



History of Transborder Minorities and Their Invisibility

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Abstract

This paper attempts to examine the invisibility of minorities during the Cold War period in the contexts of colonialism, national division, and the Cold War, rather than at an individual country level. Particularly, it delves into the forgotten history of minorities who crossed the borders of nation-states under the divided regimes of East Asia, such as stowaways, exiles, returnees, and international adoptees. Thereby, it seeks to accentuate the need for an approach to reconstructing the configuration of historicity surrounding national borders, nationality, and border-crossing in the processes of colonialism, the Cold War, and division. It draws attention to invisible minorities for an introspective contemplation of social movements in Korea during the 1970s and 1980s. At the same time, transborder minorities neither shared identical historical backgrounds, nor could they be identified with forced citizens of the nation-state. The Cold War state, groups, and even social movements were implicated in the invisibility of transborder minorities between the cracks of the nation-state.

Keywords: transborder, minorities, invisibility, national borders, stowaways, antiwar soldiers, atomic bomb victims in Korea, international adoption

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Introduction

This paper attempts to examine the invisibility of minorities during the Cold War period in the contexts of colonialism, division, and the Cold War, rather than at an individual country level. It pays particular attention to the forgotten history of minorities who crossed the borders of nation-states under the divided regime of East Asia, including stowaways, exiles, returnees, and international adoptees. In so doing it seeks to accentuate the need for an approach to reconstructing the configuration of history surrounding national border, nationality, and border-crossing in the processes of colonialism, the Cold War, and national division.

Although various measures have been taken since the Kim Dae-jung government in the 1990s and committees have been established to resolve the past history of state violence, many issues involving minorities who have been made invisible, e.g., issues on women's human rights, forced internment in institutions, military comfort women, sexual minorities, and the disabled, are still under investigation.¹ The Moon Jae-in government, which took power after the 2016 candlelight protests, declared its intention to "depart from the previous tendency of overlooking human rights and to promote the operation of affairs of state to actively correct the wrongs of human rights violations committed by the state."² More recently, the Me Too movement has reactivated contestations on feminism, moving the discussion from the stigmatization of victimhood to social change, which seems to indicate a transformation in the current milieu surrounding the agendas of democracy and human rights.

Minorities are not merely a group of people from a numeric dimension, for instance, a certain percentage of the total population, but are outsiders to the laws and institutions of the nation-state wherein human rights and the very right to survival of its members are defined by their relationship with

1. Some representative research includes Ha, et al. (2019); Oral Records Project of the Incident of the Hyeongje Welfare Center (2015); D. Kim (2019); and Heejung (2020).

2. *Munhwa ilbo* (Munhwa Daily), May 25, 2017.

that state.³ Further, outsiders are individuals or groups that do not use what is defined by the nation-state as the language that is ordered, or the language order, but rather the *language of strangers*, or the Other. Borrowing Spivak's definition, minorities refer to those who speak the language of omission, distortion, and misunderstanding in regards to the existing grammar and the institutionalized language. In other words, they are those who use an *odd language*, not the standard language or what is designated as such in the nation-state (G. Seo 2008, 203–204). They represent all groups of people who are made invisible, be it by colonialism, division, and social discrimination, such as vagrants, the institutionalized, invalids suffering from modern hygiene-related ailments, the disabled, sexual minorities, and refugees, among others.

But national histories have, for a long time, claimed sympathy with such excluded groups, giving them the term *minorities*, and impregnated the desire to appropriate their language as the *language of the nation*. Such groups, too, have sometimes been transformed into subjects who have lost their nature (*parvenus*) by being assimilated into the nation-state (K. Kim 2012, 308).⁴ In this regard, they may be understood to exist within the *violent structure* of national history and national language. For Ukai Satoshi, the nation-state's attempt to call diverse minority groups by a singular name is in itself violence; a denial of each group's individual existence that causes them to fall inevitably into the *aporia* of minority (Ukai 2009, 23–24). To force them to revert to the *citizenry* of the Cold War nation-state thus constitutes violence.

This paper draws attention to invisible minorities in order to present a reflective contemplation on Korean social movements of the 1970s and 1980s. Korea's social movements have been deployed towards national social

3. Regarding common traits of minority groups, studies have noted how i) they are subjected to discrimination and subordination; ii) their physical and cultural characteristics differ from those of dominant groups; iii) and they have collective identities and face similar types of hardships (Y. Choi 2013, 8). On the emergence of the term "minority" in Korea and the human rights paradigm, see K. Jung (2013, 186–187).

4. Hannah Arendt's term, *parvenu*, presents the image of immigrants who have become overly patriotic citizens in order to be assimilated into their adopted country (K. Kim 2012, 308).

change. In this process, these social movements lacked the framework to identify minorities situated in the chasm of nation-states trapped within colonialism and the Cold War and to conceive of them within the scope of those movements. Pondering the invisibility of transborder minorities provides the opportunity to remind us of the problem unattended to by past social movements. At the same time, cross-border minorities do not share the same historical backgrounds, nor can they be *identified* those compelled to become citizens by the nation-state. Despite their *differences*, which will be delineated later in the paper, attention is called to the fact that they all became invisible in the continuum of colonialism and the Cold War, irrespective of their intentions. While most minorities who were regarded as part of the citizenry, and thus had identities that could be verified and were visible, transborder minorities existing in the crevices between nation-states were invisible. This paper seeks to demonstrate how Cold War states, groups, and even social movements were complicit in such nonvisibility.

Nationality, National Borders, and Transborder Minorities

Transborder minorities, such as stowaways, antiwar soldiers seeking asylum, and intercountry adoptees, who are to be examined in this paper, endeavored to reflect on their status of lacking any complete *belongingness* to a nation through the violence of statism and how they kept it to themselves as the basis for extending their imagination beyond the nation-state (K. Kim 2012, 302). They took issue with the modern nation-state system and rejected nationalization, for which reason Seo Gyeong-sik has called them “refugee subjects” (G. Seo 2008, 197–199). While they tried to create “cracks” in the gigantic blockade of the “national border,” they were obliterated from the history of the nation-state, or existed tagged as betrayers of nation and state (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014a, 238).

Minorities that were peripheralized by the authoritarian state during the Cold War existed in various forms—civilians massacred under colonialism, the Cold War, and for war crimes, leftists and rightists killed in the Korean War, or those injured or killed in Korea’s democratization

movement. During Korea's decade of democratic governments that followed the horizontal regime change between ruling and opposition parties in 1998, various actions were taken on behalf of minorities—minorities that had to remain silent under the Cold War slogan of anticommunism—to determine historical facts, restore honor, and make compensations and reparations. However, the subjects of compensation, reparation, and fact-finding institutionalized in the administrative bodies of the government, including the Office of the President, were limited to certain categories, i.e., nationals, citizens, and constitutional subjects of the state within legal and institutional boundaries, thus making only these groups applicable as victims of state violence, massacred innocent civilians, and democratization movement participants.

The practice of focusing on a country's minorities has operated as a barrier to recognizing the *invisible minorities* that exist in the spaces between national borders. To take one example, the resolution of past history is defined in the context of the struggle against state violence. It is exemplified in the activities to establish a democratic constitutional order and restore and expand freedoms and rights in opposition to an authoritarian government that breached the fundamental order of liberal democracy and infringed on the citizens' basic rights as stipulated in the South Korean Constitution (the Act on the Restoration of Honor [Myeongye hoebokbeop]) (W. Jung 2017, 67). Such terms as constitution, citizen, and constitutional, are all *categories* that confirm the extent of the nation-state. Also, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Basic Act is placed in the framework of strengthening national integration and legitimacy and moving toward the future by reconciliation with the past (Yi 2015, 131). The memory of noncitizens, subjects who are trapped in the crevices of the nation-state and national borders, continues to be unvisualized.

