

REFLECTING [ON] THE ORIENTALIST GAZE:
A FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF JAPANESE-U.S. GIS INTIMACY
IN POSTWAR JAPAN AND CONTEMPORARY OKINAWA

BY

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Submitted to the graduate degree program in Sociology and the
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ABSTRACT

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Reflecting [on] the Orientalist Gaze: A Feminist Analysis of Japanese Women- U.S. GIs Intimacy in Postwar Japan and Contemporary Okinawa

This project explores experiences of two generations of Japanese women, “war brides,” who married American GIs and moved to the U.S. in the post-World War II era, and “military wives,” who married GIs within the past twenty years and who currently live in Okinawa. My purpose is to examine, reflect on, and challenge the Orientalist gaze, which I define as Eurocentric with male-centered perceptions, interpretations, and representations of Asian women. In the context of U.S. global militarization, I argue that American servicemen stationed in Japan, Korea and other Asian nations participate in reproducing and perpetuating Orientalist stereotypes of Asian women, while women’s voices often are not heard. I use a feminist strategy and reverse the positions of those who gaze and those who are objects of the gaze to make Japanese women’s viewpoints and personal experiences central to my analysis. Reversing the subject-object orientations enables Japanese women to express their subjective views of American men under *their* gaze and to represent themselves in their own voices. Methods for this research include in-depth-interviews, ethnographic fieldwork, and archival research in the U.S. and Japan, which I conducted between 2002 and 2005. My study shows that Japanese women have agency as critical analysts of American men and reveals that their perceptions of American GIs become more diverse and complicated as their gendered, racialized, and sexualized experiences interact with their GI partners’ race, class, and militarized masculinity. This study also demonstrates that shifts in economic power dynamics between the U.S. and Japan and globalization of hip-hop culture contributed to reshaping women’s perceptions of American GIs in contemporary Okinawa, while these younger generations of women still share specific images of American men with war brides.

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Author's Note

I used the Japanese convention where family names are followed by given names when writing Japanese persons' whole names. e.g., Yamada Akiko

I used parentheses to provide English translations of some Japanese terms when the given sentence is not disrupted. e.g., *naicha* (mainlanders)

I used brackets to provide additional words or information in order to clarify interviewees' narratives when necessary. I also used brackets when describing unspoken expressions made by interviewees such as laughter in their direct quotations. e.g., [laughter]

In order to protect interviewees' confidentiality, I used pseudonyms for all war bride interviewees in the U.S. and for military wives and girlfriends in Okinawa. In Okinawa, I talked with various people such as U.S. servicemen, shop owners, taxi drivers, bartenders, and bar hostesses. I used pseudonyms for these interviewees as well. Whenever it is imperative, I modified interviewees' personal information to eliminate any hints that potentially might reveal their identities.

I translated the majority of Japanese texts (e.g., narratives, Japanese articles, etc.) into English unless English translations were available. Translations of Japanese language particularly informants' narratives into English were not easy tasks. There are variations in speech styles and dialects among interviewees according to differences in gender, generations, social backgrounds, and regions where they are from. Translations from one language to another resulted in loss of distinctive and unique character of each interviewee that could be traced if written in the original language.

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Introduction

This dissertation explores cross-national intimate relationships between Japanese women and American servicemen that developed on and around U.S. military bases in Japan. Specifically, this study focuses on the experiences of two generations of Japanese women: “war brides” in the U.S. and “military wives” in Okinawa, Japan. I define Japanese “war brides” as older generations of Japanese women who married American GIs in Japan and moved to the U.S. in the post-World War II era, specifically between 1950s and 1960s. “Military wives” refers to younger generations of Japanese and Okinawan women who married GIs within the past twenty years and who currently live in Okinawa.¹

My purpose is to examine, reflect on, and challenge the Orientalist gaze by analyzing Japanese women’s personal experiences with and perceptions of American men in the context of persistent U.S. militarization in Asian since the end of World War II. While the gaze itself is defined as the process of a “one-way” subjective vision of the object to be looked at and examined by the subject (Kaplan 1997: xviii), I define the Orientalist gaze as traditional Orientalist images and stereotypes of Asian women based on Eurocentric and male-centered perceptions, interpretations, and representations. Chan (1988) claims that Asian women’s sexual stereotypes are rooted in European colonial power over Asian people, where women became not only

¹ Although Okinawans are Japanese citizens, they have a history and culture distinct from Japanese living in mainland Japan. Because Okinawan people have a strong sense of Okinawanness, they tend to identify themselves as Okinawan rather than Japanese. They distinguish themselves from the rest of the Japanese by referring themselves to as *uchinanchū* (Okinawan) and to Japanese as *naicha* (mainlander). In this dissertation, I use Okinawan to refer to Okinawan people. However, I also use Okinawan and Japanese interchangeably when I refer to Okinawa in certain contexts.

the cheapest economic commodities but also became sexual commodities for European men. Yuh (2002) argues that the belief that Asian women have exotic sexual allure and docile hyperfemininity constitutes a whole body of Orientalist stereotypes.

While European colonizers, travelers, and missionaries contributed to the production of the Orientalist images of Asian women earlier, in the context of U.S. global militarization, I argue that U.S. servicemen stationed in Japan, Korea and other Asian nations participate in producing, spreading, and reproducing Orientalist stereotypes of Asian women. For example, U.S. Navy reservist Bill Hume created Baby-san, a Japanese female cartoon character, who was perceived as “emotionally volatile and childlike...beautiful sex kitten, the fantasy of a heterosexual Euroamerican man” (Shibusawa 2006:34-41). Hume’s Baby-san appeared in a semi-pornographic cartoon series for the Far East edition of the *Navy Times* and became immensely popular among American GIs in early postwar Japan and Korea (Shibusawa 2006). American soldiers stationed overseas contributed to the perpetuation of Orientalist stereotypes of Asian women as sexual objects by representing them in Western media such as cartoons, novels, and movies.

The depiction of Japanese women as fantasized sexual objects is one dimension of Orientalist visions of Asian women constructed around the Orientalist gaze. I use the concept of Orientalism formulated by Edward Said (1979) as a departing point for my investigation of the Orientalist gaze on Japanese women, in which I examine, reflect on, and challenge in this study. Most scholars who work on

issues concerning Orientalism in relation to colonialism, imperialism, and post-colonialism since the publication of Said's (1979) *Orientalism* have focused on European representation and experience of the Orient, particularly of the near East (Middle East).² In this study, I extend Said's analytical concept of Orientalism to U.S.-Japan relationships within specific historical, cultural, and social contexts of the postwar period, characterized by U.S. military occupation of Japan in early postwar period and its continuing presence today, particularly in present-day Okinawa.

Japan occupies an ambiguous position in its power relations with the West, especially with the U.S. On the one hand, Japan is one of the few non-Western countries that was never officially colonized by Western imperial power. Notably, Japan itself exercised imperial and colonial power over other Asian countries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Johnson 2000; Koikari 2005). Japan's defeat in World War II drastically reconfigured the political and economic alignments in Asia and its relations to the West, particularly to the U.S. While Japan was a military colony under American occupation, it simultaneously served as an American ally supporting the U.S. empire building that sought a new postwar international order at the dawn of the Cold War and thereafter (Johnson 2000).³

Keeping Japan's dual roles in postwar power relations to the U.S. in mind, this study situates the Orientalist gaze in American imperialism in a broad sense; but,

² Europe refers primarily to the French and British colonial powers (to lesser extent, the Germans, Russians, Spanish, Portuguese, Italians, and Swiss) that dominated the Orient until the end of World War II (Said 1979).

³ For Japan-U.S. postwar relations in early post war, see Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (2000:3-33); John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (1999); Yukiko Koshiro, *Trans-pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan* (1999).

more specifically, within the contexts of U.S. occupation in early postwar Japan and the persistent U.S. presence in Japan, particularly in Okinawa as a result of U.S. global militarism. Said's concept of Orientalism is useful for understanding the mechanism of how images of the "Oriental other" were produced and represented through the gaze of American occupiers. As I discuss more thoroughly in Chapter 2, Americans constructed racialized representations of Japan and Japanese people as "the other" based on hierarchical binary distinctions between the West and East as well as occupiers and occupied.

Orientalism: A Point of Departure

In *Orientalism*, Edward Said (1979:3) argues that the relationship between the Occident and the Orient is a relationship of power in which the former dominates the latter, and in which Western culture gained strength and identity by setting itself against the Orient as "the other."⁴ According to Said, the Orient was created or Orientalized by the West through a series of oppositions that placed the Orient in a subordinate position, which, in turn, defined the West as superior. In Said's view, Orientalism is the discourse of power, domination, and complex hegemony constructed on the basis of Western superiority over Oriental backwardness. The Oriental degeneracy and inequality with the West are associated with the biological basis of racial inequality, which divided races into advanced (the West) and backward (the East) (Said 1979:206).

⁴ The geographical scope of the Orient is not limited to adjacent areas to Europe but it also includes Europe's old colonies established from the late eighteenth century to the end of World War II.

Influenced by Michel Foucault's formulation of power, knowledge, and discourse, Said argues that Western knowledge about the Orient is not "innocent" or "objective," but profoundly connected to an operation of power that processes the information to become "fact" or "truth." To Foucault (1980), power and knowledge are interdependent:

The exercise of power itself creates and causes to emerge new objects of knowledge and accumulates new bodies of information... The exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power... It is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power (Pp. 52-53).

In other words, production of knowledge takes place when there are imbalances of power relations between groups of people or between institutions and states (Mills 2003:69). Foucault also views the mechanism of power/knowledge relations as an institutionalized process through which knowledge is created and maintained as truth by those in positions of authority.

The complex mechanism in the creation and maintenance of "truth" about the Orient depends not simply on domination, but also on the operation of hegemony and development of consent through various institutional practices (Lewis 1996). This mechanism works not necessarily by force, but instead "through a wide range of strategies which support and affirm it and which exclude and counter alternative versions of events" (Mills 2003:76). Loomba (2005:29) stresses that "ideology is crucial in creating consent" and that it is "the medium through which certain ideas are transmitted and more important, held to be true." Thus, ideology, joined hand-in-

hand with power, played a role in creating knowledge about the Orient and legitimizing it to maintain hegemonic power, while the object's knowledge was marginalized and silenced, or subjugated.

Orientalism: Critiques and Redefinitions

Despite the influence of Orientalism on colonial and postcolonial studies, it has been critiqued by a wide variety of critics, scholars, and feminists (Bhabha 1983; Carrier 1995; Clifford 1988; Lewis 1996; Lowe 1991; Porter 1983; al-'Azm 2000; Yoshihara 2003). One of the criticisms that Said's *Orientalism* frequently receives is that it is a static portrayal of "hegemonic Western discourse" which promotes and reinforces a binary opposition between the dominant West and the subordinate East, timelessly.

While the Orient is stereotypically characterized as irrational, exotic, erotic, despotic and heathen, the West is often represented as rational, familiar, moral, just, and Christian. Stereotyping "invariably presupposes and confirms a totalizing and unified imperialist discourse" designed to affirm the positional superiority of the West over the inferiority of the East (Gandhi 1998:77). Lewis (1996:16) argues that "not only do these Orientalist stereotypes misrepresent the Orient, they also misrepresent the Occident—obscuring in their flattering vision of European superiority, the tensions along the lines of gender, class and ethnicity that ruptured the domestic scene."

Moreover, scholars in colonial studies are particularly critical of Orientalism for its focus on the pervasive and unchallenged nature of hegemonic power and discourse, which are “possessed entirely by the colonizer” (Bhabha 1983:200; Porter 1983; Spivak 1988). Porter (1983), for instance, emphasizes the profound heterogeneity in Orientalism as a discourse created by instability and ambivalence. He argues that Said failed to view hegemony as an historical process and as an “evolving sphere of superstructural conflict in which power relations are continually reasserted, challenged, modified” (1983:180-181). Lowe (1991) problematizes construction of the hierarchical binary oppositions such as male/female and Orient/Occident and the like by stating they are essentialist descriptions, which ignore the dynamic intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, class, and nationality that alter the generalized assumption about the dichotomous power relations.

Bhabha (1983) and Spivak (1988) are concerned with the subjectivities and identities of the colonized, whose voices have been silenced in colonial discourse and official narratives. Working from a post-structuralist point of view, Bhabha and Spivak reject fixed identities of the oppressed or *subaltern* by arguing that human subjectivities and identities are fragmentary and unstable. The colonial subjectivities formation is a process that involves negotiation and resistance in the dynamic of power relations, which are beyond one-way power relations between the colonizer and colonized (Bhabha 1983). Spivak argues it is crucial to look at the internal dynamics of power relations among heterogeneous subjects, including rural peasants,

urban poor, and local elite in terms of their power relations relative to each other as well as to the colonizer (Leitch et al. 2001).

Orientalism is more heterogeneous than the uniform and unchanging images of the faceless body of the Orient constructed by the West. It is precisely this heterogeneity that facilitates tension, contradiction, and fragmentation in power relations, which in turn opens up a space for the marginalized to resist the oppressor. Moreover, this space permits the marginalized not only to reinforce subjectivity and self-representation, but also allows objectified women to shift their positions to active observers of the West. To understand this heterogeneity, we must acknowledge that Orientalism is structured not only around racism, but also around patriarchal power relations in Western hegemonic discourse. Indeed, gender is particularly important, since Orientalism itself is an andocentric discourse that feminizes the colonial subject. As I discuss below, Oriental women become the most marginalized objects of Orientalism in situations when they are doubly Orientalized by Eurocentric male practices and local Asian patriarchy.

Situating Orientalism in Japan: Japanese Women as Doubly Orientalized

When Orientalism constructs the Orient as the monolithic other, the Orient is also feminized because Orientalism is a male project where the colonizer is defined as male (superior) and the colonized as female (inferior), which justifies the subjugation of the latter by the former. Said (1979) argues that

Orientalism itself, furthermore, was an exclusively male domain like so many professional guilds with sexist blinders. This is especially evident in the

writing of travelers and novelists: women are usually the creatures of a male power-fantasy. They express unlimited sensuality, they are more or less stupid, and above all they are willing (P. 207).

Orientalism is a male conception of the world where women and female bodies are symbolized as conquered lands by the Orientalist.

Similarly, European and American representations of Asians as the “other” have reinforced the images of Asian women as accessible foreign territories to be conquered and consumed, while Asian males are constructed as feminized and without masculine power. According to Okihiro (2000), images of Asian females as being sexually available were reinforced by stereotypes of Asian men as weak and effeminate, thus unable to protect “their women.” These stereotypes and images combined to justify the subordination and control of Orientals and their resources by Westerners.

