

The Origins of the US Army's Korean Comfort Women

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Introduction

This book is about Koreans and sex.

I have already written a number of articles on this subject and have discussed it in lectures. This book is an original work that I wrote based upon those articles and lectures.

Naturally sex is something that everyone is interested in from the moment that they hit puberty, but the root of my way of thinking about sex dates back even further than that.

It all goes back to my experiences in the Korean War which started over sixty years ago in 1950 when I was only ten years old. My memories of that time are unforgettable and have run through my mind countless times since then. As a witness of what happened, I have recounted what I saw for posterity. The things that I need to say range from amusing to tragic, but I have cautioned myself to never stray from the truth.

During the Korean War, the soldiers of the United Nations were a "peacekeeping force", and we thought of them as guardian angels protecting our democracy from communist rule. And yet, in my own home village, some truly dreadful acts of sexual violence against women were perpetrated by the US-led UN Army that we Koreans believed was our ally. Could it be that human beings are reduced to the level of beasts in times of war? By this point in time it is no longer possible to verify just how widespread such sexual assaults were. In my village, where Confucian ethical traditions were strong, brothels had been forbidden, but under the strain of war and the fear of rapes, the residents had little choice but to accept prostitution.

This is the story of the US Army's comfort women, a story which neither Japan, Korea nor international society can ignore when discussing the comfort women problem. However, mention of this topic has long been considered taboo within South Korea. The book "Troublesome Korea," published in Japanese by *Sankosha*, included a dialogue between myself and Oh Sŏn-hwa which took place in 1997. I mentioned that the UN Army had engaged in mass rape in my home village, which resorted to prostitution in order to defend itself from further acts of rape. The attention we brought to the issue was not at all well received in South Korea. Indeed, the Korean media, including the TV network *MBC*, subjected us to relentless criticism.

Today the problem of the so-called "comfort women" is a major source of discord in Japan and Korea. As Korea-Japan relations have hit a low point, there has been an explosion of anti-Japanese and anti-Korean literature, including many books on the comfort women. It is an undeniable truth that sex is an unavoidable part of war, but in the context of the old Japanese Army, the "comfort women" are seen internationally as an issue of "sexual slavery" due to misinformation printed in the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper.

Given these circumstances, I have avoided thinking in black-and-white terms, of anti-Japanese versus anti-Korean, attack versus defense, and legitimate arguments versus illegitimate arguments. Nor should this be a case that is prosecuted through the lens of modern-day human rights. The comfort women problem arose amidst the bloodshed of war, and I would like people to consider it as a matter of sex by soldiers in war, in which neither human rights nor basic humanity exist at all.

Nevertheless, this book's treatment of the comfort women problem does not simply adopt a pacifist-based anti-war stance. Instead, I have examined the matter by looking at war and sex crimes from the perspective of sex being the most basic human instinct. The questions I want to pose concern not only a mere problem of individuals, but also a problem of society.

For example, in the case of Korea, which has for ages adhered to Confucian ethical traditions, I ask if these traditions were maintained in a time of war and national emergency. I ask what sex and sexual morals are in a Confucian society which values chastity as much as life itself. However, I will not comment on the economic side of sexual norms and the prostitution industry.

Concerning the relationship between Japan and Korea, I have always been interested in an unbiased cultural comparison of the two nations. Though there have been times that I felt it was dangerous to talk about the comfort women problem, to be honest, that has actually increased my interest in the subject. Objective scholarship is safe, but politics is dangerous, which means that this subject is on the threshold between what is considered safe and dangerous.

In this book, I will also touch on the unsavory aspects of the Korean Confucian stance towards sex and chastity. From there, I will delve into a variety of related issues, including marriage and divorce, the mistress system, the crime of adultery, and teahouse prostitution.

Sex is something which is linked to the survival of the species, and because it also feels good, one might even say that sexual love is a gift from heaven. Still, pleasure is something that can also corrupt humans and bring us down to the level of animals. It is well known that religious leaders and sages have warned about the dangers of sex, and sexual repression is clearly a major cause of sex crimes.

In this book I have contemplated the relationship between sexual violence and prostitution by observing humans at war. As a quintessential case study of this relationship, I put forward the example of my own village which was steeped in the tradition of Confucian sexual morality but which was transformed almost overnight into a "prostitution village" during the war. However, I do not intend to convey that my point of view is the definitive truth—this is a matter that I, along with the readers of this book, want to continue to think about.

Table of Contents

Introduction

1. The Korean War As I Experienced It

- The outbreak of the Korean War
- Under North Korean rule
- Return to South Korean rule
- The invasion of the Chinese Army
- The arrival of the UN Army
- Sexual violence by the UN Army
- Embracing prostitution

2. From Rape to Prostitution

- The "necessary evil" of prostitution
- The so-called "comfort women problem"
- Sexual violence by the US Army and Korea-American relations
- Sex and war

3. The Spread of Prostitution

- Widespread prostitution in South Korea
- Coffeehouses
- Listening to the waitresses' stories
- Seeking marriage

4. Sexual Mores and the Idea of Chastity in Korea

- Sexual mores and prostitution
- The root of Korea's traditional concept of sexual chastity
- The concept of sexual chastity in Korea
- Identity through sexual chastity
- The nationalism of sexual chastity

5. Diary of a Japanese Military Brothel Manager

- My approach to reading the book
- How the diary came to be published
- Diaries are not intended to be made public
- The format of the diary

- A loyal subject
- Life as a "receptionist"
- Homesickness
- Logistics and comfort stations
- The truth about the comfort stations
- The truth about the comfort women
- Comfort stations under military administration
- To conclude

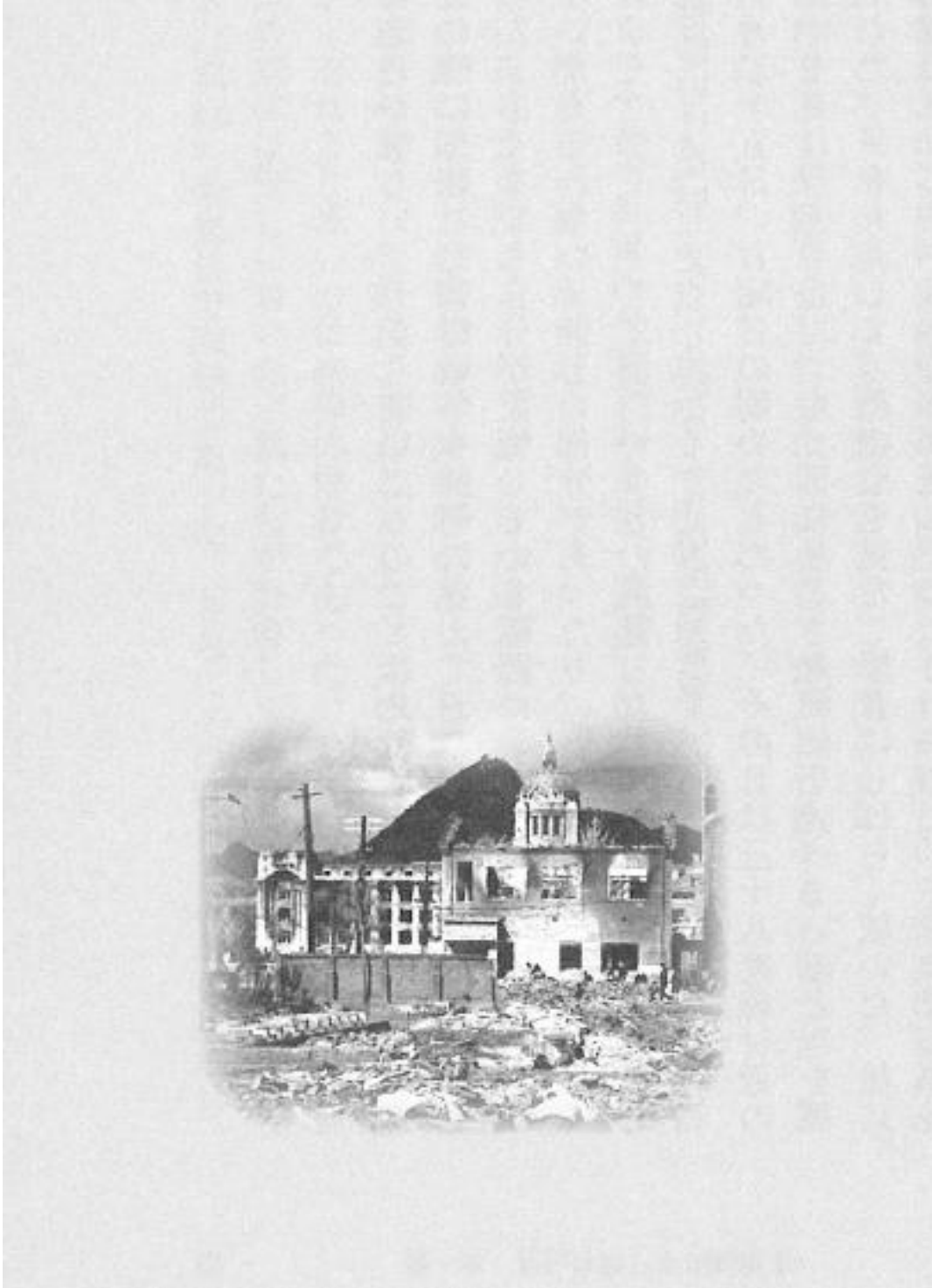
6. The Korean War and Changes in South Korean Society

- South Korean society in the aftermath of World War II
- Society after the Korean War
- Anti-communism and the military coup d'état
- Sexual torture and the Democracy Movement
- The growth of Christianity in South Korea
- The modernization of South Korea and the "New Community Movement"
- Is war just or unjust?

Conclusion

Further Reading

Chapter 1. The Korean War As I Experienced It



The outbreak of the Korean War

Although people become more forgetful as they get older, it is said that one's childhood memories remain the clear. I have vivid memories of what I experienced at the age of ten during the Korean War, which even today I have still not been able to forget. Granted, because each person can only recount the things that they personally remember, in a way our memories are somewhat imprecise. Some parts are remembered in great detail whereas others slip out of mind. At that time my psychological state was a chaotic mixture of emotions, of bitterness, fear, and fascination, but I never felt the sort of pacifist worldview that says that war is totally wrong.

It all started on the morning of June 25, 1950, a Sunday. That day we were supposed to go see a military procession or something like that near the 38th parallel. I was awakened by my mother and while I was eating breakfast an explosion ripped through the air. I turned to face my mother with eyes open wide. The loud booms continued for some time. After a while we realized that shots were being fired from north of the 38th parallel into the south. Far in the distance we heard the sounds of vehicles being driven and what seemed to be people cheering. My father said that we need to "evacuate".

My father said the word "evacuate" quite naturally, but it is not a common word in our language and it sounded unusual to my ears. It may have been a word used quite often before World War II.

My father needed to evacuate only my older sister and me first. He said that he would gauge the situation and evacuate later if necessary, so he stayed at home with my mother.

My older sister and I departed with relatives for Seoul. Seoul was about forty kilometers away, a distance which we walked amongst a crowd of refugees.

I could hear intermittent gunfire far off in the distance, but I got the impression that we were well ahead of the enemy. The suburban town of Ŭijŏngbu is located between Seoul and my home village close to Mount Tobong, so we decided to stop for the night at the base of the mountain. I had heard that there were wildcats in the area that looked like tigers, but what was even more scary than wild animals was the roaring of artillery.

The following day we reached my uncle's house in Seoul. Not long thereafter, his home would be crammed with several of our relatives' families who were evacuating from the surrounding countryside. Later, when my mother arrived, I realized how serious the situation was. We all made my uncle's home our temporary refuge as we evacuated.

At night, when my uncle came back from work, he was stunned to see such a large number of uninvited guests in his home. He had been a police officer when Korea was under Japanese rule and continued to work at the police station after the end of World War II. We all respected him for being the most successful member of the family. However, he did not believe our story that we were fleeing an oncoming war, so he told us, "You can stay here one

night but tomorrow you have to go back." He spoke to us so coldly, just as we felt that we were free from the uncertainties of war. As a police officer, my uncle believed that he was well-versed in intelligence matters and would know if a major war was brewing.

And yet, that was the night that the war came to Seoul. In the middle of the night the booming of guns filled the darkened skies. The sound of artillery and panicky civilian voices were audible from the eastern side of Seoul right through to the western side. At my uncle's house, I thought about all the trouble we were in while the gunfire outside grew louder and louder. I felt as if the artillery shells would fall right onto my head, but I managed to convince myself that my cotton mattress would protect me. I crawled underneath the wooden floorboards, covered myself with the mattress, and held out there, all the while shivering with fear.

The next morning everyone else was gone. Everyone who had stayed with my uncle had evacuated at some point in time. Alarmed, we were about to go too, but by then even the owners of the house, my uncle's family, had slipped away. Ultimately we, who were the last ones left behind, decided to evacuate with my cousin, who had been raised in our house as a brother, who was fleeing south with his wife.

My mother put some money that my father had given her into her stomach band and we set out on foot, but when we reached the bank of the Han River we found that we could not cross as the South Korean Army had dynamited the bridge. We had to pay a steep fee in order to charter a boat to get across the river.

At the place where we crossed was a middle-aged man drenched in water who was weeping loudly. He said that his boat had capsized in the river and that his wife and children had been swept away by the current. He himself almost drowned but finally managed to clamber onto the shore. We did feel bad for him, but we carried on past him just like that. We could barely handle our own problems and had no time to care for others.

Breathing a little easier after having safely crossed the Han River, we met up with other relatives along the way. However, that night, while the booming of the artillery continued, we could not even see the road in the pitch blackness and we ran through a field of green onions near what is the Kangnam District of modern-day Seoul. Because there were so many of us, we made a considerable commotion trampling through the green onion stalks, and we were afraid that we might be found by the enemy. Also, though we found a storage shed in which to spend the night--it was a terrifying experience. While we were all huddled together in the shed, some people cried out when a searchlight passed over us.

As my mother ran out of money, our relatives gradually split from the group. We felt betrayed by the ones who left us. However, my cousin and his wife stayed by our side during the evacuation and we were grateful to them for looking after us right to the end.

The next day we continued to flee southward. In the sky, we witnessed several Soviet planes attacked by American planes, which then plummeted to the earth in smoke and flames. It was an interesting sight to see.

Before long, the money that my mother had received from my father ran out, and we carried on by begging. When my mother had money, she was able to share some of it with my cousin, but now the three of us were a burden to him. We stayed for a while in a farmer's barn and my cousin went around trying to sell crab and clams which he had gathered from the seashore.

Next, we arrived at Namyang, which is in the Kyŏnggi Province west of Suwŏn, about forty kilometers from Seoul. Because the North Korean Army was advancing along the central roadways, it seemed like a safe spot. Namyang thus became the final stop of our evacuation and we survived primarily on grain and other food that my cousin and his wife received in exchange for farm work. We spent over one month there.



A scene of devastation in war-torn Seoul

By the beginning of August, we had been away from home for forty days. However, when we heard that the North Korean Army was still marching southward, with no sign that the military situation would change, we realized that there was no point in continuing to live as refugees. We decided to return to our village.

On the way back we felt anxious about the war and worried about whether or not our father was safe. First, we walked forty kilometers to Seoul, and then, from there, another forty kilometers to our village. There was not a single car on any of the main roads leading north of Seoul. We tried stopping by our uncle's house along the way, but it was deserted. North of Seoul we saw about ten foul-smelling corpses abandoned on the roadside. They were covered with noisy flies which swarmed into the air when we passed by them. The sight of this did not make me feel any pity or fear. I felt only a horrible stench stinging my nostrils.

By retracing the path on which we had evacuated forty days earlier, we passed through the place on Mount Tobong where we had camped out. Not one building in the once great town of Ŭijŏngbu had been left standing.

As we approached our house in the evening my heart began to race when I heard our dog barking at us. My father, still at home, was deluged with congratulations from the rest of the village on the occasion of our safe return. That night, amid wailing and cheering, we held a big banquet. The other villagers who had returned before us were living relatively peacefully, and our relatives who had left us on the way had also already returned. My father had waited for us, not knowing whether or not we had survived.

Evacuating our home village had been a journey, but it was also a valuable learning experience for me. I was able to experience first-hand a whole world about which I had no knowledge. I learned that my relatives could not be counted on, and I also learned that, though we were fairly well-off because of my father's business, without money, I was useless and only a burden to others.

I felt extremely grateful and indebted to my cousin. He had lost his parents early in life and because he was raised by my father, he was registered in the census as his adopted son. Because of this, my cousin never stopped looking out for us as family members.

Under North Korean rule

After the start of the war, my father's business ran into trouble, so we made a living through farm work, which we had not been used to up to that point. Still, the rice crop that year was excellent. I believed that it was during times of war that farmers were freest and most powerful, because soldiers came to them to buy food.

Under North Korean rule, our harvests were not impeded, but there were political changes. We children sang the "Song of General Kim Il-sung," with lyrics that went "the crags of Changbaek still gleam". I recently visited North Korea, and hearing that old song again made me feel really nostalgic.

In addition, the local police station was taken over by the North Korean Army and the town hall became the North Korean Office of Internal Affairs. The North Koreans tried to mobilize the people and have them work there, but the villagers did not cooperate. They probably knew that North Korean rule would not last long. If we had collaborated with the North

Koreans, I suppose that we ourselves might have been prosecuted later by South Korea. My father rubbed crushed garlic on my older sister's arm to make it swell up, and then refused on the grounds that she was sick.

The second son in a family who lived about a hundred meters from us was a communist. He was also a graduate of the university in Seoul and went around wearing the square academic cap which had been a prized status symbol since the period of Japanese rule. He was in a romantic relationship with my second cousin who had crossed over the 38th parallel from North Korea as a refugee.

Once, just before the Korean War began, he showed me and my second cousin around Seoul. The two of them doted on me back then. They took me to see a silent film in Seoul's Tongyang Theatre and I had a lot of fun listening to the live narrator. I also remember walking along the central thoroughfares, Chongno and Chonggak, and going with them to the famous Hwashin Department Store. I still carry these pleasant memories with me even after all these years.

But, in spite of this, his romance was of a type that the village had never seen before. By tradition, marriages in a South Korean village were arranged with someone from outside the village. Marrying someone from within the village was unthinkable. Therefore, the relationship was bizarre to us, but because he was "a big shot communist", no one raised a word of objection.

However, he apparently had work and connections in the wider world outside our small village, and soon enough he left us, never to return. Because her boyfriend was a communist, my second cousin, who he had left behind, ended up working at the Office of Internal Affairs, where she had to carry out indirect surveys of harvest yields, including rice and even chestnuts. Her work there would lead to a terrible tragedy later.

Three months after the outbreak of the Korean War, North Korean rule had momentarily restored peace to my village. Although we had made a political transition from President Syngman Rhee's democracy to General Kim Il-sung's communism, regime change barely made an impact on the farmers. Nonetheless, we still felt ill at ease. My father sometimes got information about the situation of the war and shared it with the other villagers after nightfall. President Rhee was counterattacking again and even said that our village would be "liberated". "Liberation" was a word that we had all heard a lot since the end of Japanese rule. At home almost every evening we debated the merits of Rhee's democracy versus Kim's communism. It wasn't clear which side the villagers favored, but they seemed to be generally leaning towards Rhee.

As usual, the crops in the fields were ready to harvest in September. We reported on how much we expected to harvest, and the administrative officials appeared in person to coach us on how to count it. They said that they would count the number of grains on one stalk of rice and then calculate and report on the whole crop based on the dimensions of the field. The

farmers feared this might be a precursor to the mandatory rice quota that took place under Japanese colonial rule, but nothing happened to disturb the peace of the village.

Then, on the night of September 15, I was at home as usual, shelling green peas with my paternal grandmother, while talking about politics. At that moment we heard a sound like thunder far in the distance. My father, who had sensitive ears, ran outside and looked into the skies above Seoul, which were glowing as if it were dawn. My father understood that this was no normal phenomenon.



The UN Army's Inch'ŏn landing

We later learned that this was General MacArthur's "Inch'ŏn landing". Seoul was recaptured on September 27 and the UN Army continued northward. Though we expected that our village would also be liberated at that time, we never caught sight of the UN Army. We only realized later that that UN Army had made it all the way up to the far northern border of Korea by advancing along the major highways.

We did see North Korean troops fleeing north on foot. They were truly a defeated army. Three of them burst into our house asking my father to carry their shells and demanding food. My mother acted fast and served them right away, and after eating, they left in a hurry. My father was saved.

It was either that evening or the following evening that a whole family living in a village two kilometers from us was cruelly massacred. All eight family members plus their cow were put to the sword because one of their sons was an officer in the South Korean Army. It was the birth family of a woman who had married into a family in our neighborhood. She went back home to bury the corpses and hold a funeral, and when she returned she told us that the children had been stabbed to death in front of their parents before the parents themselves were killed. Her story spread throughout our village, but fear prevented anyone from condemning the deed openly.

Return to South Korean rule

It was in these circumstances that our village was liberated from North Korea and brought back into the fold of President Rhee's democratic system. The North Korean Army left the local police station and the Office of Internal Affairs went back to being a town hall.

A few nights later the police station was attacked. The attack was the work of North Korean soldiers who came down at night from the mountains where they had remained hidden while the rest of their army had retreated. Stunned to hear that "Even farmers are not safe", my family and I began spending our nights temporarily encamped near the highway in front of the train station where South Korean soldiers were stationed. The general unease of the village hit a high point after a girl and two young teenagers went missing.

Meanwhile the South Korean officer whose family had been massacred returned to his home in a rage, and his village began to discuss whether or not to punish those who had aided the communists. The officer captured and killed those who had collaborated with North Korea. He bound them and had them walk to a pit dug by a man carrying a shovel. He had them stand near the pit, then shot them from behind and pushed their bodies in.

I myself saw the execution grounds while having fun sliding over the ice on my sled. Back then, I didn't think that seeing a man get killed was particularly scary, so I kept on playing undisturbed until they were finished and went home. These sorts of revenge killings continued until winter.

Our own village was debating what to do with the family of the communist university graduate. He himself had not returned to the village, but his parents and his elder brother were still living there. The villagers met several times and engaged in long, heated arguments over whether or not to punish the family. Finally we reached a decision that we could not punish fellow villagers. From then on the members of that family were grateful to their fellow villagers. They actively helped out in events and other such activities, and we lived amicably with them. The villagers did what they did not because of any religious code of conduct like Christianity or Buddhism, but only for the sake of their own clear conscience.

Nevertheless, the girlfriend of the university graduate did end up being punished. The villagers first discussed whether or not to report on her activities, but that night, while we

were still deliberating, her elder cousin ran into her house with a stick and beat her over the head until she bled. That, however, was not the end of it because next she was summoned by the South Korean Army and interrogated.

Her treatment by the South Korean soldiers surpassed even the North Koreans and the Americans in cruelty. The South Korean soldiers kept her detained for more than ten days and violently gang-raped her. Tragically, unmarried and a virgin, she was rendered unable to bear children. She would later move to Seoul and adopt a daughter who she raised alone, but I heard that she spent the rest of her life isolated and unhappy.

For a while she didn't return to her home village, but eventually she started to visit periodically. Everyone tried to put aside the painful memories of the war. It seems that forgiveness was natural for us because we had all been hurt many times during the war and had all done many things of which we were ashamed.

The invasion of the Chinese Army

It was a cold winter that year. Close to New Year's Day, rumors were swirling that Chinese communist forces were piercing the noses of the people they captured, running string through them like nose rings, and then dragging their victims along with them. We were all still gripped with fear when, in the middle of the night at about 1:00 or 2:00 AM, we heard some kind of music with bugles and gongs. It wasn't music, but rather it was the military march of the Chinese Army. To me it sounded like the gates of hell were opening up. I was dressed at the time, but remained still under my blankets, unsure whether I was asleep or awake. I heard someone banging on the front gate and calling out "hello" in garbled Korean. None of us answered back, and surprisingly, the noises fell silent. This was how I experienced the invasion of the Chinese Army in support of North Korea and the resulting "January-Fourth Retreat" of the South Korean Army from Seoul, though our village was occupied several days before that. I believe it was on December 31, 1950.

When I looked outside in the morning the mountain in front of me was white with the uniforms of Chinese soldiers. Their uniforms were green on the outside and white on the inside, but were now turned inside out to serve as winter camouflage. The residents of our village ended up withdrawing to the south again. The Chinese did not obstruct our evacuation, but we were worried about what the South Korean Army might say to us later if we didn't flee from them. The Chinese Army covered the mountain, but by walking on a path along its base we made it to a South Korean Army encampment about four kilometers from the village. Although we told the South Korean soldiers that the Chinese Army was here, not one of them believed us. Even so, we figured that the Chinese Army was rather meek and would probably be driven away soon enough, so we settled down for the night in an empty house with the intention of returning home the next day. The following morning, contrary to our expectations, the Chinese Army had grown in size. We moved another four or five kilometers southward and observed the situation. We decided that we did not need to be afraid of the Chinese Army, and since it would make no difference whether we evacuated or not, we went back home.

