

Testimonial record of survivors (4)

(4) The Testimony of Ms. Sasaki Ten

Marrying a Chinese man and moving to China

I was born deep in the mountains of Oita Prefecture.

I was extremely poor, and before I had graduated from elementary school I ended up going to Osaka to look for a job on someone's recommendation. I had wanted normal work, but because it was the hardest and most degrading sort of work for a woman, I couldn't possibly have gone back to my hometown. To make matters worse, while I was working there, I was swindled time and time again by other people. Still, I suppose that was bound to happen to someone like me without even an elementary school education.

Around six months after my twentieth birthday, my work had become so unpleasant to me that I lost all interest in working and in everything else in my life, and I contemplated running off, maybe to some foreign country. At right around that time, I happened to meet a Chinese man named Mr. Shen.

Mr. Shen was a very interesting man who always made other people laugh. He said that he had come to Osaka on business, and after seeing him several times, he took to telling me, "Why don't you marry me, Ten?" I thought that these were jokes at first, and so I replied, "Okay, I'll be your bride whenever you want!" However, in February of 1932, he brought over a friend named Mr. Yang and told me that we would have the wedding now.

I was flabbergasted. Although I had thought he was joking, he had brought his friend here. Because he said we would have the wedding now, initially I did not think he was serious.

And yet, Mr. Yang spoke to me with a very serious expression. He said that Mr. Shen had asked me many times before if I would marry him, and I had always said "yes". Therefore, Mr. Shen had thought seriously about marrying me, and had been preparing to do so. Mr. Yang strongly emphasized to me that, because of this, all the arrangements for the wedding that day had already been made.

When I protested that I would have to consult with my employer first, Mr. Shen responded that my employer had already given his consent and would be attending the wedding. When Mr. Shen told me that he would also pay off my debts left, I made up my mind and went to the wedding. That was the first time I had seen a Chinese wedding ceremony, so I felt very confused.

However, once the wedding was safely over, Mr. Shen told me that we would return to China right away. I wanted to go once more to my hometown in Oita, and there were people who I needed to inform about my wedding, but he would hear nothing of it. He told

me that once I married him, I became his possession and so would have to do whatever he ordered from then on. With that, there was nothing more I could do, and in March of that year, I moved to China with Mr. Shen in accordance with his wishes.

The joy of chatting with Japanese soldiers in Tongzhou

It was a long boat ride, but after arriving in China, I worked for a while in Tianjin. Because I didn't speak any Chinese I had a really hard time, but thankfully Mr. Shen acted as my go-between, so it wasn't too bad. Before long, I had managed to learn some Chinese, broken though it may have been, and at that point Mr. Shen told me that we would move to Tongzhou.

When I asked him what was so good about Tongzhou, he told me that there were many Japanese people there, as well as many kind Chinese people. So, as Mr. Shen wished, I decided to go with him to Tongzhou.

That was around the start of the year 1934. Just like Mr. Shen had said, many Japanese people lived in Tongzhou, and the Chinese people were very friendly to them.

And yet, I had difficulty understanding what those Chinese people were really thinking. Though they would say very nice things one day, the next day they might change completely and spout one obscenity after another.

In Tongzhou, we initially lived close to a school. There was also a Japanese Army barracks nearby, and I ended up doing business exclusively at Japanese Army facilities. When the Japanese soldiers realized that I was also Japanese, they were all too happy to buy up the goods that I brought to them.

Even after I married Mr. Shen, I continued to wear a Japanese kimono often, but he did not fancy that kind of clothing much, so I started wearing Chinese clothes from around the time we left Tianjin. I dressed myself completely in Chinese clothing and was even becoming quite proficient with the Chinese language.

Nonetheless, I had missed talking to Japanese people so much that I chatted with them in Japanese. There is no greater joy than encountering the language of your hometown in a far-off land. I also chatted with the Japanese soldiers whenever I visited their barracks, as it was just so wonderful to be able to speak Japanese again. The soldiers had mistaken me for a Chinese woman because of my clothes, but they were delighted to learn that I was Japanese. We enjoyed various conversations about our homeland.

Business also picked up. Mr. Shen's business mostly sold general supplies, but if needed, he would sell just about anything. His business was thus very convenient for buyers. He could get his hands on anything if you requested it in advance, so our business gradually began to prosper. Mr. Shen also went all the way to the vicinity of the north gate and made very good business with the Japanese people there.

Back then, most of the Japanese people lived on the east side of town. Because Mr. Shen and I lived on the west side of town, I did not see the Japanese on the eastern side often.

At that time, the town of Tongzhou was controlled by the East Hebei Anti-Communist Autonomous Government. This government was founded by Mr. Yin, and I had heard that it had an army exceeding 10,000 men. He was very pro-Japan, which made me proud to be Japanese.

Evil Korean slander of Japan

However, near the end of the spring of 1936, Mr. Shen instructed me to make sure that no one else knew that I was Japanese from then on. I asked him why, and he replied that China and Japan were going to go to war, and when that happened, it would cause serious trouble for others to know that I was Japanese. Because of that, he said that we must avoid associating with Japanese people so that people would not say that I was Japanese.

Privately, I felt very aggrieved, but I could not disobey Mr. Shen. Henceforth, I endeavored as far as possible to do as Mr. Shen told me. The hardest part of all was running into soldiers who I was acquainted with in the streets and being asked by them why we had stopped going to army facilities.

Before long, the atmosphere in pro-Japanese Tongzhou began to change everywhere. I started to feel a sort of chill towards Japan and the Japanese people. Somehow, I felt an understanding of what Mr. Shen might have meant when he told me to make sure that other people did not know that I was Japanese. Subsequently, I thought a lot about what might have been the cause in a place like Tongzhou of this chill towards Japan and the Japanese, but it was never really made clear to me.

However, the Koreans were eagerly telling the Chinese horrible things about Japan and the Japanese people. Koreans who did not know that I was Japanese told me also that Japan was an evil country that had conquered Korea and enslaved the Korean people. They said that Japan's next move would be to conquer China and enslave the Chinese, and therefore, we would have to drive the Japanese soldiers and civilians from Tongzhou. Better yet, they said, we had to kill them all. I was just about to blurt out, "You're wrong!", but if I had spoken to them they would have realized that I was Japanese, so I kept quiet and listened to them.

When Mr. Shen arrived there, he heard a lot of slander from the Koreans, and asked them, "But aren't you Japanese too?"

