation and state, I am sure, to some extent, I’ve been influenced by my daughter while I watched her growing up there.

Even though he thought that “nation is the object to overcome,” his feeling as a father has been oscillating between nationalist sentiment and cosmopolitan desire for his daughter while he watched her growing up with post-national thinking. His effort to accept and understand his daughter as she is has inspired him to “cross the boundaries of nation and state” in his own paradigms of thought and his scholarship.

Because of this ambivalence, when his daughter applied for college, Professor Cho made up his mind to urge her go to an international college in South Korea instead of a college in the U.S. I asked him with curiosity about why he did this and how his daughter responded to it. According to him, at first his idea made his daughter perplexed because she took it for granted that she would go to college in the U.S. and she resisted it. But she eventually accepted his suggestion and was attending an international college at one of elite universities in Seoul. He said that he persuaded her on two fronts:

First, it was the emotional appeal from a father, who wanted to keep his daughter close to him, through reminding her that this might be the last chance for our family to live all together [before her marriage]. And then I told her, “The advantage now you have because you have lived in America is that you may have more freedom of choices. If you

go to college in Korea now, you can experience two countries and cultures and you either make your choice to live in Korea or in America later. But if you go to American college now, then it will not be a matter of choice anymore. Only one path will be left, and you should live in America without alternative. Why don't you open both possibilities? I will respect your choice when you make a decision later."

Although he urged her and succeeded in keeping her near him in Seoul, in addition to fatherly emotion and a bit of Korean sentiment, in his account we still find his cosmopolitan desire for his daughter among his intentions — hope for his daughter to be a person who can *choose* to live abroad, not a person who is *forced* to live abroad (Robbins 1998, 254).

The experience of Professor Lee (natural science, 50), whom I introduced in the previous section as a father who strongly opposed his wife's plan to send his son to the U.S. but was now satisfied with the results, deserves more attention here. As I already briefly explained when I introduced his case in chapter three, his wife secretly planned and sent his son to a relative in the U.S. while her husband was abroad at a conference for two weeks as a last resort because of his strong opposition. He confessed that he had a difficult time with his wife for a while because he learned about the plan only after it had been already executed. When I asked him about why he was so strongly against study abroad, he answered that it was mostly because he had already experienced part of geese-family life and did not want to make his son a "foreigner" (*tarūn nara saram*). "How and in what sense?" I asked him. At first he referred to his own study abroad experience: "Based on my study abroad experience, for example, after six years passed there, I started feeling I didn't like Korea." He said that he missed and wanted to visit South Korea so much for the first two years. However, after four years of staying he did not miss South Korea anymore. Then six years later when he visited South Korea, he felt strange and was irritated by everything that he had enjoyed in the past, like people, the street, manners etc. It was another cultural shock to him. Culture shock again from his own country! He said:

If my parents were not here [South Korea] or if the situation at that time seemed that I couldn't get a job here, I must have thought that I didn't have to come back to Korea. So...um...I felt...it may sound as if I am discriminating daughters from son, however, I was uncomfortable with the thought that it would probably end up making my only son American.

Because of this reason, he said, unlike other professors, he deliberately spent his two sabbatical years staying home to avoid the possible conflicts of being a geese family.

More fascinatingly, he told me that his father also was a geese dad almost forty years ago! Professor Lee, with laughter, allowed me to call his father as an "original" (*wŏnjo*) geese dad. His father, a business man, sent his second older brother and older sister with his mother to the U.S. for education when Professor Lee was a 6<sup>th</sup> grader. They lived as a geese family for five years until his mother came back. Professor Lee told me that he paid special attention to his son's identity because he watched his siblings' cases. What he really did not like was that his older brother and sister lost the concept of the Korean family. They were still living in the U.S. He said, "Well, they became successful, but I didn't think it [ESA] made them necessarily happy or better. It's a kind of like they lost their [extended] family. No more solidarity. They are completely American. We cannot communicate well with each other." Hence after sending his son to the U.S., he has tried to get in touch with his son as much as possible and let his wife call and visit his son as many times as possible so as not to lose emotional connections. In so doing, Professor Lee tries to make his son feel that he is not alone and does not need to do everything by himself because he has family to rely on. "Nevertheless, my son became so much independent and already had his own subjectivity. He tries to do everything for himself, for example, to the extent that he refused my help when he wrote the personal statement for college application," he said. He went on to tell me that his son has probably started having uncomfortable feelings about

Korea by now because it has been almost six years since he moved there, recalling his own experience.

Another part of his struggle to help his son maintain his Korean identity, Professor Lee started repeatedly telling his son that he must fulfill the compulsory army service. As he put it, Professor Lee tried to “brainwash” (*senoe*) his son into thinking he must go to the army, secretly hoping his son could be more “Koreanized” (*han’guk-hwa*) through the Korean army experience. “I asked my wife to help me at least for this. So my son seems to understand now that he should go to the army.” Professor Lee hoped his son could live in South Korea primarily contributing to his country. However, he spoke later, “Actually, what I really want is that he can work internationally in world stage, but with Korean identity.” Professor Lee described himself as someone who has a somewhat conservative view of the nation. But when I asked him if his hope and effort for a more “Koreanized” son originated from his view of the nation, he took time to reflect on himself and said that it was all for his son’s sake: “Maybe it is somewhat because I am conservative or selfish, but it is rather because I don’t want him to have a hard time in the future agonizing over his identity — about who he really is.” It seemed his son has respected his wish so far, but Professor Lee was not sure that his son would be same in the future when his son got older. Although Professor Lee worried about his son’s identity because of his son’s future well-being, the identity he was concerned about was still focused on national identity, whether he was aware of it or not. It seems that he wants to avoid a predicament, a situation of conflict in which his or his son’s cosmopolitan desire might possibly work against his national consciousness and traditional family values.

### C. Dual Citizenship and “Flexible Citizens”

As was hinted about in Professor Lee’s case, the obligation of military service for men is an excellent example that clearly reveals certain tensions between these fathers and sons. As I discussed in chapter three, most children of my informants have dual citizenship. Having dual citizenship in South Korea is considered a privilege, but at the same time it has also long held negative implications and has often been blamed for leading to avoidance of compulsory military service (*Dong-A Ilbo* July 7, 2002; *The Korea Times* Oct. 20, 2009). In May 2005, an intense and complicated controversy over dual citizenship and compulsory military service eventually led to a significant revision of the Nationality Law, which resulted in the abolishment of dual citizenship in order to prevent the avoidance of military service.<sup>51</sup> When I was interviewing professors (from September 2009 to June 2010), the Nationality Law was in the process of being revised again so that dual citizenship would be again possible as long as men

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<sup>51</sup> The revision of the Nationality Law was proposed by Congressman (Hannara-dang) Hong Junp’yo in 2005. Since the beginning of the 2000s, the appointments of high officials like Prime Minister or ministers have often experienced obstacles because of appointees or their family members’ dual citizenship (or foreign citizenship) or exemption of military service even though every South Korean man over 18 years old is required to complete two-year compulsory military service. Especially, in addition to the repeated accusations of high officials’ avoidance of military service, the incident of Yu Sungjun drew huge popular attention to the issue of dual citizenship, overseas Koreans, and compulsory military service in 2002. Yu Sungjun, a famous pop idol at that time, who had permanent residency in the U.S., strategically gave up his Korean nationality and chose to have U.S. citizenship to avoid military service despite his active activities as a singer in South Korea and his previous vow to serve the army in South Korea. After the incident, Yu could not maintain his career as a singer in South Korea. Thus, in the process of the revision of the Nationality Law in 2005, compulsory military service was the hottest issue and the Law became more complicated than ever. According to the new Nationality Law that became effective in 2005, not only does Korea not permit multiple nationalities for either its citizens or foreigners, but also Korean nationals who obtain citizenship of another country before turning 20 years old could not renounce Korean nationality unless they fulfilled the obligation of military service first, although it was also stipulated that one nationality should be renounced before the individual becomes 22 because the Law does not permit dual citizenship after the age of 21. Before the revision, it was possible for dual citizenship holders to renounce one of nationalities before the age of 18, and if they did not renounce it, they automatically lost Korean nationality. In this case, they were automatically exempted from military service (and in this way, male dual citizenship holders could avoid their military service). During the short grace period before the Law went into effect in 2005, many people, especially parents who were seen as privileged when their children could have dual citizenship, rushed to have their young children give up Korean nationality in order to avoid compulsory military service. This was severely criticized by the media and the public as avoidance of obligation and lack of nationalist sentiment and noblesse oblige. Among the people who gave up Korean nationality at that time, 98.6% were men and 73% were less than 15 years old (*Dong-A-Ilbo* May 4, 2005, May 25, June 13, 2005; *Hankyore* May 10, 2005; *The Korea Times* Oct 20 2009, Oct 30, 2009; N. Kim 2013).

fulfilled compulsory military service. The latest revision, passed on April 21, 2010 by the National Assembly and effective beginning January 1, 2011, was also promulgated to enhance the nation's global competitiveness by preventing brain drain in the era of globalization. In September, 2009, at the time of my interviews, dual citizenship and military service once again had become a hot issue because it was disclosed that newly appointed Prime Minister Chōng Unch'an had not fulfilled his military service and that his adult son had renounced Korean citizenship for U.S. citizenship. Chōng became an object of public criticism and elites were called upon to serve the nation.

Many of my informants had sons who would have to face their military duty. As the Law was about to change again allowing for dual citizenship, most of them told me that they wanted their children to obtain dual citizenship by fulfilling the responsibility of military service. And some of them found themselves having to actively persuade their reluctant sons. Professor Lee (natural science, 50) put it to his son this way:

If you want to be really globalized in the future, you should not lose your Korean nationality. Only when you keep both Korean and American nationalities at the same time, you can keep both as your "market[s]" (in English). But if you don't serve in Korean army, it means you lose Korean "market." Why would you want to lose that?

Above I introduced Professor Lee's concern with his son's national identity, but with these remarks, he calls attention not to national or social responsibility or patriotism, but rather to "flexible citizenship" (Ong 1998, 1999).

As I discussed in the beginning of this chapter, Ong well conceptualized the strategies and effects of Hong Kong Chinese diasporic subjects, who seek benefit from different nation-state regimes, making their choice of citizenship based on economic calculation in global markets. Flexible citizenship does not seem to bring much conflict to these Chinese subjects who have already attained the market-driven sense of citizenship in their diasporic tradition. However,

flexible citizenship is not a favorable idea at all to Koreans, who are often believed to be people full of nationalist sentiment, because it is risky to have an attenuating sense of citizenship and national consciousness. Yet, these fathers, even the ones who were full of nationalist, Korean sentiment, already knew that they could not persuade their children with nationalist rhetoric anymore because their children, having been brought up abroad, had already developed different identities and different paradigms from theirs. Thus, with this realization, some of these fathers appealed to their children to maintain Korean nationality with more practical terms, using a comparable idea of a flexible citizen who can survive a changing global political economy, while they themselves adjusted their own thoughts. Of course, it is very hard to disentangle fathers' strategic deployment of flexible citizenship rhetoric with their sons from their own "true" rationales. I suggest that we take stock of ways that these geese dads have been transformed through their vicarious experiences of their sons' early study abroad.

Just as Chinese satellite children in Canada find a new way of life while accepting Western values and norms which may challenge their parents who keep traditional Chinese values (Water 2003), these fathers also often discovered that their children absorbed different values and norms in host countries and could stand on their own ideas, sometimes challenging the fathers.<sup>52</sup> For example, Professor Hong (natural science, 52), who has been a geese dad for eight years, confessed how his son's own will, which was based on apparently more universal values, actually caused complications in his mind as a Korean father:

Actually, it is concerning me! My son told me he would rather be put to death than to serve in the army. It is not because he has to spend two years there, but because he is a pacifist, hahaha [laughter]! War is evil in his belief, so he can never support the war nor

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<sup>52</sup> Water in her work (2003) pays attention to some changes in individual Chinese astronaut families in Vancouver since immigrating. According to her, Chinese children in Vancouver actually became acculturated to a "Canadian way of life" and "conceived of Canadian citizenship in more than narrow instrumental terms" (232). Not only do Children often desire a "different set of goals" as the result of their transnational experiences, but also many are "maintaining dual or multiple national loyalties" (221, 228).

go to army. So it is not persuasive at all saying him, “You should go to the army because you are Korean.” He may resist going to the army even if he lives in Korea. So it is agonizing to worry about how I should be dealing with this conflict in the future.

Professor Hong could not negate his son’s values as wrong probably because he knew that his son’s thoughts were based on the liberal thinking of the “autonomy of the individual and the commitment of liberty and universality” (Mitchell 2004, 24). Because he did not know how to deal with his own conflict, he confessed that he indeed felt that he was so “pathetic” (*hansimhage*) sometimes -- as people generally describe geese dads -- especially when he felt that he was not fulfilling his sense of responsibility towards society as an intellectual. He felt he had no voice to add to some social issues like educational issues or dual citizenship because he was the very person who was caught in the middle of these controversial issues as a geese dad. He told me that if his wife did not study there, he would not raise his children abroad. However, he felt that he might have to adjust himself even further for his children later.

