6 The Education Welfare Project at Pine Tree Hill: A Core Location to Assess Distributional and Transitional Forms of Justice

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It is amazing to see the change in the way these [government and private welfare agency] people treat us. Who could have known this kind of public welfare [e.g., basic medical treatment, free meals, places to sleep, clothes] would someday be provided? Seeing these changes has made my life "worthwhile" *(sesang cham salgo bol-il ida*).

– A homeless woman in the Seoul Train Station Plaza, 1999

I sometimes wonder if a few decades' collective efforts to build some autonomy into the community's daily lives (*jagi salmui juini doeneun*) was all in vain. Under the good years of lefty regimes, people with narrow minds deeply influenced by ideological censorship from the time of the military regime hid their thoughts. Now they've become vocal and expose their true thoughts. It negatively affects community activities now, dampening the village atmosphere of decision making through dialogue and cooperation for the common good. It feels almost as if we are back living in the [Korean] War or a refugee camp without any room to appreciate the value of mutual aid and collective action. Without knowing what's going to happen tomorrow, the only priority is to keep surviving in the short term.

– Domin, a community activist of Pine Tree Hill, 2016

This chapter examines the Education Welfare Project (EWP), a school welfare program implemented in a metropolitan working-poor neighbourhood, as a core location of distributional justice.[1] Distributional justice, represented by welfare states, seeks to repair polarized social relations stemming from uneven and structural wealth accumulation

1 The arguments in this chapter will be developed in more detail in my next book.

through promulgating a compensatory system. This is similar to the ways in which transitional justice endeavours to redress historical wrongdoings that cannot be dealt with through the regular court system, by establishing truth and reconciliation commissions and war criminal courts. As the introduction to this volume more fully elucidates, the concept of "core location," as formulated by Baik Young-seo (2013), describes a place that has experienced dual marginalities in geohistory and compound genealogies of praxis that foster insights for a transformative politics of decolonization and anti-capitalism. The Education Welfare Project marks dual marginalities of distributional justice in that it reveals the project's peripherialized location within the capitalist development process; at the same time, the EWP's realization of transformative social relations is impeded despite – indeed, because of – the focus on a certain kind of redistribution as a mediation without problematizing the ways in which the mode of production is systematically buttressing capitalist accumulation. By focusing on these dual marginalities, which cannot be reduced to mere victimhood, this chapter proposes critical approaches to transitional justice as a means of understanding the place of welfare states within the capitalist social totality.

The Asian Financial Crisis and First Welfare States

Since the Asian financial crisis, South Korean urban poor communities have received an unprecedented amount of attention from federal and municipal governments. The new policies have stressed the welfare of its citizens and have attempted to alleviate the social tensions associated with class polarization and poverty that have resulted from the state's single-minded pursuit of economic growth.[2] The period of official

2 Industrial capitalist accumulation in South Korea had already experienced crises multiple times as a result of global influences, such as the oil shock in the 1970s and the electoral democracy achieved by a worker and middle-class alliance in the late 1980s. National growth did not stop after the Asian financial crisis. National industrial development rapidly adjusted its focus to the domain of information and communication technology by promoting a flexible labour market and entrepreneurship (see Seo 2011 and Park's chapter in this volume), which resulted in the magnification of class polarization along with increasing volatility in the real estate market and the exposure of individual households to the global financial market (Jang 2011; K.-K. Lee 2011; Shin 2011). The Asian financial crisis, having taken place at the height of national growth, is therefore more relevant to the perspectives of the working (poor) class who did not benefit from the same portion of the national growth as they had previously.

crisis (1997–2001) coincides with the first appearance of a universalistic welfare state that guaranteed all citizens a basic standard of living. It began with "productive welfarism" (*saengsanjeok bokji*) under the Kim Dae-Jung presidential regime (1998–2003), when the homeless were treated as citizens deserving of welfare, initially as emergency subjects and later gaining permanent entitlements. Productive welfarism was followed by "participatory welfarism" (*chamyeo bokji*) under the Roh Moo-Hyun regime (2003–8), when the Education Welfare Project was first launched to help alleviate class polarization and poverty by designating urban poor communities as priority zones.[3]

The words in the first epigraph of this chapter are those of a South Korean homeless woman who was astonished by the degree of the state's attention given to homeless people at the height of the Asian financial crisis in 1999. The emergence of the gendered homeless subject that made homeless women invisible during the Asian financial crisis is symptomatic of a broader social discourse and ideology fraught with assumptions about gender and class. Homeless men were recognized as former breadwinners of the normative middle-class family and, thus, deserving of state support during the crisis. By contrast, homeless women were invisible and unimaginable: they were painted as unethical and selfish for having left their families and for not fulfilling their motherly and wifely obligations in dire times. Because homeless women living on the street rarely go to public spaces for fear of sexual violence, social workers denied their existence, even when they were standing right in front of them – even in the case of the homeless women in the epigraph (see Jesook Song 2009).[4]

Regardless of the morally laden "invisibility" of homeless women in the public eye, the quoted homeless woman's astonishment regarding the elevated attention given to homeless people reflects a palpable sign of the emergence of the first welfare state in South Korea, "first" in that it claims the universal right of all citizens to a basic standard of living. The universal welfare state emerged under the Kim Dae-jung regime as a national response to the Asian financial crisis. It had unprecedented support from the non-government sectors and dissents groups, owing to Kim's legacy of opposition during the military regimes of the 1970s and 1980s. Homeless people were initially targeted as

3 See Abelmann, Choi, and Park 2012 and Park and Abelmann 2004 for the context of the education crisis; see Jesook Song 2017 for background on the EWP.

