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Touching Base: The Role of Japanese and South Korean Military Prostitution and War Orphans on U.S. Diplomacy and the Racial Imaginary

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Abstract

Prior to the height of the Cold War, the United States had become increasingly concerned with the political landscape of East Asia. The aftermath of World War II created the conditions for the U.S. to interact with Japan and South Korea on both a global stage and on the interpersonal level. One of the primary sites of interaction between Americans and Japanese or Koreans was the government-sponsored sex industry that cropped up to meet the demands of occupying Allied forces and supposedly prevent the assault of “respectable” women. In the wake of war, the foreign currency that sex workers brought into the economy was essential for the nation-building that would follow. Beyond the economic factor, these women were the frontier for fostering friendly diplomatic relationships with Western nations, particularly the United States. Japan had to rehabilitate its image from being the former enemy to a critical ally in the region and the Republic of Korea struggled to establish itself as an independent government. The sexual labor of these women cannot be discounted when considering the international relations in the region. However, the stigmatization and exploitation of sex workers, as well as similarly overlooked voices such as war brides and orphans, often prevents the recognition of their contributions. Additionally, to problematize the historic relationship between the US and Asian countries, it is critical to recognize how Orientalist views have influenced and been reinforced by the gendered interactions between military men and local women.

Keywords: Camptown, Japan, Military Prostitution, South Korea, Transnationalism

Introduction

In the mid-twentieth century, the United States became increasingly invested in the political landscape of East Asia, hoping to form anti-Communist allies to combat Russia's regional influence. The aftermath of World War II, including the Allied Occupation of Japan and the Korean War, created conditions which allowed the U.S. to expand its presence in the region. The U.S. military was a significant force in the formation of the modern Japanese and South Korean governments, but these interactions did not occur within a political bubble. A primary site of interaction between Americans and Japanese or Koreans was through the military sex industry which emerged following the U.S. occupation of the respective countries. Prostitution is not typically regarded as a form of international diplomacy, but the prevalence of government-sponsored military prostitution created a system of women who would serve as unofficial cultural ambassadors to improve the relationships between the local government and the United States. The Japanese and Korean women's positions in comparison to American soldiers were placed lower in gendered, sexual, national, and—in the majority of cases, with black servicemen being a notable exception—racial hierarchies. These interactions normalized the broader Cold War Era diplomatic alliance as one between the U.S., as an established democracy, and Japan and South Korea, the younger and weaker states. Yet the local culture surrounding the American military presence created a unique site of interaction that I call a posit as a paternalistic yet pedophilic relationship. Though Japan and South Korea are distinct nations with their own histories, there are many comparisons to be drawn between the two when it comes to military prostitution and the United States.

Colonial Roots of Military Prostitution

Following Japan's surrender to the Allied Powers in 1945, the country was occupied by foreign troops, giving way to an unprecedented American presence in Japan. Motivated by fears of mass rape of Japanese women by Allied soldiers, Japanese authorities established the Recreation and Amusement Association (RAA).¹ The RAA was inspired by the system of comfort stations instituted throughout Asia wherein militarized sexual labor was provided to Japanese troops. The establishment of these "comfort stations" in 1933 was perceived as necessary to reduce the number of attacks on Chinese civilians and to control the spread of venereal disease.² Many Japanese were concerned that these events would play out again, but in the context of Japanese civilians and the Allied occupying troops. As Kovner writes, "This experience overseas led Japanese officials to fear that occupying forces would engage in mass rapes of Japanese women, so they took it upon themselves to organize comfort stations for U.S. troops."³ In some cities, newspapers published calls for the evacuation of women and children; cautionary measures for female employees of newspapers, city offices, and train stations; and warnings against women and children walking alone.⁴ These gendered anxieties expressed by male Japanese bureaucrats echoed the emasculated sentiments of Japanese men from their

¹ Sarah Kovner, *Occupying Power: Sex Workers and Servicemen in Postwar Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 21–22.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Robert Kramm. *Sanitized Sex: Regulating Prostitution, Venereal Disease, and Intimacy in Occupied Japan, 1945–1952* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017). 30.

loss in the war and subsequent subjugation by foreign powers. At an international level, this reinforced the notion of a feminine, inferior East and a superior, masculine West.⁵

The “comfort women” that Japan recruited during the war to were comprised of many Asian ethnicities, but it is estimated that 80% of the 70,000–200,000 women were ethnically Korean.⁶ The first “comfort women” were mainly Japanese former prostitutes, but as Japan invaded China, concerns about the sexual crimes enacted by Japanese soldiers and the potential spread of venereal disease led to the recruitment of young, unmarried Korean women.⁷ This was rarely a transparent process, and occurred amidst the broader recruitment and conscription of Korean laborers and military draftees by Japan beginning in 1939.⁸ Despite Japan’s *naisen ittai* policy, emphasizing Korea as being one with Japan, Koreans’ status as colonial subjects led to discrimination and violence. While Japanese women also served in military brothels as “comfort women,” Korean women were often younger, treated more violently, and many were coerced into the work through various means of trafficking.⁹ After Japan’s defeat in 1945, the U.S.’s occupation had extended to the Korean peninsula as well, with the military inheriting the former Japanese colonial government’s function and property.¹⁰ This included the former comfort stations. The colonial police force was transformed into a national police force, with much of the same personnel, and the army put together by the Americans “was formed in part by men who had served in Japanese military organizations.”¹¹ Korea, between Japan’s surrender and the later civil war, much of the colonial structure was maintained by the occupying forces, and the inadequate attempts of communication, and effective personnel prolonged the turmoil on the peninsula. The shortage of qualified translators in Korea impeded political and governing processes between Koreans, Japanese nationals, and the occupying troops.¹² Members of the Japanese settler community in Korea noted the difficulty in regulating and forming relations due to the practice of colonial education

⁵ This analysis is based on the concept of Orientalism introduced by Edward Said in his 1978 work titled *Orientalism*.

⁶ Chunghee Sarah Soh, “The Korean ‘Comfort Women’: Movement for Redress,” *Asian Survey* 36, no. 12 (Dec 1996), 1227.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 1228.

