

# Who Is Silenced?: Anti-Korean Wave in Japan and Japanese National Identity

Aya MATSUSHIMA

## Introduction

Since the mid 2000s, Japan has observed contradictory phenomena in a popular cultural paradigm, “Korean Wave” and “Hate Korean Wave”. Although many scholars attended to a widespread popularity of Korean Wave, *Hallyu*, since the mid 1990s instigated by the popularity of a Korean drama *Winter Sonata* and the subsequent craze of a male lead Bae Yong-joon by Japanese middle-age women, there is little study to situate Korean Wave and Hate Korean Wave in a dialectic fashion. Even if there was, many tend to situate the latter as a response to the former, indicating the latter signifies a phenomenon newly emerged in Japanese history. Also there is little attention to whether “Hate” in Hate Korean Wave indicates hating “Korean Wave” or a series of activities to express “hating Korea” sentiment.

This paper attempts to situate Korean Wave and Hate Korean Wave in a dialectic fashion, more specifically a supplemental relationship. That is, the paper argues that the Japanese postwar history in relation to Korea entails Japanese antagonistic sentiment toward its former colony that abruptly manifests itself after the collapse of the Cold War structure. In addition, Japan underwent a colonized period immediately after World War II, which situated the Japanese in the position of the colonized. The emergence of the two movements should be situated in the duality of Japan’s post World War II identity: a wartime colonizer and a postwar colonized nation. However, a new revisionist movement in the mid-2000s indicated Korea as a colonizer of Japan’s psyche. That is, a complex dynamics of Japan being both wartime colonizer and postwar colonized in relation to Korea materialized as a result of the influx of Korean popular culture into Japan. In order to scrutinize Hate Korean Wave movements, the paper attends to the comic book *Kenkanryu* [*Hate Korean Wave*] that provided a condition of possibility for the hatred for Koreans and resident Koreans to surface, and analyzes the processes in which Japan’s identity as postwar

colonized suppresses its wartime identity of colonizer/perpetrator. The paper further argues that *Kenkanryu* further represses Korean women as muted subjects by marking South Koreans and resident Koreans as masculine, which in turn allows the author to identify and remove the femininity associated with mentally colonized Japanese.

## Japan's Postwar Identity

It is not an exaggeration to say that Japan's immediate postwar experience of the U.S. led occupation shaped its postwar identity. As many scholars note, Japan's defeat in World War II stigmatized Japanese national identity as it prove Japan's inability to compete with Western countries (Dower, Cunnings, Gluck). In addition, the Allied forces occupied Japan until 1952, and Okinawa was under U.S. rule until 1972, where about 74% of the entire U.S. base in Japan is currently located.<sup>1)</sup> Not only the presence of Allied forces, but also Japan's loss of control over political, economic, and cultural sphere destabilized Japan's identity. Politically, a new constitution was established under the Allied supervision that unabled Japan to possess any armed forces, the Emperor who was considered the descendant of God claimed his humanity, and the International Military Tribunal for the Far East tried wartime Japanese leaders.

Economically, a defeated Japan had no hope during the immediate postwar period. It was in the 1950s, thanks to the Korean War, that the Japanese economy started showing signs of recovery by supplying weapons for the U.S. military. It is important to note that Japan's economic recovery owed to the suffering of Korean people. Since then, Japanese economy showed a remarkable success until the so-called bubble burst in the early 1990s, and along with the success, *Nihonjinron* (theories of the Japanese) flourished celebrating Japan's cultural uniqueness as a basis for its economic success.<sup>2)</sup> That is, Japan's postwar observed discourses that established a national identity by bringing economic and cultural paradigms together.

Although Japan's economic success founded the celebration of the uniqueness of Japanese culture, the immediate postwar period experienced an inability to establish

---

1) [http://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/zaibeigun/us\\_sisetsu/sennyousisetutodoufukuen.html](http://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/zaibeigun/us_sisetsu/sennyousisetutodoufukuen.html)

2) For more information, see Harumi Befu "Hegemony of Homogeneity" and Kosaku Yoshino "Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary Japan".

Japan's cultural paradigm. The influx of foreign culture, mainly American culture, destabilized Japanese society, often remarked by the term such as immoral and promiscuous. Hitherto top-down importation of foreign culture was no longer possible with Japan's adaptation of American culture through a promiscuous relationship between American soldiers and young Japanese women. However, images of America as glamorous, luxurious, and democratic gradually dominated the Japanese psyche, positioning America as Japan's goal.

As immediate postwar skewed Japan's attention to America, there had been almost no space for Japan to revisit its wartime history as if the execution of wartime leaders settled all the crimes committed by Japanese military and soldiers. Indeed, the Korean War broke out before the occupation ended, and without considering Japan's prosperity resting on Korea's suffering, Japan supplied weapons to the U.S. under the occupation. Also, as many scholars maintain, the Cold War suppressed East Asian regional issues (Sakamoto and Allen, Mackintosh, Berry, and Liscutin). Therefore, it is not surprising to observe the emergence of unsolved wartime issues during the 1990s, such as comfort women and Nanjing Massacre. In other words, the collapse of the Cold War structure provided a condition of possibility for Japan to face its wartime atrocities against its neighboring countries.

It was in this context that Korean Wave penetrated into Japan with the television drama *Winter Sonata* in 2004. However, the mid-2000s was not as peaceful as both countries had wished. Although Japan and Korea celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of normalizing Japan-Korea relationship in 2005, the dispute over a group of small rocky islands known as Takeshima in Japan and as Dokdo in Korea accelerated by the enactment of "Day of Takeshima" by Shimane prefecture of Japan in February 2005. The friendship that seemed to have been growing stronger between the two countries since the co-hosting of the 2002 FIFA World Cup faced an impasse. Moreover, the first series of comic books *Kenkanryu* was released in Japan, and triggered various movements. Korean Wave that was thought to be a way to overcome political disputes and historical issues between the two countries by many scholars, politicians, and individuals, instead, opened up a space for hating Korea/Korean Wave sentiments to be materialized. That is, Korean Wave itself has been a condition of possibility for the materialization of hitherto imperceptible hating Korea/Korean Wave. In the following section, I will outline various hating Korea/Korean Wave examples after the collapse of the Cold War structure to situate the present movement.

## Post Cold War Hating/Anti Korea Movements

Hating Korea sentiment in the 2000s is not a new phenomenon, as the present revisionist movement started in the 1990s. After the end of Cold War, the Japanese government instructed publishers to include Japan's wartime aggression against neighboring countries, namely comfort women and Nanjing Massacre. This invited many nationalists and reformists, including scholars, politicians, and writers, to organize groups to annul the instruction. The major player of resistance was *Japanese Society for New History Textbook* (hereafter the Society) that also composed its own history textbook for secondary schools. Moreover, the Society published a series of books that vilify China, Korea, and the United States, claiming their conspiracy to denigrate Japan. Simultaneously, the publications revered Japanese soldiers with whom the Japanese should identify in order to recuperate their impaired pride.

