

Special Feature

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Cosmopolitanisms: Fathers and Daughters Vie for Control Over Early Study Abroad

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Introduction

In recent decades, an increasing number of East Asian families have been sending their children to schools abroad, implementing what scholars have identified as a global capital accumulation strategy (Ong 1999, Waters 2005, Yeoh et al. 2005). Among South Korean families, the most popular strategy is called “early study abroad” (ESA) or *jogi yuhak*, namely short or long-term study abroad prior to college. Widespread is the so-called “geese family” (*gireogi gajok*) form of ESA, in which the male family breadwinner earns money in South Korea while the mother and children are located abroad (until recently, most often in Western countries). These families have been noted for their flexible form, strategically relocating their family members across borders to maximize their opportunities to accumulate global capital, namely skills and assets that can be expended for education and employment both in South Korea and abroad (e.g., English proficiency, comfort abroad). The enactment of these capital accumulation strategies has been largely documented as parental endeavors to navigate the currents of globalization so that their children can secure a better footing in an increasingly competitive and unstable world (Cho 2004, Kang 2012, Lee and Koo 2006). The scholarly works on these families focus largely on parental endeavors as the driving force of transnationalism, and the families have been understood as strategic or instrumental units which can potentially liberate their members from oppressive educational systems or the unequal topography of world capitalism (Ong 1999). In this paper, however, we turn the lens to intergenerational and often conflicted relations within these transnational families—to the family not as a unified global capital accumulation unit, but as an often conflicted body.

We examine, in particular, the perspectives and experiences of ESA daughters. We found that the daughters were simultaneously grateful to their fathers as global architects and interested in themselves playing an active role in the design and fulfillment of their own global strategy. At first we tried to make sense of our ethnographic findings in terms of family power dynamics, taking note of the power of the father as an indication of the persistence of patriarchy

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and traditional family values of filial piety, in which children consider their inherent gratitude toward their families; such gratitude that took particular shape in these families in terms of thankfulness for the advantages that can be accrued through global capital (e.g., foreign degrees, mastery of English). We have come instead to think of our findings in broader terms than simply the persistence of patriarchy or traditional family values. We are interested that the daughters we interviewed think of global capital accumulation and expenditure not in purely instrumental terms, but in terms also of personal happiness and fulfillment quite beyond practical considerations. Specifically they appreciate cosmopolitanism—the privilege of being at home in the world—as having intrinsic value. We are interested that the daughters in this paper distinguish between wise and foolish globalization: wise globalization takes the particular individual—her inclinations and dreams—into consideration; while foolish globalization considers globalization only extrinsically with no regard for the individual. This latter foolish globalization can easily and ironically thwart the very apparent goals of the (parental) strategy—e.g., material success, high profile employment, etc. The daughters we spoke with are keenly aware that their families—and fathers in particular—have the capacity to both enable, and simultaneously and ironically limit both the accumulation and expenditure of global capital.

Interestingly, while parent-children power dynamics have not been a serious scholarly consideration, scholars have discussed the impact of these transnational family forms on the relationship between husbands and wives. Researchers have been interested in the possible reformation of traditional relations between husbands and wives in the context of a conjugal and nuclear family turn with perhaps new forms of fatherhood. On the one hand, the successful performance of these families as strategic transnational units appears to depend on the reinforcement of traditional gender relations. Some scholars examine the aforementioned geese family forms as an instance of neo-traditionalism (Cho 2004, Huang and Yeoh 2005, Waters 2002). On the other hand, however, the process of families becoming transnational strategic units seems also to open space for challenging traditional hierarchal relations between husband and wife. A number of mothers, amidst the difficulties of adjusting to their new environments abroad, for example, report enjoying freedom away from the patriarchal control of their husbands and in-laws (Waters 2002). In this vein, some Filipino migrant mothers have been described as taking on

traditional masculine roles as breadwinners even as they have to take care of their children from afar (Parreñas 2005). Anthropologist Yoonhee Kang (2012) has documented the case of South Korean fathers who have relinquished their roles as breadwinners, risking emasculation, in order to take care of their children attending schools in Singapore (she has, however, also noted the ironic way in which these fathers also manage to assert their superiority). Thus, in this way some scholarship has looked to the libratory potential of family reorganization oriented toward global capital accumulation.

In this article we focus in particular on these young women's sense that their fathers' ability to be wise strategists hinges on their own intergenerational histories: in particular the fathers' relationship to their own fathers. With the libratory potential of the family reorganization in ESA families, these daughters have enjoyed liberal education in the West through the emotional and financial support of their fathers. We focus on fathers in particular because our research interlocutors named them as the central global architects of their families; this itself is a fascinating finding because it is well documented that it is mothers who are most often the foot soldiers of family transnational strategies: namely they are the ones who often do the research about ESA, make the concrete plans, and perhaps most importantly travel with their children abroad.¹ That the fathers nonetheless emerge in these daughters' minds-eye as the primary familial global architect speaks perhaps to the persistence of patriarchy in familial power dynamics—as well as to the often more public lives of fathers in that generation, particularly in terms of education, employment, and even experience abroad.

