

Chapter 7: The truth about “the escape from Gunkanjima”

All sorts of people lived in “Gunkanjima”

In *Chikuho/Gunkanjima*, there is a description that “(Korean workers) were no longer able to endure slave labor and attempted to escape from the island as a last resort.”

What, then, was the truth about those who attempted to escape? To understand this, it is necessary to understand what kind of people came to work on the island.

During the Meiji Period, a system called the “barn system” was established to assemble laborers to work at coal mines. In this system, the barn master recruited miners and had them live and eat at a barn and work at the coal mine under the barn master’s supervision.

However, barn masters had local gamblers and other men of dubious character collect workers on his behalf. Consequently, the situation became serious—miners were forcibly collected, some were borderline abducted, and they were forced to engage in cruel labor, often being hit with clubs for being lazy.¹

It was an everyday occurrence that barn masters stole their miners’ pay and they sent far more miners than the company’s production plan required and eventually the barn system came under scrutiny. At Takashima and Hashima Mines, the system was abolished in 1897 (the 30th year of Meiji).

However, the subcontracting system was never abolished. A master of a bunkhouse came with laborers and made a contract with the company. The master often ruled over the laborers as a warden of the company dormitory. Among the wardens were Koreans and they used Korean laborers. Let me call those who came to work at Hashima through this process the “first group”.

Next, there were those who wanted to work in a coal mine, who came of their own accord or through the good office of a mediator. Most came with their families and lived in company’s housing. There were many emigrant workers from the Korean Peninsula. They were said to be able to freely move in and out of the island.² Let’s say that this forms the “second group”.

¹ *Hanada*, November 2017 issue, “Were mobilized workers unhappy? 1) Gunkanjima,” by Zheng Dae-kyun

² *Listen to Gunkanjima*, page 45

There were also people who were directly recruited by the company overseas, such as within the Korean Peninsula. They came, as I will explain later, through “free recruiting,” “official good offices,” and “mobilization.” Let us suppose they belong to the “third group”.

Regarding workers of the third group, those who were “freely recruited” and recruited by “official good offices” lived under nearly the same conditions as the second group of workers, while those who came to work as part of mobilization lived at the company dormitory with a leader, called a “commander,” to be selected among them.³ When those workers were to leave the island, they needed a permit and a special reason, such as critical illness or death in the family. There were some Chinese workers in Hashima and they were treated in the same manner as the “mobilized” workers.

On Hashima, there were also regular employees of Mitsubishi. They frequently moved in and out of the island and did not stay there for long. Let us call them the “fourth group”.

Were there any cases of attempted escape by mobilized workers?

So if there ever were cases of attempted escape, what group of workers attempted to do so? Since the second and fourth groups had the liberty to leave the island as they liked, they had no need to attempt to escape. The most likely to attempt to escape was the first group.

There were allegations in which barn masters stole their workers’ pay and made their workers engage in gambling schemes or visit prostitutes, with workers in the end owing the barn master money, binding their workers in debt with two to three-year contract. Sometimes workers faced debt after debt and they were forever bound to their master. Work at coal mines was not at all easy and when workers could not earn needed money from work the situation degenerated into something similar to slavery. So, some workers must have attempted to escape from the island at the risk of their lives. If they were caught attempting to flee, the boss would have beaten them. Although such a situation might have been regarded as an inadequacy on the part of the company’s labor management, this does not necessarily mean that the company is directly responsible for the victims.

Among the third group, the “free recruited” and those recruited by “official good offices”, conditions were the same as the second group, so attempts to escape would not make sense. What about the “mobilized workers”?

³ At that time, mobilized workers were organized into a squad and the squad leader was called “commander.”