Despite the achievement of placing on the table of public discourse civilian massacres and violence by state power during the Cold War, the attention is on citizens who have contributed to democracy, while minorities external to that nation-state or in the crevices have been forgotten.

As examined here, in the political community where *collusion* or *community of silence* in regards to the separation, discrimination, and

invisibility of minorities is reproduced in the crevices of the nation-state, democracy can *serve only the citizens*. Japanese scholar Fujita Shozo, a critic of Japanese fascism, argued in his *Experience of the Era of Totalitarianism (Jeonchejuui-ui sidae gyeongheom)* that economic growth hampered democratic progress in postwar Japan, and to prolong comfort, a community of silence was formed concerning discrimination against minorities such as Koreans resident of Japan and rural dwellers, calling it a “totalitarianism for comfort” (Fujita 2014). In fact, most mainland Japanese kept silent on the segregation and discrimination against Koreans in Japan and the Ryukyuan people through division, the Cold War, and a military-base state. If only what is internal to the national state (peace state) and its citizens are within the scope of thought, the imagination to contemplate the boundaries of that state and what is external to it is eaten away.

“Rights”—a term we use readily—are granted only to citizens, and therefore transborder minorities situated in the crevices of the nation-state are denied them. Their border-crossing movements in the form of *stowawaying* and asylum-seeking are regarded as acts of betrayal of both the state and its national policy, anticommunist ideology, thus composing a “dual betrayal” (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014a, 239). Here arises an issue of minorities relating to membership and identification. The problem of nationality, which is very important to transborder minorities, is not something attained by an individual who wishes to belong to a specific nation-state; it is the lineage—determined by birth irrespective of his/her will and registered with the state—that constitutes the basis of the set boundary of the citizenry (C. Lee 2010, 9). Transborder minorities, such as Koreans in Japan, atomic bomb survivors in Korea, transnational adoptees, antiwar asylum-seeking soldiers, etc. have to prove their citizenship of a specific nation-state by presenting an identification certificate, e.g., a passport or a resident registration card. ID confirmation is more significant to them than political loyalty to or identity with a national community. That is because national community is, to them, some kind of code to be recorded in the documents rather than an ambiguous concept of imagination (Jaeun Kim 2016, 14).

Added to this is the meaning attached to the terms “compatriots” or “people of a nation.” The term compatriots signifies the requisition

of political responsibilities for the political community of the nation and nation-state, plainly speaking, such things as anticommunism, free motherland, workers for national modernization, etc. (H. Seo 2017, 14). Koreans in Japan are foreigners residing in Japan, an ethnic minority group that has kinship roots on the Korean Peninsula across the Korea Strait. Korea's 1948 Nationality Act, which granted citizenship status to one who was born from a father holding Republic of Korea citizenship, defined most overseas Koreans who originated from the peninsula as Korean citizens, including those in Japan.⁵ In the definition of nationality, it is confirmed that the Republic of Korea was not be confined to the republic founded in 1948, but represented the "nation of a people" (the people of the Empire of Korea and their direct descendants) as a whole that had existed without cessation despite Japan's colonial rule (C. Lee 2010, 11–12).

While North-South relations were an important issue to Koreans in Japan in the context of their orientation toward North Korea as their *motherland*, their relationship with the Japanese government and society (their place of residence) was problematic. Some major issues concerning the latter included, i) the Japanese government's permission for them to return to their motherland, which was granted on the pretext of humanitarianism during the launch of North Korea's "homecoming project for the Korean residents of Japan" (*jaeil joseonin gwiguk saeop*, hereafter "homecoming project") of 1959; ii) the action to allow its Korean residents to only take Republic of Korea (South Korean) nationality following the normalization of South Korea-Japan diplomatic relations in 1965; and iii) the issue of their permanent residency status that emerged from the 1970s. While passports and identification certificates are a mechanism of control and exclusion, border-crossing is an act accompanied by fear. The *stateless person* code given by the Japanese state to stowaways and Korean residents in Japan signified that the state (the caretaker) would withdraw the security provided them and invalidate any sort of official identity verification that

5. North Korea also declared Korean residents of Japan as citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) (Nationality Act of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, 1963) (W. Kim 2017, 250–253).

had formerly been granted (K. Kim 2012, 310).

East Asia, where postcolonialism and the Cold War were internalized concurrently after the conclusion of World War II, faces various unresolved issues over national borders and nationalities, e.g., China and Taiwan, South and North Korea, and mainland Japan and Okinawa. In this context, colonialism, the Cold War, and division are not something from the past to be resolved on the dimension of individual nation-states, and the problem of minorities who have become invisible in the process is a particularly historical problem involving national borders and nationalities of the Cold War era. Therefore, the problem of invisible minorities requires an approach to reconfigure the historicity of the issue beyond the perspective of any individual country concerning borders, nationality, and movements across and between them (Fujii 2007, 151).

Transborder Minorities

For a decade from the consolidation of democracy in Korea in the 1990s, minorities were not independent actors with their own voice, but objects who were *mobilized* on the pretext of protection. As the migrant workers' movement gathered force from the mid-1990s, the Roh Moo-hyun government mobilized international migrants touting multiculturalism in the wake of a declining national birth rate and labor shortages, and drove them to become *Korean*—more precisely, *members of Korean family*—through policies of assimilation and cultural diversity (K. Oh 2010).

On the flip side of their mobilization and assimilation lurked the image of minorities as objects of hatred or suspicion. They became easy targets of attack for instant gratification in the overlap between neoliberalism and the democratic state in the context of increasing numbers of migrants to Korea. Even as the multicultural family policy of the Roh Moo-hyun government drove migrants from peripheral countries to attempt to assimilate with Koreans (W. Kim 2006), in a national community such as Korea, hostility naturally emerged toward such border-crossing subjects, including certain external racial or ethnic groups. As has been confirmed in the recent

campaign appealing for the rejection of Yemeni refugee applicants, and the controversy surrounding women's anxieties and the phenomenon of islamophobia, contestations over the issue of the 2019 Hong Kong democratization protests, and the new trend to exclude Chinese nationals as *reserve infectors* with the spread of the COVID-19 virus in 2020, transborder minorities are being categorized not as workers entitled to rights, but as a labor force, based on assimilationism, statism, and national interest.

Likewise, constantly classifying minorities—be it as irregular workers, homosexuals, immigrants, North Korean defectors, sex workers, the disabled, overseas Chinese, Koreans in Japan, second-generation atomic bomb victims, etc.—the nation-state views them only as manpower, criminal offenders, or objects to regulate and manage. In this regard, after the 1987 regime, the collective representation of democracy remained a fiction to minorities. Democracy might have been meaningful to sovereign citizens, but it implicitly colluded in silencing and excluding minorities who were beyond the scope of the laws and institutions of the state. The democratic state which inherited the 1987 regime fell short of being the symbol of democracy that would work beyond ethnicity, religion, nation, class, and border, and operated as an obstacle to the discourse on democracy, which was confined to the sovereign citizen.