The Koreans became livid and shouted at us, "We are not Japanese, we are Koreans, and we're going to settle scores with the Japanese soon enough!" They spoke enthusiastically about a man named An Chung-gun who had assassinated a great villain named Ito

Hirobumi. They said that they were going to join forces with Chinese like us in order to kill the Japanese people and destroy the Japanese garrison.

I couldn't help but shudder reflexively. These Koreans were saying truly frightful things. I thought to myself that the Japanese would be in danger as long as these Koreans were here. Mr. Shen quietly listened to them without saying another word.

I heard the same sorts of things time and again, and gradually the atmosphere in the town changed.

Nevertheless, the Japanese soldiers and civilians knew nothing about it. I wanted to inform the Japanese right away, but Mr. Shen strictly forbade me from speaking to any Japanese people and would not allow it. The grim feelings that I kept bottled up inside me seemed to be growing stronger and stronger.

While walking through the streets, I wanted to say "Please be careful!" to the Japanese soldiers who I met, but the words did not come out. I gave them signals with my eyes as far as I could, but they did not understand me. Eventually the only people in Tongzhou who knew that I was Japanese were two or three of Mr. Shen's friends. Because the Japanese soldiers gradually returned home or transferred to other places, over time very few people still knew that I was Japanese.

The untrustworthy Peace Preservation Corps

Meanwhile, the soldiers of the East Hebei Anti-Communist Autonomous Government in Tongzhou began to act in a way that seemed somewhat strange. The army of the East Hebei Anti-Communist Autonomous Government was officially called the "Peace Preservation Corps", but the people in town just called it "the army". Tongzhou's Peace Preservation Corps appeared to get along very well with the Japanese military, but after Chiang Kai-shek began fighting with the Communist Party, some of the soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps started furtively whispering that the Communist Party would make China great and that Chiang Kai-shek was Japan's lackey. From that point, I steadily lost my trust in the soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps.

When I was out peddling, I encountered Japanese people, but I made sure to not speak to them much in accordance with what Mr. Shen had said. Then, as they walked away, the Koreans glared at them from behind and told the Chinese, "Those people are devils. They're murderers. Someday, we've got to wipe them out!"

In the beginning, even the Chinese did not pay much attention to what the Koreans were saying, but as the Koreans kept on repeating their message over and over, expressions that were somehow sinister came to steadily appear on the faces of the Chinese. Especially when the men of the Peace Preservation Corps began to say the same sorts of things as the Koreans, the expressions of the townspeople appeared completely different.

I became so worried that at one point I pleaded with Mr. Shen to let me inform the Japanese soldiers about this ominous mood, but he turned pale and, as if taken aback, insisted to me again and again that he absolutely forbid it and that I absolutely could not speak to them. With that, I lost my last chance to tell the Japanese soldiers about the mood of the town.

A futile message of warning

Near the end of the year 1936, the Chinese people's hatred of Japan deepened even further. Some said that this was because so many Japanese soldiers had been stationed across China, but it seemed like there was also more to it than that.

Though it felt horrible to act behind Mr. Shen's back, I wrote in detail on a piece of paper about what was happening with the Chinese and Koreans in Tongzhou and closed the message with a warning to please take precautions. Then, I threw the piece of paper into the Japanese barracks. This way, I could notify the Japanese soldiers about the situation in Tongzhou without speaking to them. I did the same thing two or three more times, but I never saw the Japanese soldiers change their behavior.

I couldn't leave things like that, so I had to think of some other way to let the Japanese soldiers know about the perilous atmosphere enveloping Tongzhou. When I heard that there was an inn named Kinsuiro in the Japanese residential zone on the east side of town that was frequented by Japanese soldiers, I dropped the same message about three times in front of Kinsuiro's back door. Even then, there was no change.

It may have been partly because I never completed elementary school and could not write very well. Perhaps the Japanese soldiers took one look at the messy writing and concluded that the messages were not reliable. Never had I felt so sorry for not having studied.

Voices saying "Death to all the Japanese" and "The Japanese are devils"

By the year 1937, the atmosphere had become even more extreme. The Chinese were openly talking as if the Chinese Army would win a decisive victory, saying that the Japanese Army had been defeated in Shanghai, Jinan, and even Dezhou. With each passing day, anti-Japanese feelings rose and the many Chinese voices calling for "Death to all the Japanese! Wipe them out!" grew more and more enthusiastic. At that time, people often told me, "The Japanese are devils. China will punish those devils." Whenever I heard those words, I had to listen while firmly biting down on my lip.

The Chinese children sang a song with the lyrics, "The demons will be defeated and the devils will be destroyed." Though it was a song about China destroying demons and devils, it was clear enough the Chinese were referring to Japan. It pained my heart deeply to have to endure day after day of these intolerable insults against Japan.

Still, my one consolation back then was Mr. Shen who encouraged me by telling me that if I patiently put up with it, the storm would pass soon enough. He also talked to me about

Osaka a lot. Because I was homesick, there was even one time that I spent the whole night listening to him while adding my own remarks occasionally.

At the end of March, Mr. Shen abruptly suggested going back to Japan. I was astonished. Why was Mr. Shen, who had insisted that I not speak to Japanese people and forget the fact that I was Japanese, suggesting that we go back to Japan? When he proposed going to Osaka, I thought that perhaps it was because the mood in Tongzhou, or rather in all of China, had turned so strongly against Japan.

However, Mr. Shen looked into various circumstances in Japan in order to return there, and he heard that Japan was buzzing with voices labeling China the enemy and calling for an attack on it. Upon learning this, Mr. Shen indicated at the end of April, "Let's try holding out in Tongzhou for a little while longer, and if it doesn't work out, we'll definitely move to Tianjin instead." With that, I made up my mind to do as Mr. Shen told me.

It had seemed like every day was a series of events stifling and suppressing me, but I was relieved a little to hear him say that we would move to Tianjin. He decided that we would move to Tianjin next year, and we agreed to make a renewed effort to build up his business.

However, by that time conditions in Tongzhou had made it impossible to make much profit from our business. Even so, our top priority was to make enough money to go on eating, so we strived to stay in business anyway. During this period, I walked through every corner of Tongzhou alongside Mr. Shen, from east to west and north to south, in order to do business.

The Japanese people's contempt for the Chinese

I often went to the Japanese residential zone, always accompanied by Mr. Shen. I was absolutely forbidden from conversing with the Japanese residents in Japanese. I really loved talking in Japanese, but Mr. Shen would not allow it. Consequently, I had to use Chinese even when speaking to the Japanese people in the Japanese residential zone. As could be expected, whenever I was speaking Chinese, the Japanese people treated me as being Chinese. Those were very depressing experiences for me.

