The people in between : education, desire, and South Koreans in contemporary China

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Chapter 5 Desirable Homecoming – Returning to Pursue Tertiary Education

In *Diasporic Homecomings*, Takeyuki Tsuda attributed the motives of various diasporic populations returning to their ethnic homelands to two interconnected reasons: economic and ethnic (Tsuda 2009). He argued that although economic rationales (e.g. in search of a job) initiate the return flow, ethnic affinities and nostalgia ultimately channel migrants back to their ancestral country (Tsuda 2009, 21). He also found that return is markedly driven by the ethnically preferential immigration policies adopted by the homeland government (Tsuda 2009, 27–30). Those policies privilege the diasporic descendants abroad (compared with other groups of foreigners) by granting them the legal status of working and living in their ethnic homeland. I do not adopt the notion "diasporic homecoming" in my study because the would-be returnees (and their parents) are not a diasporic population with a foreign nationality but Korean nationals living abroad. Despite this, I consider Tsuda's analytical framework conducive in interrogating the drives of Korean youth returning home to pursue a university education, which I call a "desirable homecoming".

Recent studies on return migration in the Asian context take political discourses and migration governance into account. "Return is not just a personal choice…it is also something that comes with specific politics and discourses that are tied to larger processes both on national and international level." Michiel Baas (2015, 10) pointed this out in the introduction of his edited volume *Transnational Migration and Asia*. In another edited collection *Return*, Xiang Biao (2013b, 2) emphasised that despite the variation in return flows, return migrants are "encouraged, facilitated and often enforced" by states. He argued that the return essentially reflects "an overarching mode of governance" in Asia, which seeks to "regulate mobility not by blocking but by facilitating movements" (Xiang 2013b, 2–3).

Studies on migration and education show that African immigrant parents in Europe and Latino families in North America send their children to the country of origin to receive an education due to their opposition to the mainstream cultural norms, racism and violence in the host society (Bledsoe and Sow 2011; Portes and Rumbaut 2001, 91–112). In this chapter, I note that

Korean motivation to pursue higher education in the home country is more complicated than the push factor of the socio-cultural circumstance in the residence society. The meaning of return goes beyond a simple subjective resistance to an undesirable environment. By focusing on the desire to return to pursue tertiary level education, I aim to show the motivation of migrants to return works in tandem with the intentions of the home government for its overseas nationals. Finally, I examine the indispensability of the intermediaries directing Korean youth towards the homeland universities, and reveal the entangled relations among the return regimes, educational intermediaries, migrant parents and their children.

Motivation to Return: Produced in a Network of Power

Chiyong, the daughter of Pyŏngkyu (a Korean woman introduced in Chapter 4), did not attend a Korean full-time school during her residency in China. She completed five years of elementary education (grade one to five) in an American international school, followed by four years (grade six to nine) in the Chinese educational track, prior to her enrolment in an English-medium program in a Chinese private international school (grade ten to twelve). Pyŏngkyu and her husband were determined advocates of international education. One reason the couple had decided to remain in China was their belief that the Korean style of schooling would not "suit" their daughter after being immersed in the American education system for five years. Nonetheless, I was surprised when Pyŏngkyu told me that her 17-year-old daughter was applying to a Korean university, rather than to a university in China or in an English-language country.

"Why not the United States?" I asked eagerly, implying my awareness of the contradiction between her enthusiasm for an American style of education and her actual plan to assist her daughter in pursuing a university in Korea. Her answer was brief and candid, "(because) an American university costs a lot of money!" This same assertion was provided by many other migrant parents, expat and non-expat, regarding potential destinations for their children's higher education. Although the pursuit of an international education in China indicates the zeal migrant families possess to convert economic capital to cultural capital in the younger generation (see Chapter 4), their financial capacity has limits. In general, Korean migrants in China are less affluent than the elite and upper classes in the home society, who consider sending the descendants to an American university as a norm and necessity (Lee 2016).

A few parents considered the option of a higher education in a third destination (e.g. Hong Kong, Singapore or New Zealand). One major factor being the relatively low educational and living expenses in these regions and lesser travel costs (travelling from Korea) to these destinations, compared with North America and European countries. The English (and/or Chinese) programs and world-ranked universities were also apparent in these considerations. The daughter of one of my informants had studied clothes and fashion design at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. Another informant consulted with me about a university in New Zealand because she had a friend in Beijing whose child planned to apply for admission at this university. Although there were a few success stories, these were not in the majority. This reveals that class, as a powerful driving force of migration, shapes the main issues: who is able to move, where to move, and how far one can move (Van Hear 2014).

According to Pyŏngkyu, the plan to return also implies an intention to be disintegrated from China. As she declared, "because we (our family) are all eventually going back to Korea… China is not like America where we can easily get a green card if we lived here for a long time." Her remark was sympathised with by her colleagues, three Korean women running small-scale shops selling Korean-style clothes. Given that I visited them early morning, they had few customers in the shop and thus gathered to join the conversation. "Then, do you want to receive a Chinese green card if it is easy to do so?" I continued asking Pyŏngkyu. Not waiting until Pyŏngkyu opened her mouth, one of the shop owners abruptly burst into a laugh and asserted, "of course not! We only came here to earn some money. We want to return and will surely go back!" Pyŏngkyu did not give me an explicit answer, although she nodded and signified her agreement.

Unlike Pyŏngkyu and her colleagues, some informants expressed explicit intentions to obtain Chinese permanent residency due to the possible administrative conveniences to their career development and residence in China. Despite this, none believed that they would be eligible to apply for permanent resident status. The discourse is attributed to the extraordinarily rigorous requirements for the applicants with reference to the Chinese immigration law. Only a small number of candidates from three select groups (skilled migrants, business migrants and family migrants) have the possibility of being granted such a juridical status. In the category of skilled migrant, for instance, applicants must be employed by a restricted list of employers (e.g. an enterprise engaged in a national or provincial project or one of the top 100 Chinese universities), have achieved a certain level of professional ranking (e.g. at least a deputy executive or an

associate professor), and have resided for a minimum of four years in China (CCA 2006; MOC 2005).[58]

The legal constraints on the employment rights of foreign graduates also hampers aspirations to remain in China for tertiary education. According to the regulation adopted in 1996, foreign students graduating from a Chinese university are eligible to apply for an employment visa, provided that they have "at least two years of working experience in the relevant industry" (MOHRSS 1996). This rule implies that the Chinese job market is exclusively open to those who have employment experience obtained abroad. According to my informants, there are two options available to individuals with limited work experience who intend to work in China: 1) to illegally be employed while on a short-term visa (e.g. a tourist visa); 2) to depart China and work abroad for two years before returning to seek a job. [59] This awkward paradox reflects a tendency for the current Chinese job market to attract and introduce veterans from abroad rather than novices. This provoked growing anxiety regarding gaining admission to university in China. Chŏnga, a Korean mother of two sons, aged fifteen and eight, declared:

> I heard foreign students (graduated from a Chinese university) need two years (of working experience) before they can get an employment visa. Who knows whether one day the government would say foreigner graduates are totally forbidden to work in China? Anyway, I feel insecure about Chinese policy, so I don't want my children to risk their future to attend a Chinese university.