Interestingly, the daughters see their fathers as objects of an earlier generation of parental social mobility strategies. We are interested that these daughters draw a parallel between that earlier generation and their own situation: namely those (grand) fathers similarly enacted mobility strategies that took an instrumental, universalistic form. We found that the daughters were keenly interested in whether those were in fact wise strategies for their particular fathers. In the cases in which they thought of their fathers as the unhappy victims of foolhardy family regimes, they saw their fathers ironically reproducing such regimes.

1. We note, however, that our interlocutors were also interested in talking about their mothers.

Methods

This paper is based on in-depth interviews with three young women who participated in ESA. The interviews were conducted in 2009 while Chung was working part-time as an instructor at a private English academy in Seoul. Jina was Chung's co-worker who not only volunteered to share her story but also introduced her to Grace. Chung met Eunhye through a personal friend residing in Seoul. All three women agreed to participate in interviews and were very interested in our research question: namely, how do ESA experiences affect the quality and intimacy of parent-children relationships and in particular with fathers. Chung spoke to several other women who we do not portray here; they did, however, similarly refer to their complicated relationships with their fathers. During the interviews, the three women shared the changes in their relationships with their fathers upon their return to South Korea, and most broadly their fathers' influence on their lives. We were struck that the daughters described not fixed relationships with their fathers, but instead relationships that changed over time and particularly in the transition from ESA to their South Korean return.

We have chosen to study women who had pre-college study abroad experience. As noted in prior research, the ESA experiences are often launched by taking advantage of fathers' career opportunities (Cho 2004, Lee and Koo 2006). One of our interviewees, Grace, presents an interesting case in that while she had ESA experience following the assignments of her diplomat father, her father performed as not only the breadwinner but also as the caretaker in place of her mother who was pursuing her own career in South Korea. Grace interpreted this arrangement as her father's intense investment and zeal to provide his children with the educational experience of ESA. We searched for women who had attended or graduated from college abroad as the fulfillment of one of the goals and marks of success of ESA projects.

All three women were in their mid twenties to early thirties, at the stage of building their careers. They come from comfortably middle-class backgrounds and graduated from top-tier universities, two in South Korea and one in Britain. They were perfectly bilingual; they spoke mostly in English during the interviews with Chung, except when using particularly Korean terminology or proverbs for explanation such as emotional attachment (*jeong*) and patriarchy (*gabujang*). Chung conducted three interviews with each woman, which were

approximately an hour and half long each.

Although our findings are based on a small sample, by focusing on the relationships between parents and children of ESA families, our research complements the ESA literature which explored the ESA experiences of parents (Cho 2004, Huang and Yeoh 2005, Kang 2012, Lee and Koo 2006, Waters 2002), and a smaller number on the experiences of children (Waters 2005 which focuses on Hong Kong). Earlier scholarly works have demonstrated the benefits of engaging intimately and in-depth with the life histories of a few informants to explore how social changes are inhabited and lived by individuals forming the realities of their lives (Steedman 1986 on industrialization; Abelman 2003 on compressed modernity; Park and Abelman 2004 on globalization). The interviews reveal that these daughters, on the one hand, have enjoyed liberal education in the West through the emotional and financial support of their fathers with the liberatory potential of the family reorganization in ESA families. On the other hand, the daughters for their part are also not entirely free from more traditional family and parental pressures—most specifically they are laden by the burden of feeling beholden to their parents' (particularly their fathers') sacrifice.

Intergenerational Mobility and Intrinsic Cosmopolitanism

Chung talked to the three women about their relationships with their fathers, changes in those relationships upon their return to South Korea, and most broadly their fathers' influence on their lives. We are interested that the daughters in question are keenly aware that they are at least the second generation to have been the object of family mobility strategies. We are fascinated that at issue for both generations is a tension between instrumental action and happiness. The daughters imagine that their fathers' happiness was compromised because of their grandfathers' judgments about successful life courses. Indeed, two of the daughters consider that their fathers have been similarly ignorant about their happiness. Interestingly what unites the generations beyond this apparent split between instrumental action and happiness is the daughters' refusal to recognize such a split: theirs is a conviction that the path to success must be tailored to personal proclivity, and to an intrinsic appreciation of cosmopolitanism.