In Japan’s case, the image of effeminate Japanese men was constructed around the unequal power relations between U.S. and Japan as a consequence of the U.S. victory over Japan in World War II. Dower (1999:138) argues that the defeated Japan, although it was once a “masculine” threat to the West, was transformed into “a compliant, feminine body on which the white victors could impose their will.” The images of Japanese women were constructed in the context of the racialized, sexualized, and feminized Orient, where their male counterparts represent the defeated country.

Ueno (2005), a Japanese sociologist, argues that Oriental women have been “doubly feminized” by the Orientalist discourse, and by their own patriarchy, since

the Orientalist discourse constructs the Orient as inferior, which in turn feminizes Oriental men. According to Ueno,

Women, of course, are no more creatures of a male power-fantasy than the Orient is that of a European power-fantasy. Both of them were created by Western male discourse as “the other.” Women are to men as the Orient is to the Occident; and difference attributed to them as a distinctive feature defines their “otherness”.... If we consider that Oriental men have been feminized, Oriental women have been doubly feminized. This double feminization complicates the situation of Oriental women when they struggle against their own men, for their femininity has already been appropriated by men themselves (Pp. 225-226).

When doubly Orientalized women were situated in the context of early postwar Japan, they were portrayed not only as sexualized objects by the U.S. victors. They were also perceived “as the products of a defeated and somewhat backward postwar nation who are then hopelessly measured against the presumed superiority of the West” (Creff 2000:451).

In a 1952 *Saturday Evening Post* article entitled “They are Bringing Home Japanese Wives,” Smith and Worden (1952) depicts Japanese women who married U.S. servicemen in Japan as

Country girls not only are innocent of slip [*sic*] technique but imagine that they are being American by having their sleek black hair frizzled into dulled mops in ‘Hollywood’ beauty salons only Japanese side streets. They mix unbelievable hues in their outer clothing and have no idea of what to do with a girdle, although they buy them...perhaps to hang on the wall of her home as a decoration (P. 79).⁵

Throughout the article, the Japanese woman was presented as a “chrysanthemum-bud” preparing for acculturation into “civilized” Western domestic life to *serve* and

⁵ Janet Wentworth Smith and William L. Worden, “They’re Bringing Home Japanese Wives,” *Saturday Evening Post*, January 19, 1952.

satisfy her American husband despite difficulty. Storrs (2000) also claims that U.S. cultural frames produced and reproduced stereotypes of Asian and Asian American females as docile, petite, submissive, and sexually desirable or erotic objects, representing a patriarchal image of attractive, feminine women. As Uchida (1998:162) notes, Asian women are objectified as monolithic “Oriental women” through the process of Orientalization by Western men who deny the women status as subjects.

In the context of the U.S. military occupation of Japan, women’s bodies and sexualities were Orientalized by Western conquerors and used as sites to demonstrate and enhance their masculine power. As sexualized objects, countless Japanese women became victims of sexual exploitation by American occupation troops (Tanaka 2002; Thiesmeyer 1999). Enloe (1997:195) argues that militarized masculinities rest on soldiers’ morale and discipline, both of which depend on the exploitable sexuality of local women. She asks: “Without myths of Asian or Latina women’s compliant sexuality, would many American men be able to sustain their own identities, their visions of themselves as manly enough to act as soldiers?”⁶ Just as the Orient helped to define Western superiority, the Oriental female body helped U.S. soldiers maintain American masculine identities.

While Japanese women have been objectified and sexualized by Western men, they also have been simultaneously gendered and sexualized by the Japanese local

⁶ Militarized masculinities refer to masculinities not only constructed in the boot camp and the battlefield, but also in the “smoky bar and sparsely furnished rented room” of the “rest and recreation” district (Enloe 1997:194-195).

patriarchy. Tamanoi (1999) argues that the discourse of Japanese nationalism used women's bodies, sexualities, thoughts, and emotions to create a homogenized womanhood through which "women become a metaphor of what they represent, rather than what they are" (Eisenstein 2000: 43). The local gender ideology of Japanese womanhood assigned women symbolic roles as gatekeepers of moral and racial purity for the nation. Similar to other societies, Japanese women who did not fit this image were criminalized for their inability to sustain the pure Japanese blood (Tamanoi 1999).

During early post-World War II Japan, Japanese women who violated the gender ideology and fraternized with American soldiers faced severe social constraints and even overt hostility from Japanese patriarchal society (Williams 1991:141). Women associated with U.S. servicemen were widely conceived as prostitutes or traitors to their country for choosing American over Japanese men (Hayashi 2002; Kim 1977; Spickard 1989; Takatsu 2002). Indeed, the term "war bride" or *Sensō (War) Hanayome (Brides)* has been associated with sexual stereotypes such as prostitutes and bar girls, who often are derogatorily termed *panpan* (Hayashi 2002; Storrs 2000; Takatsu 2002; Williams 1991).

Some Japanese, including the *Issei* in the U.S., still view war brides with contempt for violating the Japanese social norm of in-group marriage (Glenn 1986).⁷ Other stereotypes of war brides portray them as passive, sexualized objects that

⁷ *Issei* (*i* means one or first; *sei* means generation) refers to the first generation of Japanese immigrants who began to come to the U.S. in the late 19th century as migrant labors and settled mostly in Hawaii and California.

simply followed GIs to the U.S. in the hope of a better life (Hayashi 2002). This suggests that Japanese war brides are sexualized and objectified by Western men and local patriarchies, thus doubly Orientalized.

Challenging Orientalism: Occidentalism as a Counter-Discourse?

Orientalization of Japanese women is not a completed project of the past. The continuing American military presence in present-day Japan creates similar situations where U.S. GIs objectified young women around the U.S. military bases. However, the images of Orientalized women are not static or hegemonic constructions by the West. Indeed, many feminist scholars have problematized the objectification and simplistic representations of Asian women by the dominant masculine West (Chin 2000; Houston 1980; Lai 1998; Lewis 1996; Lu 1997; Mazumdar 1989; Shah 1997; Tien 2000; Uchida 1998; Yanagisako 1995; Yoshihara 2003). Uchida (1998), for example, examines the historical process of Orientalization of Asian women where *Oriental* is not only a geographical and cultural term, but also sexual. Uchida (1998:161) argues that the difference is signified in the Oriental “represented in terms of gender with the Orient being associated with female and the West with male is in essence the dimension of power.” Lewis (1996) and Yoshihara (2003) question the absence of Western women as agents who play the role in the textual production of Orientalist discourse. For example, Yoshihara (2003) focuses on white American women’s roles in the construction of American Orientalism in Japan and China instead of focusing solely on dominant male power.

Some scholars such as Richard Fox and Partha Chatterjee argue that the affirmative use of Orientalist stereotypes, such as authentic cultural and spiritual identities in opposition to Western civilization, played a strategic role during anti-colonial nationalist movements in India (Gandhi 1998:78). Others (Carrier 1995; Creighton 1995; Chen 1995) take a critical look at Said's Orientalism and argue that it focuses exclusively on Western constructions of the "Oriental Other" while neglecting images of the West constructed *by* the Orient. Creighton (1995) explains how Orientalism and Occidentalism are closely related, two-way processes:

The social construction of *gaijin* (foreigners) denies the individual uniqueness of Westerners, transforming all Caucasians into an essentialized category that reduces the complex variations among them.⁸ Just as Western orientalism created self-Occidentalism through an implied contrast with a simplified West, Japanese renderings of *gaijin* are occidentalism that stand opposed to Japanese orientalism about themselves...Among the essentialized self-orientalisms created are Japanese assertions of uniqueness and cultural homogeneity (P. 137).

Buruma and Margalit (2002:4) define Occidentalism as "a cluster of images and ideas of the West in the minds of its haters" that views urban civilization as decadent and rooted in Anglo-American materialism.

In the Occidentalist view, Western materialism associated with pleasure, wealth, arrogance, and greed is sharply contrasted to the spiritual purity of the East (Buruma and Margalit 2002). Chen argues that Occidentalism is used in post-Maoist China as a discourse of both oppression and liberation evoked by competing groups pursuing different ends (1995:3). On the one hand, Chinese authorities used

⁸ *Gaijin* (*gai* means outside, *jin* means person) refers primarily to white foreigners. Other non-white foreigners are distinguished from *gaijin* and usually called "*gaikokujin*" (*gaikoku* means foreign country) while blacks are often referred as "*kokujin*" (*koku* means black) (Creighton 1995).

Occidentalism as a discipline to enhance nationalism within totalitarian Chinese society by constructing an essentialized Western Other (1995:3).⁹ On the other hand, Chen claims that Occidentalism is a form of anti-official discourse used against the oppressive domestic political regime by constructing the Western Other as a metaphor for political liberation (1995:5). Though Chen illustrates interesting points about the dual nature of Chinese Occidentalism, both discourses are dominated by males, just as Orientalism rests primarily on Western masculine power.

While the Occidentalist approach obviously challenges the Orientalist representation of the Orient as “the Other,” it is dangerous to essentialize the Occident in the same way as Orientalism did. Also, the Occidentalist approach fails to bring in women as “allies,” which suggests that Occidentalism is also gendered. What seems to be shared by Orientalism and Occidentalism is andocentric discourse that neglects the gendered process that destabilizes a presumably uniform discourse.

Reversing the Gaze: A Feminist Analysis of the Orientalist Gaze

My approach to the Orientalist stereotypes and representation of Asian women is to reverse the positions of gazers and those who are objects of the gaze. This approach follows the examples of feminist scholars who have disputed simplistic and stereotypical representations of Asian women (Chin 2000; Houston 1980; Lai 1998; Lewis 1996; Mazumdar 1989; Shah 1997; Tien 2000; Uchida 1998; Yoshihara,

⁹ Chen coined the term “official-Occidentalism,” used by the Chinese government, while she termed “anti-official Occidentalism” as a counter discourse of the official-Occidentalism, used by opponent groups of the totalitarian government, including the intelligentsia (1995).

2003). While I challenge Western creation of monolithic images of Asian women, I do not intend to construct a uniform representation of American men through the eyes of Japanese women associated with U.S. GIs. Instead, the process of reversing the gaze or subject-object orientation destabilizes the Occidental-self and creates a space for women to express their diverse opinions and views of American men and masculinities, which rarely become the objects of the investigation by non-white other. As Kaplan claims, “white subjectivities can also be destabilized when exposed to the gaze of the Other” (1997: xix), which, in turn, challenges the Orientalist gaze.

Making Japanese women’s viewpoints and experiences the basis of analysis of the Orientalist gaze, I focus on women’s agency and subjectivities. I argue that women can become critical analysts of the multivalent power relations between West and East, America and Japan, American men and Japanese women, and Japanese men and Japanese women in the context of the U.S. military occupation and global militarization. These seemingly rigid and dichotomous power relations are intersected and obscured by tensions, alliance, and resistance along lines of gender, race, sexuality, class, ethnicity, nationality, and more. Reversing the gaze is one way to deconstruct binary opposition constructions and provide a new understanding of Japanese women beyond the Orientalist gaze. I also demonstrate that macro-level changes, such as shifts in power relations between U.S. and Japan over the past half-century, have reshaped GI-Japanese intimacy. Japanese women’s improved socioeconomic status in Japan contributed to changes not only in Western

constructions of the Orient and Oriental women, but also in Japanese women's views of the American men.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 1 addresses methodological issues, the feminist methodology on theorizing and practicing qualitative research, and interpreting and presenting data to the analysis of reversing the gaze. This chapter also discusses the research methods and data collection process, including the selection of research sites and the process of recruiting and interviewing informants. In Chapter 2, I provide historical background of post-World War II Japan that creates the context for racial and sexual liaisons between Japanese women and American soldiers. I discuss the gendered, racialized, and sexualized aspects of the U.S. occupation that shaped Japanese women's and men's lives differently. Chapter 3 continues to reveal the diversity of personal experiences among women associated with GIs in postwar Japan. Using narratives of war bride interviewees, this chapter explores patterns of relationships with American men and discusses their views of America and American GIs. In Chapter 4, I address the role of Okinawa in U.S. global militarism that contributes to the ongoing racial and sexual boundary crossing by Okinawan women and American GIs. At length, I illustrate historical shifts in economic, political, racial, and sexual landscapes of base towns that provide intimate sites (e.g., night clubs and bars) facilitating GI-Japanese intimacy in contemporary Okinawa. In Chapter 5, I use narratives of women associated with American servicemen in Okinawa and explore

Western men and masculinity as seen through the Japanese women's gaze. I analyze how Japanese women's perceptions and understandings of Americans within the context of the U.S. military presence in Okinawa have shaped their relationships with GIs. I also examine racial dynamics of contemporary GI-Japanese intimacy, particularly as a consequence of the global phenomenon of hip-hop culture and its impact on Japanese young adults.

Chapter 1

Feminist Approach to Research: Methodology and Method

This research employs a feminist methodology on theorizing and practicing qualitative research. Feminist methodology refers to an approach to social research that takes a critical stance toward traditional paradigms and theories produced and controlled within male-centered frameworks (Fox and Murry 2001; Hesse-Biber, Leavy, and Yaiser 2004; Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002; Smith 1987). Feminist scholars challenge the andocentric knowledge production that disregards women's personal experience as a research subject and source of knowledge (Hesse-Biber et al. 2004).

I follow the examples of feminist scholars who brought a range of women's experiences and lives into the center of their research as subjects of critical inquiry (Cook and Fonow 1986; Gorelick 1996; Reinhartz 1992; Smith 1987). For example, Dorothy Smith (1987) calls for looking at women's everyday lives as a starting point for feminist research and including women's personal experiences and perspectives in the knowledge building process. Feminist researchers stress the importance of women's experiences and voices in uncovering their gendered lives and relations, a perspective that was excluded in traditional social science research (Berger 2004; Gorelick 1996; Smith 1987). I use women's personal experiences and their viewpoints as valuable sources of knowledge to challenge Eurocentric and patriarchal models of the knowledge-building that objectified and sexualized Asian women as Oriental "other."

In feminist scholarship, gender has been treated as the dominant organizing principle for understanding women's lives and oppressions (Amott and Matthaei 1996; Ferree 1990). However, because of the centrality of gender, other social categories such as race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and nationality have been taken for granted in feminist research (Baca Zinn 1996; Chow 1996; Collins 2000). The intersectional approach offers a framework for integrated analysis to understand how gender and dominant categories such as race, sexuality, class, and nationality are mutually constituted relationships organized around difference (Baca Zinn and Dill 1994; Chow 1996; Collins 2000; Glenn 1999). Many contemporary feminist scholars have employed this intersectional approach to analyze how systems of inequality interact and shape women's lives differently in specific historical settings and social relations (Baca Zinn 1996; Brewer 1997; Collins 1999; Espiritu 1997; Glenn 1999; Gonzalez 1993; hooks 1990; King 1988; Smith 1987; West and Fenstermaker 1995).