Studies on Chinese and Indian students in several western developed countries illustrate education as a significant means for individuals to pursue not only credentials, skills, and knowledge, but also permanent residency (or a citizenship), which represents a freedom to travel between the home and the host country (Fong 2011; Baas 2010). In my study, the legal restrictions on the settlement and employment rights of foreigners absolutely undermines the correlation of accepting higher education and obtaining a PR (permanent residency) in China. Graduating from a Chinese university may even hamper the legal access to the local job market. Foreseeing these barriers,

[58] However, as I write this thesis, the Chinese State Council was considering enlarging the scale of employees, cancelling the professional ranking, and relaxing the residence period, in their granting of permanent residency. For instance, see (Xinhuanet 2016).

[59] The state council has started suggesting loosening the grip of work visa among the excellent foreign graduates from Chinese universities during the writing of this thesis.

migrant parents make proactive and deliberate decisions to send their children abroad to avoid the potential exclusion and disintegration.

Moreover, the implication of a Korean university degree is significant. It denotes a fundamental understanding of the key cultural elements ensuring a smooth integration into the working environment in Korean corporates. Certain professional customs are overwhelmingly prevalent and tenacious in the Korean corporate culture, for instance, a fixed rank of professional hierarchy, unquestioning obedience from the junior to the senior (Janelli 1993). As pointed out by Teacher Chang, an administrator in the Korean school in Beijing, a diploma obtained from a Chinese university indicates to the Korean job recruiters that this pupil lacks the basic knowledge needed to deal with interpersonal relations in a Korean corporate. Korean university students, by contrast, are identified as having acquired this capability from their interactions with their senior and junior counterparts at university. Such a cultural "drawback" may be reduced by pursuing a Master/PhD degree at a Korean university, or in the case of male students, by completing the compulsory military service in the home country. Despite this, Teacher Chang highlighted the bachelor education as prevailing over other factors in the Korean job market.

A similar concern was reported by *The Korean Herald*, a daily English-language newspaper based in Korea. Korean undergraduates and postgraduates from American universities were struggling to find jobs in the home country because job recruiters were worried about their knowledge of Korean employment ethics (Yeo 2015). Anthropologist Roger Goodman's study on Japanese migrant youth reached an identical conclusion (Goodman 1993). He found that these migrant children encountered many difficulties as they completed an overseas undergraduate or postgraduate level of education and returned to look for employment in the domestic job market. Japanese recruiters and executives described them as "too individualistic, lack sufficient perseverance, and pay too much attention to their home life," and thus they deviated from the "images of the ideal Japanese workers" (Goodman 1993, 76–77).

Challenging Teacher Chang's above remark, I asked, "since Korean companies are extending (market and business) in China, and they must need many people proficient in both Korean and Chinese, why can't Korean students pursue a Chinese university degree and work for them?" Teacher Chang responded without hesitation:

> Yes, it is true, but they (Korean corporates) recruit native speakers. Since a few years ago, Korean conglomerates (*chaebol*) like Samsung and LG have started recruiting Korean Chinese (*chosŏnjok*). It was followed by recruiting excellent Han Chinese graduating from reputable Chinese universities. They (conglomerates) place them in the China-related business departments. Although some (of the students) cannot speak Korean, they use English (to communicate with Korean colleagues) at work.
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> How fluent in Chinese do you think the Korean kids (who live and study in China) are? How much *guanxi* (interpersonal network) do they have in China if the company expects them to develop a business? Not so much! Don't you notice that most Korean kids here only hang out with Koreans? (Apart from this,) if kids complete university education in China, they may be bad at using advanced vocabularies and honorific Korean (*chondaemal*), which is an unpleasant matter for companies.

From the perspective of parents, a Korean tertiary education plays a crucial role in developing social ties and re-integrating into the home society. Many parents highlighted the impact of *hangnyŏn* (school or university ties) in their determination to send back the child. The hangnyŏn refers to a sort of alumni network, whereby students who graduate from the same university identify with each other and develop massive interpersonal trust and reciprocity. These academic ties act as a pivotal form of "institutional social capital" and bolster the probability that the new graduate will find their first job (Lee and Brinton 1996). They are also beneficial to everyday life. As articulated by Mr Kim, a Korean expatriate employee in Beijing, "it is invisible when one is doing well, but it becomes visible when one encounters hardships in life. You receive generous help from your alumnus, regardless of whether you even know each other in many cases". Mr Kim understood hangnyŏn as a synonym of *guanxi* (interpersonal network) in Chinese, yet also regarded it as being different to it. He claimed the hangnyŏn effort on the Korean society can only be stronger than guanxi on the Chinese context, given the small size of Korean territory and population.

In summary, I acknowledge that no single driving forces (economic, political and cultural) dominated the motivation to return in pursuit of a higher education. Instead, the motives to return were imbued with an assemblage of considerations in relation to class, immigration regime, employment market and culture. I hereby adopt a "network of power" termed by Sociologist Manuel Castells to generalise these complex variables that shape the motivation to return (Castells 1997, 304). He underscored social order in contemporary societies as being characterised by "the plurality of sources of authority (and…of power)" (e.g. capital, communication, international

institutions etc.) (Castells 1997, 303). He predicted that nation-states will continue to exist in the foreseeable future, yet they will increasingly be "nodes of a broader network of power", in which they encounter other forces (Castells 1997, 304). Notably, individuals tend to form conscious sources of meaning and experience, i.e. identity, in interaction to this nexus of power (Castells 1997, 7–8). The migrant parents and students in my study, conceived the return as economically affordable, politically secured, and culturally favourable. It may not be the most idealistic option, and yet is a feasible and pragmatic choice.

The Impetus to Create "Eligible" Returnees from Overseas

In principle, there are three possible approaches available for returned Korean youth to gain access to the domestic universities: 1) *t'ŭngnye* (literally translated as special case) [60], an admission track exclusively available to overseas Koreans and foreigners; 2) *sushi*, a track to recruit outstanding high school graduates with an expertise (e.g. language, art or sport), available to all Korean nationals; 3) *sunŭng,* known as a nation-wide examination for university entrance [61]. The three tracks are sequential, providing overseas applicants with three possible openings to gain admission (see Table 5.1).

The Korean parents in my study expected their children to go to a university via the first admission method, t'ŭngnye. They believed it was the most favourable way to avoid the "unfair competition" between the returnees and those applicants educated in the Korean education system. They considered that being educated abroad impeded one's competence to score high in domestic exams. They also emphasised that the former group of students were inferior to the latter in terms of Korean language proficiency, Korea-related knowledge and more importantly, skills to score high in exams. If the two groups sit the same exam to complete for university spot, the former group experienced only disadvantage and failure.

[60] It is an abbreviation of "*chaeoegungmin'gwa oegugin t'ŭkpyŏlchŏnhyŏng*" (special admission for overseas Korean nationals and foreigners).
[61] The full name is "*taehak suhang nŭngnyŏk shihŏm*" (college scholastic ability test).

Table 5.1. The Types and Periods of the University Admission in Korea, 2015-2016 academic year.

