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Editorial Remarks

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Editorial Remarks (Vol. 2, No. 3)

It has already been a year since the first inception of the idea of publishing this journal. In the last four issues, *Culture and Empathy: International Journal of Sociology, Psychology, and Cultural Studies* offered an array of articles and book reviews on various topics ranging from cultural comparisons, pop culture analyses, political economic discussions, and gender issues. With the participation of Professor John Lie since the last issue (Vol. 2, No. 2), *C & E* has strived to be a leading depository of the East Asian perspective of empathy as a new cultural and scientific concept of communication, creativity, social relations, organizations, institutions, and the national and global political economy.

The current issue (Vol. 2, No. 3) presents three articles on racial hybridity in Sweden, the growing hot issue of inequality in South Korea, and female entrepreneurialism in South Korea and the U.S. Two papers are country studies, while the third is comparative. The editorial board decided to publish the comparative study, given that recent inter-Pacific comparisons are on the rise in an attempt to try to figure out why Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore sometimes fare better than North America or Latin America in the area of economics, social policies, government efficiencies, and cultural developments. In a similar vein, Bland's contribution highlights the growing nature of female entrepreneurialism in South Korea and its system of social support extended to the female owners of new startups. She provides meaningful findings of why South Korean women find it more difficult to survive in a changing Confucian country than the women in a huge North American market where they tend to relish higher levels of egalitarianism than those on the other side of the Pacific.

The issue of mixed race in Sweden presents an interesting case of a new racial relation in a country that banned the word of "race," despite the fact that the word has readily been used, until now, to refer to some 20,000 mixed race people living in the country that is one of the most racially hybridized in Europe. Against this backdrop, the authors of the paper, who themselves are mixed race or adopted, present a dark side of the "living hell" in a very affluent and liberal society that is poignantly rejecting the existence of racially mixed people as socially or racially unacceptable. Based on the interviews of eighteen mixed raced elements of Swedish society, the paper finds that these interviewees in fact try hard to be more aware of and thus empowered to talk more openly about the race and racial categories than before to fight unobtrusive racial controls in the form of language and social relationships in a "racially blind" country.

The paper on inequality in South Korea by Ingyu Oh challenges the ongoing yet untrue description of the country as developed and egalitarian, a view often held by both progressive and conventional political economists of the country. The author argues that inequality must

be redefined based on various categories including gender, regional imbalances, educational inequalities, and age differentials to arrive at a more correct analysis of the South Korean economic situation. Based on this new approach, the traditional notion of “rural bias,” which benefits the impoverished rural sector during industrialization to balance income inequality between urban and rural areas, in fact did not exist as saliently as some of the previous authors in the discipline have maintained. The absence of equality in South Korea then finds it easier than ever to explain the growing inequality in the country after development and affluence.

Finally, Ute Fendler analyzes K-pop music videos to substantiate her claim that Korean music videos have achieved an art form by transcending its status as a subculture from a remote Asian country. She is the first one in K-pop studies who coined the term video as an “art form,” although it is now used by many in the study of Korean popular music. While previous K-pop studies merely mentioned in passing its prevalent music video format as a copy of American M-TV, Fendler argues that it is a much more advanced form of constructing beauty and imageries that are comparable to artistic works of higher culture, such as aesthetic films.

In this issue we present two book reviews by Ricardo Regatieri, who kindly reviewed Byung-Chul Han’s (2015) *Burnout Society*, and by Michael Dawson, who enthusiastically reviewed in length the recent book by Vincenzo Cichelli and Sylvie Octobre, *Aesthetico-Cultural Cosmopolitanism and French Youth: The Taste of the World*. We appreciate their efforts.

We hope Vol. 2, No. 3 will help scholars and students of Korea, Sweden, and the U.S. or of any comparative studies in obtaining valuable information on the countries. *C & E* will continue to strive to provide ambitious and meaningful contributions to each fresh issue.

John Lie, Ingyu Oh, and Wonho Jang