Recent scholarship on cosmopolitanism has refused the distinction between its extrinsic (e.g., instrumental action) and intrinsic value (e.g., happiness) (Abelmann et al. 2014). These young women with their objections to the specifics of their fathers' global architecture assert what some scholars have called "normative" or "ideal" cosmopolitanism, epitomized in the summary of Pnina Werbner (2008): "ideas of tolerance, inclusiveness, hospitality, personal autonomy, emancipation." Normative cosmopolitanism refers to these kinds of universal human ideals which are in turn poised against the nation and other sectarian collectivities. This said, however, it would be far too simple to say that their fathers' version is merely crass or economic. And indeed the daughters in question cannot so easily turn away from their fathers' strategies which do take intrinsic matters into consideration. In this vein, many humanists and social scientists alike have coined phrases to amend classical notions of cosmopolitanism, among them "vernacular," "discrepant," "banal," "working class," and "marginal." While the terms vary, the proposed interventions are in fact quite consistent: together they challenge the idea that "real" cosmopolitanism is only the province of Western or elite globalization desires. These daughters both appreciate their fathers' cosmopolitan desires as not simply instrumental while also being critical of them. We appreciate the daughters' refusal to consider cosmopolitanism as exclusively either about instrumentalism or happiness.

The Three ESAers

Our analysis of the three women's narratives indicates that a critical juncture for the relationships between the daughters and their fathers was when deciding on undergraduate majors and careers, namely moments in which they had to strategize as to how to mobilize their accumulated global capital, including their proficiency in foreign languages and experience of Western education. These were moments in which the relationships between fathers and daughters could falter, being easy times for disparate life goals, visions, and values to surface. Among the three women, two experienced a breakdown in their families' ideas about how they should organize their lives, while one daughter remained in solidarity with her father. The two women who experienced tension with their fathers noted that it was ironic that their fathers who enabled their cosmopolitan

visions were the very ones holding them back from actualizing their achievements. They reported emotional pressures to repay their fathers' sacrifices at the cost of their own happiness and desires. In their narratives, the daughters described their relationships with their fathers as that between providers and beneficiaries. Indeed, all three women acknowledged and appreciated their fathers as providers who financially enabled their ESA experiences (Cho 2004, Kang 2012, Lee and Koo 2006). Thus the daughters depicted their fathers as sacrificial figures who lived their lives "for" their families rather than in pursuit of their own individual happiness and desires. In narrating the history of their relationships with their fathers, however, the daughters narrated the often difficult process through which they strived to become independent from their fathers, and thereby architects of their own lives.

While one father accepted his daughter's efforts, the fathers of the other two women did not. These latter two women expressed frustration and regret because they in fact considered that they were the more capable global strategists than their fathers. For instance, Grace's case vividly shows how intergenerational history mattered to her father's parenting decisions regarding Grace's future; specifically, Grace felt that ultimately it was her father's family history that prevented her from becoming an independent architect of her own life. Even as Grace appreciated her father's sacrifice, she could not come to terms with her father's poor strategies for her. Grace understands her father's limits as a global strategist in relation to his own family history—specifically, his frustration for not having been able to become a lawyer. In other words, Grace felt that her father had failed her precisely because he had projected his own desires on her—desires driven by his difficulties with his own father.

Jina's story also provides another example of the conflict between a poor strategist father and his daughter. Like Grace, Jina greatly appreciates her father's support; however, she was bolder in declaring independence from her family. She also interprets her father's failure to understand her desire or acknowledge her as an independent planner of her own life in relation to intergenerational stories of social mobility. Insisting that his father saved his life by preventing him from following his dream of becoming an artist, Jina's father felt emboldened to push Jina to follow his vision. Jina, however, felt that her grandfather had in fact failed her father precisely because he had not been able to follow his own dreams.

The last story of Eunhye is somewhat different in that she and her father

found a harmonious way of living—foremost because her father was able to acknowledge her dreams. Unlike the two fathers and daughters above, Eunhye believes that her father is a wise strategist. In keeping with these other cases, however, she too located the reasons for her father’s wise response in an intergenerational matrix. Similar to the other two cases, Eunhye’s father had not been able to pursue his dreams. Eunhye’s father, however, somehow managed to live without regret. Having been able to find happiness nonetheless, it is this father who became—in his daughter’s eyes—a successful strategist who could in turn embrace and help his daughter to effectively actualize her global capital.

Case 1: Grace, A Diplomat’s Daughter

Grace grew up living in various countries and attending international schools, following her father who worked as a diplomat.² She considers herself as a hybrid product of the various countries she lived in. During interviews, she came across as a strong, liberal, and confident cosmopolitan ready to go anywhere in the world to pursue the best opportunities. At the same time, however, she also emerged as an acquiescent daughter who was enormously conflicted because of her belief that it is indeed her filial duty to reciprocate the privileged opportunities afforded by her father by achieving a particular kind of success. At the delicate juncture of having to decide her undergraduate major, her relationship with her father became very strained. While she wanted to study English literature, her father insisted that she study law and become a lawyer. The frustration she feels towards her father is illustrated in her critique that her family was a “higher-degree earning unit” driven by the desire to accumulate social prestige rather than a “real family” which supports the dreams and aspirations of its members. When Chung met with her, Grace was pursuing a master’s degree in comparative literature at the very same university at which she had studied law as an undergraduate.