Type	Category	Target Group	Periods of Application and Examination
Non-scheduled admission[62]	T'ŭngnye	Overseas Koreans and foreigners	Jul 2015; Jul-Aug 2015
Non-scheduled admission	Sushi	All Korean nationals	Sep 2015; Dec 2015
Regular admission	Sunŭng	All Korean nationals	Dec 2015; Jan 2016

Source: 2016 hangnyŏndo taehagip'akchŏnhyŏng kibonsahang (The Basic Items of University Admission in 2016), Korean Council for University Education, April 24, 2014, http://slc.gangdong.go.kr.

The special case admission system was initiated to secure educational opportunities in the home country for the children of a select group of Koreans working overseas for the purpose of "increasing the national interest" (*kugikshinchang*) (Lee 1989). Seoul National University (the best public university) set out to recruit children of returning civil officers through a special admission track in 1978 (Lee 1989). This track had a quota to be filled by students returning to Korea. This meant that these students did not need to compete with students who had never left Korea and had completed their education in the local school system. After two years, this system was extended to children of company employees, journalists, and professors. In 1997, 122 universities planned to open admission to 5,200 overseas Korean students focusing on two major groups of pupils: children of ethnic Koreans residing in foreign countries (*kyop'o*); and the children of Korean nationals (including civil officers, company employees, the self-employed, the locally-employed and international students) working and studying overseas (Ch'oe 1996). By 2015, the scale was further enlarged to include over 170 Korean universities offering admission to the children of non-ethnic Korean foreigners and North Korean refugees, in addition to the above groups (kcue.or.kr 2015).

The special case admission policy fundamentally divides applicants into two categories (borrowing words from my interviewees): "three-year special case" (*samnyŏn t'ŭngnye*) and "twelve-year special case" (*shibinyŏn t'ŭngnye*) (see Table 5.2). The former group refers to students with at least three years of pre-university education abroad (two years is allowed in some

[62] The first two are categorised as "*sushi mojip",* referring the admission is non-scheduled and on demand; whereas the third one is defined as a form of "*chŏngshi mojip*", meaning it is an admission taking place regularly.

cases), whereas the latter signifies those students who have accomplished the entire pre-university stage of education abroad. Individual universities have enrolment constraints on the first group (2% of the total student body), and yet have no quota limit on the second group. Both categories required that applicants prove their residential period abroad and that of both parents (single side is allowed in some cases). This requirement ensured that Korean students simply sent by parents to study overseas were ineligible to apply. Particularly, the eligible "three-year special case" must have completed the first year of high school education abroad. The absence from the Korean high school system (for at least one year) implies a markedly reduced academic competence in the university entrance exam.

Table 5.2. Two Categories in The Special Case Admission

Case	Time Abroad	Recruitment Quota	Residence With Parents
Three-year	At least three years living and being educated abroad, (two years in some cases) including the first year of high school	2% of the total number of students to be in the admission quotas every year	With both sides of parents (one side is possible in some cases)
Twelve-year	The entire pre-university education stage abroad	Unlimited	With both sides of parents (one side is possible in some cases)

Source: 2015 chaeoegungmin'gwa oegugin mojibyogang (the admission handbook for overseas Korean nationals and foreigners in 2015), www. kcue.or.kr; interview data with informants.

The university admission policy towards overseas Korean nationals and similar groups signifies a statecraft to identify the adolescents educated abroad as being distinct from other students – and further, to encourage universities to favour the first group. However, the preference is granted according to a highly simplified and standardised way – the years of receiving education abroad while living with both parents. It has been demonstrated that simplified and standardised methods of state "reading" the society often lead to the failure of a state project because it overlooks the practical knowledge locally generated by the people (Scott 1998, 309–41). Nonetheless, the t'ŭngnye policy in my study shows no obvious tendency to wane, rather it provoked dread among those who "cannot become a special case" (*t'ŭngnyega andwae*) and their families. An awkward situation that occurred frequently was that the entire family, or one of the parents, needed to move back to Korea before the child reached the first year of high school

(regardless that the family had resided in China for over three years prior to this stage in the child's education).

Mina's story is a typical example of this predicament. She declared with obvious discontent, "if I did not go to China, I should have entered the Seoul National (the best Korean university), but now I am here (Sogang University, known as the fourth best university in Korea)!" I learned of Mina's story from a few parents in Beijing and was introduced to her by one of my informants during a visit to Seoul in December 2014. We met in a cosy café beside the front gates of Sogang University, where Mina recalled her heart-breaking past. Since elementary school Mina had been a straight-A student and her dream had been to attend the Seoul National University. On the completion of her elementary education, Mina's father was deployed to work in China under a three-year expatriate contract.

Following her father to Beijing, she completed junior high school at an international school, where she greatly improved her English proficiency. Three years later, the whole family returned to Korea, which rendered her ineligible to compete for entry to a Korean university as an overseas returnee. Instead, she applied for the "sushi" admission track as an "English language specialist" (*yŏngŏt'ŭkkija*) and competed with Korean nationals who considered themselves in possession of this expertise. Consequently, she succeeded in entering Sogang University. She admitted that she had not dared to sit the sunŭng exam because she had little self-confidence in standing out in any subject other than English due to three years of absence from the Korean schooling.

Mina's case is a nightmare that migrant parents and students desperately want to avoid. Parents who were acquainted with Mina's family responded in various manners: some sighed with pity and questioned why the father could not manage to remain one more year in China for his daughter's future; some complimented Mina's excellent academic capability because she had stood out in the nationwide university entry exam even with three years of absence from Korean schooling; others asserted they would never leave their children ineligible to obtain the special case qualification on their return. Almost none of the parents I met asserted that their children could gain admittance to a top university without following the t'ŭngnye admission track. This ubiquitous assertion reveals the cruel competition to access university in Korea. More importantly, it reveals the migrants' desire for preserving and appropriating the political privilege as overseas Koreans vis-à-vis the people who remain in the domestic country. This political resource is

excessively expected to convert to access to the most reputable universities, and a move up the social ladder at home.

This aspiration, I argue, is the impetus for migrant parents to mould their children to fit the requirements of being a "special case". The major tactic is to postpone the return home by prolonging the sojourn overseas (in China or in a third country). For these people, the implications of time are as social as they are natural (Urry 2000, 106). Accordingly, uneven social relations emerge through the various individual connections to time and capabilities to manipulate time (Urry 2000, 110). Expatriates (and their families) are the most vulnerable group to this time regime. The number of years they stay overseas is determined by the corporate executives rather than by themselves. Frequently, expat wives vividly described how they were shocked by an extremely short notice that required the family move to China, and how they packed luggage in a muddle and had little time to breathe. An expat's contract normally entailed being overseas for three to five years, yet this timeframe could be abruptly extended or shortened by the company. As Yunsuk, an expatriate wife who had lived in Beijing for over four years at the time of the interview, pointed out:

> I really don't know where we will go and live after September next year. A lot of friends around me feel the same. If you ask an expatriate wife when are you returning? I bet nobody could tell you the exact time they will return. Rather, they would say they might return at some time because it all depends on the husband's firm.

Yunsuk summarised two common strategies that expat couples follow to avoid the uncertainty in time: 1) the breadwinner resigns and seeks employment in a company based in China (or embarks on a self-employed business); 2) he applies for another overseas appointment within the original company. The first option has proven to be a feasible option for most of my informants. Particularly, there is a huge demand for highly-skilled technicians and engineers in numerous enterprises based in Beijing or in other Chinese cities. Many Korean men found skilled and professional positions without much difficulty in Chinese or multinational companies. By contrast, the latter choice is less common. The majority of Korean enterprises place rigorous constraints on the maximum time for an overseas appointment, with an aim to reduce the difficulty in re-adjustment to the original working environment as expatriates return.