According to *Listen to Gunkanjima*, many Koreans jumped into the sea and lost their lives, attempting to escape from unbearably cruel forced labor. When a monument to mourn the nameless victims, built at Nangoshimyo in the Nomozaki Peninsula, opposite of Hashima, was unearthed, four bodies were discovered. Upon this discovery, with that the news that “the mining company identified the bodies as Koreans,” it appears as if the company buried the bodies and simply classified them as either ‘unidentified’ or ‘without relations.’ Thus, one could conclude that “the bodies of drowned Korean were buried.”

However, a municipal officer flatly denies the book’s premise, stating, “If the bodies belonged to Koreans who escaped from Gunkanjima, the bodies were returned to the island for identification and then cremated there.”⁴

There is a testimony by a Sempuku-ji Temple priest, which was located at the center of Hashima:

“I saw Koreans on the island, but I never talked with them nor performed burial ceremony for them. I have nothing particular to recall about them. I have never heard of a story of a Korean worker who jumped into the sea and died, attempting to escape from the island.”

Another person, named Hamaguchi Saburo, who worked at Takashima Coal Mines, which is located next to Hashima, states in the book: “At Takashima, I have never heard that a Korean escaped and died during an escape.”

As I will explain later, in Japan at that time, there were bunkhouses run by Korean masters all over the country and even Koreans who had no command of the Japanese language were readily hired by these establishments. It was said that there were Koreans who made a lot of money working at one Korean-run bunkhouse after another. Hearing of such a bonanza, mobilized workers might have thought it a good idea to escape from the island to make easy money elsewhere. Or, there might have been some Koreans who attempted to escape, no longer able to bear abuse by the boss or other workers.

However, it is extremely difficult to verify whether there were those who attempted to escape and died in the process among “mobilized Korean workers.”

There was no system to guard against escapes

⁴ *Japanism*, 2016 Volume 32, “Never make Gunkanjima anti-Japanese propaganda” by Ogawa Shigeki

In the film *Gunkanjima*, there was a watch tower on Hashima and as soon as an escapee was detected, he was shot to death. A former Korean coal miner who appears in *Chikuhō/Gunkanjima* testifies: “I have hardly heard of a successful escape from the island. When a failed escapee was captured, men in charge of labor tortured him to death and the body was thrown into the sea.” “The company’s countermeasures against miners’ escape was thorough. A motorboat searched around Hashima and at night when there was no air raid, they played a search light on the pier.”

However, a body thrown into the sea would eventually make its way to shore and the police would immediately open an investigation into a murder. Moreover, given that the company was supposedly thoroughly prepared for escape attempts, building a watch tower and motorboat patrols, how should we interpret the following Korean worker’s testimony in *Listen to Gunkanjima* ?

“On August 9, I was swimming in the sea. I was off work at the time.”

How was it possible for a guard in a watch tower to know the difference between those enjoying a swim from those attempting to escape?

In the first place, there was no watch tower. I myself went to Hashima and the fact is that there was no land available to build a watch tower. I think it is very likely that the “watch tower”, which is often mentioned in Korean testimonies, was, in fact, a shaft turret. A photo of a “shaft turret” was mistaken for that of a “watch tower”. There were many “shaft turrets” in Hashima and the tallest one stood 47 meters high.

Hashima was not a prison. Those in charge of Korean workers were their fellow Koreans. There was never a system in which the Japanese prevented escape attempts by Korean workers.

Incidentally, in *Gunkanjima—shameful UNESCO World Heritage*, there is a description of boys who were accommodated in cells with iron gratings. When I spoke with a former islander, he said, “That was totally untrue. How could one have done such a cruel thing? There was a house of detention to accommodate two or three persons at the police station in Hashima and it was usually drunks who stayed their overnight.”

Gunkanjima was totally free from guns

In *Chikuhō/Gunkanjima*, there is a statement that “to watch those who tried to escape, armed legionnaires stood on their guard.” Also, in *Gunkanjima—shameful UNESCO World Heritage*, it is

stated that “those who were caught while attempting to escape were shot to death.”