By the time we got back, there were a bunch of Chinese soldiers barracked in our house. They had lit the floor heater and were asleep with their heads pressed close to the warm spots. My mother told me that they were cooking their brains and were probably dummies. She would never have let me sleep with my head so close to the floor heater.

We ended up camping out in our bomb shelter. Though I call it a "bomb shelter", it was actually just a hole we had dug behind the house. My mother and I had created it by digging through the white clay with a Korean weeding tool and gradually carting off the soil in a washbowl. I thought of it as the first thing I had made myself, and valued it more than the house. As long as we didn't try to stand straight up while we waited, it was perfectly comfortable.

The Chinese may have called themselves soldiers, but the large majority of them did not carry guns. I did see some mortars, but individual soldiers did not have their own rifles. Instead they were armed with things like shovels and farming tools. Some of the Chinese soldiers were close to the same age as me and we played together. Some of them got into fights with my friends and cried.

They were also very nervous about the sound of an aircraft and ran for cover whenever they heard one. I didn't think that aircraft were all that scary and I snickered to see how timid the Chinese soldiers were. They were cigarette pushers too. My parents, who were both in their early 50s, were handed cigarettes as if they were old men. Some of the villagers were also given Chinese medicinal herbs.

Moreover, the Chinese soldiers never showed any interest in our women. They were a good army who acted in a manner completely contrary to what the rumors had said. Not all armies engage in rape, and whether they do or not might depend on their regulations on sex. As far as I saw, the Chinese Army never committed any acts of sexual violence, including rape, against Korean women, and some think that the reason for this lies in the Chinese Army's "Three Main Rules of Discipline and the Eight Points for Attention" which included strict rules that soldiers "not take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses" and "not take liberties with women".

In spite of this, when the Chinese ran out of food several months later they did try to forcibly requisition it from the local people. When the villagers began burying their grain and other food to hide it, the Chinese soldiers would sometimes go around beating the earth with an iron rod listening for an echo and then digging it up. Still, because they were unable to communicate with us, they didn't do anything else once they had gotten the food. It was a kind-hearted army and I think that its conduct was very good compared to the aforementioned massacre perpetrated by the North Koreans and the cruel revenge exacted by the South Koreans. Lacking any interpreters, we could not speak to them at all, but it seemed like we could somehow understand them just from their expressions. I sometimes peeked in on the ones staying in my house and they always showed a lot of emotion.

The arrival of the UN Army

In the year 1951, spring turned to summer and the farmers were hard at work. Then, one night we learned that the Chinese were on the move. At some point in time every single soldier had vacated our house. However, it seemed like something big was about to happen so my family refrained from re-occupying our house and instead we remained in the bomb shelter. My father went to another village to hide my 20-year-old elder sister but it was completely deserted.

A formation of four fighter planes flew over our village. At moments like this the Chinese soldiers would always hit the dirt, but I watched with interest. The pilot of a plane looks down on the ground in front of him from an angle, so I had heard that once you are out of his line of vision you are safe. Naturally that did seem to be true. However, these planes appeared in pairs of two. After crossing over the mountain in front of me they circled back and dropped a bomb onto its summit. Immediately, black smoke and a column of red flames shot into the sky. Because they made a whistling sound we called them "whistling planes". We called the bombs "beer bottles" because of the way they were shaped.

By the next day, four big planes had turned into a fleet of many dozens. They plastered the sky and emitted a drone which made it seem like the air was vibrating. What I found to be even more strange and ominous than the noise were the black things attached to the wings of the planes which looked like rugby balls.

Flying to the south of the village, the planes released their bombs on a riverbank to the west that morning, and then continued bombing for the rest of the day. I had never seen such a ferocious bombing by so many planes, but it made no big impact on the village. Wave after wave of aircraft soared through the skies and unleashed their bombs in the west. It rained that evening, but there was no sign that the bombing would let up.

Next morning the weather was clear and when I looked into the sky I saw something that was different from the typical bombers. This plane was dropping parachutes. The parachutes were bright and multicolored, and watching them descend from the sky was a truly beautiful sight. Today, I think that my appreciation of its aesthetics was rather imprudent in a time of war, but back then I didn't comprehend the reality of war and I was under the delusion that it was some kind of game. My impressions from that time are still lodged within my memory.

The UN troops falling from the sky wore mufflers that were the same color as their parachutes. Later when the song "Red Muffler" by Makihara Noriyuki became popular in Japan I was instantly reminded of those paratroopers being dropped near our village. I was told that the people still holding out in their bomb shelters had been liberated.

Among the roughly ten paratroopers it looked like there were black men and also a fully-armed man of Asian descent who might have been an interpreter. They moved into the village cautiously while holding their guns at ready. Meanwhile, helicopters buzzed through

the sky and a medium-sized tank fired shells into the mountain behind the village. The mountain caught fire, but none of the troops even glanced at the blaze. That night, the corpses of the Chinese who had been shot dead in battle were burned. The soldiers also drew a strip of red cloth all the way to the field in front of the village which sparkled beautifully in the morning sun. One person said that this was a red line to mark off for their aircraft the area that they successfully occupied.

A column of about ten troops went to the bomb shelters, blowing them up by tossing grenades into them, making sure that the enemy was not present. In a neighboring village one pregnant woman who had not yet left her shelter emerged suddenly and was sprayed with bullets by the surprised soldiers who were standing at the entranceway. The bullets went through her abdomen, and UN forces called in an ambulance to take her to a hospital. She received surgery and returned home about a month later, but her baby died. In addition, there were some people who, upon realizing that not everyone had left their bomb shelters, went to check up on them. They said that some of the villagers were at a point of asphyxiation when they were rescued because they had plugged the entrances to their shelters very tightly with things like mattresses.

At the time, we had no way of knowing what the American soldiers were saying, but we did at least watch what they were doing. Upon observation, we judged them to be good men. They were in a happy mood and showed no fear. They greeted us warmly and, like guests bearing gifts, handed us cigarettes and army rations. Some of the rations came with a can opener attached, but others didn't and had to be cut open with a cleaver. Most were extraordinarily tasty, though there were also a few cans of beans in the mix which were not so good.

The village also learned of the damage done by the air raids of the night before. To prevent the cattle from being bombed, we tied them up behind a protective barrier we had built on a hill behind the village, but one of the cows who had a newly born calf was struck by a bomb. The cow died, its whole tail end being missing at the time we found it, and the villagers decided to eat the remains rather than leave it to rot. They cut up the meat with their cleavers, simmered it in soy sauce for a while, and then ate it up. However, the old lady who owned the cow ran through the village in tears calling out for the calf, which had gotten loose, while holding out some feed for it in her hand. She chased it all over the village without managing to catch it. This was one of the saddest things I remember seeing during the whole war.

At the height of the bombing, everyone had been hiding and quivering in fear, wondering if they would survive the night, but now they were very happy it was all over. Now, for instance, we gazed at the helicopters and thought they were pretty cool. I don't think that the modern-day Korean word for "helicopter", "*helgi*", existed back then, during our early Korean education, so we compared them to dragonflies and called them "dragonflies". We also called the fighters "zoom planes" apparently because of the sound they made when zooming overhead. Such names came naturally to us. For me, getting to see all these aircraft was a real treat.

The US Army had lost over ten men fighting in the area. The bodies were lined up by our house and then later carried away by helicopter. By contrast, over seventy Chinese had been killed in combat and disposing of their corpses was more problematic. We were instructed to bury their corpses, so my father and the other villagers tied them up with straw and lowered them in groups into a pit. On the other hand, we were not able to reach the bodies which were in or near the water reservoir, so we had no choice but to leave them where they were for the time being. My father told me that the bodies had been stripped of all their possessions, like their watches for instance. My father did not understand people who robbed corpses and he said that it was probably the doing of other soldiers.

One thatched-roof cottage in the village had been set ablaze by a bomb. The occupants were in their bomb shelter, but by the time they emerged there was nothing left but a smoldering pile of ash and soot. Actually, this place was none other than the residence of the head household of my own extended family, the Ch'oe clan. It was a big family with a grandmother, her son and his wife, seven grandsons, and a granddaughter. When their house burned down, we lost along with it all our family heirlooms, which had been passed down for generations, including the vestments and conical hat of our ancestors.

All throughout the village, there were weapons like guns and grenades scattered about. One of my friends, who was the same age as me but was actually my nephew, invited me to try out a gun he had found and we shot at things inside his bomb shelter. The first time I was frozen with fear, but after trying it once I learned to love it. Although the sound of the gunshot hurt my ears, it wasn't so loud once we went outside and we had a lot of fun. Unfortunately, the gun was soon confiscated from us by the security officials.

All the weapons were collected up, put into a pile in a field far from civilian homes, and then doused with gasoline. A helicopter flying overhead dropped a grenade onto the weapons and blew them to pieces. The villagers who heard the explosion thought it was another bombing and scurried to evacuate. After they were told that it was just an arms disposal and nothing to worry about, they finally returned to their homes.

Sexual violence by the UN Army

When the UN Army first entered our village we all warmly welcomed its tall, smartly-dressed soldiers. We waved at them as they passed by, and the villagers, most of whom had never seen a car before, let out a huge cheer when the big unit and its jeeps drove through. What's more, the soldiers liberally distributed chocolates, candy drops, and cookies to us. Because it had been a while since any of us had had good food to eat, this seemed too good to be true. We gorged ourselves on the canned food that the Americans gave us, and we liked them more and more with each passing day.

In spite of that good first impression, the village always kept a close eye on the soldiers. The US Army had an encampment on the field and the hill in front of the village. The soldiers periodically wandered around the village in groups of two or three and on some occasions

they brought along their army dogs. This did not strike us as being particularly soldierly behavior, and rumors began to circulate that they were actually on the prowl for women.

The villagers became fearful and uneasy, and my older sister was sent away to another village. Young women covered their heads with towels and carried children, and even young married women tried to avoid being targets by wearing rags as shawls in order to make them look like old ladies, though it didn't appear that the Americans were fooled by this. Women without children borrowed children from other families and piggybacked them while working. It was said that people with children were unlikely to be attacked. Even so, the soldiers never visited the village at night. Maybe they felt it was too dangerous or maybe they had a curfew to keep.

Unfortunately, the uneasy peace did not last long and soon enough, just as the villagers had feared, the soldiers began attacking women. During the day they wandered through the village hunting women. In the evening they parked their jeep on a high point of land with a view of the whole village and peered at us through their binoculars. If they spotted a woman, they sped their jeep towards her in the hopes of ravishing her. As soon as we saw that jeep we shouted out, "Soldiers! Hide!"

One evening, the villagers caught a soldier in the act of raping a woman and bludgeoned him to death with their farming tools. The villagers made themselves scarce when the military police came to investigate, and because the unit was then transferred elsewhere, no further investigations were undertaken.

On other occasions, American soldiers brought along their shepherd dogs with them. Women hid under things like piles of straw, but the dogs quickly sniffed them out. If the villagers saw this they would surround the soldiers, who then pretended as if they were on a routine inspection and went on their way. However, there were some women who were carried off when the villagers were not looking.

One evening when our neighbors were eating dinner, a jeep carrying two UN soldiers stopped in their front yard. I knew from their red hats that they were military police. I approached the jeep out of curiosity and it looked like its occupants were not Americans, but Englishmen. My neighbors had a fifteen-year-old daughter, and it seemed like she was their target.

The girl went to hide in a tool storehouse attached to the ceiling, called a pyöckchang in Korean. I walked up to the house to see what was happening. The soldiers entered without taking off their shoes. One of them stood in front of the sliding door entranceway while brandishing his gun, and the other one searched the house. The girl was on the verge of being found and was probably terrified. When she charged out of her hiding spot and tried to make a run for it, the soldier caught her. The soldiers grabbed the girl and stood while pointing their guns out the door. The rest of the family stood outside, shuddering with fear. It was at that moment that the grandmother picked up a steel farming rake and banged it against the

floorboards. The surprised soldiers dropped the girl, quickly jumped into their jeep, which was still running, and fled the scene. Up to then, that grandmother had been treated as a black sheep due to her impaired hearing, but because of her courageous act everyone greatly appreciated her.

There was also one woman who had just gotten married who was abducted while she was fertilizing a field that was near soldiers driving a jeep. For close to a month no one knew where she had gone, but one day the jeep came back and dumped her off where the soldiers had found her.

And young women were not their only victims. One boy, just eleven years of age, one year older than me, was confronted while working in a sweet potato field with his grandmother by a soldier who demanded that the boy lick his genitalia. The soldier dropped his pants and when the boy refused, the soldier grabbed the boy's head and forcibly shoved his genitalia into the boy's mouth. The soldier used so much force that blood began to flow from his mouth. The boy's grandmother cried out beside him, but the soldier carried on as if nothing was wrong.

Around that time my father's health took a turn for the worse. He had always suffered from chronic indigestion, but this time he became bedridden and within ten days he passed away. There was concern about infectious diseases during the war, so we were told that the funeral would be kept to a small, simple affair. However, some of my father's closest friends and family members never showed up. My mother remarked that, "If it had been me who had died and your father who had lived, I don't doubt that they would have dropped by to give their condolences." It was just like the old proverb, "When the President's dog dies everyone will send their condolences, but when the President himself dies only a few of his true friends will." Up to the day he died, my father had never hesitated to lend a hand to his family members and fellow villagers, but whatever interest they had in my father died along with him. My mother seemed fairly embittered by it all. She felt especially betrayed that my father's friends did not come to the funeral. I gained some new respect for my father's warm-heartedness as well as a new understanding and new loathing for the selfish and petty nature of the other villagers.

Embracing prostitution

Our village's time of crisis actually only lasted about two months, at most. After we brought prostitutes into the village, sexual violence by the UN Army disappeared, though even then some rumors of rape continued to circulate.

The prostitutes came in from Seoul and rented rooms for themselves in the village. The village folk, who had suffered so much from the plague of sexual violence, were glad to see them. There were about thirty of them, and we sent one of them to each lodging house. The villagers viewed them not only as protection from sexual violence, but also as an economic boon, a handy source of revenue from the money they spent on rent. Every family in the village felt this way. It was our first step towards becoming a "prostitution village".

It is entirely possible that, without prostitutes, war will turn men into horrible creatures who will force innocent girls to be their own "comfort women". Our village was a small one, but as soon as these young women joined us, the village pace picked up. US Army jeeps and trucks instantaneously descended on the village and parked all over the place, filling up once-empty fields. The coming and going of American soldiers made everything very lively. If the American soldiers were too busy to drop by, the village suddenly became deathly silent. On those days the prostitutes, being unable to ply their trade, worried about whether the Americans would come back tomorrow and they all looked very glum.

Through living together, the villagers and the prostitutes gradually formed a strong bond. Up to then the mental image of a prostitute which I had formed in my young mind was a very negative one. I thought of them as the worst sort of women, corrupted in mind and body. And yet, once I got to know them, I found many of them truly innocent. Many had become prostitutes because they came from poor families. None of them had gotten into prostitution because depraved thoughts had entered their mind or because their sense of ethics and morality was questionable. They were doing what they were doing so that they and their families could make ends meet. Their hearts certainly were in the right place.

There was one lady who took a leadership role among the prostitutes. She was very beautiful and was popular with the soldiers. Among the thirty in our village she had the most commanding presence and best grasp of English, and she could intervene if a soldier became violent.

When she came to the village she brought along with her some young girls who were in danger of being sexually attacked in their hometowns. They served as her housemaids, looking after her children and doing housework for her. In Seoul, she told people that she let her housemaids take care of her children while she took care of her business, though she never let it slip that her business was prostitution.

She also pooled together the gifts and American dollars received by the other prostitutes and sold them in Seoul, and she even secretly rented a military truck and made a profit by using it like a taxi. She saved up the money she had earned from these ventures and bought a Korean-style house in Seoul. Though many of the prostitutes believed that prostitution was their only option if they wanted to eat, she, on the other hand, saw it as a business enterprise and didn't seem to feel any shame at all.

The villagers' sense of values had undergone a dramatic change. While we no longer needed to live in fear of sexual violence by soldiers, we now had something else to worry about. The women of the village suspected that their husbands might consort with the prostitutes, and the men, not surprisingly for men, kept a close eye on their wives in case they were trying to sell sex to soldiers. This became a source of domestic discord. However, there were also some women in the village who made money by helping the prostitutes with their chores, like doing their laundry, and enjoyed having them around.

There were even some who ended up with a fortune. A woman from a house neighboring ours was infuriated to find that an army unit had set up its tents in the field beside her home, crushing her newly-sprouted seedlings. She went to complain to the unit whose company commander heard about it through an interpreter and decided to compensate her. A truck filled with cigarettes and canned goods was sent to her house. Knowing that these things would fetch a good price, she sold them, and because land was cheap during the war, she used the money to buy farmland. She also had another job doing laundry for soldiers. She would walk along the barbed wire barricades set up by US Army units shouting "washy washy," but if she came home even a little late her husband would suspiciously check her backside for evidence that she was selling sex to American soldiers. They often had fights over the matter, but the villagers always blamed her husband for his own powerlessness in not stopping his wife from working outside the home. She thought of this extra source of income as a blessing unavailable up to then.

The village soon became awash with new English words relating to sex and condoms. The American soldiers also mixed in Japanese words when they spoke like "papa-san" (father), "mama-san" (mother), "*takusan*" (a lot), and "*sukoshi*" (a little). Basic English-style words which became widely understood included "hurry", "washy washy" (laundry), "stop", "hello", "okay", "yes", "no", "chop chop" (food), "shoe-shine boy", "three quarter" (a truck), "come on", "goddamn bitch", "get out", "to sleep" (meaning to sleep with a woman), "sleek boy" (thief), "short time", "long time", and "all night". Some pidgin-style expression also developed, such as combining "chop chop" (food) with "stop" to ask for medicine when suffering from indigestion. The villagers were making strong efforts to learn English.

The American troops spent their time drinking, singing, and dancing. They would all form a circle, fold their arms, squat down, and then dance while singing the latest American hits. I sometimes heard them sing songs like "China Nights". Apparently the military police of the US Army did clamp down on prostitution in general, but as far as I can remember they never interfered in our village. Furthermore, the American soldiers in Korea ended up stimulating the prostitution industry in Japan as well due to the furlough system which took them back home by way of Japan.

For a time our village boomed economically and we had many opportunities to come in contact with Western civilization. The women in the village were greatly influenced by the clothing worn by the prostitutes, and the men wore American army uniforms while working. Though this was also the first time that I had tasted canned food and coffee, it was their Western-style cigarettes, or "red balls" as we called them, that had real trade value. Another strange new device that had appeared in the village was the "lighter", which was especially enjoyed by the old folks smoking tobacco.

However, the US troop presence in our village was short-lived. The army units were transferred elsewhere, and with that the village reverted to being a poor rural backwater. The prostitutes also packed up and moved along with the soldiers. We were a traditional farming

community once more, though with the addition of two prostitutes who had stayed behind. One of them had had a child with an American serviceman, and the other was already over the age of thirty and had married a man from Seoul. The two of them had decided to settle down in our village and they lived happily with the rest of us. On each of their sixtieth birthdays, the villagers held big celebrations, and when they passed away there were impressive funeral ceremonies. No one ever mentioned their pasts as prostitutes.

Concerning the woman who had a child with an American soldier, a story did circulate that her mixed-race child had gone to primary school in the United States and that she had adopted him, but she strongly denied this. Regardless of the embarrassing circumstances of his birth, her maternal love for her child never wavered. This deeply moved the other villagers.

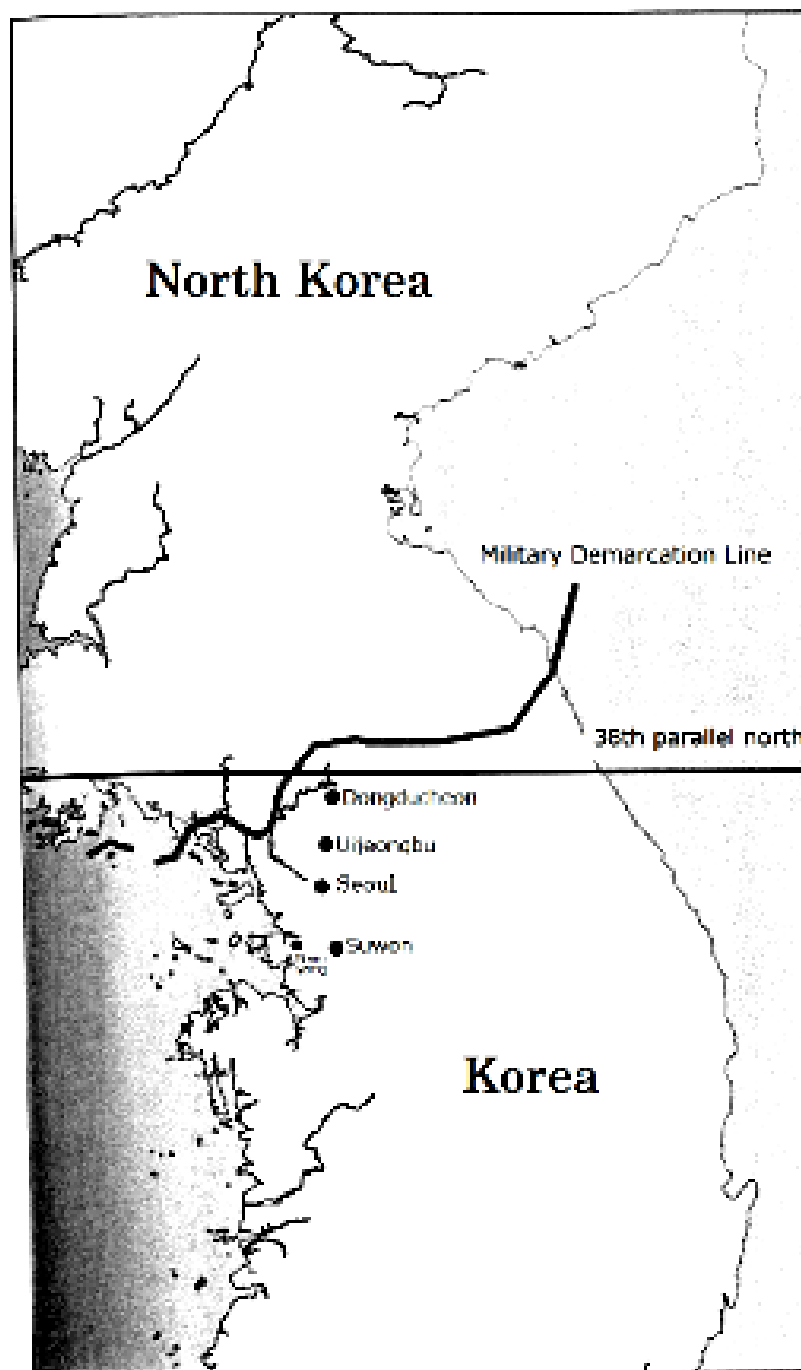
We also discovered that three people from the village had become prostitutes for the US Army elsewhere. Even so, the villagers never abused them or spread rumors about them because of this.

Perhaps war makes people more mature. Those who survived amidst the misery of war by becoming intimate with American soldiers or renting their homes to prostitutes might seem shameless to outside observers, but everyone in the village tried to mutually put aside the shame and the tragedies of the war. We all forgave each other equally because all of us were victims of the same war. To put it another way, it seems that a common experience in war is that it forces people to both open their minds and to open their hearts. We realized that everyone, regardless of who they were, was in the same boat.

Once the American soldiers had left, South Korean soldiers came in to replace them. The South Korean Army also committed a number of acts of brutality in the village. Though we had only been under North Korean rule momentarily, the South Korean Army began to ferret out those who had collaborated with the North Koreans in the manner I have already described earlier.

As a village close to the 38th parallel, there were a lot of people who had been taken away to North Korea or who had gone there on their own. Consequently, the villagers were always beset by fears that if some sort of spy scandal were to break out many people in the village would again be persecuted. War always creates tragedies, and it also creates people who will have to spend the rest of their lives suffering from them.

It was in this context that I entered middle school. After that my mother sold her farmland and moved to Seoul.



Chapter 2. From Rape to Prostitution



The "necessary evil" of prostitution

The US Army stockpiled condoms in order to protect its men from STDs. Whenever it rained you could see condoms flowing everywhere. Children filled them up with water and played with them. At my uncle's house condoms could be procured cheaply so he cut them into long, thin strips with a razor to make rubber strings and set up a business of sewing them into the ankle part of socks. Condoms had once seemed to us like the incarnation of sexual vice, but we learned to stop worrying about that.