The state's perception and regulation of transborder minorities primarily as labor and potential threats, and who are required to prove their identity by legal means such as a passport and registration, is no recent phenomenon. This trend intensified with the establishment of the Cold War nation-state and the settlement of national borders. Lineage in particular served as the main basis in determining citizenship status, which was determined primarily by tracing an individual's family roots. In a sense, people obtain citizen status by belonging to a certain ethnic group that is presumed as a premodern and prepolitical collectivity (C. Lee 2010, 10). The subjects desired by the state are "minorities suitable for authorization" or "model minorities" who are approved of by the state and the national community and are constituted by the view of the majority (Jeong 2011, 47–48). Koreans residents of Japan were, obviously, a far cry from the certified citizens desired by the nation-state, as most of them were stowaways-turned-

settlers who were from the beginning in violation of the state's immigration law, antiwar fugitive soldiers, such as Kim Dong-hui who stowed away and sought asylum, atomic bomb victims in Korea like Son Jin-du who forced people to retrieve the memory of former imperialism by their mere existence and were obliterated from postwar democracy, or border-crossing minorities who *reminded* people of the immigration control system and the deportation ordinance that erased vestiges of colonial rule.

Stowaways, Repatriation, and Antiwar Soldiers

The act of stowing away is one of hostility by the entire body toward the state, to which neither the country of origin nor the country of destination yields consent. occurred constant occurrence since the advent of the nation-state, stowing away entails being shackled by the stigma of betrayal of the nation (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014b, 254). During the Japanese imperial period and the Great East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, the act of stowing away was neither strictly controlled nor did it hold significant meaning among imperial subjects. But in 1945, with the dismantlement of the Japanese Empire, the subsequent Allied occupation, and the Cold War, the registration of stowaway minorities was reinforced as a means of establishing the boundary of the Cold War nation-state. Stowing away, an illegal but recurrent border-crossing act, swayed the legal mechanism that defined the nation-state boundary. After losing the war, the reduced Japan enacted legislation to control the border and regulate citizens' border-crossing for the *safety of the postwar peace state of the Cold War*, by enacting the Immigration Control Law and foreigner registration requirements. It is known that a total of 34,847 Koreans residents of Japan were repatriated to Korea against their will between 1950 and 1981 (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014a, 239). Considering that stowaways often had some connections with a livelihood network, e.g., kin and other social ties formed during the colonial period, the action functioned as a mediator linking the colonial domination with the present (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014a, 240).

To control border-crossing, the Japanese government took a series of institutional and legislative measures: banning reentrance (1946), installing

the Omura detention camp (1950), and passing the Immigration Control Law (1951), Law No. 126 (1951), and the Alien Registration Law (1952). The *special permission of residency* was considered at the discretion of the Minister of Justice and a *benefit bestowed by Japan*. Registration-related measures and status registration requirements were devised to expand the Japanese government's arbitrary leeway in the approval of foreigners and border-crossing. The sequential process of detection of illegal entrance, and then captivity in the Omura camp, convinced many Koreans in Japan and stowaways that they were in the wrong place (Japan); the Omura camp was maintained for the legitimate deportation of foreigners in Japan and to conceal colonialism. Stowaways were looked upon as dangerous people who embodied the temporal continuity of the reduced empire. Therefore, Japan the *peace state* attempted to deport all Koreans by force under its immigration control policy in order to remove the instabilities of the Cold War and demonstrate discontinuity between the prewar and postwar (Cha 2014, 315–337; Hyun 2017).

Meanwhile, the Omura camp made self-evident the reality that Koreans, former citizens of the empire, had now become foreigners, and it ingrained in their bodies national border and nationality by fundamentally blocking out unauthorized border-crossing (Cha 2014, 320). In addition, the Goejeong 槐亭 detention center in Busan, Korea, where deported stowaways were kept, was an object of fear and a place of death. It was the security clearance zone where they were questioned on their ideas and any evidence of betrayal of the motherland (South Korea) was collected. Although the postwar South Korean government announced its intention to grant Korean nationality to all Koreans in Japan, it displayed scant interest in them other than making some diplomatic gestures around the time of concluding the 1965 Korea-Japan Treaty. The South Korean government was less interested in securing the legal status of Koreans in Japan than in receiving Japan's official recognition that it was the sole legitimate government of the peninsula. While the Japanese government viewed them as objects of deportation for being a constant reminder of a past history they would rather deny, the Korean counterpart regarded them as suspicious and potential thought offenders, or even criminals who had collaborated with Japan. The

Omura camp was, to the Japanese, a place of *security clearance* to identify stowaways rather than a place of detention place preceding deportation, conceptualizing the sequential imagery of “stowaway-repatriation to North Korea—the Jochongnyeon⁶—thought offenders” (Hyun 2017).

Another transborder minority group was associated with North Korea’s homecoming project launched in 1959. A prevailing view on this project is that, led by North Korea and the Jochongnyeon, Korean residents in Japan (and their families) who were facing discrimination viewed the North as a socialist utopia in terms of employment, welfare, and education, and emigrated permanently to the North in groups, where they acquired North Korean citizenship. At that time, both Koreas declared that Koreans in Japan were their citizens, while Japan maintained that they were not Japanese citizens and the US government of the postwar Allied occupation period regarded them as a dangerous ethnic group. On its surface, North Korea’s homecoming project appeared to the Japanese government as a humanitarian action to guarantee the Koreans in Japan the freedom to choose their place of residence. However, in reality it was a measure to induce the deportation of dangerous ethnic group from Japan. In the Cold War terrain, Japan perceived ethnic Koreans as a fifth column (*daigoretsu* 第五列),⁷ for they demanded subsistence allowances on one hand while on the other engaging in antiwar and antimilitary activities during the Korean War period through the Agency for Countermeasures to Japan,⁸ an apparatus of the Japanese Communist Party composed mostly of Koreans in Japan. The homecoming project, which was pursued for the purpose of national purification, was no different from racism (Chung 2019; Sil-geun Lee 2015). Behind the official discourse on transborder minorities surrounding Japan’s

6. The Jochongnyeon 朝總聯, whose official name is the Federation of Koreans in Japan, is a nationalist organization formed in 1955 by ethnic Korean *nationalists* in Japan who supported the North Korean regime.

7. Meaning people who benefit or have secret relations with the enemy.

8. Before the creation of the Jochongnyeon in 1955, the Agency of Countermeasures to Japan under the Japanese Communist Party took charge of the return of Koreans in Japan to their homeland (North Korea), conducted Korean-language education and school projects, and launched the motherland defense movement.

touting of humanitarianism, North Korea's socialist buildup, and the project to repatriate Zainichi Koreans (Korean residents of Japan) to North Korea lay Washington's neglectful attitude toward the homecoming project. The US shored up Japan to allow more favorable conditions for that country's signing of a new security treaty, to the extent that it did not hamper the normalization of South Korea-Japan diplomatic relations, and concurrently, compromised with and deterred the South Korean government, which was opposed to the homecoming project (Morris-Suzuki 2008). From then on, until the 1980s, over 90,000 Koreans in Japan returned to the North and changed their nationality, transforming themselves from stateless persons to *citizens of the socialist motherland*, from whom, however, was demanded unilateral political loyalty in the political terrain of the Cold War. Eventually, their permanent migration settled as a memory of *only theirs*. In the South they were looked upon with suspicion for their thought, and in the North's socialist system they were called "returned compatriots" (*gwipo* 歸胞) and pushed to the fringe as *under-citizens*, thus becoming invisible in the histories of both regimes (Seong-a Lee 2015; S. Choi 2018).