The feminist concept of "intersectionality" and "simultaneity" provides a useful framework for the current study. Japanese women's relationships with American GIs develop within the specific context of U.S. military globalization where Japanese women are simultaneously gendered, sexualized, and racialized by the U.S. occupiers. Women's experiences become more diverse and complicated when their gendered and racialized experiences interact with other attributes such as their GI partners' race, class, and rank in the military. Heterogeneity among Japanese women who have diverse social locations and life experiences challenges the homogeneous images of Asian women constructed by the Orientalist gaze.

While my feminist strategy of reversing the gaze intends to create a space for women to talk about their subjective views and understanding of American men, my concern is how my positionality as a researcher influences the research process.

Hesse-Biber and Yaiser (2004) argue that:

Reflexivity can help a researcher both publicly and privately acknowledge that she is not the essential woman... [Reflexivity] is the process through which a researcher recognizes, examines, and understands how her social background, positionality, and assumptions affect the practice of research. The researcher is as much as a product of society and its structures and institutions as the participants she is studying (P. 115).

The practice of research, such as collecting, interpreting, and representing the data, depends on the researcher's knowledge and perspective and social relations based on race, ethnicity, gender, and class, and more (Andersen 1997; Collins 2000; Hesse-Biber and Yaiser 2004; Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002).

The concept of reflexivity is useful in recognizing and examining the power dynamics between the researcher and participants and "to take responsibility for how we exercise the social power that we have" in the research process (Sprague 2001:535). Judith Stacy (1988:23) explains the contradiction between feminist fieldwork practice and exploitative and manipulative aspects of ethnographic products where women's personal stories that they share with the researcher ultimately become data to be processed at an "ethnographic mill." As Fox and Murry (2001:380) point out, "feminists acknowledge that their orientations, actions, interpretations, biases, and interests will become integral to the research process and its outcomes, and they seek to understand how it happens as it is happening during the process of their research." Feminist perspectives make me aware of the impact of my

positionality on all aspects of the research process and also of my responsibility for the process and outcome.

Confidentiality is another important issue in this research. Bentz (1997:121) notes that protecting anonymity of individuals in small communities where the researcher's activities and contacts are common knowledge is extremely challenging. Many of my informants, in the U.S. and Okinawa respectively, are connected through their social and personal networks and they contact with one another on a regular basis. Since some questions deal with sensitive and private issues, my informants' responses would potentially embarrass them if the source of information were revealed. As Bentz (1997) points out, "informants, especially when they have formed a personal relationship with the researcher, may provide information they would not want published" (p. 123). Although I will not use gossip or personal information that is not relevant to my research topic, it is important to reassure that their narratives will maintain the anonymity of these women and will not negatively affect their relationships with other informants or their family, especially their husbands. Because of these concerns, I use pseudonyms and restrict the amount of personal identifying information.

Research Methods

This study uses qualitative research methods to collect data. Sources for this project include in-depth-interviews, ethnographic observations, and archival documents I collected in the U.S. and Japan. A qualitative approach to data

collection is relevant because many aspects of my research questions and issues focus on intimate relationships, personal memories and experiences, and gender and family relations. Qualitative methods such as interviews and ethnographic observation allow me to gain access or to glimpse women's feelings, emotions, and life experience that quantitative methods would not offer (Franklin 1996:253).

I collected interview data from two groups of Japanese women: Japanese "war brides" who met American servicemen in the early post World War II period and moved to the U.S. between the 1950s and the 1960s, and younger generations of Japanese and Okinawan "military wives" who met their American GI partners around U.S. military bases in Okinawa from the late 1980s until the present time.¹⁰ I interviewed 20 Japanese war brides in the U.S. between 2002 and 2004, and in 2004 to 2005, traveled to Okinawa where I interviewed 70 women, including 48 Japanese military wives, and conducted ethnographic fieldwork. In Okinawa, I also conducted informal, unrecorded interviews with young GIs.

Recruiting Japanese War Brides in the U.S.

I recruited Japanese war bride interviewees within the Midwestern states, primarily in Kansas, where I have lived since starting the graduate program in Sociology at the University of Kansas in 1996. My pre-existing social networks, familiarity with the local areas and situations, and relative proximity to war bride

¹⁰ Because of the restriction to the marriage between Japanese women and American GIs coupled with the discriminatory immigration law against Asians, it was not until 1953 under the McCarran-Walter Act that a large scale of war bride immigration started. The peak years of marriage cases between Japanese women and GIs are from 1952 to the early 1960s (Kim 1977).

interviewees convinced me to select Kansas as the primary research site in the U.S. Using my personal connections, I became acquainted with some war brides who were willing to participate in the study. There are small but intimate friendship-based social networks among war brides, which often cross the city limits, country lines, or even the state lines. Once I was introduced to their circles and gained their trust, a snowball sampling method through word-of-mouth communication allowed me to identify and contact prospective interviewees.

The Japanese war brides I interviewed originally came to Kansas and other Midwestern states with their GI husbands during the 1950s through the 1970s. Some women have been living in the same community ever since they arrived in the U.S., while others moved to the current residence after experiencing multiple relocations from one military station to another in the U.S. and overseas. Although Japanese war brides tended to live in dispersed pattern, Chico Herbison, a former professor of African American Studies at University of Kansas, who conducted research on Japanese war brides in Kansas, noted that over 100 Japanese war brides lived in a small city at the peak time.¹¹ While many Japanese war brides settled in Kansas, Herbison also mentioned that an almost equal number of war brides gradually left Kansas and moved elsewhere due to their husband's military orders or personal reasons (Herbison and Schultz 1990).

There is no official record of the Japanese women who came to Kansas as spouses of U.S. servicemen since the end of World War II. The most relevant

¹¹ Personal conversations with Chico Herbison, at University of Kansas.

statistics are those that counted the number of Japanese immigrants, including both male and female, who lived in Kansas: There were 127 Japanese immigrants in the 1950s, 519 in the 1950s and 1,584 in the 1970s (Herbison and Schultz 1990). The lack of official records makes it difficult to estimate population trends of war brides or their distribution patterns in Kansas and other Midwestern states. Despite uncertainties about demographics and current living situations of Japanese war brides in the Midwestern states, my informal conversations with people who have close relationships with war brides and also with some of my war bride friends convinced me that there still is a significant number of Japanese war brides who remain in Midwestern states today.

To begin with, I needed an intermediary who is not only part of the war bride network, but also is willing to bring me into her circle as her friend. I contacted a war bride friend, whom I have known for several years. Once I was introduced to some of her friends and gained their trust, I was able to schedule interviews with each woman individually. Some of these war bride interviewees referred me to their own friends, which enabled me to expand my research network in a relatively short period. Although the snowball method was effective at identifying Japanese war brides within their social networks, there was no guarantee that all the women I contacted would agree to be interviewed. Since I had no idea how many interviewees I could recruit using this method alone, I needed another way to identify more women who were not likely to respond to my snowball network.

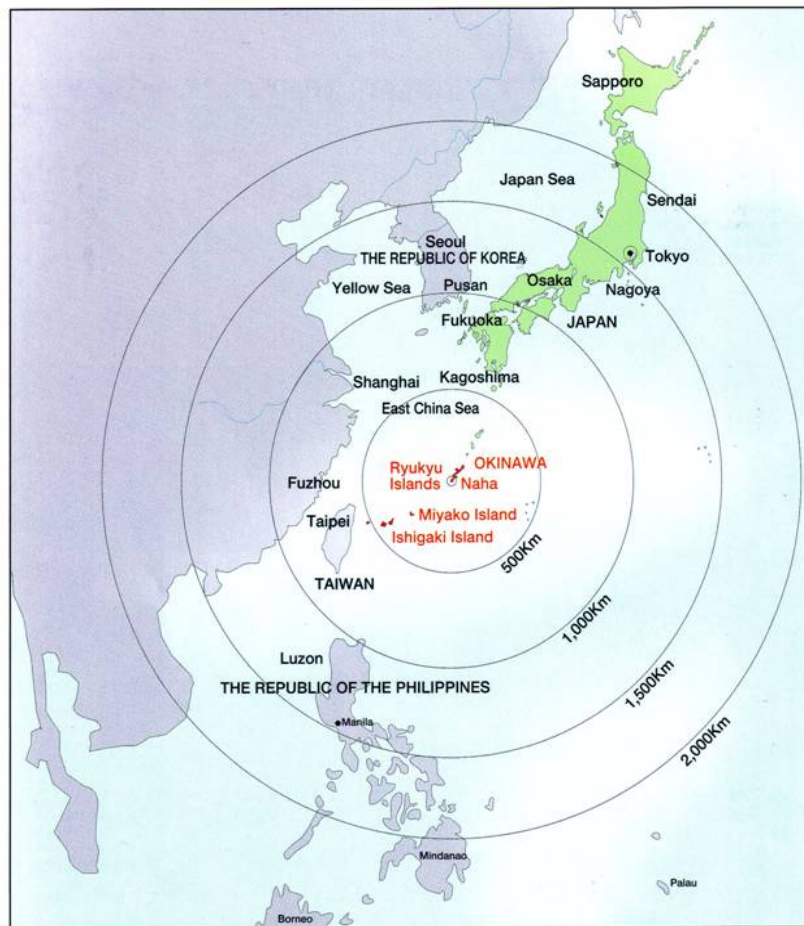
Experimentally, I used Kansas phone books and listed Japanese female names (e.g., Sachiko) with American surnames (e.g., Smith). Some of these women could be Japanese war brides who were listed as heads of households as a result of divorce or death of their American husbands. I made phone calls to all prospective interviewees on the list. When I could not reach them by phone, I mailed them letters explaining the research along with a self-addressed, stamped postcard asking for their responses. Among these women I contacted, more than a dozen of them were war brides and some of them agreed to meet with me for interviews. Using a combination of the snowball method with my other personal connections and the phone book strategy, I estimated there were at least 50 war brides in Kansas alone and more in other Midwestern states I could contact and possibly interview. With some optimism, I set a goal of interviewing 30 war brides.

After I started reaching out to potential interviewees, I began receiving more rejection than acceptances. Recruiting war bride interviewees was more difficult than identifying the war bride population in the Midwestern states. The rejection rate was higher than I anticipated an experience I discuss more freely at the end of this chapter. Despite both expected and unexpected obstacles, I interviewed 20 Japanese war brides in the U.S. Since Japanese war brides are scattered among different cities and communities in various Midwestern states, I traveled frequently to meet, recruit, interview, and revisit informants, especially during the spring and summer of 2004 until departing for Okinawa in late 2004.

Recruiting Okinawan and Japanese Military Wives in Okinawa

Okinawa was my research site in Japan for ethnographic fieldwork and in-depth interviews with younger generations of Japanese women who are married to or courting American GIs. Formally referred to as the Ryūkyū Islands, Okinawa is located at the southernmost tip of Japan in the Pacific Ocean where its capital, Naha, is closer to Shanghai, China and Taipei in Taiwan than to Tokyo (See Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1. Map of Japan and Okinawa, 2004



Source: Courtesy of Okinawa Prefecture, Military Base Affairs Division.

I chose Okinawa as a research site in Japan because of the pervasiveness of U.S. military bases and their long-term impact on Okinawa and its people (see Chapter 4). Within the scope of this project, the high population density of U.S. bases in Okinawa's relatively small geographic area increases opportunities for Okinawan women and GIs to meet and interact, which in turn facilitates intimate relationships between them. Based on these favorable conditions for my research, I expected that Okinawa would provide greater visibility as well as higher accessibility to my target population compared with the rest of Japan.

From late October 2004 to April 2005, I traveled to Okinawa and lived in a base town located in central Okinawa, where U.S. military bases are concentrated. Living in a base town provided a unique environment as these military bases and American GIs are part of the local landscape and part of everyday life. The base town offers various local shops and services, including small but numerous entertainment businesses, such as bars and nightclubs catering to GIs. Since the base town also attracts local Okinawans, tourists from mainland Japan, and immigrant workers from outside Okinawa, particularly from the Philippines, it was a rich ethnographic site for observing cultural, ethnic/racial, sexual, and economic activities. Most important, the base town played a pivotal role in facilitating interracial and sexual encounters for GIs and young Japanese women in Okinawa.

In Okinawa, I focused on recruiting a younger generation of women, primarily in their 20s and 30s, who had married American GIs during the past two decades, mostly between 1990s and 2005. Recruiting interviewees in Okinawa initially

appeared more challenging than recruiting war bride interviewees in the U.S. In Kansas, I was in an advantageous position because I was familiar with the geography and local situations; more importantly, I had pre-existing networks that allowed me to use a snowball sampling method to recruit interviewees. In contrast, I had never visited Okinawa until my research trip. Prior to my departure, my information about Okinawa came mostly from books, the Internet, and a few Okinawan friends I met in the U.S. Due to unfamiliarity with the new environment, including its climate, geography, culture, and living situations, I spent considerable time adjusting to new situations and establishing social networks with new people.

An Okinawan friend, who had finished her studies in the U.S. and returned to Okinawa, came to the airport on my arrival day. She brought me an English newsletter circulated among U.S. military personnel and their families stationed in Okinawa. My friend pointed to a small personal advertisement seeking new members for an informal social circle of women married to U.S. servicemen. My networking began when I contacted the woman who placed the advertisement in the newsletter. When I explained my research project, she, a young military wife, expressed her interest and pleasantly invited me to an upcoming event for members.

Once I was connected to the right person and gained access to her social group, I was able to reach out to a dozen military wives who could be potential interviewees. As in the U.S., some military wives referred me to their friends who were married to GIs. Some military wives were also members of other social groups

where Okinawan and Japanese military wives often were members.¹² Some were formal organizations; others tended to be informal. As I obtained the opportunity to visit these circles and organizations, I reached more potential interviewees, including women who were divorced or separated from their GI husbands. I attended group activities and meetings such as luncheons, workshops, and study groups. Most of these social occasions were informal, small group settings, with friendly atmospheres where conversation came easily. Many of women I interviewed were members of one or two of these social circles and organizations.

Whenever appropriate, I also approached young Japanese and Okinawan women I encountered at base town nightspots, such as bars, night clubs, and live music houses frequented by American GIs.¹³ Some women I spoke to were military wives and girlfriends. Others were drawn to the base town to experience an atmosphere created by American style bars, clubs (e.g., hip hop), and the presence of “real” Americans. There were also women who came to the base town specifically in search of potential GI boyfriends. Most of the women I approached at various nightspots were unwilling to have conversations with me, especially when they found out my purpose. However, there were a few women who agreed to participate in my project and promised to meet with me at later dates. Using personal connections and networks I established in Okinawa and recruiting people by becoming a part of the

¹² To protect privacy and anonymity of the informants, I avoid providing the descriptions of their organizational features.