4 Throughout this chapter, the notion of the state is divided into ethnographic identification of federal and municipal governments and a conceptual discussion of state sovereignty's role in capitalist political economy.

temporary emergency subjects in distress during the crisis, showcasing the unprecedented benevolence of the welfare state, and became permanently entitled subjects of the state welfare system in 2003 through the Ordinance of Facilities for Protecting Rootless and Homeless People. However, the change in homeless people's status from temporary emergency welfare subjects to permanent entitlement recipients was made possible through the strenuous efforts and lobbying of activists, and by public support more generally (S. Kim 2001; U. Hwang 2007).

Although the mainstream media and civic organizations perceived the idea that homeless people were deserving of state welfare as noble when their new legal status was belatedly implemented in 2005, the ordinance acted as a tool for decentralizing state responsibilities. In other words, the ordinance was set by the federal government in the name of protecting and nurturing those who were vulnerable across the whole population; at the same time, the ordinance became institutionalized through the central government's delegating financial and administrative responsibilities to the municipalities, which do not necessarily possess the resources to operate the programs warranted by the ordinance. The decentralization of the homelessness policy incapacitated the infrastructure building and operability of the majority of municipalities with homeless populations, save for a couple of the largest metropolitan city governments.[5] Some scholars refer to this kind of downloading of the central state's responsibilities to municipalities as a key characteristic of neoliberalism. Rather than assessing the extent to which the South Korean case speaks to neoliberalism, or charting its different trajectory from those of welfare states from (western and northern) Europe and (North) America, this chapter focuses on the ways in which the initiatives of distributional justice are sure to be infelicitous. Such a result is not due to some unpredictable mishap that produced a discrepancy between the ideas in the policy and their implementation on the ground. Rather, I argue that the failure of these initiatives stems from liberal (capitalist and anti-communist) political economic ideology as a crucial condition that engenders a preoccupation with welfare politics, as if there are no other options.

This trajectory of homelessness is not an isolated case of an infelicitous mode of justice seeking within welfare-governing practices in South Korea. The EWP, a school welfare program that mandates utilizing and consolidating the infrastructure of community mutual aid

5 See municipal workers' complaints in Kim Sang-chung's *What I Would Like to Know* (Geu geosi algo sipda), Seoul Broadcasting System, 26 July 2008, episode no. 678.

resources, offers another window through which to understand the intrinsic limitations of distributional justice, which is the core location this chapter hinges upon.

The Education Welfare Project and Children's Network

The extraordinary attention that federal and municipal governments paid to the welfare of urban poor neighbourhoods mobilized grass-roots organizations and community activists to take part in administering social development projects, which stemmed from a yearning to make structural changes. However, the EWP, which aims to redress historical injustices in terms of the class gap under the state's direction, inevitably invites clashes and competition among neighbourhood stakeholders. These clashes and competitions also affect the left in the form of a revitalized censorship in people's daily lives. Tensions rise among local actors, between the municipality in need of actualizing the welfare state's imperative of social development and the local community's attempt to maintain its self-governance. Further, tensions also emerge among community members themselves.

Pine Tree Hill is one of the metropolitan working-poor neighbourhoods affected by the new welfare initiatives, a place I have been frequenting over the past decade or so, tracing the Education Welfare Project. The neighbourhood was designated as one of the top-priority zones of the EWP since the early years of the new millennium. The constituency of the project includes not only the central government's goals of fostering social development and[6] urban regeneration programs. Some of these programs have been launched primarily by municipalities (as Park's chapter in this volume reveals); others are initiated by local grass-roots entities, such as the Children's Network at Pine Tree Hill, which are introduced in the following pages.[7]

The Pine Tree Hill neighbourhood's current population is approximately 27,000. The community still has long-term residents from the 1960s and 1970s, when it was established for relocated post–Korean War refugees, but people have increasingly settled in the area in the

6 The central government's imposition parallels economic development as a form of the state's "selective spatiality" that Oh's chapter precisely contextualizes, because the project is designated as a program for poverty zones to prioritize social development.

7 The names of research participants, neighbourhoods, and organizations – such as Domin, Pine Tree Hill, Seagull Town, and the Children's Network – are all pseudonyms used to protect their identities.

last two decades. Pine Tree Hill residents include taxi drivers, factory workers, low-level office workers, some college students, and people in between irregular jobs. A substantial number of people do not have paid jobs. The latter eke out a living through a combination of hustling, part-time jobs, working as unpaid domestic-care volunteers, and relying on social networks or welfare subsidies. Residents who are eligible for state welfare subsidies earn entitlements based on the following categories: people with disabilities; children, youth, and the elderly receiving no support from family members; people living below the poverty level (*bin-gon gyecheung*); people living just above the basic standard of living, labelled the "lowest income bracket" (*chasang-wi gyecheung*)[8]; people with the status of North Korean refugees; marriage-migrant families; and ethnic Korean returnees under a special decree of reconciliation in response to their forced migration from Korea (e.g., Koreans who migrated to the former Soviet Union or China). The neighbourhood is now one of the most heavily concentrated districts in the city and the nation, not only based on measures of population receiving welfare subsidies, but also in terms of all kinds of "welfare centres" (*bokjigwan*) and "local community centres" (*jiyeok senteo*) targeting "populations at risk," such as youth, elders, marriage-migrant families, people at risk of suicide, and divorced families.[9]