Although the revisionist movements took a political stance regarding the representation of national history, it also extended to popular cultural sphere. For instance, a comic book artist Kobayashi Yoshinori published a series entitled *Gomanizumu Sengen* that glamorizes Japan's involvement in World War II.<sup>3)</sup> Claiming the contemporary Japanese are indebted to the wartime heroes for their peaceful and comfortable lives, Kobayashi argues that the contemporary Japanese are brainwashed by the United States, referring to the occupation period as a starting point. Hence similar to Igarashi Yoshikuni's observation that the bodily cleansing process from the defeat took place in Japan's postwar years, the 1990s observed the cleansing of Japanese psyche to cope with the movement so as to invalidate Japan's wartime identity as perpetrator.<sup>4)</sup>

Despite the vigorous attempts by the revisionists, the Society's textbook was shunned by nearly all of Japan's school districts.<sup>5)</sup> The failed attempt, however, did not point to the disappearance of nationalists and revisionists. Instead of directly participating in a political sphere, they found popular medium, Internet and comic books, this time driven by young Japanese who are often called *netouyo*, the

---

3) *Gomanizumu Sengen* series made Kobayashi one of the most prominent conservative authors and commentators for young people in Japan.

4) Aya Matsushima. "A Japanese History Textbook and the Construction of World War II Memory". (forthcoming) in an anthology published by Routledge.

5) Kathleen Woods Masalski "Examining the Japanese History Textbook Controversies". Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education, 2001.

cyberspace right wing.<sup>6)</sup> Yamano Sharin, the author of the *Kenkanryu* series, started posting his work on the Internet as a webcomic in the early 2000s. After being refused publication for two years, the first book was published by Shinyusha in 2005. The book immediately became a bestseller, 450,000 copies sold. Observing such craze over the conservative and nationalistic ideas, many scholars and media expressed concern including a *New York Times* article, but such international attention was used to advertise a sequel *Kenkanryu 2* published in the following year.

Not only the wide readership of the comic books signals the return of the nationalists, but also other movements instigated by the comic books. There have been a series of demonstrations against Fuji Television, claiming that the TV station favors Korean programs over the Japanese ones. Also, many accused Korean celebrities of being anti-Japanese on Internet, and asserted that those celebrities are using Japan only for economic gains. There have been other hate Korean movements as well. Tsushima Island located between Kyushu Island of Japan and Korea became a site of controversy. As a result, many nationalists organized demonstrations on the island, demanding Koreans to leave, which has been reported on YouTube and Nicovideo for wider circulation.<sup>7)</sup>

The following sections discuss these hating Korean Wave by closely attending to the comic book *Kenkanryu* series. The first section manifests what the term *Kenkanryu* denotes. The second section analyzes the processes in which Yamano demystifies the popularity of Korean popular culture and establishes what he calls “the real Korea” in order to subvert Korea’s Japan and to establish Japan’s Japan. And the last section attempts to manifest the ways in which Yamano suppresses Korean women as voiceless subjects in order to exploit femininity to silence Koreans as a whole.

## Defining *Kenkanryu*

Before discussing the comic book *Kenkanryu*, let me briefly explain the format of the book. The book follows a lead character Kaname to gradually discover “the

---

6) Takahara Motoaki observes the emergence of nationalism seen in Japanese youth and comments that the hatred toward Korea and China is expressed on Internet. Also, Kayama Rika the emergence of “petit-nationalism” among Japanese youth.

7) Nicovideo is a video sharing site in Japan. It is also known as “Nico Douga”. For more information, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niconico>

truth” about Korea and Japanese wartime history by joining a college club Far East Investigation Committee (hereafter FEAIC). As the club often engages in a debate with other groups such as a Korean college debate team and a Japanese civil group who empathize Koreans and resident Koreans, Kaname learns “the truth” through preparing for a debate match, to which the president of the club Ryuhei Sueyuki often helps. Ultimately, FEAIC wins every debate, indicating Korean and resident Koreans’ view of Japanese wartime and postwar history is false.

In *Kenkanryu*, Yamano states, “This comic book attempts to construct a real friendship between Japan and Korea” (*Kenkanryu 2*, 244), although the comic book series is filled with statements that demean Korea and the Koreans. The title *Kenkanryu*, *Ken* in red and *Kanryu* in blue, seems to demonstrate its position as hating “Korean Wave”, but as Yamano claims that “I want to clarify that I started writing this comic long before so-called Korean Wave reached Japan (*Kenkanryu 2*, 255), the book is not about the negative sentiment against Korean Wave. Indeed, Yamano uses only 13 pages to discuss *Winter Sonata* in the first two series, which is less than 3% of the entire series. Then, one must ask, what the term *kenkanryu* really means. As is written on the front sleeve of the book cover of the first two series, “There is another ‘Hallyu’ Japanese media suppresses” and “It is natural for one to hate Korea if he/she learns the truth”, the book presents itself as a means to acquire the reality of Korea and the Koreans. Hence, the comic book seems less of being hating “Korean Wave”, and more of a wave of hating Korea and the Koreans. However, it is too early to dismiss this discussion because there is another area that is also accused by Yamano: the Japanese media.

Yamano argues that the Japanese media suppressed the real nature of Korea, the Koreans, and resident Koreans in Japan. The accusation is firmly directed to the media rather than the Korea-related individuals who, according to Yamano, possess malignant character traits. Such criticism against the media surfaced in July 23, 2011 when actor Takaoka Sosuke was fired from the agency as a result of complaining about Fuji Television Network on Twitter, stating “I’m indebted to Fuji TV, but I don’t watch their programs any more. They try to brainwash us by broadcasting Korean programs and K-pop. They should relocate to Korea”.<sup>8)</sup> This incident immediately caught the attention of 2channel<sup>9)</sup> users amounting to the total of 522

---

8) Takaoka’s statement is removed from Twitter, but there are some sites on which users uploaded his statements. For more information, see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQ214ejCbqo>

9) 2channel is a textboard on which users can keep anonymity. It was launched in 1999, and 2.5 million

threads of discussions, the largest in its history. The discussion quickly organized a series of demonstrations against Fuji TV, the first one held as “a stroll” on August 7<sup>th</sup> 2011, only 2 weeks after Takaoka’s comments.<sup>10)</sup> Since then, six demonstrations were held and the largest gathered about 3,500 people according to the Police. In addition, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> demonstrations were live-broadcast through Internet sites, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> one held on September 17<sup>th</sup> is said to have been watched by 120,000 people. The movement also spread to other parts of Japan such as Osaka, Nagoya, Sapporo, and Fukuoka.