The third group of transborder minorities was antiwar, asylum-seeking soldiers. In the second half of the 1960s, when the struggle against the new security system and the anti-Vietnam War movement were heightening, young Japanese found their self-assumed peace state taking part in the Vietnam War and questioned why an Asian country would participate in the invasion of a fellow Asian country. Also, as postwar Japanese society began to realize its ignorance about Asia and Asians, various contentious issues relating to Asians in Japan received attention, such as the nationality problem of Koreans in Japan, the Omura camp (which surfaced on the occasion of Kim Dong-hui's asylum), and the responsibility for the war, colonialism, and Asians in Japan in the context of the reenactment of the Immigration Control Law.⁹ While the Japanese Communist Party and the

9. On the surface, the Immigration Control Law was intended as a response measure to frequent occurrences of crimes committed by foreigners. Japan's Ministry of Justice claimed that it was submitted for legislation, as the Immigration Control Law was proclaimed in the context of the American occupation and required a revamp to simplify the immigrations procedure and to control deviant foreigners. Other reasons presented included that it was standard procedure

social movement adhered to the ideal of revolutionizing Japan and a class-centered worldview, independent social movements—based on the ideas of no-partisan-no-factionalism, civic-mindedness, and the awareness of individual rights, e.g., the Peace to Vietnam! Citizens' Coalition (ベトナムに平和を!市民連合, hereafter Beheiren)—began to take issue with the problems of past Japanese colonialism, opposing the immigration control system and demanding the dissolution of the Omura camp. In the midst of this, some antiwar fugitive soldiers received their support (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014c, 324).¹⁰

Among them were some antiwar soldiers originating from the Korean Peninsula, most of whom stowed away or sought asylum after stowing away. Kim I-seok stowed away to Japan and was later forcefully repatriated to South Korea. Jeong Hun-sang stowed away to North Korea to join his parents there. And Kim Dong-hui, while serving in the military in the South, stowed away to Japan before proceeding to North Korea through the Soviet Union.

Having witnessed the painful reality of the Korean War, Kim I-seok, a Methodist, stowed away to Japan in 1964 during his military service after he was selected for deployment to the Vietnam War. In 1968, he settled in the Korean residential area of Ikaino, Osaka, and married Yi Chun-ja, a stowaway from Jeju Island. But in 1972, eight years after his entry to Japan, he was issued a deportation order. He argued that he had stowed away for political asylum in order not to avoid participation in the Vietnam War, but the Japanese government viewed his entry as illegal. Records show that on May 28, 1981, he received from the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs

to check whether their entrance would not be against the national interest and that the enactment was necessary in order to host the 1970 World Exposition. However, it was actually geared to reinforce the control of Koreans and Chinese in Japan and regulate the entrance of antiwar foreigners and fugitive soldiers. By rewriting the law, the Japanese government sought to enforce the internal probing into antigovernment political activities by foreigners, interference in internal affairs, and surveillance of previous deportees (W. Kim 2017, 263).

10. At the time, some 570,000 Americans dodged the draft, and 9,000 were found guilty of draft evasion. In 1971, there were a record number of fugitive US soldiers (33,094, accounting for about 3.4 percent of the total US armed forces).

Committee “a final deportation order and appealed for reconsideration, which was dismissed, so he returned to Korea at his own expense” (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014a, 247).

Kim Dong-hui, born on Jeju Island in 1935, stowed away in 1953, in the footsteps of his three brothers then living in Japan. He was admitted to the Political Science Department of a political science college in 1958. A year later, he was apprehended during a police on-the-street questioning for not having a foreigner registration card with him. For violating the Alien Registration Law and the Immigration Control Law, he was detained in the Tokyo Detention Jail and then in the Tokyo Immigration Control Center before being released on parole. As the Tokyo Immigration Control Center repealed his parole on May 25, 1959, he was sent to the Omura camp and repatriated to South Korea on April 1, 1960. Arriving in Busan, he was welcomed by banners along the streets proclaiming, “Welcome Korean Compatriot Returnees from Japan,” which were displayed by the Rhee Syngman government to publicize the repatriates as patriots as a counter to North Korea’s homecoming project (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014a, 248–249). Later, in 1962, Kim stowed away again only to be repatriated for violating the Immigration Control Law. In 1965, half a year before his discharge from military service, he was ordered to Vietnam, so he ran away, again stowed away to Japan, and was again detained. In the Intent of Asylum he wrote at the Fukuoka prison in 1967, he stated that he chose Japan for asylum because he believed in the Preamble to the Japanese Constitution and its pacifism (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014a, 250). However, the Japanese government and its legal branch did not approve his asylum. To avoid repatriation to South Korea, in 1968 he took passage on a Soviet ship *Nakhodka* in the Soviet Far East and then finally to North Korea (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014b, 252).

Unlike Kim Dong-hui, who desired exile in Japan, Jeong Hun-sang stowed away to go to North Korea to join his parents there. Few records on him survive in Japan and South Korea. In the record files of the Society to Protect the Human Rights of Koreans in Japan-Hyogo Prefecture,” which was formed on the occasion of Jeong Hun-sang’s asylum to address the issues of the Alien Registration Law and the immigration control system, there is only

a brief description of him, reading, “the first-ever victorious event in history to send one to North Korea where his parents are waiting for him” (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014b, 252). Jeong was born in Boseong, South Jolla Province, in 1943 and both his parents went to North Korea during the Korean War. His father Jeong Hai-jin and mother Jeon Ye-jun dedicated themselves to socialist activists, and were arrested in 1948, defecting to the North immediately after the start of the Korean War. Living in separation from them, Jeong wanted to become a seafarer, but he could not obtain a sailor’s permit due to his defected parents. He needed an identification certificate such as a passport or a pocket ledger for border-crossing, but could not obtain one from the government. In 1968, while performing military service in Gangwon Province, Jeong ran away while on leave and made a resolute move to stow away to Japan from Busan (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014b, 257). He chose Japan for a similar reason as Kim Dong-hui; he thought that Japan, which had the Peace Constitution, would assist him in his planned move to North Korea. However, his border-crossing was unlawful not only under Korea’s Military Penal Act, Stowaway Control Act, and National Security Act, but also in Japan, whose legal statutes guaranteeing political asylum, such as the Refugee Act, were not yet in place. The Korean government requested Japan repatriate him, but Japanese government reconfirmed the “principle of non-extradition of political offenders” (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014b, 262–266). While other antiwar soldiers from the Korean Peninsula seeking asylum in Japan received the support of antiwar civil society groups, such as the Beheiren, Jeong Hun-sang was backed through an international alliance formed by the Japanese Communist Party’s auxiliary organizations, e.g., the Jochongnyeon, the Japan-North Korea Friendship Association, and the Japanese Bulletins League. He departed for North Korea on condition he pay for his own passage.

Stowaways, repatriates, and antiwar asylum-seeking soldiers crossed the border to leave behind their own nation-state for another community with less discrimination, greater safety, and peace. Such acts were not simply a transfer from one place to another, but acts swaying the basis of the nation-state that sustained the spectrum of the Cold War, i.e., colonialism and anticommunism. But such stowing away and appeals for political asylum

were labeled as betrayals of the nation-state, the Cold War regime, and the national community. Because these border crossings were largely illegal, the perpetrators were not protected as citizens, but were treated as stateless persons in both South Korea and Japan. Moreover, they were disregarded in the histories of both Korea and East Asia more broadly.¹¹

Atomic Bomb Survivors in South Korea and Koreans in Okinawa

A large majority of Koreans in Japan who suffered from the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 returned to their hometowns in Korea, such as Hapcheon 陝川, after the surrender of Japan. Of an estimated 350,000 to 400,000 lives lost in the Hiroshima bombing, Koreans made up about 10 percent (or 45,000). They were dual victims of Japanese colonial domination and US atomic bombings (Yoneyama 1999). Although they suffered from atomic bomb-related ailments after returning home, they could not request compensation or confessions of responsibility from either the Korean or Japanese governments. Later, as the issue of atomic bomb victims was not placed on the table during the talks for the 1965 normalization of Korea-Japan bilateral relations, victims independently created an organization, with some even stowing away to Japan to claim compensation. Although they were South Korean citizens, the Korean government and society at large made little effort to protect them or help them obtain financial compensation from the Japanese government as atomic bomb victims. During the 1960s, survivors visited Japan repeatedly, filing applications for pocketbook issuance, applications that were dismissed time and again by the relevant Japanese legal authorities. Even so, the Korean government was mainly concerned with the maintenance of economic cooperation with Japan and Korean atomic bomb survivors' contacts with the Jochongnyeon.