¹³ Historically, there is a connection between the base town and rock music in Okinawa. Many Okinawan rock musicians emerged during the Vietnam War era in response to the demands from American GIs stationed in Okinawa. Today, there are still some live music houses in base towns that continue to attract GI audience.

local scene, I interviewed nearly 70 Japanese and Okinawan women by the beginning of April 2005.

Interviews

For the interviews conducted in the U.S. and Okinawa, I used semi-structured and open-ended questions. In-depth interviewing each woman individually enabled me to gather detailed, intimate information that cannot be obtained through large-scale survey methods (Cook and Fonow 1986). Moreover, a relatively open-ended, less structured interview technique allowed access to women's ideas, thoughts, emotions, and memories in their own words and from their subjective experiences (Reinharz 1992:19). This strategy worked well for war brides and military wives since our conversations often evolved into intimate, sensitive, and emotional memories and experiences that involved subtlety, nuance, and unvoiced expressions, which I would not have detected if I had used survey methods.

Most interviews, both in the U.S. and in Okinawa, were face-to-face conversations. A few interviews were done by telephone when circumstances kept me from meeting informants. The majority of interviewees agreed to have our conversations tape-recorded for transcription. Interviews usually lasted for one to two hours, depending on the informant's schedule. I conducted interviews primarily in Japanese; few war bride informants chose to speak in English. For military wives and girlfriends in Okinawa, all interviews were conducted in Japanese. All interviews with war brides took place in their homes, whereas quite a few women I interviewed

in Okinawa preferred to meet in public places such as coffee shops or restaurants, or in my office.¹⁴ On several occasions, interviews took place at on-base military housing. In such cases, informants helped me obtain a visitor's permit at a base checkpoint.¹⁵

Ethnographic Fieldwork in Okinawa

During my stay in Okinawa, I became friends with Yukie, a young woman who owns a cozy bar in the base town. With her permission, I used her shop as an observation and socialization site. Whenever possible, I initiated conversations with her patrons, the majority of whom were young enlisted American servicemen. At the early stage of my fieldwork, Yukie introduced me to her regular GI customers who were, according to her, trouble-free and well-behaved at her bar. As I frequented Yukie's bar, these patrons gradually accepted me as a regular and most agreed to meet with me in private settings for interviews.

As a participant observer, I also engaged in conversations with many locals including: Okinawan shopkeepers in the base town, Okinawan and Japanese employees working on the military bases, taxi drivers authorized to drive inside military bases, a local police officer responsible for the base town and nearby area, an African American attorney assisting Japanese women with legal issues involving their

¹⁴ Throughout my stay in Okinawa, I was able to use an office space by courtesy of generous people in a local community who supported my research project. The office was located in an old part of the base town where local retail stores, bars, and restaurants formed a shopping arcade for local Okinawan.

¹⁵ Military ID holders, including their spouses, could bring their friends and families to the military bases at their own responsibility. As a rule, ID holders must accompany their guests all the time until they leave the base. However, the rule was not enforced as strictly as it was stated. In some occasions, I was able to stay on the base freely without my escort once I passed through the base checkpoint.

GI husbands or boyfriends, staff of the Okinawan women’s center (*Tiruru*), and a co-founder of the *Amerasian* school in Okinawa. These people provided viewpoints and information about current economic situations of the base town, political issues regarding U.S. military bases in Okinawa, their perceptions of U.S. GIs, and GI-Japanese intimacy.

War Bride Interviewees in the U.S.

Of the twenty Japanese war brides I interviewed in the U.S., three of them were from Okinawa, and the other seventeen were from different regions of mainland Japan. The ages of twenty war bride informants ranged from 68 to 82 years, with an average age of 73 years at the time of research (see Table 1.1). All interviewees experienced the post-war U.S. occupation during their teenage or early adult years. Nearly two-thirds of the informants met their future American husbands in the 1950s in Japan and moved to the U.S. shortly after marrying. The rest of the women married in the 1960s and later came to the U.S. with their husbands.

Table 1.1 Age of war bride interviewees at the time of research, 2002-2004

<i>Age</i>	<i>N = 20</i>	<i>%</i>
Younger than 70 years	4	20
70-74 years	8	40
78 years or older	8	40
	20	100

Most war bride informants were in their late 20s or early 30s, which is considered past marriageable age when they married their future husbands; only a few married while in their early 20s (see Table 1.2). The prolonged war and its aftermath,

created an unfavorable sex ratio between young Japanese women and men, since many men of marriageable age were away, disabled, or deceased. Indeed, some war brides mentioned difficulties in meeting potential Japanese marriage partners. Later marriages among war brides might have affected traditional gendered age comparability where women tend to be younger than their husbands. While over a half of war brides were younger than their GI husbands, the other half of women was older than their husbands.

Table 1.2 Age of war bride interviewees at the time of marriage

<i>Age</i>	<i>N = 20</i>	<i>%</i>
Younger than 25 years	5	25
25-30 years	8	40
31 years or older	7	35
	20	100

The racial identities of war brides' husbands were overwhelmingly white; only two women married men of color. To the best of my knowledge, at least four to five more identifiable war brides who married non-white servicemen currently live in Kansas. My war bride friend contacted some of these women, but none agreed to be interviewed. At the time of interviews, nearly two-thirds of the informants lived with their husbands; others remained in single ever since their husbands' deaths. A few women had divorced their husbands and later married American veterans in the U.S. (see Table 1.3). The majority of Japanese war brides in this study worked outside their homes before and after they came to the U.S. However, only a few women were still employed at the time of interviews. The rest of the informants had a generally relaxed lifestyle and spent their spare time doing a variety of social, community, and

family activities with their friends and family. Since most war bride informants have leisure and flexibility in their daily schedules, this allowed me to spend ample time with each informant and develop a degree of friendship.

Table 1.3 Marital status of war bride interviewees at the time of research, 2002-2004

<i>Marital status</i>	<i>N = 20</i>	<i>%</i>
Married ^a	11	55
Single (Widowed)	7	35
Single (Divorced)	2	10
	20	100

Note: ^a Married includes two women who remarried after divorce.

When I visited war bride informants for interviews, they warmly welcomed me. Even though it was the first time for me to meet most of these women, they treated me as if we knew each other well. Conversations over tea, sweets, and Japanese snacks, which they served, made the tape-recorded interview more informal and relaxed. Some informants even prepared lunch or dinner for me. They were willing to talk with me so long as time permitted and often encouraged me to visit them again. During interviews, some women were more reserved and gave minimal responses to my questions. Others were open, expressive, and eager to share personal experiences that involved sensitive emotional issues associated with war, death, family, marriage, separation, divorce, and relationships with American men in the past.

Some stories were heartwarming and amusing, so we shared many laughs. Others were too painful and emotional to listen to without sharing tears with my informants. Each woman had a different story and different way to narrate it. Some

women who were in my parents' age group, remembered events that occurred more than a half-century ago, and they particularly impressed me. These women narrated their stories in chronological order, which turned their narratives into summaries of their life stories or short biographies.

Military Wife and Girlfriend Interviewees in Okinawa

I interviewed 68 women in Okinawa, including 48 women who married to or previously married to U.S. servicemen stationed in Okinawa. For the purpose of this dissertation, I selected 43 women who met the study's three major criteria: age (between 20s and 30s), the time when their relationships with their husbands developed (between late 1980s and 2005), and marital status (currently or previously married to GIs). Among the 43 military wives selected, 38 had intact marriage relationships at the time of research while another 5 women were single mothers raising bi-racial child(ren) after separation or divorce from their GI husbands. Two-thirds of military wives whose relationships were intact were full time housewives and relied primarily on their husbands' incomes for costs of living. All the single mothers worked outside their homes to earn a living; none were receiving child support from their children's fathers regularly at the time of interviews.

Approximately two-thirds of the 43 interviewees are native Okinawans; the rest of the women are identified as "mainlanders" who were born and grew up in various regions of mainland Japan.

The majority of the 43 military wife informants were in their 30s, ranging in age from 24 to 39, with an average age of 31 years at the time of research (see Table 1.4). There were age discrepancies between Japanese women and their GI husbands. In my sample, as Table 1.5 shows, more than half the military wives were older than their husbands. Sixty percent of military wives married enlisted Marines, which is characteristic of a GI-Japanese marriage pattern in Okinawa where enlisted marines represent the largest military personnel by far (see Table 2.2 in Chapter 3). Most Marines in Okinawa are young, between the age of 18 and 22 whose first overseas experience happened to be Okinawa and are stationed in Okinawa for a short period (Akibayashi and Takazato 2009:262). Not coincidentally, two-thirds of the wives of Marines in Okinawa are older than their husbands.

Table 1.4 Age of war bride interviewees and their GI husbands at the time of research, 2004-2005

<i>Age</i>	<i>Military Wives</i>		<i>GI Husbands</i>	
	<i>N = 43</i>		<i>N = 43</i>	
Younger than 25 years	1	2	7	16
25-29 years	7	16	14	33
30-34 years	26	61	12	28
35 years or older	9	21	10	23
	43	100 %	43	100 %

Another distinctive feature of GI-Japanese marriage in Okinawa is that wives tend to have higher educational attainments than do their GI husbands. As Table 1.5 shows, 80% of the women have education beyond high school including technical colleges, 2 year colleges, 4 year colleges, and graduate school. There were also many informants who spent time traveling abroad prior to their marriages, participating in

home-stay programs, or attending schools, particularly in the U.S. Compared with the high educational backgrounds among their wives, GIs' educational attainments were minimal. Although almost all GI husbands completed high school, fewer than 20% of the husbands completed education above high school (see Table 1.5).

Table 1.5 Educational attainment of military wives and their GI husbands, 2004-2005

<i>Highest Education Achieved</i>	<i>Military Wives</i>		<i>GI Husbands</i>	
	<i>N = 43</i>		<i>N = 43</i>	
4 year college or higher	10	23	5 ^a	12
2 year college	24	56	2 ^a	5
High school	9	21	35	81
Less than High school	0	0	1	2
	43	100 %	43	100 %

Note: ^aAmong seven GI husbands who attained 4 year college (N=5) and 2 year college (N=2) education, three of them used GI Bill to attend college education, which indicates that they had only high school degree at the time of enlistment.

Racial identities of GI husbands were more diverse than those of war bride informants; whites (53%), however, still are the largest racial group.¹⁶ One major change was that non-white GIs, especially African Americans (28%), have high marriage rates, followed by Hispanic (14%) and Asian Americans (5%) (see Table 1.6). As I discuss in Chapter 5, shifts in racial compositions among GI husbands may be attributed partly to changes in consumption patterns and tastes among Japanese young people, especially those who began embracing a newly arrived American culture associated with hip-hop music in the late 1980s.

¹⁶ For those women who were single at the time of the interview due to divorce or separation, I counted the race of their previous partner.

Table 1.6 Racial identity of Military Wives' husbands, 2002-2004

<i>Race</i>	<i>N = 43</i>	<i>%</i>
White	23	53
Black	12	28
Hispanic	6	14
Asian	2	5
	43	100

In addition to 43 military wives, I used another 18 women's interview data as supplemental sources. Among these 18 women, 10 ("military girlfriends") were involved in romantic relationships with GI boyfriends at the time of interviews; 8 women ("ex-military girlfriends") did not have military partners, but all of women had been engaged in relationships with GIs in the past. Military girlfriends had become involved in relationships with GIs recently, mostly within the past two years. These women were at varying stages of commitment in their relationships: some planned to marry their GI boyfriends and others had just begun dating GIs. Most of the ex-military girlfriends, by contrast, were either actively seeking GI boyfriends or waiting for opportunities to meet GIs. Since GI-Japanese intimacy is an ongoing process in Okinawa, including these women's personal experiences and the views of GIs enhances narratives of military wives.

Archival Data

Historical and contemporary documentation of issues related to the U.S. military in Okinawa are collected at public and university libraries, city hall archives, and women's resource centers (*Tiruru*). These institutions hold many local

publications contributed by Okinawan scholars, writers, and social organizations, which provide insiders' viewpoints. Also many featured documents and articles focusing on various aspects of U.S. militarization in Okinawa and in a global context address broad and gender-specific issues that are often overlooked by mainstream scholarship and media on mainland Japan. I also visited museums and historical sites that not only provided visual and written information about Okinawa's rich cultures and histories, but also on the tragic history of Okinawa, including the Japanese colonization, the Battle of Okinawa, and the U.S. continuing military occupation.

There are many English publications available for American readers in Okinawa. These publications such as entertainment guidebooks, military newsletters and brochures, military marriage handbooks, and yellow pages, provide a variety of information for American military community. These publications helped me look into various aspects of military life in Okinawa. The military operated media such as a daily newspaper, *Pacific Stars & Stripes*, and military radio and TV provided various information from the perspectives of the U.S. military, which helped me monitor military events and activities that might affect my research.

After completing data collection in Okinawa, I went to mainland Japan and stayed one month before returning to the U.S. During my stay, I conducted library and archival research, mostly at the National Diet Library (NDL) in Tokyo. Microfilm copies of GHQ/SCAPS (General Headquarters/Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers) records contain historical information on Japan and Japanese people from the perspectives of U.S. occupiers during the immediate postwar

occupation period.¹⁷ These records consist of approximately 340,000 microfilmed versions of documents ranging from top-secret letters, newspaper articles, and survey results, to personal memos issued during the occupation period.

Information from Japanese publications including historical documents, literatures, scholarly journals, and statistical data to investigate postwar relations between Japan, the U.S. and Okinawa was important. I also studied Japanese popular magazines and newspapers of the early postwar period. These sources aided understanding societal reactions to the American presence in Japan, specifically to interracial dating and marriage between GIs and Japanese women, from the Japanese people's viewpoint. Most materials I collected in Okinawa and on the mainland were written in Japanese language by native Japanese or Okinawan authors. These materials increased access to a variety of historical and contemporary documents that are not available in English or in the U.S. Japanese and English publications made it possible for me to convey both insider and outsider perspectives.

Data Analysis

Qualitative researchers often use inductive strategies for analyzing data and coding as an analytic tool to locate key themes, patterns, ideas, and concepts within data (Charmaz 2004; Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2004). This inductive approach requires

¹⁷ GHQ /SCAP records (RG331) consist of a variety of documents from important official documents, newspaper articles, to memos issued during the occupation period under supervision of General Headquarters/Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. These documents are stored in over 10,000 boxes in the National Archives in the U.S. Microfilmed versions are created for the purpose of making GHQ /SCAP records accessible at National Diet Library in Japan. There are approximately 340,000 microfilmed pieces of GHQ /SCAP documents.

the researcher to study data thoroughly, until themes and concepts emerge (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2004). I used an inductive strategy to organize and analyze my interview data. The method shaped interpretation of the data through examining stories and experiences from informants' point of view (Charmaz 2004).

