

Divided Belonging: An Analysis of Media Depictions
of the Korean Diaspora in Germany

By
Mallory Sokolove

Senior Honors Thesis
Department of Global Studies
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

April 2022

Approved by:

Dr. Ji-Yeon Jo, Advisor

Dr. Rahsaan Maxwell, Reader

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Acknowledgements

I would like to give a special thank you to my advisor, Dr. Ji-Yeon Jo, for her support and guidance and for inspiring my interest in this topic, as well as Dr. Rahsaan Maxwell for his advice and input. I would also like to thank Dr. Christiana Weiler for helping me with my translations. My thesis would also not be possible with the support of my friends and family, in particular Nuray Sezgin, Kathi Neumann, Julie Arnold, and my Oma.

Chapter 1 – History of Korean Migration to Germany

There has been migration from Korea to Germany for decades, but since the 1960s, when guestworker programs between South Korea and West Germany started, the number of ethnic Koreans moving to Germany has drastically increased. Today there are almost 45,000 ethnic Koreans living in Germany (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “다수거주국가”). However, despite their roles in German history and activism, there is limited research done on the experiences of ethnic Koreans in Germany, and they are often left out of race and migration discourse in Germany. The Korean diaspora spans every continent with over 7.4 million ethnic Koreans living outside of the Korean Peninsula. Many *kyopo* (Koreans living abroad) live in the United States, China, Japan, Uzbekistan, Brazil, etc. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “다수거주국가”). Most existing studies on the Korean diaspora focus on ethnic Koreans living in these countries. However, the experiences of the Korean diaspora in Germany is still an important topic. Germany and Korea have had similar experiences of division, and Korean guestworkers greatly influenced the economies of West Germany and South Korea. Korean nurses also played a pivotal role in the advocacy for allowing guestworkers to gain permanent residence.

In this thesis, I will conduct a media analysis focusing on the depictions of ethnic Koreans in German newspapers and magazines in respect to racism and stereotypes and experiences of hybridity seen in the media. South Koreans (hereafter Koreans) living in Germany¹ are regarded as an example of successful integration by ethnic

¹ Unless otherwise specified, when discussing pre-unification Germany, “Germany” is referring to the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany).

Germans. This myth hides the complexities of integration at an individual and social level and allows German media and people to forget about and erase the history and the current problems of Koreans in Germany. Koreans living in Germany have faced a long history of discrimination, from their objectification during the guestworker programs in the 1960s and 1970s to the everyday racism they continue to experience. This history is seen in the prevailing depictions of ethnic Koreans in German news media. The media depictions of Koreans and other Asian ethnicities affect the 45,000 Koreans living in Germany. Their history and experiences are important, not only to them, but to the rest of Germany as their history and activism is intertwined with German history as a whole. The racism and Model Minority Myth seen in the media erases this history, harming the large Korean community in Germany as well as the rest of Germany. In the following chapter, I will discuss the history of Korean migration to Germany and give important historical context that the remaining chapters will build on.

Korean-German Relations

Germany and the Korean Peninsula have been governed by multiple governments in the past 150 years, but diplomatic relations between Germany and Korea essentially began with the Germany-Korea Treaty in 1883. In 1905, the Eulsa Unwilling Treaty between Korea and the Japanese Empire ended the ability of Korea to have diplomatic relations, and diplomatic relations between Korea and Germany were suspended for 40 years (Yoon 2017, 214). Beginning in 1910, the Japanese Empire officially colonized the Korean Peninsula, and Korea remained a colony until 1945 (Choi 15).

In 1945, World War II was officially over, but for people in Germany and the Korean Peninsula, the consequences of war continued. Both Germany and Korea were divided, had strong United States and Soviet Union military presences, and their economies were decimated by war. Diplomatic relations were reestablished between North Korea and East Germany and between South Korea and West Germany. However, these relations were occasionally strained. As China and the Soviet Union's relationship became uneasy, North Korea sided with China and East Germany sided with Russia (Thomas)². At the same time, South Korea and West Germany's relationship also became tense despite their close economic ties. For much of the second half of the twentieth century, military dictatorships governed South Korea while the German government was attempting to remake its image after the horrifying events of the Holocaust. Various incidents of human rights abuses by the South Korean dictatorships including the East Berlin Affair strained the relationship between the states.

Today, the relationship between South Korea, which has become more democratic, and the now reunified Germany remains strong. South Korea invested \$7.6 billion in Germany in 2020 while Germany invested \$14.5 billion in South Korea (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Germany"). The countries remain close trading partners, and Germany is the third-largest investor in South Korea (Thomas).

² The Sino-Soviet split began in 1959 and continued to intensify as China and the Soviet Union experienced tensions due to ideological differences, Russian refusal to help China build their nuclear weapon arsenal, and the 1963 Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty between the Soviet Union and the US (Britannica, "Leadership of the Soviet Union of Nikita Khrushchev").

Guestworker Programs

Starting in the 1960s, thousands of Koreans migrated to Germany as guestworkers. From 1963 to 1977, over 18,000 South Koreans immigrated to Germany primarily as nurses and miners through bilateral agreements between West Germany and South Korea (Yoon 2017, 50). After World War II ended, the Korean Peninsula and Germany were in states of recovery. By the 1960s, West Germany had largely recovered from the economic damage wrought by World War II and the fall of the Third Reich. The *Wirtschaftswunder* (Miracle of the Rhine) brought rapid economic development to West Germany, but with this economic boom came a labor shortage in certain economic sectors including mining and healthcare. At the same time, South Korea was plagued with mass unemployment as the state began recovering from the Korean War in the 1950s and 1960s (Yoon 2017, 50). In 1962, the South Korean government sought to stabilize the population and economy through the Emigration Act that encouraged Korean citizens to move overseas (Cho). Park Chung Hee, the president of South Korea (1963-1979), sought to rapidly develop and rebuild the South Korean economy. In order to do this, he reestablished relations with Japan, raised interest rates, improved the tax collection system, and relied heavily on exports. Large conglomerates were given incentives such as preferential loans to export products to other countries (Brazinky). Park's Korea Overseas Development Corporation (KODC) furthered the goal of the 1962 Emigration Act and encouraged the export of human capital overseas in order to reduce the unemployment rate and bring more foreign capital to the country. KODC facilitated overseas guestworker programs all over the world including to Germany, Saudi Arabia, Canada, and Guam, and the migrant workers

worked in mining, construction, healthcare, refineries, sailors, etc. (Ro). The Korean workers who went abroad to Germany and other countries sent much of their paychecks back to South Korea, and ultimately, from 1963 to 1977, Koreans in Germany sent \$50 million back to South Korea each year during these programs (Roberts 34).

The German government began recruiting Korean men for mining jobs first. In 1963, the South Korean Labor Department and the German Mining Association began recruiting Korean men (Yoon 2017, 50). As postwar Germany's economy recovered, many Germans did not want dangerous or physically exhausting jobs, leading to a large labor shortage of miners. At the same time, Germany experienced a shortage of nurses and nurse aids. Official recruitment of Korean nurses began in 1970; however, German hospitals through Catholic organizations in South Korea began recruitment of Korean nurses in the 1960s (Roberts 33). Originally, Korean guestworkers had three-year non-renewable contracts that required them to return to South Korea at the end of the three years, but many decided to not return (Roberts 34, 38).

While the Korean guestworkers who migrated to Germany for short or long periods positively impacted the West German and South Korean economies, they suffered from dehumanization and alienation in Germany. Oftentimes, Koreans were treated as goods. When employers would request the German government to facilitate the guestworker contracts, the requests would often refer to guestworkers as *Stück* (units) rather than as people. Furthermore, in the initial years of the labor agreements, the German government referred to guest workers as *Fremdarbeiter* (foreign worker) which was the same term the Nazi government used when referring to the eight million forced laborers during the war (Roberts 37). Additionally, some Korean guestworkers

were housed in former concentration camps. Since the Holocaust, the German government has used many of the former concentration camps to house refugees and guestworkers, including Korean nurses (“Flüchtlingsheim...”). The media furthered the objectification of Korean guestworkers, particularly women; this objectification will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

There were differences in the experiences of male Korean miners and female Korean nurses. The majority of the miners in the guestworker programs did not work as miners in South Korea. Unlike other groups of guestworkers, Korean miners typically came from financially stable families and were often recent college graduates (Roberts 34). They joined the guestworker programs to find work and provide for their families that remained in South Korea as the miners in Germany earned about 600 Marks a month (roughly \$1200 today) which was much higher than salaries in South Korea at the time. Despite the high pay, the miners worked in dangerous conditions with little to no training, and many suffered from injuries and chronic health problems after their three-year contracts expired (Yoon 2017, 50).

Outside of work, the Korean men often experienced discrimination and everyday racism from Germans as the media portrayed them negatively. For example, newspapers considered Korean miners to be “weak” and “more difficult to deal with than the Turks,” (Roberts 17). In contrast to the negative discrimination they faced, Korean women who worked as nurses often faced racist and sexist “positive discrimination³.”

³ Positive discrimination is a term employed by Roberts (2012) in reference to stereotypes that seem positive on the surface (such as “nice”) but are actually negative and have negative effects on the lives of people they are referring to.

During their time working as nurses, Korean nurses had close daily contact with German patients and staff, forming bonds despite the asymmetrical relationships they had with their patients and coworkers and the language barrier. Korean women were regarded as being particularly equipped to be good caregivers as these ideas fit within German notions of Korean femininity. Korean women were often fetishized, hyperfeminized, and infantilized by the German media as they were referred to as “*sanfte Engel*” (soft angels) and “sweet girls.” They were viewed as “exotic” by overly intrusive, curious locals leading to a lack of privacy for the Korean nurses especially those living in small towns. Despite the sexism and racism Korean women faced every day in Germany, they were also known for their professional competency, and they were able to form close relations with their patients and coworkers (Ahn 42, 45, 47).

Korean guestworkers in Germany faced problems integrating into German society as they faced racism by the government and by ethnic Germans. They experienced objectification, othering, and exoticization, and women faced infantilization and sexualization while men were emasculated. In addition, there were other factors that influenced the lives of Koreans in Germany including Cold War politics and the South Korean government.