Although the series of demonstrations ended on August 19, 2012, the movement still exists in Japan especially on 2channel. Also, many books are published having “*kenkan*” as part of the title, such as *Manga Kenkanryu no Shinjitsu* [*The Truth of the Comic Book Kenkanryu*] and *Kenkanryu Debeeto* [*Kenkanryu Debate*], and many of them accuse the Japanese media for not reporting the truth and call them traitors. For instance, the editorial of *Bessatsu Takarajima* states, “The issue is not to assess the quality of Korean popular culture; rather, the Japanese media fell into the snare laid by the Korean government that attempts to disseminate Korean popular culture as a national policy” (4-5). Also, Bocchi, a representative of the 3<sup>rd</sup> demonstration against Fuji TV, comments, “The goal of the demonstration is not to criticize Korea. We are against the TV station’s attitude that look down on the Japanese” by referring to a figure ice skater Asada Mao who was reported negatively in relation to a Korean figure ice skater Kim Yuna (*Tsukurareta*, 28-29). It is clear that hating “Korean Wave” is the accusation of the Japanese media that excessively praises Koreans and Korean culture while mocking the Japanese and Japanese culture.

However, there is another element of the Japanese media that hating “Korean Wave” movement accuses. According to Toshiaki Kitaoka “The problem is coward politicians and media who do not refute Korea’s and China’s fabrication of history” (1), and warns many Japanese, especially young Japanese, not to believe such historiography. Although the accusation does not directly blame the media for broadcasting Korean drama and K-pop excessively, it rests its claim on hating Korean Wave phenomenon to accuse Korea. Indeed, Kitaoka does not mention China’s fabrication in the book, focusing exclusively on Korea’s fabrication of Japanese history.

---

posts were made everyday in 2007. For more information, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2channel>

10) The reason for the organizing the first demonstration as “a stroll” is that the organizers could not obtain permission from the Tokyo Police Authority dues to a short notice.



Such representations of the Japanese media allow Yamano to define *kanryu* in more detail, and there are two concrete instances. One appears in the epilogue of the first volume where characters accuse the Japanese being ignorant of Korea, which is fueled by those who are enthusiastic about Korean popular culture. Here, exposing oneself to Korean popular culture is not considered as accumulation of knowledge. Commenting on such people's ignorance or neglect resulting from the Japanese media's concealment or control of information about Korea, Sueyuki who is a leader of FEAIC states, "There are increasing numbers of Koreans who hate Japan. This is what the Japanese media hides from the Japanese, and this is *kenkanryu*" (271). Here, *kenkanryu* is defined as Koreans' hatred toward the Japanese, rather than describing Japanese attitudes toward Koreans, and instead of accusing Koreans for having hatred, Yamano accuses the Japanese media that circulates positive images of Korea via popular culture, such as drama and popular music.

Another instance appears in the epilogue of the second volume where characters are discussing the significance of the Japan-Korea Friendship year 2005, which observed many instances such as the Takeshima Day approved by the Shimane Prefecture Assembly on the day Japan had annexed Korea 100 years ago. Again, the discussion holds the Japanese media responsible for concealing negative images of Korea, and Sueyuki declares, "It is true that the more we learn about Korea the more we hate the nation, but we should not be emotional. The true friendship between Japan and Korea is contingent upon whether we can overcome this *kenkanryu*" (241). This time, *kenkanryu* refers to the Japanese hatred for Korea, which establishes mutual loathing because of the aforementioned Koreans' hatred for the Japanese. The antagonistic relationship between Japan and Korea materializes. Hence, the proportional relationship between knowing and hating does not give readers a hope for reconciliation, but Yamano suggests one and the only way to establish a true friendship as a protagonist Kaname speaks immediately after the Sueyuki's definition, "We should tell the true history to Koreans without naively accepting their fabrication" (241). The binary opposition of Japan and Korea signifies the good-bad binary of historical representations, which the Japanese media uses every means to suppress. Therefore, the comic book series position itself against the Japanese media and attempts to position Korea as Japan's other that the Japanese must understand fully in order to establish a true friendship, not the fabricated friendship by the influx and popularity of Korean popular culture promoted by the Japanese media. The following section closely attends to textual and visual representations of



Koreans and resident Koreans to manifest the ways in which Yamano renounces the Japanese media-promoted Japan's Korea and Korea's Japan and argues for the recognition of the concealed Japan's Korea so as to constitute a ground on which Japan's Japan emerges.

## Korea's Japan vs. Japan's Korea

### Demystification of Japan's Korea

As I mentioned above, Yamano establishes an antagonistic relationship between Korea and Japan, both seen from the eye of the other. Japan's Korea is divided into two aspects: On one hand, there is so-called Korean Wave exemplified by the Japanese media's manipulation of the popularity of a Korean drama *Winter Sonata*, and on the other hand, the truth of Korea that the Japanese media attempts to conceal from the public.

In order to debunk the popularity of Korean popular cultural products in Japan, Yamano attends to a series of events that are believed to have promoted fascination toward Korea. He first scrutinizes the 2002 Soccer World Cup co-hosted by Japan and Korea, which many believe raised the Japanese interest in Korea (Song, Mori, and Kim). Interestingly, this is the first chapter of the entire *Kenkanryu* series, and the chapter lists the Korean players' foul plays as means for the team to advance to the semifinal. Taking a journalistic approach by reproducing the foul play scenes realistically, the chapter reports that "4 out of the most serious 10 misjudgments during the world cup took place during the games Korea fought, all of which benefited Korea" (23). Also, the chapter depicts Korean fans' ill-mannered support during the games as seen in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Representations of Korean soccer supporters at the 2002 World Cup. (Yamano Sharin. *Kenkanryu*, 21, 22)

The first depiction uses a style of a photograph of a deceased person to represent a German player Oliver Kahn, and the accompanying text reads, “Kahn, please lose!” (21), and the second one is a sign that states, “The sons of Hitler, Go home!” (22). As Sakamoto and Allen maintains, the reportage style of illustrations compared to the depiction of the comic book characters add a sense of factual reality to the depiction with which Yamano demystifies Korea. Moreover, the readers’ ignorance of such incidents, Yamano claims, resulted from the Japanese media’s biased report of the world cup that covered nothing but Japanese people’s support of Korean team (*Kenkanryu*, 22).

The demystification of Korea through demystifying Korean Wave also appears sporadically, although the focus of the comic book series is not Korean Wave as I discussed earlier. The need for attending to Korean Wave for Yamano rests on his perception that fans of Korean popular culture, mainly Korean dramas, are ignorant about a real Korea he puts forth. For instance, a Far East Asian Investigation Committee Report section in *Kenkanryu 2* discusses the territorial dispute of Takeshima/Dokdo, in which Kaname mentions that the Korean actress Kim Tae-hee, who appeared in the TV series *Stairway to Heaven* and a Japanese TV commercial, entered Switzerland wearing a Dokdo T-shirt when she visited the country as a goodwill cultural ambassador.

