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Author

KIM, Sujung

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Abstract

This study examines the complicated interlink between the Korean state's neoliberal identity politics and working- and lower middle-class Korean students' study abroad as a form of voluntarily exile. Drawing on a critical discourse analysis and a 14-month ethnographic study, this study discusses how these students' decisions to study abroad are inextricably intertwined with the authoritarian Korean state's neoliberal political-economic strategies of pushing out seemingly less-profitable citizens (namely, students and graduates of low-ranking 4-year institutions). This study also examines students' strategies for simultaneously resisting and conforming to this neoliberal ethos. For working-class and lower middle-class Korean community college students, study abroad means a deviation from the normal educational and life trajectories in Korea while, at the same time, their education in the USA opens a pathway for reentering the Korean neoliberal system as more profitable citizens. Their being recognized as members of a profitable workforce indicates their achievement of

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neoliberal normalcy. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Kim, Suijung, E-Mail: kim480@illinois.edu