Whenever I spoke to Japanese people as a Chinese woman, what I felt keenly was the Japanese people's sense of superiority over the Chinese. That is to say, the Japanese held the Chinese in contempt. They assumed that the Chinese people did not know any Japanese, and so often referred to me among their fellow Japanese people as a "chink" [chankoro] or a "brute" [kongedo]. Even though many Chinese people did not know the meaning of those words, they still implicitly understood the Japanese people's condescending attitudes towards them.

In light of this, it was perhaps inevitable that anti-Japanese feelings grew progressively stronger. This made me very unhappy. The Japanese people could insult me as much as they liked, but I did not want them to take that sort of attitude towards the Chinese living in Tongzhou. However, one could discern that some of the Japanese arrogantly believed that

they could get away with treating the Chinese like that because they had a strong army protecting the Japanese residential zone.

Mr. Shen was particularly worried that Japanese arrogance and Chinese anger would soon rise to the point of no return.

Because Mr. Shen had also spent time in Osaka, he bore no ill will towards the Japanese, and indeed, since he had married me, half his heart was Japanese. That was precisely why he was more troubled than anyone about the rise of anti-Japanese sentiment among the Chinese of Tongzhou. After returning home from a day's work, he told me at dinnertime, "It's hopeless, hopeless. Once the hearts of the Japanese and Chinese have grown this dark, anything could happen at any time."

The mood of the Chinese became worse and worse, but by the time that they began to curse the Japanese, the Koreans toned down their own aspersions against Japan and the Japanese people. In fact, as Chinese anger towards Japan steadily reached extreme levels, the standard slander from the Koreans stopped entirely. At the same time, some Koreans enlisted in the Japanese Army and became soldiers, so perhaps they were also starting to consider what was happening.

A squadron of students with bayonets and Chinese broadswords

By the end of May, antipathy to Japan had reached a fever pitch in Tongzhou.

At that point, Mr. Shen forbade me from going outside. Before I was able to go out for business as long as I was with Mr. Shen, but now, I was not allowed to do even that. He told me, "It's too dangerous, it's too dangerous." Then, when I asked him what was so dangerous, he told me that he didn't know whether the Chinese or the Japanese were going to be killed, and that I should make preparations to flee Tongzhou at any time.

In June, my strange feelings of gloom continued. While I stayed put in the house, my unease seemed to grow even stronger and I became extremely anxious, but there was no way to escape.

Around then, students wearing very unusual clothes gathered in Tongzhou and held a procession through the town while yelling, "Destroy Japan and drive the Japanese out of China!"

In July, they marched while howling slogans like "Death to all the Japanese!", "The Japanese are not human!", and "Kill the inhuman Japanese!" Some of the students were holding guns, but most were brandishing bayonets and Chinese broadswords.

Then, on I think the evening of July 8, the Chinese were whooping and hollering. When I asked Mr. Shen why they were making such a great fuss, he told me that the Japanese Army had been attacked by the Chinese Army near Beijing and had been completely

defeated and put to flight. The Chinese were loudly celebrating their victory. I was astonished to hear that, but thought to myself that it seemed the day we had all been expecting had finally arrived. Nonetheless, two or three days later I heard that, though the Japanese Army had been defeated following a confrontation at Marco Polo Bridge near Beijing, the Japanese subsequently brought a massive force to bear and counterattacked. A huge battle was taking place.

Given these circumstances, the men of the Peace Preservation Corps and the students joined forces in mid-July, and I was completely unable to go outdoors.

About that time, people started whispering that many Japanese had been killed in Shanghai. Rumors also circulated that many Japanese had been killed in Jinan as well. People were saying, apparently sincerely, that Chiang Kai-shek would crush the Japanese with an army of two million men, kill all the Japanese, conquer Korea, and even occupy Japan.

Mr. Shen was restless and nervous, and he told me to be sure that we could flee at any time. I, too, steeled myself mentally and collected together all my personal belongings so that I would be prepared no matter what happened or when it happened.

Around then, the Japanese soldiers that were always stationed in Tongzhou largely vanished. Had they gone to fight somewhere else?

The start of shooting at dawn on July 29

It happened on the morning of July 29 while it was still half-dark.

I was suddenly and violently awakened by Mr. Shen. It seemed that something terrible had happened. He told me that we were leaving immediately, so I grabbed two bundles of our possessions and flew out the door. Mr. Shen held onto my hand and we started to run through the town.

The streets were filled with people. Then, I heard the sound of fierce gunfire erupting from the direction of the Japanese Army barracks, but it was still half-dark and I had no idea what was going on. The only thing I did see were plumes of fire shooting up from the vicinity of the barracks.

While fleeing with Mr. Shen, I felt a conviction grow within me telling me that, "The Japanese Army will definitely win! There is no way that we could lose!" Around the time dawn broke, I could no longer hear the sound of gunfire, and I was certain that the Japanese Army had won.

Shortly after 8:00, I heard a noisy rabble of Chinese yelling out, "The Japanese soldiers were defeated! They were all killed!" Suddenly, it felt like blood was rushing to my head. Although I hadn't gone to the Japanese barracks very much recently, I had visited it many times in the past and had fond memories of it. I was seized with the thought of charging off

to fight with the Japanese soldiers. No matter what, I would end my life fighting together with them.

At that moment, I tried to shake free of Mr. Shen's grasp and run off, but he was holding onto my hand tightly and would not let go. I felt him tighten his grip on my hand, and then he embraced me in his arms and said, "No! No! You can't leave!" When I tried again to escape him, he suddenly struck my cheek hard.

That seemed to forcibly jolt me back to my senses. As I came to, Mr. Shen pulled me into the shade of a house while embracing me. He strongly scolded me, saying that he couldn't imagine what would be my fate if the others discovered at this moment that I was Japanese. Now, for the first time, I realized that he was right.

When I married Mr. Shen I became Chinese, but even so, I could never forget that my heart was Japanese. If no one had held me back at that moment, I probably would have run off into the Japanese Army barracks. Clearly, I have the blood of a Japanese woman, or perhaps a Kyushu woman, coursing through my veins. By restraining me, Mr. Shen saved my life.

The smell of blood from the Japanese residential zone

The sound of gunfire began to die down close to 9:00. The thought that the terrible incident might be over made me feel somewhat relieved. One person shouted that something interesting was happening in the Japanese residential zone. Because the residential zone was some distance from our home, I had no real sense of what he meant.