Despite these difficulties, Grace thought of herself as having grown up in a privileged environment thanks to her father. Following his diplomatic assignments, she lived in various countries, attending international schools

2. This case is not in fact a typical case of ESA; we do appreciate, however, that it shares features with ESA in terms of family effects.

which she described as elite “miniature United Nations.” Also distinguishing her family was that she and her siblings were raised by their father because her mother remained in South Korea to complete her doctoral degree and build a career as a professor. Grace commented that her father was oddly “liberal,” both affectionate with his wife and supportive of her professional dreams. In this context, her father’s conservative relationship with Grace was all the more prominent. Grace did indeed think of her father’s living abroad with the kids as evidence of his intense commitment to and investment in his children’s education. At the same time, however, she recognized that this “extra” work that her father has shouldered in order to educate his children gave him greater power and control over their lives. For example, after her mother attempted to mediate the conflict between Grace and her father during Grace’s undergraduate years, her father told her mother not to tell him how to raise his children, given that he was the one who had raised them alone while abroad.

Grace explained that while this unique living arrangement made her family look international and cosmopolitan, hers was in fact a typically conservative Korean family with hierarchal relations between both parents and offspring, and men and women. Her family appeared cosmopolitan to other families, she said, simply because of her and her siblings being educated outside of Korea in many different countries. Rather than truly being cosmopolitan and free to pursue their dreams and happiness, Grace and her sister were in fact expected to reciprocate for these opportunities by serving their father and younger brother and taking charge of household chores such as cooking and cleaning. Furthermore, her father expected that his children reciprocate his efforts, sacrifices and their relatively privileged upbringing by becoming successful on his terms. That Grace would become a lawyer was thus both a pillar of her father’s plan and a bone of contention between them—as well as a huge source of pressure for Grace. Grace surmised that her father had greater expectations for her because her teachers had consistently praised her as linguistically gifted because of her writing.

What frustrated Grace above all, however, was that she thought of her father as a poor global strategist because, as it turns out, she was both woefully unprepared for and ill-suited to pursuing a law degree in South Korea. Grace was steadfast that it was in fact English literature that would have afforded her a competitive advantage against most of her peers, whose English was not as proficient as hers. It was enormously illogical, she felt, for her dad to have

insisted that she study law in South Korea. As it turned out, Grace found it nearly impossible to read her law school texts with their many Chinese characters; it was ironically precisely her many years abroad that had made these so hard for her. She felt betrayed by her father, certain that he had purposely not disclosed the full requirements of this line of study because of his own dreams for her. When she found it impossible to excel as a law major and impossible to switch her major because of her poor GPA, her frustration with her father's blind pursuit increased, as it was costing her the opportunity to pursue a major that would have been gratifying to her. She expressed her anger at her father in a passive aggressive manner by playing hooky from school. Her father, who was so excited about her proceeding to law school that he even picked up her textbooks, was angered by her poor performance, and thought of Grace as lazy and ungrateful for refusing to work hard enough. She explained that he could not understand how it was that a linguistically gifted child who could speak English, French, and Italian could not quickly pick up Chinese characters.

As with the other two women we introduce here, Grace understood her father's plans for her in the context of his own family history. She thinks of her father's obsession with her becoming a lawyer in terms of his frustration with his own career. Hailing from an impoverished rural family, Grace's father had dreamed of a legal career. Her father managed to go to a top law program and he prepared for exams for both the law and diplomacy. However, because of the responsibility to support his parents and siblings, and having passed the diplomatic exam first, he gave up his dreams of becoming a lawyer, and began his career as a diplomat. Grace deemed that her father was unfortunately unsuited to a diplomatic career because of his shy and withdrawn character, and thereby was only promoted slowly. She surmised that he must have been frustrated as he watched his friends from law school being promoted quickly to important positions in the government. She sympathized with her father's frustration, imagining that he would have likely enjoyed a distinguished legal career. Indeed, he had a lifelong passion for law. He even studied for the bar exam in his sixties after retiring from his position as a diplomat. Grace was certain that it was this frustration with his own career that informed his obsession with Grace's becoming a lawyer, so as to be able to vicariously live his dream through her, perpetuating a detrimental legacy.

Grace thus spoke of her experience abroad as both a gift and curse endowed by her father. In telling the story of her relationship with him, she

described the irony in that it was her father who turned her into a liberal thinker even as he was close-minded in strategizing his children's futures. Grace thinks that a liberal person is one who does not see boundaries or divisions among different nations, races, and genders. She noted the irony that when he sent his children to international schools, her father expected that his children would learn English yet remain culturally Koreans. She reasoned that it was an oversight on her father's part to think that their education in English would only result in their acquisition of the language as capital to convert to other forms of cultural capital such as a prestigious university degree and career. He did not realize she would learn that people should pioneer and pursue their own dreams rather than live those of others in a cosmopolitan world at her international school. She offered that this sort of thinking was the misguided expectation of the likes of her father and other ESA fathers that in turn has them surprised when their children turn out to be "a mind of their own." For example, while Grace's father expected that she would become a successful lawyer within the bounds of South Korea, she turned out to be a cosmopolitan who is willing to go anywhere in the world to pursue the best opportunity. That her father both enabled and disabled her desires to live a truly cosmopolitan life is a source of endless angst for Grace.