Although the attention to Korean Wave is minimal, Yamano discusses the myth of *Winter Sonata* and its lead actor Bae Yong-joon in a special section at the end of the first volume, as they are considered to be the starting point of the influx of Korean popular culture into Japan.<sup>11)</sup> Appearing as a character himself, he acknowledges the quality of drama stating “I was absorbed in the drama” (*Kenkanryu 2*, 276) and “the characters are attractive” (*Kenkanryu 2*, 278). But the acknowledgement is immediately given negative implication by the statement “the drama resembles a Japanese drama, especially the theme song that is identical to *Ai no Kagero*, a Japanese song that was popular in the 1980s” (*Kenkanryu 2*, 278), and suggests that the quality of the drama does not rest on Korean culture. That is, Yamano implies Koreans’ mimicry of Japanese culture made *Winter Sonata* popular in Japan. This is consistent with many reports that the popularity of the drama rests on the represented values that the Japanese used to have and this created a sense of

---

11) Many scholars such as Mori, Hayashi and Lee, and Lin) maintain that the drama *Winter Sonata* inaugurated Korean Wave in Japan.

nostalgia among viewers.

Regarding the demystification of Bae, Yamano revisits Bae's first visit to Japan that gathered about 5,000 fans at the airport. As the Japanese media compared Bae's visit to western stars David Beckham, Daniel Radcliffe, and Brad Pitt to highlight the extreme popularity of Bae, Yamano compares the conditions in which Bae and the three other stars arrived in Japan. According to him, Bae's arrival had more favorable conditions for fans to gather than the others, because Bae came to Japan on Saturday whereas the others came on weekdays, because Haneda airport at which Bae arrived was closer to the center of Tokyo than Narita Airport the other three used, and because Bae officially announced his itinerary on his official Website whereas the others itinerary were strictly confidential (*Kenkanryu 2*, 282-283). Presented with these comparisons, Kaname and his girlfriend and a member of FEAIC Itsumi state that it is important not to be deceived by such strategies Koreans play (*Kenkanryu 2*, 283). As is clear, the chapter functions not only to demystify *Winter Sonata* and Bae Yong-joon, but also to "reveal" cunning nature of Koreans. This cunning nature is what Yamano claims the true Japan's Korea that the Japanese media conceals.

## A Real Japan's Korea

The demystification of Korean Wave in Japan serves as a basis on which Yamano represents a real Korea that the Japanese media conceals. His accusation ranges from popular culture to Japan's colonization of Korea as well as issues of resident Koreans in Japan. As mentioned in the previous section that *Winter Sonata* resembles a Japanese drama from 1980s, Yamano frames Korea as a country of plagiarism in the chapter entitled "Korea steals Japanese culture" (*Kenkanryu*, 103). In the chapter, Kaname visits a *kendo dojo* (a Japanese fencing training hall) managed by Itsumi's father and learns about Korea's claim of the origin of the martial art and its endeavor to disseminate such information to the world. As Kaname shares his new findings with other members of FEAIC, the story develops to list other Japanese cultures stolen by Koreans seen below. They range from what Yamano calls "Japanese traditional culture" such as *karate*, *judo*, *sushi*, and *bonsai*, as well as popular culture such as animation and snacks. Bewildered by the information, Kaname wonders why Koreans do not understand how one feels when his/her culture is stolen, and Kaneda and Sueyuki respond, "They cannot understand because there is no Korean culture that Koreans can be proud of" (*Kenkanryu*, 125-126).

Undoubtedly, no one in *Kenkanryu* including Kaneda who is a former resident Korean can enlist Korean culture except kimchi, BBQ, and plastic surgery. Korea is deprived of its culture—a culture-less nation.

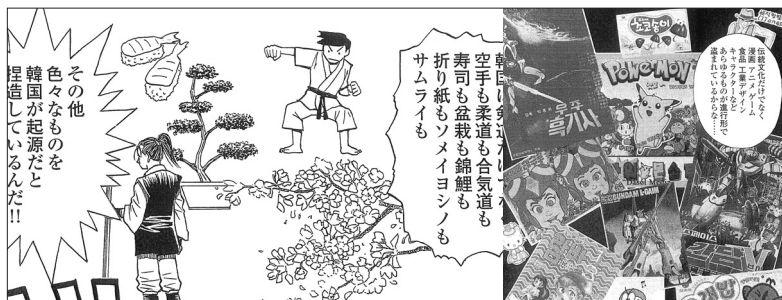


Figure 2: Representations of Japanese cultures stolen by Koreans.  
(Yamano Sharin. *Kenkanryu*, 116, 124)

The important point in this discussion is not to determine whether what Yamano considers “Japanese traditional culture” originates in Japan or not; rather, the ways in which culture is symbolized as an essential entity that is free from other cultural influence.<sup>12)</sup> Japanese culture in *Kenkanryu* signifies its purity and originality, whereas Korean culture denotes Koreans’ illicit conduct as well as their inability to produce their own culture. Korea, lacking its own culture, merely steals Japanese culture because of its greatness, according to Yamano, and Korean culture becomes Japanese culture’s inferior twin. This position is similar to the attitudes and discourses during Japan’s colonization of Korea between 1932 and 1945 that a superior Japan educated and cultured an inferior and uncivilized Korea.

Koreans’ hatred for the Japanese is another aspect Yamano attempts to visualize as Japan’s Korea. Reporting an exhibition of elementary school children’s drawings on Japan’s colonization of Korea, he marks the Korean educational system as a mechanism to foster hatred toward Japan. Again, Yamano employs a journalistic style to introduce the drawings. He also reports Korean politicians’ overseas activity of badmouthing Japan when they were supposed to discuss a diplomatic relationship.

Resident Koreans are also shown as malicious people who attempt to seize the control of Japan. The term *zainichi tokken*, the privilege held by resident Koreans in

12) This paper’s purpose is not to determine where cultural artifacts belong; rather, it aims to scrutinize the ways in which cultural artifacts are exploited to construct a postcolonial relationship between Japan and Korea.

Japan, appears persistently, and 7 chapters out of 10 in the last volume *Kenkanryu 4* are devoted to the problems created by resident Koreans. According to Yamano, because of privilege, they evade tax obligation, media uses their proxy Japanese names to report crimes, and they are trying to earn voting rights on the basis that they were brought to Japan forcibly. He carefully visits each case to claim that Japan is in the state of emergency because of resident Koreans. In addition, he equates them with Koreans by depicting Kaname's resident Korean friend Koichi as a resident Korean who supports Korean view of colonial history. However, Koichi is positioned on the border that separates Japan from the Koreans and resident Koreans, who wanders around the border as he learns "the truth" about the history and their unlawful behaviors. For instance, Koichi asks his mother the reason his mother uses a Japanese name instead of her real Korean name. His mother responds that it is easier for her to evade tax on her saving accounts and recommends Koichi to do the same. Shocked, Koichi starts doubting the fairness of the privilege and resident Koreans who possess the privilege, and asks Kaname to teach him more about the colonial history and resident Koreans. As a result, Koichi realizes the reason many resident Koreans refuse to naturalize to Japan is not because of the discrimination and agony, but because of the very privilege they enjoy. Still Koichi refuses to naturalize, but he does not have any justifiable reason for his decision (*Kenkanryu 2*, 61-84). Finally, Koichi finds his path in the first chapter of volume 4: to remain as a resident Korean to atone for sin by putting an end to resident Koreans' wrongdoings (*Kenkanryu 4*, 31).