⁸ It is worthwhile to note the difference between the “Women’s Voluntary Labor Service Corps” (*Yeoja Cheongsindae*, romanized using the Revised Romanization of Korean transcription system) which existed separately from the “comfort woman” or *ianfu* but was often used as a front for recruiting for military comfort stations. Pyong Gap Min, “Korean ‘Comfort Women’: The Intersection of Colonial Power, Gender, and Class,” *Gender & Society* 17, no. 6 (Dec 2003), 943.

The recruitment of comfort women was a systemic practice of which the Government-General of Korea assisted with. Yoshiaki Yoshimi, *Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery in the Japanese Military During World War II*, translated by Suzanne O’Brien (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 108.

⁹ Min, 944.

¹⁰ Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 19.

¹¹ Lori Watt, “Embracing Defeat in Seoul: Rethinking Decolonization in Korea, 1945,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 74, no. 1 (Feb 2015), 166.

¹² Lieutenant Colonel Federov and Major Livshits to General-Lieutenant Kalashnikov, *Untitled Memorandum on the Political and Morale Situation of Soviet Troops in North Korea and the Economic Situation in Korea*, December 29, 1945, the Military Council of the Maritime Military District, Archives of the Russian General Staff, op. 480, 29, st. 5, p. 2, pa. 21, k. 35, translated by Gary Goldberg.

in rejecting English and Korean languages.¹³ Within 1945 Seoul, there was fraternization between both Japanese and Korean women with the Americans in Seoul, not only the *kisaeng* and the range of other sex work occupations, which included comfort women in the eyes of at least Japanese nationals in Korea.¹⁴ Complaints of a lack of qualified officers in occupying troops included internal criticism, such as one Soviet commander who was merely is merely concerned with “sweeps of brothel, registering prostitutes, and monitoring hotels and restaurants. He does almost nothing else.”¹⁵ Some members of the military were not focused on their assignment, while others only wanted underlings who would agree with them rather than provide accurate reports. Over time, many towns in the areas surrounding military installments began to meet the soldiers’ demand for alcohol and women, developing into what would be known as *gijichon*, or camptowns. In turn, the foreign military presence would disseminate their own goods and ideals, such as capitalism, Christianity and anti-communism, in the case of Americans.

Sex Workers as Sacrificial Patriots

As occupying troops entered Japan, there was an anticipation by Japanese of violence at the hands of the foreign soldiers. Thus, the system of organized prostitution that emerged was viewed as a “female floodwall” (*onna no bōhatei*) which would protect the “national body” (*kokutai*) at the expense of some individuals.¹⁶ The *kokutai* was constructed in public health and education utilizing the ideal of a “wise mother and good housewife” (*ryōsai kenbō*) who is obedient to patriarchal figures of father and husband, and emperor and the state.¹⁷ The RAA initially worked with existing brothels and sex workers, which in the eyes of many, made them expendable for the greater good. Historian Robert Kramm asserts that sexual services were viewed as a necessary part of public health to “control the male sexual drive and to guarantee healthy and safe sex for men, while supposedly also saving the daughters of respectable families from depravity.”¹⁸ As demand for sexual service increased, women of low socioeconomic status who were not already sex workers were recruited into the industry as well. However, sexual labor remained an occupation that garnered little respect, as these women did not fit into the standards of *ryōsai kenbō* and thus inhabited a smaller space of social belonging. Government statements described this work as using familiar nationalist language like “selfless patriotic service” (*messhi hōkō*) and “female kamikaze” (*onna no tokkotai*).¹⁹ Despite the noble cloaking, this rhetoric implies that these women were less deserving of protection due to their presumably unchaste past and thus an acceptable sacrifice for the sake of the rest of the nation. This is more opaquely expressed by Mogami Eiko, who in her discussion of the Punishment of Prostitution and Related Activities Bill, cautioned that “the prevention of violations against the girls of well-to-do families should be considered.”²⁰ Therefore, the positive narrative

¹³ Watt, 161.

¹⁴ Ibid., 168.

¹⁵ Federoy, *Untitled Memorandum*.

¹⁶ Kramm, 30–31.

¹⁷ Ibid., 40.

¹⁸ Ibid., 42.

¹⁹ Kovner, 23.

²⁰ Mogami Eiko, “On Prostitution Law,” *Nihon Fujin Shinbun*, July 5, 1948, RG 331, SCAP, Civil Information and Education Section, Information Division, Policy and Program Branch, Women’s Affairs Activities, 1945-50, “Prostitution” folder, NARA College Park.

surrounding prostitution in the early days of occupation was not directed at the women themselves, but toward the role they would play in preventing more “pure” women from being sullied. Despite the existence of organized prostitution, rapes still occurred. Though they did not amount to the widespread brutality that was feared, numerous cases were reported throughout the years of the occupation.²¹ The responsibility of preventing sex crimes was essentially placed in the hands of women through their service as prostitutes for the Allied forces or through newspaper and community directives aimed toward women. Some of these included cautions against “licentious appearance” or offered suggestions such as wearing multiple pairs of underwear as deterrents against assault.²² This rhetoric reinforced the shame felt by survivors as it placed the blame of their own victimization solely on said victim. In this way, the prostitutes in post-war Japan were simultaneously viewed as necessary while still looked down upon as immoral women.

The South Korean government used similarly nationalistic diction to encourage military prostitution in the 1950s and 1960s. Like Japan, there were fears of American soldiers attacking the general populace which would transform into a means to form a closer relationship with the United States and improve the economy by gaining foreign currency. Though the initial permittance of camp towns was due to the extreme poverty of 1950s Korea, the growth of these areas led to greater government involvement.²³ By the 1960s, under Park Chung-hee’s reign, multiple government organizations were involved in the development of camptowns as grounds for prostitution, designating camptown prostitution as a special tourism industry.²⁴ Local Korean officials would sponsor a monthly “Etiquette and Good Conduct Lecture” wherein camptown prostitutes were told, “All of you, who cater to the U.S. soldiers are patriots. All of you are nationalists working to increase the foreign exchange earnings of our country... then they told us not to show humiliating things [behavior] to the U.S. soldiers, to maintain our dignity as Korean women.”²⁵ These speeches directly correlated a positive relationship with the United States with the benefit of South Korea, and demanded that they maintain their dignity as Korean women while encouraging them to engage in prostitution. Because the dignity of Korean women has been directly linked to the notion of chastity in nationalist narratives, these contradictory demands become impossible to balance.²⁶ Former camptown sex worker, Aeran Kim, recounted, “They urged us to sell as much as possible to the GI’s, praising us as ‘dollar-

²¹ Yuki Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution during World War II and the US Occupation* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 117.