Were there armed guards to watch those who tried to escape or to shoot those who were caught during an attempt? According to testimonies of former islanders whom the author interviewed, there were only two policemen stationed in Hashima at the time. Policemen at the time were unarmed and did not carry guns. There were no Army personnel stationed in Hashima. The island was perfectly safe in terms of security and defense and there was no need for a military presence on Hashima at all.

In the film *Gunkanjima*, Koreans exchanged gunfire with Japanese soldiers in their escape from Hashima, a scene which might have been inspired by the following testimony in *Chikuho/Gunkanjima*:

While coal mining, two Chinese workers received blows from a Japanese instructor and they fought back using shovels, seriously injuring the Japanese. The Chinese were blamed for the incident and were taken to the company office where they were violently struck. Due to this incident, a riot arose, and all workers refused to enter the mine. The mining company requested Nagasaki Prefecture for military action. ... [Omitted] Reportedly, there was a fierce battle between Chinese workers and the Omura Regiment which came to repress the riot.

However, if it had been labor trouble between employer and employee, the police, not the military, would have been called. Or, if there ever was such a “fierce battle,” people would surely remember this. However, a statement about a “fierce battle” is nowhere to be found. No record of a battle exists, either. Hashima was a peaceful island, completely free from guns. How would it have been possible for an “exchange of gunfire” or “shooting someone to death” to have taken place?

Incidentally, in the film *Gunkanjima*, there is a scene in which Hashima is bombarded by American bombers and only Japanese people take refuge in anti-air raid shelters while Koreans are shut out of the shelters and are engulfed in flames, one after another, and die. Again, the author asked former islanders about this, and they answered, “Hashima was never once bombarded by American military aircraft. Only once, a coal carrying boat was attacked by a torpedo, but there were no casualties among the islanders. Immediately before the end of the War, Futago Electric Power Generating Station at Takashima, located next to Hashima, was bombarded and the transmission of electricity to Hashima stopped. The film might have gotten the idea of shooting from this fabricated incident. Clearly, history is fabricated again.

Chapter 8: There was no discrimination against Koreans

In *Chikuho/Gunkanjima*, there is a testimony of a former Korean worker: “Those in charge of labor did not treat Koreans as humans. They thought Koreans were the lowest kind on world and they were always hollering orders at us Koreans.”

Also, in *Listen to Gunkanjima*, there is a statement: “At that time, Koreans were insultingly called ‘dogs, cats, pigs, *Chankoro* (Chinese) and *Chosenjin* (Koreans) by Japanese people and were not treated as humans.”

Well, then, is it true that people from the Korean Peninsula were discriminated against to such an extent in Hashima?

Japanese and Korean children went to school together

In the film *Gunkanjima*, an elementary school-aged girl is made to undergo an exam for venereal disease, and in the picture book *Gunkanjima—shameful UNESCO World Heritage*, it is stated that twelve-year-old boys were accommodated in a prison and were made to engage in hard labor in the galleries. The fact is that both Japanese and Korean children were good friends and went to school together.

Mr. Uchida Yoshiyuki, who moved to Hashima at the age of nine with his father, a doctor, remembers in his book *Burning Lone Island* (published by Fukuin) the following:

I changed schools and began attending Hashima Elementary School in August 1941. There were two classmates with remarkably large physiques. Their faces looked different from ours. They were called Kakusan-kun and Kin-kun. They were of Korean nationality. Kin-kun’s Japanese name was Iwaya-kun, but I called him Kin-kun, anyway.

These two boys gave their teachers and us classmates a lot of trouble. It often happened that, because of them, the entire class was punished. Responsibility fell on all of us.

Kin-kun made it a rule to wear his hair five to six centimeters long. A teacher tied his long hair with red cloth just like a ribbon. I clearly remember how Kin-kun smiled a shy smile with his hair tied with a ribbon. He and I were not particularly close friends, but somewhat I felt we got along well with each other.