The Children's Network in Pine Tree Hill was established in the late 1990s as an ad hoc association among local grass-roots organizations – including libraries, faith groups, welfare centres, and community centres providing services for children and youth. Although the Children's Network did not emerge merely to support the operation of the Education Welfare Project, it was not necessarily external to the EWP. Rather than existing in parallel with the EWP, the network functioned as key neighbourhood infrastructure in the execution of the Education Welfare Project. Despite the fact that the EWP is promulgated by the central government, primary with financial support, and managed by the municipality, which has administrative responsibilities, including liability as employer, it cannot function without its local infrastructure. Many EWP social workers note that the project was designed as a form of community welfare, although it is labelled as education welfare and anchored

8 See the National Basic Living Security Act, article 2.10, which notes that "The term 'next lowest income bracket' means the low-middle income class, the members of which are ineligible recipients (excluding persons who are deemed eligible recipients pursuant to Article 14–2), and whose amount of recognized income is below the criteria prescribed by Presidential Decree."

9 See Choo 2016; E. Kim 2017; and H. Park 2011 for socially vulnerable goups.

in the public school system. This means that community resources are essential, as they provide the content and the labour that has to be constantly mobilized to execute the after-school or summer programs that the project sponsors. In this regard, the Children's Network is not just an external civic partner to the EWP. Rather, the project is an umbrella initiative that requires both governmental infrastructure (that is, the regular state workers of the municipality's managerial workforce, and irregular state workers of the project's social workers) and non-governmental infrastructure. One of the primary responsibilities of the school social workers in the project is to build and strengthen the infrastructure of grass-roots resources if the infrastructure is not formalized and activated efficiently. EWP workers are contracted state workers with a wide spectrum of educational backgrounds and qualifications, and sometimes there is an overlap between the Children's Network members and Education Welfare Project workers. Most of all, as noted above, EWP social workers are responsible for doing the legwork of building the infrastructure of community resources, not just for the local community's benefit but also for operating the project on behalf of, and under the supervision of, regular government workers, including education board members, school principals and teachers, and regular municipal workers (see Jesook Song 2017). Observers might associate such an approach with a common (neo)liberal practice of post–Asian financial crisis government initiatives in the name of "cooperation between the government and non-government" (*min-gwan hyeomnyeok*). However, the Children's Network was neither independent of the government nor subservient to it, unlike many initiatives undertaken in the name of cooperation. Yet, the network emerged concurrently with the EWP, sometimes sharing initiatives and involving people doing both paid and voluntary labour, and other times instigating projects not involving the government's financial sponsorship.

The Children's Network's mission statement is to help members of the "shantytown" community make ends meet and to foster people's sovereignty in their daily lives (*jagi salmui juini doeneun*). This goal is not confined to Korean urban community organizing (CO). Cho's chapter in this volume succinctly demonstrates the ways in which experienced Korean anti-poverty activists have been inspired by witnessing the successes of anti-eviction movements in "aided" regions in less affluent countries as the essence of CO activism: "They [aided regional CO activists] made us [South Korean CO activists] realize *what it meant to let people speak for themselves and let them solve problems by themselves*" (emphasis added). If Cho's chapter provides a lens through which to witness long-term and more systemized CO activism, the Children's

Network is relatively recent, and the activists' passion for people's sovereignty is full of energy and vigour to the point that community organizers do not necessarily feel the need to follow the CO manuals that are made available to them. The following are a few examples of Children's Network campaigns that were pursued without the government's financial support but that became crucial resources for the Education Welfare Project: the network took the initiative on successful campaigns to serve free meals to children (mostly those attending schools in the neighbourhood who cannot afford to bring a lunch); built a community children's library; decorated village walls with child-friendly drawings; created a parents' and grandparents' group for reading books to children; and supported adolescents' projects of rewriting school textbooks to include critical views on gender and sexuality.

One of the proudest collective memories of Children's Network activists involves a situation in which local people brought pressure to bear against a daily newspaper's misrepresentation of Pine Tree Hill, which it had characterized as a model of "building villages" (*maeul mandeulgi*). Building villages is a decades-old trend in urban revitalization (*dosi jaesaeng*) movements. It highlights residents' self-initiated improvement actions in organizing institutions such as cooperative day cares or alternative schools. It is distinct, though, from the Saemaul Undong (New Village Movement), associated with the military regime's rural development projects during the 1970s,[10] in which building villages has increasingly been dominated by developers and city planners for gentrification and branding municipalities.[11] When a politically conservative mainstream daily newspaper reported that Pine Tree Hill was a successful case of village building, it highlighted the village's previous status as a "shantytown" with broken families and abandoned children. The special report on the village used an image of village children playing computer games as a sign of the pitiful state of children cared for by no family members or neighbours as a result of poverty and divorced parents. The Children's Network was at the forefront of mobilizing Pine Tree Hill residents to demand a public apology from the newspaper. It argued that the paper appropriated Pine Tree Hill as a "building village," something more in the realm of middle-class citizens who could afford to send their children to alternative private schools, and that the

10 See Jeong's chapter in this volume for a critical view of Saemaul Undong's history and its recent revival in foreign aid projects.

11 Regarding municipalities' branding exercises, see also Eom's chapter in this volume about "the Chinatown" project in Incheon and Park's chapter about urban regeneration promotion by Seoul City in the Dongdaemun area.

writer condescendingly represented Pine Tree Hill as a "shantytown." The protest was an action to establish greater sovereignty in their daily lives (*jagi salm-ui ju-in-i doeneun*) against the patronizing representations of mainstream media that overlook the structural and historical problems deriving from class relations and instead frame the problems facing the working poor in moral terms.