Why is it that comfort women appeared on the battlefield? Things like Confucian morality vanish in a time of war when people are concerned only with their own survival, but this is not easy for people who have never experienced war to understand. To be blunt, I saw with my own eyes and I know that even the greatest outrages like sexual assault will be tolerated in those circumstances. Actually, I suppose that was pretty much the same experience for all the other villagers. That is the reason why we forgave those among us who became communist and we warmly accepted into our village women who had been prostitutes. This is the most important life lesson that I learned from the war.

Even the sex crimes of some soldiers become momentarily understandable if we assume that they are on the battlefield. The question which I want to pose to the reader is, "What would you be capable of if your life was at risk every day." During and after an intense, bloody battle, it seemed as if the soldiers had gone insane. What I saw was reminiscent of Oliver Stone's film, *Platoon*.

When the US Army came to our village there was an explosion of sexual violence, and when prostitutes flocked to the village, we welcomed them in the way that I described earlier. The prostitutes were the village's saviors. We had the real fear that, without them, all of the women in the village might become the target of sexual assault. In other words, we invited the prostitutes in as a means of self-defense, and that is how we became a "prostitution village".

To ward off sexual assaults by violent soldiers, the villagers slackened their rigid traditions of Confucian sexual morality and accepted prostitution. Once we had justified this to ourselves, we even turned it into a source of revenue. The villagers supported the prostitutes, even though they were outsiders, while viewing prostitution as a necessary evil in order to protect the chastity of their own family members and relatives. The prostitutes kept the village sexually safe, and the fact that we could also make a profit by renting rooms to them was just an added bonus. With that it took no time at all for us to make the transformation to "prostitution village". Furthermore, this was not purely a phenomenon of my own home village. Rather, the same thing spread to all the areas around where troops were stationed and a sort of *de facto* licensed prostitution system developed.

Nevertheless, sexual violence and prostitution do exist outside of war. These things continued after the war ended and prostitution still exists in South Korea today, so much so that the country has even been called a "prostitution paradise". According to a report by the

Supreme Prosecutors' Office of the Republic of Korea and the Korean Women's Development Institute, "There are one million women engaged in prostitution" in South Korea. No law has achieved any significant steps towards eliminating prostitution, not the Prostitution Prevention Law, which mandates up to one year in prison or else a fine of up to three million won for both the prostitute and the client, nor the Juvenile Protection Act, which mandates up to one year in prison for paying for sexual services from a minor. What is the reason that prostitution became so widespread in South Korea, in direct contradiction to Korean society's veneration of chastity and its strict, rigidly enforced concept of sexual morality which even includes the Confucian principle that boys and girls over the age of seven sit separately from one another? Actually it is precisely because South Koreans insist so strongly on their thoroughly Confucian concept of sexual purity that we need prostitutes as a defensive barrier to protect the chastity of ordinary women in the case of an increase in sexual assaults.

I wrote this book based on my experiences of war and my ponderings on the essence of human nature, and I don't believe that its contents can be rebutted by those who have never lived through a war. It makes no sense for the postwar generation to judge the killings and rapes that took place in a time of war. The only thing we can pass judgment on now is the ultimate crime of war itself, which changes human nature and is the root cause of evil behavior. It is not a matter of trying the crimes that took place amidst the chaos of war, but rather it is a matter of trying the country which started the war.

The so-called "comfort women problem"

Neither I nor the many other scholars who had done field surveys throughout South Korea had ever heard of the so-called "comfort women". And yet, the issue found its way into Japanese-language media and then became a political problem and human rights issue within South Korea. I realized early on that this had been caused by the false testimony of Yoshida Seiji and misreporting published in the Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun*.

Certain South Koreans have offered a variety of explanations for why the comfort women problem did not emerge until fifty years after the end of the war. They say that the Japanese colonial government burned documents in order to hide the truth, that the United States glossed over Japanese war crimes during the occupation period, or that former comfort women were too ashamed to return to Korea. The women, they say, were shunned as sexual deviants for having been violated by men from a different country, but that was not the only reason why Korea's political leaders and intellectuals tried to turn the comfort women problem into a social issue.

Just when the comfort women were on the verge of being buried in the pages of history, women's rights organizations raised the issue, declaring that "The shame of the comfort women is the shame of all Koreans", but the South Korean mass media showed no interest in the essence of the problem and only wanted to stir up hatred against Japan. The comfort women were transformed into victims of crimes against the Korean people, and now that they had the noble mission of promoting nationalist feelings, the women themselves began to

come forward. In other words, a new discourse had been created claiming that the taking of the virginity of Korean women by Japanese troops was not only a rape of the women themselves, but also a rape of the whole nation of Korea. It was at that time that Korean President Kim Dae-jung officially asked for "clarification of the historical and moral responsibility of the Japanese government" in relation to the comfort women problem.

There is no clear difference between the way that comfort women were recruited by the Japanese Army and the way that they were recruited by the US Army. However, the comfort women system administered by Japan is considered a product of Japanese colonial rule, whereas the US Army liberated Korea from Japanese rule and came to South Korea as an ally during the Korean War. Therefore, the way Koreans feel about the two systems is quite different. If people merely point out that Korea was doing the same sort of thing, without first understanding this important distinction, then no path to compromise on the matter will ever be found.

Of course, if South Koreans exploit the comfort women problem in the diplomatic arena, it will boomerang back to them in the form of the US Army's own comfort women problem. If a statue is built in memory of the comfort women of the Japanese Army, there will be some people who will pipe up and ask for another statue beside it in memory of the comfort women of the US Army. The immature diplomatic actions of South Korea need to stop immediately. In order to ensure that the contentious comfort women issue will not stoke mutual hatred, both Korea and Japan must listen with sincerity to what the other side has to say.



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The "comfort women" statute in front of the Japanese embassy in South Korea.

Sexual violence by the US Army and Korea-American relations

Could it be that sexual violence is an inevitable part of war? Conflicts in Yugoslavia and Russia have also been characterized by sexual violence, so why are we only discussing the "comfort women" of wartime Japan? People have said that the comfort women of wartime Japan were unique in that they were part of a state approved system. However, the root of the problem is sexual violence by soldiers, not the question of the military approved system. To me the bigger issue is why we have completely ignored the clearly criminal acts of the UN

Army. I am referring to the cruel sexual assaults perpetrated by American soldiers during the Korean War.

The Chinese Army was very gentlemanly, but I know that the men of the US Army and the South Korean Army attacked women in our village. And yet, when I tell that to my fellow Koreans today, no one believes me. Still, at the very least all the people who lived in my village back then do know what happened. In the face of the undeniable truth that my village experienced firsthand, Koreans prefer to turn a deaf ear.

After the war, the government of President Park Chung-hee tried to preserve Confucian sexual morality while at the same time pursuing a policy of tolerating prostitution. My own hometown had been one of the originators of this scheme, and soon the US Army's comfort women spread throughout the country and became part of the official policy of both the United States and South Korea. These comfort women were deemed by the Korean government to be patriots who were ensuring the safety of the Korean Peninsula by satisfying the sexual urges of American servicemen. This demonstrates that, even though these women were despised under time-honored Confucian ideas, they were treasured by the Korean government because of their role as earners of foreign currency.

In Korea the female entertainers known as *kisaeng* are looked down on as "whores" (*kalbo*), and comfort women servicing American soldiers are called "Western whores". However, they are also known as "Western princesses". In other words, the way Koreans describe the prostitutes involves a dichotomy of viewing them as both "whores" and "princesses". These prostitutes spearheaded the modernization of the nation through their earning of foreign currency, and thus became patriotic women. The South Korean government gathered up women who had left their farms or who were unemployed, called them "patriots", and trained them to be comfort women.

Although the sex trade was outlawed through the Prostitution Prevention Law of 1961, the very next year in 1962 the South Korean government designated 104 sites across Korea as being "special districts". These were government-approved red-light districts outside the purview of anti-prostitution laws. Because they loved their native land of Korea, women prostituted themselves for foreign currency so that Korea's development as a capitalist economy would continue, and thus in some quarters prostitution was called an act of patriotism.

South Korea made a point of not strongly criticizing the US Army's use of prostitutes after the war. In other words, there would be plenty of prostitutes for the soldiers and few legal restrictions. Because of this, prostitution and rape involving American soldiers never became a big social or political issue. During the war the US Army had been the benevolent savior of Korea, and the ongoing presence of US troops in Korea was a symbol of America's pledge to defend the Korean Peninsula. In other words, Koreans sacrificed the thing they had cherished as life itself, their chastity, to the ones who were defending their lives. Certainly, the UN and US Armies did protect South Korea from the North Koreans, and one can't deny that they

contributed in a major way to the democratization and liberalization of Korea. According to administrative agreements between South Korea and the United States, American soldiers were not to be tried in South Korea if they injured or killed a Korean citizen, and even human rights violations by the US Army were rarely a matter for concern in Korean society. The point of this policy was to maintain friendly US-Korea relations and the government's economic policies.

Today, in Korea there are 28,000 American soldiers occupying ninety-six different locations across the country. These places have been described as hotbeds of immoral sexual practices, venereal disease, drug addicts, and social vice, but they have all been hospitably sponsored by the government of South Korea. When it came to prostitution and sexual violence by the US Army such things were always ignored not only by the South Korean government, but even by Korean nationalists and feminists.

Nonetheless, as national consciousness and ideas of human rights became more prevalent in South Korea, a form of anti-Americanism critical of sexual violence by the US Army did begin to arise. The Korean novel, *Land of Excrement*, declared that, "South Korea is a land smeared with the excrement of American imperialism." Its author Nam Chŏng-hyŏn (1933-) wrote that, "America's criminal occupation of South Korea is not only not fading away, but in fact is taking deeper root." In 1965 he was charged and convicted of abetting communism.

Clearly, South Korea's attitudes and policies towards rape and the use of prostitutes by the army of a foreign country will vary depending on its relationship with the country involved. The number of Korean prostitutes who have served the US Army in the forty years since the end of the war has been roughly estimated at between 250,000 to 300,000.

The scholar Katharine HS Moon noticed that American soldiers stationed in Korea paid for prostitutes even more than American soldiers stationed in Japan, and she attributes that situation to diplomatic relations between the USA and South Korea.

Moon notes that the role played by prostitutes at US Army bases in satisfying the sexual urges of American soldiers and raising their morale was viewed as an act of patriotism in support of the South Korean government's defense of the Korean Peninsula. The existence of prostitution and venereal disease at army bases was seen in principle as America's problem and not as a problem that the South Korean government needed to crack down on. According to Moon, the prostitutes of the US Army worked voluntarily, in contrast with the comfort women of the Japanese ruled period who were pressed into service forcibly and systematically.¹

¹ Editor's note: Unfortunately, Moon's statement is completely false. The comfort women who worked in the Japanese military comfort station were volunteers or looking to make money. This can be verified through various sources, such as comfort women recruitment advertisements in Seoul's top-rated newspapers. Korean brothel dealers placed the advertisements. If the comfort women were, in fact, forced into service, then there would have been no need for advertisements.

However, this situation changed suddenly in October of 1992 when Yun Kŭm-i, an employee at a US Army clubhouse, was murdered by American soldier Kenneth Markle. Her mangled corpse was found soon after, covered with laundry detergent in an apparent attempt to cover up her fresh wounds. This shocking crime became a focal point for a new anti-American movement launched by women's rights organizations. The women living near US Army bases were portrayed as being the victims of sex crimes by Korean feminists, who in turn joined forces with Christian groups to create substantial social furor. One feminist group sent a petition to then-President Bill Clinton which read, "American forces stationed in Korea commit over 2,000 crimes every year. In order to resolve this crisis at its roots we ask you to take action to eliminate these crimes, including by amending administrative agreements between South Korea and the United States."

A half century after US troops were first stationed in South Korea, the case of Yun Kŭm-i had finally become the catalyst that pushed the nation beyond silent protest. Amidst an explosion of popular outrage, the Joint Action Committee for the Yun Kŭm-i Murder Case was founded. However, there was a need for a permanent organization and so, just before the first anniversary of Yun's death, various associations, including women's rights organizations, constituted the Headquarters for the Campaign to Eliminate Criminal Acts by US Soldiers in Korea. Then on October 25, 1998 the Democratic Women's Association of South Korea sought to keep the memory of the incident alive by holding a "memorial service for the victims of crimes by US servicemen to mourn Yun Kŭm-i on the sixth anniversary of her death".

In this manner, the tide turned against the United States and public criticism of the US Army began to appear. The undercurrent of sexual morality and chastity inherited from ages past had not faded in Korea, and due to the rise of new social movements in feminism, Christianity, and human rights, the Korean people seemed to have rediscovered their traditional ideas about sex. And yet in spite of all this, the status of the Korean-US military relationship remained unchanged since the time of the Korean War. The city of Tongduch'ŏn, where America's 2nd Division is stationed, continues to be a veritable red-light district. If you go out to the railway at night you can see prostitutes lined up all along the track.

Around this same time, a Korean prostitute was murdered by an American soldier, and her fellow sex workers carried her body through the streets in a march of protest. Nevertheless, the South Korean government did not treat this as a major scandal like a similar case which occurred in Okinawa, Japan. The situation seems reminiscent of Japan in the immediate aftermath of World War II. The mentalities of the occupying soldiers, the government, and the people were perhaps the same in Japan back then as in Korea now. There were plenty of reports of sexual assaults on women by American soldiers during the postwar occupation of Japan, but neither the Japanese government nor the Japanese people made a big deal out of it.

Only recently, following incidents of sexual violence by US soldiers stationed in Okinawa, are the people and government of Japan finally started to take this up as a serious problem.

Koreans should now cease pretending that problems relating to sexual violence and war are exclusively Japanese. They must properly acknowledge that these are problems even Koreans themselves are guilty of. Korea's narrow-minded views on this subject are the products of the South Korean people's poor understanding of issues relating to human rights as well as their government's scrupulous maintenance of the benefits it receives from the UN Army's protection. Koreans need to look at the issue from a broader perspective.

For instance, South Korean soldiers participated in the Vietnam War and were said to have raped many Vietnamese women. It is also a fact that there are many children in Vietnam today, known as *Lai Dai Han*, the fathers of whom were South Korean soldiers who impregnated Vietnamese women during the war. However, this issue is rarely broached within Korea.

Sex and war

Wartime sexual violence is not simply a matter of soldiers gratifying their sexual desires. It has been said that the objective of rape in war is to humiliate and bring shame on not only the women themselves, but also their husbands and families and even their country.

Consequently, racial animosity can result in sexual assaults against women of an enemy country. For example, the French Army raped many women during the Algerian War in order to make Algerian men lose face. It is also believed that between 30,000 and 50,000 Croatian and Muslim women were systematically raped by the Serbian Army in Bosnia, and sources testify that one in every one hundred women became pregnant through rape. In Bosnia, in particular, there was even one case of Serbian soldiers raping a pregnant Bosnian woman, ripping open her belly, and nailing her unborn child to a tree.²

In addition, sexual violence occurred during the Spanish conquest of Mexico, the German Peasants' War, the Seven Years' War, and World War II. The US Army raped women during the Korean War and the Vietnam War, and even in Asia the South Korean Army is guilty of sexual violence against Vietnamese women, the Japanese Army against Korean and Chinese women, and the Indonesian Army also against Chinese women. I remember even sexual violence perpetrated by the army of South Korea against its own people.

Even when military discipline was scrupulously maintained, soldiers still raped many women. During the Vietnam War women were raped on the battlefield while up to 500,000 Vietnamese women became prostitutes, and in Indonesia, ethnic Chinese Indonesians were the targets of sexual violence by the Indonesian Army. One can conclude from these facts that wartime sexual violence arises from racial and ethnic hatred.

² Editor's Note: Similar kinds of wild stories have circulated in every war of the 20th century—of babies being nailed to trees or babies being bayoneted by “depraved and vile” enemy soldiers. Such claims tend to sensationalize war and belittle the real horrors of war.

Concerning the cruel deeds perpetrated by the American and South Korean Armies during the Vietnam War, South Korean novelist An Chŏng-hyo wrote the book *White Badge* based on his own war-time experiences. The book and the movie based on it depict a man who becomes psychotic due to his experiences with rape and murder during the Vietnam War and ultimately commits suicide. In other words, An says that war can unhinge men's minds.

Oliver Stone's movie, *Platoon*, likewise raises questions about insanity, war, and the slaughter of fellow human beings in a world gone mad. Stone tells the story of a young man straight out of college who goes to fight in the Vietnam War and grows as a human being through his experiences, but the film depicts a world enveloped in a horrifying madness where American soldiers show no hesitation in smashing in the heads of Vietnamese civilians. Through this film Stone asks questions such as, "Is this really what war is like?" and "What is the meaning of peace?" In the real Vietnam War there were cases of American soldiers shoving sticks into women's vaginas and then killing them. Madness and war are also themes of director Francis Ford Coppola's masterpiece *Apocalypse Now*. In this film as well, Coppola shows how murder and rape take place in the background of a bigger form of violence called "war" and "invasion".

Even so, the Korean War was a somewhat different situation. UN soldiers did not really have a reason to view the women they were raping as belonging to an enemy nation. Indeed, most sexual violence was directed at South Korean women, who were theoretically on their side. Perhaps this can only be explained as the madness of war. The right to defend oneself and conduct operations in times and states of war are military concepts incomparable with peacetime conduct. On the front lines of the battlefield, there are no police or even military police with the power to maintain public order, and so soldiers are effectively free to do as they please. In such a situation, soldiers can cast off the shackles of their own humanity and drop to the level of animals. This state may not be one of sanity or madness, but rather of something in between. Thus, acts like rape and murder, whether undertaken impulsively or systematically, are likely to happen, and this is why many have argued that sexual violence is an inevitable part of war.

Despite all this, it is not true that all armies engage in sexual violence in times of war. As I already mentioned, I know from my own experience that the Chinese Army did no harm to women during the Korean War, which might have been related to the Chinese Army's policies towards sexual control. I have heard that the Chinese Army did not rape Japanese women at the end of World War II as well. As I have suggested, this case does present a glimmer of hope that a war can be fought without the loss of one's own sanity.

Chapter 3. The Spread of Prostitution



Widespread prostitution in South Korea

In this chapter, I want to pose the question of why society accepts the existence of prostitution in spite of it being an antisocial and immoral institution. I will discuss prostitution and sexual violence during the Korean War as well as present-day coffeehouse prostitution in South Korea, partly on the basis of the things I have seen and experienced myself. I hope to make a contribution to explaining the meaning and function of prostitution, and the process through which it evolves.

My hometown may not have been a village of Confucian scholars, but we were a typical rural community thoroughly steeped in the Confucian traditions of ancestor worship and rites of passage. Therefore it goes without saying that we also had a strong sense of Confucian ethics towards sex. In particular, girls were always expected to guard their chastity and have the morals of proper ladies. Nonetheless, these Confucian sexual mores were turned upside down by the war. I have already discussed the process through which my hometown confronted sexual violence during the Korean War by becoming a "prostitution village". Prostitution put down deep roots in towns located near military bases, though sexual violence has not entirely disappeared there, and then it spread to other areas. This then brings us up to the even more widespread reality of prostitution in Korea today.

There exists a society of sexual morality, which restricts prostitution as antisocial sexual deviancy, and at the same time a society that seeks to reduce normal physiological tensions through the institutionalization of prostitution, in the belief that it is not possible to satisfy the sexual needs of all society within the framework of legal marriage alone. In other words, even though there are differences of degree, every society will have both prostitution and regulations against it. However, even once-fixed ideas about marriage and prostitution have been changing considerably in modern society, and the nature of prostitution has also changed. As a result, prostitution has become difficult to define, but if I was to attempt a definition myself, I would call it a dynamic interplay between normal and deviant sex, a relationship that might be balanced between the two or imbalanced towards one or the other. Even married couples sometimes use a form of "client prostitution," and often women who are called "prostitutes" are similar to lovers.

The status and the definition of "wife," "mistress," *geisha*, "infidelity," and "adultery" have all changed in modern times and it is thus not mere sarcasm to say that a fine line exists between marriage and prostitution. Korea has had its own traditional system of *kisaeng* entertainers, who could variously be lovers or prostitutes, and although modern society has officially suppressed the sex trade, it flourishes behind the scenes.

After US Army units left my village, they moved into a permanent base in the city of Tongduch'ŏn, about four kilometers away, and most of the prostitutes in my village accompanied them. It has been said that the total number of such prostitutes, known as "Western whores," is two or three times the number of soldiers in a division. In the area where American soldiers are stationed, the economy relies on them and when they are forbidden from leaving their bases the local economy quickly slips into recession. The same

is true everywhere there are US Army camps, including some in spots well-known across Korea like Taegu, It'aewŏn in Seoul, and P'aju and Osan in Kyŏnggi. These districts have the look of American towns and they are known to be outside the jurisdiction of normal Korean laws.

I once saw a sign just outside Taegu's US military bases of Camp Henry and Camp Walker for a shop dealing with international marriages. In South Korea today, there are also a lot of high-class women who enjoy going to restaurants and golf courses frequented by US soldiers in order to get exposure to American culture. In the aftermath of the Korean War, if a Korean woman was walking with a white man, it was simply assumed that she was a prostitute. Now, international marriages are common and there are apparently many cases of prostitutes formally marrying American soldiers. Researchers have shown that American soldiers serving in Korea look for a wife while shifting between one lover and the next, whereas Korean women stick with one partner and do not separate from him. Such differing views on marriage seem to be one of the pitfalls of international marriages for Korean women. However, in Korean society, many women believe that if they lose their virginity they have no chance of getting married, and that is the reason why prostitutes view American soldiers or Western people in general as being ideal marriage partners. A similar sort of tendency also exists among Korean women working in seedy nightclubs in Japan. According to Oh Sŏn-hwa's book *Skirt Wind*, some Korean women who lose their virginity and cannot get married drift to Japan and become hostesses.

In Korea, there is also prostitution around where South Korean soldiers are stationed. Red-light districts have been formed near train stations used mainly by soldiers, and until quite recently prostitutes used to congregate in great numbers around Seoul Station and Ch'ŏngnyangni Station. Such things were a widespread phenomenon.

Prostitutes in Korea usually rent private houses which they redecorate to give them a home-like atmosphere in order to attract American soldiers as regular customers. They seem to serve as "comfort stations" to provide solace to homesick American soldiers who want to feel as if they are back at home. Many prostitutes dream of getting an international marriage that, if they are lucky, might lead to a new life in the United States. International marriage is thus a possible escape route for women cast off by society as morally depraved. Whether or not they are seeking a regular customer who will marry them, the prostitutes' primary goal is to earn money and obtain the capital needed to establish a business.

A woman who I will call "Lady C" had become a prostitute and was raising a child she had had with a white man, but she had been together with an American soldiers who she was planning on marrying and who was even sending her support money. Ultimately she ended up later losing contact with him and had to give up on any plan for an international marriage. She became a coffeehouse manager, using the money she had saved up, and recently died in a traffic accident.

Although depraved acts like prostitution are deviations from the straight path known as marriage, the prostitutes themselves may see prostitution as being their own path to marriage. These ironic occasions when prostitution leads to marriage can also be seen in South Korea's coffeehouse prostitution industry. Likewise members of the general public might consider prostitutes as people protecting society from sexual violence, but prostitutes view themselves as people trying to work their way up to normalcy from the lowest rungs of society. Though the government may attempt to suppress prostitution, the people's opinions on public prostitution vary widely.

Next I will give my thoughts on "coffeehouse prostitution" in Korea.

Coffeehouses

Though I had been a frequent visitor to coffeehouses, I had not known that they were centers for prostitution. I stopped by coffeehouses habitually when doing field studies of farming villages and fishing villages. I ended up becoming interested in the functions and characteristics of coffeehouses, and that is how I noticed for the first time the presence of prostitution.

A full-fledged coffeehouse industry in Korea did not start until Japanese colonial rule. During the reform period in Korea just prior to the colonial period, black tea and coffee brought by Western diplomats spread amongst Korea's upper classes. Korea's first coffeehouse was attached to a hotel in Inch'ŏn, and the first such hotel-affiliated coffeehouse in Seoul was established in 1902 by Russian citizens of German descent. Modern-day coffeehouses began to appear following the March 1st Movement of 1919. It was after that that Japanese citizens took the lead in setting up Aokido coffeehouses and in the Chosun Hotel, followed by the opening of a modern-day coffeehouse around 1923 on Mount Kŭmgang. Coffeehouses next sprung up as cultural spaces for Korean entertainers, and prior to World War II, they had also become sites for hosting exhibitions and book publication parties as well as gathering places for unemployed people.

After the end of the Korean War the pre-war role played by coffeehouses as centers for cultural activity shifted. From 1960 and onwards, the coffeehouses, which were once run by intellectuals, expanded due to the appearance of a new business model based on a "madam" and the waitresses known in Korean as *agasshi*. It was then that the coffeehouse business really took off.