Son Jin-du, a repatriated Korean survivor of the 1945 atomic

11. Oda Makoto 小田実, a leading figure in the Beheiren, inquired about Kim Dong-hui when he met Premier Kim Il-sung during his visit to North Korea, and received the reply, "There is no one here by that name" (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014a, 253).

bombings, stowed away to Japan several times and was finally recognized as a *hibakusha*¹² after an 8-year-long legal battle starting from 1970, and obtained a special residency permit. Upon stowing away, he officially declared himself to be an “atomic bomb victim” who had come to Japan to receive the government-issued atomic bomb victim’s pocketbook and medical treatment.¹³ His very existence disclosed Japanese colonialism and the contradictory attitude of the postwar peace state that was ignorant or tried to conceal the existence of Korean atomic bomb victims living in Japan at the time of the bombings. Likewise, the lawsuit he filed to be recognized as a victim of the bombing (a so-called ‘pocketbook trial’) and to have the deportation order repealed effectively revealed anew the imperial past of Japan that had been sealed off (W. Kim 2017, 245–304; E. Oh 2014, 159–199).

Employing the Cold War rationale, the Korean government tried to stymie recalling colonialism and derail the transborder minority’s pocketbook trials. Its main concern was whether they were in contact with the Jochongnyeon and North Korea, and it even insisted that Son Jin-du abandon his lawsuit. The voice or trace of Koreans were virtually absent

12. The Japanese term *hibakusha* 被爆者, refers to people who were recognized by the Japanese government as subjects for support as atomic bomb victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The selection of *hibakusha* was made in the delimitation of the effect of the bombings to radiation exposure and health aspects, and rendered only domestically through issuance of an administrative order (E. Oh 2014, 159-160).

13. Son Jin-du was born in Osaka in 1927, the fourth son of Son Yong-no and Hwang Do-soon. After his family moved to Hiroshima in 1944, he helped his father with subcontract work for the construction of a telecommunication office. On August 6, he was exposed to radiation while working at an office warehouse, 2.5 kilometers from ground zero. His family returned to Korea in October 1945, but he remained in Japan and moved to Osaka where he worked in a sewing machine assembly factory. His parents returned to Japan in 1946, but died of atomic bomb-related ailments in less than three years. He was detained for violating the Alien Registration Law in February 1951, and deported to Korea from the Omura camp in July. In the same year he attempted to reenter Japan but was deported. After being diagnosed with tuberculosis in Busan in 1963, he stowed away to Japan in 1964 and worked at a pachinko (gambling) parlor, only to be deported again in 1969. He began to experience symptoms of dizziness, mild fever, and emaciation in the summer of 1970. It was diagnosed as an atomic bomb-related ailment and he received treatment, but his condition not improving, he decided to stow away to Japan to seek medical treatment (W. Kim 2017, 247).

at his trial, but ironically, with the help of Japanese civic groups organized in various parts of the country, such as Citizens in Support of Son Jin-du's Medical Treatment and Residency, facts surrounding the trials came to light: the chief judge, the cross-examination in court, supporting groups' newsletters, the places he stayed while in Japan (Hiroshima and Fukuoka), and colonial-reminiscent places such as the Omura camp. While his border-crossing was a precarious one to both governments in the sense of its recalling to mind the colonial past and the revealing facts about the existence of other locations like the Omura camp, it also made many question the postwar Japanese Constitution, Immigration Control Law, and Medical Care Act, creating cracks in the major premise of Japan's postwar democracy, the self-assumed peace state and the only country to have suffered an atomic bombing (W. Kim 2017, 249).

Another transborder minority group comprised the *invisible* ethnic Koreans in Okinawa. Before the formal return of Okinawa to Japan in 1972 following the termination of its occupation by US forces after World War II, Koreans in Japan had been forgotten, their existence barely known. Throughout this period, and even after the return of Okinawa, the main concern of the Korean government and society was anticommunism and the Korean residents' connections with the Jochongnyeon. Examples are plentiful: when the Korean newspaper *Donga ilbo* (Donga Daily) reported in 1966 that a Korean family was killed on Kume Island, part of the Okinawan Islands, as a result of *spyphobia*, finally confirming the existence of stateless ethnic Koreans in Japan, and when the killings were investigated by the Jochongnyeon; when seasonal female workers migrated to Okinawa over five years from 1972; when a *living minority* woman named Bai Bong-gi became known in 1975, revealing she had come to Okinawa in 1944 via Heungnam (North Korea) and Shimonoseki (Japan) and resided on as a stateless person (she survived with financial support from a Jochongnyeon-related couple until she passed away in 1991) (S. Oh 2019, 237–288).

Bai Bong-gi, a native of South Chungcheong Province, South Korea, was a subject of forced repatriation as she had no passport or visa, but was allowed to stay in consideration of her tragic past. She was called “Akiko” during the Pacific War and continued to use a Japanese name after the

war, working odd jobs, such as running errands at high-class restaurants. She remained single and had no husband or children. After the war, she was transformed from imperial citizen to resident of Okinawa and then, classified as an alien in 1954, thus becoming “stateless.” The existence of Bai, a comfort woman for the Japanese military in wartime, came to be known when the issue of the legal status of foreigners on Okinawa arose with the return of those islands to Japan in 1972 (Lim 2015, 552–553).

The continued *invisibility* of Koreans on Okinawa in the institutional and legal dimensions was due to their insecure existence as stateless persons. The labels used in references to them, such as “third-class citizens,” “odd-job workers,” and “*josenbi*”¹⁴ (revealing overlapping Cold War and colonial meanings), and suffixes like “-na,” illustrated their position in the ethnic hierarchy of Okinawa. It is easy to suppose the characteristic frame of armed forces=perpetrators and civilians=victims in the narrative structure of Okinawa’s wartime history, and Koreans were rejected from representation in that formula. As a case in point, the massacre of Koreans on Kume Island should be understood with the context in mind that it was Koreans before any others who were “secretly accused of espionage under the ‘spyyhobic’ speculation that all Okinawan people were spies”¹⁵ (S. Oh 2019, 192–203).

Some interesting points can be found in novelist Kim Jeong-han’s *Letters from Okinawa (Okinawa-eseo on pyeonji, 1977)*, a narrative about Korean women who were sent to Okinawa as seasonal workers in the 1970s. In the backdrop to the discontinuation of Japan-Taiwan diplomatic relations after the establishment of formal relations between China and Japan in the 1970s and the continuation of colonialism after the return of the islands to Japan, the work tells the story of a woman named Sanghaedaek (‘woman from

14. *Josenbi* was a derogative term for military comfort women during the Pacific War Period.

15. The massacre on Kume Island was an incident exhibiting the Japanese army’s spyyhobia during the lead up to the Battle of Okinawa. As soldiers and civilians worked together to prepare for the expected American attack on Okinawa, the army speculated that secret military information might be exposed to Okinawa locals and came to perceive all of them as potential spies. Having the lowest status among Okinawa residents, Ku Jung-hoi, an ethnic Korean whose Japanese name was Nanakawa Noboru, was killed along with his seven family members on suspicion of espionage.