The mainstream media might not be a key institution-building actor in social development, but it proliferates the discourse that taps into populist sentiments. When populist politics wanted to see the direction of development in social domains as a marker of democracy or progress, the Pine Tree Hill residents mobilized themselves and refused to be ventriloquized: they refused to be seen and celebrated as a successful case of social development in a manner predicated on representations of their town as one formerly in abject poverty. They recognized how their stories were serving as a mechanism to silence their actual demands for structural changes in social relations – demands requiring a much longer process than any single event of visibility and gesture of redress (Morris 2012).

As much as populist politics wants to appropriate the Pine Tree Hill case, the welfare state is its unabashed agent and has the goal of mediating poverty via the means of distribution without enabling the possibility of eradicating the root cause of inequality – that is, the class contradiction inherent to the capital accumulation process.[12] It was not always clear to community activists and Education Welfare Project workers whether the welfare state's expansion was compatible with the ways in which they would like to build people's sovereignty. For example, since the municipality significantly expanded the EWP priority zones (districts designated as working-poor neighbourhoods by the state) for a decade or so, two outstanding zones were recognized by EWP workers and local community activists: Pine Tree Hill and Seagull Town. Although these zones are the poorest districts in the municipality, Seagull Town was closer to downtown and had undergone recent development in the form of a concentration of high-rise condominiums, whereas Pine Tree Hill was removed from full-scale redevelopment.

12 Following Sanyal (2007), Chatterjee (2011) argues that the welfare state works to reverse the effects of primitive accumulation. However, neither scholar situates welfare state history within capitalist accumulation, as not only complementary and contributory but also impeding fundamental change with respect to capitalism. See Donzelot's (1984, 1988) and Castel's (2002) elaboration of the welfare state's history of appropriating the solidarity into the socialization of insurability, as well as Adnan (2015, 35–6) on the limitations of Sanyal and Chatterjee's conceptualization.

A former EWP worker who left the job after a decade devoted to the unionization of EWP workers and building a community network for children and youth[13] claimed that Seagull Town's Education Welfare Project is successful in terms of effectiveness and productivity as a result of its well-planned operation by highly organized and educated social workers. Pine Tree Hill's Education Welfare Project, by contrast, has a strong history of mobilizing for fundraising and building a community library, an exuberant "no-hunger for our children" campaign, and solid community activism.

Leading EWP workers in both zones are former student activists (especially among the older cohorts) or have become activists as a result of their own experiences with precarious labour (some older cohorts and the majority of younger cohorts). These workers are acting together with local residents and community leaders to challenge municipal and state government authorities in the following ways: countering budget cuts for vouchers or non-school performance-related extracurricular activities; transforming their annual contract jobs into permanent ones; and voting for class-conscious candidates for the Education Board. The two competing modes of Education Welfare Project operation – the project planning and management-oriented model in Seagull Town versus the organically mobilized community initiative model in Pine Tree Hill – pursue different strategies to achieve the same goals: people's sovereignty and genuine solidarity that is not subsumed under the state agenda and dictates of capitalist accumulation.

Cold War Legacy and People's Sovereignty

A more pressing barrier to people practising sovereignty stems from the geohistorical baggage of the Cold War. Domin, a charismatic local activist and long-term resident of Pine Tree Hill, was baffled by village leaders' sudden suspicions of her after two decades of rapport and trust between herself and the residents. She was not oblivious to the nation's charged history, which was still ingrained in people's collective memory, where socialists and communist sympathizers were viewed as threats to national security and therefore were subjected to explicit persecution by Cold War military regimes. Nevertheless, people who had provided support during the anti-state civic activism or with fundraising for and then building the local library during the Roh Moo-Hyun

13 Only certain kinds of children were eligible for Education Welfare Projects benefits. For example, high-school students and youths who had dropped out of school were not eligible.

regime were becoming increasingly apprehensive about her activities during recent presidential regimes (i.e., those of Lee Myung-Bak and Park Geun-Hye). To Domin's alarm, they expressed their concern about her activism in accusatory and derogatory terms, referring to her as a "commie" (*ppalgaeng-i*):

> The local community is being heavily influenced by the political scene. I came to think that neither people's consciousness nor the society would change if we just focused on taking care of each other. Our community activism needs to aim at transforming the social structure. When I provided a bit of a different opinion on things like the sexual violence on Shin-an island,[14] our village leaders said behind my back that my ideology is suspicious. Yet they do not say anything in front of me, just smile because of the Children's Network's organizational power [*jojingnyeok*].
>
> They are basically apprehensive about the fact that the Children's Network's political inclination is left-leaning, "North Korea sympathiser-kind-of leftist [*jongbuk jwapa*]." Once I had to challenge them, asking why it was suspicious when I said something very similar to what they [village leaders] said. Then, they said it's because I am a commie [*ppalgaeng-i*]. Those moments have erupted more frequently in recent years. I usually just say "you guys are vulgar." We talk about this by laughing because we have worked together long enough and now we are no longer young.
>
> But to people with whom I have more amicable relationships, I ask, "Have you seen me acting like a commie [*ppalgaeng-i jit*]? Probably not. I'd do more 'commie acts' if all the hard work I've done for the [Pine Tree Hill] village is considered commie." But this reveals that the political scene has changed. In the Roh Moo-Hyun era, people praised our deeds as advanced and ahead of their time. But under the Park Geun-Hye regime political suffocation is more apparent, and the same people who praised us are questioning us saying, "Aren't they North Korea sympathisers [*jongbuk*]"? More and more people brazenly comment on the actions and deeds of North Korea sympathizers. But nobody knows what to say if I ask them, "What do North Korea sympathizers do? I'm so curious to learn."
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> I sometimes wonder if a few decades of collective efforts to build some autonomy into the community's daily lives [*jagi salm-ui ju-in-i doeneun*] was all in vain. Under the good years of lefty regimes, people with narrow