In 1944, there were 60 coffeehouses in Seoul, but by 1955 there were 286. That number reached 1,041 in the year 1960 and then rose to 3,359 by the year 1977. The general setup of these coffeehouses involves one manager, two waitresses, one delivery man with a moped, and one male cook. When the manager hires a waitress, he first pays an employment agency a placement fee amounting to ten percent of her salary, and then upon bringing her to the coffeehouse, he pays the waitress in advance for her first month of work. I was told that the coffeehouse waitresses are paid 1,200,000 won monthly with free room and board, and the fee paid to the employment agency is therefore 120,000 won. A Korean professor who I was

travelling with mentioned to me that their salaries alone are somewhat higher than the starting wage of a university professor but are even more impressive when you take into account the free room and board.

The manager is responsible for bringing a madam and waitresses to the coffeehouse, but it is the madam who takes care of the waitresses. The madam plays the role of a big sister for the waitresses, giving them guidance on things like customer service, makeup application, and their on-duty hours. The madams also serve as emotional support for the waitresses, and I have been told that a madam may resign if she does not get along with the waitresses. Still, taking care of customers remains the primary duty of the madam.

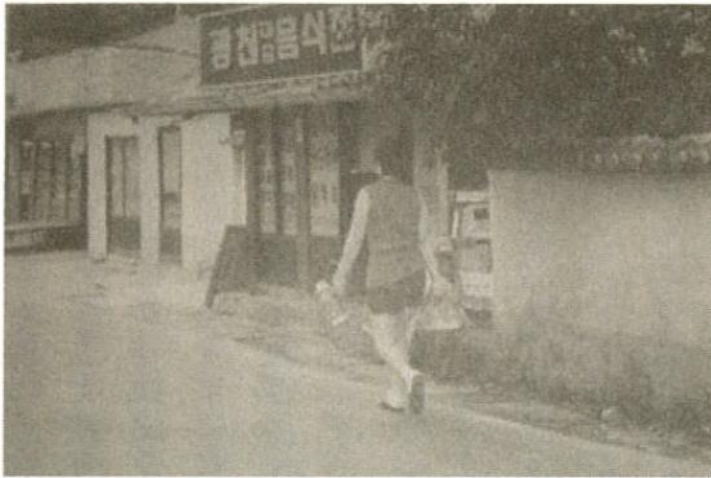
The madam of a coffeehouse dresses in the traditional Korean women's garment known as the *ch'ima chŏgori* and her job is to entertain and chat with her regular clients. Madams with a good reputation will attract a great many customers. The madams and the waitresses are also sent out to take orders and deal with customers who want credit. This "madam system" had spread quickly throughout Korea, but now coffee shops similar to the ones in Japan have become popular in urban areas and madams are gradually being replaced by waiters. Even so, the madam system still persists in the countryside.

Nevertheless, coffeehouses remain important as places to rest or socialize, both in cities and the countryside. Their usual adult, male customers often visit coffeehouses several times each day, and those who become the regular client of a madam can freely take advantage of all the coffeehouse's services. Many people select one coffeehouse as their regular haunt, and in provincial cities the lineup of customers at any given coffeehouse is more or less fixed.

One challenging aspect of running a coffeehouse is competition with other stores. To prevent business from being taken by other coffeehouses in the neighborhood, coffeehouses do extra services for their customers and cultivate many regular clients. Even more troublesome is the fact that they must insist on on-the-spot cash payment rather than credit or else they won't make any money at all. Coffeehouses have had to expand above all into the field of direct coffee delivery in order to stay competitive. Direct coffee delivery was made a success through the use of delivery men on mopeds who carry the waitresses all over town. In some circumstances the waitresses themselves might drive the mopeds, and seeing them do their deliveries in the city is not unusual. It was the introduction of the moped into South Korea which made this new field of service feasible.

A coffeehouse that I will call "Coffeehouse R" told me that it does direct coffee deliveries to 130 locations in a day. The waitresses jump onto the back of mopeds driven by delivery men while carrying a coffee pot and coffee cups in their hands. In order to cover as much ground as possible, they plan out a route through several locations near to one another. After delivering coffee to the first customers on their route, they continue through the rest of their rounds while the first ones are still drinking, and then backtrack in order to collect up all their coffee cups on the way back to the coffeehouse.

Such delivery orders come from many places including government offices, inns, eateries, and even individual homes. Sometimes single people at home or at an inn order enough coffee for several people, and I was told that the waitresses take special care for those occasions. It was then that I learned that some of these people were included in the "ticket" system. These tickets are a trade secret known only to their most trusted regular clients.



A coffeehouse waitress (unrelated to the women described in this book) delivering coffee to a customer.

Listening to the waitresses' stories

When I tried to speak at length with a coffeehouse waitress for the purposes of my research a madam mentioned to me the "tickets," known informally as *pong*, and told me to use one. This is how I first discovered the ticket system.

Under the ticket system, a customer may have a waitress all to himself on an hourly basis. When a customer wants exclusive access to his favorite waitress or madam, he calls up the coffeehouse to order a ticket, and then the madam weighs the merits of the request based on things like whether or not the employee has enough time. If the madam approves the request, the customer is charged by the hour. The price varies somewhat between coffeehouses, but it tends to be roughly 20,000 won per hour. It was explained to me that, officially, the tickets exist to respond to those customers who want a chance to eat and drink with their favorite waitress or madam, but in practice the system has attracted social criticism for being connected to prostitution.

This matter would later become widely known through the popularity of the 1986 movie *Ticket*, directed by Im Kwŏn-t'aek, which takes up the subject. In this film, Chi-suk (played by Kim Chi-Mi) was the wife of a dissident writer but is now involved in the sex trade and is bringing waitresses to a port city in Kangwŏn Province, where she runs a coffeehouse. One of them is Se-young (played by Chŏn Se-young), who has never worked as a coffeehouse waitress before and is scolded by Chi-suk when she refuses a request from her customer. Se-young's boyfriend Min-su, who is a university student, visits her and tells her that he

cannot pay his tuition and will have quit university. Se-young tells him that she will find the money, and while searching for some way to do so she becomes intimate with Captain Pak. Min-su ends up finding out about Se-young's relationship with Captain Pak and breaks up with her. Chi-suk meets with Min-su, but does not succeed at convincing him to reconsider.

Coffeehouse waitresses prostitute themselves during coffee deliveries because of their money worries, which sometimes stem from the need to support their families.

When I was walking through the islands of South Chölla Province, there were a lot of coffeehouses with signs stuck on their entranceways reading "Our coffeehouse does not accept tickets." I decided to investigate several of these places.

"Coffeehouse T" was reputed to treat its employers better than any of the nine coffeehouses clustered around the local town hall. The madam was paid a salary of 1,500,000 won and the waitresses were paid a salary of 1,400,000 won. It did not have any delivery men with mopeds, so it didn't do long-distance deliveries and instead just had the waitresses do deliveries on foot to locations near the coffeehouse.

Although this coffeehouse also had a sign reading "Our coffeehouse does not accept tickets," I was told that, in fact, sales of tickets, priced at 10,000 won per hour, accounted for twenty to thirty percent of their sales. I heard that on one day the coffeehouse ultimately made 200,000 won, of which about fifty percent were from deliveries, thirty to forty percent from in-store sales, and twenty percent from tickets. The cost of a ticket is paid entirely to the madam and is later received by the waitress as part of her monthly salary. Still, the waitresses are able to make good money from tickets. Depending on their own skill, waitresses may also receive tips completely independent of their regular salary. I was told that the tips known as "bathroom charges," which waitresses get directly from customers in exchange for sexual services, amount to a hefty sum of money. On deliveries, the waitresses told me that they do not have any set regular clients, but instead take orders from anywhere they receive them.

One woman of twenty-nine years, who I will call "Lady G," had become a coffeehouse waitress and, after only two years, came to "Coffeehouse T" for a 1,400,000 won advance payment received via her employment agency in Kwangju. The manager of the coffeehouse had paid her employment agency a grand total of 1,600,000 won which was her advance payment plus a 200,000 placement fee. What's more, "Lady G" requested an additional 5,000,000 won advance on her salary so the manager loaned her the money. Because there are so few people willing to work as coffeehouse waitresses, the manager complied with her request, and giving her a loan was also a form of security so that she would work there for a long time.

Despite this, there are various reasons why most coffeehouse waitresses do not stick to any one job for long. In cases when a waitress quits within three months, the next employer simply ends up assuming her debt. In Seoul, there is a system where coffeehouse waitresses start work at 9:00 AM, go home at 10:00 PM, and then get a day off, and these waitresses

might make a monthly salary around 850,000 won. In addition, even though coffeehouse waitresses make high wages in the countryside, they can still run into problems here as well. For instance, if they do not undergo a physical examination for things like STDs every six months then they will not receive a certificate of good health and will not be able to continue working.

The ticket system generally applies to times between 8:00 AM to 9:00 PM and waitresses can make good money during this period. I have been told that the waitresses do not want to work outside this period, especially between 11:00 PM and 1:00 AM, when they would have to service drunk men from bars and restaurants.

These restaurants do not hire their own coffeehouse-style waitresses because their labor costs are already high, but often make transactions by borrowing such waitresses from coffeehouses. When the coffeehouse waitresses receive an order from a restaurant they are supposed to take it whether they like it or not, but the normal number of ticket requests they receive are more than three times what they can handle. Some of their customers do disgusting things to them or make unreasonable demands, and at those times the waitresses respond by refusing tips even when offered them. There are some customers who refuse to pay at all even after they have had sex with the waitress, but as troublesome as that is the waitresses cannot report them since prostitution is illegal, and they have no choice but to put up with it. Some customers are also delinquent in their payments when ordering coffee, but here the waitresses have legal recourse and can resolve the problem.

Coffeehouse waitress "Lady K," age thirty-one, at first went by her real family name, but in Yönggwang County she used a different name, as well as another different name in "Coffeehouse T". In this business there are very few people who go by their family names, as is normal in Korea, but rather they often use just their first names. Coffeehouses waitresses stick with one name once they select it, changing it only if another person with the same name comes to their coffeehouse or if they are rejected in love. In the former case, I am told that the new arrival will switch to a different family name and use that. Almost all the waitresses keep either their real first name or their real last names, and few will adopt an entirely fabricated alias.

"Lady K" spent ten months in a coffeehouse on an island in South Chölla Province and then went on to work in the South Chölla counties of Changhŭng, Yöng'am, Kurye, and Chindo before coming to Kwansan. Like "Lady G," her transfers were arranged through an employment agency in Kwangju. There are numerous such employment agencies in Kwangju, seven to be precise, but "Lady K" has done all her work with just one of them. In the past, "Lady K" had relied on a woman who sold cosmetics to take care of her job transfers from coffeehouse to coffeehouse, but now she almost invariably uses an employment agency.

The women who get into the coffeehouse business as waitresses come, by and large, from bars. Girls from the countryside who have run away from home or women who have been

involved in prostitution start out working in bars and then later switch to coffeehouses in the hopes of finding somewhat more respectable work. Coffeehouses are their preferred form of employment because, unlike bars, a coffeehouse is a daytime job and their customers want normal relationships with them, possibly even marriage. In other words, it's said that a job as a coffeehouse waitress might even evolve into a marriage into a good family. Each and every coffeehouse has its own stories, passed from one person to the next like folklore, about waitresses who succeeded at finding a husband at that very coffeehouse. I was told at one coffeehouse that a waitress got married to a rich and kind man just a few days ago. He had left his home when his wife had cheated on him and left home. Then he found at this coffeehouse a woman, skilled at housework and was good with children, who he married, and now they live happily ever after.

Seeking marriage

There are many coffeehouse waitresses who aspire to get married but there are not very many suitable partners for them. A "suitable partner" needs to be both rich and kind. The waitresses do not want to continue living in a farm town. They would like to marry a businessman. The danger that they might become victims of human trafficking does exist, but it does not extinguish their dreams of marriage. There are indeed many people who will enjoy a good married life, but, by and large, marriage for coffeehouse waitress is not easy. Even if they do find a suitable partner, objections might come from friends and family and terrible arguments might occur. The percentage of such marriages that actually go off without a hitch is extremely low. Because of this, there is a general tendency for people to look down on the coffeehouse waitresses who walk about with their coffeepots in hand.

One waitress joined a coffeehouse after divorcing her abusive husband and was paying someone else 300,000 won a month in child care expenses to raise her children.

A talented waitress with many years of experience might become a madam, but being a madam is a difficult job with considerable responsibilities attached, so many people remain coffeehouse waitresses even into their thirties. "Lady K" is also still working as a coffeehouse waitress, though she mentioned that she wouldn't mind becoming a madam. She stated that she does not want to get married because all men are two-faced and unfaithful. She insisted that no matter how well-behaved a man looks, he will show his beastly side sooner or later.

According to "Lady K," seventy percent of the customers who come to her coffeehouse are old men, many of whom want to grope the waitresses. She said that it is rather tiresome dealing with their many stock questions like "How old are you?" and "Where are you from?" She added that younger men are honest and do not usually act like that, so they are better customers. Women also come to the coffeehouse, either together with a man or with other women, but they never come alone.

"Lady K" told me that the best customers bring a lot of friends, talk quietly, and leave in a short period of time. Those who do the opposite cause inconvenience, such as people who

come alone, sit around for a long time, and do things that get on the nerves of the waitresses. Some customers say crude things to the waitresses, but the ones who are basically good-natured do not leave a bad impression even if their language is bad. What the waitresses really hate are people who speak kindly but have cold hearts. In small villages, some customers use coffeehouses as their set meeting places due to their friendships with the manager and might bring in a lot of other people with them, but there are other customers with no fixed loyalties who will pop into any coffeehouse.

Even though their salaries are fixed, coffeehouse waitresses strive mightily to raise their sales. As their line of work has many challenges, being able to improve their sales gives coffeehouse waitresses a sense of job satisfaction.

However, "Lady K" had a few bitter experiences in her job. There were a lot of violent men at the port near where she worked. They had vulgar mouths and vulgar hands, often trying to grope the waitresses. When they got a ticket some of them thought they could do whatever they wanted to the waitresses and demanded sex right away. One day a man twenty-seven years of age bought his own ticket and then closely watched her reaction as he poured liquor onto a watermelon and tried to force her to drink it. When she refused and went back to the coffeehouse, the man angrily phoned up the madam and told her that "Lady K" was not a good employee. When things like this happen it is customarily the job of the madam to stand up for her waitresses, and it is also a test of the madam's authority, as the verbal abuse that she can dish out to an adversary is proof of her experience. A good madam will give her customer a real tongue lashing in order to settle the situation.

Some have even said that in coffeehouses, it is not the customer, but the waitress who is always right. Even so, I have been told that when a coffeehouse waitress has no work she goes back home, naturally telling her parents that she is on leave from the factory, and in this relaxed atmosphere might doze right off for twenty-four straight hours. At these times the waitresses sometime also meet up individually with people from their coffeehouse and form a mutual finance group with them.

"Lady A," thirty years of age, did not tell me her family name. She was a madam who never let her guard down. When I asked her if she made a monthly salary of about 1,500,000 won she replied, "I made that for three years in Chindo and later came here. I chose this coffeehouse because all the customers who come here are well-behaved." Though she refused outright to permit any photography or answer any questions about the coffeehouse, she did provide me with some information.

Her coffeehouse sold tickets at 20,000 won for a two-hour block, and she also informed me of the meaning of *pong*, the slang word for a ticket. The word came into use because when the waitresses went to spend an hour with their customer they brought five energy drinks called *pong*, which were sold for 2,000 won each.

The madams manage the waitresses' time, but they don't have the right to appoint personnel or other such administrative duties. "Lady A" was also kind enough to offer me the perspective of the coffeehouse manager, who was having problems with the mounting labor costs of paying for the coffeehouse's four waitresses. She mentioned that they also have to occasionally deal with the problem of waitresses who take their advance payments and then run off. Her remarks were consistent with her role as a supervisor of the waitresses and gave me a rather different impression from what I heard from the waitresses themselves.

This brings me to an explanation of the direct coffee delivery service, one of the defining characteristics of a Korean coffeehouse, which can perhaps also be seen as an extension of the issues I have already discussed above. The subtext which strongly underlies this service is not so much the delivery of coffee, but the dispatching of a woman. Very few restaurants in South Korea do direct deliveries. Though farmers sometimes bring takeout back to their places of work, the restaurants themselves do not do delivery. There are Chinese restaurants which are starting up such services, but apart from that it is fair to say that delivery service is virtually nonexistent in Korea's restaurants and bars. Coffee delivery remains the big exception.

Coffee delivery in Korea today is reminiscent of its popularity in the Middle East in medieval times. Ralph Hattox wrote the following in his 1985 book *Coffee and coffeehouses: The Origins of a Social Beverage in the Medieval Near East*.

"The coffeehouse... was in essence a 'take-out' shop, usually located in a commercial area, for the convenience of those doing business in the markets. It might have been nothing more than a tiny cubicle, where coffee was prepared and then put into the hands of those menials who carried it to the various shops in the market for the refreshment of the merchants and the clients they were cultivating. The custom, as those who have been in the markets or offices anywhere in the Near East well know, is still very much alive. It is not at all uncommon to see young men or boys, employees of the coffee stall itself or, more usually, employees of the individual concerns, hustling through the streets and alleys carrying cups and single-serving sized pots on a tray..."

Chapter 4. Sexual Mores and the Idea of Chastity in Korea



Sexual mores and prostitution

For the most part, Korean society is Confucian and is said to have a strong sense of sexual mores and morality. It is certainly true that Confucianism upholds unshakeable gender roles for men and women. Korean society adheres to strict rules concerning sexual relationships between men and women as emblemized by the rule that boys and girls over the age of seven sit separately from one another. However, Koreans are especially strict concerning the chastity of women, and things that are instantly viewed as deviant when a woman does them might be considered normal for men. In a Confucian-based patriarchal society, it is thought that such attitudes towards sex also serve the important role of protecting the purity of the paternal line.

Back when the student protest movement was at its high point, there were a lot of cases in Korea of teachers being dismissed from their schools due to sex scandals. In general Koreans feel considerable apprehension about exposing their bodies, and a strong taboo against incest also exists with most people marrying outside their clan. Furthermore, Korean law also contains strict regulation of sex, such as the law against adultery, Article 241 of the Criminal Code, which mandates a prison sentence of up to two years to married individuals caught having an affair, as well as the person with whom he or she had the affair. Immediately after coming to power in a military coup, President Park Chung-hee cracked down on prostitution and acts of depravity. The South Korean government raided underground dance clubs, hauled any married women dancing there onto the backs of trucks, and then drove them through the city for all to see to serve as a warning to others.

On the other hand, Korean society has permitted men to keep a mistress, often on the grounds that men needed to produce additional offspring, and traditionally the *kisaeng* system played this role. The frequently lewd conversations of Korean men are perhaps also indicative of this situation. A society can never completely control its own sexual urges through a code of conduct alone and it is extremely common that even my fellow Korean university professors enjoy telling risqué stories over a meal. I was told of one school board president who boasted of being able to recite enough obscene stories to fill several hundred books. In contrast with Japan, which is relatively flexible and where sexual outlets do exist, Korea has fashioned a second culture below the surface of the Confucian society that treasures outward respectability. It's no surprise that Korean men, who have been permitted to be sexually libertine behind the scenes, have natural mixed feelings over the fading away of traditional morality in modern society. In this chapter, I will reflect on the reality that exists in Korea today which arose in modern society from this historical backdrop.

To sum up my conclusions so far, it was during the Korean War that, for a moment in time, the inhabitants of my village relaxed their traditionally strong Confucian sense of sexual morality and accepted prostitution in order to ward off rapes and sexual assaults by soldiers. After they had found a justification for permitting prostitution, they actively turned it into a source of income. This was not a phenomenon limited to my own village. Rather, prostitution became normal around military bases and a sort of *de facto* licensed prostitution system developed. To some, prostitution ended up being not just an act of sexual depravity, but also

a path to marriage. Especially in Korean society which puts a high value on chastity, women who had lost their virginity and had trouble getting married, including prostitutes, sought international marriages in Japan or the United States and often went abroad to ply their trade. In this context, one might say that there was a tendency for the line between prostitution and marriage to become blurred.

The roots of Korea's traditional concept of sexual chastity

South Korea's use of sex and chastity for political purposes is not a recent phenomenon, but rather it dates far back into history. Today the South Korean government has taken the traditional concept of sexual chastity and exploited it to advance its twin purposes of national consciousness at home and diplomacy abroad. The problem of the so-called "comfort women" is a good example. Here Koreans show strongly anti-Japanese attitudes and emotions while putting forward the notion that the chastity of all Korea was robbed by the Japanese, and that seems to be a reflection of the government's agenda. It would be fair to say that in Korea chastity is also an instrument of state policy.

However, it is not quite true that the Korean people's reverence of chastity means that they are in mental denial of their sexual side. Korean views on sex are conservative, but not quite puritanical. For instance, Korean women are expected to give their virginity to their marriage partner, and marriage is considered, like rites of passage, to be a basic requirement for life. From the Korean viewpoint, marriage is a fate that all people must accept, just like the Korean proverb says, "Even sandals come in pairs." For this reason, unmarried people are seen as a misfortune both for the individuals themselves and for society as a whole. Those who die unmarried are regarded with especial contempt and end up causing problems for both their families and their communities. In spite of this, Koreans still have a strong moral sense that a marriage ceremony must take place only once in each person's life. The Confucian code of conduct is that no second marriages are allowed, especially for women, even if the first marriage fails.

Under the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1910) the concept of sexual chastity was rigidly enforced throughout Korean society as part of the deeply-rooted Confucian outlook on womanhood. According to one saying, "Whether or not a woman starves means very little but whether or not a woman remains chaste means everything in the world." Women could not remarry after their first marriage, and sometimes women lived right alongside the graves of their husbands.

Confucianism promotes the principle of "three bonds," or "*samgang*" in Korean, which involves the bond between rulers and subjects, whereby subjects are expected to be loyal, father and child, whereby children are expected to be filial, and husband and wife, whereby wives are expected to be faithful. The idea of sexual chastity had a major impact on the spread of the "three bonds" concept, most notably on the Korean law of 1485 stipulating that the descendants of a woman who remarried would not be permitted to take the civil service examination.

Even if her husband took a mistress, became deathly ill, or abandoned her, a wife would remain devoted to him and his family. She would stay faithful to him even if it meant suicide, murder, or mutilation of her own body. No matter whether her husband was kind or wicked, she would always stay true to him and uphold the iron rule of "*pulsa ibu*," "never serve two husbands".

The Korean book, *Model Women*, contains a total of sixty-five anecdotes about twenty-four "virtuous women" and forty-one "heroic women". Seven of the stories about "heroic women" featured brides-to-be, in other words virgins who were not yet married in law, but who died in order to protect their chastity. There is only one about unmarried virgins who died solely to protect their chastity, the story about the two daughters of Mr. Bin of China, ages sixteen and nineteen, who committed suicide by jumping off a sheer cliff when it seemed like a bandit was about to rape them. These stories indicate that the "heroic women" were not defending their chastity for their own sake, but for the sake of their husband who they honored above all else under the doctrine of "*pulsa ibu*".

The 1530 book, *Revised and Augmented Survey of the Geography of Korea*, discusses the origins of numerous stone monuments, including those dedicated to "heroic women" of the Koryŏ Dynasty and Chosŏn Dynasty. There are a lot of instances of women who did things like slay tigers which had pounced on their husbands and thus saved their husbands' lives. The monuments emphasize the Korean idea that women must be strong in order to defend what is right and defend their chastity.

Also, in order to emphasize the principle that a woman must not remarry, the "young widow," who had been engaged and only briefly married, is used as a symbolic figure.

What became the traditional Korean model woman was a "heroic woman" who would protect her chastity like her own life even if something terrible had happened to her husband and she had to face great hardship. As examples of "heroic women," I will list out thirty-five examples of filial daughters taken from the Korean book, *The New and Expanded Illustrated Guide to the Three Bonds* (1434), which was a primer on women's education and instruction in use during the Chosŏn Dynasty.

- (1) When a fire broke out at night, she did not flee to the temple, but instead in an act of faithfulness to her husband she allowed herself to be burned alive.
- (2) Her husband married her mistress and left her, but even so she continued to be dutiful to her husband's parents.
- (3) After her husband died, she drowned herself.
- (4) Even though her husband contracted a severe illness, she did not leave his side.

(5) After becoming a widow she was tempted by the king himself, and so she cut off her own nose.

(6) When the enemy was about to kill her husband or her husband's father, his wife put on a disguise and died in his place.

(7) Though she had two sons of her own, she also raised the four sons of her partner's ex-wife as if they were her own children.

(8) Even though her husband had not returned to her for seven years, she killed herself by slitting her own throat when her mother-in-law was about to be raped by enemy soldiers.

(9) After the death of her husband, she was beaten to death without showing any unfaithfulness to him.

(10) She broke her husband out of jail and then committed suicide.