Korean Migration and the Cold War

During the Cold War, Germany and Korea were divided in half. North Korea and East Germany were led by communist governments and allied with the Soviet Union while South Korea and West Germany allied with the United States. The division of Germany and Korea was further entrenched as Germany and Korea were divided by opposing sides of the Cold War, and the Cold War especially affected the Korean

Peninsula as it experienced direct violence and war. During the early Cold War period, West and East Germany worked to recover from the economic, political, infrastructure, and moral damage of World War II. As the Cold War divided the world especially Germany and Korea, ideological and political alliances formed between East Germany and North Korea and between West Germany and South Korea.

East Germany and North Korea established diplomatic relations in 1949 with one another due to both being communist states (Hallam). Migration from North Korea to East Germany occurred, but on a much smaller scale than the guestworker programs between South Korea and West Germany. There were two primary reasons for North Koreans to live in East Germany. Students from North Korea would attend East German universities, a practice also common before the divisions of Germany and Korea (Thomas). During the Korean War, North Korea would also send war orphans to East Germany and other communist countries (Jung 313). Since the end of the Cold War, German-North Korean relations have taken a turn as Germany was reunited under the West German government. Despite that, North Korea maintained a diplomatic mission in Berlin until recently when in 2020, the courts ruled that the presence of a North Korean embassy violated international sanctions ("North Korean Embassy..."). There are still about 1500 North Koreans in Germany who migrated before the reunification (Thomas), but there are very few North Korean refugees living in Germany (Jung 314).

German and South Korean relations have continued after the reunification of Germany, but during the Cold War, there were often tensions between the states and these tensions affected the lives of Koreans in Germany. One example of tension between West Germany and South Korea was the East Berlin Affair.

In 1967, the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) abducted and arrested numerous Koreans living in Germany and France⁴, accusing them of espionage after they traveled to East Berlin. The South Korea government arrested over 200 people at home and abroad in connection with the alleged spy ring. None were convicted by the courts, but they still faced torture, and some were sentenced to death. Due to the breach of West German and French sovereignty and the allegations of human rights abuses committed by the South Korean government, the European governments demanded restitution, and three years later, then-President Park Chung-hee ultimately released the prisoners including those on death row. In 2006, the South Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Committee investigating the human rights violations by the KCIA reexamined the evidence of the East Berlin Affair. They found that the offenses were exaggerated and deemed it likely that the government intentionally misled people to generate fear of North Korean spies and communism (Yoon 2017, 91).

The East Berlin Affair exemplified South Korea's over-surveillance of suspected communist sympathizers, and the government's lack of understanding about the contexts of Korean diaspora in Germany and raised the question of sovereignty over diaspora population. During the division of Germany, people, including Koreans, in West Germany and West Berlin could travel to East Germany, and many did. However, for most of the Cold War, South Korea was under military dictatorship with hard anti-communist stances. Any association with a Communist or a sympathizer would put South Korean citizens including Koreans living abroad in danger of being detained and possibly tortured by the South Korean government. The KCIA continued to keep tabs

⁴ Isang Yun, a famous Korean composer living in Germany at the time, was one these abductees.

and sometimes surveillance of their citizens living abroad. Despite this danger, some South Korean citizens took the chance and travelled to East Germany. Some went as far as violating South Korea's Anti-Communist laws by meeting North Koreans (Yoon 2017, 91). Cold War politics drastically affected the lives of Koreans living in Germany who were caught in the middle of political tensions. The East Berlin Affair showed the degree to which the South Korean government surveilled *kyopo* and illustrated how Korean diasporas are "taken advantage of by Cold War authoritarian power," (Yoon 2017, 91).

When the Berlin Wall fell on November 9, 1989, Koreans were able to see what reunification could look like. For decades, the Cold War cut Germany and the Korean Peninsula in half, but while Korea remains divided today, Germany experienced reunification. After the wall fell, the people of Berlin were reunited, and for Koreans in Berlin, they were able to see a post-division era, and decades later, they still vividly remember the day the wall fell. Not only was the fall of the Berlin Wall important to German history, it gave Koreans in Germany hope that one day Korea will also be reunited (Jung 314). Inspired by the historical incident, the Korean Women's Association in Germany hung a poster on the remains of the wall that said, "Korea is One" on the day after the fall of the Berlin Wall. German Koreans and Korean organizations began linking German reunification to the possibility of Korean reunification, and demonstrations across Berlin followed (Jung 315). The reunification of Germany also brought about academic discourse about what Korean reunification could look like; however, today the situations are very different.

Korean women were heavily involved with activism in Germany well before the “Korea is One” demonstration. For example, when Korean guestworkers’ contracts began ending, Korean women led the charge for their ability to stay in Germany. After the oil crisis in 1977, the government began sending Korean nurses back to South Korea and stopped the recruitment of nurses and other guestworkers. However, Korean nurses and nurse aids organized together and petitioned for permanent residency. After collecting thousands of signatures, Korean women convinced the German government that guestworkers who have worked in Germany for a certain number of years should be granted the right to stay. For Korean guestworkers, the successful activism by Korean women marked the beginning of life in Germany without an expiration date. Furthermore, guestworkers were now allowed to change professions. Former Korean guestworkers cemented their lives in Germany as they married, had children, and/or brought their families to Germany. The second-generation German Koreans grew up with connections to both German and Korean cultures and languages, but it took several more years for the German government to recognize them as Germans instead of immigrants (Roberts 35, 39).

Ethnic Koreans in Post-Reunification: Law and Language

Korean guestworkers began cementing their lives in Germany after being granted permanent residency. They brought their families to Germany, and many of their children were born in the European state. Despite growing up in Germany and speaking German, second generation Koreans were still legally treated as foreigners. In 1973, the commission set up to address the *Ausländerproblem* (foreigner problem) proposed creating a path for naturalization for second-generation migrants. However,

this proposal was not approved for another two decades until 1990 when naturalization for non-ethnic Germans became possible (Roberts 39). Prior to 1990, German citizenship was entirely based on the principle of consanguinity. A person could not become a naturalized German citizen unless they can prove German ethnicity or blood, a policy opponents argued was reminiscent of Nazi ideologies of “blood” (Roberts 40).

Between 1990 and 2000, second- and third-generation immigrants in Germany could be naturalized if they met the strict requirements imposed by the German government and, in most cases, renounce their birth citizenship (i.e., South Korea); however, they were not granted citizenship at birth unless one of their parents was a German citizen. Since 2000, Germany’s citizenship law has been a combination of *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis*. Children of German citizens still receive German citizenship at birth. In addition, children born in Germany receive citizenship at birth if one of their parents was also born in Germany or had been legally residing in Germany for more than eight years. This change allowed for second- and third-generation Koreans to receive German citizenship at birth (Roberts 41). As the legal framework of migrants and their children have changed over the past decades, the language employed in German discourse on migration has changed with it.

Today, *Migrant* (migrant) and *mit Migrationshintergrund* (with migration background) have become the accepted terms for non-ethnic Germans, but *Ausländer* (foreigner), which has a negative connotation, is still widely used in German discourse even when referring to second- and third-generation migrants. By referring to Koreans and other people who are not ethnic Germans as *Ausländer*, Germans are able to remove their responsibility for migrants, and the perception of people with migration

backgrounds as being outsiders continues (Roberts 39). While *Ausländer* is still one of the most widely used terms, throughout recent decades, other terms emerged as political agendas changed. Since 2006, as the German government has focused more on integration, use of the terms such as *Zugewanderte* (the immigrated) and *Einheimische* (the natives) have become increasingly common (Roberts 40).

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

There is limited research done on the lives of the almost 45,000 ethnic Koreans living in Germany. What little research focuses on the Korean diaspora in Germany mainly focuses on the experiences of the guestworkers who initially migrated to Germany for work. Research on Koreans in Germany often employs postcolonial theory including the concept of hybridity. In this chapter, I will give an overview of how related literature apply postcolonial theory and the concept of hybridity to the Korean diaspora in Germany. I will use the framework and concepts outlined in this chapter to analyze depictions of ethnic Koreans in German media in later chapters.

Postcolonial Theory / Postkoloniale Theorie

Postcolonial theory is an approach that deconstructs the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized and the ramifications of colonialism. It focuses on colonial history, decolonization, and colonization's influence on power relations today. This theory is often applied to the study of formerly colonized peoples but has been expanded to apply to other marginalized communities. The Korean Peninsula has never been colonized by Germany, but the academic discourse of the Korean diaspora in Germany uses postcolonial theory by treating a colonizer as “any country or culture that dominates a group by insisting on perpetuating a Eurocentric view,” (Roberts 26). This concept of colonizer allows postcolonial theory to be applied to the study of migrant populations.

Postcolonial theory began emerging in the late 20th century with foundational texts by Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, and Michel Foucault (Roberts 28). *Orientalism* (1978) by Said looks at the relationship between the West and the East.

According to Said, the Orient is an artificial construct of other created by the West (Roberts 27). This construction of the Orient artificially homogenizes Eastern cultures and peoples into one while also othering it from other regions and cultures, namely Western cultures, which is why the term orientalism has, for the most part, not been used in 21st century discourse (Varisco 32). The idea of the “Orient” creates a dichotomy between the assumed East and West (Kim and Taylor 7). This homogenization will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

As postcolonial theory gained traction in a variety of disciplines, German academics initially considered this approach not to be applicable to Germany and its history. German academics justified this avoidance of postcolonial theory by arguing that Germany’s colonial history is insignificant. As the definition of colonizer and the application of postcolonial theory has been expanded, German scholars have used postcolonial theory in discourse on racism and migration in Germany. Postcolonial theory in Germany primarily focuses on the creation of the female migrant, the methods of resistance, racism and anti-Semitism, and current migration policies (Roberts 28). However, there are differences in the application of postcolonial theory on migration and racism in Germany than in other academic discourses.