Before long, someone else said that women and children were being killed in the Japanese residential zone. Though I felt a shudder run down my spine, I wanted to see the morbid sight for myself. That is a normal human response. I tugged on Mr. Shen's hand and we ran in the direction of the Japanese residential zone. I cannot clearly explain why I did such a thing. It seems that I was perhaps acting purely on instinct. The reason why Mr. Shen was led here by me was also perhaps due to the mysterious bond of husband and wife.

As I got nearer to the Japanese residential zone, I detected an unusual smell. I thought that it might have been the smell of the Japanese Army barracks burning after the recent gunfight, but it wasn't only that. There was also another grisly odor. It was blood. The smell of human blood was wafting from the Japanese residential zone.

And yet, having come this far, it seemed hardly surprising that I would smell blood. There were many Chinese people on the side of the road, and standing among them were the strange-looking students from earlier dressed in black outfits. In fact, they were standing with the soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps.

The murder of a father protecting his daughter

Soon enough, a girl was dragged out of one of the Japanese houses.

It was a light-skinned girl who looked to be fifteen or sixteen years of age. A student had pulled her out of the house, and then announced that he had found her hiding and dragged her out here. The girl's face was frozen with fear, but her body was shaking uncontrollably.

The student who was holding the girl looked elated as if he were a cat that had just caught a mouse. He said something to the Peace Preservation Corps soldier at his side. When the soldier shook his head, the student grinned broadly and then slapped her where she stood five or six times. After that, he suddenly ripped her clothes.

In China, too, July is the height of summer and the weather is hot. The light summer clothing that the girl was wearing was easily ripped off, exposing her snow-white skin.

The girl was saying something to the student in desperation, but the student just sneered back at her and did not listen. She clasped her hands together and pleaded with him frantically. Several other students and soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps started to gather near them. The eyes of the assembled students and soldiers sparkled as they waited to see what the student would do next.

He abruptly shoved the girl down onto the side of the road and took off her underwear. The girl screamed, "Help me!"

At that moment, a Japanese man burst onto the scene. He threw himself atop the girl in order to shield her with his own body. It was probably the girl's father.

A Peace Preservation Corps soldier quickly used the butt of his rifle to deliver a brutal blow to the man's head. I think that I heard the sound of something being crushed. Though he had cracked the man's head, the man would still not separate from the girl's body. The Peace Preservation Corps soldier said something or other to him and pulled him away.

The blood of the man who appeared to be her father was pouring down the girl's face. The Peace Preservation Corps soldier who had pulled him away struck him on the head again with his rifle. Something sprayed from him violently in all directions, probably his cerebral fluids.

Next, two or three soldiers and two or three students began kicking and trampling his body. They tore through his clothes and exposed his skin, which was oozing with blood. In spite of this, they did not stop kicking and trampling him.

Soon one of the soldiers stabbed the man's stomach area with the bayonet affixed to his gun. Blood spurted out and flew onto the girl, who was laying, apparently unconscious, at his side.

Perhaps the soldier thought that just stabbing him in the belly was not enough. Next, he stabbed him in the chest. Just when I thought it might be over, the gruesome spectacle continued. The soldier stabbed him in the belly again, and then in the chest again. He kept on stabbing him over and over again.

Although many Chinese people were watching, they never said "ooh" or "wow" or anything else. They just quietly observed what the soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps were doing. Their brutal acts were not like anything I can describe. I could liken them to the acts of beasts or demons, acts of abject, pitiless cruelty, but it seems that there are no words that can truly express such inhumanity.

The students and soldiers kicked the corpse of the man who was probably the girl's father over the ground for a distance of about three meters as if they were rolling a log, and then returned to the girl who seemed to be unconscious.

And then they raped the girl

The girl had already been stripped naked. She was frozen with fear as the soldiers walked up to her. They spread her legs wide apart and were about to rape her, to commit the most despicable act a human can commit in front of a crowd of onlookers. Although they were Chinese men, what they were doing were not the acts of human beings.

However, their rape of the girl did not proceed easily, perhaps because she had never had any such experience before.

Three students spread out her legs as much as they could, and then one of them took a gun from a Peace Preservation Corps soldier and thrust its barrel into her vagina.

Although there were many Chinese people observing this nearby, none of them tried to stop the student or raised their voices. They did nothing more than watch the cruel acts of the students in complete silence.

From that point on, I could not see precisely what was happening because Mr. Shen and I were standing at a spot twenty meters away from the students. Or rather, it was because I could no longer open my eyes and face the horror. I clung firmly onto Mr. Shen's hand and closed my eyes tight.

Then, I heard a terrible cry that was not quite a scream or a shriek. Instinctively, I opened my eyes in shock.

What was it? While grinning happily, a soldier of the Peace Preservation Corps was cutting out the girl's genitals. My body was literally rattling as I shook at the unbelievable sight. Mr. Shen embraced my body tightly to comfort me.

I couldn't look! Still, even as I told myself that, my eyes would not close.

While shaking violently, I saw the soldiers slash her belly open lengthwise, then cut off her head with a sword. They tossed her head flippantly in the direction of the abandoned corpse of the man they had killed earlier. Her head rolled on the ground for a while before stopping at the side of the man's corpse.

The idea flashed in my mind that, if the man was the girl's father, at least the parent and his child were together now, and I reassured myself with that thought. And yet, it is strange that I would have thought of something like that after seeing such a macabre scene, and even stranger that I still remember that thought so long after it all happened.

The reason I was not suspected of being Japanese

I was so exhausted that I became unable to stand. My body somehow felt paralyzed, and I could no longer move. I stared fixedly at their savage act.

Blood was still slowly flowing from the gaping wound in the girl's belly, even though her body had no head. It was a truly bizarre sight. The sight of something so unimaginable may have deranged my mind a little, because I just stared at it blankly as if I had forgotten who I was.

It was then that Mr. Shen, who was still embracing me, said "Hey!", and shook me abruptly to bring me back to my senses. However, I felt a sudden pain shoot through my stomach and seemed to be about to vomit.

I squatted down by the roadside and tried to vomit, but nothing came out. Though Mr. Shen massaged my back, I was still not able to. Nonetheless, my stomach pains did not go away. Mr. Shen grunted and suggested that we return home. Even while desiring in my mind to return home right away, I shook my head.

They say that there is no cure for curiosity. Perhaps my curiosity ultimately proved stronger than my fear. After I shook my head, it seems that Mr. Shen resigned himself to carry on. He held my body in his arms and guided me further towards the Japanese residential zone.

