

Homework 1: A Korean Heritage Minute Script

Summary: This Korean Heritage Minute discusses a dark moment in Korea's history: the establishment of international adoption system as a way of removing (sometimes abandoned, sometimes abducted) mixed-race babies from Korea after the Korean War.

Sources: My main sources included:

- "The International Adoption of South Korean Children" by Clara Haugland
<https://overseas.mofa.go.kr/no-en/brd/m_21237/view.do?seq=112>
- "In South Korea, international adoption as a solution to social problems" by Kevin Hartnett.
<<https://www.bostonglobe.com/ideas/2015/05/12/south-korea-international-adoption-solution-social-problems/4ltTuTWZylEINQJqzMVdRN/story.html>>
- "In Korea, Adoptees Fight To Change Culture That Sent Them Overseas"
<<https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2014/09/09/346851939/in-korea-adoptees-fight-to-change-culture-that-sent-them-overseas>>
- "Chartered Plane Bound for the US with Adopted Babies in the 1950s: Holt Donates Records to National Archives" by Lee Sang-ho.
<http://english.khan.co.kr/khan_art_view.html?artid=201301181833447&code=710100>

Goals: There are three goals for this video:

- To raise awareness about the historical and present experience of mixed-race Koreans in South Korea.
- To reveal one of the origins of the International Adoption System in South Korea.
- To highlight the perseverance and struggle of one minority group of Koreans: Koreans of mixed-race heritage.

Script:

Mihwa: Where is she?

Mihwa's Mother: It's better this way.

Mihwa: Mom, where is she? She's my...

Mihwa's Mother: (*Sternly but sadly*) It's too late. A 'G.I. Baby' would ruin your life. You'll thank me when you're...

Mihwa: (*bursting into tears*) No! My baby! Ji-yeon-ah!

Mihwa grabs her coat and runs out of the house and through the snowy streets. It's winter, and her breath fogs up as she runs through the dark alleys of her clearly poor 1950s neighborhood. In the background, a construction site is visible, rebuilding houses destroyed in the war.

Cut to a baby being carried onto an airplane and placed in a small crib. Camera pulls back to reveal many babies and a number of female caretakers on the plane.

Narrator 1: My father was a Westerner, a soldier who had come to fight in the Korean War. My mother hadn't loved him, but she did what she had to do to survive. I was born mixed race, and seen as a mark of shame on my family, but she loved me anyway. My grandmother—and the government—had other plans for me, though.

The plane flies away.

Cut to an American farm where a Korean baby is being handed over to a white family.

Narrator 1: My mixed-race heritage was why they wanted to get rid of us. And we were just the first to be sent away: over the following decades, many orphans and children abandoned by single mothers or their families followed behind us.

Cut to present day: a Korean-looking adult woman gets off a plane, and meets an elderly Korean woman who weeps when she sees her.

Ji-Yeon: (same voice as Narrator 1, in awkward Korean) Mother? I'm Ji-yeon. I'm your Ji-yeon...

Elderly Mihwa: (bursts into tears and hugs Ji-yeon, speaking in Korean) My baby... my little baby...

Narrator 2: Over the decades, tens of thousands of Korean orphans and abandoned babies were adopted abroad, but the first international adoptees were mixed-race children who were seen as shameful and socially unacceptable in Korean society. Although some things have improved, mixed-race Koreans still fight to attain social equality and the acceptance of their fellow Koreans.