Case 2: Jina, A Professor's Daughter

Like Grace's family, Jina's family experienced a breakdown in intergenerational understanding. Returning to South Korea after completing her undergraduate degree in London, Jina declared her independence from her father by moving out of his house—a decision that had in fact been hard and long in coming. Currently she lives what she calls a "Bohemian lifestyle," namely a life that is not financially lucrative or high in prestige, yet nonetheless rewarding to her in terms of intellect and experience, working as an English teacher at a private academy and living in a culturally alternative place. Similar to Grace, Jina considers herself a cosmopolitan, who feels greater loyalty to humanity rather than to a particular nation. Although she attributed her current lifestyle and identity to the vision and endeavors of her father, when Chung met with her, she was still suffering from guilt for having made the decision to leave her home. She was, however, confident that it would be the best decision for the wellbeing and happiness of her entire family in the long run. In framing her narration of the

history behind the recent conflicts with her father, Jina stated several times that she has no doubt that her father has always wanted the best for her including the times he insisted on strategies which were based on misguided judgment as to what is in fact best for her.

Jina thought of herself as living a privileged lifestyle for being the beneficiary of an intergenerational global project. According to Jina, her global project was founded in her parents' sacrifices and heroic adventures designed to make the children in the family "better versions" of their parents, namely climbing the social ladder in terms of family class and prestige. She drew this lineage, beginning with her grandfather. Her grandfather was a self-made man who paid off his parents' debt and managed to become the greatest landowner in his county. His regret, however, was that although he was wealthy he was illiterate. Thus when his son became a professor, it answered his every dream. Jina narrated her father's excursion to Britain as his pursuit for intellectual freedom, and as an endeavor to set her and her sister on a larger world stage. Her family lived together in Britain while her father was studying as a doctoral student and her mother as a master's student. Once her father completed his doctoral degree, he returned to South Korea and worked as a goose father to support her mother, sister, and Jina who remained in Britain to study. When her mother completed her master's degree, her mother and sister reunited with their father who was working as a professor in Seoul, while Jina remained alone in Britain for her undergraduate degree.

While Jina had been well aware that she is part of the lineage of this intergenerational project, she experienced her first conflict with it when having to decide her undergraduate major. Different from Grace's father who envisioned his daughter living a comfortable and prestigious upper-middle class lifestyle as a lawyer within the bounds of South Korea, Jina's father imagined that his daughter would continue the family's legacy by studying English literature at Oxford University as an undergraduate, do her graduate work either at Cambridge University or some other university in the United States, and later return to Oxford as a professor. She reminisced on visiting Oxford's campus during her summers as a young child, as her father showed her where he envisioned her future. It was not until applying for colleges that she felt the pressure of her father's expectations. Although she had her heart set on majoring in the fine arts, her father insisted that she study English literature. To persuade his daughter, Jina's father told her that when he was a teenager he quit high

school in order to pursue his dream of becoming an artist. He explained that it was very fortunate that her grandfather had intervened. Furious that his son was throwing away an opportunity to be educated, his father destroyed all his artwork. Jina thus decided to follow her father's order to study English literature instead of fine arts, understanding his insistence as his attempt to save her from the selfish and lonely lifestyle of an artist. At the same time, however, she was determined not to go to his dream university, Oxford, and went instead to a different college in London which ranked as number one in English literature the year she applied. Although she considered the ranking to offer a justifiable rationale for her decision, her father was nonetheless very upset, refusing to talk to her for months. Nonetheless, she considered it to be a great privilege to have attended college in London, and was grateful for her family's support.

Jina and her father experienced their second major conflict regarding her career trajectory when she came to Seoul after completing her undergraduate degree. When she first arrived in Seoul, away from the hype for jobs in management and consulting she experienced on her undergraduate campus, she suddenly felt enormous freedom in terms of her career. This was also when she met her future husband, whose confidence in pursuing his passion reminded her of a similar freedom that had once been hers. Her passion for fine arts having returned to the fore, she was angry with herself for not having fought for her dream at the time, and she pledged to live her life following her passions. At this juncture, her father was suffering a bout of depression after losing his professorship on account of a political scandal; he was also beset by financial woes. Oddly, he suddenly began to chart the ways in which Jina could become a millionaire, a 180-degree change from his earlier emphasis on continuously being intellectually productive. Jina figured that the political scandal had tutored her father in the importance of financial power to maintain one's independence.