It may have looked like my mind had gone blank, but each cruel sight was engraved deeply in my memory. Mr. Shen continued to cradle me in his arms, and this may have been the major reason why I was never noticed by the strange-looking students and the soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps.

Even though I was married to Mr. Shen, if the students and soldiers had realized that I was Japanese, they would certainly not have spared my life. Because I was walking unsteadily in the arms of a Chinese man, the students and soldiers noticed nothing suspicious about me and thus let me pass by them without objection.

A "human chain" even Satan could not have conceived

As we continued on towards the Japanese residential zone, even more horrible sights awaited us. It appeared that most of the Japanese had already been killed, but the students and soldiers were scouring the area like mad bulls in search of Japanese people. A man in the distance shouted, "There are Japanese people here!", and the soldiers and students around us immediately stampeded in that direction.

While supporting me in his arms, Mr. Shen followed them, and we saw a group of Japanese men being made to stand in front of five or six soldiers. The men were brought forward one by one. Once the Chinese soldiers and students had about ten Japanese men, they wound wire around their fingers so that each Japanese man's left hand was bound tightly to his right hand. After that, the Chinese took the bayonets that were fastened to their guns and plunged them into their bound palms to make holes in their hands.

In the face of such extreme pain, most of the men let out bloodcurdling shrieks. These were definitely not the acts of human beings. I thought to myself that even Satan could not have conceived of something so cruel, and yet, the Chinese students and soldiers were doing this evil deed quite casually.

No, not casually. Rather, the soldiers and students were positively joyous as they carried out tortures that would have appalled Satan himself. In the Japanese mind, to commit such an atrocity would be inconceivable, but what is inconceivable to the Japanese is quite normal to the Chinese. I learned for the first time that cruelty is normal behavior to the Chinese.

Among the roughly ten Japanese men who had been rounded up, there was a young boy who looked to be still a child. There was also an old man who looked to be over sixty years of age. In China, "respect the elderly" is a popular adage, but the students and soldiers did not seem to think that an elderly Japanese man was worthy even of being treated as a human being.

After having bound together the palms of each of the ten or so Japanese men with wire and gouged holes in them, the students and soldiers brought a much longer wire and strung it through the palms of all ten of them to form a human chain.

The Japanese men cried and wailed as this was being done. What I witnessed was so bizarre that it beggared description. Even today, fifty years later, it remains etched indelibly in my memory.

And that was not all. The students and soldiers took off all their underwear and then, of course, removed their shoes and socks as well. One of the students who was wielding a Chinese broadsword approached a Japanese man who looked to be about twenty years of age. The student made him spread his legs apart, and then he raised his sword and slashed off the man's penis.

The Japanese man had screamed "Help!", but the student had paid no heed. When the student slashed off his penis, the man screamed and probably lost consciousness just like that. Even so, he could not fall over. He could not fall because he was tied to the other men in the human chain. The students and soldiers saw this and chuckled.

On impulse, I tightened my hold on Mr. Shen. It seemed that Mr. Shen was also becoming agitated, because he was embracing my body even more strongly than before. Then he whispered in my ear, "Stay quiet and don't utter a single word." Naturally, there was nothing that I would have been able to say anyway, so I simply nodded in response.

Numerous Chinese people had gathered around Mr. Shen, but they were only watching what was happening and did not say anything. On their faces, I saw expressions that seemed to show an indifference that was as cold as ice. Although the students and soldiers were grinning and laughing happily, the ordinary Chinese watching them remained completely silent and expressionless. I thought to myself how incredible it was to see such a large number of Chinese people gathering here, and yet, not one of them tried to stop the students and soldiers or even smiled as the students and soldiers were. The ordinary Chinese just observed impassively and nothing more. Of course, even though they were Chinese, they may have been uncertain about what would happen to them if they spoke out, and thus they safely opted to do nothing more than look on coldly. This, too, was a sight so bizarre that it begged description.

The huge crowd of Chinese gradually began to move. There were both men and women in the crowd, and I was believed to be one of the Chinese women. Together with Mr. Shen, I obeyed the flow of the crowd and kept on moving towards the Japanese residential zone.

Murder and rape at Asahiken

The closer we got to the Japanese residential zone, the more I perceived something eerie in the atmosphere.

When we were near Asahiken, which was both an eatery and a brothel, two women were brought forward by soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps. Both of their faces were deathly pale. The shirt of one of the women was unbuttoned, exposing her chest. Because I had also been involved in that sort of work, I knew exactly what they had done to her. I also understood from the appearance of her open shirt that she had been treated in a very violent manner. Though I felt pity for her, I was helpless to act. There was truly nothing I could do. I could not even speak a word.

One of the two women had most likely resisted fiercely. Her cheeks were badly swollen and were even bleeding in places. Her hair was in disarray. She was in such a miserable state that I almost could not bear to look at her directly.

The soldier of the Peace Preservation Corps who had captured the two women forced the one with the swollen cheeks to stand before him, and then cut open the front side of the clothes she was wearing with one slice of his bayonet.

When the woman instinctively attempted to cover her chest with her hands, the soldiers suddenly slashed at her hand with his bayonet. Her left arm from the elbow down was lopped clean off, but she never shrieked or cried out. All I heard from her was what sounded like a faint moan before she dropped straight to the ground.

Even then, the soldier dragged her back into a standing position and stabbed her full force in the chest with his bayonet. The woman fell right where she stood as if her body had caved in on itself. For good measure, the soldier stabbed the collapsed woman a second time in her belly.

In spite of myself, I was on the verge of shouting "Stop it!", but at that moment, Mr. Shen caught me tightly in his arms and whispered, "You mustn't, you mustn't", into my ear. I felt like my whole body was about to explode with fear and anger.

The soldier stabbed her five or six times in quick succession, before turning towards the other woman and flashing an evil grin. In front of all the onlookers, he swiftly tore off all the clothes she was wearing. Then, he pinned her on the ground and immediately started to rape her as everyone else watched.

I believe that such human acts ought to be sacred, but when I saw the soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps raping that girl I could not imagine anything more depraved and repulsive.

After one soldier was finished, the next soldier raped her. Once about three soldiers had finished, a student took his turn to pounce on her. One man after another repeated this depraved, beyond beastly act.

Still in Mr. Shen's arms, I continued watching all this while wondering if I was asleep and having some sort of nightmare. Finally, it seemed that the foul Chinese beasts were sufficiently satisfied. Several of them drew together and seemed to be talking about various things. After a while, one of the soldiers raised his gun and aimed it in her direction.