Another Korean who went to elementary school in Hashima with Japanese children remembers his school days in his book⁵:

Children whose fathers were miners were able to go to school. ... [Omitted] School life there was not bad. A boy named Goo Yon-chol learned Japanese before he came to Japan and he was so clever that he was able to get the best grades in class, outdoing Japanese classmates. He was good-natured, fun with frequent jokes, and good at playing sports, which made him a popular figure among Japanese children.

In addition, when I, the author, visited Hashima in person, a former islander told me about his experience:

“There was a Korean boy among my good friends. When I first went to his house, the place smelled of *Kimuchi* (traditional Korean pickles) everywhere. But I immediately got used to it and I frequented his house and we played together.”

From these testimonies, we can vividly imagine how happily Japanese and Korean children spent those days together. Obviously, they lived an ordinary school life in a pleasant manner.

During the period of Japan’s Annexation of Korea, Korean people were “Japanese citizens” and were protected by Japanese laws as Japanese citizens. It was not at all permissible to make little children engage in forced labor or prostitution. If such a thing had occurred, the police would have immediately been involved and arrested the perpetrators and sent them to prison.

How extraordinarily creative those who came up with a film or picture books are! I only wish they used their vigorous imagination in a more constructive manner.

Japanese and Koreans ate the same food

In *Listen to Gunkanjima*, a former Korean worker who claims that “he was forcibly taken to Gunkanjima at the age of fourteen” claims: “As reward for such hard labor, I was given ‘rice’ consisting of eighty-percent bean cake and twenty-percent unpolished rice with a side dish of boiled and muddled sardine. Almost every day, I had diarrhea and became physically exhausted.”

⁵ Mr. Che SYoung’s Webpage: “So many evidences to indicate that the film *Gunkanjima* is faked.”

Regarding this claim, Mr. Kachi Hideo, Chairman of the Society of Hashima Islanders for True History, whom I previously mentioned, recalls in his book, *The Record of My Gunkanjima* the following:

“In 1944, I became the sixth grader. As the war situation gradually became worse, so did the food situation and we were short of almost everything. Accordingly, food we received was barley, minor cereals, sweet potatoes and bean cake.”

Koreans were understandably not satisfied with food provided by Japan. However, it was war then and the entire nation suffered from food shortage. Japanese people were in the same poorly fed condition as Korean people.

In *Listen to Gunkanjima*, there is also a statement of another former Korean worker: Food given was “bean cake” and “pressed barley” at almost every meal and I felt hungry all the time. But I got used to it over four years.

Another said, “I secretly purchased beans the Japanese brought to the island and ate them to help satisfy my stomach.”

Everyone was hungry. From testimonies of former islanders, clearly there was no differentiation between Japanese and Koreans regarding food rations.

There was no discrimination regarding housing

The housing situation of Korean workers as described in the film *Gunkanjima* is extremely poor. Their rooms are located quasi-underground and if they step onto the tatami floor, foul water spreads out from it. Also, in *Listen to Gunkanjima*, there is this claim: In the nine-storied concrete apartment building, rooms allocated for Koreans were on the semi-basement floor, with no sunshine all day and bad ventilation.

However, the housing facilities in Hashima were all equipped with perfectly functional anti-tidal measures. Building No. 30, the oldest concrete building in Japan, was built in a circular-square shape and doors to the rooms and stairs were faced inside so that tide would not wash into the building. And at relevant sections of corridors, thick anti-tidal doors were installed to keep waves from rushing into the building.

Incidentally, regarding buildings constructed in 1918, there was an anti-tide structure installed in

which the first floor was used for the tide to exit, which washed over the island⁶. It is very likely that in the film *Gunkanjima*, to emphasize atrocious Japanese behavior, mobilized Korean workers are made to live on the uninhabitable “exit floor.” Even so, mobilized Korean workers were a very important workforce, and everyone will easily see that the company would never have them live in such unhealthy conditions lest they catch a cold and become unfit for work.