Jina was in a difficult situation: it became clear to her that her family was expecting that she would contribute financially. Nonetheless she was committed to following her own dreams, and eventually made the difficult decision to declare her independence and move out. She vividly remembered that day because it was the first time she remembers intentionally trying to hurt her father. Her entire family was gathered at some family property in the countryside, where he had built two green houses after moving out of Seoul. Her family had eaten the lunch—broiled chicken, rice, and salads—that her mother had packed. Her mother and sister were taking a nap inside while her

father began to dictate Jina's future again without listening to her at all. She ended up expressing what she had bottled up before having held back because of her deference to the sacrifices her parents had made to support her. She told her father that she regretted not having stood up more against him to pursue her dream of studying fine arts. She stomped into her mother and sister's room telling them that she was leaving. She suffered an enormous amount of guilt that she was "ditching" her family, aware that all of the privileges she enjoyed were thanks to their support. She decided that although her family would be upset with her in the short-run, this was the wiser decision she could make for the long run.

It is critical to understand the idea of "flesh and blood" in Jina's family in order to understand her decision. Jina and her father agreed that they were flesh and blood, namely that there is a fundamental biological connection between them such that they hardly need to communicate to understand each other. This connection also makes it so that one feels the other's emotions with greater intensity. For example, if one person is in pain, the other person will feel greater pain. Her father had dictated her life based on the argument that she is his flesh and blood. She conceded that he does in fact know her better than she knows herself. Jina applied the same logic to understanding her father. Reflecting on her father's life and career history, she attributed her father's political scandal to his frustration from working as a professor after having given up his true passion and vocation, namely being an artist who is free to create with his hands rather than being an academic who has to live in his head. Having felt how unbearable it was to watch her father suffer depression, she realized that her parents would experience greater misery and pain if she were to end up unhappy and blame it on them. She learned the importance of individual family members being responsible for their happiness not only for themselves but also for the happiness of the family collectively in the long run. Through this reassessment, Jina disagrees with her father that her grandfather having forced him to give up his dreams was the best thing that happened to him; she concludes rather that her father ought to have fought for his dreams.

After having learned the importance of being responsible for one's own happiness, Jina took a critical step towards becoming the strategist of her own life: moving out and declaring her independence. These were difficult decisions as she was aware that her family considered her actions as indicative of her wish to no longer be part of the family. Upset with her daughter, Jina's mother

explained to her that to be family means to stick together through both the good and bad, and it is through the accumulation of both positive and negative feelings during this process that people become a family. Her actions were interpreted as an unwillingness to deal with the hardship of being a family, and thereby severing herself from the intimate and complicated emotional ties that create the cohesiveness of families. She felt torn that the best she could do was openly and honestly apologize to her mother that she finds herself incapable to follow their wishes and be happy even as she wishes she could. She thinks about the happiness of her family members to the extent she can without losing sight of her responsibility to design a life in which she can be happy.

Case 3: Eunhye, A Teacher's Daughter

Like Grace and Jina, Eunhye considered the many privileges she enjoyed as having been made possible by her father. Unlike Grace and Jina, however, Eunhye did not experience major conflicts with her father upon returning from her study abroad. Eunhye was rather proud that she and her father managed to together develop a “special” relationship, through shared experiences such as ESA that sets theirs apart from most other father-daughter relationships in South Korea. She largely attributed their special relationship to her father being different from most South Korean fathers. She greatly appreciated that her father has not only given her wings, but also the freedom to pursue her dreams. Her father did not pressure her to major in law or medicine like many South Korean parents, but instead supported her study of sociology as an undergraduate and graduate student. Eunhye thinks of her father as a great cosmopolitan strategist precisely because of his being open-minded and wise, and having the willingness to continue to learn—traits that also distinguished him she thought as a wonderful teacher. Her family's time in Argentina was an opportunity for both Eunhye and her father to learn and grow as architects and together build cosmopolitan lives. During this process, they have also built a strong intimate bond based on mutual respect and appreciation.

What Eunhye appreciates most about her father is that he didn't let frustration with his own biographical and career history interfere in his strategizing for his children's future—precisely the issue for Grace and Jina. She explained that perhaps what most distinguished her father was that he didn't have the need to live vicariously through his children on account of feeling

that he had unduly sacrificed. All the more interesting is that this was the case even as Eunhye's father—like the other two fathers in this paper—similarly had to forfeit his initial dreams due to family circumstances. His own father had been an abusive alcoholic. He wanted to become a doctor but because he did not have enough money for medical school he ended up becoming a teacher, and supporting his mother and siblings. But, this sequence of events did not mean that he would live an unhappy, frustrated life. He managed to build a meaningful and rewarding career as a high school teacher who has been much respected by his students, and is today a vice principal at a prestigious science high school. Eunhye interpreted that he was able to avoid becoming frustrated with his job by building hobbies such as hiking and reading books.