Shanghai'), a character resembling Bai Bong-gi, the first-known military comfort woman of Korean ancestry. By depicting women victimized by state violence, Kim Jeong-han attempts to present a testimony to colonialism and its continued reproduction in Japanese society and Okinawa in the form of seasonal labor and *kisaeng tourism*¹⁶ even after Japan's defeat in the war (Yim 2013, 118).

Besides, according to materials produced in the 1970s, female workers submitted a pledge on the day they embarked from Korea, which warned them to "take caution the not to go around alone, considering the possible intrusion of the Jochongnyeon." Those who worked at pineapple farms living in dormitories were not allowed to go anywhere on their own; even when they went to the bathroom, they were accompanied by a team leader (Yim 2013, 128). This reveals the South Korean government's view towards Koreans in Okinawa. It is also confirmed in the *speed battle between* the pro-South Korean Mindan 民団 (short for Jae ilbon daehan minguk mindan, the Federation of Korean Residents in Japan) and the Jochongnyeon in the 1970s over the construction of the memorial monument for those mobilized by imperial Japan against their will. Beginning in 1971, South Korea's Foreign Ministry took it on as a major task to collect information on the moves of the Jochongnyeon. In early 1974, the South Korean foreign minister instructed the South Korean Embassy in Japan to immediately act to deter the Jochongnyeon's attempts to build in Okinawa a memorial to Koreans sacrificed in the labor and military drafts of World War II. Eventually, five months later, the inaugural ceremony for the monument was held with South Korea's health and social affairs minister attending, but the monument itself bore no vestige of colonialism or the Cold War. The rationale for the creation of the monument, which was inscribed on it, made no mention of responsibility for colonial domination, remarking only the "wish for friendship and amity from the hearts of the Korean and Japanese people" (Yim 2013, 130–133; Lim 2015, 580).

16. Kisaeng tourism is a type of sex tourism. It became a serious social problem from the second half of the 1960s, as many Japanese travelled for that purpose. For further details, see Park (2014, 435).

All these things—the sending of female seasonal workers, the discovery of Bai Bong-gi, and the investigation into forced mobilization and the rivalries over the erection of a memorial monument—occurred around the time of the *return* of Okinawa to Japanese sovereignty. In contrast to South Korea's indifference, the Jochongnyeon set up on its own a civilian investigative body named the Fact-finding Group for the Forced Arrest and Massacre of Koreans on Okinawa during World War II, composed of four Japanese and four Korean residents of Japan (Jochongnyeon members) with lawyer Ozaki Susumu at its head. It later produced its Report of the Fact-finding Group for the Forced Arrest and Massacre of Koreans on Okinawa during World War II.¹⁷ Meanwhile, the South Korean Foreign Ministry sent officials to Okinawa twice, in July 1971 and May 1972, quite close to the return of Okinawa, to negotiate the legal status of Korean residents there. The Japanese government demanded a resolution to the problem in a legally non-binding manner, using the term “moral consideration” instead of recognizing their application for permanent residence as per an agreement. Korea accepted this, so no Korean on Okinawa was able to secure an agreement-based permanent residency status. Following this, neither Seoul nor Washington (having the key to resolving the problem) moved decisively, leaving not a few stateless Koreans opting for naturalization as Japanese citizens. The Korean government's lukewarm response was behind the choice they made to take the path of silence and assimilation rather than rejecting their invisibility and asserting their Koreanness (Lim 2015, 554, 558–560).

The return of Okinawa to Japan did not signify the end of the US military occupation but the extension of that territory's function as a military base. It was not sought to integrate Okinawa with the Japanese *peace state*, but rather to further its development as a US military base with its military-base economy. For Korea, the return of Okinawa created a momentum to solidify the Korea-US-Japan security alliance with the US

17. It is estimated that wartime Japan mobilized over 10,000 men and several hundred women for the Battle of Okinawa, and about 3,000 of these were compelled to work for the US military after the end of the war (Lim 2015, 549–550).

at the center. While the US and Korea approved of Japan's rearmament, the US secured hegemony in the regional alliance and Korea was ensured participation in the triangular alliance (Lim 2015, 576).

Also, according to the materials on "comfort facilities for POWs" which were put together during talks between Japan and the Allied powers on the handling of POWs after Japan's surrender, the former system of wartime slavery and indebted servitude was reproduced by the Allied occupation authorities after the war. Reports made by the Jochongnyeon recount how Korean women sent to Okinawa by Japan through forced mobilization were exploited by the US military during its postwar occupation. These reports disclosed the harm inflicted by local Okinawans based on the multilayered hierarchy of them and the island's Korean residents (Morris-Suzuki 2016, 75–113; Lim 2015, 568). Besides, Koreans in Okinawa were unable to return to their homeland and had to work in such areas as corpse disposal, military base and airport construction, and in bars for GIs. As employees of the US military, their livelihood depended on the existence of the base. Concealing their nationality, for a long time they kept ID cards issued by the Office of Military Occupation using their Japanese names, and were unwilling to have contact with either the Mindan or Jochongnyeon (Lim 2015, 563, 570). Caught in continuing colonialism and the Cold War regime, Son Jindu and stateless Koreans in Okinawa who had stowed away voluntarily or involuntarily were questioned on their very existence. Both Korea, mainland Japan, and Okinawa, all gripped by Cold War politics and ethnic hierarchies, made them virtually stateless. For them, the end of the war did not mean the end of colonialism.

Forced Border-crossing and Intercountry Adoption

The Convention on the Rights of Children defines it as "the adoption of a child whose parents reside in a different state." It is commonly called intercountry adoption, is also known as overseas adoption, and is a type of "forced transnational migration of children" (Mun 2015, 4).¹⁸ The number

18. Autobiographies of international Korean adoptees that have been introduced to Korea include

of intercountry adoptions worldwide reached 50,000 between 1948 and 1969 and doubled to 100,000 during the 1970s before climbing to 180,000 in the 1980s and 230,000 in the 1990s. Korea is notable as the world's largest adoptee-sending country, with 170,000 children sent between 1953 and 2009. Intercountry adoption has grown in large numbers since World War II, or the Korean War in the case of Korea. The increase of intercountry adoptions in the Cold War period is intertwined with diverse political intentions, including colonialism, anticommunism, and the expansion of US hegemony (Mun 2015, 19–20).

Intercountry adoption, which is a form of forced migration and a reproducer of transborder minorities, has its origins in discussions on the international adoption of war orphans of World War II. With the persecution and mass killings of Jews by the Nazis and the rise in child refugees as a result of World War II, the international community took action to protect Jewish children from Nazi Germany and have them adopted by families in safe places. The United States, which received more adoptees than any other country during the Cold War, had also to face the issue of children born between American soldiers abroad (either deployed in wartime or during the Cold War) and local people and so began to show an interest in the adoption of orphans in both Europe and Asia (Mun 2015, 24).

On the surface, intercountry adoption was promoted as a humanitarian action to provide poor children in peripheral nations with opportunities for a better life and such adoptions were packaged as successful international migrations. The practice of international adoption persisted even after the Kim Dae-jung government officially apologized for its intercountry adoptions of the Cold War period. The gender inequalities of patriarchal societies serve to reinforce the intercountry adoption regime. In Korea's case, families composed only of women and children, e.g., those formed by extramarital relationships with American soldiers and single-mother families, are regarded as abnormal, which serves to justify the continued practice of adoption (Mun 2015, 9).

Trenkka (2005); Robinson (2002); Jo (2000); and Yun (2007).