A third option is that the father returns, leaving the mother accompanying the child until the end of high school (or at least until the child finishes the first year). However, deciding to become a transnational family remains controversial among parents for three reasons. Overseas residence with one parent limits university options available to the child. The most reputable universities require that applicants have resided abroad with both parents. Moreover, the remaining parent, mostly mothers who are housewives or part-time workers, often encounter problems renewing their own residency permits. Only a limited number of schools (most Chinese public schools) cover the residency documents for parents of the enrolled foreign students. A third concern is the morality of splitting a family across two countries which may undermine the well-being of family members.

Based on the above considerations, families endeavour to remain in China (or to migrate to another country) as a whole. Some families stayed with satisfaction. When I met Unsil, her husband had successfully switched from being an expatriate to a technician locally hired by a multinational electronic corporate headquartered in Beijing. He earned a salary similar to that of an expatriate and received a slightly lower education subsidy (it covers 40% of the tuition fee, usually 50%-70% for an expatriate). Unsil seemed basically content with the life of her family: they lived in a spacious high-end apartment (over 100 square meters) in Wangjing; the two boys attended a bilingual school; and, she enjoyed being set free from the excessive family obligations in Korea. On several occasions she asserted that she and her husband were determined to remain in Beijing until their two sons (11-year-old and nine-year-old) accomplished their high school education. Given that the two boys had initiated their elementary school in China, they would definitely be eligible for the "12-year special case" when they graduated from high school and hence be given the keys to the best university in Korea.

By contrast, some others lingered around with affliction. As Kyŏngra grumbled, "I don't like living in China, neither do my children like studying in China, but we did not have any choice. We had to come because of my husband. We are victims!" Kyŏngra's husband embarked on his career in China as an engineer employed by a Chinese company under a long-term contract. They had been living in China for 13 years at the time of the interview. "(Since you don't like here so much,) then do you have any plan to return?" I asked. She answered:

> No, at least not soon, because my children (a 16-year-old son and an 11-year-old daughter) have to finish their high school and become qualified as special cases before they can apply for the good Korean universities. In my daughter's case, she has never been to school in Korea, so if she could complete her high school in China, she could apply for Seoul National University. But, if we move back to Korea now, they would have a very hard time adapting to the school environment...You must know how difficult it is for Korean kids to go to a good university, if they move back now, they would have no chance to enter a good university. So, we need to get the special case qualification before going back, it is a compensation we deserve to acquire.

Although this desire to create the child to become a special case is convergent, the specific experiences are divergent. This demonstrates that laws and regulations do not repress/urge desire per se, they have to persuade subjects and prompt their intention to correspond to the order (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 114–15). The subjective perceptions and identities lead to heterogeneous experiences, strategies and outcomes. Certainly, remaining in Beijing is not the only solution to the special case paradox. During a brunch, Yunsuk exposed a new plan for their family in the coming year: a move to Mexico. Given that her husband's corporation had established a factory in Mexico, he had volunteered to be deployed there and this had been approved by the executives. Yunsuk seemed to be enormously imbued by imagining their new life in this "remote" country. She said, "(people say that it is a bit unsafe there), it should not be a problem if we stay at home after dinner. I think it is not a bad idea to go to Mexico as my children can learn some Spanish there…There is also a Korean school there, cheaper than the one in Beijing, and local schools are even cheaper than the Korean one."

In some cases, this aspiration for the child to eventually become a special case was the impetus for the parent in Korea voluntarily applying for an overseas appointment in China. As 21-year-old Ahyeon pointed out, "my father applied for this job (a managerial position in a Korean bank in Beijing) for us (me and my sister), because he wanted to give us a chance to study abroad and go to a better university (in Korea)." Ahyeon failed the university entrance exam in Korea and ended up attending a low-ranking university (she felt too ashamed to mention the name). She did not like university life and applied for suspension on completion of her freshman year. Her goal in Beijing was to learn Chinese and obtain level six (the highest level) of HSK (Chinese Proficiency Test) before returning to Korea. By submitting the Chinese language certificate, she expected to compete in the sushi admission track as a "Chinese language specialist" (*chunggugŏt'ŭkkija*) and

to get access to an "In-Seoul" university (the universities in the city of Seoul are believed better than those outside).

This strategy was developed by Ahyeon's mother, who I met a few days later. According to her, this move to Beijing had been a long-time plan developed with her husband, which she described by using the idiom of "killing two birds with one stone" (*ilsŏgijo*). I learned that the move to Beijing not only helped Ahyeon pursue a second chance of entering a better university, it was also beneficial to her younger daughter, Ahyeon's sister, who had graduated from junior high school the year they left Korea. The girl was expected to complete her high school education in China, given that the father had applied for a three-year overseas contract. It implied that the girl would become eligible to compete for admission as a special case and go to a Korean university via a less challenging route. At the end of the meeting with Ahyeon and her mother, Ahyeon winked at me and said, "I told you, our mother has many educational strategies."

When a pupil is deemed ineligible for the special case admission, return to Korea becomes a less desirable option. The educational detour travelled by Yŏngmi's younger son vividly demonstrates this. Arriving in Beijing in 2008, Yŏngmi and her husband ambitiously diversified the education courses of their two sons. The older son attended a Chinese junior high school and the younger son was sent to the elementary department of the Korean school. Their original intention was to raise the older son to be a Chinese specialist and to assist the younger son gain admission to a reputable Korean university. Acknowledging the rising importance of the Chinese language, the couple immersed the younger child in a Chinese schooling environment for one and a half years after he accomplished the elementary level of Korean education. Following this, they moved him back to the Korean track to continue the eighth and ninth grades, expecting him to stay there until the end of high school.

However, 2013 was a watershed in the family's life – the father's business in Beijing went bankrupt. A friend offered him a well-paid position in the company he operated in Korea. The father took up this position as an appreciation of the friend's generosity and because he needed this job to support the family and overcome financial difficulties. Unfortunately, his absence from China resulted in enormous difficulties in having the younger son be a "qualified" special case. Eventually, Yŏngmi decided to stay with her sons in China and took care of their lives. She transferred the younger son from the Korean school, once again, to a Chinese high school and set a new academic goal for him to go to Tsinghua or Beida (the two best universities in Beijing).

Referring to the motive not to return, she asserted without any hesitation, "because he (my younger son) cannot become a special case anyway, the return is not beneficial (*yurihan jŏmi ŏpsŏyo*)."

In summary, the special case admission policy for overseas Koreans signifies a state effort to reach the Korean population living outside the national borders by giving this group political credit to the status of their children. Accordingly, people are willing and desirable to be involved in this national project. They have made conditions to fit the younger generation into the policy framework, despite the simplified logic in it. The specific approaches to achieve this goal are diverse and often characteristic of disengagement from (the geographical concept of) the state: remaining in China, postponing the return, or moving further to a third destination. The course of the return journey is never linear and uniform, nor is the return a necessity in some conditions. Nonetheless, it does not mean that Korean migrants are like the "fugitive population" who escaped to the hills to evade the extensive power of states in the valley areas in Southeast Asia (Scott 2009, 27). On the contrary, they are more likely to be a group of people welcomed by the mother country to return. This political superiority endorsed by the state urges them to be receptive to the standardised national policy.