Eunhye depicted her father as an upright and wise strategist committed to enabling his children and students, providing them with the kind of support that he had not enjoyed himself instead of letting the mistakes of his past repeat in the present. She praised her father's "liberal" vision, highlighting that her father is an independent thinker and remarkable considering his 60-something age. Her father created a "liberal environment" for the family with his wife as his co-partner. For example, her parents shared the house chores equally. Also, Eunhye and her brother were allowed to freely speak their opinions. To demonstrate how unique her family was, she explained that in elementary school when the teacher was surveying which newspaper each household was reading, she found that hers was the only family reading a left-wing liberal newspaper. As a teacher, she thinks of her father as like a brother or friend to his students rather than being a patriarchal figure.

While Eunhye is proud and appreciative of having been raised in this sort of democratic family culture, she described that the cultural gap between her household and mainstream society did present some challenges. For instance, when her homeroom teacher told female students to clean the classroom, explaining that it was a "woman's" job, she objected that it was unjust for the teacher to discriminate between female and male students. With this sort of behavior, Eunhye became marked as a problem child. Her father became particularly concerned when Eunhye was told that she should take responsibility for a cut that a male student had given her with scissors. Eunhye was infuriated, well aware that her teacher was protecting the male student whose mother frequently visited and likely bribed the teacher. She wrote a furious and critical letter to her teacher, who then summoned her parents to school. Eunhye ended

up shocked that her parents were abhorred by the letter she wrote rather than the teacher's poor handling of the accident which had left her scarred.

After this incident, Eunhye's relationship with her father became strained. She recalled this as a moment in which her father's parenting approach suddenly shifted. She thinks that her father was likely concerned that she would grow up to become an odd woman out; further she imagines that her father was given cause to reflect on the downside of her liberal upbringing. As she looks back on those years, she thinks of herself as immature and selfish, but she also thinks that her parents' expectations were perhaps too high for a young child. When her father told her she was the one in the wrong, she felt betrayed by him and rebelled. Today, however, she no longer considers her father to have been saying that her teacher was correct, but rather that Eunhye could have solved the problem with her teacher in a wiser way, namely by following one of their own cardinal family values: the importance of being polite. According to her parents' definition, being polite means to be able to understand events, including conflicts, from others' perspectives. Had Eunhye strived to observe and understand her social setting and the accordant motivations of her teacher, she would have been able to resolve instead of heighten the conflict with her teacher. While understanding what her father's expectations were, she thinks her father was simply concerned with her failure to be polite rather than attempting to understand her struggle to straddle the different ideas of appropriate and inappropriate ways of socializing at home and at school.

Eventually Eunhye's father switched his strategy, from trying to change Eunhye to changing her environment. She judged this was because her father decided there was nothing necessarily wrong with her liberal way of being, and thus his daughter could be happy and thrive if put in an environment in which her behaviors would be the norm rather than those of a social outcast. Her father made arrangements so that he could work as a school inspector in Argentina for 2 years rather than in South Korea. His decision was based on his romantic idea about the West, as a place where people are more individualistic, and where individuals have more freedom to express themselves. Exceeding his expectations, during their time in Argentina, Eunhye learned how to get along with everyone, no matter how different from her. This happened through learning how to listen to others. At her school in South Korea, she had been a child who liked to talk rather than listen. Once she arrived at her international school in Argentina, she had to listen to others because her English was not

yet proficient, and also because she was fascinated by the stories of her friends who lived in different parts of the world. This was a humbling experience for her, which made her realize how vast the world is beyond one's experience and knowledge. Through this experience she matured learning how to be cosmopolitan, namely getting along with people from anywhere around the world, which she considers a richer way of living.

Different from Grace and Jina, Eunhye noted her family's time abroad not only as a period of cosmopolitan growth for her but also for her father. She narrated her father's tolerance of her drinking with her peers in Argentina as exemplary of her father's open-mindedness. In South Korea, a student's drinking is a sign that the student will become a delinquent. Thus it is the responsibility of elders, especially teachers, to prohibit students from drinking. On the other hand, in Argentina, drinking was one of the casual activities students engaged in, which Eunhye enjoyed. Rather than admonishing her drinking as unacceptable, her father took the time to observe that his daughter was adjusting well in a new environment, doing well at school, and had a good reputation in the community. She hypothesized that he may have also tolerated her drinking because he considered this sort of freedom as being a part of Western education. Observing students outside of South Korea, her father utilized his time in Argentina as an opportunity to further hone his sensibility as to what guidance students need. Eunhye repeatedly lauded her father for his strategic ability to guide students based on this keen sense he built over the years as a teacher. She greatly appreciated the efforts he made to understand that her drinking was not a sign of delinquency but rather a preference for how she wishes to spend her leisure time and conduct her social life.