Fathers often said that “children are different from us.” These fathers were experiencing extra conflicts in addition to the common conflicts that come from a generation gap. Pierre Bourdieu argued that “generation conflicts oppose not age-classes separated by natural properties, but habitus which have been produced by *different modes of generation*, that is, *by conditions of existence* which, in imposing different definitions of the impossible, the possible, and the probable, cause one group to experience as natural or reasonable practices or aspirations which another group finds unthinkable or scandalous, or vice versa” (1977a, 78; second emphasis mine).<sup>53</sup> I discover that these fathers have started recognizing that their transnational projects not only afford children a so-called “good education,” but also inevitably bring more changes in their

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<sup>53</sup> Bourdieu defines habitus as “systems of durable, transposable disposition” which generate practices and perceptions (73). Habitus is socially learned but unconsciously internalized in a particular type of environment—historically and socially situated condition. According to Bourdieu, when an individual does certain practices, he does it not simply because of his choice that he makes by his will but also because of manifestation of habitus. For more of this complex concept, see Bourdieu (1977a).

children's way of life and way of thinking than they expected at the outset because study abroad provides them with different conditions of existence that produce a different habitus.

As Professor Min (education, 48) once pointed out, there are differences between the experiences of these fathers and their children in foreign countries. When these fathers studied abroad and also, in many cases, when they sent their children abroad, their own habitus as Korean adults limited their way of thinking, their range of choices, and even their aspirations. Their habitus made them often consider familial and national values, which permeated or were imposed on their paradigms. Yet, they realize they cannot limit their children by forcing them to share the same paradigms because their children have developed a different habitus. Thus, Professor Hyun (engineering, 52) echoed: "Because I am Korean...very naturally I always thought that I had to return to Korea when I studied abroad. There was no other thought. But in the case of my children...as they are growing up, I feel my thought has gradually changed. At first, there was no concrete thought at all, but more and more I became to think that it [which nationality to have or where to live] should be decided in the best way for my children and their happiness." Instead of trying to change their children, rather, they hope their children will be free from the constrictions; this often makes them wish they themselves could be free from these constraints, which sometimes leads to a change in their own paradigms. They also feel that the world is changing to allow/demand them to make these changes.

#### **IV. Awakening as a Cosmopolitan**

Ulrich Beck argues that in this globalizing world, the imagining of possible lives is understood within world society, not just confined within the nation or ethnicity. That is, "What people dream, how they would like to be, their everyday utopias of happiness – these are no

longer tied to a particular geographical area and its cultural identities” (2000, 65). While raising their young children abroad, through the interaction between the father and children, these fathers might have to continuously reflect on and reevaluate both themselves as fathers and the transnational educational project for their children. And as I have shown, in this process, they have to keep readjusting their own attitudes as parents, often experiencing conflicts. However, it seems that the more these fathers recognize and try to accept their children’s post-national thinking and transnational subjectivities, the more they experience their own paradigms shifting while developing their own cosmopolitan thinking. Being open to any possibilities for their children as autonomous subjects, they gradually experience vicarious cosmopolitanism through their children.

#### *A. Eventually, It Is Their Choices*

When speaking about dual citizenship, all my interviewees admitted that South Korea was the only divided nation in the world now, so the government’s efforts to prevent the avoidance of military service were quite understandable. However, on the other hand, most of them indicated that they would eventually respect their children’s own choice for their future, even if their children ended up living only as American (or other countries’) citizens without serving in the South Korean army. They showed a tendency to value individual freedom and individual identity over collectivity and collective identity. In this process, these fathers were also developing a serious critique of the conception of nation.

Some fathers did force their sons to serve in the army, but it was not necessarily because of their nationalist sentiment or their insistence on importance of collectivity. Rather, it was often, as in Professor Chon’s case, because fathers wanted their sons to live as better independent

people on a world stage. Professor Chon (natural science, 51) told me that he nearly had to threaten his son to serve the army and that his son would soon serve. He said that he gave his son a carrot and a stick because his son was very reluctant to serve; for example, he had to say things like: “Just do it for you. When you are discharged, I will buy a new car for you.” Still, the motivation to persuade his son did not originate from his patriotism or concerns over dual citizenship at all but was rather rooted in the father’s educational hope that his son would become a stronger and more mature man both physically and mentally through military experience -- which is in fact a very Korean way of thinking. He told me that his motivation was not related to nationalist sentiment whatsoever. His son actually wanted to keep living in the U.S. and he also was ready to accept it. He was even open to the possibility of international marriage of his son and daughter. He said that the most important thing to him was that his children lived their own lives, making their own choices.

Some fathers argued that Koreans needed to change their biased perception of dual citizenship in this globalizing world. Professor Kim (humanities, 49), who has two daughters, spoke, “I think acknowledging dual citizenship is reasonable because it actually fits most their identities. If someone feels like he or she is half Korean and half American like my daughters, and then it is not bad at all for him or her to live with it.” In the same vein, Professor Yoo (social science, 47) also thought that his son, who was an undergraduate student at the time of interview, had had no identity crisis so far: “My son thinks he is Korean because his parents are Korean, but he also thinks he is American because he lives in America with American citizenship. But I see that he has his own identity without any conflicts. There is no problem so far except that Korean government demands to choose only one nationality between them.” Professor Yoo was the first and only one who voluntarily brought up the issue of military service during the interview. He

told me that his son wanted to choose American citizenship if he had to choose only one, and that his son's thought and will could not be and should not be changed by parents' force because his son has his own rationale and aspiration. He added: "I don't think we are now in the world in which I must give up Korean citizenship if I get another citizenship." These fathers seem very open to any possibilities for their children, trying to respect and accept their children's own choices.

Sometimes, the children's post-national thinking tended to be more advanced than the fathers, so that fathers were often baffled by it, but also eventually adjusted to it. Professor Ahn's (social science, 48) only daughter in the U.S. had no identity crisis so far but had multiple belongings. According to him, it seemed she thought she was Korean, but she also had deep affinity to Japanese culture and wanted to have a job in Japan after college graduation (she had lived in Japan, where she had many relatives, for a few years when Professor Ahn researched there). Nevertheless, she also wanted to apply to the U.S. Air Force ROTC program as an American citizen. Because she was not just becoming an American but also an American soldier, Professor Ahn thought that he should give up all his hopes of attaining high-official positions (positions like prime minister, minister, or even president of university) rather early after observing recent controversies. He especially pointed out that the exploitation of nationalism for political purposes by certain groups was not right. And he said:

Although the devotion and love for the society they belong to is good, the perspective, with nationalism in particular, to see the relation of nation to nation as a "zero-sum game" (in English) is not good at all. But Koreans have that tendency. [...] Actually, as a social scientist and a Christian, I don't regard nationalism as good. So I think that the infusion of nationalist sentiment into children repeatedly saying like "You are Korean" is not good for children. I rather hope my child to grow up as an upright person and a good Christian, who has good will for others than antagonism toward others, regardless of nationality. It is more important to raise children as a crucial member of society regardless of which nationality they have.

Professor Ahn said that he had no intention to make his daughter live in South Korea if it was not her choice. Rather, he and his wife were considering living in the country where their daughter would live in the future after their retirement.

Meanwhile, some fathers rendered more aggressive criticism of the contradictory, irrational attitudes of the South Korean government and people surrounding globalization and global citizenship. Professor Park (engineering, 49) especially criticized some lawmakers who were agitating nationalist sentiment of the people in their treatment of the dual citizenship issue. He attempted to explain, in an interesting way, the reason why the agitation did work for revision of the law despite some legal problems.

Frankly speaking, our country has been a third-tier country, you know. That is the reason why Koreans are so sensitive to nationality issues. It seems it is from the [inferiority] “complex” (in English). If our country became wealthier one, then people would become much more open to the issue. I think the sensitivity toward dual citizenship comes from...um...the basic assumption that Korean nationality is inferior, isn't it? If Koreans believe that Korean nationality is the best, why should it be an issue at all? If the Prime Minister's son doesn't have Korean nationality, people would rather say this, “Oh, what a pity for him!” The anger over the U.S. citizenship itself tells us that ours is third-tier country. So people ask that why his son alone has top-tier nationality; if it isn't a privilege. That's the psychology. It's sad. I hope Korea becomes better country soon, so we can pity the people who have other nationalities, haha [laughter].

Some may agree with his analysis, but some may not. Nonetheless, what I do not want to miss here is that the [inferiority] “complex” that Professor Park mentioned, in fact, connotes another issue, even if Professor Park himself might not be aware of it. The issue of dual citizenship is not just related to nationality but also to unequal opportunities to access global mobility (along with the issue of equally serving the army). Thus, the “complex” is also related to the frustration of ordinary South Korean people who have a deep-seated, strong desire to become world citizens but do not have mobility that elites enjoy. That is why this issue has been so sensitive. In some sense, the South Korean government ought to be blamed for this frustration because the

government continuously emphasizes globalization and global competitiveness for its entire population on the one hand, but demands that individuals solely take responsibility for that competitiveness on the other hand. And to control this social sentiment of frustration, the government tries to exert control over certain individuals by setting a strict boundary with inconsistent policies.

Some professors were indeed bothered by the globalization rhetoric of the government.

Professor Min (education, 48) was talking about globalization when he said:

I don't like the expression competitiveness (*kyŏngjaengnyŏk*) that the government often uses, but I think being pluralized (*tawŏnhwa*) is very meaningful. [...] So, it becomes that people can demonstrate their abilities anywhere in the world, in any countries, and I think it is globalization (*segyeoha*). So to speak, there is no border now... obviously, it has been disappearing. It will become more and more open as economy did. Um...the mindset that I can go and work anywhere they need my ability even though I am Korean and its following-up actions, rather than the drawing the strict "boundary" (in English) only for our nation ...well, I think those are the real globalized. I don't think globalization is the matter of world-ranks in which our country is for this or that as the government often argues.

In some sense, today, Korean society is changing to the extent that the state's control over citizenship and globalization is somewhat troublesome to some people who already have cosmopolitan subjectivities.

In the era of globalization, "individuals as well as governments develop a flexible notion of citizenship and sovereignty as strategies to accumulate capital and power" and there are certain tensions between them (Ong 1999, 6). As I discussed in chapter two, the South Korean state has mobilized globalization (*segyeoha*) discourses among its citizens in order to raise its global competitiveness especially after the Economic Crisis.<sup>54</sup> Although the state tries to control and demand loyalty from its citizens by engineering neo-liberal governmentality and

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<sup>54</sup> See chapter 2 for how the state has made an effort to reinforce its capability by encouraging citizens to raise individual capabilities for themselves and how those discourses that the state disseminates continuously have conditioned people's sense of self and everyday practices.

emphasizing national belonging and culture in the face of globalization, it seems that some citizens like my informants are developing their own cosmopolitan ideas (Foucault 1991a; Hoffman 2006; Ong 1999, 2006; Rofel 2006; Song 2010; Yan 2003). This development happens while they bring up their children abroad, especially when they witness their children's own growth and multiple belonging and when they continue to have direct contact with foreign cultures.

Rules for how to globalize are no longer dictated exclusively by the state, but people have their own agency to produce and negotiate their own cultural meanings in their own lives in the face of globalization (Ong 1999). Having managed the geese-dad life, these fathers are challenging the nation-state's cultural hegemony while breaking existing familial and national norms and boundaries and developing their own deterritorialized ideas in ways that the Korean state would hardly be able to imagine. The Korean state's recent contradictory attitude toward dual citizenship and the confusion in the process of repeated revisions of Nationality Law was a clear example of this tension and embarrassment. Just as Professor Cho (social science, 51) sent his daughter contradictory signals about national identity, the Korean government also sends contradictory signals to its citizens, creating friction between the ideas of globalization and nationalism. The government emphasizes global competitiveness with aggressive neoliberal rhetoric and suggests that its citizens acquire flexible citizenship on the one hand, but also severely controls citizenship by banning dual citizenship with the close-minded perspective that only South Korean nationals can contribute to South Korean society on the other hand.

B. *Personalized Globalization, Vicarious cosmopolitans*

These fathers create their own meanings of globalization while they personally deal with the more concrete realities and more urgent challenges of bringing up their own children abroad. I call their geese-dad experience “personalized globalization.” It seems that some fathers are determined to pave the road for their children to live as cosmopolitans, to the extent that they are willing to change their own paradigms to better fit their circumstances. They show quite progressive ideas about the nation and the global. And they tend to cherish liberal dreams by emphasizing individual autonomy to make choices about how to create oneself as an independent subject, even when the fathers are caught between their own positions and their children’s. They want their children to meaningfully live as well-rounded, competent cosmopolitans with global perspectives and every possibility. Some professors further asserted that neither nation nor race would matter in their children’s generation in this rapidly globalizing world. They talked in these ways:

In terms of my son’s identity, I don’t think the identity must necessarily be based on the nation-state. One’s individual identity, who I am, should not be primarily governed by one’s national identity. (Professor Han, humanities, 58)

I think... and I also hope that their generation will be the generation that people can acknowledge diversity. And I believe, for example, the notion that Korea is a solely homogeneous nation-state will gradually disappear. (Professor Yim, Business, 55)

Now, I don’t think it’s necessary to divide the world into two parts like my country and the rest of the world. Whether my son contributes as a Korean or an American, the quality of his contribution to both worlds would not differ. That’s what I believe. (Professor Choi, humanities, 56)

Professor Choi (humanities, 56) said that ESA students would bring about a so-called “cultural revolution” (*munhwajŏk hyŏkmyŏng*) to Korean society in the near future and that they had begun to bring some changes already. “Those children are already citizens of the world. The very cosmopolitan consciousness that they have must be recognized as the biggest benefit they

got from early study abroad.” He emphasized that these children would eventually raise the competitiveness of Korean society even though parents did not send their children with the intention of increasing national competitiveness. “I heard that recently [in 2010] Mr. Chŏng Ŭisŏn, the vice chairman of Hyundai Motor, gave a presentation in Beijing Motor Show. It was said that he did it by himself in a confident manner in very fluent English. Just the way that Steve Jobs does it. If he didn’t go to early study abroad, he probably couldn’t do it.” He pointed out that ESA or geese families were often vilified, but the real problem was not the phenomenon of early study abroad or the geese family itself; rather it was the thought that the opportunities for these practices was limited to a relatively small group of privileged people. He argued that if the opportunity could be open to more people, then South Korean education and society would be better.