German *Postkoloniale Theorie* views migrants as *subaltern* (Roberts 28), a term expanded on by Gayatri Spivak in her essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (1988). Spivak refers to people who cannot speak for themselves due to lack of resources or information as subaltern. Subaltern is not the same as marginalized, however. According to Spivak, the subaltern are poor, illiterate, and from rural areas. They do not have access to education or social mobility, and they do not view themselves as the

Other. Therefore, migrants, who can be marginalized and othered, are not subaltern, in accordance with Spivak's definition (Roberts 27). This essay is one of the foundational works of postcolonial theory, but the German approach to this theory views migrants and people of migration background as subaltern despite Spivak's assertion that subaltern does not equal marginalized.

Postcolonial theory can be used to investigate the dynamics and power relations between ethnic Germans and ethnic Koreans. Yonson Ahn built on Robert's research of German media depictions of Korean guestworkers and focused on the affect these depictions had on the lives of female Korean nurses. German media perpetuated the image of the gentleness of Korean nurses, calling them "sanfte Engel" (soft angels)⁵ (Roberts 85). This idea influenced the perception patients had of nurses and the nurses' perceptions of themselves. It led differences in the patients' view of German nurses versus Korean nurses. While the perception of Korean nurses being nice and "always only smiling"⁶ seems innocuous, this idea, coupled with the language barrier, was also used in media depictions that infantilized Korean women (Ahn 43). Kindness was viewed as innate in Korean nurses, and this concept of Korean femininity was further reproduced in stereotypes of other Asian women (Ahn 44). The exotification of Korean women in German media played a role in their interactions with ethnic Germans. As the idea of Korean women being other and special spread, locals became overly inquisitive in their lives, causing Korean nurses to experience a lack of privacy (Ahn 45). Because power dynamics in Germany were in the favor of ethnic Germans, they were able to use

⁵ Originally published in *Schwäbisches Tageblatt* (3/8/1991)

⁶ Originally published in *Bildzeitung* (2/14/1966)

the objectification and exoticization of Korean women as justification to encroach on their privacy. Ahn further uses postcolonial theory to analyze the power dynamics in Germany in the case of forced renaming.

As German media perpetuated the otherness of Korean people, Korean names were considered by ethnic Germans to be too difficult to pronounce. Asymmetrical power dynamics allowed for ethnic Germans to use this otherness to justify and enact the forced renaming of Korean guestworkers. According to feminist writer, Andrea Dworkin, forced renaming allows those in power, “to determine what can and cannot be expressed, to control perception itself,” (Ahn 49). Names are important in the production of personal identity and have ethnic ramifications. When forced renaming is practiced and legitimized by the dominant culture, it allows for parts of migrants’ home culture to be erased as names play an important role in people’s ethnic identities and have cultural significance (Ahn 49).

Postcolonial theory can also be used to analyze the creation of the concept of *Leitkultur*. The term *Leitkultur*, a guiding or core culture, was first introduced by German political scientist, Bassam Tibi, and was later used in 2000 by Friedrich Merz, a conservative politician and member of the Christian Democratic Union, to describe a core culture to which all migrants should be required to conform (Roberts 41). Tibi’s original definition was a “mutually accepted secular tolerance,” but Merz changed the meaning of *Leitkultur* to a “Western-Christian” guiding culture. The debates surrounding *Leitkultur* and what it means to be German were heated. While these debates died down because the different sides of the debate deemed the arguing unproductive, the concept of *Leitkultur* has continued in conservative ideologies (Roberts 42). This idea of

a true, guiding German culture that non-ethnic Germans must adhere to but are not also led to anti-foreigner sentiments.

It is important to apply postcolonial theory to research on the Korean diaspora in Germany as it offers a framework to analyze the asymmetrical power relations between ethnic Koreans and ethnic Germans. The German concept of *Leitkultur* and the domination of German culture can be examined by postcolonial theory as Germany and German culture takes on the role of “colonizer” when it perpetuates Eurocentrism. By applying postcolonial theory to my analysis, I will be able to investigate the depictions of Koreans, the power dynamics, and the concept of *Leitkultur* in German media.

Hybridity (Hybridität)

Hybridity is an important concept in postcolonial theory. According to Homi Bhabha, one of the founders of postcolonial studies, hybridity is the process of identity construction and negotiation that subverts colonialism and hegemony. It should not be misunderstood as simply combining or creolizing aspects of different cultures together (Roberts 28). According to Roberts, hybridity is “a process by which mixed cultures were produced through encounters within colonial discourse,” (31)

The term *hybridity (hybridität)* has become more popular in nonacademic German writing on migration and people of migration background. It is often used to refer to someone or something of more than one cultural background in nonacademic discourse; however, this is overly simplified to the point of being misleading. As nonacademic discourse idealizes the concept of hybridity by treating it as an enriching, nonthreatening concept, the true complexities of marginalized people’s experiences are diminished (Roberts 31).

The processes of hybridization have impacted the Korean diaspora in various ways. For example, unlike in the United States where hyphenated identities such as Korean-American are common, Koreans in Germany do not typically refer to themselves as *Deutschkoreaner* (German Koreans), a term that merges German and Korean into one but maintains an emphasis on Korean. Often Koreans in Germany refer to themselves as *Kyopo* (교포) (“Koreans living abroad”) which is a broad term that can be applied to Koreans living in any country outside of the peninsula. Many prefer to identify as Korean rather than German, including second generation Koreans who prefer to speak German over Korean if they can speak Korean (Roberts 8). In her research, Roberts found that everyday racism experienced in Germany plays a role in the development of German Koreans’ identities and the preference to identify as *Kyopo* which will be discussed more in Chapter 4. Hybridity also affects the food made and eaten by Koreans in Germany as Koreans navigate differences in cuisine, specifically by reducing their consumption of garlic and kimchi because ethnic Germans regard these foods as having a bad odor (Ahn 51). The navigation of food culture is illustrated in *Kein Reis Ohne Fleiß: Wie ich ein guter Deutscher wurde* (No Rice Without Diligence: How I Became a Good German) by Martin Hyun, the son of Korean guestworkers. On the cover of his book, he is eating spätzle, a German noodle dish, with chopsticks, a utensil used in Korea (Hyun).

As German Koreans negotiate between cultures, they construct their identities as they navigate relationships with Germany, Korea, and each other. For the remaining chapters, I will analyze ethnic Koreans and people of other East Asian ancestry as it relates to the experiences of ethnic Koreans. I will look at 1) racism and stereotypes

perpetuated by the media, including visual depictions, and 2) media discourse on cultural aspects of Koreans. I will use postcolonial theory in analyzing prejudice and the emphasis on integration/assimilation in the media. I will also use the concept of hybridity in Chapter 4 in respect to the ways in which ethnic Koreans navigate Korean and German cultures as discussed in German media.

Methodology

In this thesis, I will use media analysis to look at the ways German media depicts and discusses Korean people and culture. The media plays an important role in the perpetuation of stereotypes and impacts the lives of ethnic Koreans. Interviews of Koreans in newspapers also show glimpses into their lives and experiences.

Suin Roberts also used media analysis in her book, *Language of Migration: Self- and Other-representation of Koreans in Germany*. Through media analysis, Suin Roberts has used postcolonial theory to investigate the use of language in German media pertaining to ethnic Korean people. German media has affected the discourse on migration in Germany as it paints some migrants as desirable and others as undesirable. According to Roberts, “the farther away a migrant emigrated from, the more likely they are to be presented as undesirable,” (Roberts 14). However, I disagree with this statement. For one, Turkey is closer to Germany than Korea, but Turkish people are often considered undesirable foreigners. This is also true with Central American migrants in the United States while Europeans are seen as more desirable foreigners in the US. Physical distance is not a contributing factor to whether foreigners are undesirable or desirable, but rather perceived cultural distance affects these ideas.

Roberts utilized topoi outlined by Ruth Wodak that reoccurred in German media in migrant discourse (Roberts 22). Wodak outlined fifteen topoi that reoccurs in discourse surrounding discrimination and racism⁷ (Wodak 74). Roberts extended Wodak's list to include another fourteen topoi⁸ (Roberts 48). Nine topoi based on the frameworks by Wodak and Roberts will be in my analysis. I will use four of Wodak's topoi: 1) usefulness/advantage, 2) uselessness/disadvantage, 3) definition/name-interpretation, 4) danger and threat. I will also use five topoi based on Roberts' list: 5) objectification and exotification, 6) integration/assimilation and failed multiculturalism, 7) *Leitkultur*, 8) hybridization, and 9) model minority. I chose to combine objectification and exotification together as they often go hand in hand. Similarly, I combined integration and failed multiculturalism together as the emphasis on integration or assimilation comes from the idea that multiculturalism failed. I chose not include Roberts' topo of racism/discrimination because racism is an overarching issue that is part of the topoi I do use.

These topoi can be applied to ethnic Korean people living in Germany as these topoi or "cultural stereotypes" are collectively used by people in discourse on migration and anti-Asian racism. The topoi "enable people to interpret social events, especially as they are presented in the media," (Roberts 23). The use of these topoi illustrates the sentiments towards Korean migration, such as the "usefulness" of Korean

⁷ Wodak's 15 topoi: 1) usefulness/advantage, 2) uselessness/disadvantage, 3) definition/name-interpretation, 4) danger and threat, 5) humanitarianism, 6) justice, 7) responsibility, 8) burdening, 9) finances, 10) reality, 11) numbers, 12) law and right, 13) history, 14) culture, and 15) abuse (Wodak 74).

⁸ Roberts's additional topoi: 16) objectification, 17) second-rate human being, 18) infantilization, 19) integration/assimilation, 20) failed multiculturalism, 21) *Leitkultur*, 22) lack of integration/assimilation, 23) exotification, 24) hybridization, 25) discrimination/racism, 26) resistance to discrimination/racism, 27) model minority, 28) insights into the other, and 29) foreigner (Roberts 48).

guestworkers, the “disadvantage” of guestworkers after the oil crisis when unemployment increased, and the use of “name-interpretation” as the term *guestworker* connotes an expectation of temporary stay (Roberts 22; Wodak 75).