²² *Ibid.*, 115.

²³ Na-Young Lee, “Un/forgettable Histories of US Camptown Prostitution in South Korea: Women’s Experiences of Sexual Labor and Government Policies,” *Sexualities* 21, no. 5–6 (2018), 757.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 759–761.

²⁵ Quoted sections from an interview with a former camptown prostitute who worked in Dongduchon and Songdan in the early 1970s.

Katherine H.S. Moon, “Prostitute Bodies and Gendered States” in *Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism*. Edited by Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi. (New York: Routledge Press, 1997), 152.

²⁶ Hyunah Yang, “Re-Membering the Korean Military Comfort Women” in *Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism*. Edited by Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi. (New York: Routledge Press, 1997), 131.

earning patriots.”²⁷ Though the government encouraged the growth of the sex industry around camptowns, it was merely viewed as a necessary evil for economic growth. Most women involved were not proud of their work, but rather ashamed, suffering arduous conditions for little money, and felt unprotected by their government.²⁸ This lack of agency is a theme in the reflections of former prostitutes, as many women who worked in the sex industry did so out of economic need, or as a result of coercion or force. In contrast, G.I.s described camptowns as a “sexual paradise” amidst what was considered a hardship tour.²⁹ The neighborhoods which housed the interactions between the U.S. military and South Korea’s civilian population unofficially considered to be buffer zones which served to protect other areas from dangerous foreign influence.³⁰ The role of the prostitutes inhabiting these areas was that of a sacrifice to prevent the general population from facing the most significant effects of U.S. military presence. As women and members of lower socioeconomic classes, they were less important in the eyes of Koreans, and for American soldiers, their racial and national identity placed them lower in the sociopolitical hierarchy.

For Whose Protection?

By the early 1950s, the presence of Western soldiers was a more common sight in Japan and the role of prostitution morphed into that of a method to control the spread of venereal disease (VD). The official precautions against Japanese women were contrasted by the “free condoms and mandatory inspections of sex workers.”³¹ Women were treated in a dehumanizing manner when it came to being suspected of being a sex worker or transmitting VD. The occupying forces’ military police efforts to round up prostitutes and examine women for carrying VD invited human rights violations, and in some cases, women were fined for transmitting the disease to a soldier.³² Some in the occupation forces disapproved of the organized prostitution, not agreeing that it would not be “sufficiently effective to prevent a serious loss of manpower due to Venereal Disease.”³³ Though General Douglas MacArthur issued orders for segregating Americans and Japanese in April of that year, he did not issue a no-fraternization order.³⁴ In his eyes, fraternization was conflated with prostitution, and he made it clear that he was not in favor of passing a law banning prostitution despite the fears of VD.³⁵ The clinical standards for the examinations and treatment of sex workers were less than ideal at the venereal disease

²⁷ David Vine, “My Body was Not Mine, but the US Military’s’: Inside the Disturbing Sex Industry Thriving around America’s Bases,” *Politico*, November 3, 2015, <https://www.politico.eu/article/my-body-was-not-mine-but-the-u-s-militarys/> (Accessed April 24, 2023.)

²⁸ Katherine H.S. Moon, “Prostitute Bodies and Gendered States,” 163.

²⁹ Lee, “Un/forgettable Histories,” 766.

³⁰ Elisabeth Schober, *Base Encounters: The US Armed Forces in South Korea* (London: Pluto Press, 2016), 118.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 29.

³² Yuki Fujime, “Japanese Feminism and Commercialized Sex: The Union of Militarism and Prohibitionism,” *Social Science Japan Journal* 9, no. 1 (April 2006), 38–39.

³³ In the words of Kenneth Bonner Wolfe, major general of the Fifth Air Force stationed in Nagoya. Kramm, 93.

³⁴ Kovner., 36.

³⁵ “MacArthur conflated a law that would have banned prostitution with an order prohibiting fraternization—as if they were the same thing—so central did sex work become in relations between the occupiers and the occupied.” *Ibid.*

hospitals, but their presence solidifies the legitimacy of the sex industry in the eyes of many American and Japanese officials.

Despite the nationalistic narratives regarding sex workers offered by the government, the women involved with American servicemen did so with a more complicated motive than is officially expressed. Many of the prostitutes were coerced into the work through a working contract that granted advanced payment which would be later repaid.³⁶ Labor brokers, police, politicians, and local organizations recruited women to work as sex workers, barmaids, and dancers.³⁷ The primary incentives for these women to enter the industry were food, shelter, and money rather than the patriotic sentiment as was expounded by the government.³⁸ It would be remiss not to mention that despite the measures of regulated prostitution, rape did still occur. In Okinawa, for example, the Japanese policing system in Okinawa fell apart shortly after the surrender, and within the first 5 years of American occupation, there were 76 cases of murder or rape-murder reported.³⁹ While this could also be considered an instance where Okinawans, being an ethnic minority, were placed in lower priority compared to other Japanese, most people were more concerned about survival than the prosecution of occupying forces, thus many crimes went unreported or uninvestigated during the early Occupation period. The post-war suffering (*kyodatsu*) is euphemistically referred to a time of “bamboo shoot existence,” because many were so poor and hungry that they lived off bamboo shoots.⁴⁰ In general, the Japanese were already in a disadvantaged social position as the occupied and conquered people, even before women were recruited into sex work.