Anthony Smith (1995) once argued that the dream of a cosmopolitan global culture is utopian. Interestingly, however, most of these fathers expressed optimistic views on the cosmopolitan global culture. Their cosmopolitan dreams for their children are based on the premise that the world equally treats all people with tolerance, hospitality, and inclusiveness and affords equal opportunities regardless of nationality or race (Appiah 2005, 2006; Wallace 1997; Werbner 2008). It is also assumed that if anyone feels comfortable enough entering the world stage, they can pursue their dreams anywhere in the world without strain. Bruce Robbins puts it, “it is now assumed more and more that worlds, like nations, come in different sizes and styles. Like nations, worlds too are ‘imagined’” (1998, 2). These fathers also imagine a new world for their children which they themselves could not experience before. For most of my informants, the world today is not an object beyond their boundaries, but a place that their children can jump into and accomplish anything they want without limitations.

Still, their “bringing up children as cosmopolitans” is an unfinished project. We do not know yet how the children of these fathers will turn out: whether these children will be “tourists” with a free spirit or at least with so-called flexible citizenship or “vagabonds” without a sense of belonging in the world or in their future. Bauman puts it, “the tourists travel because *they want to*; the vagabonds because *they have no other bearable choice*” (1998, 93). My informants, in their accounts, emphasized that they wanted to give their children “freedom of choice.” If freedom of choice is “the tourist’s flesh and blood” as Bauman reminds us, we should wait to see whether these children will be able to maintain this flesh and blood in their life courses (93). Future studies may give us the answer as to whether they are really becoming cosmopolitans on the world stage, going back to South Korea securing capital and enjoying a successful life as they somewhat expect, or stuck betwixt and between.<sup>55</sup>

All these accounts that I examined show how these geese-dad professors simultaneously experience contradictory, often agonizing, and transforming moments while they bring up their children abroad as global citizens. For these professors, the concept of “global” or “globalization” is not merely abstract anymore because it has already been actualized in their practical lives. It is not just a meta-discourse which is imposed by the state or institutions anymore, but globalization permeates their individual lives as personalized experiences, for some even reaching to the level of changing their own beliefs and value systems. Many of my informants might have started their transnational educational practices imagining comparable images of flexible citizens as a part of broader strategy of familial social reproduction or upward mobility. However, the result was

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<sup>55</sup> Scholars argue that some children who have transnational childhood may be “caught between two nations, educational systems and ways of growing up” and may have the risks of “feeling marginal in both places” (Orellana et al. 2001, 583). Abelman and Kang (2014) also point out that the global children of geese families are “ambivalent cultural figures.” According to them, they are intended to become flexible citizens on the one hand, but they are also demanded to become “proper Koreans” who fulfill their national and filial duties. Also see, Lo and Kim (forthcoming), which examines how ESA returnees in Seoul narrate their current lives.

more than what these professors expected at the outset. My research reveals that many of these professors undergo a paradigm shift in their thoughts on the nation and the global via the experience of raising their children abroad. In their accounts, they are certainly fashioning new ideas of cosmopolitan citizenship and autonomous liberal subjectivity that supersede national subjectivity when they envision their children's future in particular. They are not only raising future cosmopolitans, but also nurturing their own cosmopolitan desire as vicarious cosmopolitans. And I found that these transformations were often reflected in their profession as well, especially when they play the role of campus globalizers at their universities, as I will keep discussing in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CAMPUS GLOBALIZERS AT HOME

[U]nless there is more organized resistance to the globalization agenda that links universities to markets, the result will be a shift from scholar to entrepreneur. Academics are in a position to examine these globalization practices in depth within their own workplaces and to begin to understand the way in which many workplaces are being restructured and downsized. They are moving in a similar way to assimilate globalization practices, almost through unconscious osmosis (Currie 1998, 6).

The internationalization of the academic Self should be seen as a fundamental building block in an institution's response to global forces affecting higher education. [...] teachers as individuals must operate from a base that extends beyond local and national perspectives. They, themselves, have to be among the cosmopolitans of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Sanderson 2008, 276-7).

Nearly always what caught my eyes whenever I got into elevators in buildings at elite universities in Seoul during my fieldwork (2009-2010) were posters advertising talks by purportedly renowned foreign scholars in the name of the "WCU" [abbreviation in English] project at those universities. As I couldn't help but notice these "WCU" posters here and there, I became curious about the very meaning of WCU. Soon, I learned that WCU stands for the World Class University, a government-sponsored university project devoted to inviting and hiring world-renowned scholars especially in technology, bio-technology, and the natural science fields in order to "upgrade" South Korean universities. In addition, during my fieldwork period, I also frequently noticed the placards and posters on billboards informing the university public about the various international conferences, symposium, or talks by foreign scholars on campuses. Although it was in fact not so often that I saw foreigners on these campuses, I could feel the pull of what we call internationalization (*kukchehwa*) at South Korean universities.

In chapters three and four, I have explored the complexity of being a geese-dad professor. I found that their private choices in child-rearing abroad were involved in multi-faceted personal and social desires and therefore, in a sense, possible future conflicts as individual parents and/or

intellectuals were inherent from the onset. In addition, in the course of the interviews, I discovered that there was another intriguing ontological irony that these geese-dad professors presented: that is, most of my informants were in fact playing the role of campus globalizers, more specifically the role of agents of internationalization for their own universities, while they made their personal decisions to have their children exit South Korean schooling and get a college education abroad.

This is so because South Korean universities, in recent years, have striven for arguably one of the world's most aggressive state-mobilized globalization programs for universities and in the process they demand professors to play the role of agents in the imperative to globalize their universities. Professors with foreign (mostly U.S.) doctorates like my informants are presumably the very professors who are expected to play the broker role for the internationalization of their universities: e.g., working in international colleges, developing international programs, teaching courses in English, or organizing exchange programs or international conferences and so on, while mobilizing their foreign experiences, and thus drawing on their English skills, international networks, and cultural understandings — the very same cultural and social capital that they draw on for their children's education abroad. Then, how do they observe and envision their given role as campus globalizers? How do they juggle their personal and professional lives with the possible inner contradiction that comes from being geese-dad professors whose children are opting out of Korean schooling, but who themselves play the professional role of agents of internationalization for their universities? Do they recognize this as a contradiction or ever feel any conflicts about it? If they do, how do they try to resolve it?

In this chapter, starting from the questions above, I first briefly examine the relationship between globalization and South Korean higher education. I especially focus on how the state

policy of internationalization of universities as a restructuring tool has wielded strong influence over universities (and thus academics) and how it has eventually become a major strategy for universities to cope with the changing external and internal environment of higher education. I then observe how my informants as faculty/academics are directly experiencing these changes in their profession and responding to it; I look at how they perceive, embrace, or resist their newly given role as campus globalizers.

Throughout my fieldwork interviews, I could notice that some ongoing changes were taking place in the academic values and agendas in South Korean universities. My informants showed somewhat ambivalent attitudes toward the implications that these changes might have. I especially found ongoing struggles and ambivalence surrounding the idea of “internationalization” in light of these geese-dad professors’ subjectivities: i.e., on the one hand, they actively embraced cosmopolitanism and international education while pursuing a personalized globalization project for their children; but on the other hand, many of them revealed reluctance to follow the neoliberal demands imposed on their profession and the uniform directions of internationalization from both their institutions and the state. For many, this reluctance came from their perception that the internationalization of higher education was operated by a very centralized metric-driven instrumentalism, focusing on competition and showiness. It seemed that their awareness of the imperfection of internationalization efforts in South Korean higher education eventually worked in two directions: pushing them to keep foreign education for their children on the one hand, and motivating them to work for more genuine internationalization at their universities, on the other hand. The extent of their participation in the activities of internationalization is varied according to the degrees of internationalization of their own universities, yet, most of them are in fact contributing to the internationalization of their

universities in diverse ways. Interestingly, however, I identified a tendency that the more these geese-dad professors perceived their children's education abroad positively and also experienced their own paradigm shift, the more they tried to transform the new challenges related to internationalization in their profession into other opportunities by making good use of their international experiences. Yet, a few among them revealed contradictory attitudes toward the current institutional internationalizing efforts they were participating in, in contrast to the strong personal cosmopolitan yearnings they displayed for their children. Others expressed their frustrations caused by the gap between them and the institutions: the cosmopolitan, liberal ideals that they had accumulated through their personal vicarious cosmopolitan experiences seemed to clash with the reality of their institutions, which emphasized performance- and competition-driven policies rather than pursuit of basic principles, values, and ultimate goals of internationalization.

As "globalization" has become a contemporary mantra, there is extensive literature that pays attentions to the impact of globalization on higher education and internationalization of universities, particularly in the education field. However, while many have studied about how globalization or internationalization affects universities (educational institutions) and students (educational consumers), less scholarship has examined how it affects academics selves in higher education. Especially, in South Korea, there are hardly any studies that have addressed and examined in detail academics' own individual experiences and thoughts in particular. In this chapter, I will try to provide a meaningful snapshot of this relatively unexplored realm in studies of higher education in South Korea, based on ethnographic data. Yet, the limitation that I should acknowledge here is that the interviews with my informants were not designed solely focusing on this issue. Rather, my inquiry started from my intellectual curiosity of questioning whether

their experiences of child-rearing overseas had any impact on their profession or not. I wanted to know whether these kinds of impacts actually existed, then, how those impacts, along with impacts of globalization on their professional work, eventually affected their subjectivities.

Thus, my aim in this chapter is not to comprehend the internationalization of South Korean higher education per se, but to comprehend the current position and challenges of South Korean academics in their profession, specifically focusing on the experiences of geese-dad professors. I want to show how institutionalized -- both state-imposed and/or university-driven -- globalization projects transform the South Korean academics' professional experiences and expectations and also govern them (Henkel 2000; Lin 2009; Sidhu 2006, Slaughter and Leslie 1997), and how these processes eventually reshape academics' own definition of their job and role in South Korean society. A full discussion of the literature dealing with these issues in depth is also beyond the scope and object of this chapter. However, through this chapter, I attempt to understand how all these internal and external challenges (or opportunities) in their profession in the public sphere of their lives ultimately affect South Korean professors' own subjectivities as intellectuals at this historical juncture.

## **I. Globalization and Internationalization in South Korean Universities**

In recent decades, globalization has become an "all-encompassing and irresistible idea" that is not easily challenged (Currie 1998, 10). As it has infiltrated every corner of the world, scholars around the world have tried to understand how globalization relates to changes in higher education. Above all, as Jan Currie points out, globalization has "brought the free market into universities but with serious ramification and significant costs," making universities participate in the new order of business (6). Although scholars have criticized the marketization of higher

education under the globalization of the political economy, calling it sometimes “entrepreneurial universities” or “academic capitalism” (Clark 1998; Sidhu 2006; Slaughter and Leslie 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004), it is still a strong global trend that cannot be easily resisted. South Korean universities also, for over a decade, have had to transform themselves quickly in the face of the changing environment of higher educational institutions because of the domestic and global challenges that globalization and the notion of the supremacy of the market have brought. Not only have the forms of knowledge and quality of education and research become more contested in the rapidly changing knowledge-based global economy, but the environment of higher education institutions has also become increasingly competitive and difficult for universities to survive and maintain their status in higher education markets (Altbach 2012; Beerkens 2003; Burnett and Huisman 2010; Byun and Kim 2011; Chan and Lo 2008; Chu 2009; Currie and Newson 1998; Iwasaki 2009; Henkel 2000, 252; T. Kim 2008; Lin 2009; Mok 2003; Rhoades and Torres 2006; Sidhu 2006; Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004).

#### *A. Global Ranking Competition of Universities*

In the era of globalization, which places universities in the marketplace, university rankings in particular have achieved an “iconic status” across the world as an important tool in the global knowledge race, establishing hierarchies of institutions (Altbach 2012). Apart from the serious question of their validity, many universities in the world have struggled to be included in the “top” category of research universities in the rankings, sometimes “distorting their basic missions” in the process (27). Rankings are an “inevitable result of higher education’s worldwide massification” as well as “competition and commercialization within it” (27). As other Asian countries have changed policies and made vast investments in higher education to earn global

recognition in recent years (Altbach 2012; Chan and Lo 2008; Chu 2009; Iwasaki 2009; Lin 2009; Lo 2010; Mok 2003; Ozawa 2009), South Korea also has put great pressure on her universities to improve their place in various world rankings.

Unfortunately, it is only very recently that South Korean universities came to be included in the top 100 universities in any global university rankings. The frequent media reports that even Seoul National University, the so-called number one university in the country that is famous for exceptional education zeal, could not place its name on top 100 lists in any global rankings has aroused strong criticisms from both inside higher education institutions and the public. Naturally, it drove universities and the state into somewhat of a panic; the government with a sense of urgency further accelerated educational reforms, which included strong internationalization policies. To match the government's expectations, indeed, in 2007, Seoul National University developed "Global SNU," an internationalization project which is a major attempt to achieve the goal of becoming a world-class university that can be ranked within the top ten in the world rankings (Y. Kim 2009, 26). It might be too hasty to predicate that it is a result of these efforts for internationalization, but recently a few universities have made some tangible progress in terms of global rankings. For example, in 2012, three South Korean universities, including SNU (the 37<sup>th</sup>), were included in top 100 universities in "the 2012 World University Rankings" conducted by QS (Quacquarelli Symonds), a UK university rating agency (Financial News, 11 September, 2012). The South Korean government has continued to push restructuring policies both through incentives and sanctions to motivate universities to meet certain criteria to win the race of university rankings.