This is not to say that there are no sources of conflict for Eunhye and her father, but rather that they have learned how to work out their differences based on their mutual respect for each other as distinct individuals. There are incidences that have made Eunhye realize that she and her father can never fully know or understand each other. For example, one day her father suddenly yelled at her when she was drinking at home after completing some hard translation work. She was perplexed because she was certain that he had overheard her receive permission from her mother, and also because there were times when she and her father would drink together at home. She assessed the problem as stemming from her father's basic dislike of her drinking but trying nonetheless to tolerate it. Although she was dumbfounded at first, she acknowledges and

appreciates that her father tries to temper his Korean patriarchal temperament in order to respect her as an individual. Thus rather than rebelling, as she had before her time in Argentina, she is rather invested in thinking of ways she can minimize actions that anger or upset her father such as avoiding drinking at home or seeking permission from her father rather than mother before doing so. Whether she can drink at home or not are trifling matters in the face of Eunhye's confidence about her father's respect for and confidence in her ability to make important life decisions such as choosing her undergraduate and graduate major, and finding her own happiness. To illustrate the relationship she and her father have built together, she shared one of the most memorable conversations that she had with her father while he was giving her a ride to school. She thanked him for the wonderful experience she was able to have attending a prestigious foreign language high school, and then a prestigious women's university in South Korea. Aware that her ability to speak two foreign languages—English and Spanish—significantly contributed to her receiving admission to these two institutions, she thanked her father for enduring the hardships in Argentina that led her to this opportunity. He responded that she must also give herself credit for all that she has achieved. It was she who sowed and reaped the benefits of the environment he provided for her: studying hard and making friends in a foreign environment. To Eunhye, her father is a hero who enabled her to not only enjoy the privileges of studying abroad and subsequent perks, but also to enjoy a rich cosmopolitan life including a special relationship with her father as the architect of her own life.

Conclusion

The narratives of the three women we have introduced here demonstrate that there is no simple formula as to whether transnational family forms will liberate South Korean daughters from traditional familial norms that include a deep-seated sense of being indebted to family. This finding is aligned with prior research which has inquired as to whether “flexible” families subvert traditional spousal relations. Our research demonstrates that ESA strategies are one of the many familial experiences through which parent-children relationships form and transform. In exploring the three daughters' pursuit to become independent architects of their own lives, we have seen that their narratives illustrate that

they were entangled not only in their relationship with their fathers, but also in their fathers' relationship with their own fathers. These complex emotional matrices of relations constitute the family as a regime, which can both enable and hinder the freedoms of individual family members. Also made clear is the complex intersection of instrumentality and happiness. We have seen that these young women's sense of wise vs. foolish global family strategies is tied up in their sense of whether or not their fathers in particular have respect for their personal proclivities and happiness. The global spirit that emerges here is much more than merely an instrumental strategy; it respects cosmopolitanism in its own right, as an intrinsic pleasure and aim. We thus suggest that the regimental nature of transnational families needs to be critically examined beyond merely perceiving it as a strategic unit that navigates the global political economy of nation-states' educational and employment structures so as to enable children to thrive as cosmopolitans.

All three women narrated their families' ESA projects as the product of their fathers' cosmopolitan vision and strategizing. Identifying their fathers as the strategists who masterminded, organized, and initiated ESA projects, none of the daughters described their fathers' maneuvering as oppressive, or relying simply on their submission to their fathers' authority and desires. It was rather the case that these upper-middle-class women felt greatly indebted to their fathers, keenly aware of their relative privilege. They were also well aware of the relatively impoverished environment their fathers grew up in, the sacrifices they made for their families, and their hard work in order to provide their children with luxuries and opportunities they had not enjoyed themselves. Grace and Jina felt compassionate about their fathers' frustrations, yet also burdened to fulfill their fathers' sacrificed or lost dreams. Aware of the more common experience among South Korean families such as Grace's and Jina's, Eunhye is grateful that her father supported her to become an independent architect able to design and pursue her own dreams. She thanks her father for being a great strategist who not only devised the family's ESA strategy, but also prevented family history from repeating itself.

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Abstract

This paper focuses on how South Korean early study abroad (ESA) daughters think about their fathers as architects of their ESA experiences. These families which send their children abroad for better education have been noted for their flexible form, strategically relocating their family members across borders to maximize their opportunities to accumulate global capital. In this paper, however, we turn the lens to intergenerational and often conflicted relations within these transnational families—to the family not as a unified global capital accumulation unit, but as an often conflicted body. We note that ESA daughters' ambivalence about their fathers as global architects and their own interest in controlling their education and employment has historical roots in the social mobility schemes and relation of earlier generations. Through an analysis of three ESA daughters' narratives on their experiences with their fathers, we argue that the daughters are very interested in the intrinsic value of study abroad or cosmopolitanism and take issue with what can appear to be their fathers' approach to the extrinsic value of study abroad.

Keywords: educational migration, family dynamics, cosmopolitanism, daughters, transnationalism