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I know that my heritage gives me advantages in my life. My Korean culture allows me to look at life with different views from the American views, and my ability to speak another language fluently not only allows me to communicate with people who aren't fluent in English but also defines a part of who I am. My pride in my Korean heritage and culture allows me to investigate the values and traditions of the Korean culture; those that I find fitting for me, I keep them and cherish them. From investigating my heritage, I have also found some of the things I enjoy most in life, including Korean music and entertainment. Not everything that comes from my heritage is advantageous to me, but many things are certainly significant and make my life unique and interesting.

Everybody has his/her own unique set of paradigms, so often times it is difficult for people to come to a consensus with a certain topic. However, what is important is that we at least listen to other people's paradigms, even if we may disagree with them or not understand them. Only through this method can we, as humans, come to greater understanding of ourselves. The more paradigms one has, the more one is able to look at life through different perspectives. My Korean culture is definitely a paradigm that opens my mind to many perspectives, including ones that highly contrast traditional American values or beliefs. When my American friend once heard about a student in Korea who became blind in one eye after her teacher threw a book at her face, I was certainly disgraced, but I also was more understanding of the event than my friend was. I knew, because of my culture, that Koreans value respect for their elders above anything else. I knew, because my parents had always enforced a strict code on me, that all Koreans must regard their elders, whoever they may be, with respect. Therefore, while my friend only criticized the teacher, I found myself questioning things. I wondered what the student had done that had

angered the teacher, and to what extent her actions had been disrespectful. Although I by no means empathized with the teacher, I did find myself automatically thinking that the student had done something wrong.

My pride in my culture and my ability to speak Korean give me personal advantages in my life. I enjoy going to restaurants and meeting Korean people who I can chat with, and I also enjoy listening to Korean music and engaging in Korean activities, such as traditional holiday celebrations, watching Korean shows, and going to the karaoke bar with my friends. I know that a great deal of my social life is shaped by my Korean culture. Plato asserted that knowledge is true if the belief is true and can be justified. I know that my knowledge claim that my Korean culture gives me advantages in life is true because I can justify it. I know that I cherish my culture because I feel happy when I engage in cultural activities. I know that it is advantageous to be able to speak another language because I have experienced those advantages. I am able to communicate/translate in another language and this ability also allows me to communicate with my Korean family and relatives, from whom I learn about my culture and gain some of my values and beliefs. With the Pragmatic Theory of Truth, my knowledge claim is true because it is useful and it is verified through experience. With the Coherence Theory of Truth, my knowledge claim is true because it is consistent with other established truths that are accepted as true. I say that my culture is advantageous to me. It is accepted as true that having multiple paradigms, interests and hobbies, knowledge of other cultures, and personal values and beliefs is advantageous to a person.

Although I believe that my knowledge claim is true, there are limitations to my justifications. The biggest limitation is that my knowledge claim is based wholly on perception, subjective experiences, rather than objective reality. With the Correspondence Theory of Truth,

which states that a concept is true if it matches the objective reality it describes, my knowledge claim does not really have an actual reality. It would be far more difficult or maybe even controversial to prove that my knowledge claim is true than to prove that I am sitting at a chair at Tualatin High School at this very moment.

My knowledge claim is also not eternal; that is, my knowledge claim has the ability to change within time. It is not a concrete, set knowledge claim such as, "I know that I am human." In the future, I may experience more negative aspects of my heritage and my disadvantages may outweigh my advantages. Therefore, it is possible for my knowledge claim to change into: "I know that my heritage is disadvantageous to my life." My knowledge claim seems to be based solely on my experiences. Therefore, if my experiences change in regards to the joy they bring me, my knowledge claim will change in response. For example, I may enjoy Korean music and activities at the present, but in the future I may dislike them. There is no guarantee that my interests will stay the same. The same goes for my values and beliefs. As I introduce myself to more paradigms, I may come to abandon my Korean-culture paradigm. If I lose this paradigm, I will disagree with Korean values, and I might come to the conclusion that my heritage tries to enforce a set of beliefs that I do not want to believe in.

Philosophers claim that "believing is seeing," *not* "seeing is believing." it is true that my knowledge claim is highly derived through filtering. By saying that my Korean culture is advantageous to me, I am filtering and accepting those that are of interest to me. Although I do see the disadvantages, I am attributing my culture with the advantages because I have a preconceived notion that if there are more advantages to something, then that something should be labeled as advantageous than disadvantageous. Speaking of the word "advantageous," I now come to wonder what I meant when I claimed that "I know that my heritage gives me advantages

in life." What things are advantageous? How does something get labeled as advantageous? Is the fact that something brings joy to one's life make that something advantageous? What is advantageous? How can something be labeled as advantageous if it is sometimes disadvantageous as well?

After exploring my knowledge claim and its justifications, I have come to the conclusion that my knowledge claim is not very strong and that there are many limitations to it. I am less certain of my knowledge claim; In fact, this exploration has merely led me to ask questions. What I can say for now is that it is true that my heritage has brought me joy in my past life, and that at this very moment I can say that I am glad that my Korean culture has made some positive impacts on my life. However, I cannot label my heritage as advantageous to my life: it would be contradicting because I have sometimes felt the negative impacts of my heritage. Also, I cannot foretell the future; therefore I can only say that my heritage *has* been advantageous many times in my past life.