In the case of Hashima Coal Mines, except for those who worked on the island as traders, employees of Mitsubishi, miners, their families and subcontracted workers hardly worried about rent, utility expenses and other living expenses. A wife of a former miner recollects those dear days⁷:

The rent at the time was only ¥2. Electricity and water were provided free of charge. As for gas, several free coupons for propane were distributed to each household. When we needed more gas, we just bought it.

The more senior workers could afford the better rooms. Points were accumulated according to years of service, and using the points, workers could move to the better rooms in the apartment building.

This system applied equally to Japanese and Korean workers⁸. There is the following in *Chikuho/Gunkanjima*.

Mr. and Mrs. Jiang wanted to start their life as newlyweds in Hashima, but two Korean couples were ahead of them for the apartment they wanted and they could not move into the apartment as they wished. For the time being, they lived with the husband’s acquaintance. ... [Omitted] When an apartment became vacant, the Jiangs happily moved to the apartment on the seventh floor.

Both Japanese and Koreans lived in the same apartment buildings and clearly, there was no discrimination regarding housing.

There was no discrimination regarding wages

In *Listen to Gunkanjima*, there are stories such as: “I have never been paid. My memory is certain,” or “As I was not paid, I could not go to bars for drinks or restaurants.”

⁶ *Introduction to Gunkanjima*, written by Kurosawa Naganori (published by Jitsugyo no Nihon Sha)

⁷ Hearing and on-the-spot survey in Hashima (Gunkanjima) conducted by Goto Keinosuke, Mori Toshio, Sakamoto Michinori and Kojima Takayuki

⁸ *Gunkanjima, Miraculous Industrial Assets* by Kurosawa Naganori (Jitsugyo no Nihon Sha)

On the other hand, however, one person states, “I was paid ¥60 to ¥90 per month. As I became a skilled worker, I got paid more. I sent money back home to Korea and my family received money I sent.” Why are these stories conflicting?

First, let us confirm the situation in terms of laws.

According to Article 18 of Imperial Order No. 89, issued on February 18, 1944 (the Order came into effect in the Korean Peninsula in the same year):

The salary of a mobilized worker shall be paid by the governmental office or a private employer that uses the mobilized worker, according to the worker’s skill, the kind of work, the place of work and on consideration of the worker’s former salary and other income.

In terms of the state, it is stipulated that salary is to be paid, considering the former salary and other incomes. However, this would be the minimum wage. In fact, Japanese mining company had no race-based wage system and they paid wages to workers from the Korean Peninsula on the same terms with Japanese workers.

A Japanese who worked at the overseas employment section of Hashima Coal Mines at that time testifies, in *Listen to Gunkanjima*: “We paid the same wages to Koreans as Japanese and let them behave as they liked.” As to the fact that there was no discrimination regarding wages, I will explain in detail later. (Refer to page)

Moreover, in Hashima Coal Mines, workers were paid higher wages than at other coal mines. A staff member at the Gunkanjima Digital Museum states⁹:

Koreans say that they were brought to Japan under mobilization. Of course, there were those mobilized workers, but mostly, Korean workers came to Hashima from other coal mines, saying, “They offer good wage and working conditions here.”

According to a report from the *Nagasaki Nichinichi Newspaper*, dated January 17, 1942, the average monthly salary of workers at Hashima Coal Mines was ¥150, and a Korean who had spent his boyhood

⁹ *Seiron*, September 2017 issue, “Save world heritage Gunkanjima from the Korean film’s fabrication” by Sugita Mio

in Hashima writes as follows¹⁰:

My father was a skilled worker and his monthly salary jumped to ¥180 during wartime when prices rose. His monthly salary was higher than those of teachers and municipal officers. Moreover, even if we wanted to spend money, there was no place to spend money on the isolated island. So, we saved a fair amount of money.

Koreans who worked at Hashima earned far more money than those who worked in the Korean Peninsula.