With the increase of mixed-blood babies born to sex workers in Korea's military-base towns after the intensification of the Cold War in the 1950s, intercountry adoption was extended to refuge orphans. Officially initiated by South Korean presidential decree on the establishment of organizations dedicated to overseas adoption, the program for international adoption later became a state-led program (Jae-min Kim 2013, 245). As intercountry adoption became reinforced with the aim of creating a nation-state of pure blood under the Rhee Syngman government (1948–1960), children in need of protection and interracial babies made up a large share of adoptees. In order to accept them, the United States government amended its Refugee Relief Act (1953) and Immigration and Nationality Act (1957) (Mun 2015, 23–24).

Following the passing of adoption laws in the 1960s, such as Korea's Act on Special Cases Concerning Adoption and the US Immigration Act, a full-blown adoption program, often dubbed "babies for sale" was implemented by the Korean and US governments and middle-class families abroad.¹⁹ In this aspect, Korea's intercountry adoption may be understood in relation to the military regime—which was employing an export-led industrialization strategy—turning to overseas migration policy as a means of resolving a domestic overpopulation problem, while also using overseas adoption to control and purify unmarried women's premarital sexual relations and childbirth (Hübinette 2012, 279–280).

Legislation for the institutionalization of intercountry adoption began with the enactment of the Act on Special Cases Concerning Orphan Adoption by the Park Jung-hee government in 1961 for its regulation and promotion. In 1976, it was revised as the Act on Special Cases Concerning Adoption, deleting the word orphan, and then amended again in 1985 as the Act on Special Cases Concerning Adoption Promotion and Procedures, and

19. Interestingly, in 1977, around the time that the existence of the forgotten military comfort woman symbolized by Bai Bong-gi came to be known in Okinawa, the fact that about 400 Korean children adopted to US soldiers in Okinawa were not taken to America when the soldiers left for their homeland was reported in newspapers and also appeared in Jeong-han Kim's novel published in the same year, *Okinawa-eseo on pyeonji* (Letters from Okinawa) (Jeong-han Kim [1977] 2015, 475).

an eighth rewriting was done in 2010 (Jae-min Kim 2013, 261). As shown here, from the Cold War period to this day intercountry adoption in Korea has not been made through person-to-person arrangements. The general practice is that the state arranges the mass sale of mixed-blood children, lost or abandoned children, and the children of unwed mothers, the particulars of which are then delegated to international civilian intermediary organizations, which makes them invisible.

During the early Cold War period, the United States, the destination of the majority of Korean adoptees, played a leading role in intercountry child adoption as part of its national foreign policy. Pushed under the government's initiative, it imparted importance to the Christian doctrine of salvation and American hegemony, which resembled the previous discourse of colonialism. The United States promulgated the image that America, the epicenter of the liberal world, protected Third World nations from the threat of communization and simultaneously, diffused the perception that Americans adopting orphans from war states were being patriotic and altruistic (Mun 2015, 14–15, 25).

Censuring the communist negation of God and believing that all humans are equally children of God, Pearl Buck, a Christian Evangelist, and Harry Holt, the founder of the Holt Foundation, tried to use intercountry adoption as a means of converting children and their parents to Christianity and at the same time, make economic gains (Mun 2015, 27). It was a large-scale business formed by the collusion of the Korean government's insistence on pure blood, the US government's Cold War anticommunism, Christian Evangelism, and the humanitarianism and liberal democracy of the American middle class. Especially, white middle-class families relished nonwhite culture as a commodity out of the belief that white people would be enriched by consuming exotic things (P. Kim 2012, 182–183).

Intercountry adoption peaked during the 1980s, a period of vehement resistance against authoritarianism, and here the timing is noteworthy. At that time, together with the expansion of overseas migration, a huge number of homeless children, children in institutions, and the children of unwed mothers were forcefully adopted abroad in the name of civilian diplomacy (Jeon Hong et al. 2019, 82–89; Hee-jung Kwon 2019, 164–210).

Around 70,000 children were sent out of Korea by adoption during the 1980s, creating zealous competition among the four major civilian adoption organizations (Holt Children's Services, Eastern Social Welfare Service, Social Welfare Society, and Korea Social Service), which are still very active today. To ensure the stability of intercountry adoption, these agencies built obstetrics hospitals specializing in adoption, foster homes, temporary protection centers for children, and shelters for single mothers. As a result of providing comprehensive services to single mothers, they were able to continue to supply healthy children and make a profit, most of which derived from fees paid by adoptive families.²⁰

Around the time of the 1988 Seoul Olympics, the journalist Matthew Rothschild wrote an article for *The Progressive*, "Babies for Sale: South Koreans make them, Americans buy them," in which he called Korea an orphan exporting country. At the time, the adoption of a Korean child cost about US\$5,000, so 6,463 children adopted in 1988 alone generated some US\$32 million in revenue (Jae-min Kim 2013, 260; Mun 2015, 29).

Remembering Transborder Minorities

The Korean nation-state failed to protect transborder minorities but instead made them invisible. How then are we to understand the relationship between them? Instead of taking issue with history centered on the nation-state and the narrative of nation and collective memory and revealing the identity of transborder minorities vis-a-vis the nation-state, we may be able to conceive a different approach by actively engaging in remembrances of them. *Remembering* differs from the *collective memory of the people*, which calls attention to the nation-state's self-affirmation. Tomiyama Ichiro, a scholar of Okinawa, used the term "remembering" in his *Jeonjang-ui gieok*

20. On the fact that social welfare institutions (e.g., Hyungje Welfare Center) and those housing persons in need of protection, in collusion with civilian organizations, put babies and young children up for adoption by paying child-rearing expenses and fees, see Jeon Hong, et al. (2019, 114–124) and Mun (2015, 28).

(Memories of the Battlefield), borrowing it from Homi Bhabha, the scholar of postcolonialism. Bhabha views remembrance as attaching significance to present mental trauma and reconstructing the past. Tomiyama also emphasizes how the battlefield is laid out in mundane everyday life, which is connected to the here and now (Tomiyama 2002, 40, 131). In this context, *remembering* by minorities has less to do with fact-finding than with ongoing suffering and trauma. For instance, the battlefield of the 1945 Battle of Okinawa is, to Okinawa residents, a metaphor for an ongoing state of war, not its closure. When they remember the battle, they cannot bring themselves to give a full account of what they experienced, because it accompanies the suffering of reproducing the relations and oneness of both recounter and listener, e.g., the explosive sounds of the American military base, stone ruins perched there since the war, etc. Minorities with trauma may *refuse* it when they are asked to speak about their suffering, and they perceive the suffering of having to remember what has been suppressed in the unconscious. In other words, the memory of their past experience is data; it is not a trauma as an illness, but a problem of both sides—speaker and listener.

The transborder minorities examined above are not a problem of the past but of the present, and which should be remembered. Concerning border-crossing and nationality, after the 1965 normalization of Korea-Japan relations, the Korean government put pressure on Koreans in Japan in many ways to change their nationality from “Korea” (i.e., originating from the Korean Peninsula) to the Republic of Korea (South Korea). Violence against minorities over the issue of nationality is ongoing. In 2015, novelist Kim Seok-beom was rejected entry into Korea, while Chung Young-hwan, a researcher on third-generation Koreans in Japan, could not get affidavits from the government because he was denied security clearance for having previously visited the North and meeting people associated with the Jochongnyeon. To this day, any Korean related to transborder movement to and from Japan is considered a traitor and person of suspicion.