Since Koichi refuses to naturalize to become a Japanese, his visual representation resembles that of Koreans who have small eyes, heavy-jowled face as seen below.



Figure 3: Representation of Matsumoto Koichi, a resident Korean in Japan. (Yamano Sharin. *Kenkanryu*, 67)

However, there are two Koreans whose visual representations adhere to the style to represent Japanese characters, Kaneda Yasuhiro and Park Yeon-soo. As mentioned earlier, Kaneda is a former resident Korean who naturalized to Japan. He is a major member of FEAIC and declined to be a candidate of the chair of the committee because he wants to form a group with former and other current resident Koreans in order to fight against resident Koreans' anti-Japan movement.<sup>13)</sup> Of course, Yamano does not represent such a movement in *Kenkanryu* as it might give a positive impression to readers.

Park, on the other hand, is a Korean college debater and is represented more or less similar to an android whose facial expression is minimum. Unlike other Koreans, his appearance is pleasant, but because of the lack of facial expression he appears cold-hearted and hard to get along with. Despite his appearance, he possesses hatred toward Japan and calls the Japanese “*jjokbari*”, an ethnic slur to call Japanese citizens. At first, the motive of Park's visuality seems to rest on his command of the Japanese language and the fairness he seeks in the debate match. He physically attacks his teammate who tried to deprive a Japanese team of sleep the night before the debate so that the Japanese team would be unprepared. However, as a seemingly-fair-minded Park struggles in the debate and starts making incoherent arguments, his smart-and-cool-looking face starts losing its shape. He starts sweating and in the end he develops *hwabyung*, which Yamano identifies as a mental disease specific to Koreans in the first volume (*Kenkanryu* 35-36).<sup>14)</sup> Since the readers witnessed many occasions of *hwabyung* expressed by resident Koreans and Koreans up to this point, the immediate identification of Park's expression and the disease is possible, and in Park's case *hwabyung* becomes more dramatic because of his pleasant appearance. These visual representations suggest a clear dichotomy between the Japanese and Koreans as a binary between good and evil, which Sakamoto and Allen also maintains.

Such representations of Koreans and resident Koreans as undesirable and hateful is supported by a female international student from Taiwan. She appears in *Kenkanryu 2*, and immediately shows her hatred toward Korea upon encountering Koichi who introduces himself as a resident Korean. She enlists Korea's betrayal of

---

13) There is no representation of present or former resident Koreans Kaneda works with in *Kenkanryu* series. The lack of representations contributes to vilify Koreans and resident Koreans.

14) *Hwabyung* is a Korean somatization disorder that arises when one cannot manage his/her anger. For more information, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hwabyeong>



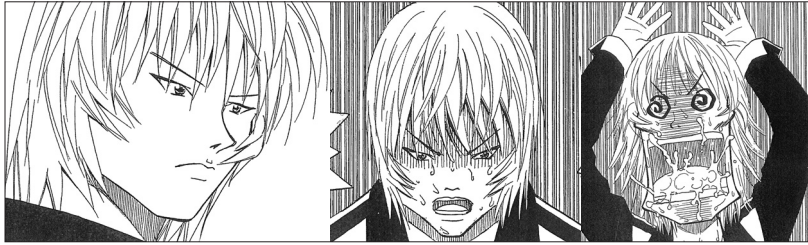


Figure 4: Representations of Park who develops hwabyung.  
(Yamano Sharin. *Kenkanryu 2*, 203, 226, 230)

Taiwan as well as the sexual assault committed by Korean soldiers against Vietnamese women during the Vietnam War. Although Koichi argues that the Korean textbooks mention the sexual assault, Kaneda quickly responds it's only mentioned in "one line" (*Kenkanryu 2*, 47). The story develops to introduce other problems caused by Koreans and concludes that "no ethnic group can get along with Koreans" (*Kenkanryu 2*, 53).

Positioning Koreans as the world enemy is further materialized in the chapter entitled "The Worldwide Hating Korean Wave that the Japanese Are Unaware of" (*Kenkanryu 4*). Members of FEAIC, Koichi and his friends from Korea go to a party hosted by an international club. Many international students accuse Koreans for their past and present crimes and misconducts, and express their hatred toward Koreans. They also dismiss Koichi's friends claim that Japanese traditional and popular cultures originate in Korea stating "It's nonsense" (*Kenkanryu 4*, 231). Moreover, a Chinese student's claim that Koreans also publicize Chinese culture as their own reaches a conclusion that "Koreans are liars and miserable" (*Kenkanryu 4*, 233), which is further illuminated by Koichi's friends stating "every civilization originates in Korea" (*Kenkanryu 4*, 234). As a result, no one listens to Koichi's friends and Koichi remains silent being concerned about his friends' behavior and statements. The complete isolation of Korea is achieved.

The worldwide hatred toward Koreans quickly extends to resident Koreans in Japan, as one international student asks about the privileges resident Koreans hold. Not only all international students express their concern and perplexity about the privilege, but also they are astonished by Kaname's statement "most of resident Koreans are yakuza, criminals, unemployed, or social welfare recipients" (*Kenkanryu 4*, 250). Informed of problems, one student from England asks why the Japanese don't act, and he continues to explain how England overcame colonial issues with India during Thatcherism that encouraged British people to acknowledge the



benefits India received from colonization (*Kenkanryu* 4, 252-253). Here, the equation of Japan's colonization of Korea and Britain's colonization of India is established with a single difference: The Japanese cannot acknowledge Japan's contribution to Korea's modernization during the colonial period. Leaning Britain's success story, members of FEAIC declare their determination to fight against Koreans by stating, "Hating Korean Wave is a global standard!!" (*Kenkanryu* 4, 256). Having the world on Japan's side is more important for Yamano as such positioning of Korea gives courage to the Japanese to fight against Korea's accusation of Japan's wartime assault. The following section examines the ways in which Yamano attempts to visualize the colonization of Japanese psyche by Koreans in order to nullify Korea's Japan and to reclaim Japan's Japan.

### From Korea's Japan to Japan's Japan

The positioning of Korea as a country hated by the rest of the world justifies to nullify Korea's accusation of Japan's wartime aggression, and this is the moment in which Yamano's repeated visual representations of Korea's brainwashing of the Japanese in the *Kenkanryu* series start taking effect.