(11) After her husband had died, someone urged her to get remarried, but instead she cut her hair, cut off her own nose, and worked to support her husband's family.

(12) After her husband had died, even her husband's father recommended that she get remarried, but instead she cut off her own ear and swore never to do so. She went to plant a tree in front of her husband's grave and when she saw the swallows flying past she was profoundly reminded of the late husband's love of her.

(13) She and her husband encountered bandits while traveling and even though her husband escaped, she resisted being raped and was killed by them.

(14) When her husband was banished to a remote island, her husband advised her to get remarried, but instead she cut off her own ear and swore not to. She read a biography of a "heroic woman" and stayed faithful. Ten years later her husband took a second wife, but he later abandoned the second wife and reunited with her.

(15) After her husband passed away following a serious illness, she ran into a bandit. Just when she was about to get violated by him, she fought back and was killed.

(16) After the death of her husband, her wrist was touched by another man, so she cut off her arm with an axe.

(17) A bandit tried to rape a beautiful girl. He hauled her off with him, but on the way she hung herself.

(18) The Korean Army was shattered in battle and turned into bandits. They tried to rape a married woman who resisted and was killed. Her corpse was thrown into a river.

(19) Her husband was attacked by enemies and fled, and though she was almost raped by them, she resisted and then hung herself.

(20) After her husband perished without fleeing in an act of loyalty, his wife followed suit by hanging herself.

(21) A wife of a Chinese man of the Song Dynasty was about to be raped by enemy Mongols, so she claimed that she had to undergo a mourning ceremony and then killed herself by jumping off a precipice.

(22) When a married couple was captured by bandits, the wife told a lie to the bandits to get them to release her husband, then died fighting them so that she would not be raped.

(23) When war began her husband joined the army, so his wife found someone to look after their children and then hung herself.

(24) After her husband died in a far-off land, the wife continued to be obedient to her husband's parents and in order to find her husband's remains, she searched for them after praying on top of a sheet of ice for forty days.

(25) A wife who showed piety to her mother-in-law was kidnapped by bandits. When she fought back she was skinned alive.

(26) When her husband died of illness, she mourned for three years, then hung herself beside his grave.

(27) During an incursion by Japanese pirates, wet nurses including unwed women who feared that they would be raped hung themselves.

(28) A bandit killed her husband and tried to cannibalize him, so his wife allowed herself to be eaten in his place.

(29) Even though the man to whom she had decided to marry died when she was only sixteen years old, she stayed true to the principle of "never serve two husbands" and remained a virgin while living with his family for fifty-two years.

(30) When she was summoned by the king to become a lady-in-waiting, she ran off to the island to meet her husband, and then they both went to the Korean nation of Koguryō where they became the king's retainers together.

(31) A woman with four children refused to be violated by invading Japanese pirates and was killed by them.

(32) During the late-sixteenth century Japanese invasion of Korea, when a woman whose husband had gone to war was about to be raped she left behind her infant children and killed herself by tossing herself into a river.

(33) A woman who was just about to be raped by Japanese invaders resisted her attacker because she was already married, so her arms and legs were chopped off, killing her.

(34) When her husband was bitten by a tiger, she rescued him.

(35) A woman grieving the loss of her husband died after fasting for fifty-three days and was then buried together with him.

Of these thirty-five stories, five are about women from the period of China's Han Dynasty, nine are from China's Song Dynasty, five are from China's Yuan Dynasty, two are from China's Tang Dynasty, three are from Korea's Chosŏn Dynasty, two are from Korea's Koryŏ Dynasty, and there is also one story each from the Korean state of Paekche, the Chinese state of Cai, the Chinese state of Wei, China's Five Dynasties Period, and China's Qi, Liang, Sui, Jin, and Ming Dynasties.

By comparing the ratio of stories set in China to stories set in Korea, we can see that twenty-nine of the thirty-five are Chinese and only six are Korean. The role models for Koreans were Chinese, especially of the Song Dynasty. This was natural for the leaders of the Chosŏn Dynasty who venerated the teachings of the Song Confucianist scholar Zhu Xi.

In addition, four of the stories deal with women who resisted Japanese men.

The concept of sexual chastity in Korea

As I already noted, denial of sex per se is not part of the Korean mentality. Koreans are not sexually repressed but rather one might say that they put their focus on specific human relationships. I believe that the most quintessential examples of this are the concept of chastity in Korean society and the prohibition on remarriage. A common dictionary definition of chastity might be, "The maintenance of purity in sexual relationships between women and men, especially the faithfulness of a woman towards a man." This definition includes no restrictions on things like masturbation or nocturnal emissions, in other words, it lacks references to "celibacy towards oneself". I would argue that it is a very Asian notion.

Confucius' *Analects* do not directly deal with sex in relationships between men and women, but it does mention that one of the "three things the gentleman should guard against" is "the attraction of feminine beauty". This has a strong implication of celibacy, but not as an institutional rule, and yet, as a result of a long historical process, these ideas would take root as a societal institution without advocating celibacy.

This code of sexual conduct was institutionalized through the work of Zhu Xi at the time of China's Song Dynasty (960-1279), which had a special influence on East Asia. This is why

Korea's sexual mores are said to be Confucian. Basically, it can be thought of as the management of women's sexual behavior through the establishment of a societal code of sexual conduct. In other words, Confucian sexual ethics are controlled through societal relations.

Such Confucian sexual ethics stand in contrast with Christian ideas. In Christianity, the New Testament encourages celibacy without marriage when it is possible. If we acknowledge that chastity can be defined in both subjective and objective ways, then we could say that for Christians chastity signifies "chastity of mind" first and foremost. In his essay, "The Battle for Chastity," Michel Foucault placed great significance on the "subjectivation" of chastity while discussing the theories of John Cassian. Foucault described how monks especially suppress their lustful impulses on both a conscious and subconscious level. For instance, they grapple with how to manage both conscious acts of masturbation and subconscious acts of nocturnal emission. For them the hardest things to deal with are sexual impulses that occur in dreams and while sleeping. Tolstoy concurred that, "The hardest fight to win is the fight against lust."

Chastity and its discontents are also a major issue for world religions. Religion's role in reinforcing institutions is to portray sexual pleasure as being dangerous and repress it. The ancient form of ascetic morality, which warns against wine and women as being a path to self-destruction, exists in society primarily due to the religions which advocate fidelity to one's husband and the suppression of lust.

The Korean concept of sexual chastity is different from Western-style celibacy. The Korean way of thinking is strongly patriarchal, derived from an ages-old system of chauvinistic sexual discrimination which even today has far from faded away. The traditional code of sexual conduct values only the chastity of women and the prohibition on their remarrying, but it gives men free reign.

In spite of this, the status of women's rights in Korea has improved as a result of the postwar prohibition on keeping a mistress. Today, Korean men are relatively restrained when it comes to adultery and prostitution and have paradoxically ended up adopting the same sexual morality devised for a patriarchal society. Furthermore, it seems that Western-style celibacy has also infiltrated Korea to some degree due to the spread of Christianity.

Even so, nothing has been able to change the fundamental Confucian principles. There is even a trend among Korean women who have lost their virginity, such as prostitutes, to break free of the shackles of Confucianism by fleeing to Japan and the United States. Naturally though, this cannot be explained solely through reference to the Korean concept of chastity, and there are probably also economic motivations behind the trend, alongside the widespread mental idea that you can start anew by moving to a place where no one knows your name.

Identity through sexual chastity

Due to the influence of Enlightenment ideas and Christianity, the Chosŏn concept of sexual chastity has been acknowledged as an old feudal relic that should be reformed. Divorce and remarriage are legally possible in Korea today.

Nevertheless, the traditional concept of sexual chastity remains firmly implanted. Adultery is still prohibited by law. According to Article 241 of the Criminal Code, "If a married person commits adultery, his or her partner may press charges to have both sides sentenced to up to two years in prison," and though crimes concerning chastity dealt with in Chapter 312 of the Criminal Code mainly cover rape, there is also Article 304 which states, "Any man who has sex with a woman who has no history of lewd conduct, either by claiming he would marry the woman or else through other fraudulent means, will be sentenced to up to two years in prison."

The traditional concept of sexual chastity is strongly rooted not only in law, but in custom as well. Korean society remains generally Confucian, and so has a strong sense of sexual mores and morality. Indeed, Confucianism maintains strong gender roles in order to avoid sexual relationships between men and women, including the rule that boys and girls over the age of seven sit separately from one another. Confucianism is especially strict concerning the chastity of women. In traditional textbooks used for women's education, like *Model Women* and *Instructions for Women*, it was stressed that women who were deprived of their chastity would have no choice but to kill themselves. Naturally, any extramarital sex for women was seen as a horrendous act. By contrast, things that are instantly viewed as deviant when a woman does them might be considered normal for men. In a Confucian-based patriarchal society, it is thought that such attitudes towards sex also served the important role of protecting the purity of the paternal line.

Confucianism originated in China, and the Confucian code of ethics can still be seen among Chinese citizens of Korean descent. In August of 1983, the Chinese government issued the "Provisions for the Registration of Marriage between Chinese Citizens and Foreigners" and set up the Department of Marriage to administer it. China did this because of the large number of international marriages that have been taking place recently between Chinese women of Korean descent and South Korean men. Generally the men are remarrying and the age difference between them and the women is great. This has caused social problems such as bought brides, sham marriages, and an unbalanced sex ratio in rural villages. In April of 1993 the "Memorandum of the Prefectural Government Concerning Bride Buying by Foreigners" was issued and administered, but prostitution and related activities have remained prevalent.

Changes in attitudes towards sex and chastity can also be seen in South Korea. A movement gradually arose in South Korea among those who viewed Westernization and foreign culture as being sexually decadent to guard against this sexual immorality in modern society by reinforcing the traditional concept of sexual chastity as it existed in books like *Instructions for Women*. In the 1980's sales of the book *Instructions for Women* suddenly skyrocketed as a result of the production of the TV drama, "Plum Blossom in the Snow", which includes the

book's author Lady Han as one of its protagonists. The image of the "heroic woman," as an ideology of male chauvinism rather than celibacy, became the symbol of the movement to reinvigorate traditional sexual morality amidst the sexual liberation and decadence that had accompanied modernization.

The nationalism of sexual chastity

Korean historical records often document the rape of chaste Korean women by enemy forces. In particular there are many records relating to rapes by Mongolians, Chinese, and Japanese.

In the thirteenth century, the Mongols invaded the Korean Kingdom of Koryŏ on seven occasions. As one of their peace terms, the Mongols demanded women as tribute. The Mongols did this in order to provide marriage partners to the soldiers who had surrendered to them during the invasion of China, and also to sap Koryŏ's will to resist by robbing its women of their chastity.

Following its capitulation to the Mongols, Koryŏ set up the "marriage bureaucracy" in order to recruit virgins between the ages of twelve and sixteen and send them to the Mongols. Records indicate that Korean messengers bearing virgins as tribute made their way to the Mongol court more than fifty times over a period of eighty years. Virgins were prized due to the moral principles that premarital sex was wrong and that the paternal bloodline should not be contaminated.

The Ming Dynasty, which governed China after the fall of the Mongol Yuan Dynasty, also exacted a tribute in virgins from the Korean peninsula for the purpose of "strategic marriages." Through this period, suicides and early marriages of young Korean women were common to escape being sent away as tribute and hatred of the Mongols was especially strong.

By the middle of the Chosŏn Dynasty, which succeeded the Koryŏ Dynasty, the deification of chastity was becoming widespread. One entry recorded in the book *Treatise on the Board of Punishments* states, "In 1379, Mr. Pak died and his wife was sexually threatened by the grandson of Mr. Pak's cousin. Mr. Pak's wife refused his advances and was killed by him. When we prayed to her spirit during a year of drought it rained, and so we called it 'the rainfall bestowed by the faithful wife'." In *Collected Edicts*, a legal distinction is made between virgins who were from aristocratic families and commoner women, married or unmarried ordinary women who were not prostitutes. The rape of a virgin was to be punished by beheading, whereas the rape of a commoner woman was to be dealt with through normal law. In the year 1682, one man was beheaded on the spot for raping a virgin by the side of the road.

In addition, gender roles became stricter. Special etiquette for behavior both inside and outside the home was established, including the rule that a lady must never speak a word, even if she is with her sisters, as she enters the room where her husband is, and the rule that a

lady must never socialize with anyone other than her father and mother, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, and father-in law and mother-in-law.

The recent trend in Korea has been to look up to China and look down on Japan. When Koreans show hostility towards Japan today they sometimes still mention the Japanese pirates, Japanese bandits, and Japanese invasions referenced in days of old.

The Korean encyclopedia *Topical Discourses* mentions 356 "heroic women" of every social class who died defending their own chastity during Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea, far more than its 67 filial children and 11 loyal subjects. Among them is the story of Non'gae (?-1593), a *kisaeng* who lured a Japanese general to the riverbank and then, while embracing him, hurled him and herself into the river. This story was passed on orally before being recorded, and today there is a festival in the city of Chinju in worship of Non'gae.

Among the thirty-five filial daughters discussed in the aforementioned book, *The New and Expanded Illustrated Guide to the Three Bonds*, there are four dealing with Japanese enemies. "During an incursion by Japanese pirates, wet nurses including unwed women who feared that they would be raped hung themselves." "A woman with four children refused to be violated by invading Japanese pirates and was killed by them." "During the late-sixteenth century Japanese invasion of Korea, when a woman, whose husband had gone to war, was about to be raped, she left behind her infant children and killed herself by tossing herself into a river." "A woman who was just about to be raped by a Japanese bandit resisted her attacker because she was already married, so her arms and legs were chopped off, killing her."

Even during the late Chosŏn Dynasty, references to sexual atrocities by Japanese pirates continued to crop up. There are fifty stories in the "Chastity" volume of *Biographies of Wise Women*, including seven involving the Japanese. One of them says, "During the Koryŏ Dynasty, a virgin in Ryŏngsan, South Kyŏngsang Province, who was twenty years in age, fought back against Japanese pirates attempting to rape her and was killed." The book notes that, "There are an especially large number of heroic woman from the times of the Japanese and Manchu invasions. Korea had become a nation of heroic women."

Xenophobic fears of the Japanese people, based on Korea's history of wartime sexual violence, have been further stoked by nationalist sentiment in Korea. Sexual fears of the Japanese people are a recurrent theme in Korea history, and up to this day they continue to reappear time and time again. This is what the problem of the so-called "comfort women," as well as the criticism of "*kisaeng* tourism," are all about.



Non'gae Shrine, a popular tourist destination in South Korea.

In the 1970's, the government of President Park Chung-hee promoted "*kisaeng* tourism" as part of its economic development strategy. Because so many Japanese men in particular took advantage of it, Japanese people were called "sex animals" in South Korea. Consequently, anti-Japanese sentiment rose and at times it even became an impediment to good Japan-Korea relations. It became a social problem too, and during this time there was one case of a Korean *kisaeng* who jumped to her death after leaving a suicide note that read, "The Japanese men crush their lit cigarette butts all over my body, and I just can't bear it anymore." Women's rights organizations began an investigation into the incident, and it made headlines not only in South Korea, but across the world. It even became the subject of a play.

Thus, Koreans are intensely fearful of sexual violence by Japanese people, but American soldiers are a very different situation and it does not appear that Koreans bear any great ill will towards them. In the case of the US Army, it seems that their feelings are tempered by the role America played in protecting the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula.

South Koreans had decided that Japanese culture was sexually depraved, and so imports of Japanese popular culture have been strictly prohibited. Sex culture is not widely accepted in Korea, as it is in Japan, and yet there are still all manner of social problems in Korea relating to sex including illegitimate children, *kisaeng*, prostitution, adultery, mistresses, sexual discrimination, and abortion. Most of these things are connected to the issue of sexism.

If you look at Japan's sex culture from the perspective of Korea it does appear rather sleazy. However, in other areas like the structure of the family household, Korean and Japanese society are very similar. In comparing Korea and Japan, differences and similarities exist side-by-side, and this is a major reason why we misunderstand each other so easily.

Chapter 5. Diary of a Japanese Military Brothel Manager



My approach to reading the book

Obviously, Japanese women have engaged in prostitution abroad, most notably in the form of the so-called *karayuki-san* who travelled the world plying their trade in the late nineteenth century. It is likewise fairly apparent that Korean women under Japanese colonial rule also engaged in prostitution both in Korea itself and overseas. To demonstrate this point, I will now examine the diary of a "receptionist" at comfort stations in Singapore and Burma (modern-day Myanmar) and will consider what it can tell us about the relationship between the Japanese Army and prostitutes.

In August of 2013 the publication of the book, *Diary of a Japanese Military Brothel Manager*, caused a major sensation in South Korea. Naturally, it sparked my interest as well. In South Korea, it was widely regarded as being "definitive evidence" of the forced recruitment of Korean comfort women by the Japanese Army. In Japan the only newspaper to cover it was the *Mainichi Shimbun*. Although the *Mainichi Shimbun* did quote portions of the diary, I suspect almost no one in Japan is aware of this book outside of a small group of researchers. I wanted to transcend Korea-Japan relations and to find out what the diary was really all about.

I bought the book immediately and after reading it over once I took it up as a text for discussion with my weekly reading circle. There were those who were apprehensive about the fact that I had brought in a book about such a touchy subject, but I insisted that the sensitive nature of the subject material was what made it so interesting. Then, over the course of the next six months or so, I analyzed its contents thoroughly while making detailed notes.

Before I read the book, I had made the decision that I would think about it in a purely objective manner, not for the purpose of reconciliation, peace, or understanding between Korea and Japan. In other words, I would read it without taking into consideration the political rights or wrongs of colonialism, nationalism, pacifism, and other -isms.

One must bear in mind that research is not possible if one starts with the presumption that colonialism is absolutely evil. Most of the now-independent nations of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania were colonies of the Western powers at some point in the past. Likewise, parts of Asia were colonized by the Japanese, but no matter how bad one might think that was, a researcher should simply treat facts as facts.

The problem is that, in South Korea, Japanese colonialism is regarded as the root of all evil, and South Koreans still will not discuss the reality and consequences of Japanese rule. By its very nature, scholarship must be free from the shackles of nationalism and patriotism. This is what "academic freedom" is all about. However, in research regarding colonialism, a considerable number of taboos and sacred cows remain. Many people fail to surmount these obstacles in a skillful manner and instead conduct their research by consciously avoiding them.

During the 1980's, when I was teaching in South Korea, it was normal that a professor would start off any lesson on Japan by casting aspersions on Japan. The catchphrase referred to in these lessons was "One must know one's enemy in order to defeat one's enemy", as Sun Tzu said in *The Art of War*. I found this attitude to be somewhat unfair, and so during my lectures I touched on such issues as the maintenance of infrastructure, the improvement of rice crops through selective breeding, and the development of education which occurred under Japanese colonial rule. I wanted to do away with the presumption that Japanese colonialism was "the root of all evil".

This would be the start of my long ordeal. Unfortunately, the situation that I have described above has not taken a turn for the better since then, and actually has been made worse by the deterioration of Japan-Korea relations.

How the diary came to be published

The diary was written by Mr. Pak (1905-1979), who, from August 20, 1942, worked at the "front desk" of comfort stations in Burma and Singapore. He made entries in his diary over a span of two years, from January 1, 1943 to December 31, 1944.

The diary was a unique document, portrayed in South Korea as being definitive evidence of the forced recruitment of Korean comfort women by the Japanese Army. Out of curiosity, I went to find the original diary in Seoul because I wanted to clarify whether or not the forced recruitment of comfort women really was a fact.

I traveled north of Seoul and then, by heading in the direction of Panmunjom and my own hometown, I went to find the man in possession of the original diary. The diary's current owner was a sculptor, Oh Ch'ae-hyŏn, the curator of the Time Capsule Museum in the city of P'aju, who had bought the diary a long time ago at a used bookstore. Oh told me that the diary covered thirty-six years and that its twenty-six volumes were being kept under his care. To read the whole thing, it would likely take several years. In book form, it was called *Diary of a Japanese Military Brothel Manager* because it excerpted two years of entries relating to Mr. Pak's time at the comfort stations.

Thanks to Mr. Oh, I was able to look through the original diary with my own eyes. I proceeded to ask him if I could meet with Mr. Pak's descendants, but he responded that this would not be possible. It was very disappointing to me, but I accepted his explanation.

Diaries are not intended to be made public

A diary is an informal and personal document in which an individual records his daily experiences. However, it might not necessarily be "daily," as there are times when a day or two might be skipped due to various circumstances, and the subsequent entry will summarize several days' events. In comparison to an official logbook, a diary is similar in some ways but different in others. In the case of a diary, the author's unvarnished secrets and true intentions are fully exposed.



The original copy of *Diary of a Japanese Military Brothel Manager* (owned by Oh Ch'ae-hyŏn of the Time Capsule Museum in P'aju).



The owner of the diary Oh Ch'ae-hyŏn (at left) with the author.

A useful reference for reading Mr. Pak's diary is the *Diary of Takami Jun*, the first volume of a two-part volume published by Keiso in 1966. After being conscripted into the Army's Propaganda Unit, Takami Jun kept a diary during the Japanese Army's invasion of Burma, which commenced in January of 1942, and many of his diary's dates and locations line up with those in Mr. Pak's diary. Takami spent about a year in Japanese-ruled Rangoon where he was involved in the editing and publishing of newspapers and magazines as well as censoring Burmese books and films. He carried out key duties that are typical to a public relations team,

such as propagandizing to the locals through both publications and events, while justifying Japan's invasions as being part of "the liberation of East Asia".

When Takami published this diary after the end of the war, he felt conflicted.

In the preface of volume one, he wrote, "I sincerely apologize to everyone for the indiscreet language used in this diary," and in the preface of part one of volume two he wrote, "In this diary, I seem to be providing proof that I collaborated with the national war effort, and thus some people might think that I would have been wiser to have quietly disposed of it. However, this is what I was really doing at the time, and so I decided to publicize all of it, without any alterations."

As you can see from Takami's reaction, people do not start writing a diary with the idea that it will one day be made public.

The format of the diary

Examination of the format of Mr. Pak's diary shows that each daily entry starts in the following style.

"The 18th year of Showa, May 22 (April 19 under the lunar calendar), It was cloudy and rained at night, 21C, 23C."

It starts with the regnal year and date, then the date under the lunar calendar, followed by the weather and the minimum and maximum temperatures in degrees Celsius.

The use of regnal years originated in China and spread across East Asia, but today they remain in use only in Japan and North Korea. For the date, Mr. Pak used both the solar calendar and the lunar calendar side-by-side, though at that point in time most people were already using the solar calendar.

The original diary was generally in Korean *hangul* script mixed with Chinese characters, but in some places the Japanese *katakana* script was used. In the book which was ultimately published, all this had been translated into Korean *hangul* by An Pyŏng-chik, professor *emeritus* at Seoul University. I did note that the Japanese which was used in the original diary contained some mistakes, like failures to distinguish the Japanese long vowels and voiced consonants, but it seemed no different from the level of Japanese I spoke, and I definitely related to it.

The translation of Japanese and Korean presents unique challenges, even apart from the translation of the words themselves. For example, *ri* in Japanese is about four kilometers, but the same unit of measurement in Korean is about four hundred meters. Mr. Pak himself sometimes confused the two.

"Our lodgings are only thirty or so meters from the seashore and are about two *ri* from the city of Singapore." (Diary entry of November 8, 1944.)

In this case, he was likely referring to Korean *ri*, meaning eight hundred meters, and not Japanese *ri* which would have meant eight kilometers.

"I was asked to go take a look at the fishing grounds around Singapore and so I headed down there to the waterfront fisheries over twenty *ri* away."

In this case, it also seems appropriate to assume that he meant Korean *ri*, or eight kilometers, as using Japanese *ri* would put the distance at eighty kilometers.

"I have heard that the Imperial Army has crossed the border between India and Burma and has now advanced into a position only one *ri* away from the stronghold of Imphal." (Diary entry of April 16, 1943.)

Here it's difficult to say whether he was referring to Japanese *ri* or Korean *ri*. In this case, I had to consult a map.

Also, Koreans use the verb "to play" to refer to all manner of rest and recreation. Because the word has so many uses, there are times when a precise translation into Japanese is difficult. For example, if the author writes that he "played in the comfort station," the meaning could be easily misunderstood.

The author, Mr. Pak. was born in Chinyŏng, South Kyŏngsang Province, and he had worked as a scribe and with the prostitution industry. Therefore, what was the reason that he wrote this diary and why did he keep it up to his death? It may have been purely his personal thoughts, which he didn't want others to know, or it may have been intended to be a record of his work and duties at the comfort station. It may also have been a combination of the two. Speculating about the motivations behind the diary is endlessly fascinating to me.

A loyal subject

I will now quote from a diary entry dated January 1, 1943.