As the Korean War went underway and more soldiers were stationed in the region, more women became entangled with the armed forces as there were limited opportunities to make a living. Akin to the sex workers in Japan, Korean women exchanged their bodies for rations, cigarettes, and jackets.⁴¹ They gained the pejorative nicknames of *yanggongju* (“Western princess”) and *yanggalbo* (“Western whore”).⁴² Again, economic coercion played a role, wherein women were bound to a pimp, club, or manager through a debt bondage system.⁴³ While not as highly organized as the colonial comfort system, there was still a level of government involvement in the operations of camp towns (*gijichon*). The private businesses that the sex workers catering to U.S. military personnel operated out of had to be licensed by the Korea Special Tourist Association and have a valid VD card, issued by clinics run by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.⁴⁴ The women were the only ones checked for VD, not the men, which indicates that the protection was not for them, but for the foreign troops.

³⁶ Kramm, 50.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., 53.

³⁹ Yuki Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution during World War II and the US Occupation* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 112.

⁴⁰ John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999), 91.

⁴¹ Ibid., 20.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Moon, “South Korean Movements Against Militarized Sexual Labor,” 315.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 316.

Informal Prostitution and its Shadow on Interracial Relationships

While the RAA was a major player behind formally registered prostitution in Japan, the interactions between servicemen and locals were not limited to the officially sanctioned sex work. In 1946, the RAA was abolished, though sex work was still permitted if it was by a prostitute's "own free will and accord."⁴⁵ In the words of Lieutenant General Robert L. Eichelberger, "The sight of our soldiers walking down the streets with their arms around [a] Japanese girl is equally repugnant to most Americans... as well as to most Japanese."⁴⁶ Despite the distaste it brought to some American and Japanese, "fraternization" became a business which a large population depended upon, well beyond the RAA's program.

Various jobs sprung from the practice of sex work, such as recruiting agents (*keian*), promoters (*ponbiki*), rickshaw pullers, hairdressers, seamstresses, and letter writers.⁴⁷ The American trends that were popular among *pan pan* girls, such as lipstick and pantyhose, are an example of the materialist desires which emerged in post-war Japan.⁴⁸ The ways of meeting these demands were not always established companies, but included a thriving black market, or "free market," economy which were often controlled by gangs.⁴⁹ The black market was not solely the territory of the Japanese, as some GIs were accused of stealing U.S. supplies and selling them for profit on the black market.⁵⁰ In Sasebo, an economy grew around the creation of American-style entertainment quarters that catered to the U.S. and United Nation forces whose navies stopped in its harbor.⁵¹ A Kanagawa citizens group wrote a letter which "testified that women were held in debt bondage, while masters live in 'the lap of luxury.'"⁵² Proprietor-style houses were sustained through "tight relationships among recruiting agents, proprietors, presidents of street associations, and the police."⁵³ This made it difficult for women to leave the sex industry. Some prostitutes even wrote to occupation authorities complaining of police corruption and owners who forced them to work in unsafe conditions.⁵⁴ Yet most of these complaints were resolved by neither the occupying nor Japanese officials.

As previously mentioned in descriptions of goods sold in black markets, women who fraternized with foreign troops were often distinguished by their non-traditional manner of dress. The photo of Okita, a *pan-pan* girl shows her in fashionable Western-style clothes with lipstick, curled hair, high heels, sunglasses, and smoking a cigarette.⁵⁵ The visible distinction between a woman who kept the company of GIs and the "respectable" women who did not was seen in Korea as well. In multiple photos by a former U.S. soldier stationed in Korea, the women socializing with the American G.I.s wear their hair in curls, wear lipstick and wear Western style

⁴⁵ Kovner, 30.

⁴⁶ Kovner, 27.

⁴⁷ Kovner, 84 and 93.

⁴⁸ Dower, 137–138.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 140–141.

⁵⁰ Tanaka, 127.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁵² Kovner, 83.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 89.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 88-89.

⁵⁵ Dower, 125.

clothes.⁵⁶ The clubs where Korean military prostitutes worked were typically situated near U.S. bases and were open to foreigners only, not allowing Koreans entry unless they were accompanied by a foreigner.⁵⁷ Through the labor of Korean women, euphemistically called “entertainment hostesses,” foreign money came into the South Korean economy through the sale of liquor.

After prostitution was largely deregulated and criminalized through the *Prostitution Prevention Act* of 1956, non-traditional sex work became more common.⁵⁸ Norma writes, “SCAP did not ban the sex industry outright... its selective prohibitions allowed prostitution entrepreneurs to regroup and begin selling women under the geisha-esque guises like ‘hostesses’ and ‘barmaids’ in venues like bars, cafes, restaurants, and dance halls.”⁵⁹ Some women began to negotiate the sex industry outside of the structure of brothels, turning instead to streetwalking.⁶⁰ This broke the conventions of licensed and indoor prostitution, as streetwalkers, or *panpan*, operated in the public space and had greater autonomy.⁶¹ As a result, *panpan* girls faced both disapproval and admiration for their shameless behavior, working openly in the day time with servicemen.⁶² Kovner writes, “A more typical response among those Japanese angered by women who associated with GIs was to ostracize them. They were called ‘gaudy’ and ‘disgusting.’”⁶³ This stigma remained branded upon these women even if she tried to leave the sex industry. One woman reflected, “Of course it’s bad to be a hooker. But without relatives or jobs due to the war disaster, how are we supposed to live?... There aren’t many of us who do this because we like it... but even so, when we try to go straight and find a job, people point their fingers at us and say we were hookers... You can’t trust society, they despise us.”⁶⁴ There was a general assumption among many Japanese “that only ‘bad girls’ dated American servicemen,” and that “should she date [an American], her life would be full of troubles.”⁶⁵ This depicts a common reductive narrative that all interracial relationships between Americans and Japanese women originated from prostitution. Despite the initial mobilization of Japanese women to service to foreign troops, women who entered personal relationships with American men became the target of Japanese people’s feelings of resentment and inferiority following the wartime defeat.

⁵⁶ Williams, Hanson A., Jr., photographer. “[Soldiers Socializing with a Woman.]” Black and white negative, 2.25 x 2.25 inches. 1952. From *Hanson A. Williams, Jr. Collection of Photographs and Negatives 0017*. Pepperdine University Special Collections and University Archives.