To analyze interview data, I began by transcribing all interview material using the same languages of the interviews. The majority of the interviewees used Japanese. For these interviews, I used Japanese language to transcribe and analyze data, without translating into English. Using the original language throughout the data analysis process prevented me from losing subtle, implicit, and cultural meanings informants expressed in their narratives. Certain phrases and words, especially culturally grounded expressions, often cannot be translated into English, which made the writing process in English challenging. I focused on conveying the meanings of what informants' narratives intended to express as much as possible rather than on translating their narratives literally. After transcription, I created descriptive codes for the exact words of my informants followed by the next step of coding, which allowed me to develop a set of analytical categories based on *my* insights and interpretation (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2004:412; Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002). This process of developing more abstract and conceptual categories enables researchers “to synthesize, to explain, and to understand [their] data and to identify patterned relationships within it” (Charmaz 2004: 497).

Limitations: Recruiting Interviewees in the U.S. and Okinawa

With two groups of women in my research, I had different experiences and challenges for each group. For the war bride interviewees, similar to those scholars who did research on Asian war brides in the U.S., this research was based on “small scale, location-specific, unrepresentative samples” (Saenz, Hwang, and Aguirre 1994). Difficulties of identifying and recruiting war brides, who are scattered throughout the country, give researchers little choice. Similar to others (Glenn 1986; Herbison and Schultz 1990; Schnepf and Yui 1955; Strauss 1972), I relied mainly on personal networking and expected to recruit participants within a specific locality. However, word-of-mouth along with my personal network enabled me to reach women living in different parts of Kansas and other Midwestern states. This helped me avoid relying exclusively on a small group of war brides living in the same community, which in turn reduced the likelihood that informants would be identified easily by other participants. Nonetheless, confidentiality remains a major issue in this study.

As I mentioned earlier, I initially set a goal of recruiting 30 interviewees for each group of women, war brides and military wives. However, the rejection rate among war brides was higher than I anticipated. Other researchers who interviewed war brides also noted the difficulty of recruiting potential subjects (see Creef 2000; Herbison and Schultz 1990). I received more rejections than acceptances from war brides when I contacted them directly or through my intermediary. Some war brides simply said they were too busy to meet me. Others gave no explanations; but were

reticent and indicated they were not interested in the project. Women who initially agreed to participate in the study but later changed their minds were also notable.¹⁸ Some of these women changed their minds after they talked about this project to their husbands or friends and started conceiving of me as a potential troublemaker to their private lives. Others simply stopped answering or returning my phone calls.

There were also war brides who reacted suspiciously toward me because they assumed I would exploit their personal stories for my benefit. These women tended to link interviews to commercialized book publication and interpreted my research as potentially harmful to individual war brides who shared their stories and to the war bride community. They assumed my research would misrepresent their stories and reinforce negative perceptions of war brides. Some women's negative reactions to my research were attributed to a Japanese TV documentary featuring life experiences of war brides living in the U.S.¹⁹ Many informants knew the documentary, but none of them liked it.

One told me that her circle of war bride friends was quite upset about the way they were portrayed in the film by the Japanese media. Other informants observed that war brides were depicted as pitiful victims of their marriages to American soldiers. One informant commented: "They [Japanese documentary producers] picked someone who lived in poverty and misery in a trailer house for interview as a representative of us. She could not speak either Japanese or English fluently." These

¹⁸ There were 26 women who initially agreed to participate in the study. However, 6 of them later changed their minds and decided to withdraw from the study.

¹⁹ The documentary entitled "*Umi O Wattata Hanayometachi*" (Brides who crossed the Pacific Ocean) was in part shot in Kansas and broadcasted by the Tokyo Television in 1985 (Williams 1992).

women blamed the documentary for reinforcing negative images and stereotypes of war brides among the general public in Japan. The film also influenced war brides' perceptions of "professionals" who investigate, interpret, and report "findings" about war brides in their own ways, which might explain some women's reluctance to participate in my research.²⁰ Considering the stigma attached to women associated with American servicemen in postwar Japan (see Chapter 2), the high rejection rate among war brides convinced me that they continue to bear an emotional burden of their past memories, even after more than a half century.

Unlike situations with war bride informants in the U.S., I had few rejections and ambiguous responses from military wives I contacted in Okinawa. Most women I met on various occasions expressed genuine interest in my project and said they wanted to learn about other military wives' situations through participating. Once I established a network, reaching my goal of recruiting 30 military wives was much easier than recruiting 20 war bride interviewees in the U.S. The process of collecting data was successful, but there were several issues I had to negotiate and make decisions for the best results.

My original research plan in Okinawa was to collect all data, including 30 interviews and historical and contemporary documents on issues of gender, sexuality, intimacy, and the U.S. military, in three months. Time passed quickly in the field; at

²⁰ Herbison told me that recruiting war bride participants living in Kansas for a documentary film "Quiet Passages" was also affected by the same Japanese TV documentary. Because he and his production crews were unable to find sufficient number of war bride participants in the film, they filmed a group interviews with war brides' children (personal conversations with Herbison at University of Kansas).

one point, I had to make a decision whether to withdraw from the field and return to the U.S. This was not an easy decision. By the end of the third month in Okinawa, I had become familiar with my new environment and was reaching wider social networks. I extended my stay in Okinawa for another two months to benefit from friendships and networks I had established. Although the changes in my original schedule affected future plans, the result was positive: I could interview nearly 70 women before leaving the field. However, this also created problems.

For one thing, I had an overwhelming number of tape-recorded interviews to be transcribed, categorized, and analyzed. Each interview lasted between 60 minutes and 120 minutes. Transcribing all the tape-recorded interviews took much longer than I anticipated. Furthermore, the large sample size created a discrepancy in the number of participants between contemporary military wives (N = 43) and war brides (N = 20). Instead of reducing the sample of contemporary women to half its size, I decided to use all interview data. This prevented me from making decisions as to whom to include and whom to leave out of in the study. The substantial numbers of younger generation of interviewees enabled me to see a general trend of GI-Japanese intimacy in present day Okinawa.

Extended fieldwork in Okinawa also enabled me to interview more women who had different patterns of relationships with GIs and use these women's interview data as supplemental sources. These women included single mothers of bi-racial children fathered by GI husbands or boyfriends and women who had out-of-wedlock children; women who were in courting relationships with GIs; and women who were

actively looking for GI partners. Inclusion of these stories added more diverse voices from women in contemporary Okinawa.

Chapter 2

Racialized, Gendered and Sexualized Experience: U.S. Occupation and Early Postwar Japan

Prologue

On August 15, 1945, the Japanese people heard their “divine monarch” Emperor Hirohito’s voice for the first time, announcing Japan’s surrender to the Allied powers through a radio broadcast (Bailey 1996; Behr 1990).²¹ By the time of Japan’s surrender, hundreds of American air raids, which started in the early 1940s, and two atomic bombs had caused huge civilian casualties, homelessness, and the devastation of millions of homes and buildings in targeted cities (Allinson 1997; Bailey 1996).²² With Japan’s unconditional surrender, Allied occupation of Japan began, lasting until 1952 in mainland Japan and until 1972 in Okinawa.²³

Although the Allied occupation force was composed not only of the U.S. but also of ten more nations, the U.S. dominated the occupation from the start.²⁴ By late 1945, some 430,000 U.S. troops were stationed in Japan, overshadowing other Allied military presence.²⁵ The U.S. also controlled most of the important positions in the core administrative organ, Supreme Commander for the Allied Power (SCAP), also

²¹ Though it was controversial, the U.S. occupation authority decided to preserve the Imperial system and retain Hirohito as a “puppet leader of Japan” rather than prosecuting him as a war criminal (Sakai 2006:181). Under the new Japanese Constitution, the Emperor was defined as a “symbol of the state and of the unity of the people” with only ceremonial powers (Behr 1990:362).

²² For a detailed postwar history of Japan, including cultural and socioeconomic conditions, also see Arai (1988), Dower (1999), Gordon (1993), and Takemae (1988, 2002).

²³ The U.S. administrated the occupation of Japan differently between mainland Japan and Okinawa. See Appendix: History of Okinawa.

²⁴ The Allied powers were originally composed of 11 nations, including the Allied Four Power Commission (the U.S., Britain, the Soviet Union, and the Republic of China), which was established for occupied Germany, and India, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, France, the Netherlands, and the Philippines (Takemae 2002:98).

referred to as General Headquarters (GHQ) (Allinson 1997; Takemae 2002).²⁶ With an overwhelming U.S. military presence and monopoly on power in occupied Japan, the *Allied* occupation became synonymous with *U.S.* occupation.

Occupation of Japan as the “White Man’s Burden”

Some historians called the occupation of Japan the “White Man’s Burden,” since it was white conquerors, specifically American victors, who dictated the political and economic agendas aimed at demilitarizing and democratizing the conquered “Oriental” people of Japan (see Dower 1999; Koshiro 1999; Perry 1980). According to Hamer (2008), the “White Man’s Burden” is understood as the responsibility of white races to guide non-Western, “backward” people toward a more civilized way of life. Non-western peoples were referred to as “children” who were waiting to be developed and civilized by white “adults” (Hamer 2008).²⁷

Similarly, U.S. occupiers used an adult-child analogy in which the Japanese people as a whole were perceived as a “boy” of twelve in “his” development, while the Anglo-Saxon was an adult male (Bailey 1996). To American occupiers, one of their responsibilities as adults was to evangelize the American way of life to the Japanese from a European colonial idealist goal of a “civilizing” them (Perry

²⁵ While the Soviet Union contributed 70,000 troops and the British Commonwealth (Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and India) with 40,000 troops, the remaining Allied nation, China, failed to contribute any military forces toward the Japanese occupation because of the outbreak of civil war at home (see Takemae 2002:93-94).

²⁶ American General, Douglas MacArthur, exercised sole power and command in every aspect of occupation policies as the Supreme Commander for the Allied Power (Buhite 2008; Takemae 2002).

²⁷ See the Kipling Society web site (<http://www.kipling.org.uk/>) for Rudyard Kipling’s poem, *The White Man’s Burden*.

1980:xiii).²⁸ Dower (1999:23) also notes that Japan exhibited exoticism as “a pagan, ‘Oriental’ society,” which attracted a “messianic fervor by white men” who were self-righteously and enthusiastically engaged in a “Christian mission.”²⁹

The ideological concept of “White Man’s Burden” highlighted the racialized process of Orientalization, which justified the inevitability of occupation of Japan by the superior white race. Koshiro (1999:16) points out that the U.S. used the concept of white supremacy as the manipulative instrument to make the Japanese “accept a ‘proper’ sense of relations between the white victor and the colored vanquished.” Defined by U.S. occupiers, this new power relationship made the Japanese people comply with occupation reforms and policies at home while legitimizing a new American (white) leadership in Asia, replacing the Japanese (non-white) former colonizer (Koshiro 1999).

Castration of Japan and the Gendered Occupation

With its emphasis on white supremacy, the “White Man’s Burden” reinforced the Orientalization of Japanese people, who were simultaneously racialized, gendered, and sexualized by the American victors in the context of the occupation. This Orientalization process shaped Japanese men’s and women’s postwar experiences differently, which has complicated the genderless and monolithic images

²⁸ Historically, the idea of the “White Man’s Burden,” centering on an assumption of superiority of Western civilization and the white race over a non-white populous, had been a crucial aspect of Western expansionism and colonization in the nineteenth century and before (Perry 1980).

²⁹ Dower (1999) notes that Americans’ crusading zeal civilizing the Japanese and carrying out its Christian mission there did not exist in occupied Germany because the Germans lacked racial and religious “exoticism” that the Japanese people exhibited.

of U.S. occupation of Japan. Japan's defeat meant the symbolic castration of Japanese men by their white conquerors, who not only viewed Oriental male chauvinism as a threat to global security but also as a feudalistic patriarchal oppressor of Japanese women. Japanese women were represented as victims of a domestic patriarchy who needed to be liberated "as recipients of American liberal feminist tutelage" (Yoneyama 2005:892), while these women were simultaneously perceived as sexual objects for the occupation troops.

The demilitarization of Japan was, figuratively, a castration of Japanese men both outside and inside Japan. Japan lost its military power in Asia, while its wartime heavy industry, symbolizing masculine power, was forced to close (Allinson 1997).³⁰ In addition to their relinquishment of militarized masculine power and production, Japanese men also lost sovereignty in their traditionally male domains of political, administrative, and economic spheres, which contributed to the reconstruction of the traditional gender relationships. Koikari (2005) argues that a crucial aspect of Japan's democratization was to liberate oppressed Japanese women from "Oriental male chauvinism." The occupation gender reforms emphasized the legal aspect of equality between men and women, who lacked rights of access to education, employment, and political representation and participation (Allinson 1997; Nishi 1985; Morosawa 1971; Nagahara and Yoneda 1996).³¹

³⁰ A forced closure of Japan's heavy industry affected Japan's economic recovery and also imposed the economic isolation from international markets (Allinson 1997).

³¹ The new civil code abolished women's subordination to patriarchy in the home and preferential treatment for men (e.g., inheritance practices). It also regulated parental power over a child in private affairs such as marriage (see Allinson 1997; Nishi 1985; Morosawa 1971; Nagahara and Yoneda 1996). It is remarkable to note that the occupation authority granted Japanese women suffrage while its

On one level, women gained more access to public life through paid employment, political participation, and new social networks outside the family. Theoretically, women's new circumstances would help Japanese women improve their socioeconomic status in postwar Japan (Liddle and Nakajima 2000:160). In reality, however, the devastation of the country forced a majority of women to focus on daily survival. Although a shortage of food and other resources affected almost the entire population, children and women (especially young women, who lost their parents during the war, and widows with children) were most vulnerable to conditions in early post-war Japan (Tanaka 2002).

The Arrival of Occupation Forces

Prior to the arrival of Allied forces, Japan's leading newspaper, *Asahi Shinbun* (Asahi Newspaper), published an article that provided Japanese women gender-specific "instructions" on how to behave when encountering occupation troops. While Japanese people were discouraged from having direct contact with occupation troops, women were warned "not to lose pride as 'Japanese women' and always stay on the alert" (*Asahi Shinbun* 1945). Women were also instructed "not to dress provocatively and never nurse their children in public" so as to avoid unwanted attention from occupation troops (*Asahi Shinbun* 1945). Widespread rumors of anticipated gang rapes of Japanese women by occupation forces drove many women and their children in large cities to flee to the countryside (Duus 1979).

members continued to debate whether to grant suffrage to American women in the U.S. at that time (Koikari 2005).

Several of the Japanese women I interviewed shared their observations and personal experiences of the immediate postwar period, including the arrival of occupation troops. Miyako was thirteen years old when the war ended. Miyako said she was aware that Allied occupation forces were coming to her region because of the rumor of anticipated sexual assaults by occupation forces. Her father told the family to lock all the doors and windows of the house and to stay inside quietly during the early occupation days.