I will be analyzing four newspapers and magazines based in Germany, but I will be primarily looking at articles and images from *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Der Spiegel*. *Der Spiegel* is a major weekly news magazine in Germany. I chose to look at *Der Spiegel* due to its popularity and the large archive of issues they maintain going back to 1947. *Der Spiegel* often has a readership of over 14 million, both online and in print, and is one the most widely read news magazines in Europe (“FAQs”). The magazine is known for aggressive exposes on corruption and a “hard-hitting news approach,” (Britannica, “Der Spiegel”). The articles I will be analyzing range from 1978 to 2007. In my research, I looked through the cover stories of *Der Spiegel* editions from 1963 to 2022. Of the over 3,000 covers I looked at, about forty were related to East Asia. Most of those articles were about Mao or China specifically. The six covers I include in my analysis are not specifically about Korea, but they include stereotypes or racialized language, such as the word *gelbe* (yellow), that extend to Koreans.

I will also be looking at *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), a daily newspaper from Frankfurt, home to the largest population of ethnic Koreans in Germany. FAZ is considered one of the most prestigious and responsible newspapers in Germany, with a daily circulation of 400,000 (Britannica, “FAZ”). An initial keyword search of “Korea” in their database going back to 1949 shows over 28,000 results. Due to the size of the results, I focused on articles relating specifically to the Korean diaspora in Germany,

finding about 20, and including 11 in my final analysis. These articles range from 1967 to 2021.

Other news agencies that I will be including in chapters three and four are *Zeit Online* and *Redaktionsnetzwerk Deutschland (RND)* as well as *Neue Presse* and *Der Abend* articles originally cited in Roberts's research.

Chapter 3 – Racism and Stereotypes in the Media

This chapter will look at racism towards and stereotypes of ethnic Koreans perpetuated by the German media. I will look at the media's general attitudes towards migrants and guestworkers, the homogenization of Asian ethnicities, the sexualization of Asian women, and the Model Minority Myth. I will also analyze several covers from the news magazine, *Der Spiegel*. In my analysis, I will look at depictions of other Asian ethnicities in German media. I will discuss how due to the homogenization of Asians in Germany, racism towards other ethnicities affects Koreans as well. However, in including depictions of other East Asian ethnicities, I may risk further homogenizing them in my own analysis. To avoid this trap and hold myself accountable, I will make sure that my analyses and justifications are complete as well as including information about Korean culture itself.

I focus on the depictions of Korean and East Asian people in German news rather than other forms of media such as movies and TV shows because there is very little representation of East Asians in this medium. German Korean actors and singers often move to South Korea instead.

Racism and Prejudice towards Asian and Korean people

Attitudes towards Migrants and Guestworkers

Overall, the attitudes towards migrants and people of migration background in German media has been negative. As mentioned in Chapter 1, guestworkers were often objectified by the German government, businesses, and the media. For example, they were referred to as *Stück* (unit) in applications businesses filled out to request guestworkers be assigned to their businesses. *Stück* is normally only used in reference

to objects, not to humans. In the media, the adjective, *billig* (cheap), which is also normally only applied to objects, was used in reference to guestworkers (Roberts 52). Another common aspect of migration discourse in German newspapers and magazines was metaphors with water or natural disaster. Oftentimes, German media would use the words, “*Zustrom*” (flood or influx, usually applied to people) or “wave” to describe the influx of migrants and guestworkers into Germany. This “connects the idea of guestworkers with the very real human fear” of drowning (Roberts 54). This idea of a flood of people connects with Wodak’s topo of danger and threat.

Starting the 1990s, German media began focusing on Germany becoming a multicultural society (Roberts 57). However, by the early 2000’s, the German media regarded multiculturalism as a failure, and the concept of *Leitkultur* dominated German media (Roberts 58). As discussed in Chapter 2, I am applying postcolonial theory to my analysis by treating a “colonizer” as a cultural one rather than a political, economic, or geographic colonizer. German *Leitkultur* is an example of this. The concept of *Leitkultur* was thoroughly discussed in political discourse between politicians and parties, and these debates spread to German news agencies as integration was emphasized. In the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Archiv*, there are almost two thousand articles mentioning *Leitkultur*. For example, a 1991 FAZ article discussed *Leitkultur* and long-term plans for immigration related issues.

“Wenn am Ende des imperialistischen Zeitalters China unbestritten den Chinesen, Afrika den Afrikanern und hoffentlich bald auch Tibet den Tibetanern und Kurdistan den Kurden gehören wird, kann den Europäern ihre Identitätsbehauptung nicht verwehrt werden. Kant hat mit großer Weitsicht die

"Hospitalität" des republikanischen Weltbürgertums als "Besuchsrecht", nicht als "Gast-" oder gar Eindringrecht verstanden" (If at the end of the imperial era, China will undoubtedly belong to the Chinese, Africa to the Africans and hopefully soon, Tibet to the Tibetans, and Kurdistan to the Kurdish, Europeans cannot be denied their identity assertion. Kant understood with great foresight the "hospitality" of republican cosmopolitanism as "visitation rights," not as "guest" or even a right of intrusion.)

This distinction between "visitation rights" and guest or "intrusion" rights connects back to Wodak's topo of name-interpretation and Robert's analysis of this topo. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the topo of name interpretation is exemplified in the term *guestworker* as the prefix, "guest-," creates an expectation of temporary stay (Roberts 22; Wodak 75). This article is similar in that regard as it argues that migrants have "visitation rights" and considers long term stay to be an intrusion.

Another example of the emphasis on adhering to the dominant culture is the focus on integration in the media rather than on multiculturalism in recent years. In a 2016 op-ed in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Dr. Richard Schröder said, *"Auch fernöstliche Immigranten aus China, Vietnam, Korea lassen keine Integrationsprobleme erkennen"* (Far Eastern Immigrants from China, Vietnam, Korea also do not indicate integration problems). Schröder focused on the preception that Koreans were able to successfully and easily integrate. This article and the idea of multiculturalism in Germany will be discussed further in the Model Minority section of this chapter.

Homogenization and Othering of Asian people

A common experience of Korean diasporas outside of Asia is the homogenization with other Asian ethnicities. *Orientalism* (1978) by Edward Said, a foundational work of postcolonial theory, discussed the homogenization of Asia. As discussed in Chapter 2, the artificial homogenization others the “East” from the “West” and reinforces preconceived notions of Asian cultures and peoples. This homogenization is also seen in the media. For example, a 1966 *Neue Presse* article when referring to Korean traditional clothing (*hanboks*) used the term *kimono* which is Japanese traditional clothing (Roberts 64)¹⁰. This confusion between Korea and Japan was not just in the media but had real world implications on the lives of ethnic Korean people. For example, during World War I, Germany and Japan were on either sides of the Great War and fought over territory in China. While most Japanese nationals were able to evacuate from Germany prior Japan’s declaration of war, the German government incarcerated those who remained, including Koreans (Hoffmann 20)¹¹.

¹⁰ Originally in *Neue Presse* (3/8/1966)

¹¹ Fears of Koreans acting as Japanese spies affected other Korean diasporas as well. During World War II, the Soviet Union forcibly relocated almost 200,000 ethnic Koreans from the Russian Far East to Central Asia because of fears perpetuated by the media that they were acting as spies for Japan (Yoon 2012, 420).



Figure 1 - *Der Spiegel* October 5, 1978 (*The Yellow Peril: Moscow feels surrounded*)

“Yellow peril” (*die gelbe Gefahr*) has been used for centuries as a means of demonizing and alienating East Asian people through race. The phrase homogenizes East Asian people into a singular danger or threat regardless of differences of nationality, ethnicity, language, or culture. Figure 1 shows a Chinese and a Japanese soldier painted yellow with the Red Square in Moscow below bathed in red. The article is discussing the 1978 Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and the People's Republic of China that the Soviet Union strongly opposed. Figure 1 reuses the phrase “die gelbe Gefahr” (yellow peril) which has a sordid history in Western countries including Germany. The German Emperor Wilhelm II (1888-1918) used the term “yellow peril” to justify German foreign policy in East Asia and “as a tool of alarmist diplomacy” (Barth 264). *Der Spiegel* furthers this idea of “yellow peril” into the 20th century with the use of *gelbe* in the context of Russian interests being threatened by Japanese-Chinese relations. While neither Korean state or Korean people are depicted in this article, the use of *gelbe* and *gelbe Gefahr* racializes a political issue and the perception of a danger or threat to include them. The color scheme of the cover reinforces this.

In recent years, German media has become more aware of issues related to homogenization and othering and of the Korean diaspora in Germany as businesses, either from South Korea or owned by ethnic Koreans in Germany, have established themselves as well as Korean organizations and restaurants. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, in particular, has published several articles in recent years that inform readers about the history of Koreans in Germany and their unique experiences. For example, in a 2003 article in *FAZ* about the Korean population in Frankfurt, the journalist, Matthias Trautsch, interviewed several ethnic Koreans living in the city and mentions the problems this homogenization can cause.

“Doch auch in Deutschland ist es als Koreaner nicht immer leicht: “Die Leute denken meist, wir kämen aus China oder Japan,” berichtet die junge Frau. Besonders die Verwechslung mit Japanern schmerze ihre Landsleute, die die 35 Jahre dauernde Besatzung und die Verbrechen der Japaner im Zweiten Weltkrieg nicht vergessen haben. Die meisten Deutschen wüßten davon wenig: “Vielen ist ja noch nicht einmal klar, daß es da noch ein Land in Asien gibt,”

(However, in Germany as well, it is also not always easy to be Korean: “people usually think we come from China or Japan,” recounts the young woman. The confusion with Japanese people is especially painful for her compatriots, who have not forgotten the 35-year occupation and the crimes of the Japanese during World War II. Most Germans do not know even understand, she added. “Many do not yet understand that there is another country in Asia”).

However, this increased awareness does not mean homogenization or confusion around Asian cultures have stopped. Articles in *FAZ* still use stereotypes of not only

Koreans but also Asians generally to describe Koreans, including being “*aufopferungsvollen*” (self-sacrificing) and “*produktiv*” (productive) (Gnam; Bräsel). These stereotypes will be discussed further in my analysis of *Der Spiegel* covers. My analysis will also discuss the continued homogenization of East Asians through the racialization of political issues, often by using the term *gelbe* (yellow) like in Figure 1. Part of the homogenization of people of different Asian ethnicities includes the sexualization of Asian women.