### *B. Internationalization, the Key Tool for Upgrading Korean Universities*

Along with the strong obsession with the global ranking competition, it is evident that the internationalization of the university is one of the most conspicuous and systematic efforts of universities to respond to and cope with globalization (Altbach and knight 2007; Burnett and Huisman 2010; Sanderson 2008). Although, in a sense, “higher education has always been international” (Beerkens 2003, 141), internationalization of higher education has increasingly become a global trend in recent decades and some scholars anticipate that increasing internationalization can also cause the further globalization of higher education (Beerkens 2003; Sidhu 2006).

In South Korea in particular, internationalization apparently has been one of the most critical changing forces in higher education in recent years. In addition to the intense global competition for recognition and rankings, there has been growing global pressure to open up the domestic education market for transnational education services under the WTO, GATS and FTA negotiations since 1996 (T. Kim 2008; Y. Kim 2009).<sup>56</sup> Under these circumstances, in which the government had to liberalize and open up the education market but at the same time curb increasing outward education migration, it seems that internationalization policy aiming to upgrade South Korean universities to global standards was the best way to ensure the survival of South Korean universities in global higher education markets, which have been increasingly internationalized, with “Anglo-American dominance” (Sidhu 2006, ix).

However, in contrast with universities in Western developed countries, which are main exporters of higher education and have increasingly regarded international higher education as a

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<sup>56</sup> The liberalization of the domestic education market started in 1996. It is often said that the latest and perhaps most radical decision in the government’s policy agenda for restructuring Korean higher education was to open up the domestic higher education market through negotiations with the World Trade Organization (WTO)/General Agreement of Trade in Services (GATS) and a new bilateral free agreement with the USA (T. Kim 2008; Y. Kim 2009).

tradable commodity that can earn profits by charging high fees (Altbach and knight 2007; Sidhu 2006), in South Korea, the internationalization of universities is more perceived as a “key tool for improving the quality and increasing the competitiveness of higher education” and eventually increasing national competitiveness in the global economy (Byun and Kim 2011, 468). Under the existing conditions in which international students usually move from the South/East to the North/West and where universities in the North/West have both controlled the process of internationalization and global education markets and benefitted financially from the process (Altbach and Knight 2007; Sidhu 2006), South Korea universities are in a disadvantageous position, facing challenges related to internationalization. As latecomers to internationalization they have a burden to newly develop (in most cases) or enhance their international programs and infrastructure to draw more prospective international students, while also competing with other leading foreign universities in reputation. Furthermore, the degree of internationalization to pursue does not depend on the size, capability, circumstance, and strategy of each university, but rather depends on uniform measurement through detailed indicators of assessment that the Ministry of Education (MOE) or external examiners provide. Internationalization has become a critical criterion to evaluate the competitiveness, determine the domestic rankings of universities, and distribute government funding. Not surprisingly, there has been a tendency for universities to be so busy meeting the uniform standard that each university does not have time to develop their own distinctive internationalization programs and principles.

In this vein, although the government apparently emphasizes global competitiveness as the rationale of internationalization and recent restructuring policies, it can be suggested that most South Korean universities are more likely to comply with them, foremost, to survive and succeed in the domestic competition by mostly focusing on external development that can be

measured and proved by figures. In fact, South Korean universities are faced with new, serious challenges in the domestic higher education market. Above all, the higher education supply in South Korea has started to exceed the demand due to rapid expansion of higher education institutions with government deregulation policies and the abolishment of enrolment quotas in 1995 (T. Kim 2008). Some universities in fact have failed to meet their student enrollment quota. As a result, unlike in the past, South Korean universities cannot have the advantage over consumers in the education market anymore. Moreover, the demographical changes have added another crisis. As the size of the college-bound age cohort has continued to decrease, the number of 18-21 year-olds enrolling in higher education will drop from 3,278,000 in 2000 to 2,336,000 in 2020, according to recent population growth projections. And the projections expect that the number will go down further to 1,511,000 by 2030 (MOE; Ryu, et al, cited in T. Kim 2008, 560).

To make things worse, there has been increasing outward migration as parents choose overseas education like early study abroad. South Korean universities increasingly have lost their domestic consumers to foreign higher education institutions since they have failed to meet the demands of both domestic consumers and the labor market by failing to raise competent global citizens.<sup>57</sup> The demand for high-skilled knowledge workers in the labor market has been heightened, and yet the unemployment rate of university graduates has rather increased (T. Kim 2008; Park 2007). Now, only a limited number of universities with high reputations are part of the competition in the higher education market and universities are also put under the rigorous rule of the market. South Korea universities are at a crossroads for survival, facing consumer demands to develop human capital by teaching knowledge and skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The era when it was sufficient for universities to afford lectures and give credentials to students is gone.

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<sup>57</sup> According to the data, provided by the Statistics Korea (*T'onggyech'ŏng*), the numbers of Korean students who go overseas for their undergraduate degrees were 113,735 in 2006 and 154,178 in 2012. Available at [http://www.index.go.kr/egams/stts/jsp/potal/stts/PO\\_STTS\\_IdxMain.jsp?idx\\_cd=1534](http://www.index.go.kr/egams/stts/jsp/potal/stts/PO_STTS_IdxMain.jsp?idx_cd=1534)

Universities now have to compete to recruit students and commit to preparing competent job-ready graduates for domestic and global markets. Besides, the employment rate of graduates has become an actual crucial indicator of the evaluation of and criterion for state financial support for universities. In short, as one scholar points out, “the war for reputation and dominant position in higher education is now increasingly intense, begetting various effects” (J. Kim 2011a, 112).

Thus, for most South Korean universities, internationalization is not just an option that helps to make profit as in the case of Western universities, but an imperative strategic effort to enhance a university’s reputation and improve its profile as a high-quality education provider with top rankings and a requirement to survive domestically and globally. Ironically, however, it produces a circular argument: that is, universities should be internationalized in order to be ranked at the top of university rankings, and at the same time they should be at the top rankings in order to succeed in their internationalization, when, for example, they try to recruit excellent foreign students and scholars.

## **II. Campus Globalizers: Internationalization of Self and Institution**

Responding to global and domestic challenges in higher education, South Korean universities have persuaded and put huge pressures on their faculty to play the creative and ardent role in the restructuring process and to fit into new, competitive environments. Faculty, particularly, with international pasts such as these geese-dad professors are mobilized to activate their own international networks in the service of the capitalization and globalization of their universities. Most of my informants, indeed, often engaged in the activities related to internationalization of their universities in various ways: working in international colleges,

developing international programs, teaching courses in English, or organizing exchange programs or international conferences and so forth.

I found that, despite the sudden pressures and extra burden on faculty, most of my informants agreed that the internationalization of universities is necessary. Some professors showed their passion and pride for their role as agents of internationalization. For example, when I asked Professor Park (engineering, 49) about how he was involved with the internationalization of his university, he started expressing his thoughts in a confident manner:

I believe that internationalization is the right direction to take. Actually, it is way overdue. My university is pushing forward various plans right now, but I still think the momentum is too slow. We need to pick up the speed for our [Korean] situation. As of now, it seems that *internationalization is not a choice that we can make*. Our country has no other option, we cannot wonder about doing it or not. It's as if we're like the seniors in high school (*kosam haksaeng*), they cannot have half a mind to study and definitely have to study hard. And we cannot hesitate either when it comes to internationalization. How we approach it is the only issue.

While he was talking, Professor Park suddenly stood up, went to his desk, took his name card, and presented it to me. The position on his name card told me that he, in fact, played an active role in one of his university's globalization projects. The name of the institution that he served had the word "global" in it: "Global XXX Center." He took the job because he thought he saw a potential to synthesize his ideas of internationalization with this job despite his usual dislike of this kind of administrative work. The projects of the center aim to raise engineering students "as 'global leaders' (in English) with leadership, communication skills especially in English, and entrepreneurial ethics and spirit" through intensive training beyond a mere engineering-centered education. He thought that these efforts would eventually contribute to the paradigm shift of South Korean society toward a truly internationalized society, making students objectively see themselves and interact with foreign people and cultures; he was happy to play his part in this effort. I could understand where his confident manner came from.

Professor Yoo (social sciences, 47), who worked for the international program at his university, shared similar opinions with Professor Park, saying that South Korean universities could not resist the trend of internationalization in they were to survive because they had to compete with foreign universities. He acknowledged some existing “discomfort” surrounding internationalization and its accompanying pressures among professors, but he added that he felt that there also had been “significant changes” in the attitudes (e.g., from reluctance/resistance to acceptance) of the professor community toward it in recent years. He believed that if internationalization was solely dependent on the individual level, such as an individual professor’s passion and effort for publication in global journals or participation in international conferences, the internationalization of university would never be achieved.

However, not all of my informants felt the way Professor Park and Yoo felt or shared the same confidence in internationalization. Their senses of fulfillment or frustration as campus globalizers were different depending on the degree of internationalization of their universities, the degree of their individual involvement, the characteristics of their disciplines, or their seniority as professors. Some more willingly complied with the requests of the university than others. Yet, from time to time, I found that many, even the professors who actively engaged in internationalization efforts, revealed certain degrees of discomfort with state-imposed internationalization and the follow-up actions of universities. It was not only because these were extra burdens, newly imposed upon them. They showed discomfort when they felt that these forces ignored the nature of their work, the differences between disciplines – especially when they ignored the differences between quality and real contribution of scholarly work, and associated the mission of international education with pervasive obsession with rankings, external systems, and performance and efficiency, based on quantified figures, as I discuss below.

### A. *Changing Nature of Professors' Labor*

The strongest impact of globalization that most faculty in South Korean universities feel now is the abruptly shifting nature of academic labor. It includes the strong demand to internationalize the academic self. Western scholars have already observed that “the globalization of the political economy at the end of the twentieth century is destabilizing patterns of university professional work” with unprecedented changes (Slaughter and Leslie 1997, 1). South Korean professors are somewhat belatedly experiencing these changes in relatively contracted period but with stronger impacts at the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The university professor has been broadly considered one of the most stable and unchallenged jobs in South Korea. In addition, professors have been considered one of the most symbolic and respectable professional and intellectual communities in society and have enjoyed this aura of respectability until recently as I discussed in chapter two and will discuss more in chapter six. Traditionally, identities of professors as professionals have been formed while valuing “the individuation and reputation within self-regulating knowledge communities” and also professors’ role has been centered on teaching (Henkel 2000, 250). Until quite recently, South Korean professors could maintain their habitus in a comparatively relaxed academic environment: once professors were tenured, they could teach until their retirement, usually without any rigorous performance evaluations or excessive pressures, unless they critically misbehaved. They also have been relatively successful at protecting their jobs when workers in other workplaces have been laid off as a consequence of the restructuring processes after the Economic Crisis.<sup>58</sup> But, nowadays, most professors — the young and old together -- feel more

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<sup>58</sup> However, the recent restructuring process of universities, along with the growing competitiveness of the academic labor market, has created the exacerbation of inequality in academic staff, for example, in contract status, workload, and salary. Universities have shown a tendency to hire more hourly-based temporary staff (*sigan kangsa*) with fixed-term contracts than tenure-track academic staff on a permanent basis, focusing on the economical advantage of the

pressures in various ways in their profession than ever before and they are more likely to integrate both research and teaching as their central role. Furthermore, they have started to realize that research is no longer a private concern of the individual but has become a public and collective matter for the survival of institutions and the state (Henkel 2000, 254). Moreover, their individual internationalized levels of research (as well as teaching), e.g., their publications in international academic journals in English, are more critical to not only their own individual reputations as academics but also those of universities and the state than ever before.

South Korean faculty has been put in increasingly competitive situations under the state's restructuring policies. For the internationalization of research, first of all, the MOE has set new rules of competition among universities for national research funds and a new evaluation system to measure the academic performance of universities, in order to achieve the goal of upgrading South Korean universities to the level of a global standard of excellence. Among the government's internationalization policies, internationalizing research and academic staff has been one of the major agendas. Two major projects, the Brain Korea 21(BK 21) Project which was started in 1999, aiming to develop 10 world-class research-oriented universities, and the World Class University (WCU) Project, which was launched in 2008 to try to reverse "brain drain" and at the same time to attract prominent world-class scholars to South Korea, have been funded by the government as efforts to upgrade the research of universities and to nurture globally competitive researchers of the next generation (Byun and Kim 2011; T. Kim 2005).

At the same time, to measure the excellence of academic research and also distribute academic funds, specific criteria for the evaluation of research productivity have been imposed: e.g., detailed guidelines for the number of articles to be published in scholarly journals listed in

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practice. The rate of temporary academic staff among the newly hired has kept increasing in recently years, reaching 38.2% in 2012 from 14.9% in 2005 (*Kyosusinmun* 23 April, 2012).

the KCI (Korea Citation Index) within a certain time frame. The South Korean government has placed a particularly strong emphasis on worldwide visibility by demanding that research articles be published in globally acclaimed journals, as such as those listed in the Science Citation Index (SCI) or the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), attempting to spur the advancement of Korean universities' rankings in the international rankings of research universities (Byun and Kim 2011; T. Kim 2005).<sup>59</sup> Moreover, research productivity within these specific criteria has become the most critical factor for academic staff appraisal systems which affects promotion and salary differentials.<sup>60</sup> Professors who cannot comply with these new criteria of research recognition are “vulnerable individuals” in these competitive circumstances (Henkel 2000, 136). Although all of my informants acknowledged the significance of research to their professions and were in a relatively advantageous position to deal with this challenge as foreign doctorates, these professors often complained about these enforced, uniform policies and regulations of research.