Miyako mentioned that her house was located in close proximity to the red-light district, which worried her father about his daughters. She saw Americans for the first time when they started appearing in her neighborhood:

We lived just a few of blocks away from a red-light district. I saw American soldiers, who were passing by on the street in jeeps or by foot right in front of my house.... They were going to the prostitution houses. The street was very narrow, the seeing the American jeeps in traffic scared me. This was the first time that I had seen jeeps (automobiles)....

Miyako noted that American GIs driving through her neighborhood gave chewing gum to Japanese children. American GIs, throwing chewing gum, chocolate, or cigarettes to Japanese people from their jeeps, are commonly remembered postwar scenes by older generations of Japanese. To some Japanese, this was remembered as a friendly gesture by Americans, who liked children, and gave away American sweets. To other Japanese, it was symbolic of an occupation that made all Japanese people (from children to adults) into “beggars” without pride (Takami 1959).

Like Miyako, Natsu witnessed the arrival of occupation forces in her home region in Japan. She lived in one of the “fortunate” regions that escaped Allied air

raids during the war and her family did not have trouble finding food. “I did not really feel that the war was actually going on,” said Natsu. However, the arrival of occupation troops in her area convinced Natsu of Japan’s defeat and its consequence. Natsu clearly remembered a stream of American military tanks and trucks passing ceaselessly on a highway near her neighborhood. She mentioned that the military procession to the U.S. camp caused loud noises lasting all day long.

Natsu also told me that major buildings such as department stores, hospitals and hotels in her city were confiscated by Allied forces for their own use, which in her eyes meant “there were occupation soldiers everywhere in town!” In her post-war recollection, Natsu had a vivid memory of the so-called “Black Cat,” an African American paratroop that came to her city:

Well, they were all black [soldiers] and they were called “Black Cats.” Everybody wore a black-cat-patch on his uniform. All of them were black.... And, at the middle of the night, they came out to the town [from their camp]. We could not see them well. They were wicked because they threw stones at streetlights and broke them. This made the town dark, so it was even more difficult to see them.... There was a rumor that women might be raped. It became dark around 8:30pm in the summer, so we were told not to go outside after dark. If it was absolutely necessary for us to go out at night, we had to walk together in a group of 3 or 4.³²

Because of the behavior of the Black Cats, especially in the early days of occupation, people in the city stereotypically viewed all black servicemen as “dangerous.”

According to Natsu, this was a major reason why there were few Japanese women who married black GIs in her city.

³² Natsu also mentioned that GIs came to a Japanese neighborhood with the hope of exchanging chocolates and chewing gums for a Japanese flag as a victor’s regalia. Perry (1980) noted that souvenir hunting was a popular activity among American GIs and “GI shoppers,” who sought kimonos, swords, and battle flags, even in the early days after their initial landing.

Sawada Miki, a founder of the Elizabeth Summers Home in Japan, stated that the black soldiers in Natsu's home city had "one of the worst" reputations among the black soldiers stationed in Japan, which made it difficult for "part-Negro children" to live without resentment from the local residents (Trumbull 1967:283). As I discuss in Chapter 3, in addition the stereotype of black soldiers as being dangerous, white racism against black GIs in the military contributed to shaping Japanese perceptions of black GIs and their Japanese lovers.

The Conquered Bodies and Sexuality: Institutionalization of Prostitution

From the perspectives of Japanese authorities, a major issue was protection of Japanese women from anticipated mass rapes by U.S. occupation forces. As many historians and scholars noted, Japanese fears and anxieties about American soldiers' sexual behavior mirrored Japanese soldiers' atrocities in the recent past. Japanese soldiers committed countless brutal crimes against civilians, including gang rapes of local women in Japanese-occupied territories in Asian countries (Duus 1979; Hicks 1995; Koshiro 1999; Tanaka 2002; Watanabe 1995).³³ The Japanese Imperial Army institutionalized "military sexual slavery" involving "comfort women" (*jūgun Ianfu*) during World War II, forcing hundreds of Asian women into its system to "comfort" Japanese armies stationed overseas (Hicks 1995; Oh 2001; Watanabe 1995).

Similar to Imperial Japan's institutionalized sexual slavery, Japanese authorities in occupied Japan organized licensed sexual establishments, known as the

³³ The Rape of Nanjin in 1937 is particularly notorious among the military sexual violence and crimes that Japanese military committed during the wartime.

Rest and Amusement Association (RAA), for Allied occupation troops. While the comfort women system was created to sustain Japanese soldiers' morale and discipline and to protect Japanese soldiers from venereal diseases, the RAA was designed to protect Japan's "respectable" women from militarized sexual threats by Western powers (Molasky 1999; Watanabe 1995). Commodification of women's bodies and sexualities began as an institutionalized national project financed and administered by the Japanese government. Lie (1997:251) argues that the Japanese state functioned as a "pimp" in the 1940s, for its role in controlling women's bodies and sexualities. Lie's argument suggests that U.S. occupation authorities did not completely dismantle Japan's patriarchal apparatus. Instead, Japanese women's bodies became politicized, militarized sexual objects in new postwar power relations between Japan and the U.S.

Former Japanese prostitutes, *geishas*, and bar hostesses, who served their "own" men prior to Japan's surrender, were initially recruited in the name of "national security" (Takemae 2002).³⁴ However, a shortage of these "professional" women caused authorities to target ordinary women, particularly poor women who might be willing to work for the RAA in exchange for food, shelter, and the promise of a high income. A large signboard with the following text appeared in downtown Tokyo to recruit prospective female workers:

To new Japanese women...as part of urgent national facilities to deal with the postwar, we are seeking the active cooperation of new Japanese women to

³⁴ Interestingly and ironically, a first group of Japanese women who volunteered to work at the RAA were granted "official thanks" for their patriotic sacrifice in front of the Imperial Palace (Takemae 2002:68).

participate in the great task of comforting the occupation force...Female *office clerks* (my emphasis added), aged between eighteen and twenty-five. Housing, clothing, and food supplied (Dower 1999:126-127).

A similar RAA's advertisement was placed in a Japanese newspaper which was translated into English and even quoted in an article in the *New York Times*: "Wanted immediately--calling for 3000 *geisha* girls for entertaining occupation troops. Girls with experience will be given superior treatment. Those without experience also will do. Conveniences will be offered in case travel is necessary. After contract is signed, not only food, but also livelihood, is guaranteed. High income" (United Press 1945).

Japanese women who responded to the RAA's call were mostly uprooted women, especially those who were severely affected by the war and its aftermath. The RAA's subsistence offer (housing, clothing, and food) was undeniably attractive to women in dire economic conditions. These women's bodies and sexual labor were euphemistically defined as "female breakwaters" (or floodwalls) for their role in blocking the sexual desires of occupation troops before they reached "respectable" Japanese women (Duus 1979; Molasky 1999; Tanaka 2002). This rationale suggests that the RAA was not only reflects a gendered and sexualized aspect of state control over Japanese women, but also a classist bias.

The anonymous women used as "breakwaters" in postwar Japan were comparable to women whom Hegarty (2008) calls "patriotutes." According to Hegarty, "patriotutes" were wartime women in the U.S. who fulfilled their patriotic duty to their nation during World War II by providing services that would sustain military morale. However, Hegarty also mentions that these women were stigmatized

as promiscuous and their sexualities were kept under control.³⁵ Hegarty (2008:5) argues that “patriotutes” represents an unstable, dualistic female sexuality which was paradoxically “represented by both the sexually dangerous (female) individual and the sexually alluring (female) morale builder, who became conflated with each other.” In both cases, “patriotic” women who responded to their nation’s call in wartime U.S. and in occupied Japan were institutionalized and manipulated by patriarchal states to fill designated sexual roles while also being stigmatized.

For American occupiers, Japanese women’s sexual services at the RAA were, to borrowing Duus’ book title, *Gifts from the Defeated* (my translation). As Kanzaki (1974) notes, in no other country other than Japan did the government command police to recruit hundreds of thousands of their women as prostitutes for occupation troops. Within six months of the war’s end, the RAA alone employed more than 2000 comfort women and “dancers,” working in approximately forty establishments, to provide “entertainment and amusement” for occupation forces (Tanaka 2002:155; Hicks 1994:161).³⁶ In the early period of the occupation, occupation society was, as Perry (1980:187) claims, essentially “masculine” where “drinking, whoring, and souvenir hunting were among the most popular activities” for servicemen.

³⁵ According to Hegarty (2008:1), the term “patriotute” was originally coined by a physician, Otis Anderson at the U.S. Public Health Service, to describe “women who entertained the troops in order to maintain morale, stigmatized numerous young women who had responded to their nation’s call to support the war effort.”

³⁶ According to Tanaka (2002:155), the estimated the total number of prostitutes and comfort women who were employed by known facilities, including RAA-operated brothels and other establishments, was approximately 10,000 in the Tokyo area alone at the end of 1945.

Kanzaki (1974:137) portrays vividly RAA's first comfort station, *Komachien*, which was flooded with American GIs as early as August 30, 1945, just two days after their landing:

At the entrance gate of *Komachien*, many soldiers holding money in their hands were lining up in a long line and they were making a fuss in the incomprehensible language (English). *Komachien's* garden and entrance areas were filled with the soldiers who were impatiently waiting for their turns. Alas...what a shameful "comfort" scene it was. The quarters were partitioned merely by folding screens and even the hallways were used to handle a large number of GI clients. There were no beds or futons and everything was exposed to the public gaze. A sense of shame inherent to human beings was completely suppressed and animal-like intercourse was shamelessly performed before the gaze of others (my translation).

Kanzaki (1974:138) further reports that each comfort woman took at least 15 and as many as 60 occupation clients per day when *Komachien* began providing services to occupation forces.

In his *Japan Diary*, Gayn (1948), reported on the *International Palace*, the largest RAA-operated brothel in the Tokyo area.³⁷ From his perspective as a U.S. journalist, Gayn described the *International Palace* as "one of the items of evidence in the damning record of Japan's efforts to seduce the Army of Occupation away from its purpose" (p. 212). He also depicted the brothel owner's exploitive management of some 250 young Japanese women, who became enslaved by debts accumulated through personal purchases at the brothel store. Partly because of his Orientalist bias, Gayn made no explicit comments on GIs' sexual behavior, which dehumanized

³⁷ The *International Palace* was originally converted from a munitions factory that used to produce war materials during the war. Gayn visited the *International palace* on May 21, 1946, shortly after the U.S. Army placed all prostitution facilities "off limits" to GIs because of the widely spread VD among them.

Japanese women. Instead, Gayn blamed only the Japanese patriarchal officials who made their “own women” available. Furthermore, Orientalist perceptions of Asian women as exotic, sexually available and alluring justified the impulses of lonely, homesick young GIs who were susceptible to *seduction* by these underprivileged Japanese girls.

In the context of U.S. militarized occupation, Japanese women were doubly Orientalized and utilized by local patriarchy and Western masculine power. Occupation authorities abolished all licensed brothels, including RAA comfort stations, based on Western humanitarian missions of “liberation” for Japanese women from sexual slavery representing Japan’s feudalistic customs. The closure of brothels was, in reality, due to concerns for the high rates of venereal disease (VD) among GIs (Tanaka 2002; Nagahara and Yoneda 1996).³⁸

While this was indeed liberation from enslaved prostitution, the U.S. also moved some 150,000 Japanese women out of their jobs (Tanaka 2002). These women, who had been recruited for a “national patriotic mission,” were turned out into the streets without financial support or rehabilitation, either from the Japanese government or from occupation authorities. Out of desperation, many of these former prostitutes went to the streets, which contributed to emergence of the new phenomenon of street prostitutes, derogatorily called *panpan*.

³⁸ The SCAP/GHQ issued the memorandum on January 21, 1946, which states “the maintenance of the prostitution is controversies of the ideal of democracy and...the development of individual freedom throughout the nation,” which emphasizes humanitarian cause of their decision (see “Abolition of Licensed Prostitution in Japan,” JNDL Collection, GHQ/SCAP records, Box No. 5250, Sheet No. CIE(A)-01643, Prostitution 1946/01-1949/08.

***Panpan*: Street Prostitutes as a Postwar Phenomenon**

Unlike conventional Japanese prostitutes who were secluded in quarters within designated red-light districts, street prostitutes or *panpan* became visible to the public, especially in urban centers and around U.S. military bases. Japanese women's sexualities moved from the private arena to public spheres where they were identified easily by their striking appearances, associated with bright lipstick, colorful clothes, nail polish, high heels, permed hair, and behaviors such as smoking cigarettes (Dower 1999; Tanaka 2002). The Japanese people's reactions to *panpan* were ambivalent and contradictory: "admiration and disdain, pity and envy, fear and desire" (Molasky 1999:104). While these women were often portrayed as tragic figures of the postwar period, of deserving public sympathy; they were also accused of promiscuity and having desires that threatened traditional Japanese male authority over sexuality and gender roles (Molasky 1999).

I asked war bride interviewees about their postwar memories, emphasizing views of *panpan*. Midori was 13 years old when the war ended. During the war, Midori was one of millions of urban residents who evacuated to rural areas to escape from the massive air raids targeting large cities.³⁹ Midori's memories of the end of the war were associated with frequent air raids, sirens, underground shelters, and B-29s dropping tons of bombs that turned schools, factories, and houses, including hers,

³⁹ Millions of urban residents evacuated to the countryside to escape from bombing raids that began to attack large cities such as Tokyo and Osaka in April 1942. The mass exodus of city residents in Tokyo dropped its population from 7 million in 1940 to fewer than 3 million in 1945 (see Allinson 1997:42-43, 46-47).

to ashes.⁴⁰ Food became extremely scarce in the immediate postwar period, according to Midori, her family's diet was still much better than that of other Japanese people, especially war survivors in the cities.

After the war, Midori resumed school in a city, where U.S. occupation forces confiscated a Japanese military airfield for their own use. Since Midori's school was located in that city, she often saw American GIs, and (as she hesitantly pronounced) "*panpan* girls," on her way to school and back home:

They [*panpan*] were sticking together like this (she leaned slightly toward me). And, they looked really gaudy...they wore loud clothes, something the ordinary women wouldn't wear at that time.... When my friends and I walked past them, we couldn't help looking back at them over our shoulders [out of curiosity]. And then, they shouted at us in a rough language: "Hey you, what are you looking at? You should thank us for saving you!"

I asked Midori, "What did they mean when they said, 'You should thank us for saving you'?" She replied directly, "Well, they meant we would have been raped if they [*panpan*] were not available [for American soldiers]." Midori did not explicitly express negative views toward *panpan*. However, women like Midori and other war brides who had "legitimate" relationships with GIs disassociated themselves from women who had "illegitimate" relationships. Many war bride informants implicitly or explicitly said they were afraid of being perceived "mistakenly" as *panpan*.