Moreover, even as it defined itself in the post-war period as the only country to have suffered attack by atomic bombs and proclaimed its hope for peace from the universal perspective of humanity, Japan did not allow

national/peripheral minorities who were invisible and situated on the fringe of the atomic bombings to be admitted to the realm of that *only country to have experienced an atomic bomb*. When the commemorating monument to Korean victims was erected in Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park, Japan maintained that it would be unacceptable to have the term colonial domination mentioned in the inscription on the monument, so it was changed to a simple and dry expression, "People from the Korean Peninsula were sacrificed." This illustrates how colonialism and the Cold War are not problems of the past, but the present (Yoneyama 1999). Also, at an inconspicuous corner of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park is a clock tower dedicated by "Koreans in Hiroshima Prefecture in Commemoration of the Return to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea." Made invisible even in the memorial park, it shows that Korean atomic bomb survivors as well as Koreans in Japan are not protected by Japanese relief law and are barely remembered to this today.

It is the same with minorities who crossed the border due to intercountry adoption. Their family registration records were forcefully obliterated in the adoption process and adoption records were privatized by adoption agencies. Sometimes even "registered as an abandoned baby" or the so-called G code were fabricated in the adoption process.²¹ In the early phase of intercountry adoption, most of the adoptees from Korea were interracial or abandoned children, but later those of unmarried mothers comprised the largest share. But what remained unchanged was how the adoptees were excluded from the social safety net and became a dual minority—invisible in both their country of birth and the adopted one (Jeong Hong et al. 2019, 125–141; Jae-min Kim 2013, 251). Besides, intercountry adoptees who were forced to migrate across borders had their family registrations created irrespective of their will, but it did not lead to their automatic acquisition of the nationality and citizenship of their adoptive countries. They had to struggle with the fear of desertion by their adoptive

21. The "G code" was the number given to Korean babies being put up for adoption (with some exceptions), and which served as a sort of registration number, but provided no information about the child's birth parents.

parents and suffer depression in endeavoring to be docile daughters and sons so as not to be abandoned. Some returned to Korea, unable to file the application for citizenship at the right time due to parental discrimination or domestic violence; in those cases, they became virtually stateless. Trapped in the process, a few committed suicide. Intercountry adoption never ceased throughout the Cold War and continues today.

An interesting case of overlap between intercountry adoption and asylum can be found in the case of Kim Jin-su, or Kenneth C. Griggs, an antiwar US soldier who became a fugitive at age 22. He was born in Seoul in 1947 and lost his parents during the Korean War. Adopted to a US soldier at 11, he went to America. In 1961, he volunteered to join the US Army. While serving in his post in Japan, he sought asylum in Japan. The adoptee had kept his Korean nationality, as his application for US citizenship was rejected in 1957. After an 8-month stay at the Cuban embassy in Japan and protection by Beheiren activists, he was exiled to Sweden through the Soviet Union. Due to his status as an American soldier with a South Korean passport, it became an incident involving several countries—Japan, the United States, South and North Korea, Cuba, and the USSR. The Cuban government expressed a positive response to his appeal for asylum. Japan's Foreign Ministry was concerned that he might later want to go to North Korea, which could be used as propaganda by the communist bloc. Besides, if he had been a US citizen, the matter could have been resolved rather smoothly by passing it over to the US. But as he had South Korean citizenship, the South Korean government was likely to intervene and this would cause further complications. Amidst these complex circumstances, having personal experience of the Korean War—an experience that had made him a war orphan—Kim Jin-su was acutely aware of the violent nature of the Vietnam War and so opposed it (Hyeok-tae Kwon 2014c, 326–341). Kim and other intercountry adoptees should have been able to obtain the nationalities of South Korea or their adoptive countries under nationality laws. However, under the logic of *we chose you*, these adoptees became invisible beings and their trauma continues in the racial hierarchy that exists between the cracks of national borders.

An additional question to be raised is how long these minorities shall

remain invisible, or for how long will we try to resolve the past in the usual, repetitive manner of bringing them up as victims, making laws and national bodies, and letting them file complaints (W. Jung 2017, 76). Attempting to resolve the past at an individual country level, or based on the actions to be prompted by those harmed, appears insensitive to the intricate historical contexts confronting the Korean Peninsula, Asia, and diverse minority groups that have crossed and continue to cross borders. As the dreams of each country to create an integrated and pure nation-state (e.g., the myth of a homogeneous country) settled in, the scheme of the nation-state seems to have emerged as a self-evident principle, something absolute.

But the *unconscious desire for good citizens* is still an action to justify the invisibility of minorities, in the deceitful disguise of conscientious citizenship. However, as demonstrated by Jeong Yeong-hye's term, "permit minority" (*heogajeung maineoriti*) it is one of the social tendencies to "insert the identity of the minority in the nation-state in the hopes of relieving the majority's ignorance" (Jeong 2011, 47–48). It makes us reconfirm that victimization and violence committed by the nation-state, which help maintain colonialism and the Cold War, are not phenomena of the previous epoch, but are underway at present.

Despite all this, transborder minorities hold the potentiality of allowing the imagination to break from the realm of violence of the nation-state, through the "self-consciousness as refugees" or the self-identity of "volitional refugees" (G. Seo 2008), which enables them to maintain a distance from the nation-state.

The expression of Ishimure Michiko,²² "drift from..." does not suppose two places which define movement, but harbors none other than the momentum to detach. What matters is not where to, but to secede, i.e., to "depart from home" (Tomiyama 2015, 90). To apply it here, stowaway, asylum, and adoption are geographic *transfers* between the boundaries of nation-states and at the same time, nationality—such as motherland,

22. Ishimure Michiko is the author of *Gohaejeongto* (published in English as *Paradise in the Sea of Sorrow: Our Minamata Disease*), which widely publicized Minamata disease, allegedly a pollution-related illness, and *Sindeul-ui maeul* (Village of Heaven).

nationhood, and nation—is activated in the process. In this sense, it could be understood that border-crossing does not just mean a movement from one place to another, but entails the momentum for an exit from a legitimate boundary.

Recognizing themselves as minorities and conceiving their existence as such actors should not start with their historicization in the frame of the nation-state, but with remembering them to shake the history centered on the nation-state and the grammar of collective memory. Also, it needs to be directed towards empathy with their need for recognition, and even with the reality of the overlap between inflictors and inflicted. The anti-history of minorities, which shakes the grammar of the nation-state, should be part of the work to gather-integrate the stories of the deceased and the shattered (Benjamin 2009, 336–343).

The actions of stowing away and asylum seeking call into question the boundary-ness between communities by crossing it illegally. What the actors experienced facing the immigration control system and the law at arrival may be important, but what is just as important is taking note of the possibilities they pursued crossing the border but could not attain and to ponder on the traces of the possibilities they left behind beyond their experiences through the process of stowing away, detention, and repatriation.

“When we visit each other’s land, imagine the existence of the Other contemplating on what happened there, think about it in association with what happened in our own places of dwelling, and reflect on the existence of the Other and speak about it in concrete terms, we will be able to create a sphere of discourse in which the Other is accepted proactively and which is directed toward postcolonialization” (S. Oh 2019, 331).

With only the history of a single nation-state in view, it will be difficult to remember the Other (transborder minorities) who crossed the borders of the Korean Peninsula, the North and the South, mainland Japan and Okinawa, and the United States, and to deliberate on the possibilities that they did not actualize in their lives. Their border-crossing is present in current history and it is a requiem for the reverberating voices wandering like phantoms in colonialism and the Cold War of the Korean Peninsula,

Okinawa, Japan, and Vietnam. People tend to speak easily about harming and being harmed, testimony, past history, and restoration of honor. Particularly, in the ideological terrain of South Korea, it often plays out in the frame of damage inflicted by state violence and its restoration, or transitional justice. But Koreans in Okinawa, who have become stateless and like ghosts cannot make their voices heard, pose a contemporary problem that implicates governments, groups, and individuals in Japan and on the Korean Peninsula that seem to want to turn a blind eye to colonialism, or to believe that anticommunism was of greater importance in the Cold War regime.

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