Naturally, the Chinese were still observing this event unfold, but at that moment, voices that seemed to be murmuring "Whoa!" swept through the crowd. Perhaps frightened by the noise of the crowd, two soldiers and a student dragged the woman back inside of Asahiken.

Shortly afterward, we heard the shriek of a woman. Most likely the soldiers and students had lost their interest in the Japanese woman and had the ones who carried her away kill her. Still, the Chinese onlookers couldn't do a thing about it, and neither could Mr. Shen or I.

By this point, I did not want to go on, but though I thought about returning home, Mr. Shen was still embracing me tightly and showed no signs of loosening his grip. Pulled onward by Mr. Shen, I entered the Japanese residential zone.

An old lady's dying prayer to Buddha

What awaited us in the Japanese residential zone was beyond description, like a scene straight out of Hell. Many Japanese people had been killed, or rather, were still in the process of being killed. There were sounds that seemed like shrieks echoing from various directions, and then I heard the unmistakable sound of someone screaming, "Aah!"

I suppose that that person screamed many times. I tried not to listen, but I couldn't help but hear it. Even when I covered my ears, I could hear it. When I tried to cover my ears again, Mr. Shen stayed my hands as if to tell me that I should not do that.

At that time, we were close to Shozanro, an inn located midway between Asahiken and Kinsuiro.

We saw an old lady running towards us while struggling to maintain her balance, but a student was in close pursuit. The student brandished his broadsword, and suddenly brought it down upon her.

Because the old lady was fleeing desperately from him, the strike missed her head and instead chopped off her left arm at the shoulder. She fell to the ground facing upwards. The student stabbed her once in the belly and once in the chest, and then left her for dead.

Because no one else had seen the murder but Mr. Shen and I, I ran over to her and gently put my hand on the old lady's forehead. The old lady slowly opened her eyes and mumbled, "It's regrettable", before adding, "Avenge my death."

I caressed her forehead without saying a word. "Ichizo, Ichizo", she called out. That must surely have been the name of her son or grandson. I was helpless to save her, and so I just caressed her forehead silently.

Finally, the old lady uttered the prayer, "Praise be to Amida Buddha", before she stopped breathing.

Those final words she spoke to me, "Praise be to Amida Buddha", lingered on in my ears and may indeed have been the reason that I ended up coming to the Nishi Honganji branch temple in Beppu.

Manhandling a pregnant woman

At the time that I put my hand on the old lady's forehead, I heard a clamor of voices somewhere nearby. Mr. Shen held onto my body and we walked in the direction of the noise.

When we got there, we saw a large crowd of Chinese, including a total of roughly ten students and soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps. There were also several soldiers, not from the Peace Preservation Corps, but from the Republic of China Army. They had all gathered there because a Japanese woman had been captured.

The woman had a very large belly. It looked like she was seven or eight months pregnant.

The students and the soldiers from both the Peace Preservation Corps and the regular army were chatting noisily while dragging a woman beside the entranceway of a house. The woman was unable to speak a word.

I suppose that she was too scared to even open her mouth. Even though I am a woman, as I observed her shuddering with fear I was taken by how beautiful she was.

However, when one of the students attempted to rip off the clothes she was wearing, she fought back fiercely. She kicked and screamed through clenched teeth over and over. A student struck her in the cheek two or three times, but she just kept up her stubborn resistance. Periodically, she let out tearful cries.

The soldiers and students huddled together again to confer. Even the crowds of Chinese who had gathered there were increasingly unnerved at such excessive violence against a pregnant woman.

The glorious final moments of a resisting Japanese man

At that very moment, a Japanese man carrying a wooden sword leapt forth. The man shouted, "What are you doing to my wife and child? Stop it now!"

With that, the situation changed dramatically. If that man had never burst onto the scene, maybe they would have spared the pregnant woman's life, but now her prospects looked unambiguously bleak.

Without responding to the Japanese man's command, one of the students lunged at him with his Chinese broadsword, but the man nimbly dodged the attack. Then, the man struck a tremendous blow to the student's shoulder with his wooden sword. The student let out a moan and fell to the ground.

Next, the soldiers of the Republic of China Army and the Peace Preservation Corps affixed their bayonets to their guns and charged towards him. As I was watching this, in my heart I was cheering, "Hang in there, Japanese man! Hang in there!", but of course I couldn't possibly have said that aloud.

Though seven or eight Chinese soldiers were steadily surrounding him, the man showed no fear. He readied his sword in attack position and never took a step back. I could only think to myself, "What gallantry! That is truly a Japanese man!"

However, a soldier of the Republic of China Army who was circling behind him swiftly thrust his bayonet at the man's backside.

What was he going to do? Once more, the Japanese man easily dodged his opponent's blow before delivering a stunning riposte with his wooden sword to the soldier's shoulder. The soldier dropped his gun and cowered on the ground.

Unfortunately, that was the Japanese man's last move. Just when the man struck down the soldier, a member of the Peace Preservation Corps approached him from the side and plunged his bayonet into the man's waist. As soon as the Japanese man fell over, the remaining soldiers and students converged on him and began to kick and punch him mercilessly.

The man groaned once, and then fell silent. He never let out any dying cries, but it seemed that was because he had already completely lost his capacity to vocalize. The man lay motionless even while the soldiers and students continued to beat him. Still, it was what came next that was a truly heartbreaking act of savagery.

His head was scalped, his eyes gouged out, and his intestines chopped up

First, one of the students flayed the man's scalp off with his Chinese broadsword. I had never seen anything so cruel. This was not the act of a human being. It was more like the act of a devil, though I think that even a devil would not have done something so barbaric.

After the student had scalped him, next he gouged out his eyes. It appeared that the Japanese man was still alive up to that moment, as I saw his arms and legs twitch faintly while his eyes were being cut out.

Once the student had gouged out his eyes, he stripped off all the man's clothes. Then, the student flipped the body on its back and used his Chinese broadsword to rip open the belly. He sliced the man's belly sideways and lengthwise, and from there tugged on his intestines. When the man's intestines emerged with a sickening slurp, the student quickly proceeded to have them stretched out.

I did not know that a human's intestines were so long. They looked to be close to ten meters. The student shouted something, but I was not listening. Though I was still clinging to Mr. Shen, I felt as if I had been pulled into another world. Somewhere in my head, I thought earnestly that if Hell existed, this was Hell.