14 This incident brought huge media attention and social controversy after a woman dispatched to the island as a schoolteacher reported that she was a victim of a gang rape by male villagers and parents, especially because it was discovered that she was not the only such victim, as previous women teachers were silent and silenced about the sexual violence. See S. Hwang 2016; H. Jeong 2016.

> minds deeply influenced by ideological censorship from the time of the military regime hid their thoughts. Now they've become vocal and expose their base nature. It negatively affects community activities now, dampening the village atmosphere of decision making through dialogue and cooperation for the common good. It feels almost as if we are back living in the war or a refugee camp without any room to appreciate the value of mutual aid and collective action. Without knowing what's going to happen tomorrow, the only priority is to keep surviving in the short term. (Interview with the author, summer 2016)

Domin's narrative presents multiple layers of Pine Tree Hill's internal dynamics and its status as a post–Cold War core location.[15] First, Pine Tree Hill is scarred by the memory of refugees from the Korean War, and it has also relived Cold War censorship. We saw in the villagers' protest to the newspaper how the paper invoked the village's stigma as a war refugee town, one still poor to a point that the children playing online games were portrayed as the abandoned kids of broken families in a shantytown. The protest was important to villagers' sense of pride and ownership of their own history (*ju-in uisik*), so receiving an apology really mattered to them. The media protest reflected their dignity and their determination to shake off the stigma and shame of poverty during the post–Korean War and Cold War era. However, the political climate of the previous two regimes has enabled the interpellation of community activists as North Korea sympathizers, which renders community activism more difficult to separate and contest because the regimes posed protectionist positions by taking up populist demands for post–debt crisis economic recovery and social development.[16]

Since the division between North and South Korea has never overcome the status of an ongoing war, the Cold War presence offers the rationale of "national security" as the top priority for being subjected to US-led transpacific Cold War architecture in the name of alliances (Yoneyama 2016). During the Vietnam War, South Korea was the foremost ally of the US, functioning as a sub-imperial nation-state (Lee 2010) and accumulating national capital by supplying paid-labour soldiers and nurses

15 By the "post–Cold War regime," I refer to the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and Eastern European bloc, but I also use "post" here to align with postcolonial and poststructural theory and how those "posts" do not mean the cessation of colonial and structural entanglements (Shohat 2006; Yoneyama 2016).

16 The impeachment of Park Geun-Hye (10 March 2017) and the election of Moon Jae-In (10 May 2017) are other dramatic political changes whose consequences for daily politics and social relations need to be considered.

as well as accelerating industrial production, as Japan similarly aligned with the Americans and benefited from the Korean War (Glassman and Choi 2014). The US army still has more than fifty bases with approximately 690,000 personnel in the southern half of the Korean peninsula, amazingly segregated and hidden from mainstream domestic citizens' daily lives (Cheng 2010; Höhn and Moon 2010; Moon 1997; Yea 2015). However, during the recent democratic civilian presidential regimes, anyone who criticized state and municipal authority was called a communist in an attempt to isolate and nullify dissent. Although the interpellation process was regarded as a marker of the politically suppressed past, it has been revitalized in the public witch hunt of politicians and celebrities as North Korea sympathizers, along with the Park Geun-Hye regime's attempt to justify the past military authoritarian regime and its brutality by reference to North Korean threats.

Suspicion about leftists in association with North Korean sympathizers has been increasing since the 1990s – for example, over the so-called Sunshine Policy of the Kim Dae-Jung regime (1998–2003), which expanded trade and family reunions between North Koreans and South Koreans, and the Northern Limit Line dispute during the Roh Moo-Hyun regime (2004–8). However, suspicion was magnified in 2013, when the election fraud of the United Progress Party (*tongjindang*), an opposition party, exposed key members' likely involvement in advocates of the North Korea. It is no coincidence that 2013 was the beginning of the Park Geun-Hye regime. From 2013 to 2017, she not only articulated her right-wing ideological position most clearly, invoking her father, Park Chung-Hee, and his regime of 1961–79, but she also instrumentalized ideological suspicion as a political tool to suppress opposition parties and leftist politics (J-i. Kim 2014; Y-c. Kim 2014; Pak 2014).[17] The panic culminated in the "witch hunting" of leftists by conservative mass media, national assembly members, and juridical authority when they accused hosts of a public talk show of being North Korean sympathizers based on falsified claims, even though the hosts were attacked by the audience for an suicide attempt (Ahn 2012; S-j. Kim 2015; J. Jeong 2014; Yi 2015).[18]

By observing Pine Tree Hill community dynamics embroiled in haunting Cold War memories and their enunciations through local leaders, it is clear that community activism is not constantly homogeneous and

17 See Jeong's chapter in this volume regarding the background of Saemaul Undong's revitalization in relation to Park Chung-Hee's regime.