"The 18th year of Showa and the 2,603th year since the founding of Japan, January 1, Friday, Clear skies, 19°C, 21°C. This was the second New Year's Day since the start of the Holy War for East Asia. One hundred million people prostrated themselves in reverence, and celebrated in honor of the long life of the Emperor and the prosperity of the imperial family. I am very far from my hometown. I woke up at the Kanpachi Club, a comfort station in Arakan, Burma, and bowed in the direction of the Tokyo Imperial Palace in the east. I thought about my parents, siblings, wife, and children back at home and prayed for their happiness. The light of the eastern sky shined down on me auspiciously, blessing the nation with prosperity and the Imperial Army with martial fortune. My brother's wife and (REDACTED)-hwan together with some comfort women went down to the regimental headquarters as well as three or four

other places to deliver their New Year's greetings in the hopes that we might enjoy another safe and happy year. Once night fell and my New Year's on the front lines was almost over, I dreamed about a year of good fortune. Because I had had trouble sleeping for the last several days, this night I slept soundly."

A diary, being a record of one's own life, can reveal, among other things, an individual's character, personality, and upbringing.

Did Mr. Pak ever consider publishing the diary? Would he have been fine with it being published? Did he think that it might be published one day? Writing in his diary was a daily ritual for him for at least in excess of thirty years, and perhaps he wrote the whole thing without seriously considering that someone else might read it.

However, why is it that he wrote so minimally about the war, the Japanese Army, and the comfort women? I suppose that something like an accident involving two comfort women was just a part of war. Why did Mr. Pak not write about the war, even while carefully noting down things like the remittances he sent to his two wives?

"April 29 (April 6 under the lunar calendar) Saturday, Clear skies. Today marks the Emperor's third birth date since the start of the holy war. His Majesty celebrates his forty-fourth birthday today. We common people sincerely celebrate for the long life of the Emperor. A ceremony took place in the public square in front of the Singapore municipal office. Today being a holiday, due to the Emperor's birthday, we were visited by many soldiers and the club had its best day since we set up shop, raking in over 2,450 yen in revenue. I finished my work at the front desk a little after 1:00 AM and then went to bed."

In writing the diary, Mr. Pak acknowledged himself to be a loyal subject of the Japanese Empire. In the portions quoted above he writes about "the Holy War for East Asia," "the long life of the Emperor and the prosperity of the imperial family," and "blessing the nation with prosperity and the Imperial Army with martial fortune." I suspect that this represents how Koreans at that time viewed their country. The concepts of "holy war" and of the "Imperial Army" advocated within the Japanese Empire had taken root in the minds of many Koreans as well, who apparently saw themselves as "loyal imperial subjects".

Life as a "receptionist"

I shall now examine what sort of life Mr. Pak led at the comfort station. With the exception of one period between June 1 and September 30, 1943, he worked continuously as a "receptionist" at the front desk. He counted up the revenue and recorded it in his ledger, and it could be said that he was the "manager" of the comfort station. His diary provides some information about the administration of the comfort station, but he does not go into detail about his work at the front desk which he manned from 2:00 PM to about 1:00 AM. The following is what Mr. Pak did write in the diary about his work.

He rose early each morning and after breakfast he went shopping in the marketplace with his page. Upon his return, his duties included drawing up statements of income and expenditure, attending regular meetings, adjusting accounts, going on air raid watches at the office of the club association, managing the savings of the comfort women, distributing rations, participating in the Civil Defense Corps and celebratory events, procuring entry permits at the Military Administration Headquarters, remitting money to the field post office, Hua Nan Bank, Yokohama Specie Bank, and the Southern Development Bank, submitting the employment permits of comfort women, having his car checked, paying workmen, rationing rice, etc...

Mr. Pak appears to have also subscribed to newspapers and was well-apprised about the global situation.

"I paid two yen and fifty sen for newspapers in the month of May." (Diary entry of May 29, 1943.)

It also seems that he led a comfortable life, buying expensive suits, shoes, watches, and vehicles, as well as spending time at a movie theater.

"I bought nine yards of Western fabrics for seventy yen." (Diary entry of March 2, 1943.)

"I went down to the Hiranuma Tailor Shop and was fitted for a new set of clothes." (Diary entry of April 12, 1943.)

"I ordered four new outfits for the price of 355 yen." (Diary entry of October 31, 1943.)

"I purchased clothing worth over 350 yen from a wool clothing store owned by an Indian man." (Diary entry of December 13, 1943.)

"I promised to purchase a wristwatch from a Chinese man for the price of 750 yen." (Diary entry of June 20, 1944.)

"I called in an Indian street barber so that my hair could get trimmed." (Diary entry of February 19, 1943.)

"I watched a boxing match at the Great World Amusement Park." (Diary entry of March 18, 1944.)

"I bought a car and drove it back to work." (Diary entry of August 9, 1943.)

"Mr. Kanagawa showed me around and I got to see the Buddha statue which is the number one in Burma. This recumbent Buddha was truly amazing to look at. It was said to be over fifty-five meters long and over fifteen meters high." (Diary entry of January 26, 1943.)

Still, Mr. Pak was not an out of the ordinary individual and he lived his life honestly. I felt that he was a rather meticulous man, in that he wrote a diary entry every day, without fail.

Mr. Pak had two wives, one in Pusan and one in Taegu. He supported both of his families, sending them money and communicating with both them and his in-laws by either letter or telegram.

"I sent a telegram to the father of my wife in Pusan." (Diary entry of July 6, 1943.)

"I sent 2,000 yen to my mistress in Taegu last year." (Diary entry of December 6, 1943.)

"I sent 500 yen." (Diary entry of May 4, 1943.)

"I sent 600 yen." (Diary entry of June 14, 1943.)

One might ask what kind of position Mr. Pak must have held to be living this kind of life, and yet it appears that he was just the manager of a comfort station, organizing and administering things at the front desk, and was not a soldier or a civilian employee of the Japanese Army. Indeed, he seemed wary of military employees and always thought of his business as being independent from the men of the army.

"I went out to eat with army-affiliated civilians, but, starting from tomorrow, I won't be able to eat there anymore." (Diary entry of January 12, 1944.)

"I went to have dinner at Kikusui Restaurant with Oishi, Toyokawa, Mita, Oyama, and the gang, but I was told that only soldiers and civilian military employees were allowed to enter, so we stepped out onto China Street instead and had dinner there." (Diary entry of April 23, 1943.)

One can understand clearly from such entries that a separation existed between military employees and comfort station managers. Evidently, based on this account, the comfort women were likewise not employees of the military.

Even though the comfort women business was not a part of the military, it did have a tight connection with the military. Perhaps, upon reflection, it would be fair to say that the military and the comfort stations were in a "special relationship". Alternatively, one might say that the comfort stations were governed by the military administration of the territories occupied by the Japanese Army.

In addition, although the diary mentions many people bearing Japanese-style names, in most cases these were Japanese-style names taken by ethnic Koreans.

Homesickness

Mr. Pak was a long way from Korea, and throughout his diary there is a palpable sense of homesickness.

"This is the coldest time of the year in Korea, but here it feels like it's the middle of autumn." (Diary entry of January 2, 1943.)

"The climate here is very cool at daybreak, but extremely hot in the afternoon. Even when I go for a short walk, sweat pours down my body. The intense cold in Korea is probably fading away about now. In just a little over twenty days, the cherry blossoms will be blooming. That good time of year is approaching. In many foreign lands I spend time just imagining Korea's wonderful springs." (Diary entry of March 13, 1943.)

"This night, the fifteenth night of the lunar calendar, the full moon glistened brightly in the sky. In Korea, the best moon of the whole year appears on the night of October 15, when the weather is good and there isn't a cloud in the sky. When will I be able to see that moon in my native land again?" (Diary entry of November 12, 1943.)

"Recently the weather has been quite refreshing, just like the cool autumn breezes of Korea. If I don't close the doors at night and curl up in my quilt, the air even chills my skin." (Diary entry of February 24, 1943.)

In the published version of the diary the first entry starts with, "I greeted the new year in Arakan, Burma, near the border with India."

The city of Arakan, now Sittwe, in western Burma was a key base area for the Japanese Army during World War II. During the Arakan Campaign, lasting roughly four months between the end of 1942 and April of 1943, Japan's 55th Division won spectacular victories there over the British and Indian Armies.

Mr. Pak wrote the following in his diary about the situation in Burma.

"It is now a little over two years since the start of the Greater East Asian War. Japan has invaded and conquered the British colonial territories of Burma and Singapore, and then, on the front lines of the Burma theater, beat back the British-Indian counterattack from India and completely foiled their plans to retake Arakan. After that Japan intercepted the British Air Force, which was firing on our units blindly but tenaciously. Accompanying the military achievements of the Imperial Army is its divine mission to liberate Asia, which has progressed through the solemn declarations of independence issued by Burma in August and the Philippines in October, as well as the establishment of the Provisional Government of Free India." (Diary entry of December 31, 1943.)

He made no mention of what situation the Japanese Army might have been in at the time he was writing the entry.

Logistics and comfort stations

The relationship between the comfort stations and the military comes to light whenever the Japanese Army was on the move, but it is not clear whether the comfort stations transferred along with an army regiment on their own volition or under military order.

"I hear that the comfort station in Mandalay moved along with the army units to Prome and has set up shop there." (Diary entry of January 29.)

"After the arrival of the unit commander of the 55th Division, an order was handed down to transfer Mr. Kanagawa's comfort station to a place called Yeu near Mandalay. He ordered them to move, but I heard that the comfort women were all resolutely opposed to it and would not go." (Diary entry of March 10, 1943.)

"Ultimately, they couldn't overrule an order from the headquarters. The comfort station was moved to Yeu." (Diary entry of March 14, 1943.)

"Now I am being told by Mr. Kanagawa that the planned transfer from the divisional liaison office to Yeu is being temporarily put on hold." (Diary entry of March 16, 1943.)

"The comfort station in Arakan has moved along with the regiment and did business in Taunggyi."

"It seems like the women of the comfort station moved along with the unit one or two months later." (Diary entry of June 28, 1943.)

It would appear from statements like these that comfort stations were not appendages of the military.

The other comfort station manager who Mr. Pak mentions, "Mr. Kanagawa," was also a Korean. In the published version of the diary translated by Professor An, his name appears in the "List of Korean Comfort Station Managers".

Since he was not an employee of the military, Mr. Pak had no right to use the "unit cars" to transfer to a new location with a military unit, but it seems that he did often hitch rides on military-use vehicles.

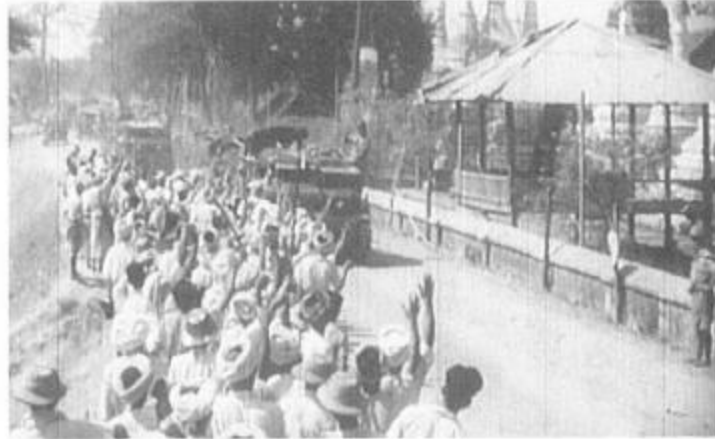
"For four or five days the regular trains have not been in operation. The only trains running are the special military trains, so I have arranged to get a ticket to ride at the railway station headquarters so that I can ride them." (Diary entry of September 5, 1943.)

"I hitched a ride on a military train departing at 15:50 from Mokpalin bound for Martaban. I was told that the time we arrived at Martaban was around 2:00 AM." (Diary entry of September 11, 1943.)

"I hitched a ride with the head of the Health Department, a Burmese man." (Diary entry of January 22, 1943.)

"I got out of bed at the logistics barracks in Tavoy, ate breakfast, and then took a car owned by the supply unit up to the Nippon Express Motor Vehicles Division." (Diary entry of September 14, 1943.)

"I went with Mr. Fujioka to the anchorage headquarters and applied for permission to come aboard. They told me that this time the ship would disembark in the evening, so I went back to logistics and brought some more people." (Diary entry of September 19, 1943.)



From the documentary film *The War in Burma*.

"I received a ticket to ride at the railway station headquarters and caught the military train departing at 22:40. We left Chumphon heading towards Singapore. It looks like we have already past the worst part of the trip. I didn't get a passenger train and instead was stuck riding alone in the freight car." (Diary entry of September 27, 1943.)

When Mr. Pak transferred to a new location, he utilized the standard means of transportation, usually trains, boats, cars, and carriages. The fact that he had to "hitch a ride" on military-use vehicles proves that he was not a soldier.

What's more, because he was not a soldier, he had no choice but to rely on civilian facilities even for the accommodations where he stayed during a transfer. For his meals he likewise made do with what his friends and acquaintances provided to him at their homes.

"Seven of us rode along with the team of Second Lieutenant Himura, commander of the Himura Platoon, in his unit car in Taungup, Burma. We departed from Taungup at 11:00 AM." (Diary entry of January 21, 1943.)

"We crossed two big rivers along the way and arrived at Magyi around 8:00. I paid a visit to the logistics department in Magyi and asked them for a room. I ate dinner there, had a bath, and then went to bed. Everywhere I go the logistics people treat me hospitably and I felt very grateful to them." (Diary entry of September 15, 1943.)

There was one time that he arrived late at night and slept at the logistics department.

"I made it there at about 21:00. I went to the logistics department of the Guard Force and set down all the luggage of my group there. Then I got something to eat and went to bed in their sleeping quarters." (Diary entry of September 12, 1943.)

"I went to the anchorage headquarters and paid for my board on the ship I was about to ride." (Diary entry of September 16, 1943.)

There was also a time that he lodged with four civilian employees of the military in a dormitory in Katong, Singapore.

"Our lodgings are only thirty or so meters from the seashore and are about two *ri* from the city of Singapore." (Diary entry of November 8, 1944.)

These lodgings were likely not military facilities, something also confirmed in other diary entries.

"I stayed at the home of Oyama Toraichi of Rangoon Hall." (Diary entry of January 23, 1943.)

"I had heard that Mr. Kanagawa, a friend from my hometown, will be in Pegu around the end of March. I went down to his place and stayed there for about a month. I was sorry to have made other people put up with me from that point."

"At the home of Arai and Yamamoto I made and ate my own meal and then went to sleep." (Diary entry of May 21, 1943.)

Thus, there is no indication here that he was taking advantage of military facilities.

In another such entry he wrote, "I went to Mr. Murayama's house in Insein along with Mr. Arai and Mr. Nakamune. I had dinner and stayed the night there. Without a fixed place to sleep and eat, I am, as usual, just going to the homes of people I know and taking advantage of their hospitality. I feel ashamed of myself." (Diary entry of May 19, 1943.)

The above passages suggest that Mr. Pak was not an employee of the military, but rather seems to have been in some form of partnership with the military.

The truth about the comfort stations

In the late nineteenth century, Japanese prostitutes, known as *karayuki-san*, exported the sex trade abroad, especially in the vicinity of eastern and southeastern Asia. For instance, it is well known that typical red light districts were established by Chinese and Japanese prostitutes in Singapore. However, Mr. Pak does not mention this topic in his diary.

Apart from comfort stations run by Koreans, there were also other comfort stations in the area of Arakan, including those run by Japanese and those run by residents of Arakan, described as "local people comfort stations" in a diary entry of June 19, 1943. In his diary entry of July 23, 1943, Mr. Pak says that between sixty and seventy Korean comfort women were working at those comfort stations.

Now that they were subjects of the Japanese Empire, this was probably the first time that Koreans were going abroad to do business. The diary makes it clear that several Koreans had wide-ranging business contacts in places like Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and East Timor, and in addition to comfort stations they operated a diverse range of businesses, including restaurants, cafeterias, rice cake shops, confectionaries, tofu dealerships, and oil refineries.

When people think of a comfort station, there are probably quite a few who instantly imagine a military camp or army tent. And yet, it seems that, for the most part, the comfort stations were actually located in ordinary civilian buildings. Furthermore, it would appear that they were not segregated into designated red-light districts.

"I have rented a house and factory for 500 yen monthly plus a deposit of 1,000 yen." (Diary entry of April 1, 1943.)

"I have been told that the Kanpachi Club, a comfort station in Arakan, Burma, was the home of Mr. Yamamoto. Ichifujiro, the comfort station run by Mr. Murayama in Insein just outside Rangoon, apparently is Mr. Murayama's home." (Diary entry of July 20, 1943.)

"I was told that the Kikusui Club, located at 88 Cairnhill Road in Singapore's residential district, is the home of Mr. Nishihara." (Diary entry of January 29, 1944.)

These comfort stations were also engaged in buying and selling, borrowing and loaning, and transfers of property.

"Mr. Murayama and his wife begged me to take over and run their comfort station, so I decided definitively that I would accede to his request." (Diary entry of August 15, 1943.)

"Ichifujiro was put under the control of the logistics department and Mr. Murayama and Mr. Arai have gone to the logistics headquarters. After the two comfort stations in Insein were transferred to its control, the army doctors from logistics even inspected the comfort women for syphilis. I went to the home of Chen Ruixin on Prome Road and signed a lease contract on a house and factory for 500 yen monthly. I paid him a deposit upfront of 1,000 yen. Then I went with Mr. Oyama to look for the location of Kikusui Restaurant before returning to Mr. Oyama's house and eating dinner. I returned to my quarters and went to bed. As of today I have struck a deal to jointly manage a cafeteria and an oil refinery with Mr. Oyama, and I have decided to move forward with prepping the enterprise. Regarding our deal from a few days ago, Mr. Murayama proposed to me that I manage his comfort station Ichifujiro until September and continue to hold onto it after September 1 until the beginning of October.

However, I told him that I wouldn't be able to do that and so when he suggested that it be transferred to someone else, I agreed." (Diary entry of August 24, 1943.)

"Mr. Kanagawa of Kiyokawa Co. acquired a new business in China and is continuing to manage it." (Diary entry of April 13, 1944.)

These are examples of the sort of transactions that were taking place.

The diary commented on two comfort stations "affiliated with the air service" which were "put under the control of the logistics department," but what do these statements mean exactly? Was it a change of "affiliation" or a change of "control"? Does this mean that these two comfort stations were singled out? How was it possible for Ichifujiro to be transferred to Mr. Pak when it was already under the control of the logistics department? A comfort station could not be transferred to another manager if it was controlled by military logistics. Does "control" simply refer to "health control"?

The truth about the comfort women

Administratively, it appears that the comfort women were treated as being "barmaids," as noted in the following passages.

"I got a permit for the barmaid." (Diary entry of June 16, 1944.)

"I received a medical certificate for the barmaid Song (REDACTED)-og." (Diary entry of June 28, 1944.)

"I received the diary of one of the barmaids." (Diary entry of December 14, 1944.)

It appears that the comfort women were referred to using words like "barmaid" or "workwoman" and that in administrative language the work was referred to as "employment," as shown in the following passages.

"I went to the official in charge of business at the Peace Preservation Section of the Singapore Police Department and applied for employment permits for the workwomen." (Diary entry of May 8, 1943.)

"I undertook the necessary procedures for her and made her a workwoman at the clubhouse." (Diary entry of June 9, 1944.)

It appears that it was not easy to leave the comfort women business.

"Haruyo and Hiroko had worked at Mr. Murayama's comfort station, but they left in order to live with their husbands. Logistics ordered them to return and now they are working as comfort women at Kinsen House." (Diary entry of July 29, 1943.)



Nevertheless, there were procedures to allow comfort women to quit work or take time off. "Two comfort women, Junko and Osome, quit their jobs." (Diary entry of March 3, 1944.) "The comfort workwoman Tamae is currently seven-months pregnant and so I gave her a leave of absence from work." (Diary entry of July 4, 1944.)

There were many recorded instances of comfort women quitting their jobs, being given leaves of absence, or returning home during Mr. Pak's time in Singapore, but not very many from during his time in Burma. The comfort women were given regular medical examinations and those infected by sexual diseases were hospitalized. They also received hospitable care during pregnancy and childbirth.

"(REDACTED), a comfort woman from Sakura Club, was suffering from considerable abdominal pain and in the afternoon I was told that she underwent surgery. During her seventh month of pregnancy there were abnormalities with the way the baby was kicking. She was admitted to Suzuki Hospital, but miscarried and was driven back here." (Diary entry of July 17, 1943.)

The diary suggests that there were also controls on soldiers entering the comfort stations.

"The military employee came to the clubhouse to see the barmaid Kikue, but was discovered by the military police." (Diary entry of September 9, 1944.)

Some entries show that the comfort women had individual savings accounts.

"I went to the Specie Bank and deposited the savings of two comfort women working at Mr. Murayama's comfort station." (Diary entry of April 14, 1944.)

"I deposited money for the workwomen." (Diary entry of June 16, 1944.)

"I deposited 32,000 yen at the Rangoon branch of Yokohama Specie Bank." (Diary entry of January 25, 1943.)

"At the request of a comfort woman, I withdrew six hundred yen from her savings for remittance and then sent it out via the Central Post Office." (Diary entry of October 27, 1944.)

The comfort women business perhaps provided psychological comfort, the sort of function also played by corporate recreational outings. It seems that "comfort" refers here to comfort and appreciation provided to soldiers serving on the battlefield. Alternatively, one might define them as brothels selling sexual pleasure. How should we distinguish these two?

One encyclopedia defines "comfort station" as "a brothel created or designated for use by soldiers and civilian military employees". The comfort stations described in Mr. Pak's diary

were likewise basically brothels. They were part of a Comfort Station Association, referred to as a "geisha agency," just like the brothel guilds of Japan and Korea. The Comfort Station Association held regular meetings. Thus, the same system of *kisaeng* associations that existed in Korea also existed in Burma and Singapore. They were not treated as being a part of the military.

"I paid a total of 62 yen in dues to the Comfort Station Association, including thirty yen for myself and two yen for each of my sixteen comfort women." (Diary entry of August 10, 1943.)

Prostitution was run purely as a business. The primary customers of the comfort stations were soldiers and they also provided entertainment to military personnel.

"We have had fewer customers than ever before since January 2. We managed to sell only fourteen tickets to soldiers." (Diary entry of January 7, 1943.)

"I went with Mr. Arai, Mr. Murayama, and Mr. Kanagawa to the room of Warrant Officer Yamazoe, who works at the Aide-de-Camp's Office of army headquarters. We brought Mr. Yamazoe back to Ichifujiro so that he could have some fun." (Diary entry of September 8, 1943.)

"Our customer traffic has hit rock bottom recently. We aren't able to do any business. Because we are all just spending our time idly, the comfort women are also terribly bored. Even the comfort station owners are not allowed to go outside now and so we are feeling claustrophobic." (Diary entry of July 31-August 4, 1943.)

"Recently business at the comfort station has been slow and revenue has dropped considerably." (Diary entry of August 11, 1943.)

"Due to the recent epidemic, the soldiers have not been going out." (Diary entry of August 17, 1943.)

"Today, being a holiday on account of the Emperor's birthday, we were visited by many soldiers and the club had its best day since we set up shop, raking in over 2,450 yen in revenue." (Diary entry of April 29, 1944.)

Passages about the soldiers "going out" means that they were leaving their posts in their units and going out to the comfort station. This was the factor determining whether or not the comfort station would turn a profit.

Comfort stations under military administration

Singapore and Burma, where Mr. Pak worked, were territories occupied by Japan. The occupied territories were under military administration. The movement of comfort women

and public health measures were among the areas controlled by the military, but this alone does not mean that the comfort stations were controlled by the military.

"We have halted operations. We were completely prohibited from going out and everyone stayed at home." (Diary entry of August 1, 1943.)

"An Indian man got the plague and now three to four cases have been reported. The soldiers are not allowed to go out." (Diary entry of March 22, 1943.)

"The military police came and said that we were to cease operations for one week and would not be allowed to go out." (Diary entry of July 31, 1943.)

However, the above passages do seem to indicate that under normal circumstances people could enter and leave freely.

"I got entry permits for the comfort women at the Military Administration Headquarters." (Diary entry of February 1, 1943.)

"The army doctors from logistics inspected the comfort women even for syphilis." (Diary entry of July 26, 1943.)

"I went to the clinic for comfort women and had a couple of unregistered comfort women examined." (Diary entry of July 29, 1943.)

"Mr. Sakaguchi, who is in charge of business at the municipal Peace Preservation Section, and Dr. Yoshioka of Nadeshiko Hospital stopped by at around 10:00 PM and inspected the business and its washing facilities." (Diary entry of July 3, 1944.)

Among Mr. Pak's other jobs were to distribute and sell supplies from army canteens and logistics, and to fill out travel documents for trips back home at the office of the municipal Peace Preservation Section.

"I bought white rice at the unit canteen to distribute to the coolies and workmen. I piled it all up in my cart, stopped in Katong, and then returned to the office of the East Asia Trading Co." (Diary entry of July 15, 1944.)