Compared to professors in the humanities and social sciences, who tended to express more of a critical stance toward the changes, it seemed that scientists (including professors in engineering) felt less of an impact on their work by these internationalization and research

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<sup>59</sup> In fact, the articles published in international journals which are included in the SCI, jumped from 9,854 in 1999 to 25,494 in 2007 (Byun and Kim 2011, 475). See Byun and Kim (2011) for an overview of changing patterns of Korean government policies for internationalization of the higher education system since the mid-1990s.

<sup>60</sup> In Western universities, more varied employment contracts with staff, which incorporated different salary structures and different working conditions, were already introduced as the system moved away from the norm of relatively low salary differentials in the academic profession, as one can see, for example, in the British case at the end of 1980s (Halsey 1992, cited in Henkel 2000, 63). However, in South Korea, the introduction of the practice of a performance-based salary system in addition to the academic staff appraisal system is relatively new in universities, and thus it has only recently caused much anxiety in academia. For example, a *Dong-A Ilbo* article in 2008 reported the impact of an academic staff appraisal system on the tenure system in universities (4 March, 2008). Also, a news article in 2012 reported recent changes in the salary system and the responses of professors: for example, a senior professor expressed his frustration about the fact that some of his junior colleagues received almost twice his salary and confessed that his self-esteem was hurt. Korea University tried to adopt a new system that required professors (*chŏng kyosu*) to have at least one publication in a journal listed in SCI or SSCI for promotion in salary steps, in order to induce more production of research papers. (*Kyosusinmun* 22 October, 2012).

assessment policies. They felt that there was not much difference because these conditions were already embedded in their disciplines. Professor Chon (natural sciences, 51) spoke:

Well, in terms of internationalization, we are already internationalized. We publish many papers in English unlike humanities and social sciences, and that in itself is internationalization. We also consider it as the best way for internationalization. For example, in my case, I have kept publishing mine over one hundred. So in our discipline... well, I think, internationalization has been naturally accomplished. We present everything in English, so students also take it for granted while doing a research ... so they naturally get used to using English, not by being forced. [...] Therefore, uhm... it might be seen as a self-centered thought, haha [laughter]... I think that the best way to internationalize universities is more supports for professors...affording them better environment for research.

It seemed that Professor Chon almost identified the internationalization of research and/or the academic self with the internationalization of university. Professor Chon was actually involved in other activities for the internationalization of his university as well: e.g., he was teaching graduate classes in English, and he had arranged a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for an international project between his university and a state university on the east coast in the U.S., where his children attended when he was on sabbatical. However, interestingly, he described those efforts as not “critical” (in English) ones for internationalization but as a sort of “showoff” (in English). Professor Chon’s approach to internationalization was more individualistic, focusing on individual competitiveness of research, although he did acknowledge that there were disciplinary differences. He also did not resist the demand for articles published in journals listed in the SCI or the enforced research output criteria; he rather thought that the university had to support these individuals better to accomplish these things so as to eventually achieve internationalization.

Yet, in contrast to Professor Chon, it seemed that the pressure and impact were stronger on the professors in the humanities and social sciences. Professors in these disciplines

complained about that these demands made them write many unnecessary short articles that they did not really think academically significant. Professor Cho (social sciences, 51) spoke:

Although it's no use, whenever I go to the meetings with MOE or National Research Foundation of Korea, I repeatedly talked about this issue...saying, "Please reduce the quantity of required papers in the cases of humanities and social sciences. Uh...basic characteristics [of disciplines] are different and we need to write papers and books which last longer. [In these disciplines] we still read writings, written one hundred, even two hundred years before. But now we write papers with one-year longevity. This is not a right way."

Professor Cho's remark raises the question of what is real productivity in academic work and reveals the negative impact and crisis that these policies have brought about. In a similar vein, Mary Henkel discusses, in her study (2000), how British research assessment exercises attracted criticism from academics because they ignored different forms of knowledge, especially "those who valued the more private, reflective conception of knowledge, primarily historians and English scholars. The concept of maturation was prominent in their thinking, and for most of them books were valued more highly than articles" (139). Many of my informants especially in these disciplines shared Professor Cho's thoughts and expressed a sense of resistance against neoliberal systems and ideas that assumed that the productivity of academic work could be uniformly counted by external figures and by "endorsing bureaucratic definitions of quality" in an extremely competitive mode (Henkel 2000, 79).

On top of this, the publication of articles in English is another burden, even to my informants who have U.S. doctoral degrees, and are seemingly in a more advantageous position than domestic doctorates. The demand to produce articles in journals listed in the SCI or SSCI does not just mean a pressure to write good articles in English, but it does in fact limit what can be thought, written, and researched to that which can be published in these mostly Western journals. By forcing and pushing academics to publish articles in Western journals regardless of

their own personal research agendas, the state/universities further, though probably unintentionally, make their academics take more for granted and succumb more readily to the First World's power and knowledge, complying with “the parameters of knowledge through a series of ‘rules’ about what are acceptable and legitimate modes of knowing,” while at the same time ignoring the push for research to address the concern and needs of different geographical spaces or nations (Sidhu 2006, ix; Chu 2009; Kang 2009; Lin 2009).

One of my informants confessed his embarrassment that he actually had a hard time writing research articles to meet the new standard after having spent several years devoting his services to administrative work for his university. He also was a proud teacher who had received recognition as a good professor by students; I witnessed the plaque for the “outstanding teacher award” in his office. However, now he was trying to reboot his academic desires as a researcher despite his senior position. There have been increasing demands made on competent professionals. Although there are differences in terms of the intensity of pressure and the level of acceptance of the change, it looks as if they are going through, to some extent, unsettling experiences, expecting that some changes to their habitus as South Korean professors will be made. Senior professors felt less pressure than junior professors, and yet it seemed that they all felt that they could not swim against the tide, no matter what they felt about it — whether it was positive or negative.

### *B. Teaching English-medium Classes*

The importance of English in university research and teaching has increased more than ever as internalization has become a major agenda for enhancing the competitiveness of South Korean universities. There already has been an increased emphasis on English as the lingua

franca of higher education in general, but what is relatively new is the introduction of English-medium programs in universities. Professors' English skills are necessary and valued not only for publication in English as scholars, but also for lectures in English-medium classes (*yǒng'ŏ kangŭi*) as teachers in their universities. English-medium classes exist not only for foreign students but also for domestic students. Universities give incentives to professors for teaching English-medium classes to increase the number of these classes. Just as I had presumed, almost all of my informants who had studied in English-speaking countries, especially professors in the sciences and engineering, had experience teaching classes in English at their universities. These professors are the people who know better than others the importance of English. However, their personal responses to the implementation of English-medium classes varied.

In our university, newly hired professors are unconditionally required to teach three English-medium classes for two years. Although most of them are foreign doctorates, there is no consideration of their individual English proficiency. It doesn't make any sense because some cases, because of the characteristics of their majors, it can be difficult for them. But it is so-called internationalization, internationalization! Why? Because of the assessment of universities. Internationalization comprises a large portion of evaluation scores of universities. (Professor Ha, humanities, 52)

Professor Ha was in a high administrative position at his university and was supposed to follow and execute the policies imposed by MOE and the university, but he revealed a critical attitude toward English-medium classes, especially of their uniformity. As he points out, English-medium classes have been increasingly in demand as an evaluation criterion of internationalization. During the interviews, my informants often referred to the rankings and assessment of universities conducted by *Joongang Ilbo*, one of major news papers in South Korea, since 1994 and exposed their discomfort toward them. The degree of internationalization has been newly included since 2006 as an important criterion in the assessment of universities by

*Joongang Ilbo*.<sup>61</sup> The indicators of internationalization in 2006 and 2007 were comprised of the proportions of foreign faculty (20%), foreign students who register for degree programs (15%), student exchange arrangements with universities overseas (10%), foreign study abroad students in the university (5%), English-medium classes among major courses (20%), and so on. In terms of curriculum, both the state and universities emphasize English-medium teaching and learning (Y. Kim 2009, 27-29; Joonang Ilbo 18 October, 2012). Most professors understood and admitted the necessity of the English-medium classes for internationalization, but they were also doubtful about the effectiveness of the current classes.

Many professors felt that the English-medium program, in most cases, was hastily executed before content and meaning -- which they thought were more important -- could be well-prepared and delivered. Thus the classes had various practical and potential difficulties. In order for the program to succeed, professors should first be assisted to “pursue the aim of internationalization in their teaching practices, curricula and delivery of courses” (Liddicoat, cited in Sanderson 2008, 281). However, it seemed that it did not work this way at South Korean universities. The ironic situation of one of my informants, who was an English professor at an elite university, is a good example. Recently Professor Sohn (47) received a new mission to develop teaching methods for English-medium classes from his university. The program had already been running at his university and he understood that his mission’s ultimate goal was to further increase the number of English-medium classes. However, he told me that he personally opposed English medium-classes, especially the ones for domestic students. He opposed the idea primarily because he could predict the poor quality of the classes which he thought would lack depth. He argued that the improvement of the quality of the classes and university was the very

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<sup>61</sup> The total assessment scores of universities by *Joongang Ilbo* are composed four elements: the condition of education (95), the degree of internationalization (70), research productivity (115), and reputation and employment of graduates (70) in 2010 (Joongang Ilbo 27 September, 2010).

first thing to do for internationalization rather than the increase of English-medium classes. He further thought that internationalization should move in the direction of making foreign students want to take high-quality classes in Korean at Korean universities while learning about Korean culture. Another professor expressed a similar thought. He said, “You know, as the food is scrumptious, the restaurant is packed with guests without any advertisement. Likewise, if the university is excellent with internal stability and substance, foreign students and scholars will seek to come here. They don’t come here just because of the number of English-medium classes.” Although some might not share same opinion, these professors’ thoughts might reflect other professors’ general criticism of the lack of preparation, content, and cultural meaning of internationalization at South Korean universities.

Moreover, professors in lower-tiered universities often described the reality of English-medium classes with a skeptical tone, saying, “Actually, both students and professors are not ready for those classes.” Their students had even more difficulties taking English-medium classes than students at top universities. It was not only a big burden for both students and professors, but it also sometimes had the unintentional effect of making the students more discouraged and dispirited. Professors at these universities felt relatively less pressure to teach English-medium classes, compared to professors at top universities. However, in the current atmosphere, as an informant expressed, professors who could not teach class in English often felt that they were “incompetent.”

Yet, Professor Koo (business, 52) at a top university felt somewhat differently. He had a long history of teaching English-medium classes. He started teaching English-medium classes at his university when he was an instructor there in 1994 after he had returned to South Korea with his U.S. degree. At that time, there were two or three students who could speak English well

among about 30 students in a class and he taught the class in English with confidence. After taking several years off, he taught an English-medium class again a year ago at the request of his university. At that time, he voluntarily chose to teach the class although the university asked him to encourage other professors to teach English-medium classes. He said he did so because he felt sorry to make other professors do it. He soon noticed that there were only two or three students who spoke English worse than him among about 30 students. Most of them were exchange students or students who had lived abroad before. He spoke, “When they complained that they could not understand me, my voice became louder and louder, ha-ha [laughter]. Whenever the class ended, I had a pain in the back of my head because of tension.” He told me that he would never want to teach an English-medium class again. Every university has different requirements for English-medium classes and other international programs as well, but these requirements were often ignored.

These professors did not just complain about their burden of teaching in English as non-native speakers. In fact, a few professors expressed their enthusiasm toward English-medium classes despite their own practical burden and problems. Most of them, however, criticized its ineffectiveness and inefficiency in reality in both teaching and learning. Some thought that it was very necessary to first set up the system as quickly as possible and then they could gradually improve it by fixing problems. But more felt that these were only external systems that lacked content; they felt that it was a waste of the time and energy of professors and students. They suspected that the basic intention of this program was only to meet the evaluation criteria. Their ultimate target of criticism was the university and the state: short-term plans and practices without long-term goals and lacking the basic principles of internationalization, the program’s

unpreparedness, uniformity and so on. An informant described it cynically, “They internationalize in a Korean way.”

### *C. Playing the Broker Role for Internationalization*

My informants’ activities as campus globalizers were not limited to participation in the internationalization of their own research and teaching English-medium classes. Many of them were involved in other diverse activities and willing to play the broker role for the internationalization of their universities, actively using their international networks and skills. Since 1997, some elite South Korean universities have opened international graduate school programs to train professionals to work for international organizations and trade. Following in quick succession, there have been openings of international colleges one after another. International colleges have been increasingly popular among South Korean universities as one strategy for internationalizing the university. Some of my informants, in fact, had worked or currently worked for these programs. Recently, a few elite universities, such as SNU and Yonsei University, have tried to expand their international colleges under so-called ambitious master plans with state supports, while building separate campuses such as Sihŭng or Songdo international business district. These projects were still controversial and there was uncertainty about the possibility of their success despite the universities’ efforts moving ahead, e.g., building their infrastructure at the time of the interviews. My informants showed both positive and negative reactions toward them. However, it is also clear that these universities needed even more support and contribution from their faculty. Not only did they need professors who would directly work for these international colleges at these elite universities but they also needed professors across the board who had enough international networks, skills, and experiences to

play a certain role for their universities. My informants were also playing that role, making academic connections with foreign universities -- for example, they would recruit foreign students and scholars, arrange international projects and cooperation with foreign universities, set up experimental video-conference-style classes with foreign professors and so forth -- while also accommodating with various on-campus, inbound, and outbound internationalizing efforts.