Williams, Hanson A., Jr., photographer. “[Soldiers Socializing with a Woman.]” Black and white negative, 2.25 x 2.25 inches. 1952. From *Hanson A. Williams, Jr. Collection of Photographs and Negatives 0017*. Pepperdine University Special Collections and University Archives.

⁵⁷ *The Women Outside: Korean Women and the U.S. Military*, 15:22.

⁵⁸ Caroline Norma, *Comfort Women and Post-Occupation Corporate Japan* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 77.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁶⁰ Holly Sanders, “Panpan: Streetwalking in Occupied Japan,” *Pacific Historical Review* 81, no. 3 (August 2012), 404.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 405.

⁶² Sanders, 405.

⁶³ Kovner, 78.

⁶⁴ Interview with a woman only identified as “Otoki.” Dower, 124.

⁶⁵ Debbie Storrs, “Like a Bamboo: Representations of a Japanese War Bride,” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 21, no. ½ (2000), 204.

There were different styles of operation among the *pan-pan* girls, as well. Opposite the “butterflies” were those who remained loyal to one patron, earning them the nickname “*onrii wan*,” borrowed English for “only one.”⁶⁶ While these women have still been framed as a type of prostitute, there were certainly cases of genuine relationships forming between Japanese women and foreign servicemen. The pursuit of these relationships was hindered by immigration and anti-miscegenation laws. Even if a Japanese woman was able to marry a G.I., they were not immune from judgment and speculation. Colloquially known as “war brides” in the U.S. and *sensō hanayome* in Japan, these interracial marriages became an object of concern for legislation and immigration of the broader Asian community.⁶⁷ Though these war brides were not all former *panpan* girls, they often inherited that same social stigma. They were regarded as traitors by some Japanese, and assumptions were often made regarding their sexual past, with the mandatory interview process meant to discourage marriage.⁶⁸ Additionally, early American news articles about Japanese war brides maintained doubts regarding the women’s backgrounds and ability to assimilate into American life.⁶⁹ The prevalence and historical importance of these relationships can be seen in legislation such as the 1945 “War Brides Act” which allowed for exceptions to national origins quotas.

Though Japanese war brides are largely viewed as having faded into the background of American life, their process of assimilation was not an easy one. In a documentary tracing the experiences of three Japanese war brides, several mention difficulties fitting into their husband’s family. For example, Hiroko was renamed “Susie,” by her husband Bill’s family, and she had been dressed in a kimono to meet them, as it was the nicest clothing she had with her but was told to go upstairs and put on something else.⁷⁰ The associations of Japanese with the enemy were not so easily overcome with the end of the war, and war brides were expected to shed whatever aspects of their identity or appearance that would threaten the image of ordinary American life.

The rebranding of Japanese women, from enemy to harmless and attractive potential wife, occurred through the reinforcement of Orientalist notions of femininity. *Madame Butterfly* was one of the earliest depictions of Japanese women to circulate around the Western world, and as such, it influenced the formation of American conceptualization of Japan. The influence of this play is seen in its mention in regard to a newspaper article reporting on a Japanese war bride who had “acted like a Madame Butterfly in reverse... when she failed to follow her Australian soldier-husband to his homeland from Japan.”⁷¹ *Madame Butterfly* was used as the blueprint from which to interpret relationships between Japanese women and Western men, bringing with it the implicit assumptions that the Japanese woman would be loyal and cling to her Western husband, and perhaps duplicitous in her motivations for the relationship. The

⁶⁶ Ibid., 134.

⁶⁷ Storrs, “Like a Bamboo,” 208–209.

⁶⁸ Ayaka Yoshimizu, “‘Hello, War Brides’: Heteroglossia, Counter-Memory, and the Auto/biographical Work of Japanese War Brides,” *Meridians* 10, no. 1 (2009), 115.

⁶⁹ Caroline Chung Simpson, “‘Out of an Obscure Place’: Japanese War Brides and Cultural Pluralism in the 1950s,” *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 10, no. 3 (Fall 1998), 53.

⁷⁰ *Fall Seven Times, Get Up Eight: The Japanese War Brides*, directed by Kathryn Tolbert, Karen Kasmauski, et al. (New York: Third World Newsreel, 2015).

⁷¹ “A Madame Butterfly in Reverse.” *South China Morning Post* (Sydney), April 9, 1964.

language used to describe Japanese war brides in Western reporting emphasizes their beautiful and innocent appearance, with phrases such as, “An attractive raven-haired Japanese girl” and “the doll-faced beauty.”⁷² The article characterizes this war bride, Nobuko Boyajian, as naïve and pitiable, which is not simply reflective of her individual circumstances, but an attitude seen toward war brides in a broader narrative.

War brides from South Korea became another issue of international concern. One of the other common spaces where G.I.s and Korean women met were on the military bases themselves, as Koreans worked in a variety of jobs on the base, such as secretaries, cashiers, janitors, etc.⁷³ Thus, not all of the women who dated or married American men were involved in prostitution, yet due to the commonality of that assumption, they faced judgement about their moral virtue.⁷⁴ The recollections of military brides and mixed-race Korean children show that they experience discrimination both by outsiders and fellow Koreans. For example, Mrs. Morgan was told by her white neighbors that they initially saw her “as another former ‘working girl’ who had snagged a soldier as a ticket to America.”⁷⁵ A half-white, half-Korean adoptee, David, recalled being taunted at school in the 1950s–1960s, hearing “Your mother was nothing but a whore.”⁷⁶ The belief that decent Koreans do not fraternize with Americans is seen the way that others view Korean military brides, mixed-race Korean children, and Korean adoptees. Mrs. Sommer had married a G.I and immigrated to America, and expressed objections to the assumption that her life was somehow pitiable due to her being internationally married she faced by other Korean women in her community, arguing that she enjoyed more freedom than Korean women with Korean husbands and mothers-in-law.⁷⁷ Institutionally, the pursuit of marriage between a US serviceman and a Korean woman was deterred by a complex application process involving interviews, documents which may be difficult to procure for many Koreans due to the war’s destruction, and character references.⁷⁸ Contrary to the military brides who were simultaneously envied and denounced for their ability to immigrate, Korean women who gave birth to mixed-race children were pressured to give their children up for adoption to America, with part of the relinquishment process including a stipulation which prevented the mother’s future immigration.⁷⁹ This was in direct opposition to the American Dream sentiment held by many individuals in camptowns, hoping to somehow gain a better life in America.