Japanese people in postwar Japan tended to view almost all women who had connections with GIs as *panpan*. This was the prime reason "war brides" were

⁴⁰ B29 targeted large cities such as Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, and Kobe and dropped tons of bombings repeatedly since the first air raids attacked Tokyo in November 1944. According to the statistics taken immediately after the war, the damages made by the air raids alone included 260,000 death tolls, 2.2 million of complete destruction of houses, 90,000 of partial destruction of houses, and 9.2 million war victims (Arai 1988:27-29).

stigmatized by mainstream Japanese society, and to some extent, by the Japanese *issei* community in the U.S. (Enari 1991; Glenn 1986). Midori told me she felt guilty and sorry for her younger sisters and brothers who had to bear curious and often contemptuous public scrutiny because of her relationship with an American GI. “One day, my youngest sister came back home from school in tears because her classmate had called her a name and teased her by saying ‘Your older sister is a *panpan!*’” said Midori.

Panpan was a pervasive postwar image not just for adults, but also for children. The so-called *panpan asobi* or *panpan* role-playing became a popular activity, particularly among female children in postwar Japan (see the illustration, “*panpan asobi*” in *Kōdansha* 1987:217). In this illustration, one child is pretending to be *panpan* and another to be a GI in a military hat stand arm-in-arm, while three other children watch the couple while giggling (Ibid.). *Panpan* role-playing responded to the prevalence of street prostitution in early postwar Japan and even shaped children’s activities. *Nippon Fujin Shinbun* (Japanese Women Newspaper) reported that a Japanese woman’s association decried the popularity of *panpan* role-playing among children and urged the immediate eradication of street prostitution.⁴¹ Uyemura, a member of the National Public Safety Commission, criticized the morals of U.S. soldiers patronizing Japanese street prostitutes. He addressed the issue of children working as procurers between GI clients and *panpan* and argued that *panpan*

⁴¹ See “Miss Smith Encouraged Women’s Association to Root Out Prostitution,” January 21, 1949 in JNDL Collection, GHQ/SCAP Records.

role-playing is a “juvenile experiment in the business of prostitution” (*Associate Press* 1952).

Since women associated with GIs in postwar Japan were likely to be perceived as *panpan*, many war bride informants noted they felt as if they were doing something wrong when they were together with GI boyfriends or husbands in public. Many of these women chose to conceal their association with American GIs from family and neighbors until it was imperative to share the secret. As Miyako said, “At that time, it [dating an American] was something that you would not tell other people, you see?... Even though I knew I was going to marry my husband, I was uncomfortable when I was seen with him by other Japanese.... I felt I was somewhat put down....” Some informants avoided meeting their GI boyfriends outside the military posts as much as possible because they did not want to expose themselves to curious, often contemptuous scrutiny.

Japanese people, especially Japanese men, were not silent on the issue of fraternization between Japanese women and American men. Some Japanese male writers published observations of postwar daily scenes, including fraternization between American GIs and Japanese women (see Takami 1959; Yamada 1985, 2002, 2004). Takami Junichi (1959), in his published diary, criticized hungry-looking Japanese crowds who were obsequious to Americans: he was contemptuous of young Japanese women who flirted with GIs in public and those women who appeared to invite the attention of GIs. In his diary on October 18, 1945, Takami (1959:340) wrote:

What caught my attention was there were many young girls congregating [outside the General Headquarters].⁴² Some of them were encircling American GIs, and others were surrounded by GIs. What is more is some women were seemingly waiting for GIs to talk to them. But they did not seem to be brave enough to get attention from GIs individually. So, two or three women in a group would stroll together and deliberately pass by the American GIs. These women, in their company uniforms, looked younger than in their 20s. I felt unpleasant. Am I jealous?... After all, these foolish and shameful women were equal to those bastards [who quickly converted their fawning from the Japanese Imperial Army to the occupation authorities], I thought... (my translation).

Public display of fraternization between Japanese women and the American occupiers brought hostility and disdain, especially from Japanese men. Dower (1999:135) argues that the public fraternization “constituted a piercing wound to national pride in general and masculine pride in particular.” For Japanese men, pride was severely damaged not merely due to their loss of militarized masculinity, but especially to Japanese women’s “betrayal.”

Victors versus Defeated

While women’s “betrayal” was often condemned in the context of GI-Japanese intimacy, Endo Takeo’s satirical cartoon entitled “Yūshi no Saikai” [Reunion of Soldiers] illustrates the contrasting images of an emaciated, disabled Japanese veteran and an American GI (*Chikuma Shobō* 1970:16).⁴³ The Japanese

⁴² The occupation forces confiscated remaining buildings that survived during air raids in Tokyo for their own use. The former Japanese Dai-Ichi Mutual Life Insurance Building was replaced by General Headquarters (GHQ) and became a symbol of the U.S. occupation. Takami (1959:340) noted strong presence of Americans around the GHQ: some were strolling the street and others were reading newspapers and magazines as they sat by the mote across from the building.

⁴³ Endo Takeo’s “Yūshi no Saikai” (Reunion of Soldiers) originally appeared in *Hakubyō Giga* in 1950.

veteran, wearing a white robe and worn-out military hat, with a donation box hanging from his neck, stands on the street. In contrast, the burly GI, in his vulgar Hawaiian shirt, arm in arm with a Japanese woman in western attire and high heels, walks briskly. This cartoon represents symbolically a redefined postwar power relationship between former enemies, while the Japanese woman is depicted as a collaborator with the American victor.

Takemae (2002) also illustrates contrasting images of the victors and the defeated in his historical account of the GHQ (General Headquarter) in occupied Japan:

Off-duty GIs thronged the streets in freshly pressed olive-drab uniforms, their servicemen's hats cocked jauntily to one side. Road traffic was dominated by nearly empty khaki-coloured, white-striped staff sedans and was nearly all American, for only the occupier had access to ample petrol—most Japanese cars and buses ran on charcoal... Officers sped through downtown thoroughfares in commandeered jeeps accompanied by fashionably dressed Japanese girlfriends trailing bright scarves, their insouciance a striking contrast to the gloomy faces of the hungry, ill-clad Japanese, many of them homeless, who looked on these centurions with a mixture of awe and envy (P. 74).

While emphasizing the masculine and material powers of American victors, this comparison reflects a gendered aspect of defeat that reshaped power dynamics not only between victors and the conquered, but also among the conquered. For example, the Japanese woman in the jeep symbolizes that women associated with American GIs were perceived as “privileged” people who had a head start on recovery from the war.

Japanese women's greater access to material benefits explains why many Japanese people had mixed feelings of contempt, envy, fear, and desire toward women associated with GIs such as *panpan*:

...Among ordinary people, no group trapped the material treasures of the conquerors as blatantly as the *panpan*. They were the recipients of goods from the U.S. military exchange posts that in those impoverished days truly seemed like treasure houses from a magic land: crammed not only with basic foodstuffs, but with liquor and cigarettes, sweets and delicacies, voluptuously decadent feminine things such as lipstick and nylon stockings (Dower 1999:136).

This gender-specific alliance between American GIs and Japanese women left out Japanese men. While these women enjoyed "privileges," specifically material benefits, they were also sanctioned and marginalized by Japanese society and its patriarchy.

***Panpan*: Keepers of "Ethnosexual Boundaries"?**

MacDonald, a U.S. Lieutenant, made an interesting comparison of men's reactions to women's fraternization with American GIs in postwar Germany and Japan (Duus 1979). According to MacDonald, people in Germany performed the persecution of German women who had sexual relationships with American GIs. These women were beaten and their heads were shaved, similar to French and Belgian women who were discovered to have had sexual relationships with Nazi. Referring to French women persecuted for their sexual collaboration with Nazis, Nagel (2003:141) argues that sexual behavior of "rule breakers" that violated national sexual boundaries can "strengthen hegemonic national sexual orders."

Disciplining women sexual collaborators claimed and reinforced proper sexual conduct and “ethnosexual boundaries” (Nagel 2003). Even though Japanese women who fraternized with GIs were not persecuted in the same way as German or French women collaborators, their sexualities were monitored, regulated, and sanctioned, officially and unofficially. In collaboration with MPs (U.S. military police), Japanese police regularly conducted “round-ups” of *panpan* and took suspected streetwalkers to a hospital for involuntary VD tests and medical treatment.⁴⁴ An *Asahi Shinbun* (Asahi Newspaper) article reported on a series of round-ups conducted by Japanese police and MPs. According to the article, authorities arrested some 300 women, ranging from 16 to 38 years-old, who were in targeted areas of Tokyo on that night alone (*Asahi Shinbun* 1946).⁴⁵

The picture taken on June 12, 1946, depicts a group of arrested street women who are being taken to a Japanese police department for investigation (*Kōdansha* 1989:270-71).⁴⁶ The women are being forced to walk in a single-line, hand-cuffed, and tied to one another with a rope like criminals. In another picture of a round-up, three Japanese police officers who have arrested a woman suspect, are literally “carrying” her as if handling an animal--one holds up her legs and the other two hold up her arms (see Kanzaki 1974). The woman’s skirt is rolled up, leaving her thigh

⁴⁴ The practice of round-ups of street prostitutes started in January 1946 and lasted until September 1949. It was estimated that there were approximately 40,000 *panpan* in six large cities alone and 70,000 altogether were arrested throughout the country (*Kōdansha* 1989:270-71).

⁴⁵ The women arrested were mostly factory workers, dancers, and office clerks, but particularly war victims who lost their houses and were separated from family. “‘Women of the night’ 300 arrested,” *Asahi shinbun* (Asahi Newspaper), March 11, 1946.

⁴⁶ The caption associated with the picture is read as: Women are arrested for round-ups of ‘women of the night.’ The picture was taken on June 12, 1946. See *Kōdansha* (1989:270-71).

and underwear completely exposed. In both round-up incidents, women are criminalized and dehumanized by male authorities and become objects of public display as “sanction” for their promiscuity and “rule breaking.” Among women picked up on the street for round-ups, many were wrongly arrested and found not guilty.⁴⁷

Japanese women’s bodies and sexualities were controlled and sanctioned not only by U.S. occupiers but also by Japanese patriarchal authorities. Collaboration with MPs in carrying out “round-ups” enabled Japanese men to retain some degrees of patriarchal control over Japanese women. As Molasky (1999:109) points out, *panpan* were vulnerable to “both official and unofficial persecution, and at any time they might be arrested by police, forcibly examined by (male) physicians which were sometimes conducted in the presence of five or six MPs, beaten by pimps, or even murdered by customers.”⁴⁸

Similar to French collaborators in Nagel’s (2003) account, “round-ups” of *panpan* should be understood as punishment for “rule breakers,” reinforcing “ethnosexual boundaries” among Japanese people. In this context, young women ranging from street prostitutes and camp followers to war brides associated with

⁴⁷ According to the interviews with two young women who were wrongly arrested by MPs and taken to a police station, nearly two-thirds of women rounded up on that night were, in actuality, wrongly arrested. While these women who, after all, “did not seem to be prostitutes” were released, the rest of the women in question, including the two women, were taken to the hospital for DV tests. See “Round-up of Women in Tokyo,” JNDL Collection, GHQ/SCAP Records, Box No. 5250, Sheet No. CIE(A)01644, prostitution. 1946/01-1949/08.

⁴⁸ “Round-up of Women in Tokyo.” JNDL Collection, GHQ/SCAP Records.

American GIs, were viewed as “sexual collaborators” and were marginalized and stigmatized by Japanese people who remained within their national sexual orders.

Internal Diversity among War Brides

Although Japanese women associated with GIs were lumped together and often perceived as *panpan*, women who had “legitimate” relationships with American GIs, including war brides, rejected such labels. As spouses of American GIs, war brides tended to distinguish themselves from *panpan* and other sex collaborators who were treated as dispensable objects by GIs. Even among war brides, women with respectable social backgrounds tended to draw a line between themselves and others who worked at socially “disrespectable” jobs (e.g., bar hostess) prior to marriage. To some war brides, their previous work experiences in postwar Japan were a delicate subject. When I began interviews, I did not expect all war bride informants would tell me their true stories. Considering the socioeconomic situations of postwar Japan, it was natural for war bride informants not to want to share certain memories if they felt their recollections were unpleasant, painful, or shameful.

I was surprised when a few women shared their post-war experience of being *only-san* (*onrii-san*) or “temporary wives” for American GIs. These women were “paid to serve only one particular man” stationed in Japan (Tanaka 2002:165). Like *panpan*, *only-san* is sentimentally remembered by many Japanese people to symbolize painful wounds of the postwar period. However, unlike *panpan*, who were likely to take multiple customers on a one-night-stand basis, *only-san* performed

wifely duties for one GI until he returned to the U.S. GIs who “hired” *only-san* usually lived with women in off-base housing, from where they commuted to military posts. Even though keeping a woman in a private house required extra money, strong monetary values of U.S. dollars against the Japanese yen at that time made it possible for U.S. soldiers to keep *only-san* while stationed in Japan.

An article in *Ebony* (1953b) featuring black GIs’ lives in the Tokyo area during post-war Japan portrayed their living conditions as “one great big bowl of cherry blossoms” where “the soldiers can and do live like kings” with a personal maid or, at least, an “easy, plush life” (p. 36). Just as *only-san* were perceived as temporary companions for GIs, their plush lifestyles in postwar Japan ended when they returned to the U.S. However, some GIs ended up marrying *only-san* and brought them back to the U.S.: Aki was one of them.

Only-san: Aki’s Story

Aki was 20 years old when the war ended. Even though she lived in the countryside where the food supply was larger than in the cities, Aki told me that scarcity of food motivated her to work at the factory that produced rations for the starving Japanese population:

There wasn’t much food to eat at that time.... We made a lot [of bread and other food items at the factory] and sent them to a distributing station. Cooks [working at the factory] gave away some food for us [behind closed doors]. So, as for food, I could eat enough. I did not have to worry [laughter].

Aki eventually quit the factory and worked as a live-in waitress at a small Japanese restaurant owned by a middle-aged widow, whom she called *obachan*.⁴⁹

Aki began to work at the Japanese restaurant in the early postwar when local restaurants and bars were designated “off limits” to occupation soldiers.⁵⁰ Aki energetically explained her job experiences at the restaurant. Japanese prostitutes who came to Aki’s restaurant regularly particularly fascinated her:

One day, a lot of beautiful young girls came to the restaurant. They were all Japanese, so they could come inside the [local] restaurant and eat there. Wow, all of them were so beautiful, I thought. I asked the *obachan* why they all wore nice dresses. “They are [*panpan*] for the Americans,” said the *obachan*. Then she warned me, “Be careful.”