If this is true, then Korean claims that they were never paid sound strange indeed. At least, so far as workers with families were concerned, a former islander states, “On payday, they never failed to come to the office with their personal seals to receive their salary, forming a line.”¹¹ In the case of single men, the person in charge of their dormitory came to the office to receive their salaries in the mass and then handed to each worker his salary. If there ever was any trouble in receiving one’s salary, it would have been most likely in the latter case.

There was a brothel for Koreans

There was also a brothel for workers from the Korean Peninsula. Brothels in Hashima were written about in *Gunkanjima, Miraculous Industrial Assets*, written by Kurosawa Naganori (Jitsugyo no Nihon Sha):

There were three brothels in Hashima, two of which were houses called “Honda” and “Morimoto” for the Japanese and the remaining house was called “Yoshida” for Koreans. ... [Omitted] There was an article describing “Honda” in the *Nagasaki Newspaper*, dated January 1933.

A restaurant called Honda-Ya, run by Mr. Honda Isematsu, a member of the Nagasaki Prefectural Assembly, demonstrates a soft side of Hashima Coal Mines, by offering comfort and joy to coal-dusted miners’ bodies and minds with a variety of tender and passionate emotions.

From this passage, as Mr. Kurosawa points out, we learn many things: the vital role brothels played in

¹⁰ Mr. Che SYoung’s Webpage: “So many evidences to indicate that the film *Gunkanjima* is faked.

¹¹ From *the Sankei Newspaper*, dated December 4, 2017, “To the beautiful and strong country” by Sakurai Yoshiko.

the coal mining island community, what kind of island Gunkanjima was and even the social conditions at the time.

At “Yoshida,” Korean women worked as prostitutes, and it is said that the brothel continued its business after the War. ... [Omitted] It can be said that at least employees at “Yoshida” got along well with Japanese and their children were good friends and played together with Japanese children living in Gunkanjima.

A brothel exclusively for Koreans appears in the film *Gunkanjima*. Korean prostitutes at the time were friendly to Japanese. From the fact that the brothel for Korean workers had brisk business, we can conclude that Korean workers earned good wages.

A doctor who was much appreciated by the Chinese

There is a brochure titled *Hashima (Gunkanjima)*, which the town of Takashima published, commemorating the 30th anniversary of the closure of the coal mines. In the brochure, the following is written:

“Safety to you,” is a galleries greeting. In the pitch-darkness of the galleries, miners exchange the greeting “safety to you,” with anyone appearing in the light of the cap-lamp. There are no other greetings in the galleries. There, one man’s carelessness leads to danger to all. Such spirit of solidarity and safety-mindedness are concentrated in “Safety to you”. Coal mining is conducted under the ground where working conditions are very harsh. In the galleries, miners remain incessantly alert. However, once out of the mines, “men of the coal mines” are all brothers and one family, tied with a strong sense of unity. Hashima has been called One Family Island.

This was the true Hashima before and after the War. How was it ever possible for the people of this island to abuse Koreans and Chinese?

Mr. Uchida Yoshiuki, whom I mentioned earlier, tells us about a Chinese worker in his book *Burning Lone Island*.

The man came to Mr. Uchida’ house one day and said in broken Japanese:

“I am Chinese. I got injured in the leg while working in the gallery about a month ago. Doctor

Uchida treated me for my injury. Dr. Uchida was so kind to me, a Chinese, treating me as if I were Japanese. I was so happy to receive such kindness for the first time since I came to this island.”

Then, the Chinese man gave him a piece of bread wrapped in newspaper he was holding in his hand, bowed very politely and left. When Mr. Uchida’s father came home from the hospital in the evening, he told his father about the Chinese. His father said to him:

“There are some Koreans and Chinese among my patients. I have never treated them differently from Japanese. Rather, thinking that they came all the way from home to Japan, I might be unconsciously kind and sympathetic to them .”

In addition to the “men of the coal mines” who worked as one, doctors and nurses who supported the workers dealt with Koreans and Chinese without distinction.