Hakkyo and Hagwŏn: Indispensable Intermediaries

I met Hyŏnmi, a senior undergraduate student at one of the top ten Korean universities, in Beijing. She had applied for a one-year voluntary suspension from the university in order to prepare for the Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK). She believed that such a certificate would improve her competence in the upcoming stage of job seeking in Korea. When I became more acquainted with her, she confessed her previous connection to China as a migrant child. She had spent three years during high school living in the city of Tianjin with her parents. Following this, she had successfully obtained the special case qualification and returned to receive higher education in Korea. Studying in a British school in Tianjin, she had enjoyed the relaxed academic environment and stated that regular classes ended at 3pm every day. As a casual question, I asked her:

> Me: Then, what did you do after class?
>
> Hyŏnmi: I went and studied Korean curriculum in *hagwŏn* (private education institute, or after-school academy), preparing for the university entrance exam. And it was not easy at all because I was doing two

> studies, my school and the exam. The two of them were totally different. Sometimes I felt confused and disordered.
>
> Me: Really? Did other Korean students in your class feel the same?
>
> Hyŏnmi: Not all (of them), but only those who want to go to university in Korea.

Hyŏnmi's after-school study load reminded me of the fact that being an eligible special case does not ensure success in gaining access to a (top) Korean university. The eventual success seems to entail both the operation of educational institutes and the efforts made by migrant parents and students. This gives rise to a key question: to what extent are these educational intermediaries indispensable? In order to answer this question, I draw on a significant argument made by migration broker scholars: brokers increasingly come to mediate flows of migrants because "hierarchies of regulation…treat migrants differently depending on ethnicity or level of education and skills" (Lindquist, Xiang, and Yeoh 2012, 11). That is to say, it is the governmental regulations that make commercialised brokerage indispensable (Barabantseva, Xiang, and Chao 2015, 3). In this chapter, I include two kinds of brokers channelling Korean students to pursue universities in the home country: formal and state-sponsored hakkyo (school, particularly referring to the overseas Korean school); and, informal and privately-run hagwŏn (education institute).

Before going further, I briefly introduce the special case admission policy. It involves two rounds of selection: document selection (*sŏryujŏnhyŏng*), and an interview and/or written examination (*p'iltap*). The first round of application normally entails the submission of two sorts of documents: 1) general document, including high school diploma, school records from elementary to high school, guardian's employment certificate (clarifying the time period of overseas appointment), registration document as overseas nationals (both guardian and student) etc.; 2) additional documents such as personal statement, letter of recommendation, and foreign language certificate.[63] In following this formula, individual universities are allowed to implement specific admission systems that differ slightly from one another. The document selection is pivotal in the admission procedure of the first-tier universities. All the top three Korean universities (abbreviated as "SKY", standing for Seoul National University, Korea University, and Yonsei University) predominantly select candidates based on the submitted documentation. Only first

[63] 2015 chaeoegungmin'gwa oegugin mojibyogang (the admission handbook for overseas Korean nationals and foreigners in 2015), www. kcue.or.kr, 249. The digital version of document was provided by an administration working in KISB.

round successful applicants are granted access to the second/final round, being an interview and without the requirement to complete an examination. In particular, most 12-year special case applicants are required to submit documents, and are not required to sit exams.

By comparison, the vast majority of universities utilise written exams and interviews to select qualified returnees (especially the three-year special cases). The written exam is termed as "special case examination" (*t'ŭngnyeshihŏm*) and includes two tracks: Liberal Arts and Sciences. Liberal Arts applicants should prepare for exams in the subjects of Korean language (*kugŏ*) and English. Applicants to the Sciences track need to sit exams in mathematics and English (Korean language in some cases). Another exam called "*nonsul*" (essay) is also on the exam agenda of many universities and requires applicants to write a short essay in Korean. These exams generally assess how familiar applicants are with the knowledge derived from three years of Korean high school textbooks, regardless that specific questions vary from one university/exam track to another.[64] Since 2012, each applicant is confined to applying for a maximum six universities in one application. Prior to that, students had been allowed to submit applications to an unlimited number of universities provided they were able to sit for multiple exams.

As shown in the previous chapter, Korean International School in Beijing (KISB) was not favoured by parents for several reasons. Nonetheless, the school gained popularity among the would-be special case returnees and their parents. Numerous parents attempted sending their children to study in the high school department of the KISB. They believed it was conducive for pupils to follow the national curriculum as they prepared to take the special case exams. They conceived that adolescents benefitted from the pure Korean academic circumstance which prepared them to return linguistically, culturally and psychologically. On a practical level, students received professional guidance from school teachers in regard to document preparation and submission. Many teachers assisted students with polishing and proofreading documents such as their personal statement. In brief, I did not meet a parent or student who denied KISB being pivotal in the facilitation of the younger generation to home universities.

Also evident was the drastic increase in the number of enrolled students from the ninth to tenth grade in KISB (see Figure 5.1). The school administrator, Mr Kim, explained that in response

[64] For instance, in 2015, Hanyang University required liberal arts applicants to take Korean language test, sciences students to take math; and KyungHee University asks liberal art applicants to take Korean and English test, and science ones to sit math and Korean. Information provided by staff in Hankook Academy-Education Consulting, Beijing.

to the demands by parents, the school had added new classes in grades ten, 11 and12. “Despite this, there are still many students failing to get into our high school every year,” he said. “If you ask why these students come and study here, they come for one single purpose, that is going to university in Korea. That is precisely the reason why they come. All of them are (eligible) special cases.” This assertion was made during an interview with Mr Pak, the director of the “university admission department” (*chinhakpu*) affiliated with KISB. The interview was carried out in a small meeting room located on the second floor of the main building in KISB. He initiated the conversation with, “you visit us at a right time.” After a short pause, he elaborated, “our officers are not so busy at this moment because the third year of high school students just received the results of university admission in Korea, which means our task for this year is nearly done.” “What is the final result?” I asked. “Very good, almost all have obtained admittance to a Korean university, and dozens have entered the top ten (universities),” he said. His good mood permeated our conversation.