18 I thank Professor Kim Won for helping me trace the genealogies of the recent *jongbuk jwapa* (North Korean sympathizer) discourse. See also N. Lee 2007; Evans 2015; Song Ji-hye 2015.

unified. Pine Tree Hill is not merely contesting state authority as the administrator of welfare but is also struggling with the geohistorically produced architecture of Cold War regimes in the post–Cold War era.[19] It is impossible to rectify structural poverty when people's acts of sovereignty to change the social structure are interpreted as the work of communists aligned with North Korea.[20]

In this context of challenges stemming from the structural poverty that was triggered by and has been sustained since the Cold War, welfare became the predominant and omnipresent recipe to mediate the visible polarization of classes. Welfare is a hot potato issue in many countries, for both those with a long history of trying out different kinds of welfare states and those with a relatively short history of welfare that starts as neoliberal workfare or combines different models of welfare states (Kingfisher 2002; Smith 2007). In South Korea, during and after the Asian financial crisis, welfare was predominantly a politicized subject. It was used as a (neo)liberal governmental technology to mediate the crisis's socio-economic consequences, in addition to being a trope to mark South Korea's balance between social development (equated with democratization) and economic development (excelling in global market competition). As noted above, the Kim Dae-Jung regime that coincided with the Asian financial crisis launched the first welfare state, assuring everyone a basic standard of living premised upon universal welfare. Since then, welfare and the politics of well-being have been showcased by both the left and the right in elections – at presidential, provincial, municipal, and district levels – as the solution to social vice or class polarity that is aimed at appealing to voters. Welfare politics contributed to neoliberalization of everyday life in that it promotes discourses of certain affects and commodities of "enjoyment" and "well- being," whether they are food, vacations, or resort housing beyond domain of policymaking (Seo 2014; Jesook Song 2014; Zhang 2016; Žižek 2007). In other words, welfare politics and discourse govern a way of taking care of oneself in light of an overworked and precarious life.[21]

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19 Although this chapter does not reveal the location of province, it is one of the provinces most heavily affected by McCarthyism in South Korea.

20 Eom's chapter in this volume also elucidates how this Cold War architecture and South Korean state sovereignty doubly marginalizes Chinese residents in South Korea. This marginalization is not only because of their being considered communists until recently but also, ironically, a result of viewing them as useful liaisons to the globally ascending People's Republic of China regime.

21 It would not be irrelevant to juxtapose this with Foucault's notion of technology of the self and his examples in Western history – for example, self-reflection in the ancient Greek period, confession during medieval times, administering in the modern epoch.

The Education Welfare Project as a Core Location

The Education Welfare Project in Pine Tree Hill can be viewed as a core location of distributional justice, primarily because of the ways in which it is in tension with the Children's Network. The EWP initatives are immanently "abortive" when social development is intended to counterbalance economic development: in other words, in this approach, social development exists only to ameliorate the consequence of economic expansion, and does not actually problematize the premise of development within capitalist systems. (I expand on the notion of "abortive" justice below; see also Trouillot 2000.). At the same time, these initiatives invite catachronic moments and unpredictable and disjointed possibilities (Yoneyama 2016) when subalterns try to be heard, rather than just seen, and actual changes are realized rather than remaining unsubstantiated symbolic gestures (Morris 2012).

When welfare was branded as the way for state and municipal governance to implement distributional justice as if it would resolve class contradictions and consequences of capitalist development, Pine Tree Hill residents and community activists opened up different ways to imagine welfare itself. Their direct actions and confrontations have negated social development's ventriloquilization of their efforts to build people's sovereignty. At other times, they have coasted together within and next to the operation of social development, despite the continued Cold War stigma against communism or criticism of universal welfare as financially inefficient. People's subalternity is not curated for populistic politics by privileging event-centred media politics or street protests as hegemonic modes of self-expression for the need of social transformation. Instead, true revolution is an outcome of parallel efforts in people's daily lives to transform mundane yet oppressive social relations (Morris 2012).

As anthropology theorists (e.g., Povinelli 2001 and Morris 2012) and Asia-as-method thinkers (e.g., Chen 2010 and Baik 2012) suggest, a place's geohistorical singularity allows for something new and even radical to emerge socially when its problems and ideas (*sasang*) are taken up by other thinkers as a way to imagine connections and forms of praxis. By engaging with the ideas behind Asia as method, the concept of core location can allow us to corroborate this radical potential in pursuit of a synchronicity of insights and the problematics against the hegemonic epistemology of modern sciences that seeks generalizability through reproducible and comparable capacities. Those ideas illuminate how the knowledge production of a location can contribute to decolonization and anti-assimilation when knowledge producers are

embedded in the location's historical marginalities, especially when the very idea of core location is confronted by problematics created through empirically grounded research.