Exotification and Objectification of Asian women

As discussed earlier, Korean guestworkers were often objectified by their employers and the German government. However, the media also played a role in this. Korean women in particular were hypersexualized and often objectified as part of this sexualization. In 1970, the newspaper *Der Abend* furthered this in a piece as to why German men desired Korean women as wives by saying “*sie gehen weg wie warme Semmeln*” (they sell like hotcakes)¹³. This statement commodifies women and makes them out to be objects of desire that are in high demand. According to Ahn, “such phrases highlight the host society’s racialized cultural translation of the social values of ideal womanhood and social expectations regarding women’s roles as wives,” (Ahn 46).

Korean women were sexualized, exotified, and hyperfeminized in newspapers in several ways. Korean nurses were often called “*sanfte Engel*” (soft angels). Additionally, German newspapers, especially at the beginning of the guestworker programs, often focused on the appearance of the Korean nurses. Reports focused on their

¹³ *Der Abend* 7/16/1970. Originally cited in Roberts, p. 76. Cited again in Ahn, p. 46

“Mandelaugen” (almond eyes), *“schwarzen Locken”* (black hair), and *“zarte Hand”* (soft hands) (Ahn 44). Additionally, they were often described as “exotic”. For example, a 1967 article in *FAZ* about a Korean celebration, while did correctly refer to Korean traditional clothing as *“Hanbogs”* (hanboks) (한복), repeatedly described aspects of the celebration as exotic.

“Die exotischen Gewänder konnte man nun aus der Nähe betrachten... Im Verlauf des Programms ging es jedoch zunehmend exotischer zu,” (One could observe the exotic garments up close now... However, in the course of the program, things became increasingly exotic).

The reporter also incorrectly referred to taekwondo (태권도), a Korean martial art, as *“eine Abart des japanischen Karate,”* (a variation of Japanese karate). This goes back to my earlier discussion on the homogenization of East Asia, as taekwondo is a very different fighting style from karate.

These stereotypes did not just stay on the pages of German newspapers but affected Korean women in their everyday lives. For example, one of the former nurses interviewed by Ahn recalled a time when her supervisor complained that she was impolite as she did not act in the manner the supervisor assumed Asian people carried themselves. The supervisor had a preconceived notion that Koreans, and Asians more broadly, were inherently polite (Ahn 46). In addition, the exotification of Korean women led to them experience a lack of privacy as Germans reacted with extreme “levels of inquisitiveness” (Ahn 45). Furthermore, Korean and other Asian women experience sexual violence in Germany due to ideas of Asian femininity and Asian women being

obedient, submissive, or hypersexual beings. In 2021, most human trafficking victims in Germany came from Thailand, or Romania (specifically Roma people). Over 20% of sex trafficking victims came from Thailand, but victims also were often taken from China and Vietnam (US State Dept.). This is in part due to their sexualization in the media. I will continue discussing this phenomenon and the homogenization of Asia in the next section as I analyze covers of the weekly magazine, *Der Spiegel*.

Asian as a Danger/Threat

The following section will analyze covers of the weekly magazine, *Der Spiegel*, that reference Korean and East Asian people. The covers I will discuss range from 1980 to 2007. As stated before, Asia is often homogenized in Germany and Western cultures into a singular race and culture. Because of this, several of the covers that I will be analyzing refer to Asians generally or refer to Chinese and Japanese people.



Figure 2 - *Der Spiegel* August 26, 2007 (The Yellow Spies: How China spied on German technology)

Figure 2 is the cover a 2007 article about Chinese hackers accessing German computers. The cover shows a woman looking sideways through blinds. Both Figures 2 and Figure 1 use the word “gelbe” (yellow) to describe East Asian people and are

examples of Wodak's topo of danger and threat. Similar to the United States, *gelbe* (yellow) is considered an offensive description of Asian people. In fact, the application of the word was initially started in 1735 by Carl Linnaeus, a Swedish physician and botanist, who divided humans into four groups, each with their own color: European (white), African (black), Native American (red), and Asian (yellow) (Chow). While neither article is focused on either Korean state or Korean people, the use of the term "gelbe" racializes fear of spies and the rise of East Asian international power and extends this fear to other Asian nationalities. The highlighting of the woman's eyes in Figure 2 reinforces this because as discussed before, eye shape has become a racialized and exoticized trait of Asian people with media reports often describing Korean women as having "almond eyes". In fact, a racial slur towards Chinese people translates to "slitted eyes." This cover associates eye shape and skin color with a threat and makes it a racial issue rather than a political one.

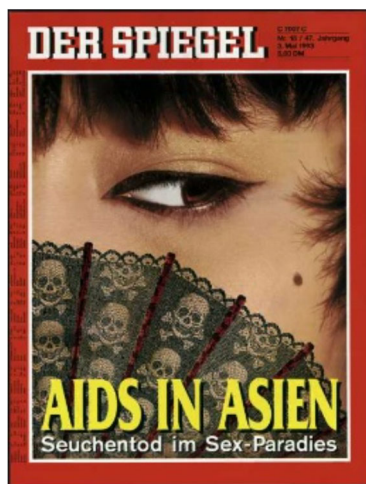


Figure 3 - *Der Spiegel* May 2, 1993 (*AIDS in Asia: Epidemic Deaths in the Sex Paradise*)

Figure 3 shows the cover of a 1993 article of *Der Spiegel* about AIDS. The title of this article alone furthers the hyper-sexualization of Asian women by referring to Asia as

a “sex paradise.” On the cover of this edition is a woman whose face is blocked by a hand fan. The only part of her face that we can see is one eye looking to the side that is coded for viewers to associate with Asian people, and her make-up enhances the shape of her eye.

The women in Figures 2 and 3 have their faces almost entirely obscured other than their eye(s). By choosing to cover their faces, *Der Spiegel* creates a feeling of mystery. The viewer does not know who these women are, thus perpetuating the fear of the unknown. This is particularly true with Figure 2. Because the blinds are blocking most of the woman's face, we do not know who she is. The blinds reinforce the idea that she is an outsider encroaching into a space she should not have access to, having to move an obstacle to look in.

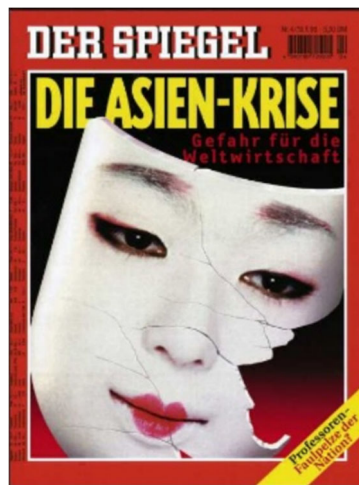


Figure 4 - *Der Spiegel* January 18, 1998 (The Asian Crisis: Peril for the World Economy)

Figure 4 is an article about the 1997 economic crisis in East and Southeast Asia. The image on the cover is of a cracked, painted porcelain mask. Masks cover one's identity, with this mask obscuring the entire face, like how the fan and blinds obscured the faces of women in Figures 2 and 3. Masks can be used to create a façade.

However, this mask is fracturing, showing that there is nothing behind it. The mask is also made to look like porcelain, a fragile substance often used in dolls. Porcelain dolls are often delicate and can easily break or fracture like this mask. The pottery is also associated with Asia, specifically China, as it was originally made in China. Porcelain dishware is also often called china (UNESCO). The mask is also painted with makeup reminiscent of what geishas wear. Geishas are Japanese female entertainers that are often incorrectly associated with prostitution by Westerners. Geishas became associated with prostitution after U.S. soldiers in Japan mistook sex workers for geishas.

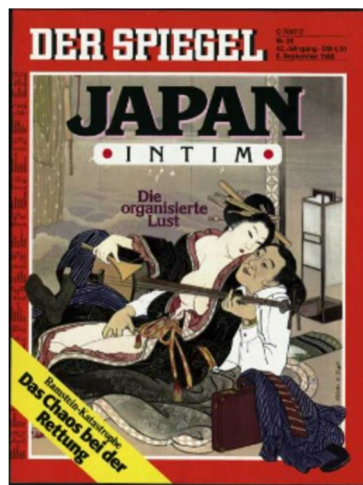


Figure 5 - Der Spiegel September 4, 1988 (Intimate Japan: The Organized Lust)

The belief that geishas are sex workers spread, and *Der Spiegel* has furthered this misconception. Figure 5 is an article about sex work in Japan. It was written ten years before the article in Figure 4. The article itself starts by talking about Japanese work ethics: *“Sie wohnen in Häuschen mit Wänden aus Papier, sind beängstigend fleißig und machen kaum Ferien. Sie arbeiten 46 Stunden in der Woche.”* (They live in houses with walls made of paper, are alarmingly hardworking, and hardly take vacation time. They work 46 hours a week.) This reinforces the perceptions Germans have of

Japanese work ethic; a stereotype that as mentioned before, is also applied to Korean people.

The article goes on to describe *“die organisierte Lust”* (the organized lust) in Japan in the form of bars, “love hotels,” and karaoke. It begins by discussing various bars and karaoke bars, but soon focuses on the sex industry in Japan, and the *“schummrigen Lokale”* (dark pubs) where men can pay for sex. However, the article does incorrectly associated geishas with these dark pubs: *“In einem Land, dessen Geishas einst die Phantasie der ganzen Welt beflügelt haben, sind die >>schummrigen Lokale<<, ist die ganze Bar-Industrie ein schockierender Niedergang.”* (In a country whose geishas once inspired the fantasies of the whole world, the dark pubs, really the entire bar industry, are in a shocking decline).

While geishas are only Japanese, the misconception of geishas as prostitutes is another example of the sexualization of Japanese women but also more generally Asian women. As discussed earlier, the racialization and homogenization of Asian people means that this misconception and the sexualization of Japanese women is extended to other Asian ethnicities. In fact, a 2020 article in *RedaktionsNetzwerk Deutschland (RND)* describes geishas as *“im Westen Sinnbild für asiatische Weiblichkeit”* (a symbol for Asian femininity in the West) thus connecting geishas to stereotypes of women of other Asian ethnicities (“Corona-Krise in Japan...”).