Conceiving Baby-San in the Pacific

A racialized image of Japan emerged, depicting its women as feminine, obedient, and sexually available which, while rooted in prostitution, was imposed upon the nation as a whole.⁸⁰ The pervasiveness of sex work and its surrounding practices is observed in the popular

⁷² “Abandons Japanese War Bride.” *Daily Defender* (Chicago), October 6, 1958.

⁷³ Yuh, 40.

⁷⁴ Woo, 183.

⁷⁵ Yuh, 91–92.

⁷⁶ Kim Park Nelson, *Invisible Asians: Korean American Adoptees, Asian American Experiences, and Racial Exceptionalism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2016), 66.

⁷⁷ Yuh, 176–177.

⁷⁸ Yuh, 177–179.

⁷⁹ Woo, 161.

⁸⁰ Kramm, 102–103.

consciousness. For example, the game *panpan asobi*, played by children where boys would imitate GIs and girls, the entertaining *pan-pan* girl.⁸¹ This gendered and racialized stereotype is embodied by the caricature “Baby-san,” a name of address used toward any young Japanese woman, such as maids, clerical staff, and waitresses. The nickname “combined an American pick-up line (‘Hey, baby’) with a Japanese title of respect.”⁸² There was a stark distinction between the men of Japan and their female and infant counterparts. In the *Atlantic Monthly*, Lieutenant John Ashmead claims to trust very few of the Japanese men he has encountered, but “certainly this feeling of mine does not apply to the women and children.”⁸³ To many Occupying Americans, Japanese women had a type of hard-working, coquettish charm, which lavished loyalty and affection upon those she served.⁸⁴ Her posited “submissiveness” was placed in direct opposition to American women, who were accused of being too proud, talkative, and selfish.⁸⁵ This led to the creation of the *Babysan* comic series by Bill Hume, a character who was the object of racial and misogynistic fantasies, featured weekly in the Far East edition of *Navy Times*. Lily Anne Y. Welty Tamai critiques the role of Babysan in reinforcing colonialism, arguing that it also centers white heteronormativity through its representation of white soldiers and exclusion of black and Japanese men.⁸⁶ Additionally, it is important to note that Babysan, and the amalgamation of women on whom she was based, was only meant to be a temporary “poor man’s geisha,” not a future wife to bring home.⁸⁷ This can also be seen in the interchangeable names and identities that Babysan is addressed by, whether a Japanese name or a multitude of American names—but never her family name.⁸⁸ The secrecy and replaceability of the relationship shows that it is not only the GI who is discouraged from pursuing a long-term romance, but Babysan herself keeps a distance from her revolving door of admirers.⁸⁹ Despite her flirting with servicemen, it is implied that her obsession with receiving gifts and money is to help support her family.⁹⁰ The prevalence of the Babysan trope, who can arguably be considered a *pan-pan* girl, created a dichotomous experience of Japan, wherein the feminine and child-like was welcomed, while the masculine was a past threat, one which was erased in media like the *Babysan* comics. While this was perhaps not deliberate, these female-dominated representations carried significant symbolic weight in the American re-imagining of Japan.

⁸¹ Dower, 111.

⁸² Naoko Shibusawa, *America’s Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 35.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁸⁶ Lily Anne Y. Welty Tamai, “Checking the ‘Other’ Twice” in *Red and Yellow, Black and Brown: Decentering Whiteness in Mixed Race Studies* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2017), 186.

⁸⁷ In Hume’s own words, Babysan “was an outgrowth of the geisha... Babysan became that; she was a poor man’s geisha. Geisha were wonderful things in other times; they were not immoral as such.”

Robert Harvey, *Insider Histories of Cartooning: Rediscovering Forgotten Famous Comics and Their Creators* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2014), 166–167.

⁸⁸ Bill Hume, with commentary by John Annarino, *Babysan: A Private Look at the Japanese Occupation* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1953), 18.

⁸⁹ Debbie A. Storrs, “Japanese Feminine Wives and Naïve American Sailors: The Reconstruction of Gender and the Nation in the Babysan Comics,” *U.S.-Japan Women’s Journal* 34 (2008), 27–28.

⁹⁰ Hume, with Annarino, 96.

However, Babysan as a fictional girlfriend was only able to exist because of Babysan, the real child. The new era of young Japanese women with a positive attitude toward Americans, more similar to modern American girls than the old Japanese enemy, was created in part by daily interactions with occupying forces, particularly the “gifts from heaven”—most commonly subsisting of candy, chewing gum, and cigarettes—that soldiers offered to children.”⁹¹ The name “Babysan” was directed broadly to Japanese females, not merely *pan-pan* girls or those engaged in similar practices. Debbie Storrs’s mother recalled, “They used to call me Babysan, Babysan. And they used to give me chewing gum and chocolate and all that stuff. I was about fourteen.”⁹² Though this could be seen as merely an innocuous display of good will, the use of “Babysan” as a ubiquitous monicker for any Japanese girl cannot be divorced from her inherent eroticization in the comics. Storrs describes this “practice of U.S. servicemen extending gifts in anticipation and in exchange for ‘the affections of Japanese women,’” articulating how this gift-giving came with unspoken expectations, be it gratitude or physicality.⁹³ Historians have noted the potential for these more malignant attitudes to arise in the post-war environment, writing, “To some members of the occupation force, native women came to be regarded as little more than available sexual objects.”⁹⁴ This view applied to all Japanese women, not only prostitutes, and there are accounts of soldiers forcing women to engage in sexual acts at gunpoint while offered a small gift, such as candy, cigarettes, or handkerchiefs.⁹⁵ The convention of soldiers’ goodwill toward children was reconstituted through a sexual encounter. These practices reinforced the notion of feminine and pre-adolescent bodies serving as the site for economic exchange between the U.S. and the defeated nation. Around American military camps in Japan, a practice known as “*musumesan*-hunting” emerged among some soldiers, where they would pursue young Japanese women, often newly employed at the camps, and brag about having taken their virginites.⁹⁶ In some camps, the soldiers would have tallies of their “conquests” or mark photos of the female employees with “MV,” standing for “military victory,” or lip marks, once someone had slept with them. *Musumesan*-hunting itself holds an inherently dehumanizing and violent connotation, as it is a pun on the word “*musumesan*,” Japanese for “daughter,” and the activity of “moose-hunting.” Watt describes the behavior of Japanese settlers remaining in Korea in 1945 as “performance[s] of defeat,” showing recognition of their nation’s loss in the war by cooperating with occupying troops and employing a humble attitude.⁹⁷ This concept can be applied to the personal interactions between Japanese and Americans in Occupied Japan, particularly the acceptance of American soldiers by women and children, which helped ease the process of reforming Japan’s image from an enemy to an important ideological ally in the Cold War.