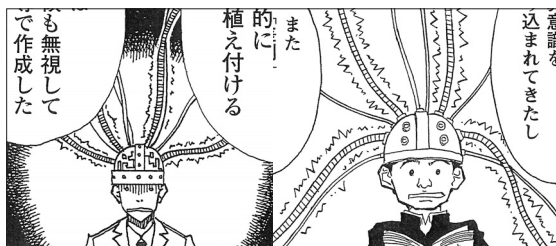


Figure 5: Representations of brainwashed Japanese.  
(Yamano Sharin. *Kenkanryu* 2, 136. *Kenkanryu* 3, 232)

As these brainwashing visual representations appear with statements "Koreans inscribed a sense of atonement for the past onto our [the Japanese] mind" (*Kenkanryu* 3, 232) and "Japanese children go through education that cultivate a sense of atonement and teach a self-abusive history of Japan" (*Kenkanryu* 2, 136), the brainwashing Yamano attempts to nullify is Japan's wartime aggression against Korea such as forced conscription of Koreans including comfort women and forced labor. As many scholars identify Yamano's positioning with the revisionists who were active in the mid-1990s to the early 2000s, Yamano's arguments follow the same logic with one significant difference. Whereas the revisionists accused the United States for brainwashing the Japanese, Yamano accuses Korea.

Not only nullifying brainwashing, but also Yamano identifies the Japanese tendency that invited the brainwashing. Again, he uses international community's perspective of the Japanese for the characterization. Ryu, a Taiwanese female international student comments, "The Japanese tend to apologize for their past crimes they didn't even commit" (*Kenkanryu* 2, 40) and "the Japanese are gullible" (43), and an American male international student states, "It is regrettable that the Japanese don't fight against Korea's fabrication of cultural origin" (*Kenkanryu* 4, 232). The Japanese attitude is also problematized, and Yamano calls for the change among the Japanese to assert their perspective on Japan's past that denies Japan's aggression against Korea. The antagonistic relationship between Japan and Korea is, hence, uneven one: the representations of Koreans and resident Koreans are ultimately deprived of their voice in an international community. By silencing them, Yamano reinstates Japan's Japan that is completely opposite of Korea's Japan: Japan that speaks for itself and Japanese history that did not commit any crime against Koreans and resident Koreans. In turn, Japan's Korea starts re-embodiment of Japan's colonial gaze: barbaric, uncivilized, and lack of culture.

## Voiceless Subjects

It is already problematic that Yamano's representations of Korea and resident Koreans silence their voices in order to justify Japan's colonization of Korea and to renounce Japan's aggression against Korea. Yet, they are still visible in the *Kenkanryu* series, meaning their existence is acknowledged as expressive subjects who speak. However, what makes *Kenkanryu* more problematic is that there are individuals who are repressed further as impassive subjects: Korean women.

There are several female characters in *Kenkanryu* who play major roles. Tae Soeuchi and Itsumi Aramaki, who are FEAIC members, appear from the beginning and they participate in debates against resident Koreans, Koreans, and members of Japanese civic group who were brainwashed by Koreans. There are several debates only Tae and Itsumi fight against a group of people and without doubt win the debates. They consistently speak their knowledge and opinions on Korea and Japan.

The same applies to Miyako Sueyuki, a younger sister of Ryuhei Sueyuki, who joins FEAIC in the second volume and gradually learns about Korea and Japan. Here, she seems to represent a generation of young people who went through what revisionists call a self-abusive history education in grade schools, but her earning

knowledge turns her as a Japanese who can properly judge the issues inherent in the Japan-Korea relationship. The Taiwanese female student Ryu Shinshia, I mentioned earlier, also joins FEAIC in volume 2 and plays a major part to position Korea as the world's enemy. Her hatred toward Koreans is expressed openly, as if she is a representative of Taiwanese people. Unlike Japanese and Taiwanese women who express their opinion and contempt without hesitation, Korean women are given little, if not no chance, to speak. Yet, there are a few Korean women who express their views openly.

Among Korean women represented in *Kenkanryu*, comfort women and one Korean college debater speak the most. Although the issue of comfort women appears countless times from the beginning of the first volume as part of discussing Japan's colonization of Korea, Yamano waits to devote a chapter specifically discussing the issue until toward the end of the third volume, in which Korean college team led by Park invited FEAIC members to hold an open debate in the United States. The United States, here, is not a perspective-neutral space; rather, it was chosen for Korean college students to have advantage as Park states, "American public opinion is on our side" (*Kenkanryu* 3, 167). Again, Korean sly nature is implied, which has been already established by Yamano in the first two and half volumes.

Hence, the representation of comfort women as speaking subjects does not seem to have validity in their claims. In addition, the chapter withholds the representation of comfort women until the second half of the debate. At the beginning of the debate, Korean college students introduce their professor Kang Yong-joong who plays a major role in the second half. Again, Koreans' sly nature is expressed so as to demonstrate the greatness of FEAIC. Park plays a major part in the first half of the debate accusing Japan's conscription of Korean women as sex slaves and its refusal to apologize and compensate. Kaname, in return, claims they were prostitutes because the term did not exist at that time and there is no record of conscription (*Kenkanryu* 3, 206-207). Unable to present valid evidence, Park falls prey to *hwabyung* and leaves the scene.

Witnessing Park's failure, Kang takes over the debate introducing two former comfort women. Despite their testimony, the story unfolds the inconsistency of the testimony providing citation for every statement, and invalidates the entire testimony except one in which a comfort women states, "Two Korean men came and told me that they will give me a job at a factory, so I followed them. My father knew that I was not going to work at a factory, but he did not do anything" (*Kenkanryu* 3, 219).

This statement, without being contested, clearly marks Koreans as offenders behind the conscription. In addition, Kang's persistent demand not to ask questions to the women highlights untrustworthiness of the testimony. Eventually, Kang also develops an outbreak of *hwabyung*.

Yamano not only nullifies the two comfort women's testimonies, but also publicly harasses them in the context he provides. As mentioned, the debate takes place in the United States as an open debate where Americans, Koreans, and media participate as audience. The discredit of the comfort women's testimonies, therefore, is witnessed by the audience as well as circulated widely in the United States as the moderator speaks that "please state your opinions regarding the comfort women in the way American people can understand" (*Kenkanryu* 3, 204). The disadvantages FEAIC had with Professor Kang's participation and the audience including many Koreans, function to illuminate the team's victory, and concurrently the comfort women were placed in the shadow permanently being labeled as fabricators on an international stage.