A 2016 *Zeit Online* article by Florian Prokop discussed the sexualization of Asian women and the emasculation of Asian men in Germany. The article gave several reasons for the origin of generalized prejudices and stereotypes of Asian people, including the depictions of geishas in Western literature. The article specifically

references the 1887 French novel, “Madame Chrysanthemum” by Pierre Loti, which the opera, “Madame Butterfly” by Giacomo Puccini was based on. The novel follows a naval officer who married a geisha while in Japan. The character wanted a wife that fit within his preconceived notions of Asian femininity.

“Seine Ehefrau wünschte er sich mit ‘crème-farbener Haut, schwarzen Haaren und Katzenaugen.’ Außerdem sollte sie ‘hübsch und nicht viel größer als eine Puppe sein.’ In einer Szene des Buches katzbuckeln gleich drei japanische Frauen zu seinen Füßen und bedienen ihn. Unterwürfig, klein und hübsch” (He wanted his wife to have “crème colored skin, black hair, and cat eyes.”

Additionally, she should be “pretty and not much bigger than a doll.” In one scene of the book, three Japanese women bow at his feet and serve him. Submissive, small, and pretty.)

The *Zeit Online* article not only argues that the fetishization of Japanese women in Loti’s book contributed to stereotypes of Asian women more generally, but Prokop also argues that stories of sex workers in Asia by Western soldiers contributed to the sexualization of Asian women.

“Auf welche Art lernten zahlreiche, männliche US-Amerikaner Asiatinnen in der Realität kennen? Als devote, gehorsame Sexsklavinnen. Im Vietnamkrieg mussten eine halbe Million vietnamesische Prostituierte den amerikanischen Soldaten diesen Traum erfüllen” (How did numerous male US-Americans get to know Asian women in reality? As devoted, obedient sex slaves. In the Vietnam War half a million Vietnamese prostitutes had to fulfill this dream of American soldiers).

Vietnam and Japan were not the only countries where foreign soldiers partook in paying for sex. US soldiers also paid for sex in South Korea. In fact, the increasingly common eye lid surgery was created by an American military doctor, Dr. Ralph Millard, who experimented on Korean sex workers to make them more “attractive” to foreign soldiers. While the increasingly popular double-eyelid surgery in Korea is often not associated with racism anymore, its origins show its close relation with racism. In 1964 Millard wrote that “the absence of the palpebral fold produces a passive expression which seems to epitomize the stoical and unemotional manner of the orient,” (Lee).

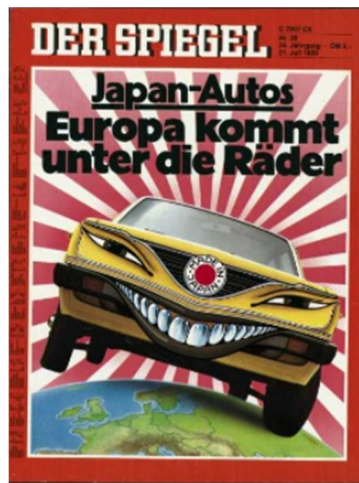


Figure 6 - Der Spiegel July 20, 1980 (Japanese Cars: Europe comes under the wheels)

Figure 6 is the cover of a 1980 article about the increasing success of Japanese cars. However, the caricature plays on racist stereotypes of not only Japanese people, but also other Asians. As discussed earlier, *gelbe* is associated with Asian people due to the term *die gelbe Gefahr* (yellow peril) and Western racial ideologies from the 19th century. The idea of “yellow peril” is reinforced with the use of the “Rising Sun” flag, a symbol of the Japanese Empire, in the background. In this image, the association is furthered by the personification of the yellow car. The car is given human features such as eyes and teeth. However, the eye shape is exaggerated to play on stereotypes of

Asian people. Furthermore, the artist included buck teeth which were a common attribute in caricatures of Chinese people in the United States media in the 19th and early 20th centuries (Barajas).

Even though these articles are focused on Asia more generally, the depictions of Asian women and the personification of the car in these images feed off German ideas of race of Asian ethnicities including Korean people and reinforces the media depictions of Korean women from the 1960s and 1970s.

Model Minority (*Vorzeige-Minderheit*) Myth

Development of the Model Minority Myth

The model minority myth is the idea that a specific minority achieves a higher level of success, either socially, academically, or economically, than other minorities. In the United States, Asian Americans are also referred to as the model minority (“The Model Minority Myth”). However, this myth is problematic in a number of ways that will be discussed shortly. In Germany, the media has distinguished migrants between “*erwünschten*” (desired) and “*unerwünschten*” (undesired) foreigners. According to Roberts, “the purpose of creating the image of a ‘desired’ foreigner is to show a willingness to accept foreigners, but with the stipulation that said foreigners fulfill certain positive requirements advantageous to the host society,” (Roberts 47).

The idea of a “model minority” in Germany has been perpetuated since the 1990s, but a major catalyst of this myth was the 1997 article “*Die Gelbe Elite*” (The Yellow Elite) which discussed the model minority in the United States, Asian Americans (Roberts 59). The term *model minority* was first used in the United States as a way to

“describe Asian Americans as an ethnic group that overcame the image of the ‘yellow peril’ and successfully climbed the social ladder,” (Kim and Taylor 1). However, in the framework of postcolonial theory, the myth serves as a mechanism that “integrates, differentiates, and manages,” racial and ethnic dynamics (Kim and Taylor 1). Academic discourse on the model minority myth builds off of *Orientalism* (1978) by Said (Kim and Taylor 7). The concept of Orientalism is built from Western assumptions of the East being separate and different from the West, and this assumption also influences the model minority myth. As will be discussed in this section, there are two assumptions of the model minority myth in respect to Koreans in Germany: 1) that Koreans were able to integrate easily and fully into German society and 2) that any problems experienced by other migrant groups, namely Muslim and Turkish people, are at their own fault, not Germany’s. The idea of East vs. West contributes to this because Koreans are the model minority because they are seen as having crossed the divide while the dichotomy of East and West further separates Muslim and Turkish people from German society and lets white Germans demonize or put them down for their perceived failures at assimilation and integration into German culture or *Leitkultur*.

The model minority myth in Germany is not restricted to people of Asian descent. People with a migration background with a higher education are called “*Vorzeigemigrant*” or “*Mustermigrant*” (model migrant) (Roberts 59). It would be incorrect to say that this myth is applied to every person of a particular ethnicity. For example, highly educated Turkish people are still considered model migrants (whether or not they are even migrants), as evident in the headline of a 2009 article, “*Exodus von Mustermigranten: Abschied aus Almany*a” (Exodus of Model Migrants: Farewell from

Almanya¹⁵). This headline is referring to the trend of “model migrants” emigrating from Germany (Roberts 59).

However, the idea of a model migrant is not restricted to one’s personal education experience, it has been extended to encapsulate different ethnicities based on preconceived notions of their education levels and stereotypes of work ethic. This extension of this myth has been felt by second-generation Koreans in Germany, and during certain periods of the guestworker programs, applied to Korean nurses and nurse-aids.

In Roberts’s analysis of common topoi in German media discourse on Korean guestworkers, she found that in the 1960s, the media depicted Korean nurses in a “positive” way. They were described as “hard-working, helpful, and ever friendly,” (Roberts 66). The media during this time also reported that Korean women were quick to assimilate, linguistically and culturally. They were considered “good” guestworkers because they learned the German language and integrated into German culture and were useful (Roberts 71). German media focused much less on Korean men who immigrated to Germany as miners. The reports that did cover Korean men objectified them, but also considered them to be undesirable (Roberts 91). The idea of Koreans being “good” guestworkers was only applied to nurses, not miners.

Effect on Korean and Other Migrant Communities

The Model Minority myth negatively affects Koreans and other communities with migration background in a number of ways. Firstly, the idea that Koreans were able to

¹⁵ Almanya is the Turkish word for Germany (Roberts 59).

integrate into German society easily and fully erases their history and experiences. As discussed in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3, Korean guestworkers faced objectification by the government and media as well as sexism and racism. Even though early media reports fluctuated between positive and negative depictions, the depictions relied on and reinforced stereotypes of Korean and Asian people.

The myth also demonizes or undermines other migrant groups, specifically Muslim and Middle Eastern people, by treating any integration problems or culture shocks as a “failure” on their part, not on the part of white, ethnic Germans. When then-Chancellor Angela Merkel (2005-2021) said that multiculturalism, the idea of people of different cultures living together, has “failed, utterly” in 2010, she blamed immigrants for this failure and said that integration should be the focus going forward (Connolly). To be clear, Germany never enacted any multicultural policy other than civil rights protections. There have been some government programs that work towards integration, such as language instruction, but there have not been official programs supporting multiculturalism (Roberts 44). Merkel’s speech takes the blame away from white Germans for any tensions with communities of color or of migration background. She made it clear: it’s their fault that there is not cultural harmony in Germany. This stance has been reiterated in the media as well.

Dr. Richard Schröder, a member of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), wrote a op-ed in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in 2016, titled “*Was wir Migranten schulden – und was nicht*” (What we owe migrants and what we do not). His article mostly discusses government policies towards refugees, specifically from Syria, as well as

integration. However, he does perpetuate the idea that Korean migrants integrated quietly and without difficulty.

“Auch fernöstliche Immigranten aus China, Vietnam, Korea lassen keine Integrationsprobleme erkennen. Überall in Europa aber gibt es erhebliche Integrationsprobleme mit Migranten aus islamischen Ländern. Die Hauptprobleme sind die mitgebrachten Ansichten über Frauen, Juden, Homosexuelle, Abfall vom Islam und das Verhältnis zwischen Staat und Religion.” (Far Eastern Immigrants from China, Vietnam, Korea also do not indicate integration problems. But everywhere in Europe there are significant integration problems with migrants from Islamic countries. The main problems are the views brought with them about women, Jewish people, gay people, and renouncing Islam and the relationship between the state and religion).