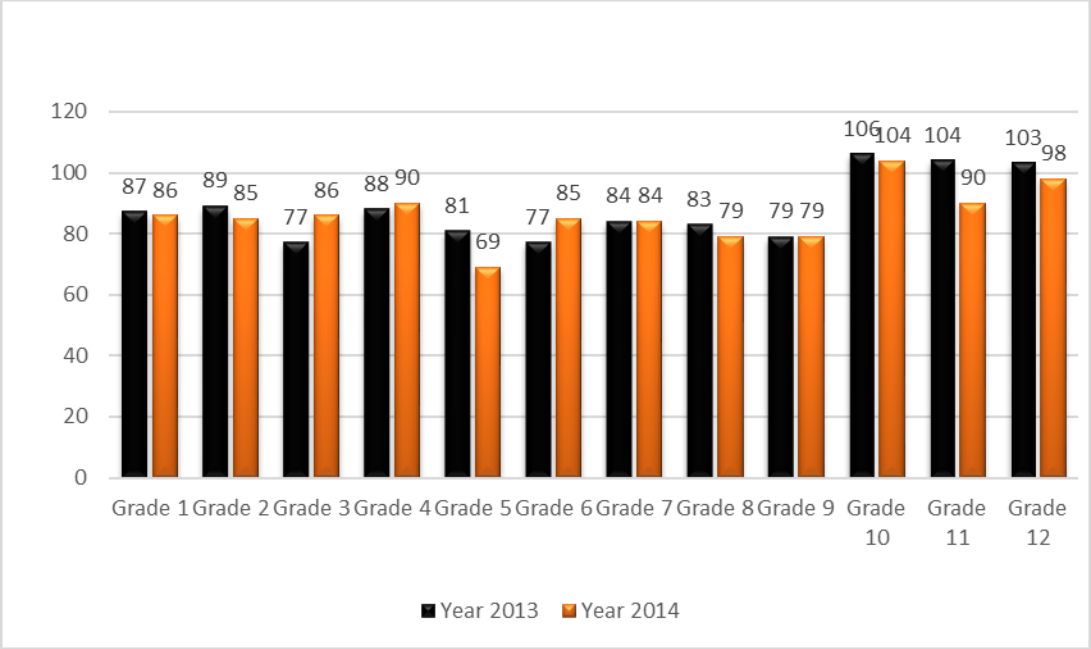

Figure 5.1. Enrolled Student Number in KISB (Grade 1-12) in the academic year 2013 and 2014. Source: KISB Brochure (2015).

According to Mr Pak, the secret to their success was the efficient pedagogy adopted during the high school years. By targeting the special case exam, the teaching staff focused on teaching the national curriculum of three subjects: Korean language, math and English. Other “irrelevant”

subjects were not taught. They adopted any teaching method needed to help students understand and memorise textbook contents and possible exam questions. The teachers continued teaching the same knowledge point until the majority of students understood. This method was necessary as a considerable number of students had been absent from the Korean education track for years, including some who had never been in Korean full-time schooling. He praised the teachers for their patience and devotion especially towards disadvantaged students.

The university admission department, led by Mr Pak, was responsible for everything related to university admission, excluding teaching. Three main tasks were involved: 1) to collect and collate a comprehensive list of university admission information (admission requirements, special case policy) and to distribute this information to pupils; 2) to prepare all documents required in the admission procedures for students (e.g. school record, record of volunteering activity, letter of recommendation) and to assist students in completing requested documents (e.g. personal statement); and, 3) to schedule and manage mid-semester night classes and additional lessons during summer and winter vacations for students in need. Mr Pak stressed that night classes were not compulsory as many students had expressed their intentions to study in hagwŏn in the evenings, and that the school executive respected this need and permitted them to do so. In his summarising of these three tasks, Mr Pak highlighted that the school acted like "a bridge", connecting and assisting students to pursue their dream university in the home country.

According to the parents and students I met, it is not uncommon for KISB students to follow lessons and receive additional tutorials in a variety of hagwŏn in the evenings and weekends. School teachers and executives encouraged this after-school education because the Korean school curriculum is insufficient to guarantee a student's acceptance in a top-ranked university. To stand out from the competition, a pupil needs to submit excellent additional documents, specifically foreign language certificates. The most valued certificates are TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language, a standardised test that non-native speakers take in order to enrol in English-speaking universities) and SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test, applied in college admissions in the United States). Similarly, the test results from the IB (Diploma of International Baccalaureate) are valued. Students also prepare to submit a HSK Chinese language certificate proving their linguistic

achievement during their residence in China. The accumulation of certificates is ironically referred to as "building up one's spec (specification)" (*sŭp'ekŭl ssat'a*) by parents and students. [65]

Hagwŏn has an essential role in providing instructions on how to score high in the above lingual and academic exams and in paving the way for the would-be returnees to pursue the top universities. For most of my informants, after-school tutoring was seen as a necessity rather than a supplementary education. The need to study in a hagwŏn or with a private tutor (*kwaoesŏnsaeng*) was even more urgent for adolescents attending a non-Korean high school. The majority were children of expatriates expected to achieve an internationally-recognised high school diploma (or at least experiences from being immersed in an English environment) before obtaining a special case status and returning home. These students needed to study the Korean curriculum in their spare time and prepare for the special case examination. Moreover, many took private English tutorials for the purpose of learning the essential skills needed to score high in the TOEFL and SAT certificate exams. Consequently, parents invest excessively in the child's extra-curricular education (see Figure 5.2). As a parent Chŏngjin stated:

> I used to believe that if my kid (15-year-old, son) attended an international school, his English would be good enough so there would be no need to arrange (study load in a) hagwŏn for him. Actually, I was wrong. He needs to learn how to sit an exam. He is doing TOEFL in TimeEdu (the name of an English hagwŏn), and then he will do SAT, and the last will be the "special case English" (*t'ŭngnyeyŏngŏ*) starting shortly before the entrance exam… If you ask why a Korean kid here goes to hagwŏn, everyone will tell you it is because they need to prepare for going to university in Korea.

[65] The expression was originally used in Korea as a sarcasm to depict job seekers striving to accumulate various kinds of certificates to stand out in the rigorous job selection procedure, the way they prepare to be evaluated by the human resource staff is similar to the way that consumables are examined by their "specifications".

