

International Summer Research or Residency Award

Younsun Choi, 2024 Colonial Affect in Curriculum:

Forming Social Practices with Visual Culture between U.S. and Korea Curriculum & Instruction

The main purpose of the trip was to collect historical archives from the mid-20th century about the influence of the U.S. on Korea. I mainly focused on visual cultural materials and curriculum documents in mid-20th century Korea (1948~1980). Before collecting U.S. data, I decided to explore Korean archives to see the influence of the U.S. after the Japanese colonial era. To conduct the research, I visited the National Congress Library, the National Museum of Korean Contemporary History, and the Seoul National University of Education in Seoul, Korea.

At the National Congress Library, I found some documents from Korean educational magazines that focused on anti-communism education in the 1960s and 70s. I was able to collect the quiz or lesson plan for anti-communism education in the mid-20th century. At the National Museum of Korean Contemporary History, I found interesting audio-visual resources, anti-communist speech contests in the 1960s, and anti-communist video slides on how to identify communists in the community in the 1970s. I felt that these would help me analyze the discourse of anti-communism animation and relate how U.S. democratic education was revised and applied to Korean education. Finally, I obtained an elementary school moral textbook from the 1970s from the Seoul National University of Education that depicts the ideal moral citizen of the time.

I am interested in connecting visual materials with historical archives to explore how these images could be produced under certain social or cultural norms, specifically anti-communism and Westernization. In the 1970s, Korea aimed to build an autonomous and democratic nation, which emphasized increasing national strength to be independent of the U.S. because Korea would be invaded by communist nations without the help of the U.S. This seems more prominent from the archives, which represent similar to U.S. anti-communism propaganda visuals in the 1960s, pursuing Westernization and supporting the capitalist camp. From this research, I found that the epistemic colonialism that began in the late 19th century continued in the mid-20th century. Also, I could get meaningful historical resources, which can relate to visual cultural materials to explore the colonial affect.