Schröder’s statement is damaging in two ways. Firstly, it erases the history and the difficulties that Korean and other East Asian migrants faced in integrating to German society. Ethnic Koreans in Germany have and continue to face racism and prejudice in the media and in their everyday lives. Secondly, it puts the blame of “integration problems” onto Muslim people, not on Germans and prejudice towards Muslims, prejudice repeated by Schröder in his op-ed. In three sentences, Schröder uses East Asians to put down Muslims, takes the blame off Germany for any problems related to migration, erases the history and experiences of East Asians in Germany, and puts Germany on a moral pedestal.

A less extreme example from *FAZ* that still perpetuates the idea that integration problems are at the fault of migrants is in a 2018 op-ed by Dr. Sylvia Bräsel, a scholar

who has studied Korea since the 1990s. The majority of her article talks about how hard Korean migrants had to work to integrate in Germany and credits their higher education backgrounds¹⁶ with their ability to integrate. She also argues, *“dann ist Migration ein unschätzbarer Gewinn für alle Seiten”* (then migration is an invaluable gain for all sides). She asserts that Germany should offer more support towards migrants and people with migration backgrounds.

“Wir sollten die Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund aus den verschiedensten Ländern, Kulturen und Religionen stärken, die in Deutschland ‘angekommen sind...’ (We should strengthen people with migration backgrounds from various countries, cultures, and religions who “have arrived” in Germany...).

However, Dr. Bräsel also puts the blame of integration problems on migrants themselves, specifically Turkish people, by blaming their attitude towards Germany.

“Vielleicht ist es eben doch eine Frage der Einstellung zum Gastland, zur Sprache und zur Kultur,” (Maybe it is just a question of the attitude towards guest country, language, and culture).

While her statement is not Islamophobic in the way that Schröder’s statement is, Dr. Bräsel also blames Turkish migrants by asserting that their attitude is the problem. Even though she discusses the difficulties Korean guestworkers faced in adapting to German culture and does not erase this fact the way that Schröder did, she still uses the example of ethnic Koreans to shift blame to Turkish people in Germany.

¹⁶ This higher education background is a contributing factor to the idea that Koreans are “model migrants.”

According to Kim and Taylor, the model minority myth supports the colonial power “by accepting criticism and even promoting more criticism as evidence of its flexibility and acknowledgement of differences,” and keeping this criticism within media or academic discourse (7). Because Dr. Bräsel did discuss the issues Koreans in Germany face and even proposed more education programs and support to people of migration background, she offered criticism towards the Model Minority Myth. However, she still perpetuated it by situating the experiences of Koreans against Turkish people. Therefore, her article fits within the framework that Kim and Taylor outlined on how the Model Minority Myth reinforces the interests of the *Empire* as it offers criticism while also reinforcing the myth and does so within the safety of media discourse.

These examples show that how the example of Korean people is used to blame other migrants (in these cases Turkish and Muslim migrants) for not integrating the way that Germans want them to. By treating Koreans as the model minority that other groups must emulate, German media creates a sense of division between Koreans and other ethnicities.

While German media has focused on the racial and ethnic differences between Koreans, and Asians more generally, and Germans, the media has also focused on the cultural differences between them. However, as will be discussed in the next chapter, these issues are not separate as xenophobia and racism have played a role in German reactions to Korean cultural products, namely food. They also influenced Koreans reactions to Korean culture and their own sense of belonging and identity.

Chapter 4 – Korean Culture in the Media

Kyopo vs. Deutschkoreaner

For ethnic Koreans living in Germany, especially those that grew up there, there is a question on identity. Most second-generation Koreans in Germany identify as *kyopo*. As mentioned in before, *kyopo* (교포) means “Koreans living abroad” in Korean.

There is no mention of German in this identifying word, and *kyopo* is used by Korean diasporas all over the world. *Deutschkoreaner* (German-Korean) is used occasionally, but it emphasizes Korean rather than German (Roberts 8,9). The issue of identity negotiation and hybridity among ethnic Koreans is discussed in German media.

A 2003 *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* article mentioned in Chapter 3 discusses feelings of belonging by Koreans.

“Aber eines ist klar: ‘Ich bleibe in Deutschland. Hier bin ich aufgewachsen, hier habe ich meine Freunde.’ Ihre Zukunftsträume spielen, wie bei vielen Kindern der ersten Einwanderergeneration, in Deutschland. Aber auch denjenigen, die Korea als ihre einzige Heimat ansehen, geht es ähnlich, berichtet die junge Frau. ‘Allerdings in politischer Hinsicht,’ fügt sie hinzu. Das vielschichtige Deutschland-Bild der Koreaner habe seit 1989 eine neue, positiv Facette gewonnen. “Schon vor dem Mauerfall haben wir uns mit den Deutschen verbunden gefühlt, weil beide Länder geteilt waren.” Nun sei das wiedervereinigte Deutschland eine Art Vorbild für das in Nord und Süd getrennte Korea: “Die Deutschen haben es geschafft - friedlich. Das wünschen wir uns auch.”

(But one thing is clear: “I will stay in Germany. I grew up here. I have my friends here.” Her dreams of the future play out in Germany, like for many children of first-generation immigrants. But the young woman reports that the situation is similar for those who view Korea as their only homeland. “Though in a political way,” she adds. Since 1989, the Koreans’ complex image of Germany has gained a new, positive facet, she added. “Even before the wall fell, we felt connected with Germans because both countries were divided.” Now the reunified Germany is a role model for Korea which is still divided into North and South, she said: “The Germans did it – peacefully. We wish for that for us too.”)

The second-generation Korean woman interviewed in this excerpt considers Germany to be her home and where her future is. She feels connected to Germany, not only because it's where she grew up, but also because of the similar histories of division between her home and her homeland.

Koreans interviewed in German newspapers generally say the same thing. A 2013 article also in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* interviews a woman born in Germany but who had recently started the naturalization process to become a German citizen. The naturalization process in Germany requires the person to renounce their birth citizenship, in this case, South Korean nationality. “*Deutschland ist meine Heimat, ich hatte nur noch auf einen richtigen Anlass gewartet.*” (“Germany is my home. I was only waiting for the right occasion.”)

A 2018 *FAZ* article interviewed first generation Koreans who migrated to Germany as guestworkers. One of the women interviewed is a naturalized German citizen.

She said, *“In mir ist ein Teil Deutsch und ein Teil koreanisch – und so fühle ich mich wohl,”* (“In me is a German part and a Korean part- and that is how I feel good”).

Ethnic Koreans are able to maintain connections with their ethnic homeland through cultural centers. Sejong Institutes, named after King Sejong the Great who created the current Korean writing system and operated by the South Korean government, offer classes teaching the Korean language to people all over the world. The Institute has 55 locations in Europe with two in Germany and conducts online classes (“세계 곳곳 세종학당”). Much of their language instruction is free, allowing for ethnic Koreans in Germany to either learn Korean or improve their skills.

Another way ethnic Koreans maintain their connection with the Korean language in Germany is through various Korean-language magazines and news sites including kyopo.com and Kyopo Shinmun (교포신문) (Kyopo newspaper). Kyopo Shinmun was founded in 1995, making it the first Korean language newspaper based in Europe. The newspaper focuses on news related to ethnic Koreans in Germany and now also includes a section written in German to make itself more accessible to younger Koreans. One aspect of Kyopo Shinmun is the 독일생활 총서 (German daily life collection) which seeks to help readers navigate everyday life in Germany (“교포신문”).

This navigation between the culture that they live in or are raised in and the culture of their family or ancestors is seen in not only in how they identify themselves and their own introspection, but also in their external interactions with these cultures. One example as to how Koreans in Germany have to navigate between and across different cultures is with food.

Food

Over the course of Korean migration to Germany, Germans and German media have been introduced to Korean food, and overtime, the depictions of Korean food in the media and German's opinions of Korean food have changed. Xenophobia and racism play a large role in the German perception of foreign food, but uncertainty and unfamiliarity also affected initial reactions. However, stereotypes and criticism of Korean food have also played a role in the treatment they experience in their daily lives.

Cultural Importance of Food

Food as well as the way it is eaten have strong cultural implications and significance. In Korean culture, commensality is an important practice. It “promotes solidarity not only among the living, but also between the ancestors and their descendants,” (Bak 159). Furthermore, certain dishes have different cultural meanings. It is a tradition to eat *miyeokguk* (미역국) on one's birthday (Escamilla). The cultural importance of food is not left behind in the homeland when people migrate to other countries. Food from one's homeland can have a positive impact on migrants as it can ease homesickness (Lin 2). For diasporic populations, food can “be a source of distinctive emotions and memories of the homeland,” (Ahn 50). However, German perceptions of Korean food affected the ability of ethnic Korean people to consume their ethnic food.

Reactions to Food

During the guestworker programs in the 1960s and 1970s, Korean migrants experienced mixed reactions from Germans towards Korean dishes. However, Germans often reacted very negatively to the prevalence of garlic, in not only Korean

food, but also in dishes eaten by other migrant communities. In fact, a shared derogatory term for Turkish and Korean people is “*Knoblauchfresser*” (garlic eater) (Ahn 50). *Fresser* does not simply translate to the more neutral English term, “eater”; in German, it is typically used in describing animals eating and can also mean “devourer” or “glutton.” Despite the prevalence of garlic in Italian cuisine, *Knoblauchfresser* is not used to refer to Italians. Some Germans described stomach issues after eating too much garlic, with one restaurant critic saying that he was unable to go to work the next morning after reviewing an Italian restaurant (Rebmann).

Germans who lived in the same building as migrants who cooked with garlic complained about the smell. Even those who ate at restaurants that served Italian food or other cuisines that often include garlic were not tolerant to sharing a building with migrants who cooked with garlic (Rebmann). Coworkers of Korean guestworkers also complained about the odor of Korean food and “garlic breath.” In fact, Korean nurses often stopped eating Korean food before work or feeding their children kimchi to prevent them from also being ostracized based on their ethnic food. The German reaction towards Korean food affected the social interactions of Koreans and Germans as well as the domestic spaces of Korean migrants (Ahn 51). In a 2005 article in *Der Spiegel Online*, Nela (Panghy Lee), a second-generation Korean and Hungarian TV host, said that her mother does not cook Korean food anymore in order to display her family’s successful integration in Germany (Roberts 104).