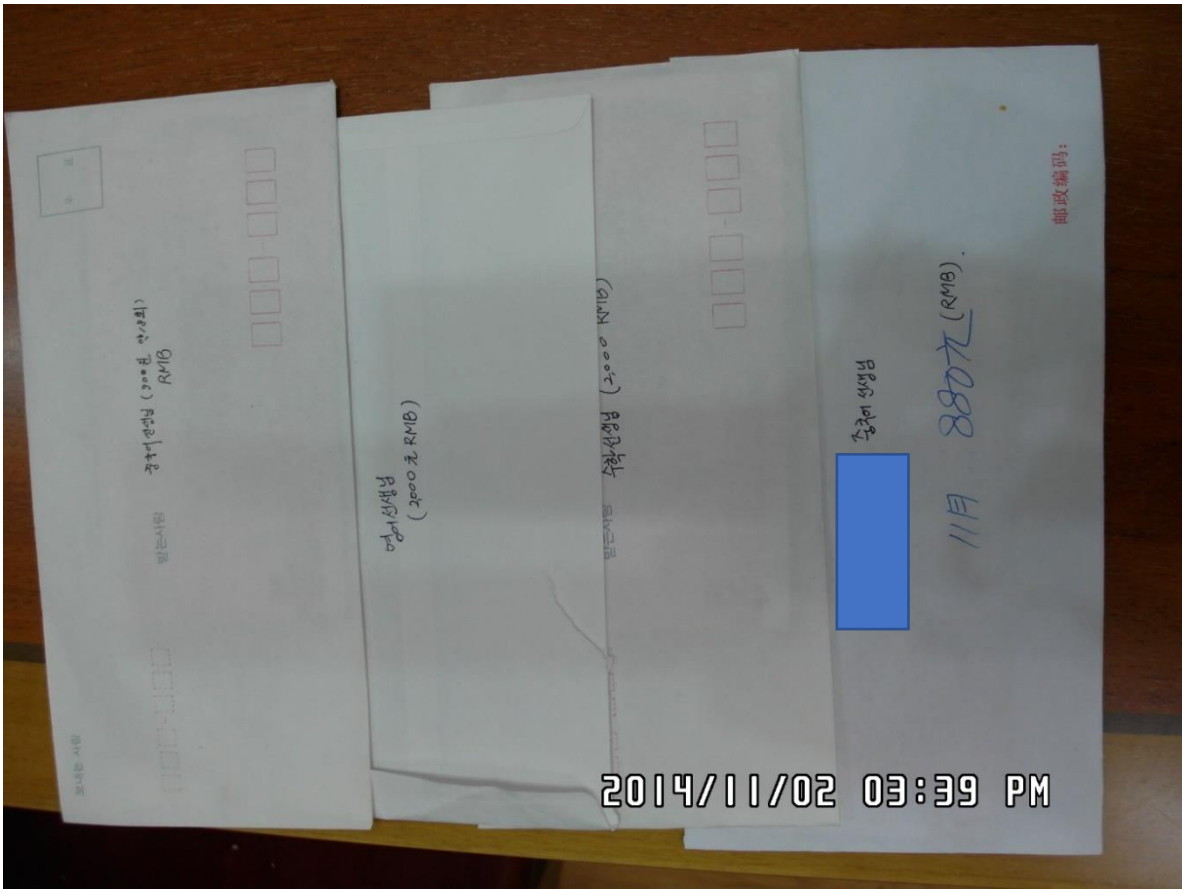

Figure 5.2. White envelopes were filled with Chinese yuan. They were about to be handed to hagwŏns and private tutors, by a parent whose child was at a junior high school age. The total expense was 5780 yuan (759 euro) per month. According to the parent, this expense was actually lower than the average level consumed by the peer parents. Photograph by the author.

Following a Korean parent, Hyemin, I visited Shilla Academy in Wangjing. This institute is known for its professional tutoring of would-be special case returnees. We were hosted by Mrs Kim, one of the consultant teachers (*sangdamsŏnsaeng*). I was struck by the availability of approximately thirty different types of lessons to pupils, ranging from early junior high school to the last year of high school. English classes were predominant in the schedule, in combination with special case math and Korean language tutorials (see Table 5.3). Mrs Kim recommended that students should be "building up one's spec" from the early stage of junior high school, preparing TOEFL, SAT, and followed by special case exam preparations. The earlier a student began, the higher the probability of a more favourable outcome one might achieve, because the student would have sufficient time to sit TOEFL/SAT multiple times before he/she received a good score.

Table 5.3. English Tutorial Schedule in Shilla Academy

English Tutorial	Time	Content
The 1st year of high school, special case English Class (special case basis)	Tue, Thu, 20:30-22:00 Sat 14:00-15:30	Basic special case English method Special case necessary vocabulary memorisation
Daily class, special case English, preparing for the 2016 academic year	Mon-Fri, 17:30-19:00	Vocabulary memorisation like Spartans Special case English perfect preparation
Special case English, preparing for the 2016 academic year	Mon, Wed, Fri class, 19:00-20:30, 21:00-22:30; Tue, Thu, Sat class, 19:00-20:30; Sat, Sun class, 10:00-12:00	Special case English perfect preparation
TOEFL Basic Class	Mon, Thu, 18:00-20:00	Focus on Reading& Writing, vocabulary memorisation
TOEFL Hanyang University class	Wed, Fri, 20:00-22:30	Preparing for Hanyang University, aiming at over 90 points achieved
TOEFL Ability Class	Mon, Thu, 20:00-22:30 Wed, Fri, 18:00-20:00	TOEFL comprehensive course, analysing examination type Take mock test
TOEFL Weekend Intensive Class	Sat, Sun, 14:00-16:00 Sat, Sun, 16:00-18:00 Sat, Sun, 13:00-18:00	Reading & Writing Listening &Speaking Intensive course
SAT Beginner class	Mon, Wed, 20:00-22:00 Tue, Thu, 18:00-20:00	SAT basis strengthening vocabulary memorisation
SAT Actual Battle Class	Mon, Wed, 18:00-20:00 Tue, Thu, 20:00-22:00	Critical reading, comprehensive conquest Essay writing, customised guidance
SAT Friday and Saturday Class	Fri, 18:00-20:00 Sat, 14:00-16:00 Fri, 20:00-22:00 Sat, 16:00-18:00	Core vocabulary memorisation
SAT Saturday Class	Sat, 9:00-13:00	
SAT+ TOEFL	Sat, 16:00-18:00 19:00-21:00	Aiming at TOEFL over 115 points

Intermediate English Reading &Writing Strengthening Class	Mon, Thu, 17:00-19:00	Targeting at Grade Seven to Nine Grammar &Reading & Writing

Source: A curriculum brochure provided by Shilla Academy in Beijing, 2014. Translated by the author.

The striking domination of English lessons in the schedule uncovered a crucial implication: the preference of the Korean state to summon back overseas youth who are proficient in English. That is to say, the special case policy essentially favoured adolescents who lived in and returned from English-language countries over those from China and other non-English countries. A similar debate on the hierarchy between different groups of overseas Koreans was conducted in regard to the Overseas Korean Act (OKA, passed by the Korean National Assembly in 1999) (Park and Chang 2005). The act pledged to grant a "quasi-citizenship" to Korean Americans rather than Korean Chinese and Korean Russians, regardless that they had all been claimed as Korean diasporic population sharing primordial ethnic ties to the state (Park and Chang 2005). Korean nationals living abroad were untouched in the act, due to their undoubted citizenship. However, my study shows that an identical hierarchy has also been generated between overseas Korean nationals living in different countries, albeit in a more subtle and invisible way.

Nonetheless, hierarchy in the special case admission was not the major concern of parents and students. The majority were scarcely conscious of this hierarchical existence embodied in the return policy. As previously discussed, the temptation of gaining privileged access to domestic universities substantially urged people to downplay and ignore their relatively adverse situation compared with their counterparts in other countries. Their intensive wish to reify this potential privilege into accessible educational opportunity further reinforced the imperative of the formal and informal intermediaries. The parents and students I met were preoccupied with: when should I move (the child) to the Korean school? Which hagwon provides more professional service than others? Which private tutor has richer experiences than others? From this perspective, the state-sponsored and the private intermediaries were not contradictory to each other, but complemented one another and constituted "a continuum", which actualised and smoothened the journey to the dream domestic universities (Lindquist, Xiang, and Yeoh 2012, 14).

In Shilla Academy, I observed the consultation between Korean parent Hyemin and consultant Mrs Kim, which lasted over two hours. The conversation revealed the interdependent and interconnected relations between hagwŏn and hakkyo, the parent and the agency. Hyemin had

sought the services of the consultancy because of preoccupations she had regarding how best to assist her daughter (a would-be returnee) in standing out from the competition. Similar to many other expat parents, she initially inquired whether it is necessary to transfer the child to the Korean school (from a delightful international school) for the purpose of university preparation. Prior to asking the question, she had spent nearly half an hour introducing the migration story of her family to China, the pleasant school her daughter attended, the excellent academic progress she had made etc. The emphasis on these details implied her aspiration to keep the child in the international school while being wary of the preparation for return.