At that point, I heard someone shout, "Ha!", and when I raised my eyes once more in shock, the student had brought his Chinese broadsword down on the man's intestines. He didn't stop there. The man's intestines, which had been stretched out with the help of the other students, were hacked again and again into pieces.

Once the student had chopped the man's intestines into roughly foot-long slices, he flung the minced intestines in the direction of the pregnant woman who had been steadfastly watching the whole gruesome spectacle. When a piece of her husband's intestines struck the face of the woman, whose belly was swollen with his child, she shrieked and fainted.

The soldiers and students who saw this clapped gleefully. They then tossed two or three of the remaining slices towards the crowds of Chinese onlookers and shouted to them, "A Japanese man's intestines! They're really tasty! Cook 'em up and eat 'em!"

Nonetheless, not one of the Chinese observing this attempted to pick up any of the chopped intestines. The soldiers and students were no longer human beings. They had become wild animals, demons, or prehistoric beasts. However, the other Chinese ultimately could not bring themselves to join in on their inhuman acts. They were willing to watch, but were not ready to abandon their humanity.

An unforgivable act towards a pregnant woman and her baby

Once the soldiers and students were finished chucking around the minced intestines, they began to gather around the pregnant woman who was lying unconscious on the ground.

It looked like the woman was already about to deliver her child. She was also starting to bleed. Perhaps it was the first time that the soldiers and students had seen something like this, but their excitement had far from cooled. They assembled beside her and chatted noisily amongst themselves. It appeared that they had taken her underwear and were now attempting to extract the baby that was on the verge of being born. Because the soldiers and students were surrounding her and making a great commotion, I was unable to grasp exactly what was going on. However, I discerned that they may have been looking for something like a wire in order to extract the baby.

At that moment, it seems that the pregnant woman came to and realized what was happening. She staggered to her feet and made a frantic bid to escape. Even the Chinese people looking on privately rooted for her, but none of them would say that aloud, let alone save her from her fate. They were all afraid of being killed just as the pregnant woman's husband had been.

One of the students who saw the woman get up shoved her and sent her flying back to the ground.

A soldier immediately rushed towards her and turned her onto her back. Because her underwear had already been taken from her earlier, she was exposed in the most

humiliating way that a woman can be, made only worse by her huge belly in the seventh or eighth month of pregnancy.

The soldier, who looked to be a member of the Republic of China Army, stood directly beside her. I wondered what he would do. I kept on praying fervently from the bottom of my heart that, as a fellow human being, he would do no more harm to her.

However, the Chinese soldier had no shred of humanity left in his heart. He drew his blade and immediately plunged it into the woman's stomach.

Red blood gushed out of her belly. It spurting out of her with such force that I believed that the streams of blood would fly into my face and I instinctively shut my eyes.

In fact, I was situated over ten meters away, so it could not possibly have reached my face, though the surge of blood that erupted from her belly when it was cut open was incredible indeed.

Even the woman's final death scream was the most tragic cry imaginable. I was amazed that she had had that much energy left in her.

The soldier who had sliced open her belly sunk his hand in, searching for her baby. He didn't seem to be able to find it, because next he tried to cut into her from her vagina. Finally, he pulled the baby out and beamed with joy.

The soldier, who held the baby in one hand, tossed it like a ball in the direction of the students and soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps. However, none of them bothered to catch it, and it struck the ground with what sounded like a wet thud. The soldiers and students standing around the place where the baby had landed made a great commotion, and it seemed like they then trampled it under their boots.

The sight of such unfathomable ruthlessness seemed to have astonished even the Chinese onlookers. After the soldiers and students had left, one of the Chinese brought a newspaper and gently covered her face and eviscerated belly with it. This was the only act of compassion I ever saw from them.

My husband was Chinese and I was Japanese

After that horrible experience, I felt too exhausted to even stand. When I told Mr. Shen that I wanted to go home, he agreed and we began to head back.

Before long, we heard someone shout, "Japanese people are being executed!" I thought to myself, "On top of everything else, do they still have to execute them?" And yet, if the students and soldiers were involved, I suppose that it would be inevitable. I did not want to see it, and at any rate, I wanted to go home. Nevertheless, Mr. Shen said, "Let's go", and carried me off in the direction of the execution grounds.

It was at that moment that I suddenly realized something. My husband, Mr. Shen, was Chinese. Because I had married him at our wedding and became his wife, I had assumed that I, as the wife of a Chinese man, was also Chinese. Both when we were doing business and when we were living at home together, I persisted throughout in thinking that I was Chinese and gradually convinced myself of it. Until now, my goal had been to become a true Chinese as soon as possible. Within one or two years, I was able to speak good Chinese and, by all appearances, I was a Chinese woman. In fact, all of Mr. Shen's new friends saw me only as Chinese, and I had many conversations with them about Chinese matters.

Now, I felt a surge of unbearable emotion at the prospect of seeing more Japanese people subject before my eyes to the Chinese people's cruel methods of killing. Something, call it my Japanese blood or perhaps my Japanese sentimentality, was starting to stir within me.

I had already seen more than enough inhumanity towards Japanese people and had tried to go home, but Mr. Shen was Chinese. He couldn't understand what was in my heart. I wanted to tell him that I did not want to see any more acts of cruelty against Japanese people, but as a Chinese man, it seemed that he simply could not feel the same profound sorrow as I did when I saw a Japanese person being killed. Even though I wanted to go home, he took me to the plaza where the Japanese were being executed. It was an empty lot of land on the east side of the Japanese residential zone.

A final cry of "Long live the Japanese Empire!"

Dozens of Chinese people who were neither soldiers nor students had already begun to congregate at that place. There looked to be probably over fifty Japanese people crowded onto one spot of the execution grounds. There were also many soldiers of the Republic of China Army. The students and soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps stood behind them.

The Japanese people assembled there had few possessions on their bodies. They had probably been robbed by the students or the soldiers of the Republic of China Army or Peace Preservation Corps. One can perhaps assume that men who carry nothing with them are victims of robbery.

Soon enough, the soldiers of the Republic of China Army yelled out something. The students and soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps promptly rushed to the rear area where two machine guns were set up.

That was when I understood what the Chinese soldiers intended to do. The fifty-odd Japanese people surely also understood everything as soon as they saw the machine guns. Their faces were all frozen with fear.

Before anyone was able to say a thing, the soldiers of the Republic of China Army kneeled down before the machine guns. If they touched the triggers, it would all be over. An indescribable chill of horror filled the plaza.