Germans were not the only people who reported having stomach problems after eating unfamiliar cuisine. When Korean miners first arrived in Germany, they struggled to adapt to the German food they were given. Some even vomited after eating German

sausage and sauerkraut. Kwang-Seoug Park wrote in his autobiography, *Ich war koreanischer Gastarbeiter in Deutschland* (I was a Korean guestworker in Germany)¹⁸:

“Aber obwohl sie alle viel Hunger hatten, brachten die meisten Männer nichts herunter, einige mußten sich sogar übergeben... So aßen die meisten schließlich nur die Wurst, nicht aber das Sauerkraut.” (Though they were all very hungry, most of the men could not get anything down; some even had to vomit... So ultimately most only ate the sausage, but not the sauerkraut.)

It is interesting that the miners decided not to eat the sauerkraut, a fermented cabbage dish kind of similar to kimchi. Park went on to force himself to eat exclusively German food as a means of adapting to German culture until he enjoyed the cuisine, particularly sausage. This was also a means of setting himself apart from other Korean miners (Roberts 125). Like Nela, Park used German food as a means of proving his assimilation to and love of German culture and as a method of navigating between cultures.

Not only was the food itself a source of friction between German and Korean people, as well as other migrants, but the culture around food was different. As mentioned before, commensality is a common practice in Korean food culture. Sharing food is an important ritual in Korean society. Korean nurses were surprised to learn that their German colleagues did not share food with one another, and instead established “a clear boundary of ownership,” (Ahn 51). Additionally, chopsticks are common in Korea while Germans use forks and knives. Unlike other Asian countries, Koreans often

¹⁸ Originally cited in Roberts (124)

use metal chopsticks instead of bamboo or wooden ones. There are several theories as to why Koreans started using metal chopsticks several hundred years ago, but metal is better than bamboo when eating from a Korean BBQ grill. However, because it is more slippery, metal can be more difficult for people unfamiliar with chopsticks to use (Ulltang). A 1967 article discussed earlier talked about a Korean celebration in Frankfurt. The reporter described Germans' reactions to the use of chopsticks.

“Daher lagen auch neben jedem Teller ein Paar Eßstäbchen, Gokarak genannt. Ein liebenswertes und sehr lebendiges Mädchen erteilte an einem Tisch mit Vergnügen eine Lektion zum Gebrauch des ungewohnten Eßgeräts; trotzdem griff mancher vorsichtshalber zur gewohnten Gabel, um nach dem Genuß einer kräftigen Algensuppe die Glasnudeln mit Pilzen, die Fleischklößchen und den Reis sicher zum Munde zu führen.” (Therefore, next to each plate lay a pair of chopsticks, called *jeotkarak*. A likeable and very cheerful girl happily gave a lesson at a table on the use of the unusual eating utensils; still, as a precaution, quite a few people grasped the normal fork to bring the glass noodles with mushrooms, the meatballs, and the rice safely to their mouths after enjoying an strong seaweed soup.)

Germans also saw friction in the interactions surrounding food with other ethnicities. In traditional Italian food culture, pasta is eaten as the first course or appetizer, but in order to fit within German expectations of food, Italian restaurants adapted by making larger dishes of pasta for the main course (Rebmann). These differences in food and food culture created boundaries between Germans and Koreans, as well as other communities with migration background.

These boundaries are still felt today. In a 2021 interview with *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ)*, Professor Maren Möhring, who wrote *Fremdes Essen: Die Geschichte Der Ausländischen Gastronomie in Der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Foreign Food: the History of Foreign Gastronomy in Germany), described visiting a Korean restaurant in Hamburg in the 1990s.

“Dort hatte ich so ein Fremdheitsgefühl, gar nicht im Sinne von: ‘O Gott, ist das alle anders,’ sondern, dass ich eine Unsicherheit gespürt habe, weil ich gemerkt habe: Ich verstehe die Sprache nicht, und ich weiß nicht, ob ich die Speisen auf eine korrekte Art esse. Ich habe mich gefühlt, als wäre ich an einem anderen Ort, als wenn ich in Korea in einem Restaurant wäre.” (I felt foreign there, not in the sense of “Oh God, everything is different,” but rather that I felt insecure because I noticed: I do not understand the language, and I do not know if I am eating the dishes the correct way. I had the feeling, as if I was in a different place, as if I was in a restaurant in Korea.)

However, this article discusses this insecurity in a positive light, as it argues that eating foods from other cultures and especially in a setting such as the one Möhring described as a substitute for traveling and a means of dealing with *lockdownbedingtes Fernweh* (lockdown-related wanderlust).

Overtime, the perception of Korean food and garlic has changed in Germany. From the 1990s to now, while depictions are not all positive or no longer racist, as seen in the case of *Der Spiegel*, German media has a more positive outlook on foreign food, including Korean. This change coincides with two major changes related to Korea. In 1988, South Korea held the Summer Olympics in Seoul which greatly changed to image

of South Korea. The games showcased South Korea to the world and subsequently led to an increase in international trade and diplomacy between South Korea and other states (IOC). In 1997, Hallyu (the Korean Wave) began, as Korean media, such as TV shows, movies, and music, gained popularity in other countries. At first, Hallyu was centered in Asia, but by the mid-2000's Korean bands were gaining fanbases outside of Asia. In 2020, 100 million people all over the world have joined organizations related to Hallyu and Korean music, culture, food, shows, etc. (Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, "Hallyu"). South Korea and Korean culture have gained international popularity and Germany was not an exception, affecting Germans' perceptions of Korean culture and food. Korean cuisine has become more commonplace in Germany.

Today, international foods can be found in restaurants and snack bars all over Germany. A 1997 article in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* described the health benefits of garlic and various ways people can cook with garlic including kimchi even as the author says, "*es stinkt im Vorderen Orient und auch im Hinteren Orient*," (It smells in the Middle East and also in the Far East). However, "*stinkt*" has a negative connotation and is used when talking about a bad smell, showing that even though garlic has become more popular in Germany, the association with a strong, bad odor persists as well as its association with Asia, despite the prevalence of garlic in Italian cuisine as well.

This article also gives a recipe on how to make kimchi. However, the recipe uses chili powder, a spice more common in Germany, instead of gochugaru (Korean chili powder). The recipe also calls for only two tablespoons of spice for one kilogram of cabbage, so this recipe makes much milder kimchi than what is eaten in Korea. This

recipe was changed to fit with 1) what is easier to purchase and 2) German spice tolerance and preferences.

Another example of the increased popularity of Korean food is the success of Soyeon Schröder-Kim's cooking videos. Schröder-Kim is the fifth wife of the former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and has almost 50,000 followers on Instagram. According to an article in *FAZ* from August 2021, she had 27,000 followers at the time. *“Und immer wieder geht es auf ihrem Account ums Essen. Ihre koreanisch-deutschen Kochvideos und Rezepte sind sehr beliebt,”* (And her account is again and again about food. Her Korean-German cooking videos and recipes are very popular).

As Korean cuisine has been depicted more positively in German newspapers and Hallyu has spread all over the world, the prevalence of Korean food outside the home of ethnic Koreans has increased. In 2003, there were 20 grocery stores in Frankfurt, home to the largest population of Koreans in Germany, that stocked kimchi as well as other Korean foods. These stores are frequented by both Koreans and Germans regularly. However, ethnic Koreans are still unable to find every food product that is available in Korea. In a 2003 interview with *FAZ*, Joo-Ho Park, whose family owns a Korean store in Frankfurt, described the various products his store stocks including fish.

“Fisch aus dem Ost- oder dem Gelben Meer kann er wegen der Einfuhrbeschränkungen nur selten bieten dafür aber Atlantik-Makrelen, Lachs und lebenden Steinbutt. ‘Das sind nicht dieselben Arten wie in Korea, aber sie schmecken ähnlich.’” (He can only rarely provide fish from the East Sea (Sea of Japan) or the Yellow Sea because of import restrictions, but he does provide

Atlantic mackerel, salmon, and live turbot. “These are not the same types like in Korea, but they taste similar,“)

Kimchi and garlic are not the only Korean foods to become more popular amongst Germans. In the 1970s, foreign fruits became commonplace in German stores. In 1977, 1.6 million tons of fruit were imported into Germany from various countries. German stores began selling a wide variety of fruits including persimmons from Korea, China, and Japan, as well as lychee, kiwis, and mangos. However, import restrictions affect the availability and price of these items. Imports into Germany have a 19% value added tax in addition to any duties from customs. There are also restrictions on imports of plant and animal products (Thoms).

Food is incredibly important in culture and people’s relations with one another and their ethnic homeland. However, because the initial German response to the food of guestworkers including Koreans was largely negative, the consequences of this response are still in effect today even as Korean food has become more popular. Derogatory terms related to food are still used towards Korean and Turkish people while some 2nd generation Koreans were cut off from Korean food by their parents to protect them from ostracization and to prove their Germanness.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion

German media perpetuates racism and stereotypes of Korean and other Asian people, including the Model Minority Myth. These stereotypes have been in the media and have affected the everyday lives of Koreans in Germany for decades. Depictions of Koreans and other Asians in the media are not in a vacuum, they affect Koreans everyday lives and the treatment they experience.

However, there have been changes in recent years to the discourse surrounding Koreans as Hallyu has spread across the world and to Germany. The contributions of Korean guestworkers to Germany have been recognized more by the German media, Korean food has become more common, and the media has focused more on the unique experiences and identity of *kyopo* in Germany. However, these changes have not fully addressed the racism that Koreans experience nor stopped the racism and stereotypes spread by the media. The effect of racism has not ended especially as integration has continued to be emphasized over multiculturalism. Even in articles addressing the hardships faced by Koreans in Germany, the Model Minority Myth can be seen.

In this thesis, I used in the media analysis in the framework of postcolonial theory to analyze media depictions of Korea and Koreans in Germany. However, there are limitations to my research. My research was limited mostly to *der Spiegel* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* due to access. There was also a language barrier in my research, but as my research went on, my German improved. Writing this thesis not only gave me the opportunity to research Koreans in Germany, but also to improve my own language skills. Coming into this topic, I knew very little about the Korean diaspora

in Germany, but this thesis gave me the opportunity to learn a great deal more. I hope in the future to further this research as I continue my studies and address these limitations.

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