Figure 5.3. The name list of the Shilla Academy "alumni" succeeded in the 2015 special case admission in Korea. Photograph by the author.

"I advise to you transfer your daughter to KISB as she upgrades to high school instead of keeping her in BSB (the abbreviated name of the international school)," Mrs Kim firmly stated, as

she noticed Hyemin finally had reached the end of her lengthy narration. She provided three persuasive points to assure the validity of this suggestion. KISB was the best option given the pure Korean environment and, specifically, the academic competition among the would-be returnees in their daily study. This competition is positive because it inspired students to make every effort to prepare for the return exams. Subsequently, she gently reminded Hyemin that entry to the KISB high school department is extremely harsh, and that applicants must sit an entry exam to compete for limited available spots. Many students failed to get in, and this failure negatively affected their preparation for the university entrance in Korea. Thirdly, she highlighted that this suggestion had been made in the interests of the child rather than of the institute. Given that Korean curriculum is an available provision by the institute, she could have suggested the mother choose that service while keeping the child in the international school.

Hyemin continued to ask Mrs Kim how she could help her daughter get to a top university with the provision of hagwŏns. She emphasised that both her husband and herself were alumni of Korea University and thus they expected their daughter to enter a top three, or at least top five university in Korea. Mrs Kim asked her immediately, "how is her (your daughter) English?" Hyemin paused and mumbled, "not very good." Mrs Kim continued:

> You might know the majority (students) go (to universities) through examinations (*taebubun shihŏmŭro gayo*). What are the exams? Korean and English, or math and English…English test is included in either case. Only a few students go (to top universities) through the document (submission). Seoul National University only accepts the twelve-year special case, and the rest four (universities) are Korea University, Yonsei University, Sungkyunkwan University, and Sogang University (she started writing the names on a piece of paper) Then, what do they need to go there? TOEFL, over 115 points (out of 120 points), SAT, over 2250 (out of 2400 points), IB, if applicable, over 40 points (out of 45 points), and a good school record of course. [66]

Hyemin appeared enlightened by the information provided by Mrs Kim and said, "now I know that I need to ask my kid to study more English. I did not know this, so I had asked her to study a lot of Chinese (as we are in China)." Mrs Kim seemed quite satisfied with her response, and she smiled and added, "you should not (do that). If you want, please send your kid to the TOEFL basic

[66] Ivy league members such as Yale and Columbia University only required non-English native speakers to achieve at least 100 points in TOEFL test in their undergraduate program admission in 2015.

class, the teacher is very good. Studying TOEFL can also help her prepare special case English test in terms of vocabulary, grammar and reading." After the consultancy, Hyemin told me, "now you understand why Korean mothers trust hagwŏns more than schools? You can see how professional they are!" By professional, she referred to the capability of offering updated information including the rules for applying to the top universities by highly experienced hagwŏn staff. Paradoxically, in a previous conversation, Hyemin had relentlessly criticised the excessive investment in private education by Korean parents for their children both in Beijing and in the home country.

The after-school tutorial boom among Koreans in Beijing, I argue, cannot be simply understood as a replication of the private education fever in the home country (for instance, see M. Kim 2012). These private academies provide an imperative rather than a supplementary education for the would-be returnees because the special case admission policy requires the acquisition of the Korean national curriculum, in addition to placing a strong emphasis on English proficiency. It is this regulation in the home country that causes the formal and informal Korean education institutes in Beijing to be necessary rather than supplementary in the daily study of the potential returnees. The two intermediaries function to support one another, collaborating to assist Korean youth to pursue a bright future in the home country. Most Korean parents and students are heavily reliant on the institutes in their preparation to return.

Conclusion

Desirable homecoming refers to a return journey imbued with migrants' subjectivities to reify the political privilege permitted by the mother country to available educational opportunity. The concerns of migrants entail a calculative and economic logic, and yet they have little to do with nostalgia or a collective political allegiance to the motherland. Nonetheless, this return is substantially driven by the preferential policy towards overseas Korean nationals adopted by the home government. That is, the obvious desire to return home for higher education profoundly reflects the state's intention to appropriate education as "bait" to feed its nationals living abroad, to maintain a connection with them, and to induce them home when needed for the national

interest.[67] However, the return policy is by no means favourable to the all nationals living abroad, as it grants more privileges to those returning from English-language countries.

Koreans working and living in China are able to choose to return (or not) and meticulously plan for when to return. This trait distinguishes them from the labour migrants forced to return to the home country at the end of their working contracts (Xiang 2013b). Nevertheless, their choices are not entirely free, rather they are bound to a complex power nexus spreading over cross national borders: class, immigration regime, employment market and culture. In this network of power, nation-state plays a crucial role, and yet are not the sole formidable power. Operating within such a power network provides the individuals with some flexibility to navigate their mobility. In the return journey, migrant individuals have been made subjects, not only due to their "resistance against different forms of power", but also because of their occasional compliance to them (Foucault 1982, 780).[68] Evidence of this is exemplified by the parental endeavours to create the younger generation to become "eligible" returnees in various means. This compliance is not unconditional. Once the potential privilege is doomed to fail, the return is no longer a desirable option.

The educational intermediaries, hakkyo and hagwŏn, are indispensable due to the emphasis on excellent English proficiency and familiarity with Korean curriculum in the admission policy leading to first-tier Korean universities. Parents and students tend to voluntarily comply with this requirement and overlook the embedded hierarchy between returnees from different countries. Their compliance further reinforces the imperative of the educational institutes. Moreover, they rely on hakkyo and hagwŏn for the university application document, to acquire Korean curriculum and to prepare for English language certificate. This dependence on intermediaries is adopted as a strategy to enhance the competitive competence of students in the university admission process. In this regard, I hesitate to utilise the term "migration infrastructure" to incorporate the hakkyo and hagwŏn in my study (Xiang and Lindquist 2014). This concept has been adopted by scholars

[67] This political motive is highly comparable to that of the Beijing government towards the return of *Huaqiao* (ethnic Chinese overseas) in the 1950s and from the late 1970s onwards (Wang 2013). In both time periods, overseas Chinese are honoured as a valuable category of people needed by the state for national development and establishing international linkages.

[68] Michel Foucault highlighted "resistance against different forms of power" a starting point to study how human beings are made subjects (Foucault 1982, 780). Likewise, Manuel Castells also pointed out that individuals transform into subjects as they develop "prolongation of communal resistance" against otherwise unbearable oppression (Castells 1997, 11).

to highlight the precarious tendency of people's migratory capability to be impeded rather than enhanced by the actors that condition their mobility. Rather, I consider the hakkyo and hagwŏn as "ethnic resources", or "ethnic capital", facilitating Korean migrant children in rejoining their motherland (Lee and Zhou 2015; Yoon 1991). [69]

[69] Sociologist In-Jin Yoon referred "ethnic resources" to the available capital to every member of an ethnic group who shares the common origin and culture, e.g. ethnic customers, employees, media, social organisations, in his study of South Korean immigrant business in Chicago. Likewise, the after-school educational institutions act as significant "ethnic capital" to ensure the younger generation of Asian Americans to achieve outstanding academic achievement in the host society (Lee and Zhou 2015, 8).