"I went to the official in charge of travel at the detached office of the municipal Peace Preservation Section and submitted repatriation travel papers, but there were problems with the forms so I brought them back with me." (Diary entry of July 20, 1944.)

The Peace Preservation Section in Singapore was the department responsible for government administration.

"I got travel papers for (REDACTED) Kanemoto and her younger sister, and applied to have them board a ship belonging to the Southern Navigation Company." (Diary entry of August 7, 1944.)

"I went to the official in charge of business at the Peace Preservation Section and had him issue the necessary certificate to apply for travel papers for a comfort woman at my clubhouse, Kim (REDACTED)-sŏn." (Diary entry of September 11, 1944.)

"The travel papers for Burma and back which I had recently submitted and the travel papers for within Burma for the comfort women Kim (REDACTED)-sŏn and Kim (REDACTED)-ae were ready with the official in charge of travel at the detached office of the Peace Preservation Section, so I left immediately, picked them up, and returned." (Diary entry of September 27, 1944.)

"I went to the official in charge of travel at the detached office of the municipal Peace Preservation Section and cancelled my travel papers to go to Rangoon, Burma. I submitted a notice for termination of employment for my job at the front desk of Kikusui with the official in charge of business at the Peace Preservation Section." (Diary entry of October 10, 1944.)

"My travel papers were ready and I received a message to come pick them up from the detached office of the municipal Peace Preservation Section, so I left right away, took them, and returned." (Diary entry of November 2, 1944.)

"I submitted an application for travel papers so that Hidemi can return home." (Diary entry of November 6, 1944.)

"I submitted an application for travel papers for the waitress Lee (REDACTED)-pong with the official in charge of travel papers." (Diary entry of November 8, 1944.)

"I stopped by the municipal Finance Section and the official in charge of travel papers in the same detached office of the Peace Preservation Section, and then returned." (Diary entry of November 14, 1944.)

"I went to the Aide-de-Camp's Office of army headquarters to see Warrant Officer Yamazoe. He had not yet been given a report on the accident in Arakan so I briefed him." (Diary entry of May 20, 1943.)

"There was a meeting of comfort station managers at army headquarters." (Diary entry of June 15, 1943.)

"I presented my clubhouse's monthly report for the month of August to the office of the association." (Diary entry of September 6, 1944.)

"I submitted a daily business report to the logistics headquarters and received condoms."
(Diary entry of August 12 and 26, 1943.)

These passages are crucial documentary evidence of how the comfort stations operated under the military administration of the time.

To conclude

After I had read the diary the first time, I concluded definitively that the comfort stations were not military institutions, but rather were more similar to wartime brothels. I wrote about this in the magazine *Shincho* 45, in the issue published in September 2014.

Despite this, the translator of the book Professor An Pyŏng-chik received the exact opposite impression. Professor An argues that Mr. Pak's diary proves that the Japanese Army gave the comfort station managers and the comfort women a status akin to civilian military employees, integrated them into a subordinate branch of the army hierarchy, and unilaterally ordered them onto the frontlines. These claims were given a great deal of sensationalistic coverage by the South Korean media, and that was the way everyone in Korea accepted the diary. In other words, the diary was "definitive evidence" for the forcible mobilization of comfort women by the Japanese Army, quite contrary to what I had taken from it.

My areas of interest are certainly not limited to the current status of Japan-Korea relations or specifically to politics and the national interests of one country or another. Even so, I do feel that my readers and I have arrived at a good opportunity to confront these issues, so it is natural that my interest would be directed here. However, what I desire is not to analyze such problems on a superficial level, but rather to seek out the truth that lies below the surface. This is my primary concern and is the message that I want to have heard. I suppose that I have taken advantage of this opportunity so that my message will be understood sympathetically.

Undoubtedly, the military and the comfort stations enjoyed close relations, but that alone does not allow us to conclude that the military controlled them. Though the published diary was called *Diary of a Japanese Military Brothel Manager*, after reading it, I somehow felt the urge to remove the words "Japanese Military" from the title.

Chapter 6 The Korean War and Changes in South Korean Society



South Korean society in the aftermath of World War II

In 1945, Korea was liberated from Japanese colonial rule. After the end of the war, the men of my village who had been conscripted into service as laborers or soldiers returned home. We put on a welcoming party in my house for my cousin who had returned from a coal mine in Hiroshima. Next door there was a young man who had evacuated from the South Pacific islands. He told me some memorable tales about his experiences during the war, such as the air raids by B-29 bombers. Those who returned home never said a word about "war responsibility" or "reparations". It appeared to me that they just considered themselves rather lucky for having safely survived to tell the tale.

It didn't seem like the villagers felt any great sense of liberation from Japanese rule. They were able to get a few close encounters with a foreign culture from the English language labels printed on American sugar and candies distributed to them free of charge, but otherwise it did not appear that the power of the United States Army Military Government extended very far into the countryside. In spite of the convulsions gripping the country, the remote rural villages preserved the same traditional society they had always had.

The people in my village and in my household continued to use a considerable amount of Japanese vocabulary, just as we had before the war, including *hontate* (bookshelf), *baketsu* (bucket), *nawatobi* (jump rope), *jankenpon* (rock-paper-scissors), *okusan* (wife), and *manma* (rice). We also sometimes referred to each other with Japanese-style names, not limited to adding "*ko*" onto the end of feminine names as is done in Japan. For instance, we pronounced the name Myōngja in Japanese style as Akiko.

When I entered elementary school the year after the war ended, almost nothing had changed from the days of Japanese colonial rule. The school textbooks were mostly direct translations of the Japanese language ones. When we played "shoulder wars" games during our school athletic meets in autumn, we likewise cheered on the rival teams in Japanese, shouting "*aka ganbare*" (Go red team!) and "*shiro ganbare*" (Go white team!). Even when we were receiving our diplomas, we tearfully sang out the nostalgic Japanese graduation song, "Glow of a Firefly," just as Koreans had during the colonial period. In other words, education in the immediate postwar era was run by different people, but mimicked the prewar model. Anti-Japanese sentiment had not yet taken root there.

In that case, what was it that transformed South Korea after the end of Japanese rule? The major factors included the Korean War, the land reform, the introduction of Western ideologies, education, and mass media. We know the importance of the economic and social lifestyles and the population shifts which started through exposure to foreign culture during the Korean War. Korean society underwent an especially dramatic change as a result of rural youth rethinking their traditional culture following their service in the army.

On June 15, 1948 at the Central Government Building, which was known as the Korean General Government Building during Japanese rule, Rhee Syngman ended the US occupation and declared the foundation of the Republic of Korea as an independent nation.

Rhee, a charismatic man regarded as a Korean national hero and savior, became the first president of South Korea.

Independence brought major changes to life in South Korea. The introduction of the ideas of liberal democracy by the US occupational government, the social chaos resulting from the collapse of the Japanese planned economy, the management of former Japanese-held lands by the New Korea Corporation and subsequent land reform, the in-fighting between left-wing and right-wing factions, the advent of guerrillas in some rural areas, the implementation of compulsory education, and the Korean War were all significant events for Korean society.

At the end of World War II, Korea was divided along the thirty-eighth parallel into a northern and southern zone, but the villagers felt little of the tension that existed between North and South Korea. The village where I was born was at the mid-point of the thirty-eighth parallel, just on the southern side of it. Before the Korean War, villagers were able to cross back and forth across the thirty-eighth parallel if they needed to attend a funeral, wedding, or other ceremonial occasion. My father also often crossed into North Korea and back to do business. Refugees came across the thirty-eighth parallel at night under cover of darkness.

One day, a whole family of my relatives came as refugees from a place called Chŏngok in North Korea. They stayed at our home for a while and then settled in the house next door. Some refugees and families divided by the thirty-eighth parallel reunited with their loved ones in this manner during the war. In addition, there was also population transfer based on ideology. Those who sympathized with communism went north and those who favored liberal democracy came south.



The national ceremony marking the foundation of the Republic of Korea (South Korea), August 15, 1948.

Basically, in the immediate aftermath of the war, we did not think of the thirty-eighth parallel as being a national border with a foreign country, but rather as a temporary dividing line. Because of this, we did not even feel much hostility towards communism. It was only after the Korean War, when the thirty-eighth parallel became the ceasefire line, that the strong polarization between north and south began.

Society after the Korean War

As General Matthew Ridgeway put it, "The attack began at dawn on a rainy summer morning, June 25, 1950, with heavy artillery fire in the various attack zones." The North Korean Army had launched a heavily-armed invasion of the south and the Korean War had begun. Artillery shells coming from the north soared through the sky above my house and exploded with a terrible boom. Over the span of three years, the war took a terrible toll on the lives of Koreans before finally ending in a ceasefire on July 27, 1953.

Many men of the UN Army sacrificed their lives to bring peace to Korea, but there were other soldiers who behaved like demons. Though the army was fighting to defend Korea, morality does not necessarily mean anything to a man facing death. Indeed, expecting a sense of morality to exist on the battlefield at all is hardly realistic. Soldiers might behave unlike themselves when placed on a battlefield, but that should more appropriately be judged as a problem tied to war itself rather than to those soldiers in particular. In times of war, some soldiers might feel not just fear, but also a desire to use their weapons to achieve extreme forms of unrestrained freedom and gratification.

When I think about war, I realize just how restrained people are in normal circumstances. On the battlefield, an explosion of sex accompanies the explosion of bombs. War is not just about killing. It unleashes all mankind's basest desires. The mental state war brings about is like a sort of hedonism. During the war, even the UN Army committed many horrible acts, and there were American soldiers who would use tombstones as target practice or chop down the pine trees which were symbols of the village.

However, what was worst of all were the rapes perpetrated against the women of the village. I was an observer at the time the UN soldiers came, and it appeared to me that the rapes, commercialization of sex, fights, and murders that took place were like a reversion to an era before human civilization, or else like the darkest elements of modern-day society had suddenly taken over. War not only disgraced the soldiers but also exposed the dark nature of society itself. This poses disturbing questions about the fundamental contradictions of the Korean War.

The people of my home village invited in prostitutes in the hopes of protecting the chastity of our own women, and ultimately we became a "prostitution village". As I have noted a number of times already, this is an example of how war changed the ethics and values that our village had once held dear. Although the village had originally frowned upon commercial business in general, and especially business by women, now there were a number of villagers, including women, going about army bases accosting soldiers in broken English and trying to sell them things.

Still, the US Army units did not stay in our village for long, and soon they relocated to the nearby town of Tongduch'ŏn. The obscure town of Tongduch'ŏn had been the site of fierce fighting during the war, and now the presence of US troops would make it well-known across Korea as a "camptown". The truce that had ended the war had split the Korean peninsula into a northern and southern half, each bitterly hostile towards the other. The situation seemed

symbolic of the broader confrontation of East and West during the Cold War between the USA and USSR. The term "cold war" refers to international hostility on political and economic levels without involving direct, armed warfare.

The three-year Korean War caused tremendous human and material devastation to Korean society. North Korea lost 2,720,000 people, 28.4 percent of its prewar population, as war dead or refugees. South Korea lost 1,330,000 people, mostly war dead. One million Chinese and about 63,000 Americans were either killed or missing in action. The war's other legacies included disabled veterans, families separated between north and south, orphans, and children of mixed race. After the war, soldiers who had been injured roamed through Korean villages like beggars. They often acted in an unruly manner, justifying their conduct on the grounds that they had been wounded fighting for their country. Most people were terrified of them.

The tragic symbol of the war was the "ten million separated families," which became a popular rallying cry for the cause of Korean reunification. Reunification had been the stated objective of the Korean War, and yet ironically, the war had actually resulted in the world's most hostile relationship between two countries of the same ethnicity. The ceasefire line created by the Korean War became a tragic borderline, even more tense than the thirty-eighth parallel had been. On the South Korean side, all 155 miles of the ceasefire line is heavily militarized and studded with fences and landmines. The situation remains extremely volatile.



Panmunjom

One symbol of the conflict and tension between the north and south is Panmunjom, the sole window between North and South Korea. Sightseeing tours to Panmunjon have become a fixture war industry, but for Koreans, the partition of the country was a national tragedy, and even more so for the separated families. According to news reports, it is common for South Koreans to walk close to the ceasefire line and carry out ceremonial rites here for their ancestors while facing north. It's like a Korean version of Hong Kong's Amah Rock, where the wife of a fisherman who was missing at sea was said to have come every day in the hopes of spotting her husband on his way home.

South Koreans still feel fear and resentment towards North Korea.

Families of my home village whose young men had gone north were gripped with fear that they might return as spies. It was rumored that one young woman who had gone missing during the war was living in North Korea. On the other hand, there were also many cases of families unable to cross the border before the war who were reunited amidst the chaos of war.

But even the separated families which were reunited sometimes met tragic fates. There were cases where the spouse who was separated had already remarried another person, and other cases where the reunions proved difficult due to changes in the structure or beliefs of the families.

In what ways did the Korean War change South Korea? Of course, murderous acts took place openly during the war, and a great amount of lives and property were lost, but South Koreans came out of the war with a stronger sense of patriotism and a greater appreciation for peace. In war, the structure of the population shifts due to migration and due to deaths in battle and from disease. People develop a sense of values which emphasizes survival through adapting biologically and environmentally to these changes. Furthermore, acculturation takes place through exposure to the guns and horrors of war, and new organizations and products have an impact on the unification, dismantlement, and stratification of parts of society. Hatred of the enemy gives rise to ethnocentrism, government centralization causes the military to gain power, and a national consciousness comes into being. These effects naturally have both negative and positive aspects, and among some scholars there is even a tendency to focus on the positives. In addition, the military system is also said to contribute to social stratification.

In the past, books about the Korean War have concentrated mainly on its origins and causes. The war itself was wrong, but it did bring about changes to Korean society. The major significance of the Korean War lies in the ways that it fundamentally transformed Korean society. Recently, an increasing amount of research has been done on the political and military influence that the war had on the Cold War-era political and economic scene in East Asia. The Korean War ought to be analyzed from diverse angles.

War is a major topic for discussion among scholarly associations of anthropologists in the United States. They have held conferences and seminars on the subject every year and have published their findings. Conflicts in small-scale societies can result from a variety of situations or designs, including accumulation of wealth, hostility incurred by aggressive attitudes, or a desire for territorial expansion. Ultimately the pre-civilizational warfare usually discussed by anthropologists is of a different nature from warfare in civilized societies.

However, if we were to look at the Korean War from an anthropological perspective, the north and the south were of the same culture, society, and ethnicity, but the war was not a spontaneous upheaval splitting apart a homogenous race. Rather, this was a "war of unification" seeking to put an end to the partition of Korea, which was itself a tragic byproduct of a war that engulfed the entire world.

Though the United States did not gain anything economically from the Korean War, they did secure popular support for their participation in the war thanks to the collective security provisions of the UN Charter. Japan was able to escape from its postwar economic ordeal thanks to "special procurements" of war supplies during the Korean War. Japan ended up profiting from its neighbor's misfortune.

Anti-communism and the military coup d'état

As I described above, the thirty-eighth parallel was the product of Japan's defeat in World War II, but the Korean War, which was North Korea's attempt to erase this line and reunify the country, only served to establish the wartime ceasefire line as the rigid dividing line between north and south. The prewar thirty-eighth parallel had been a remarkably flexible border, but by contrast the postwar ceasefire line was a line of death exceedingly dangerous to cross. The Korean War had been fought to make the border between north and south disappear, but ironically that border would instead be entrenched more solidly than ever before.

The devastation wrought through South Korea's war with an external enemy may have strengthened South Korea's sense of national consciousness following the end of the war. This manifested itself especially in the form of strong antipathy towards communism.

After the end of World War II, the two pillars animating South Korea are said to have been anti-Japanese sentiment following the liberation from Japanese colonialism, and anti-communist sentiment following the partition of the country into north and south. But though there was some popular anti-Japanese sentiment prior to the Korean War, the anti-communism advocated by South Korean politicians had little impact and failed to persuade the masses. It was only after the end of the Korean War that anti-communism became widespread.

The South Korean government used North Korea's provocations as an opportunity to bolster its power by making patriotic appeals for "total unity", *ch'onghwa tangyŏl* in Korean, and enforcing anti-communist education in schools.

1953 was the year that I entered middle school. My schoolhouse had been destroyed during the war, so for a while I took classes at the schoolhouse of a nearby elementary school. Apart from taking classes, I was also mobilized to help clear away the rubble of destroyed buildings. Soon after, a temporary building was set up on the main school grounds, so I transferred there to continue my education. There were placards hanging on both sides of the blackboard which said, in red letters, "Down with Japan" and "Down with communism". Almost every day at school we sang "The Song of June 25" and "The Song of Unification". The former was full of violent threats against the enemy whereas the latter expressed hope that the country would reunite under one shining flag. Even now I remember some of their lyrics.

"The Song of June 25

We shall never forget that day

when the enemy set foot into the fatherland.

On that day we repelled the enemy with our own blood and bare fists
and stamped our feet with anger.

(Refrain) Now we shall have vengeance on our enemy of June 25.

We will scatter and strike down the fleeing enemy hordes

until not one of them is left standing,
we the people of this glorious nation."

"Song of Unification
Unification is what I long for
Unification is what I wish for even in my dreams
For unification I will devote my heart and soul
We shall achieve unification
Only unification will revive our countrymen
Unification is what our nation seeks and desires
May the day of unification come soon
May the country be united."

The government was attempting to bring the people together under the twin banners of anti-communist and anti-Japanese sentiment. At the time, it was often said that, "The Korean people's sense of unity is weak," and elementary school textbooks reprinted the old Japanese fable about Mori Motonari teaching his sons that one arrow can be broken easily but that three arrows bound together could not be. The Rhee Syngman regime appealed for unity under the slogan, "united we stand, divided we fall."

President Rhee Syngman attempted to create an anti-communist union to protect the country from the threat of North Korea, and anti-communism ended up becoming synonymous with pro-Americanism. Following the end of the Korean War, anti-communism established itself as the state ideology and this intense hatred of communism gave rise to a military government.

Student protests brought down President Rhee, but when Korean society fell into chaos people feared that North Korea might invade once again. Park Chung-hee took advantage of the apprehensions of the people to launch a coup d'état on May 16, 1961. Park became the new president and immediately sought to stabilize his regime by politically exploiting the danger from North Korea. Park made talk about reunification taboo, and instead solidified anti-communism through promotion of political nationalism. Park perpetuated his military regime by emphasizing anti-communism over anti-Japanese sentiment and strengthened his dictatorship by insisting to those who opposed him that the country had to remain united to resist the threat from North Korea.

In accordance with Park Chung-hee's policy of cooperation with the United States, about 400,000 South Korean soldiers served in Vietnam at American request between February 1965 and 1973. Of these, 4,400 died in combat. As was the case in many new nations following the end of World War II, the South Korean military provided impetus for societal modernization. The South Korean government felt gratitude for the protection it had received from the United Nations during the Korean War, and so pledged in return to demonstrate its army's strength internationally. However, the popular slogan was, "America provides the bullets and Korea provides the blood." Because Korean lives were being lost fighting for the

United States, some anti-war sentiment also developed within Korea. As a result of such circumstances, the government ramped up its propaganda, encouraging its men to believe that if they returned safely from Vietnam they would lead affluent lives.

It was in this context that the hero named Kang Chae-Ku was created. Kang was a South Korean soldier attached to the Tiger Division as a company commander from October 1965. While undergoing training and preparation for deployment in Vietnam, one of his subordinates accidentally dropped his grenade. Kang did not hesitate to throw his own body over the live grenade and perished to save the lives of his one hundred men. The government of Park Chung-hee held Kang up as the model of a patriotic soldier, erecting a monument in his honor and promoting his story by inserting it into textbooks. The government used this opportunity to have military education adopted into the school curricula. Later, the Republic of Korea Homeland Reserve Forces was established and South Korea became more and more militaristic.

The atrocities committed by the South Korean Army during the Vietnam War were discussed widely among international groups and journalists. I had seen such tragedies first-hand during the Korean War, and even though they were then happening in far-off Vietnam, I feared that Korea might soon enough experience the same thing again.

Sexual torture and the Democracy Movement

As I described in Chapter One, my hometown transformed into a "prostitution village" or "camptown" following incidents of sexual violence by the UN Army. Nevertheless, South Koreans have never been told the truth about the cruel sexual assaults perpetrated by UN, especially American, soldiers. The South Korean government should have made loud protests to the United Nations and the United States at the same time that it had admitted and accepted responsibility for crimes committed against its own people.

The origins of the US Army's comfort women can be found in the sexual violence during the Korean War perpetrated by the UN Army against Koreans, as well as the sexual violence during that war perpetrated by South Korean soldiers against their own countrywomen. Furthermore, I should also mention the human rights scandals involving sexual assault on Korean women which sparked the "Democracy Movement" in South Korea. One of them was the sexual torture of Kwŏn In-suk by South Korean police in 1986 when South Korea was governed by the military dictatorship of Chun Doo-hwan.

Miss Kwŏn was a student at Seoul University, later expelled during her fourth year at the Faculty of Clothing and Textiles. While still taking classes she made a forgery of another person's residency registration card to work at a company in Puch'ŏn where she planned on engaging in human rights activism. At around 9:00 on the night of June 4, 1986, she was taken to the Puch'ŏn Police Station where she was interrogated until 3:00 the next day in order to make her reveal the hiding places of her colleagues. However, the police were not satisfied with the results of the interrogation and so a police detective named Mun Kwi-Tong

of the Puch'ŏn Police Station took charge of the case. He is said to have handcuffed and raped her as sexual torture on two occasions on June 6 and June 7.

Kwŏn managed to get her story out and expose her tormenter when her parents gave an interview to the media, but in spite of this the police brushed off the allegations by saying, "The police detective Mun was merely overzealous in his investigation and lightly touched her chest by accident."

In response, the Women's Alliance Countermeasures Committee Against Sexual Torture was formed as an association of organizations, including religious groups, and then a defense team of historically unprecedented scale was constituted under the declaration that, "Human sex is a symbol of life and to abuse it as a form of torture is a violation of human dignity." A defense team of seven lawyers reported the police detective to the public prosecutor on the grounds that he had "interrogated her for about one hour in the investigation room with the door locked, the lights turned off, and her hands handcuffed behind her back."

This incident became a major social issue and, in combination with the death of Pak Chong-Ch'öl, who was suffocated through water torture by other policemen also attached to the Security Office, it became the driving force behind the Democracy Movement of 1986-87.

The growth of Christianity in South Korea

South Korean society following the end of Japanese colonial rule still maintained its traditional value system based on shamanism and Confucianism. Most Koreans had no interest in Christianity and would turn up their noses at any priest or missionary who entered their village.

However, the Korean War brought drastic change to the culture and state of mind of the Korean people and overturned Korea's traditional value system. When a communist state was put in place in North Korea, freedom of religion was restricted, causing an exodus of North Korean Christians to the south. As a result, churches grew rapidly. One representative example is Yŏngnak Presbyterian Church in Seoul. This church was like a community of refugees who had all fled communist persecution. Of the same race and speaking the same language, many had been killed without knowing the difference between their enemies and their allies. Their graves were marked with crosses, which earned them the protection of the US Army. Anti-communism served to popularize Christianity in South Korea.

While South Korea was recovering from the ravages of war it relied on American assistance. American culture became all pervasive and American relief aid was distributed to churches and orphanages. The United States Army Military Government had designated Christmas as a national holiday and Christian culture flourished.

President Rhee Syngman may not have emulated the policies of the Japanese colonial regime, but he did leave intact its anti-superstition campaign which deemed shamanism to be

"superstitious". He also held negative views towards Confucianism, though he did not take any proactive steps to suppress it.

Even in the region where my village was located, which had held on to its traditional beliefs, the influence of Christianity began to be felt. Soon after the end of the Korean War, a thatched-roof civilian home in a neighboring village, where the town hall was located, was lent out for use as a Christian church. The third son of the Ch'oe family, which was the head household of my clan, became a Christian and went to work as a deacon. He was a true believer who was admitted into Pierson Missionary School in Seoul with the recommendation of his minister.

Because he was cross-eyed and had a history of mental illness since childhood, his family at first did not interfere with his choice of religion, though they did object to his refusal to participate in ancestral rites even when he was back at home for the traditional holidays. When he suffered a seizure due to his mental illness his parents blamed it on his Christian faith and undertook a shamanistic purification ritual.

In spite of his family, his faith never wavered. In 1960, at a time when I was seriously ill, he convinced me to attend his church. I studied there and on Christmas of that year I was baptized at the mother church, Yŏngnak Presbyterian Church.

Under the military regime of Park Chung-hee, Christian churches became strongholds of opposition to the dictatorship, including, notably, the support and cooperation given to Kim Dae-jung by Christian groups like the Catholic Priests Association for Justice. Kim Dae-jung and Kim Young-sam, two Christians who led the democracy movement, called upon their Christian brethren to join the real-life struggle against the dictatorship.