Of course, the Korean debate team including Kang is also publicly harassed at the open debate, but the visual representations of Korean women including the comfort women deserve scrutiny. As seen below, the visual representations of comfort women are less feminine compared to the ways in which Japanese women and

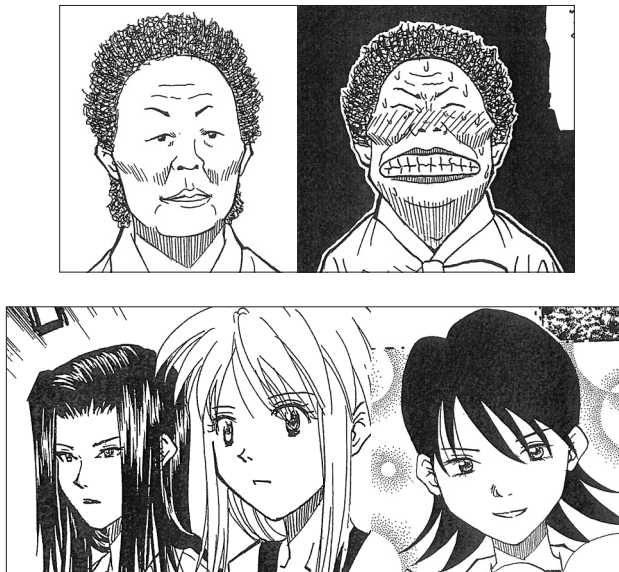


Figure 6: Representations of comfort women (top), Japanese women (bottom left), and Taiwanese women (bottom right) (Yamano Sharin. *Kenkanryu*, 200. *Kenkanryu* 2, 36. *Kenkanryu* 3, 218)

Ryu, a Taiwanese international student, are represented. It is almost hard to tell they were “women” at the first look because of the way in which Yamano clearly visualizes the gender difference throughout the *Kenkanryu* series. This visual masculinization of Korean women corresponds to the Korean women who speak in the series, whereas women with inherent femininity remain silent.

There are three women on the Korean debate team as well. One woman is depicted in the same way as Japanese women, but she never speaks. This also applies to female Korean residents who are represented visually without any utterance. Another woman, who also does not speak but depicted more often than the aforementioned women, has a similar facial features as male characters, but it is clear that she is a woman because of her breasts. The third woman who accuses the Japanese for their colonial past and treatment of resident Koreans would be mistaken for a man if one does not attend carefully. I had to attend carefully to one depiction and her rather feminine speech style, in order to examine her gender. However, as the story develops, she speaks less and disappears in the last debate on comfort women. The debate she speaks the most is the first debate where only Tae and Itsumi participate from FEAIC, in which the visual representations of the Japanese



Figure 7: Representation of Korean college student debate team. (Yamano Sharin. *Kenkanryu*, 212)



Figure 8: Representation of Korean female student who openly accuses Japan. (Yamano Sharin *Kenkanryu*, 217)

women is juxtaposed with her. In addition, Yamano juxtaposes her with other Korean women who retain femininity in exchange for silence. Hence, the lack of femininity seems to indicate anti-Japan sentiment, which corresponds to Yamano's problematization of Japanese people who embody Korean view of Japan as their own: Korean view is masculine that have been colonizing Japanese psyche.

As a result, the *Kenkanryu* series silences Korean women from whose position male characters speak, but they are also silenced by Japanese characters who present the truth about Korea and Koreans in the three debates Korean students participate. Then, to whom does Yamano give privilege to speak on behalf of Koreans and resident Koreans? As I mentioned, the Japanese civil group that empathize and support Korean's and resident Korean's views of Japanese history speak for them, but every attempt fails. Ultimately, it is members of FEAIC who speak for Koreans and resident Koreans, and Yamano gives such rights on the basis that they recuperated Japanese pride by rejecting Korean's and resident Koreans' views of Japanese history. This could be described as remasculinization of the Japanese characters Yamano strives to achieve, so as to decolonize Japanese psyche from Koreans. Interestingly, such masculinization conforms the then-current and current Japanese government's, especially Liberal Democratic Party's attempt to amend Japanese Constitution to have its own military instead of Self Defense Force and politicians' repeated visits to Yasukuni Shrine where Grade A war criminals including the then prime minister Tojo Hideki are enshrined.

## Conclusion

The uniqueness of *Kenkanryu* discourses rests on the binary opposition between Korea and Japan that signify Japan as a wartime and postwar perpetrator as well as Korea's victim. Yamano attempts to negotiate Japan's alternative identities by equating the acceptance of Korea's Japan, the perpetrator, and the brainwashing of Japan's psyche by Koreans and resident Koreans. That is, the brainwashing led Japanese people to acknowledge Japan's wartime aggression, which ultimately silenced them to express their own wartime history. In order to annul such conditions, Yamano first accuses the Japanese media that reports nothing but positive aspects of Korea. Yet, as the discussion manifests, the term *kenkanryu* is not about hating Korean Wave. It is the hatred toward Koreans and resident Koreans.

Yamano demystifies the media representations of Korea by closely attending to

what he believes the Japanese media conceals. This ranges from popular culture such as the drama *Winter Sonata* and its lead actor Bea Yong-joon to historical and political issues such as the territorial dispute over Dokto/Takeshima. By utilizing news media reportage styles, he adds a sense of reality to the depictions. The demystification, then, provides a space for him to assert his view of “a real Korea” that manipulates Japanese psyche on the basis that they were and still are mistreated by Japan. The introduction of “a real Korea” provides a condition of possibility for Yamano to establish Japan’s Japan that is free from Korea’s brainwashing.

A Japan Yamano attempts to construct has nothing in common with Korea’s Japan as he constitutes an antagonistic relationship between Japan and Korea. Depicting an international community represented by an international club, Yamano denies every claim Koreans and resident Koreans make. Allied with an international community, the binary opposition between Japan and Korea signifies that of good and bad, and this dichotomy is further supported by visual representations. Also, as in the case of Kaneda’s intent to work with former and current resident Koreans to prevent further corruption and offense, the lack of visual representation also serves to keep the dichotomy intact. In addition, Koichi who shares Kaneda’s objective and decides to remain as a resident Korean is positioned in the Korea side of dichotomy, suggesting one needs to be a Japanese and share FEAIC’s views in order to be situated in the Japan side of dichotomy.

To silence Korean voices and to reinstate Japanese voices, Yamano utilizes the feminine-masculine dichotomy. As discussed, Yamano represents Korean voiceless subjects with feminine physical traits. Their silence seems to indicate their inability to debunk FEAIC members’ arguments. On the other hand, expressive subjects have masculine traits, which seems to suggest aggressiveness. Yet, Yamano manages to silence the expressive Korean and resident Korean men by depicting their claims as fabricated and false, which is always accompanied with their unpleasant facial features. Ultimately, their voices become worthless, and their masculine and aggressive claims are silenced by FEAIC members’ revealing the truth. Also, as the unpleasant facial features such as *hwabyung* indicate, their false and fabricated claims are marked with ugliness.

Among Korean and resident Korean women, there are several expressive subjects who share the same physical traits with men. Despite their presence, comfort women are represented as non-feminine expressive subjects who fabricate the truth. Also, a Korean female debater can be mistaken as a man if one does not



attend to her rather feminine speech style. Again she is represented as the exactly same manner as Korean and resident Korean men whose aggressive and masculine claims are nothing but lies.