All of my informants indeed hoped that their universities would successfully accomplish internationalization since they acknowledged the necessity for it in the face of globalization. However, this does not mean that they all spoke with one voice about how to go about doing it. Therefore they experienced different frustrations and hopes while respectively playing their role. Some found their own thinking evolving as they more actively participated in the role of campus globalizer. Professor Lee (natural sciences, 50) was an active globalizer for his university. He has not only taught English-medium classes for three years, but also organized many international symposiums and conferences. He told me that he now very well realized the importance of internationalization that he could not recognize in his study abroad years. The more he got involved in the work of internationalization, the more he learned from these experiences. He highly valued the joint work between domestic universities and foreign universities for internationalization: joint research, joint teaching/classes, and joint degrees etc. He thought these were the fastest and the most effective ways to be internationalized. He argued that the bilateral approach to trying to understand and learn from each other was really necessary for accomplishing “genuine” (*chinjŏnghan*) internationalization. What he was currently putting great effort into, at the time of the interview, was an arrangement of a dual degree system for an M.A. program between his university and a private university in the U.S., using his academic networks. He truly believed that the dual degree system had many advantages for both

universities and their students. According to him, it was a “win-win system” (in English) that both universities could benefit from and also equally learn from each other.

However, what he acutely realized nowadays was how much the internationalization of South Korean universities leaned towards “showing off,” getting away from genuine internationalization efforts and finding easier ways. Professor Lee revealed his frustration caused by his own university. While he and his colleagues were pushing forward with the dual degree project, they met an unexpected obstacle. The headquarters of his university objected to the project because the counterpart was not a very renowned university in South Korea. His elite university wanted the U.S. counterpart to have a name value that reached the level of so-called Ivy League schools like Harvard University or MIT so as to match its own name and to have a positive return on the rankings. He said:

The pride of prestigious university in South Korea was so strong that it became an obstacle of internationalization. Although we have meetings and sign the MOU with the university, actually, it’s not like we just work with the counterpart university, but we get opportunities working with the renowned scholars in that university, in the U.S., in the world. But those opportunities are going to be blocked.

It was regrettable for him that his university was going to lose the good chance to substantially internationalize the university and to attract more excellent students in the future. He added that the pervasive and obsessive idea of “rankings” and “fame” really hindered the successful internationalization of his university and South Korean universities in general. His anecdote well represents the often shared frustration among professors who take internationalization seriously and are willing to contribute to it as campus globalizers. They were often disappointed by symbolic, ceremonial, and performative internationalization practices of their universities and “prevailing instrumental logic” (Sidhu 2006, 15).

The other side of the same coin was expressed by another informant. Professor Noh (natural sciences, 52) expressed his dissatisfaction with the current mode of internationalization saying, “First of all, I think it’s not right to take for granted that we are in an inferior, lower position in the process of internationalization.” He criticized the fact that South Korean universities were more than willing to pay a lot to bring foreign scholars to their universities, especially under the name of WCU, just to show off, as if they could not internationalize their universities without those foreign scholars. Further, in his view, these were not actually highly competent scholars because he thought that top-class scholars rarely wanted to come to South Korean universities; this view was largely shared by other informants. He did not like the attitude of South Korean universities that implicitly devalued South Korean scholars as mediocre. Professor Noh had pride in his own excellence as a scientist and a teacher. He had trained his students as the best scientists and sent them to prestigious graduate programs in the U.S. Because they had performed so excellently as superb scientists and received recognition while publishing their work in major journals such as *Nature* and *Science*, U.S. universities began to recognize that students from Professor Noh’s lab were very worthy to take on as graduate students. Professor Noh thought that although he did not sign any MOUs with these universities, he had established international trust and earned credit not just for himself but also for his university and country by raising internationally competent students and showing the excellence of Korean scholarship.

As I presented in the cases of Professor Lee and Noh, every professor might have different thoughts, visions, and hopes for the internationalization of their universities, thus their experiences and approaches would be not same. Moreover, their activities and contributions as agents of internationalization were not always in accord with their own beliefs or preferences. I

already presented above the cases of Professor Sohn who had an unwanted obligation to develop the teaching methods for an English-medium class against his belief, and Professor Chon who concentrated his efforts at internationalization on his research and devalued other activities as “showoff,” but still played the broker role, successfully arranging the MOU between his university and a state university in the U.S. even during his own sabbatical. Fascinatingly, however, Professor Chon also gave a talk at that same state university during his sabbatical year while his children were in the audience watching him giving the talk, which made both himself and his children proud. At that moment, he might have shared his pride as a competent cosmopolitan and an internationalized professional with his children.

Some informants were untiringly enthusiastic with a lot of confidence, some just played the role to follow the trend and adapt to the circumstances, but others became reluctant to play the role of campus globalizers when they realized that the practices did not match with their ideals. Yet, even the frustration, conflict, or confusion that my informants frequently expressed during the interviews might not be too different from the other side of their efforts to find a way to work towards “genuine” internationalization at their universities. They often showed their sincere concern for the way internationalization worked. As an informant described, “They [the university and the state] just want to paint a color first, rather than deeply think about how we lay the basis for it. And I am worrying about it.” They worried about the superficiality, the lack of philosophy, and the absence of long-term visions and plans for internationalization.

### **III. Ambivalent Globalizers, “Genuine” Internationalization**

To a greater or lesser degree, most of my informants expressed pride as internationalized professionals. However, they also to some extent shared ambivalences about being campus

globalizers. There was a coexistence of will and reluctance. For some, the ambivalent or inconsistent attitude toward internationalization originated from personal inner contradiction, but for others it came from lack of confidence or discomfort with the modus operandi of internationalization and its implication. Through interviews with my informants, I found that there was an issue often bugging their minds as campus globalizers, although sometimes it was not clearly uttered or expressed.

One of my informants elaborated this issue well. According to him, there were two kinds of approaches toward internationalization: First, there was the approach of trying to change people's minds and thoughts in advance through such things as campaigns; second, there was the approach of setting up the system first and then encouraging people to fit themselves into it. And Professor Kwon (business, 55) thought that South Korean universities chose the second approach.

He spoke:

Because it takes long time to change people's thought as if it takes long time to change the culture of a society. Well, our society is not yet reached to that level [to choose the first]. Changing system can be done faster and it is an advantage..., but isn't changing the way of thought more important? Having open minds is more crucial [for internationalization] than having foreign professors and students on campus or speaking foreign languages well.

Professor Kwon, who was one of deans of this university, well understood the circumstances that made universities prefer the second approach to the first. However, he felt sorry for about the decision because he thought that only people who had an open mind and wider perspective could learn and accept the diversity of life when they contacted foreign people, languages, and cultures. I sensed that the internationalization efforts of the university often did not meet the cosmopolitan criteria of some of my informants, even if it could meet the criteria of the state.

A. *Cosmopolitan Teachers: a Fundamental Building Block for Internationalization*

In this vein, the case of Professor Hyun (engineering, 52) is very intriguing. His story brings my discussion of professors' role as agents of internationalization to another dimension, i.e., to a bit more of a philosophical dimension. Professor Hyun confused me with many honest but contradictory comments and attitudes during his interview. In his attitudes toward internationalization, passiveness and activeness were both mixed. He told me that his life as a professional was "already" and also "inevitably" internationalized because of the characteristics of his discipline. He proactively taught English-medium classes before others did when they were requested, because he thought this would be the irresistible future direction. In addition, whenever the university requested his cooperation with things related to internationalization, he always tried to actively comply with it because he thought that he should do it anyway. However, interestingly, he confessed his feelings this way: "Actually, I want to live resisting 'globalization' (in English), hahaha [laughter]. That's my honest feeling. Although internationalization is an irresistible trend and we should get ready for it, anyway, I feel the less [internationalization] the better." He was explicitly ambivalent about internationalization. He had an especially reluctant attitude toward inbound policies of internationalization. He went on to say that he did not mind if foreign students took his classes, but he did not like having foreign students in his lab. He spoke:

Why should I educate foreigners? Why should I put my energy and time for them? I know, it will eventually helpful for their countries and somewhat for our country. But... maybe I am so Korean. I want to teach only Korean students. I had studied in England with their help though, to be honest, I don't like to have Indian students in my lab."

Surprised, I asked him again if this is really how he felt, reminding him that he was raising his children to have an international education in Canada. He awkwardly laughed for a moment, but soon he confirmed that that was his honest feeling. He thought that outbound internationalization

by which Korean students could learn from developed countries was more desirable than inbound internationalization through which more students came from underdeveloped countries.

I was somewhat shocked because his remarks, to some degree, reflected South Korean popular sentiments toward recent multicultural changes in South Korean society. These were also the last words that I expected to hear from my informant who had a cosmopolitan yearning for his children, especially when considering that his children were also minorities in Western society. In fact, as the numbers of incoming foreign students in South Korean universities have increased and recently reached about 100,000 students, some issues have been floating around. First and foremost has been the discrimination of foreign students, especially non-white students, on campuses and in society in general (Dong-A Ilbo 21 November, 2011). It is also shocking because, through the internationalization of education, both international students and domestic students are supposed to “develop the international perspective and cross cultural sensitivity that are essential attributes of the effective citizen of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and which gives us the skills and personal capacity to respond positively to globalization” (Yerbury, cited in Sidhu 2006, 1-2). And if these attributes are required for the students, what about the professors?

Although some informants emphasized that the internationalization of professors was more urgent than that of students, from the case above, it is suggested that internationalized professors are not necessarily cosmopolitan teachers. Terry Kim (2005; 2008) points out that although academics with U.S. doctoral degrees have become a part of the tradition of the South Korean university, this does not necessarily lead to the internationalization of South Korean higher education. In her studies, she often points out the lack of bi/multi-cultural attitudes of South Korean academics even among professors with foreign doctoral degrees. She argues that “The overall character of university academic culture is homogeneously Korean” and “culturally

the internal sociology of the contemporary university in South Korea is still very local in practice” regardless of the official emphasis on internationalization (2005, 93-94). In spite of their pride as internationalized professionals, their study abroad experiences by which some informants are hugely impacted, and even more the experience of raising children abroad, it seems that some professors still do not want to move beyond their own habitus and boundaries and have somewhat failed to gain intercultural or cosmopolitan perspective and sensitivity.

Yet, Professor Hyun does not represent the thoughts of all of my informants. Other professors shared more cosmopolitan ideas of the internationalization of the university. For example, Professor Noh (natural sciences, 52) spoke:

Although we have to compete with developed countries in the era of globalization by raising competent students, we should not forget other thing too, the contribution to the world community. I believe we have dual responsibility. Our country is not a poor country anymore, you know. We have to educate and train the capable students in poor countries such as uhm... Pakistan or Nepal... so they can contribute to develop their own countries. I believe so.

Many other professors echoed this notion in different words: “We should pursue internationalization from the point of view of seeking how we contribute to the world, the global community. If our students don’t have that kind of mindset as global citizens, they in fact don’t have competitiveness”; “Open mind, attitude, and ethos are prerequisite of internationalization. Korean society needs maturation than development”; “I sent my children abroad because I wanted them to be educated in the society based on pluralism. Likewise, I want my student to experience pluralism through internationalization of university. Internationalization does not mean just making them do English well. It is regrettable our university doesn’t have a systematic long-term plan with this perspective” and so forth. They revealed their hope in cosmopolitanism for the “true/real/genuine” internationalization of their universities. For some, they had at least a personal, emotional motivation to be a cosmopolitan teacher with more empathy, creating a more

accepting environment, as Professor Yim (social sciences, 54) said: “You know, there are foreign students coming to our university. Those children cannot speak Korean well. I often think that I’m going to treat them well, taking care of them [because they remind me of my children].”

According to the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) definition of internationalization, it is “the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension in the teaching, research and service of the institution” (Knight & de Wit, cited in Sidhu 2006, 2). Obviously, it is not just about having foreign professors, foreign students, English lectures, or new buildings or campuses. Gavin Sanderson (2008) pays attention to the experiences of teachers and their roles and responsibilities in the internationalization of (Australian) higher education and emphasizes the importance of the “cosmopolitan teacher” in higher education. And he argues that a university that “encourages its teachers to engage positively with diversity is going to be better placed to take advantage of the opportunities brought by current global flows” (301), while making an “opportunity for humanistic advancement in the face of present neoliberal, neoconservative, and implicit neoimperial agendas influencing politics, economics, education, and culture” (302). Also, as Konrad Gunesch (2004) argues, cosmopolitanism could constitute an alternative to or complement for international education; the “desirable individual outcome” of international education has to be “rooted in the concept of cosmopolitanism” (253). In this vein, it seems that the internationalization approach of South Korean universities is far from the ideals that the scholars above suggest because not only did it start as a instrumental survival tool in a global competition, but also because, by and large, South Korean universities have been obsessed with external development and dominated by rankings and economic considerations.

As shown in the first section above, the goals of the internationalization of higher education are more instrumentally associated with “neoliberal and hegemonic imperatives” (Sanderson 2008, 296). Therefore, as Matthews and Sidhu argue, “In the absence of concerted efforts on the part of educational institutions to sponsor new forms of global subjectivity, flows and exchanges like those that constitute international education are more likely to produce a neo-liberal variant of global subjectivity” (cited in Sanderson 2008, 296). As I showed, my informants experienced struggles as campus globalizers who enacted international policies and strategies through their own teaching, research, networks, and administration services. This might be more because of the relatively immature phase of internationalization at South Korean universities. The gap between ideas/hope and practices/frustration often led to ambivalence in my informants, making them feel that something fundamental was missing -- principles. I do not mean to suggest that all of my informants are active globalizers or cosmopolitans. However, what I found was that, for some of these geese-dad professors, cosmopolitanism was one of the most crucial principles of the internationalization of universities.