Welfare as Abortive Justice

Abortive justice is a notion I develop from Trouillot's concept of an "abortive ritual" of collective apologies (2000) and Yoneyama's discussion of post–Cold War redress culture in transitional justice (2016).[22] Trouillot's piece describes how increasing occasions of collective apologies are abortive rituals. His transatlantic context of collective apologies includes European Christians' repent of Crusade massacres and also President Bill Clinton's apology for American slavery to the ghost audience on the global stage. Trouillot clarifies that his question is not whether such apologies have any short-term benefits; rather, he seeks to reveal the conditions that make the wave of collective apologies possible. He problematizes the ways in which such apologies occur in particular illocutionary events that stabilize collective entities (both the apologizers and the addressed) in temporal and spatial distances, so that historical violence is addressed peacefully. In some cases, these apologies happened centuries after the atrocities were carried out, so the words of apology serve merely a performative function. Further, in that illocutionary structure that equalizes the positions between aggressors and victims, apologies of the former Western empire necessitate the Other, non-Western former empire subjects, to be in a forgiving position through a rhetoric of sharing pain, which obscures relations of power. He targets liberal juridical regimes as the crucial condition of making the wave of collective apologies possible by electing a particular mode of communication as hegemonic in the illocutionary events of collective apologies, which is inevitably abortive and infelicitous. The ways in which liberal ideologies elevate status or even empower the victims by making them "individuals" or "individual cultures" equal to aggressors or aggressor collectivity in the illocutionary position of saying yes or no to apologies (which are the only options) do not leave room for non-liberal modes of communication for redress to precede this ritual in ways that would be felicitous for the victims.[23]

22 "Transitional justice" refers to juridical reparation of inter-states' war crimes or the kinds of injustice that cannot be addressed in regular courts.

23 Christopher Krupa's (2013) discussion of the Truth Commission in Ecuador and Latin America resonates with the way in which redress is claimed only in the premise of disavowal of on-going violence.

Yoneyama also points out the limitations of the liberal juridical framework by problematizing transitional justice and redress culture in the transpacific post–Cold War regimes that are still embedded within the Cold War architecture. She focuses on post-1990s redress culture, particularly through the ways in which comfort women's issues have been politicized and addressed in state-to-state treaties along with tribunal courts of war crimes. She argues that the liberal juridical framework in transitional justice depoliticizes conflicts between nations or national subjects by seeking harmony and resulting normalcy of state sovereignty and global order inherited from the Cold War. One of the examples she provides includes the Asian women's fund that was established to compensate the victims on behalf of the Japanese government, which was refused by the majority of former comfort women. Also, her example of a Japanese ruling party leader's official apology regarding the atrocities endured by comfort women situates the double sides of redress culture: the official apology was exalted as noble because it was courageously performed despite the strong opposition within conservative party and nationalist protest to acknowledge the crime. At the same time, the apology for a crime against humanity wound up silencing a colonial legacy laden with gendered violence as well as any accountability for the Cold War security order in the Pacific. According to Yoneyama, this kind of rhetoric of crime against humanity is a tendency of liberal governance of transitional justice. That is, it is a form of transitional justice that deals with fundamentally destabilizing elements, such as the tension between a former colonizer and the colonized, without disturbing the structure by using a flattening universalizing discourse. In the context of comfort women, who were mobilized as sexual labour under colonial and imperial domination, the moment of redress of the violence bypassed US military hegemony in the transpacific that pacified the Japanese Empire while at the same time legitimized Japan's ascendancy in the region. Japan's official apology to Korean comfort women, which acknowledged that violence against gendered bodies represented a crime against humanity, is not simply novel, compared with the conservative nationalist voice in Japan. The official apology elevates comfort women's status as equal to that of humanity more generally, yet at the same time silences Japanese colonialism, in that Korean (and other ethnic) comfort women have never been equal to Japanese middle-class women, during either the empire or the US military occupation. Here, Yoneyama points out that epistemic violence occurs in the universalistic assumption of the moral economy of apology and forgiveness and in the further impossibility of real redress through transitional justice when harmonious humanities

and equal grounds between victims and aggressors are imposed in exchange for legitimizing the sovereign state and normalcy of US hegemony in the relationship between Japan and Korea and the transpacific domain.

Both Trouillot and Yoneyama problematize the liberal juridico-political framework as a condition to make the abortive transitional justice possible in that it regards justice as setting up the victim and the aggressor as equals. If Trouillot's and Yoneyama's criticism of transitional justice is true – that it inherently prevents real redress – how possible is distributional justice in modern nation states, including welfare states? The need for redress emerges to recuperate former colonizers' or draconian states' moral legitimacy even when it relies on the rhetoric of liberating the oppressed, or securing human rights. In the context of the welfare state, I argue that it, too, is an *abortive ritual*. In general, welfare is politicized under the disguise of a utopian imagery or teleological view of democratic advancement in reference to the West. It equates the nation state form with being "advanced," so it graduates to the status of economically developed former colony, rather than grappling with the historically caused poverty and class polarization characteristic of this process.

I do not use the word "abortive" to mean miscarriage, as if the outcome is certain and its normalcy is predetermined. Following Trouillot, I choose "abortive" as opposed to "thwarted" or "failed" or "unproductive," because an unfulfilled reparation is not about a hampered process or no gain whatsoever. Instead, I am interested in a premise and framework that is not directed at securing reparations for wronged people. If the redress is premised on the forgetfulness of deeper violence or distraction through rhetoric of liberation or hopefulness, is it really different in the context of welfare?

At first, it might seem puzzling to think of the welfare state in the same domain as truth and reconciliation commissions or tribunal courts. The acts of a welfare state with respect to distributional justice are very much political economic matters that concern the subsistence levels of everyday people, whereas transitional justice is a political domain that hinges on the moral economy of apology and forgiveness through illocutionary singular events. After all, distributional justice mediates social relations that directly contribute to the capital accumulation process (or let us say national wealth), such as workers and populations that are essential to the reproduction of the workers in the name of dependants. Distribution is not a matter of moral economy but an essential component of understanding capitalist political economy, especially the necessary role of the state to mediate the labour and

class relationship for capital accumulation. Thus, distribution is just as central as production to political economy, and, more importantly, distribution cannot be singled out and separated from production in the circuit of capital.