The interplay of long-standing Orientalist views regarding Asian women and sexuality with the political relationship between the U.S. and South Korea created unique gender roles for children. Korean boys became miniature soldiers, embodying the “little brother” figure that the

⁹¹ Dower, 72.

⁹² Storrs, “Like a Bamboo,” 203.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 203.

⁹⁴ Dower, 138.

⁹⁵ Tanaka, 120–121.

⁹⁶ Tanaka, 130.

⁹⁷ Watt, 169.

United States hoped South Korea would become in the greater Cold War ideological struggle.⁹⁸ Most notably were the mascot-boys like “Jimmy Pusan” and “Chocoletto” who followed U.S. military units and eventually joined the military themselves.⁹⁹ Meanwhile, Korean girls provided entertainment for the GIs, responsible for providing a warm welcome to the soldiers and lift their morale through dance, gifting flowers, and singing.¹⁰⁰ Though they did not engage in the same sexual services as camptown prostitutes, they were often still sublimated into an Orientalist image that mirrors the role of camptown women. Korean girls who were adopted into military troops like mascot boys were described in ways that reaffirmed the patterns of Asian women falling for American men. In Arissah Oh’s *To Save the Children of Korea*, she mentions how children who spent significant time around Americans developed distinctive behaviors compared to other Korean children who did not. One passage about a three year old girl reads, “Pointing to the child’s flirtatious behavior, an American social worker said it was obvious that the girl had been spoiled by a large group of men.”¹⁰¹ Whether the soldiers themselves ascribed this “flirtatious behavior” to the girl, or if it was just how the social worker described it, there is an obvious instance of linking the imagery of adult behaviors to this child. Chun Jea Lee, a four-year old orphan, was described in multiple *Pacific Stars and Stripes* articles as a “Korean Pin-up,” “battalion sweetheart,” and “Baby-san” who fell for Lieutenant Doernbach at first sight and despaired when he eventually left her at an orphanage at the end of his deployment.¹⁰² Beyond merely the language of reportage, the items she was sent by soldiers included American-style clothing, shoes, and stockings, which were similar to the gifts commonly received by camptown prostitutes.¹⁰³ Soojin Pate argues that the militarized gaze is one which invades the privacy of, holds captive, objectifies, and occupies the subject; Korean orphans were framed as victims of war and the GIs as their heroic saviors despite their role in creating their orphan status.¹⁰⁴

Transnational Connections in the Pacific Sex Industry

The United States’ involvement in Korea was not independent of Japan’s sex industry. Many of the troops stationed in Korea would go to Japan for their leave to enjoy the R&R program.¹⁰⁵ Some local entrepreneurs welcomed the servicemen’s patronage of Japan’s sex industry, viewing it as a way to capitalize on the reconstructed economy.¹⁰⁶ During the 1970s, Japanese men were one of the largest demographics of tourists to Korea. “*Kisaeng* parties,” where Korean women would drink with and service the paying men, were cited as one of the main reasons for their visit.¹⁰⁷ The sex industry promoted toward Japanese was a different style than that of

⁹⁸ Arissa Oh, *To Save the Orphans: The Cold-War Origins of International Adoption* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015), 26.

⁹⁹ Soojin Pate, *From Orphan to Adoptee: U.S. Empire and Genealogies of Korean Adoption* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 54–56.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 56–57.

¹⁰¹ Oh, 40.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 59–60.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 67.

¹⁰⁵ Norma, 80.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 131.

camptowns. These interactions occurred in a less physically distinct space, often taking place in high class Seoul hotels.¹⁰⁸ The inequal economic relationship between Japan and Korea was one where South Korea became a “dependent economy.”¹⁰⁹ While the Japanese men could afford to enjoy sexual services for a better deal than at home due to the strength of the yen, the Korean women who entertained Japanese men were in a “socially weak position.”¹¹⁰ *Kisaeng* tourism was associated most strongly with Japanese visitors, but the *kisaeng* parties themselves were also used as a form of diplomacy by the ROK government in the early 1970s. A former USFK intelligence officers spoke of the “generous hospitality” (*taejop*) extended to U.S. military higher ups, including *kisaeng* parties, expensive dinners, and gifts.¹¹¹ South Korea’s contradictory reliance on the sexual labor of women and the simultaneous condemnation of those women created a difficult situation. Between *kisaeng* parties and camptown prostitution, sex workers were an integral part of the economic and political development of the ROK. Historically, *kisaeng* were a social class of skilled female entertainers, but in the 1970s, the term was transposed to sex work. The South Korean government used *kisaeng* parties as a form of diplomacy, where Korean women would be brought to drink with and later sleep with U.S. military officials in hopes that it would foster closer relations between the two countries.¹¹² Additionally, *kisaeng* prostitution was an industry which generated nearly half the country’s tourism income, largely attracting Japanese businessmen.¹¹³ The unequal economic relations between South Korea and the U.S. and Japan led to the encouragement of sex work to earn foreign exchange.¹¹⁴ Through to the intentions by Korean officials to use sex workers as an incentive for the U.S. to maintain political interest in the region, these women became informal diplomats whose labor served as an extension for their government. Through to the intentions by Korean officials to use sex workers as an incentive for the U.S. to maintain political interest in the region, these women became informal diplomats whose labor served as an extension for their government.