#### *B. Ambivalent Globalizers: Struggles for the Real Agents' Role*

Globalization has had strong impacts not only on my informants' private lives, but also on their professional lives, although the perception of this impact was somewhat different according to professors' seniority, discipline, and university. The intense internationalizing efforts by the state and the university have affected the nature of their work, and one result was that they played the role of campus globalizers as part of a new mission. Although my informants, mostly as the U.S. doctorates, had a relatively advantageous position to deal with challenges related to internationalization, the ways that they responded to their given mission

were not identical. As shown above, I observed some trends shared by certain groups of informants, e.g., the difference in the responses to the demand of internationalization of the academic self between scientists and humanist/social scientists. However, it is also impossible to group the trends of my informants with clear-cut demographic demarcations, e.g., saying that most senior professors, for example, in social sciences at top universities showed certain tendency toward internationalization, since each demographic factor does not work monolithically, but all factors rather complicatedly intertwine with each other depending on different issues.

These professors' individual relationship to international activities is very different. They either assimilated to the logic of trend because they could not go against it, or stayed away somewhat because they did not want to be swayed by the trend. Some professors thought that the internationalization of the academic self, mostly involving getting recognition for research, was the more urgent and effective way of internationalization. But some enthusiastically participated in institutional efforts of internationalization and ardently played their role since they believed it was more effective and faster. However, most of them were more likely to be caught in-between in the process: they were either actively or reluctantly playing the requested roles for internationalization, but also had to in some way deal with the nagging issues of the gap between ideals and reality, expressing that South Korean universities and more broadly South Korean society was not realizing "genuine" internationalization. Thus, they often showed reluctance "to simply 'go along with' the globalization agenda" presented by their institutions and the state and "to assimilate globalization practices, almost through unconscious osmosis" (Currie 1998, 6 and 11). Sometimes, the institutionalized globalization efforts did not match well with their own cosmopolitanism or vicarious cosmopolitanism.

Concluding the chapter, I would like to introduce A. Campbell's interesting analogy of people being either frogs or snails when dealing with other cultures, cited in Sanderson (2008, 299):

The frogs are happy to jump headlong into the cultural pond and let diversity and difference wash over them. [...] The snails, however, carry their houses (their culture) on their back wherever they go, hardly exposing themselves to other cultures at all.

Although they might have felt that they were internationalized, I think most of my informants were probably people who were "snail-like" in their study abroad period, except a few who were distinctively impacted by their experiences, as I explained in chapter four. Indeed, one of my informants said, "American culture had had no influence what so ever on me during my study abroad period, except in an academic aspect." He was a "snail." However, currently he was educating his son in the U.S. and he expected his son to jump into the pond and swim there. In addition, he himself also worked for the international college at his university. These certainly have been transformative experiences for him. In another example, when asked about why he sent his daughter to the U.S., Professor Ahn (social sciences, 48) answered me that it was primarily because he was internationalized, thanks to his study abroad and other international experiences in foreign countries. His daughter was affected by these experiences as well, although to some extent he was influenced by his friends who had already sent their children abroad. He said that unless people spend time in other countries, they cannot really know about themselves and their own culture because they cannot objectify themselves. "That's why I sent my daughter there," he said. Indeed, during the interview with him, my impression was that he really accepted his daughter's becoming a "frog." Likewise, he said that what was lacking in the internationalization of South Korean universities was the consideration of how we would eventually contribute to the world through internationalization. He also wanted to raise his

students as cosmopolitans who would contribute to the world regardless of where they were, even if they could not have abroad experiences. Most of these geese-dad professors did not want their next generation to live just as snail-like people.

In this chapter, I asked and also tried to unravel the paradox of these geese-dad professors: how they dealt with the plausible ontological irony of being campus globalizers and at the same time fathers who sent their children abroad for international education. Intriguingly, it was not just an irony, contradiction, or a conflict at all: certainly, these geese-dad professors have continued to become more cosmopolitan through their vicarious experiences, and the cosmopolitanism was also reflected in their profession to a greater or lesser degree. Many of them were the critical or cynical consumers of the university's rationales and techniques of globalization, knowing that the realization of the ideals could not be soon achieved for their children in the present imperfect systems of the universities. However, on the other hand, this very awareness also keeps motivating them to seek more genuine internationalization efforts in their role as campus globalizers.

I put the excerpt (Sanderson 2008) at the beginning of this chapter because I think it shows well what it has meant for South Korean professors to be agents for the internationalization of the university. As Sanderson points out, professors are "a fundamental building block" for internationalization and need to internationalize their personal and professional outlooks as cosmopolitans to become the real agents of internationalization. I interpret my informants' struggles above, to a large extent, as their desire to contribute to the "genuine" internationalization of their universities, while working as a "building block." Further, we may wait and see how things turn out: if these geese-dad professors provide the cultural space and environment with intercultural acceptance and cosmopolitanism for the

internationalization of their universities and South Korean society; if they may foster cosmopolitan perspectives of students and further change South Korean university cultures.

## CHAPTER SIX

### NOSTALGIC INTELLECTUALS, AUTONOMOUS PROFESSIONALS

Foucault argues that through practices that he dubbed ‘technologies of self’ we are capable of assuming or rejecting particular subjectivities ahead of others. Our words and deeds in everyday life are opportunities to choose and to overcome particular expressions of personhood. Foucault also suggests that there can be a contingent dimension to the subjectivities that we inhabit and, furthermore, that the subject positions available to us are not fixed but ever shifting as circumstance change (Sidhu 2006, x)

“What a difference it was!” Professor Chung (humanities, 42), who was recently hired as an assistant professor, expressed the surprise that he felt right after he finally became a professor (*kyosu*). He confessed that the treatment he got from others -- no matter what kind of social event he was attending -- before and after being hired as a professor was tremendously different although he was the same person with the same clothes and the same car. He spoke:

For example, the husband of my wife’s older sister is a manager of one of famous conglomerates. He has a nice job, right? He is younger than me, but I call him *hyōngnim* (older brother). He had always felt sorry for me before [I became a professor], even if he didn’t think of me pathetic. Then, after I became a professor, our positions were completely reversed. Whenever I met him, he expressed his own mixed feeling of enviousness, jealousy, and frustration [on himself]. I often felt same kind of feelings from others too. I keenly realized, ‘Ah, this is the social perception of the professor. What a privileged occupation the professor is!’

Professor Chung told me that he sometimes felt he was overlooked when he was a lecturer (*kangsa*). However, after experiencing the reality of two different statuses firsthand, these days he has really felt sorry for academics who cannot become professors because he knows that there is not such a big difference between professors and lecturers in their knowledge and character, and he feels that gaining the professor position was due in part to luck.

Professor Chung’s account shows to what extent South Korean professors still sustain high social status in terms of honor and respect even though it is said that the status of professors have been gradually lowered and devalued due to the rapid increase of the number of professors

and colleges. According to Hong Tusŭng's study, the professor's social prestige index of occupation (*sahoejök chiköp wisin chömsu*) was second only to the judge's in South Korea in 2006 (2010 64-67). It could be said that the prestige and privilege of professors in South Korea is still much higher than that of professors in Western countries, especially in the U.S, where professors are mostly likely treated as just academics.

### **I. Disruption of Habitus and Nostalgia for Intellectual Aura**

However, my informants also frequently talked about the differences they perceived between professors in the past and in the present. As I already pointed out in chapter five, there has been increasing demand on professors to change their habitus. Professors Cho (social science, 51) spoke, "I have been a professor for fifteen years. At the time when I was junior faculty, one senior professor told me that the good old days for professors are already gone, hahaha (laughter). I think he was right." Many others echoed the idea, saying that the "myth" of the professor was gone -- both the profession as an envious stable occupation and the professor as a respectable social figure. I often sensed my interviewees' mixed feelings of acceptance and frustration towards the change. I discussed in the previous chapter the kinds of challenges South Korean professors have recently faced in their profession and how these challenges have transformed the nature of academic labor. Many informants pointed out that the changes in the environment and culture of South Korean universities reached an extent that professors two or three decades ago could never imagine.

Bourdieu, in *Homo Academicus* (1988), analyzes the tensions in French higher education at specific historical juncture of 1968 during which some critical transitions took place because of grave changes in university demographics – the great increase in students and the

corresponding growth in the demand for professors -- and the economic needs of society. Despite the gap of several decades, the challenges and circumstances that French academics faced at that time are somewhat similar to those that South Korean academics today face, especially in the fact that the tensions and challenges in South Korea have been caused by changing demographics, economic trends, and increased desire for socio-economic advancement/social mobility through education. Bourdieu reveals the ways in which French academics tended to react to these shifts and pressures on higher education and how the mechanisms of reproduction of faculty members operated in this transition. This dissertation does not analyze this subject as in-depth as Bourdieu does. In addition, the reactions of academics in Bourdieu's time in France and those in South Korea today are not identical due to their different chronotopes and cultural traditions. However, his study still gives insight into understanding the struggles that South Korean academics now go through in responding to changes in the academy by taking a look at how habitus works in the midst of the changes and how different academic generations are formed through the process. If there are significant differences between the Bourdiean case and mine, they are, first, that South Korean universities have already passed through the stage of expansion, unlike the French case in Bourdieu's study; second, who has more "globally" recognized cultural capital has become even more important in reproducing faculty members and shaping the university culture in South Korea today in the face of globalization than it was in Bourdieu's study.

Through changing expectations from both inside and outside of academia, professors' habitus was disrupted and it brought new tensions to their lives. That is, the words, "the good old days for professors are already gone" reveal the ethos of professors in this transition. This transition and the accompanying tensions affect the subjectivities of professors not only as academics but also as intellectuals. In a sense, South Korean professors are double-burdened in

this moment: they have to adopt themselves as academic professionals to rapidly changing new environments in the face of globalization, as academics in other countries have started to do as well, but at the same time they have to decide to what extent they will hold fast to their traditional roles and given expectations as South Korean intellectuals, which were discussed in chapter two. It seems that, on the one hand, they are experiencing a crisis of identity, but on the other hand, they have an opportunity to redefine the role of South Korean professors.

Through the interviews, I noticed that these professors themselves were somewhat confused by the changing demands on professors and subsequent shift of the location of professors in society. Nonetheless, they tended to adopt themselves to the trend. Professor Choi (humanities, 56) expressed his acceptance of the change: “Professors, like in other professions, are objectively evaluated according to their ability these days, rather than unconditionally respected as they were in the past. But I rather think of it positively, since I interpret it as the evidence that our society begins to fall into place.” Yet, when I asked him if this was general perception among professors, he said, “Ah...actually [we] don’t feel all right. Yes, somewhat frustrated or ...so to speak... missing spring days, already passed (*chinagan pomnaldŭl*)? The past was better for us, but it has to be in this way and it can’t be helped.” But he also thought that professors were still respected in general. Professor Min (education, 48) also showed a positive attitude toward the change. He spoke, “It is only fair to demand a professor to research hard and evaluate him... it makes sense to me. I rather criticize some senior professors who gave up on research at a certain point, usually after they got promoted.” He further thought that these ongoing changes could break the old university culture which tended to keep vested rights and tight hierarchy by hiring junior faculty based on personal connections (*inmaek*). He went on, “Young professors these days are more “liberal” (in English) and reasonable and do not accept

the old culture. It is not just because of evaluation, but they have aspiration for research. They have a high self-esteem and want to be recognized in their field.”

These professors often thought that professors in the past maintained the aura of socially respectable intellectuals better than now. Yet, they said they lived in a different era. “In the past, for example during the democratization period, some professors were especially more respected even though they were not actually excellent scholars. It was because they had more courage [to resist the power] than others, you know. In terms of that aspect, professors these days might be less courageous, but the era that we live in is different,” Professor Sohn (humanities, 47) said. He said that he wanted to contribute to society with his professional knowledge rather than directly making a social critique. These professors tended to think that they were obliged to contribute to society since they still enjoyed more honor and respect as professors than people in any other occupation. Especially, senior professors and professors in humanities and social sciences more often expressed nostalgia for the aura of socially responsible intellectuals that professors in the past enjoyed. “Of course, who I want to be is the professor who has the aura of intellectuals, but I don’t think I myself have that aura. It is not easy...going in that way...although I wish...,” said Professor Moon (social science, 47). Even professors who used words like “sense of duty” or “social responsibility” felt that young/new professors might feel differently from them since they were increasingly being pushed to reach certain academic criteria (as I discuss in chapter five) and struggled with fulfilling these new requirements. In fact, Professor Chung (humanities, 42), a junior faculty, whom I introduced above said, “Honestly, I am not in the position to discuss social responsibility as an intellectual since my life is too hectic as a newly hired professor.” They agreed that the trend had already started changing the culture of universities and that it would be difficult to go against it regardless of how ambivalent they were about it.

A generational difference was also frequently recognized during the interviews. The professors in a middle position of seniority in particular more often expressed their conflicts as the sandwiched generation between the old and new generations. For instance, Professor Park (engineering, 49) spoke:

More and more we focus on producing knowledge with a functional consideration, because... when the university hired professors, they do not expect us to be a man of virtue like *sŏnbi* (literati) or a Renaissance man of broad knowledge, you know. Universities see their depth of professional knowledge and scholarship, no matter how narrow it is, and then keep evaluate them to make them productive. It is their expectation. That's the reality, but only our society is still confused about it, demanding, so to speak, the higher moral standard and social leadership from professors."