I consider the emergence of the welfare state as an abortive ritual of justice in capitalist modernity in dealing with the vulnerable and harmed subjects of historical violence in the process of capitalist accumulation. The social development and citizenship that arise in response to and buttress the capitalist accumulation process are not exceptional in geopolitical contexts where development is heavily embedded in Cold War security politics, such as South Korea (Glassman and Choi 2014; Lee 2010). In particular, South Korean history shows that the ascendency of the welfare state occurred during the Asian financial crisis in the course of the nation's self-criticism for the single-minded emphasis on economic development, where social development was meant to be a form of compensation. The ascendency of welfare in South Korea overlaps with proliferating reconciliation movements aiming to indemnify the historical violence of colonialism and transpacific Cold War crimes (Yoneyama 2016). This aspect of structural violence, whether stemming from South Korea's Cold War regime or its capitalist development, is recognized by the state and its attempt to redress it draws a parallel between welfare and reconciliation as abortive justice within liberal governing.

Conclusion

If the welfare state's acts of distributional justice are just as abortive as those seeking transitional justice under the similar premise and history of the liberalization of the justice domain that simultaneously opens up and erases reparation of historical and epistemological violence, what is at stake in pointing out this resemblance? Since my research on this question is still in an incipient stage of contemplation, I can offer only a tentative position. Nevertheless, an obvious implication of the juxtaposition between distributional justice and transitional justice lies in the material ground that welfare has become a frontier of solutions for neoliberal capitalism, whether being nostalgic about the Keynesian system in the European and North American contexts or the utopianization of welfare as social development to offset some of the effects of economic development in other part of the planet, as in South Korean context, or basic income movement in global scale.

A rather discrete implication is not unrelated to this obvious one, yet it is still in need of greater elucidation. I am concerned about how

politically committed scholars, including anthropologists, who advocate distributional justice as the only practical option for dealing with the political economy of capitalism wind up making Marxism (although there are so many kinds) a culprit in ineffective counter-movements for dealing with capitalism. A typical criticism directed at Marxism is that Marxists tend to preoccupy themselves with problems of the accumulation process, rather than the distribution of the resources or consumption. For example, James Ferguson's efforts to address the significance of distribution in the form of basic income is understandable, yet unsatisfactory. Ferguson's position is understandable since he argues that, as the proverb goes, to give people fish instead of teaching them how to fish can ameliorate matters of immediacy, such as hunger; more importantly, he suggests a basic income model as an alternative to the Western welfare system by challenging the liberal premise inherent to welfarism that privileges independent individual as the deserving subject. This challenge to liberalism echoes Trouillot's and Yoneyama's criticisms of liberalism in transitional justice. Yet Ferguson's position is unsatisfactory because his suggestion of a basic income is not sufficient for minimal subsistence in the majority of cases, as he is acutely aware of. Further, the basic income model is built upon a false dichotomy between production and distribution as a solution to the problems surfacing from the capitalist system as if it is an option for not dealing with capitalist accumulation continuously. This illusive solution through a basic income model or distribution over a reckoning with the dynamics of accumulation resembles the paradigm of liberal duplicity in transitional justice in that it opens up a possibility of redress, but at the same time closes the door to the opportunity for or orientation of a fundamental reshaping of social relations. Here you see my concern with pragmatic assertions through distributional justice that render Marxism and political economy as ineffective and outdated approaches. The direction that I am heading with this observation is to suggest that a politics of distribution is an appropriation of political economy into a politics of moral economy by regurgitating a liberal framework that impedes the necessary process of confronting the destabilizing elements of capitalism in the very moment of opening up possible changes in a reconciliatory manner.

Therefore, I put those modes of justice together in the hopes of creating a dialogue between what is considered as "political" (focusing on the criticism of liberalism or making liberalism as the primary object of knowledge) and what is viewed as "political economic" (focusing on the ways in which capital accumulation is structured in the circuits of the production and distribution of commodities and social relations

being construed both as a result and the engine of the reproduction of the social totality, both by Marxists and their opponents). Distributional justice through the welfare state is infelicitous in not dissimilar ways to how transitional justice through international courts (or truth and reconciliation commissions) is inherently abortive. Both deflect the orientation of reckoning with deep-seated structural issues by focusing instead on addressing negative repercussions in the name of practicality. The (neo)colonial order that haunts us in postcolonial redress culture is silenced when pressure to rectify structural conditions ends in mere nominal recognition or the logistics of monetary compensation. How the capitalist form of wealth has been and will continue to be made is sidelined when consequential problems of accumulation are redirected as a matter of generosity and a redistribution of wealth. These soothing rituals of liberal ideology that advocate for the rights of the vulnerable are not equipped to transcend deep-seated political-economic violence, such as colonialism and Cold War regimes. I assert that the EWP represents a prime example of a core location of distributional justice. It is a core location in that the EWP exposes the double marginalities of distributional justice – that is, with reference to the marginality of the working-poor class within the capitalist system and marginalization of a fundamental challenge to capitalism by focusing on distribution without questioning the wealth-making structure. At the same time, the EWP allows us to think of these marginalities as potentially spearheading grounds characterized by tensions and cooperation with neighbourhood sovereignty, rather than as sites of perpetual victimhood. We should take seriously, then, the idea that the EWP's singular constituency of the Children's Network in Pine Tree Hill serves as a platform for seeking justice for class contradictions that are not reducible to the sort of distributional justice pursued by liberal capitalist states.

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