In *Listen to Gunkanjima*, it is claimed that “in the case of Koreans, it is believed that even when they received medical treatment, the treatment was substandard and many were left unattended.” In this case, by all means, I would like Mr. Uchida’s testimony to be heard by all.

Japanese and Koreans alike waved farewell, yearning for each other

And finally, on August 15, 1945, the War was over and Korean workers were to return home.

According to a member of the Society of Hashima Islanders, Korean workers were sent home to the Korean Peninsula aboard the ship owned by Mitsubishi.¹² A former islander told me about the day of their departure when I, the author, inspected Hashima:

Both Japanese and Koreans alike waved farewell, yearning for each other. When they got aboard the ship and as it was leaving Hashima, all Japanese gathered at the pier and waved to the Koreans, who waved back to us until they were gone, out of sight.

According to the previously mentioned *Chronicle of Coal Mining*, there is a statement about the day of departure of Korean workers from Oshima Coal Mines (Oshima Office of Mitsubishi Coal Mines) on Oshima (Saikai City, Nagasaki Prefecture), located to the north of Hashima:

¹² *Seiron*, September 2017 issue, “Save World Heritage ‘Gunkanjima’ from the Korean film’s fabrication” by Sugita Mio

Not waiting for governmental orders, the office contemplated a plan to send back the “nine hundred Korean workers” who supported coal at production Oshima during the War, and through the cooperation of Korean leaders, the plan was smoothly carried out from October to November. The company gave each departing worker his calculated wage together with rice, miso and other daily goods and provided them with a ship. Korean workers exchanged farewell with the Japanese and left Oshima quietly at night.

When Korean workers left Japan for home, there seemed to be scenes of parting everywhere between Koreans and Japanese, yearning for one another. The Chairman of the Society of Hashima Islanders says of the time:¹³

Slave labor depicted in the film could have never taken place. In galleries, a Korean old= hand showed Japanese newcomers how to work and after the War, some Koreans returned to the island, saying, “They pay more here at Hashima.” In the narrow island, if there ever was abuse or murder of Koreans, everybody would have known about it. Such cases did not happen at all. About one hundred Korean families lived In Hashima and their children went to school with our Japanese children.

The truth about Hashima is certainly distilled in these words.

The film *Gunkanjima* is a culmination of race-hate

Far from discrimination, the people of Hashima and the people from the Korean Peninsula were closely united in spirit.

In the film *Gunkanjima*, Koreans escape from the island after an exchange of gunfire. I would like Director Ryoo Seung-wan to fully understand how much the film’s lies have hurt the feelings of former islanders.

According to Mr. Kuroda Katsuhiko, a member of the *Sankei Newspaper*’s editorial committee, who lives in Seoul, when he temporarily returned to Japan on board Asiana Airlines, a Korean airline, the film *Gunkanjima* was shown as an in-flight movie. Other anti-Japanese movies such as *Park-lie*, which depicted the massacre of Koreans during the Great Kanto Earthquake and *I Can Speak*, dealing with

¹³ *Sapio*, October 2017 issue, “The film *Gunkanjima* is the worst faked cinema in history.”

the comfort women issue, were also on the list of in-flight movies. I don't understand how they can show these movies, which openly calls Japan a "beast", during Japan-bound flights. No wonder the number of Japanese tourists to Korea has drastically decreased.

When I flew from Haneda to Seoul on Korean Air, the in-flight map of our position loudly proclaimed "Dokdo" (Takeshima), which was nothing more than an in-your-face to Japan.

Korean people call themselves a "people of feelings." Well, then they should know that the Japanese people also have feelings. Korean people are free to make films, but they are not free to distort facts. In particular, films that are a culmination of race-hatred, degrading another people using visual images which leave terrifying impressions. As such, this kind of action is not acceptable.

For our honor and pride, we Japanese urge those who were involved in the production of this film to engage in deep self-reflection.