I asked him, "If society is confused about it, how about yourself?" He immediately answered, "I am confused too...really I am." He went on to say, "Oh, I don't dare to have an aura of the professor who is respected as the so-called intellectual and moral exemplar. However, it probably subconsciously keeps affecting me, even now." He added that even professors in younger generation might not be totally free from these social expectations which were subtly working.

Recent changes in higher education consequently have formed "different modes of 'academic generation'" among professors. The "academic generations" do not simply mean age groups, but different groups of academics, whose expectations, attitudes, and outlook on the given changes in universities are considerably different (Bourdieu 1988, 147). "Unlike us, it seems that most young professors take for granted the changes of expectations [created by the restructuring process]," a senior professor said. The new academic generation has to be academically more productive and better equipped with cultural capital like English skills and transnational networks in addition to professional knowledge. They develop their own expectations of their job. In contrast to the old-generation academics in Bourdieu's study, who

were frightened by the interruption of “the rhythm of the old university life-cycle” and feeling that they were relatively deprived of “the benefit of the expansion of the universities,” the younger generation of South Korean professors these days, rather, feels that they are comparatively disadvantaged by “the new rules of the game” which have become stricter and more demanding than those of the older generation (156). Recognizing on-going changes, not only the new generation, but both old and new generations think that calling for intellectuals to play the same role as they have in the past, creating social consciousness and appearing as moral exemplars, is not realistic anymore. However, whether or not they think society demands this kind of role of professors anymore, they still cherish their role as intellectuals.

## **II. Autonomous Professionals and Different Intellectual Pursuits**

Interestingly, despite the generally shared nostalgia for the aura of intellectuals and the different degrees of impact of the change to different academic generations and disciplines, most of my informants wanted to be recognized first and foremost as the professional. It seems that they echoed Foucault’s post-modern notion of intellectuals. Foucault argues that “the specific intellectual” who uses specialized knowledge for social purpose is the appropriate example for our time (1991b). These professors felt that professors had become just another professional job. They thought that if they fulfilled the role of the professional who produces and teaches knowledge, it was sufficient. And if they thought they had to have moral leadership for society, it was more likely because they were teachers, and not because they were intellectuals. They rather wanted to have leadership and authority through the excellence of their scholarship and professional knowledge. In fact, according to a survey of 550 professors by *Kyosu Sinmun* in 2012, 81.8% of respondents answered that the most important quality of professors is

professionalism. At the same time, 19.5% professors answered that the quality that was the most lacking from professors was also professionalism (17 April, 2012). This, to some extent, reflects professors' awareness of the crisis and the reality that professional knowledge is no longer the exclusive property of professors these days.

This perception of themselves as professionals might make some professors think outside the box. Professor Noh (natural science, 52), for instance, elaborated this in a more extraordinary way:

Uh... I am... I didn't think it at the beginning of my professor career, but a few years later after I became a professor, I wanted to show a different image of the professor to students. The image of the professor, who stays late and researches all night long, but doesn't take care of his family and drives an old used car, is not the only image of the professor. I wanted to show that the professor can drive a Mercedes or Porsche and contribute to the university by earning money through his excellent research work and good inventions. [...] There are many professors who share these similar ideas.

In a sense, it looks as if Professor Noh wanted to break the image of intellectuals who are distant from or transcend materialism or the wealth of the real world. To some extent, it also reflects the mode of "academic capitalism" in universities today (Clark 1998; Sidhu 2006; Slaughter and Leslie 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). Actually, during the interview he also emphasized the social responsibilities of the professor as teacher and an exemplary social figure. It seemed that these different lines of thinking did not create a conflict at all in his mind. Professor Noh's case might be somewhat exceptional although he did say that there were others who shared his ideas. Honestly, I do not know whether I should interpret this as an example of an identity crisis or a case of building up a new identity. However, I take his case as a sign of on-going changes.

Decades ago, Daniel Bell welcomed the "rise of the new elites based on skill," who share "norms of professionalism" that "could become the foundation of the new ethos for such a class," rather than who are "bound by a sufficient common interest to make them a political class" (Bell

1976 (1973), 362). Some may consider these changes the so-called “death of the intellectual,” as I introduced in chapter two. What is certain is that, with changing environments – both economically and politically -- and concomitant new modes of professional life, it seems that these South Korean professors are newly defining the professoriate role and at the same time being liberated from the constraints of the collective identity of intellectuals. They defined themselves as professionals who could enjoy more individual autonomy, freely pursue their own individual goals, and make individualized decisions. The images and roles that were traditionally associated with the collective identity of Korean intellectuals did not just operate as a normative guide for intellectuals’ actions, but was also a prominent source of authority, status, prestige, and the respectable aura for intellectuals. In other words, the role of the intellectual allowed them hegemony in a particular way. However, it seems now that these professors are replacing their source of hegemony with a different kind of authority – professionalism. They operate in society as professionals, contributing to society with their specific professional knowledge. As an informant emphasized, most of these professors felt that they were “still intellectuals, but intellectuals as professionals.” By defining themselves as professionals, they take different responsibilities, while seeking for “different kinds of intellectual pursuits” (Barber 1998). “Identity is no longer experienced as a natural, coherent and unchanging attribute of the individual, but as the uncertain and fractured result of personal decisions and plans” (Rose 1996, 302). Clearly, the tradition of or collective identity as Korean intellectuals has become less taken-for-granted for these professors and yet they still have more questions (Heelas et al. 1996).

These professors’ subjectivities as South Korean professors were shifting. Even so, they were not totally free from the expectations and responsibilities that were traditionally given to professors. To put this in other way, they were caught between nostalgia for the yesteryear

professor who enjoyed the aura of respectable, privileged intellectuals and new ideals of the autonomous professionals who were unrestrained by the imagined collective identity. And here I argue that the shift from the intellectual to the professional and their development into vicarious cosmopolitans are not separate processes, but a correlated, enmeshed process that their current chronotopes created. In chapter two, I asked in particular if the geese-dad professors' transnational educational practices betrayed the mission of South Korean intellectuals. I also showed in chapter three that it was professors' inner conflicts as intellectuals that made them mask their privileges and motivations of ESA with the rhetoric of inevitability. I also revealed that these professors were unexpectedly developing post-national thinking and rather nurturing their own cosmopolitan liberal yearnings through the experiences of raising their children abroad, in chapter four. In chapter five, I presented how their transformation as fathers, who came to have a cosmopolitan outlook, was reflected in their profession as they played the role of internationalization agents at their universities. I suggest that when the experiences of globalization in both personal and public realms are conjoined, they boost the transformation of these geese-dad professors as fathers and intellectuals through a paradigm shift. In turn, this transformation also mitigates their inner conflicts, tensions, or agonies which could arise from their different but concurrent subject positions. Trying to answer the question previously raised, here I introduce an account of one of my informants. Professor Hyun (engineering, 52) spoke: "Although we are faced with stronger and urgent demands to perform better in our profession than to play a broader social role as intellectuals, I rather think it is still better to ask professors to have higher moral, ethical standards. But, for me, the early study abroad is certainly not the case to judge professors, in terms of whether professors fall short of those standards or not. It is only a matter of personal choice and decision. It's not relevant at all." In his account, he displayed his

confidence that his geese-dad practice was not against collective weal and did not betray the mission of professors/intellectuals.

My informants probably did not have any strict, absolute definition of intellectuals in their minds, but during the interviews I sensed that their nationalist sentiment, one of the salient characteristics and legacies of Korean intellectuals – also many scholars have recognized intellectuals as catalysts of nationalist ideologies and movements (Anderson 1991; Hobsbawm 1990; Smith 1971; Sunny and Kennedy 1999) -- had become attenuated. And as I discussed in chapter four in particular, it seems that their transnational experiences as geese-dads have accelerated this process of change – they have been transformed as fathers and intellectuals, especially because they want their children to have more autonomy and freedom even if they move beyond the national framework. Based on the traditional paradigm, South Korean society, especially the mass media, still considers professors collectively as the group of intellectuals which is supposed to hold fast to existing tradition. South Korean society and media call for the responsibility and aura of intellectuals, and thus criticize their lack of leadership in making the zeitgeist. However, these professors have started making a new zeitgeist in a different way with a different outlook, seeking alternative roles, creating new identities, and making new traditions as a new time and space emerges in front of them and their children.

### **III. Some Insights for Cultural Phenomena in Globalization Era**

This dissertation started as the study of intellectuals' actual practice, focusing on a cultural phenomenon of geese-dad professors, a symbolic group of South Korean intellectuals. While I explored the subjectivities of geese-dad professors by paying attention to two ways in which geese-dad professors were experiencing globalization – both personal and public realms --

I have been especially intrigued by the transformative qualities of the experiences of my informants. As I stated in chapter one (Introduction), I as a researcher as well as the goal of my study have continuously evolved over the course of my research. I already mentioned that I shied away from taking an evaluative position toward the geese-family phenomenon by not using the prevailing analytical lens of a monolithic neoliberal framework. Rather, I treated and understood their practices as revealing cultural phenomena, which illuminate certain paradigm shifts and cosmopolitan liberal yearnings within society, rather than as objects of social critique.

This study allows us to appreciate that there is no cultural phenomenon that can be completely understood, by affording another different interpretation of the geese family phenomenon. I suggest that the geese-dad professor phenomenon should not be simply understood or judged as a moral hazard or the giving up of noblesse oblige of intellectuals for the sake of social reproduction. I admit that, in this dissertation, I have shown readers a lot of contradictions and ambivalence that my informants revealed. But I believe that this rather proves that they were going through a very challenging moment. As I tried to reveal in both chapters three and four, the relation between the father's own study abroad experience and the children's is crucial. To people who have not studied abroad or had any transnational experiences for themselves, these geese-dad professors' practices might seem unnatural and somewhat scandalous. Yet, for my informants who have accumulated transnational/global experiences from their own study abroad and by keeping in contact with foreign cultures and scholarship, to a large extent their children's ESA is more likely to be executed through the inertia that naturally comes from their habitus. These professors are the generation who spent their youth under authoritarian regimes and mostly became professors after the democratization of South Korean society. In a sense, they are the generation who spent their youth in a controlled society, but

tasted and were impressed by freedom and the atmosphere of a democratic developed society through their own study abroad. However, within their own chronotopes, their study abroad opportunities were often embedded in conversations about Korea's strength, about making a contribution to building the nation both as intellectuals and professionals. That is, "Ideas of autonomous self-development and collective imperatives of responsibility to the nation may be incorporated into a single subject position without causing personal turmoil" (Hoffman 2010, 98). However, as geese-dads, they began to realize that their children's experiences were not identical to theirs despite the fact that most of them started this transnational educational project for their children by imaging similar or even better results than those from their own study abroad experiences in the past.

No doubt my informants had more opportunities to be self-reflective and self-aware as fathers, teachers, and intellectuals, while raising their children abroad. Their transformations as vicarious cosmopolitans might have been achieved through these repeated self-reflections. These geese-dad professors did not all share the exact same motivations from the outset, but they often shared the same kind of transformative experiences as fathers. Whether a father who started ESA for his children with his own ideal values as an intellectual or a father who started ESA with the very naked practical reasons of social reproduction, many of them experienced unintended transformations when they adjusted their expectations of their children and shifted their own paradigms, trying to respect and accept their children's own life goals, chronotopes, and natural growth abroad while also hoping that their children's own liberal cosmopolitan dreams could be achieved.

They have probably repeatedly gone through "self-reflection within the framework of [their] value system and that of [their] national and social culture" (Sanderson 2008, 288)

through big and small quotidian struggles with their children abroad and likely often fought inner conflicts. Yet, their intercultural contact mediated by their children's abroad experiences, in turn, might have stimulated them to have a more inclusive cosmopolitan framework to understand broader human society and accept more possibilities for ways of life beyond their own. Also "critical reflection and self-reflection on the basic assumptions of one's own culture and worldview can facilitate a transformative process, which can result in greater self-awareness and self-acceptance" (Cranton, cited in Sanderson 2008, 283). As evidence, we saw in chapter five how these transformations often influenced these professors' positions and caused them to struggle as both cynical consumers and critical players of the internationalization of South Korean universities. At the same time they also sought more genuine internationalization, not wanting to be passive compliers who unconsciously assimilated globalization practices.

Insights from this study also have the potential to reveal the broader contours and impacts of cultural phenomena related to the on-going transnational practices and increasing cosmopolitan yearnings in South Korean society, which have become more and more common, especially among young Koreans. In a sense, this study informs us that the appearance of new people has already started, the appearance of people who are not afraid of boundary-crossing and who are willing to take up new paradigms, as we saw in the experiences of these geese-dad professors and their children. Their experiences well show how South Koreans, and their broader contemporaries, make an effort to grope for their own way of life – sometimes nurturing their cosmopolitan yearnings, while also responding to globalization. As I mentioned in previous chapters, we do not know yet whether these trials or experiments will be successful or not; we need to wait to see how they will turn out. These questions may be answered by future studies. However, I am certain that this study also gives us an opportunity to reflect on what the ideal

way of responding to globalization can be, by applying the lens of cosmopolitan liberal yearning, rather than a neoliberal framework of survival in a global economy, in order to look into human motivations in a globalized world. Even if globalization is an irresistible force for us, to assimilate it or to choose expression of personhood by “rejecting particular subjectivities ahead of others” depends on our individual decision (Sidhu 2006, x). Even when most people make the same decisions, there are some who make different decisions. Regardless of how small the trial is or how small the number of the people who experience it is, these things may also start to change the culture and the direction of society. Further, imaginably, these geese-dad professors’ practices as a cultural phenomenon can be seen as one of the catalysts for this change and might have already caused a watershed moment for change.

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