At that moment, one of the Japanese people shouted, "Long live the Japanese Empire!" Most of the other Japanese immediately followed suit and began to shout, "Long live the Japanese Empire", but before they had finished shouting, fire shot forth from the machine guns.

The Japanese fell in rapid succession. When they were hit by the machine gun bullets, they winced briefly and remained standing for a time. After a while, they tumbled to the ground. "A while" might give the impression that it was a long time, but I suppose that it was actually just two or three seconds. And yet, to the people who were watching, the time between when the bullet hit and the man fell seemed terribly long indeed.

It was a true scene of carnage, but I could find no words to express it. I just stared in shock until the sound of the machine guns stopped.

All the fifty-odd Japanese people were strewn out on the ground. I heard faint moaning from some of them, but most seemed to be dead.

However, the soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps came forward and proceeded to walk through the piles of corpses. Just as I was wondering what they were doing, they began using their bayonets to stab, one by one, all the people who were not yet dead from machine gun fire. The soldiers gave the bodies of the Japanese a kick to check if they were dead, and if the soldiers detected even a slight movement from a body, they would instantly plunge their bayonet into it. I wondered if I could accept such a horrible thing, but there was nothing I could do anyway. Once they had made sure that the Japanese people were dead, all the students and the soldiers from both the Peace Preservation Corps and the Republic of China Army withdrew.

No sooner had they left than the Chinese onlookers poured down to the place where the corpses lay. When I looked to see what they would do, they started to search the corpses and steal any of the various possessions they still had on them.

What was the world coming to? I had no idea what to make of this. Rather than just being afraid, I abhorred to stay at that place another minute or even another second, so I pulled on Mr. Shen's arm and left with him. I could no longer fathom any of the thoughts rushing through my mind.

I did not want to be in the town any longer, so, as I pulled on Mr. Shen's arm, I started walking away from the east side of town in the hopes of leaving on the north side. There was a road inside the city walls that led back to my house, and because it was the closest path, I entered through the North Gate where I passed close to Kinsuiro.

The blood red pond of Kinsuiro

There was a pond near Kinsuiro where I saw forty or fifty Japanese people being forced to stand.

Shocked to have stumbled upon yet another tragic sight, I tried to turn back, but because there were several Chinese people nearby, I wasn't able to. If I had told Mr. Shen that I didn't want to see this and had turned around, the other Chinese people would certainly have found that to be suspicious. The Republic of China Army had been telling everyone that the Japanese were wicked people who should be killed, and the Communist Party had echoed the same message. Therefore, the majority of the Chinese people living in Tongzhou undoubtedly believed that Japanese people were evil demons. If I had left right then to avoid having to see Japanese people get killed, the Chinese people of Tongzhou would certainly have found that unusual. It would not have been good if even Mr. Shen was looking at me strangely. That's how I ended up having to stand by at the Kinsuiro pond and watch what would surely be yet another massacre of Japanese people.

There appeared to be forty or fifty Japanese people gathered there, mostly men, though there were a few women who looked to be over age fifty. Among them were also the roughly ten Japanese people from earlier whose hands were tied with wire and then all strung together with a large wire that ran through the holes that were cut in their palms. The students and soldiers of both the Peace Preservation Corps and the Republic of China Army were also present.

A Japanese man of about fifty years of age was the first one to be brought forward by the Chinese soldiers and students. One of the students struck him with his Chinese broadsword, aiming at his neck, but he missed and hit the man's shoulder instead. A man who appeared to be an officer of the Republic of China Army immediately snatched away the student's sword and, with the help of two other soldiers, lifted the injured Japanese man who had fallen to the ground back upright. He made the Japanese man stick out his head further, and lopped it off with one blow of the broadsword.

The officer grinned as the man's head fell to the ground in front of him with a plunk. A soldier of the Peace Preservation Corps kicked the Japanese man's head as if it were a football and sent it flying into the nearby pond.

Then, the officer pulled his next victim from the group, and this time, he brought his broadsword straight down onto the man's forehead with all his might. The man's forehead was split wide open and his brain fluids exploded in all directions. After killing these two Japanese men, the officer raised his hand and made a signal to the other Chinese, then departed in a hurry.

As soon as the soldiers and students saw the officer's signal, they immediately pounced upon the rest of the Japanese people. The forty or fifty Japanese were butchered one by one,

and their bodies were all cast into the pond. It took them less than ten minutes to slaughter and dispose of all the Japanese.

Before my eyes, the water in the pond was turning the color of blood. By the time that all the Japanese were thrown in, it had become completely red.

My divorce and return home impelled by hatred of the Chinese

I couldn't bear it any longer. I pulled on Mr. Shen's hand and started to run away from that place, but without wanting to, I cast one parting glance at the pond. Floating on the surface of the bright red water, there was a single lotus flower in bloom. Seeing that made me think that perhaps many of the dead would be carried safely to Buddha's realm where lotus flowers bloom in abundance.

By the time that I arrived back at home with Mr. Shen, I was unable to speak a word. Mr. Shen tried his best to comfort me. Even so, the more he tried to console me the more my conviction grew that he, too, was Chinese.

It was a little past noon. A single Japanese aircraft flew overhead and someone shouted, "The Japanese Army is here!" One could hear the distant sound of stamping army boots. All the Chinese soldiers of the Peace Preservation Corps and the Republic of China Army, as well as the students, left Tongzhou when they heard that the Japanese Army had arrived.

The soldiers and students who had committed such unspeakable atrocities, atrocities beyond anything that even a demon or wild beast would commit, bolted from Tongzhou like startled hares the moment that somebody told them that the Japanese Army was here. And yet, as I listened to the frantic footsteps of the fleeing Chinese, I felt no sense of triumph over their cowardly retreat, only anger that the Japanese Army had not come sooner.

In fact, the Japanese Army did not arrive until the following day. The Chinese soldiers had fled at the mere mention of the Japanese Army. How did these Chinese soldiers, who would not stand a chance against Japan in a war, manage to play the role of cat burglars and pull off such a crime right under the nose of the Japanese Army?

It was said that over 300 and close to 400 Japanese people were killed at that time by the Chinese. (EDITOR'S NOTE: The actual number was around 250.)

Because of that incident, I gradually became embittered against the Chinese people. Even though my husband was Chinese, I came to hate them.

As a result, I ultimately separated from Mr. Shen and returned to Japan in 1940.

However, I could never forget my haunting memories of July 29, 1937. Even today, I remember each and every thing I witnessed as vividly as if it was yesterday, and I know now that a Hell just as real as that described in any religious text does exist in this world.