Christianity experienced some schisms amidst the poverty and the social and political uncertainty of the postwar years, and new Christian-based religious movements were founded. The Unification Church made anti-communism its dogma, criticized the established churches, spread its teachings, and expanded its influence. However, because the Unification Church adhered to a special theology based on pre-war mysticism, it was condemned as heretical.

It was not just the Unification Church which was anti-communist. Rather, Korean Christians in general had turned anti-communist as a result of the persecution by the North Korean communists which they had experienced during the Korean War. During the war, the churches even preached from the pulpit that it was "a war against the anti-Christian movement" and urged young men to join the fight.

Furthermore, the charismatic mysticism movement within Korean Protestantism absorbed shamanism, which had been generally hated and shunned, into its mysticism. This shamanist mysticism met the demands of the times and sparked rapid growth in the churches. The hallmarks of "holy spirit mysticism" include mass prayer chanting (*t'ongsŏnggido*), the holy

presence (*sŏngnyŏngimjae*, speaking in tongues (*pangŏn*), the threefold blessing (*sambakchach'ukpok*), faith healing (*ch'ibyŏng*), laying on hands (*ansu*), blood sharing (*p'igarŭm*), spiritual possession (*chŏpshin*), and communication with god (*kangshingŭk*). Such new religious and holy spirit movements have existed not only in South Korea, but have cropped up in Korean communities throughout the world.

In Korea's Christian churches, shamanism and Christianity came to intermingle or else to coexist side-by-side. Many Christians who believe shamanism to be superstitious are blissfully unaware that shamanism is deeply embedded within their own religious practices. It is believed that the key to the triumph of Korean Protestantism was the spiritual revival meetings which were rooted in the religious fervency they had inherited from Korean shamanism.

Christianity tried to convert shamanists on the grounds that their beliefs were superstitious. Shamanist practices which had stagnated in the rural areas revived around the cities as they were incorporated into Christian churches. As a religious creed they became especially popular with women.

During the 1950s, the average Christian church in South Korea increased its membership by 16.5 percent.

The modernization of South Korea and the "New Community Movement"

The Korean War had made Koreans painfully aware of how poor and weak their own country really was, and they became self-critical of their own nation and traditional society. After the end of World War II, Korean society especially turned against the Confucian, male-dominated patriarchy, widespread male chauvinism, clanism, and the *yangban* class system. The division of Korea dictated by the great powers and the tragedy of the Korean War left deep psychological scars on the Korean people.

Even so, the war was not purely destructive. It also gave rise to a new mentality that Korea would have to reflect on its own faults in order to become stronger. This attitude of self-criticism at times became almost masochistic. The cultural policies of the United States Army Military Government following the end of Japanese colonial rule and especially the US Army's military culture which became prevalent after the Korean War both played important roles in Korea's transition from clanism, authoritarianism, and collectivism towards the value system of Western civilization. When most Koreans today think about American culture, what they are actually thinking about is the military culture of the US Army.

American culture had a tremendous impact on Korean society, and the American cultural traits which made especially significant contributions to the modernization of Korean society were pragmatism, individualism, and a notion of universal values.

The Korean War changed the structure of the population ratio in both North and South Korea and triggered mass migrations of refugees. There were also migrations in rural areas. Farmers increasingly began to abandon agriculture, which had been the traditional bedrock of the Korean economy, and focused their attention on the cities so that their children could get a better education. Because of this, the wealth disparity between cities and rural villages widened dramatically. More and more people left their impoverished villages and moved into the slums which were springing up along the periphery of urban areas. In addition, women who lived in the countryside often travelled to Seoul where they worked as maids or were sold to brothels.

In 1970, President Park Chung-hee launched the New Community Movement, a government-led rural revitalization campaign under the slogan of "diligence, self-reliance, and cooperation". The goal of the program was to promote the modernization of Korea's rural villages, which were struggling with poverty and continuing to suffer from an outflow of talented people. Under the New Community Movement, things like road improvements, roof repairs, and the construction of storehouses were undertaken collaboratively by the villagers, and impressive results were achieved.

The movement also spread to the cities where it fused with campaigns to improve productivity and, thus, contributed to South Korea's industrial development. South Korea's economic development was truly the product of those who labored in these campaigns.



President Park
Chung-hee

And yet, President Park's highly successful policies seemed to be a continuation of the "rural revitalization campaign" originally promoted by Governor-General Ugaki Kazushige during the period of Japanese colonial rule. The very guiding principles of the campaign were the same as those advocated by the Japanese agricultural reformer Yamazaki Nobuyoshi, "the spirit of public service, the spirit of cooperation, and the spirit of self-help." Ugaki's policies may not have reached their full potential while he was still in office in the 1930s, but the young leaders who were educated in that era would be at the peak of their careers when Park Chung-hee was president.

Certainly, they played an active role in the success of the New Community Movement. In Park Chung-hee's sayings and writings, Japanese-style expressions like "rural revitalization" (*nongch'on chinhŭng* in Korean and *noson shinko* in Japanese), "restoration" (*yushin* in Korean and *ishin* in Japanese), and "self-improvement" (*charyŏk kaengsaeng* in Korean and *jiryoku kosei* in Japanese) are seen very often. Notably, the word "*kaengsaeng*" is used in Korean only in reference to the social rehabilitation of criminals or medical patients, but Park's avid use of this term seems to reflect its broader Japanese usage.

President Park, who had seized power in the name of achieving stability in the face of the North Korean threat, embarked on a "five-year economic development plan" in January 1962, inspiring his countrymen to believe that South Korea could become a wealthy nation. Park plotted out a course of economic growth by keeping the people in constant fear of the threat of war with North Korea and demanding national unity. The South Korean economy expanded through this model of state-led modernization. The New Community Movement is just one representative example of such state-guided policies.

It was at this time that the propaganda film, "The Land of Korea," was broadcast nationwide. In the film, an elderly couple living in Seoul received invitations from children across South Korea, so they go on a sightseeing tour of the nation. They are introduced to all manner of sites of historic and scenic interest, and everywhere they go they see a Korea which has overcome the tragedy of the war and shows remarkable economic development. They also get to hear fine music like the popular work, "Tears of Mokpo".

The Koreans who left for the cities still returned to their home villages for the traditional holidays. Traditional annual events became important functions. The New Community Movement wiped out Korea's vast economic disparities, but it was also a spiritual revolution which breathed new humanity into people who had become robotic profit-seekers and thus re-invented Korea's traditional life philosophy.

Is war just or unjust?

I once wrote a short essay, sorrowful in tone, based on my experiences in the Korean War. It was all written in line with the highly naive anti-war paradigm of yearning for peace by rejecting war. Still, I was not making an appeal to society in the manner of a pacifist or anti-war campaign, and I will not deny that recently I have had occasion to even praise war, while still holding a generally negative view of it.

A taboo exists in discussions of war. What is needed is for politicians and citizens to directly and openly debate the hard morality of war. Up to now we have not asked the question of whether or not war is just, though war ought to be examined from both a positive and negative angle or else from a variety of different perspectives. It seems that war is gradually being recognized as the most universally agreed upon "evil force" in human society, but the fundamental question is still worth pursuing; is war just or unjust?

Noam Chomsky has warned that it is dangerous to entrust the question of war and peace entirely to military strategists and politicians. Chomsky has adopted an anti-war standpoint while commenting on the moral dilemma of intervening militarily in foreign nations, but he has not really touched upon the just or unjust nature of war.

Alvin and Heidi Toffler have weighed the merits of "war and anti-war", and according to them, the human need to "fight," whether for one's life or one's family, or even against something like sickness, is ubiquitous. They see a sort of dichotomous harmony between "war and anti-war".

The Tofflers predict that, although the risk of all-out nuclear war between the two superpowers is diminishing, smaller scale conflicts between nations and ethnic groups will probably heat up and increase in number. In other words, diverse military conflicts can result from economic competition for resources, political demagoguery, religious fanaticism, or infringements on the sovereignty of nation-states. According to the Tofflers, there will be a need for us to devise a new approach to war and peace in order to counter these trends. The dominant form of warfare will likely involve intelligent strategies seeking to neutralize the enemy army without killing anyone or else using high-tech weaponry like robots, aerial drones, omniscient surveillance satellites, and sound systems.

He also discusses the struggle against war, in other words preventative measures for peace involving the transmission of news and sharing of information and technology to halt the proliferation of weaponry.

What are the moral criteria for judging the justice or injustice of war?

The most fundamental moral justification for war is to protect human rights and human lives from massacres and atrocities. However, a contradiction exists here because humans fight amongst themselves expecting death and ready to give their lives. One must take into account that wars in fact take human lives in great number.

Is it really possible, as the Tofflers have said, that wars of the future will focus on destroying weapons and facilities without killing humans? Even if we go to war with the aim of protecting peace and human rights, is it really true that soldiers risking their own lives on the battlefield can become angels of peace carrying out all their duties with perfect moral rectitude?

That is to say, in the structure of war, peace is the superstructure and war is the substructure. This means that "War and Peace" is not just the title of a novel, but is also the actual mechanism of war itself.

In comparison to other evils like colonialism or aggressive war and occupation, it doesn't seem so bad to intervene in a foreign war with a humanitarian agenda. Nevertheless, I think that any system of universal morality would collapse if it were to accept war itself as being just, and imagining a war game scenario in which the rules of international society are upheld by an umpire, like international police and judges, is probably a fantasy. The very argument that "just wars" are normally possible is difficult to accept without qualification, and the same is true of the morality not only of war, but also theft or assault. And yet, at some points in the past it was acceptable for the poor to steal from wealthy families, and even now one is not likely to be legally charged with a theft that takes place among family members or close relatives. In Korean textbooks, the man who went to China and came back with stolen cotton seeds is treated as a hero. In Greek mythology as well, there is a story about a man who stole fire from the gods.

It is not true that war or theft have no positive outcomes. For example, there might be secondary effects like when a new city rises from the ashes after a fire. Could it be that it is even possible to justify robbery?

War against a nation that has violated human rights or basic humanity seems to have a theoretical basis as a form of punishment like the death penalty. However, in an era where even the death penalty is being abolished, we can't simply accept a war which will put many lives at risk. Could it be that a just war is one that abides by the rule "thou shalt not kill"?

And even if we are against war, there will always be a need for nation-states to have armies just in case a war does happen. Communities have armies in order to protect themselves from war, and such armies exist not solely as a deterrent force. Defensive wars are also necessary, in the same way that the right of self-defense can be employed in cases of assault. Armies are also, in a sense, a form of life insurance. Sometimes even a preemptive strike will be necessary, though this is the worst sort of defensive war.

Concerning America's military intervention in Libya, on March 26, 2011, President Obama declared that, "A humanitarian catastrophe has been averted and countless civilian lives have been saved." He stated that "Military operations are progressing well," and he appealed to the American people for support. Meanwhile, members of Congress were calling into question his justifications for the air raids on Libya.

What really is a "justification for war"? Whenever I listen to a speech announcing a state of war, I can't help but feel mistrust towards the way wars are legitimized.

The "Imperial Declaration of War Against Qing China" was a written declaration of war, running in at just over 800 Japanese characters, which was released by Japan's Meiji government at the start of the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894. This declaration uses the word "peace" six times, such as in the phrase, "for the sake of peace in East Asia". The word "peace" is very often appropriated for the purpose of justifying war. It may be that American-led wars have simply swapped the word "humanitarian" for the word "peace".

The scholar Michael Walzer has published several masterpieces on the morality of war including "Just and Unjust Wars" and "Arguing About War."

Walzer, who grew up during World War II, makes a rational argument for differentiating "just war" from "unjust war". He contends that a military intervention against acts of atrocity or aggression, in other words Nazi or Rwanda-style massacres, is legitimate on humanitarian grounds. Among the specific points that he outlines are as follows.

"War is the continuation of politics by other means."

"Politics is the continuation of war by other means."

"War is sometimes justifiable and that the conduct of war is always subject to moral criticism."

"All's fair in love and war."

"Some wars and some acts of war will turn out to be 'just'. How can that be, when war is so terrible?"

There have been plenty of individuals in human history who have waged aggressive and destructive wars in the name of peace, and the slogans of all invaders are either "peace" or "humanity". Walzer takes a close look at this and focuses on the controversial issues. He says that wars started to defend the cause of peace are usually wars for the cause of national self-interest. In other words, Walzer criticizes the fact that the standard conventional framework for evaluating war was based not on justice but on self-gain. He shows no faith in the arguments for just war put forward by religious scholars and theologians in particular, and instead argues that war should be carefully examined from a true moral framework. His moral framework is "human rights".

According to Walzer, if we look at war from the perspective of human rights and humanitarianism, then wars in which there are atrocities and massacres of civilians and noncombatants, like the Vietnam War and the Boer War in South Africa, are not "just wars". He then introduces the precepts that "we should not fight wars about whose justice we are doubtful" and that "war is properly a war of armies, a combat between combatants." Some conclude from this that any killing of a civilian is murder, that any war in which civilians are killed is unjust, and that therefore all wars are unjust. Nevertheless, Walzer views the US invasion of Afghanistan as a necessary war.

Furthermore, one must not only win the war justly, but also win the peace justly. At the end of the war one has to reconstruct the country to its prewar state. Especially in cases of humanitarian intervention, it is essential to have the war end properly. In the aftermath of a success, one must continue to succeed in the postwar phases. This, I suppose, is the price of success. Included in this description are things like a legitimate occupation, a change of regime, and the institution of a protectorate.

Walzer affirms that "innocent human beings can never be intentionally attacked," including any murder of innocent civilians or terrorist acts aimed at cowing people through fear. In other words, innocence is inviolable, and targeting innocent civilians is a violation of just war theory. In spite of what Walzer states, I think that the killing of innocent civilians by soldiers is something likely to happen given that soldiers at war are under constant threat of death. Like policemen, firefighters, and sailors, soldiers are expected to put their own lives on the line to protect the well-being of the innocent people of a community. This means that we must always recognize both the evil deeds we are fighting against and the evil deeds we ourselves might actually commit, in order to guard against both as far as that is possible.

According to Walzer's theory, we cannot respond to terrorists who kill innocent civilians by seeking complete victory and domination over them, and we cannot suppress cruel, dehumanizing violence with military force alone.

So what is the "just war" to which Walzer refers? This is the fundamental question. Walzer says that war is undertaken as a necessary evil which we must accept as being a last-resort act of violence to prevent human tragedies from happening. If I were to rephrase Walzer's words about aggression, military intervention, just causes, self-defense, protection of noncombatants, POWs, double effects, terrorism, and war crimes, I would interpret it to mean that war is legitimate for the goal of protecting "human rights". As Walzer indicates, if we view war from the standpoint of human rights, then wars characterized by atrocities and the massacre of civilians and noncombatants, including the Vietnam War and the Boer War, are not just wars.

Although rape and the use of prostitutes by soldiers are typical phenomena, the way in which they occur can vary. I have learned that these circumstances will differ depending on factors like the policies of a nation's army and the attitudes of the country affected by it. During the Korean War, the US Army was our benevolent ally, and the American forces which remained stationed on the Korean peninsula were symbols of America's security guarantee to Korea. Prostitution flourished around US Army military bases in South Korea to a greater extent than around its bases in Japan. People have said that these differences have occurred due to, and have been defined by, the US-Korea diplomatic relationship.

The Korean War left significant influences, both positive and negative, on Korean society. Mutual enmity between North and South Korea prevented the Korean people from reunifying, but anti-communist sentiment did permit the people of South Korea to come together as one. That, however, in turn led to the military coup d'état and a long period of military dictatorship. Religious groups, including Christian ones, shifted towards anti-communism and Christianity in particular became widespread in South Korean society, which caused Korea's traditional Confucian sense of values to change. This and the modern frame of consciousness that accompanied it became the basis for the modernization of South Korea.

The Korean War began in the 1950's while Korean society was still in turmoil in the aftermath of the liberation, and it took time for society to recover. Then the military dictatorship appeared with the aim of stabilizing the political system and promoting rapid modernization. These, however, were not phenomena that suddenly came into being from the 1960s and onwards. Rather, they were a continuation of earlier periods. In other words, there were past trends which continued through the hostile relationship between North and South Korea, the rise of anticommunism, and the military dictatorship.

On the other hand, as North Korea was rebuilding after the war, it too had formulated a "revolutionary tradition," which integrated the story of North Korea's founding with the Korean partisan war against the Japanese, and used it to unify its own citizens. This in turn

was part and parcel to the solidification of Kim Il-sung's absolute rule. Thus, both North and South Korea had adopted policies of exploiting their mutual enmity for one another in order to unify their own citizenry behind them.



Two participants in the Second Sino-Japanese War, photographed in front of a "comfort room" in Xiaguan, China, by the late Leading Private Koyama.

Conclusion

Even while Korean society was in a dramatic state of flux, Korea's Confucian-based sexual norms and the concept of chastity remained firmly in place. This, in turn, would have a major impact on the current political situation in Korea, specifically the postwar Korean government's corresponding policies towards sex. In reality though, rather than saying that it had an impact, it would be better to note that the Korean government has always been exploiting sex and sexual morality for political ends, and today's ongoing controversy over the comfort women is merely another instance of this.

In this book, I covered in great detail the controversies of both the Japanese Army's and the US Army's comfort women and I was able to trace back their origins over a broad span of history. They did not burst into the scene out of nowhere and they were not products of Korea-Japan relations, but rather they are purely rooted in Korean traditions.

Thus, I wrote this book in order to better understand Korean society, where sex and politics are deeply intertwined in the manner I have described.

In war, soldiers demand sex in order to distract themselves from their fear of combat, or conversely out of the euphoria and sense of liberation they feel from having survived a battle. I have given many examples of this throughout this book. In my own home village, the villagers were subjected to sexual violence by the UN Army and so accepted prostitution to defend themselves against it. Consequently, I personally witnessed how my village, which was steeped in the traditional Confucian concept of sexual chastity, transformed overnight into a village of prostitutes and comfort women.

In South Korea, there are laws concerning chastity and sections of the criminal code prohibiting adultery. Viewed from the perspective of Confucian morality, one would normally expect that it would not be permissible for a village to hire prostitutes. And yet, the irony was that the village accepted prostitution in order to defend chastity. However, we shouldn't call this a contradiction because in reality prostitution has a moral side that coexists with the side that people call "immoral". In the end, the prostitutes were found to be dutiful to their parents and devoted to their families, and the villagers admired them for that.

Taking the example of my own village, I would like to reflect on the economic and diplomatic policies of South Korea. In South Korea, women like prostitutes who failed to protect their chastity normally were ashamed of themselves for it, and the best thing they could do was hide it. Women who had lost their chastity were discriminated against, and almost never made appearances in the political scene. But in spite of this, these women were also praised for patriotic acts, in the context of those women who had defended their chastity from foreign invaders, and people even began to call them patriots who sacrificed their chastity, rather than their lives, for the sake of the country.

I have clearly described how, during the time of the Koryŏ and Chosŏn Dynasties, the women who protected their chastity and virginity were transformed into the idealized picture of the "heroic woman". Throughout the South Korean countryside, you can come across shrines and monuments dedicated to these "heroic women". The humiliation of women losing their virginity to Japanese or Mongol invaders was emphasized as a means of promoting a Korean racial identity. One notable example is the cliff face known as the "rock of righteousness," where legend has it that the *kisaeng* named Non'gae embraced a Japanese general at the time of Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea and then hurled him and herself off to their deaths. This is now a famous tourist site where female tourists get to try on traditional Korean costumes. Korea's spacious national parks are also full of monuments to patriotism and loyalty, but all the new ones which have been built deal with events of Korea's distant past. I felt like Korea has been inventing and fabricating an artificial version of its own traditional culture.

At one museum, the guide spoke to me in Japanese about South Korean patriotism and Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion, and the aforementioned legend of Non'gae continues to be taught and promoted in South Korea. I believe that we should likewise view the comfort women problem as a direct continuation and extension of this. However, I cannot overlook the fact that this attempt by South Korea to use sex to create a national identity has laid bare a number of serious inconsistencies.

Armed combat is an extreme situation where people kill one another and where, as I have seen myself, concepts like morality do not exist. I saw soldiers who had been driven virtually insane, and it was not just soldiers but also ordinary people who were like that. We have had discussions over whether war is sane or insane. The definition and scope of the word "war" is broad, and though I may not be able to say that war as a whole is intrinsically insane, soldiers on the battlefield or in a war-torn area where killing was taking places were desperate to protect their own lives and at very least in these circumstances I cannot say that their states of mind were particularly sane.

As soon as the battle began, sexual violence began. Naturally only some soldiers participated in it, but in order to understand war we should be careful to not judge rights or wrongs based on moral concepts alone.

Brave warriors and victims emerge from every war, and from them heroes and patriots are born. In Korea, female victims were often called "heroic women". The theft by Japanese soldiers of the chastity of Korean women was seen as the ultimate humiliation, and the anger of the nation would elevate the comfort women to the status of patriots. In this context it is understandable how the comfort women came to be regarded as heroes in Korea-Japan relations. One could say that Korea's government and leadership devised its policy towards the comfort women in full knowledge of how strong the Korean fascination with female chastity is.

From this same context one can also understand the situation of the Korean prostitutes serving the US Army. These women are called both "*yang kalbo*" and "*yang kongju*," and while both of these words are pejoratives, the former means "Western whore" whereas the latter means "Western princess". This shows the de-facto dichotomy between approval and disapproval of prostitution existing in Korean society. Depending on the circumstances, the prostitutes might be scorned as whores or hailed as heroes.

This is the reason why war produces so many prostitutes. Even though sex is the foundation of marriage, society, and the family, morally deviant sexual acts might fall within the definition of "prostitution". Thus sex has both formal cultural and social elements as well as elements which are suppressed or kept hidden. When a society falls into disarray due to a war or another catastrophe, a dynamic interplay between these elements begins. This is the explanation of why my village invited in prostitutes and actively used them as a source of income. Thus, prostitution may have been regarded as sexually deviant, but on the other hand it was tacitly permitted as an excellent way of acquiring foreign currency.

Even now in South Korea, prostitution is tolerated within a sort of de-facto licensed prostitution system. Even half a century after the end of the Korean War, prostitution continues to thrive around US army bases. "Peace" and "war" are thus not neatly divisible, because they are like the light and the darkness that coexist in every society. The number of people who work full-time as camptown prostitutes in South Korea is said to be currently in the hundreds of thousands.

But there is one important point that we must not overlook concerning this phenomena of "sexual deviancy", and that is the fact that one of the goals of the prostitutes themselves is to use prostitution as a path to an international marriage. Korean society puts a high value on chastity and those who lose it are thought of as "fallen women". Women who lose their chastity, including prostitutes, have a hard time getting married, and, ironically in a way, they thus have to prostitute themselves in the hopes of finding a foreign partner to marry. Furthermore, this does not apply only to camptown prostitutes, but rather, as I have made clear in this book, it is the exact same situation for coffeehouse prostitutes as well. From a macrosociological perspective, these aspects of society are often ignored, but on a microsociological level it is very important to pay due attention to the lowest rungs of society.

The scholar Kim Hyun Sook analyzed South Korean novels and concluded that the sole wish of those women who had experienced rape, divorce, or work in prostitution, was to go to the United States.

Another scholar, Andrew P. Killick, has also noted, based on the experiences of people who have coupled with Korean women, that "sexual careerwomen" in Korea like prostitutes see American men as objects of envy for potential marriages. Conversely, he says that Western men tend to worry about falling into the "trap" of marrying that sort of Korean woman.

Oh Sŏn-hwa has revealed how Korean women who have lost their chastity seek marriage whether through the means of prostitution, love, or noncommittal relationships. Most of these women marry foreigners such as Americans or Japanese, and there is also a tendency for them to prostitute themselves overseas.

Yang Hyunah has put at issue the discrepancy between Korean nationalist discourse and the confessions of so-called "prostitutes". That is to say, under normal political circumstances women who lose their chastity are despised, but particularly when the country is attacking an external enemy they suddenly become "victims" or "patriots", described as "the daughter of a poor family, our nation's daughter" or "good women victimized by beastly GIs." Like I noted earlier, prostitutes are also commended for their filial piety and devotion to their families.

In one study, Yoo Chul-In introduces the life story of a woman named Sunhi who became a prostitute in order to pay for the tuition of her siblings, and then ended up marrying an American. Yoo also explains the process through which she justified her own acts to herself.

It is known that acts of sexual violence like rapes were perpetrated during war, a fact very much at variance with the moral idea that wars are fought to bring peace. If war is fought to bring peace, then soldiers on the front lines must be the angels of peace. In what way should we understand the fact that these soldiers actually committed large numbers of murders and rapes both in their own countries and in enemy territories? There is a need for us to, once again, reflect deeply on the meaning of war. For me this remains one more of the big unanswered questions.

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