Then, there are two kinds of Koreans and resident Koreans. One is silenced subjects who never speak, and the other is expressive subjects who address their claims aggressively. Yet, they share one commonality: Both are never be able to debunk the FEAC members' claims. By such representations, Yamano attempts to release the Japanese psyche from Korea's brainwashing, and reinserts his version of history to undo the brainwashing. Yamano's Japanese history praises Japanese colonization of Korea and observes nothing wrong about the treatment of resident Koreans. And with the visual depiction of expressive subjects as sly, ugly, and uncivilized individuals, *Kenkanryu* ultimately puts forth Japan's colonial gaze onto Koreans.

## References

- Bessatsu Takarajima Henshubu [Bessatsu Takarashima Editorial]. "Introduction". In Bessatsu Takarajima Henshubu (ed.). *Tsukurareta Kanryu Bumu [Fabricated Hallyu Boom]*. Takarajimasha: Tokyo, 2011, 4-6.
- Befu, Harumi. *Hegemony of Homogeneity: An Anthropological Analysis of "Nihonjinron"*. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2001.
- Creighton, Millie. "Japanese Surfing the Korean Wave: Drama Tourism, Nationalism, and Gender via Ethnic Eroticisms". In *Southeast Review of Asian Studies*, 31 (2009): 10-38.
- Cunnings, Bruce. "Japan's Postion in the World System". In Andrew Gordon (Ed.). *Postwar Japan as History*. Berkley: University of California Press, 1993: 34-63.
- Dower, John. *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 1999.
- Gluck, Carol. "The Past in the Present". In Andrew Gordon (Ed.). *Postwar Japan as History*. Berkley: University of California Press, 1993: 64-95.
- Hayashi, Kaori and Eun-Jeung Lee. "The Potential of Fandom and the Limits of Soft Power: Media Representations on the Popularity of a Korean Melodrama in Japan". *Social Science Japan Journal*, 10. 2 (2007): 197-216.
- Igarashi, Yoshikuni. *Bodies of Memory: Narratives of War in Postwar Japanese Culture, 1945-1970*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Kayama, Rika. Puchi Nashonarizumu Shokogun: Wakamono-tachi no Nipponshugi [Petit

- Nationalism Syndrome: Young People's Japan Doctrine]. Tokyo: Chuokoron Shinsho, 2002
- Kim, Hyun Mee. 2005. "Korean TV Dramas in Taiwan: With An Emphasis On the Localization Process." *Korea Journal* 45, no.4: 183-205.
- Kitaoka, Toshiaki. "Introduction". in *Kenkanryu Debeeto [Kenkanryu Debate]*. Sogo Horei Shuppan: Tokyo, 2006.
- Kumagai, Keichi. "Herbivorous Boy, *Otaku*, or Petit-Nationalist?: Floating Japanese Men Masculinity and National Integrity". In *Cool New Asia: Asian Popular Culture in a Local Context*. Unitec ePress, 2012: 43-56.
- Lin, Ho Swee. "Emotions, Desires and Fantasies: What Idolizing Means for Yon-sama Fans in Japan". In Patrick W.Galbraith and Jason G.Karlin (Eds.). *Idols and Celebrity in Japanese Media Culture*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012: 166-181.
- Mackintosh, Jonathan D., Chris Berry, and Nicola Liscutin. "Introduction". In *Cultural Studies and Cultural Industries in Northeast Asia*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009: 1-22.
- Masalski, Kathleen Woods. "Examining the Japanese History Textbook Controversies". Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education, 2001.
- Matsushima, Aya. "A Japanese History Textbook and the Construction of World War II Memory". In Heather Snell and Lorna Hutchison (Eds.). *Children and Cultural Memory in Texts of Childhood*. New York: Routledge, 2014: 67-85.
- Mori, Yoshitaka. "*Winter Sonata* and Cultural Practices of Active Fans in Japan: Considering Middle-Aged Women as Cultural Agents". In Koichi Iwabuchi and Beng Huat Chua (Eds.). *East Asian Pop Culture*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2008: 128-141.
- Onishi, Norimitsu. "Ugly Images of Asian Rivals Become Best Sellers in Japan." *New York Times* (November 19, 2005). Retrieved on October 20, 2011.  
<https://ezproxy.library.nyu.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/433201583?accountid=12768>
- Sakamoto, Rumi and Matthew Allen. "'Hating 'the Korean Wave'' Comic Books: A Sign of New Nationalism in Japan?" *Japan Focus* (posted on October 4, 2007). Accessed October 9, 2009. [http://japanfocus.org/articles/print\\_article/2535](http://japanfocus.org/articles/print_article/2535)
- Song, Changzoo. "Post-colonial Nation-building and the Politics of Popular Culture: Korea's Ban on Japanese Popular Culture and the *Hallyu* Phenomenon". In *Cool New Asia: Asian Popular Culture in a Local Context*. Unitec ePress, 2012: 57-70.
- Takahara, Motoaki. *Fuan-gata Nashonarizumu no Jidai [The Era of Unstable Nationalism]*, Tokyo: Yosensha, 2006

- Yamano, Sharin. Kenkanryu [Hating Korean Wave]. Tokyo: Shinyusha, 2005.
- Yamano, Sharin. Kenkanryu 2 [Hating Korean Wave 2]. Tokyo: Shinyusha, 2006.
- Yamano, Sharin. Kenkanryu 3 [Hating Korean Wave 3]. Tokyo: Shinyusha, 2007.
- Yamano, Sharin. Kenkanryu 4 [Hating Korean Wave 4]. Tokyo: Shinyusha, 2009.
- Yoshino, Kosaku. Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary Japan: A Sociological Enquiry. New York: Routledge, 1992.

## Who Is Silenced?: Anti-Korean Wave in Japan and Japanese National Identity

Aya MATSUSHIMA

### Abstract

Susan Sontag comments on collective memory, “To make peace is to forget. To reconcile, it is necessary that memory be faulty and limited” (Sontag, 2003). Japan’s memory of the Asia-Pacific War is not an exception. Japan still faces many unsolved issues with its neighboring countries today, and one major unresolved issue involves the representation of comfort women, the victims of Japan’s sexual atrocities. The discourses surrounding comfort women exemplifies Sontag’s position: historical revisionists and conservatives attempt to dismiss the comfort women’s claims of victimization as invalid because of perceived erroneous testimony. Such attempts are noticeable not only in the political paradigm as exemplified by Osaka mayor Toru Hashimoto’s statement that dissolves injustices against comfort women into an indispensable aspect of any war, but also the popular cultural representations of comfort women in diverse formats such as the comic book *Hating Korean Wave* and the film *Listen to the Voices of Fallen Student Soldiers*, and scrutinizes the ways in which comfort women are eventually muted and marked as erroneous. Also, this work juxtaposes masculine/feminine dialectics within the muting process, and interrogates the relationship between gendered representation and visibility/invisibility.

Eventually, the paper attempts to divulge a subject that speaks for the comfort women in order to limit and annul their claims, which ultimately reinstates a colonial relationship between Japan and Korea.