Many South Koreans became sensitive about what kind of image Americans were seeing of Korea based on their soldiers’ time in the country. Korean soldiers reportedly believed that prostitution had a damaging role in U.S.-Korean diplomatic relations, despite American soldiers holding the opposite view.¹¹⁵ Some of the women involved in *kijichon* prostitution had a negative attitude toward the U.S. soldiers they serviced while others held a negative image of themselves. Kim, a woman who had been coerced into prostitution, said, “I felt like I’m a dirty woman.”¹¹⁶ Most women feel a sense of social rejection and attempt to hide their

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 135.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 139.

¹¹¹ Moon, *Sex Among Allies*, 121.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Caroline Norma, “Demand from Abroad: Japanese Involvement in the 1970s’ Development of South Korea’s Sex Industry,” *Journal of Korean Studies* 19, no. 2 (Fall 2014), 401.

¹¹⁴ Matsui Yayori, “Sexual Slavery in Korea,” translated by Lora Sharnoff. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 2, no. 1 (Spring 1977), 25.

¹¹⁵ Moon, *Sex Among Allies*, 118-119.

¹¹⁶ *The Women Outside: Korean Women and the U.S. Military*, 5:43.

occupation.¹¹⁷ Though feminist activists and organizations speak of military sex workers as victims, for years many of these women did not recognize themselves as a victim.¹¹⁸ Jeon, a former *kijichon* sex worker said, “Women like me were the biggest sacrifice for my country’s alliance with the Americans. Looking back, I think my body was not mine, but the government’s and the U.S. military’s.”¹¹⁹ The women involved in the sex industry were deemed as non-marriageable and distinguished from the “respectable” women, yet the country continued to depend on them fulfilling their role in facilitating international relations.

Implications of National Victimhood

Comfort women redress movements began to emerge in the 1970s with feminist activism, and since the mid-1980s, there have been efforts to recognize the suffering of *gijichon* prostitutes. Yet, these movements were initially met with resistance by men, who moved to silence former comfort women with slogans like, “Don’t expose our nation’s shame.”¹²⁰ Even once the movement became more mainstream in South Korea, people who were not former comfort women would make decisions on their behalf, such as turning down monetary compensation, utilizing the women’s suffering for their own political motivations, rather than allowing former comfort women to have agency in decisions involving them. These women can only be redeemed in the eyes of others if they are reframed as a victim symbolic of Korea’s oppression by more powerful nations. Some scholars, such as Prof. Yun Chong-Ok, Chong Chin Song, and Katherine Moon, attempt to speak to the exploitation of Korean women as a violation of human rights, but nationalistic narratives gain greater traction than individual stories. This can be seen in the landmark incidents like the murder of Yun Geum-i in 1992, whose case was recalled when two teenage girls were killed by a U.S. military vehicle in 2002, despite there being little link between the context of their deaths.¹²¹ The specific struggles of Korean camptown prostitutes were not recognized, and instead absorbed by the larger narrative of anti-U.S. imperialism.

Japanese war brides were able to be accepted in America through their assimilation and characterization as pitiable, naive women from a nation struggling after defeat. The stories of Japanese war brides are disappearing as they pass away, sparking some projects undertaken by their children to record their experiences. In December 1948, Diet member Miyagi Tamayo argued for a welfare budget amidst the topic of anti-prostitution legislation, bringing up the cases of women who turned to prostitution because they were war victims or struggling mothers.¹²² To garner sympathy for these women, it was necessary to emphasize their victimhood and how they were affected by national hardship. While the *pan-pan* girl has largely

¹¹⁷ Moon, *South Korean Movements Against Militarized Sexual Labor*, 313.

¹¹⁸ Yang, 96.

¹¹⁹ David Vine, “‘My Body was Not Mine, but the US Military’s’: Inside the Disturbing Sex Industry Thriving around America’s Bases,” *Politico*, November 3, 2015, <https://www.politico.eu/article/my-body-was-not-mine-but-the-u-s-militarys/> (Accessed April 24, 2023.)

¹²⁰ Chizuko Ueno, *Nationalism and Gender*, translated by Beverly Yamamoto (Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2004), 73.

¹²¹ Schober, 63.

¹²² Miyagi Tamayo, “Untitled Statement,” December 14, 1948, RG 331, SCAP, Civil Information and Education Section, Information Division, Policy and Program Branch, Women’s Affairs Activities, 1945-50, “Prostitution” folder, NARA College Park.

disappeared from the national consciousness, the prevalence of the sex industry surrounding U.S. military bases like Okinawa continue to color perceptions of the region and women who interact with Western soldiers.

In Japan and Korea, the emergence of military prostitution in post-war periods is internationally significant due to the role that the sex industry played in diplomacy and the formation of each country's image on the global stage. The interactions between foreign military servicemen and local women cannot be looked at with solely a feminist or class lens but requires a critical approach with a combination of those with a racial, post-colonial, and historical understanding. Partially owing to the influence of Orientalist ideas popularized in the century prior and building upon the stereotypes already formed in the American consciousness, the narratives of military prostitutes were imposed upon the broader population of Japanese and Korean women. The destitution of Japanese and Korean women in the mid-20th century which drove them to sex work or entering relationships with foreign men despite the stigma attached became an oft-overlooked factor in the rebuilding of their nation's economy and foreign diplomacy. The power imbalance between the American soldier and Asian prostitute normalized the hierarchical relationship that the U.S. had with Japan and South Korea. However, these power relationships are fluid and as Japan and South Korea have gained status and stability, it has become increasingly apparent that Western men are not always the purchasers of sex, nor are women always the product, as evidenced by areas like "Homo Hill" in Itaewon. In the future, this research must be broadened to include queer perspectives and further investigate the differing experiences that non-white servicemen had in the Pacific military sex industry. Nonetheless, the dominant images of Asian women involved with American military men from this era have continued to influence the popular perception of marginal communities and the Asian diaspora in the present.

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