Aki’s employer, the *obachan*, worried about the negative influence of these prostitutes on a country girl who still wore a traditional *kimono* and *geta* (a Japanese clog). To someone like Aki, seeing young women dressed in Western clothes and wearing make-up was a shocking experience.

Aki became friends with one of these prostitutes, nicknamed Nancy, who regularly came to her restaurant: “Nancy’s been working for long time [as a prostitute]. She only took Yankees (GI clients). So, she spoke English well, you see?” Aki learned a few English words from Nancy so that she could take orders when GI patrons came to her restaurant. Aki said:

Many Americans came to the restaurant at night for cheap Japanese beer. They weren’t allowed to get inside the restaurant, though. The Japanese

⁴⁹ *Obachan* is an informal title for an aunt in Japanese. But in some instances, one could use *obachan* to refer to a middle-aged woman who is in close relationship.

⁵⁰ Certain places such as Japanese local trains, subways, hotels, ins, restaurants, bars, and theaters were designated as “off limits” to GIs by SCAP as a measures to reduce the likelihood of fraternization between GIs and local women.

restaurants were “off limits” to Americans.... But it was alright to sell beer to Americans outside of the restaurant. So they bought beer and drank outside of the restaurant.... It was alright.

Working at the local restaurant gave Aki first hand “American experience” through interactions with GI customers and Japanese prostitutes.

Aki eventually quit the local restaurant and became an *only-san* after she was convinced to do so by a friend who was serving an American GI as *only-san*:

Well, the reason why I quit [the restaurant] was because I was tempted by my friend. She was serving a [American] soldier as “*only*,” but they were not married. She said to me, “there is a soldier who just got here a week ago from America. He isn’t sly yet. Why don’t you become his ‘*only*’?” I said to her, “[if I leave the restaurant and follow a GI] my *obachan* will get mad at me. So, I can’t leave....” My friend angrily asked me, “Will your *obachan* take care of you in the future?” I said “I don’t think so.” Then she said, “You see?... Why don’t you leave [the restaurant] and come with me?” After all, I was somewhat convinced by my friend and became an *only* for the newly arrived soldier.

Aki’s friend persuaded her to become an *only-san* and encouraged her to capitalize a relationship with an American GI rather than working at the restaurant as a waitress whose marriageable age had already passed. Considering her socioeconomic situation and uncertainty about her future, it was tempting for an unmarried woman like Aki to take a chance with Americans, the most powerful and wealthiest men not only in Japan, but in the world. Aki’s interaction with Japanese prostitutes who frequented her restaurant gave her a new perspective on the material benefits associated with American men. Indeed, a GI patron who regularly came to Aki’s restaurant gave her enough money to buy new clothes, which she could not afford as a waitress. Acquiring the conqueror’s language, English, if only at word and phrasal

levels, was an asset that enabled Aki to communicate and negotiate with American GIs.

Femininity, youth, and language skills gave women like Aki advantages that were not available to their male Japanese counterparts. Aki told me she served two GIs and then her future husband as an *only-san*. According to Aki, she lived with her first GI patron for several years until he went back to the U.S., then served the second GI patron just for one year. When the second patron left Japan, he introduced Aki to a fellow GI, who eventually became her husband. When I asked Aki how she ended up marrying her third patron, she said:

Before going back to America, my boyfriend talked about me to his friend (her future husband), who just arrived in Japan. He asked his friend to take care of me. His friend agreed. That's why he came to take care of me, and eventually married me.... Well, I did not care about his looks, though. I had to think twice about marrying such an ugly soldier [laughter]. But, when I asked my friends' opinions, they said the ugly man is better than a good looking guy because he would not have affairs [laughter].

The circumstances under which her future husband agreed to “take over” Aki so easily were not clear. Perhaps he did not think much about it when his friend “offered” him Aki, but simply “received” her as if she were a welcome gift for a newcomer to Japan. For Aki's part, she added, “I married him not because I loved him. I decided to marry him because I wanted to see America...I told him so.”

Aki was honest when she said her priority was to see America, the country of wealth and power. For her, marriage to an American GI was the only means to realize her goal. At the same time, as a woman in her 30s lacking education and occupational skills, Aki had few options for a decent life in postwar Japan. Her

marriage to an American GI was, in some respects, a continuation of performing the *only-san* role in a new setting. Even so, Aki's marriage offered her a better life and more opportunity than she could have achieved in Japan. Therefore, Aki's reasoning to marry a GI could be more than just "I wanted to see America," but her boldness and active voice to say so masked her vulnerable post-war circumstances behind her decision.

Toward the end of the interview, Aki seemed uncomfortable and expressed regret about negative remarks she made about her deceased husband:

I shouldn't have said bad things about my husband...I shouldn't. He was a good person. He was always good to me. It was because of him...because I married him, I don't have to worry about my life now. I can do what I want to do here. I go to Bingo every week with my friend, I eat what I want. I am truly thankful to my husband.

Aki realized that her deceased husband's veteran status enabled her to receive military benefits (e.g., medical care, pension). Even though the government pension she received every month might not be large amount, it provided enough money for her to maintain a decent lifestyle in the U.S. Aki added that this was a primary reason she decided to remain a widow when her brother-in-law urged her to remarry or return to Japan.⁵¹ Aki's decision to stay a widow may have been opportunistic; but, to her, it was another choice among a narrow range of options.

⁵¹ Like many other war brides, when Aki decided to marry an American GI, she eliminated an option of returning to Japan no matter how difficult her life would become in the U.S. This reflects strong societal prejudice not only against women married GIs but also their bi-racial children.

Only-san and Bar Hostess: Miwa's Story

Miwa also decided to become an *only-san* before marrying her first husband and moving to the U.S.⁵² Miwa was outspoken about her past in spite of bitter experiences during and after the war when her focus was survival. Miwa's parents had died during her early childhood, which separated her from her siblings. Later, Miwa was adopted by a woman who died shortly before the end of war. Miwa struggled to find food and her adoptive mother took most of her own Japanese *kimonos* to farmers in exchange for rice.⁵³ Rice was so scarce that Miwa had to make handfuls of rice into gruel, mixed with sweet potatoes and other rice substitutes. Miwa also sought food by gleaning and searching for edible greens in the fields.

When her adoptive mother died, Miwa, who was only 13 years old, again became an orphan and had little choice in making a living. Young women lacking occupational skills and education were disadvantaged, and Miwa had no a guardian. The world of *mizushōbai*, the entertainment business, was the easiest and quickest way to make cash to survive at that time.⁵⁴ Most women entering the entertainment business in the immediate postwar had few if any other choices; and Miwa was no exception.

⁵² Miwa's previous husband was an American sailor, who she met at her bar when she was working as a hostess in Japan. Within six months after they moved to the U.S. in the early 1960s, they separated and were divorced three years later. Miwa remarried another GI, who she met in the U.S. and they have stayed together since then.

⁵³ Because rations provided by the government were never enough, it was common practice for city residents to take a long train trip to the countryside and exchange their precious items, such as *kimonos*, for food. Farmers were in a more advantaged position in this barter, which widened the economic discrepancy between those who had food (farmers) and those who didn't (city dwellers) in early postwar Japan.

⁵⁴ *Mizushōbai* is the general term for the night entertainment business such as bars and nightclubs, but it the terms does not necessarily mean that females were performing sexual services at these establishments.

When occupation forces came to Japan, Miwa was working as a hostess at one of many bars in a port town that was filled with young American sailors. I frankly asked Miwa about her work experience candidly; she said, without emotion, that

It was simply business, it was just business for me.... These folks bought [a lot of] drinks. They drank like water. When they bought a drink for me, a half [of the price they paid] became my share.... I worked [at the bar] and [went back home and] slept, worked and slept and so forth.... I drank not because I wanted. I drank because it was a way to make money. I couldn't afford to spend time thinking about things like what other people think about me. I drank [at the bar] for the sake of money. Making money for living...for paying the rent...that's all.

Women engaged in *mizushōbai* were often looked down upon because they were assumed to have “immoral” interactions with male customers. Rather than accepting social degradation, Miwa viewed her labor at the bar as a means to make a living, just as other people took less stigmatizing jobs to survive. For Miwa, the difference between being a bar hostess and a sales clerk at a PX (Post Exchange) was an inconsequential choice.

Similar to Aki, Miwa served GIs as *only-san* before moving to the U.S. Many women, including Miwa, became *only-san* based on verbal agreements without legal documents or guarantees of future prospects. This short-term, informal contract meant women were expected to commit to one relationship as faithful “house wives.” Women could be abandoned at any time, without an advance notice. This clearly reflects gender power relations based the “unequal contract” that could be modified, revised, or cancelled by GI patrons without consent from *only-san*: Miwa said,

I quit my bar hostess job once or twice [to serve my GI patrons].... You may have heard of [the term] *only-san*...have you? There were some women

(*only-san*) who eventually married their patrons and went to America. But there were still hundreds of thousands of others who didn't make it.... I lived with a GI patron [in an off-base house]...(long pause)...[One day] he said to me he was going back to his base [for a while]. I said "OK." But he did not come back. So, I thought about it and decided to call him at his base barracks. Someone answered my call and said 'He went back *home*.' When I asked, "What do you mean, [by] *home*?" and the guy replied, "He went back to America."...It was a heartbreaking experience.

After being unexpectedly abandoned by her patron, Miwa returned to the bar to work as a hostess again until she met another GI patron for another *only-san* contract, only to experience another abrupt termination of the relationship.

Although *only-sans* gained some economic security from patrons, this was generally temporary relief. Monetary rewards for *only-sans* varied depending on the military ranks of their patrons and the types of relationships they had with GIs.⁵⁵

Miwa stated that the amount of money she received was no more than an allowance for maintaining the quasi-household, leaving no money to save for herself. In fact, Miwa claimed she made better money working as a bar hostess than by serving as an *only-san*: "Well, the only good thing [about being *only-san*] was I did not have to hustle [for work]. All I had to do was to hang around him [for a living]." For someone like Miwa, who struggled for many years, being an *only-san* meant some financial relief and "leisure time," even if temporary.

⁵⁵ For variations of monetary rewards among *only-san*, see Kanzaki (1974) and a magazine article which feature interviews with Japanese women who identified themselves as *only-san* (*Maru* 1952:72-73).

Ultimately, Miwa married an American sailor she met at the bar where she worked. When I asked why she married the sailor, Miwa did not answer my question directly at first:

There was nothing good about him when I look back.... Well, [unlike other GIs] he never bought anything for me [laughter], though he was a sailor with three stripes.... He never took me out anywhere to places like restaurants and movies, either. But I somewhat liked him almost one-sidedly and pressured him to marry me, I think.

Miwa added that “survival” was always on her mind, especially since losing her adoptive mother. Even though she did not make her motives to marry the sailor explicit, Miwa implied that she married him for survival and for the chance of a better life in the U.S., as is a common reason among Japanese women.

Stigmatized images of women who were involved in the entertainment business (*mizushōbai*), particularly catering to American GIs in postwar Japan made many of these women silent about their past. Like Aki, however, Miwa did not deny or conceal her experience as a bar hostess or as an *only-san*. Miwa insisted her postwar experiences of serving American GIs were shared by hundreds of underprivileged Japanese women victimized by the war and its aftermath. Miwa asserted that these women’s actions were not “deviant” or “immoral” to be ashamed of. Instead, she blamed social and economic consequences of the war that forced underprivileged women to take “unrespectable” work to live independently, support their families, and survive.

Miwa was outspoken and challenged stigmatized images of bar hostesses and *only-san* who were accused of “promiscuity” in postwar Japan by affirming that her

relationship with American GIs was a socially acceptable means to survive. Miwa used her narratives to portray herself as a victim at times, but also to empower herself as a survivor with dignity and pride that postwar Japanese society sought to deny. Miwa also criticized other war brides who denied connections to *mizushōbai*, which was often a gateway to meeting GI lovers or future husbands. Miwa denounced women who pretended that they met their husbands through “respectful” occupations such as sales clerking at PX.

As I have shown in this chapter, the occupation of Japan demonstrated clear power relations between the victors and defeated. While Japanese men were castrated through the process of demilitarization, the conquered women’s sexualities and bodies became the spoils of the war for occupation forces as a reward and a symbol of their masculine powers. While rape of local women by the conquerors functioned as a warfare technique “to dominate and humiliate enemy men by sexually conquering their women” (Nagel 2003:181), Japan’s postwar RAAs were sites of institutionalized mass rapes of Japanese women by American victors. Japanese women’s bodies were objectified and consumed by American victors with assistance from local patriarchy and, thus, Japanese women were doubly Orientalized.

I used some war bride informants’ narratives to illustrate U.S. occupation and postwar socioeconomic conditions through young Japanese women’s observations and experiences. Two women’s stories as *only-san* provided both vulnerability and strength. While *only-sans* enjoyed some material benefits because of their associations with GIs, they had to accept a “contract” with GI patrons who had power

over the relationships. *Only-sans* could be discarded, given away, or exchanged at any time by GI patrons. As were other women who took “disrespectable” jobs, *only-sans* were victims of the war and its consequence. At the same time, socially defined disrespectful jobs were indeed, from Miwa’s viewpoint, socially acceptable means to survive. Labels such as *panpan*, *only-san*, and *war bride* are all socially constructed in the context of U.S. occupation and, thus, they could be modified, redefined, or destroyed. However, since the stigma attached to these labels is powerful, they continue to exert a negative social impact on women, including on the war bride informants in this study.

Chapter 3

Reversing the Gaze: U.S. GIs from Perspectives of Japanese Women

In the early stage of the occupation of Japan, at least for the first few months of the occupation, American Army officers believed fraternization would never become a problem for GIs in Japan unlike the situation in Germany.⁵⁶ To most Americans, Japanese people were still “Japs,” “a warped and despicable race, forever responsible for untold suffering to thousands of our people” (Croket 1949). Americans’ fierce hatred against atrocious creatures combined with backwardness and inferiority of Oriental race seemed fraternizations impossible. Language barriers, cultural differences, the reserved nature of the Japanese women, and propaganda against fraternizations were also believed to be obstacles to GI-Japanese intimacy (Kluckhohn 1945).

Contrary to the initial assertion, American GIs strolling with Japanese women on the street and parks became common sights not only in Tokyo but elsewhere by the end of 1945. For example, Frances Baker (1949), an American artist drew the “scenes of the occupation that are familiar to all who have played a part in it” by both American and Japanese in the humorous manner. One of his pieces in Japanese print style illustrates a “rendezvous” scene between GIs and Japanese women under a moonlit sky. Two American GIs, one in civilian clothes and the other in a seaman’s uniform were walking along the river with their arms around Japanese women, while

⁵⁶ See “Japs Warn Girls on Winking at GIs” (UP), September 17, 1945 in JNDL Collection, GHQ/SCAP Records; Kluckhohn (1945).

another GI in khakis was sitting on the river bank intimately with a Japanese woman in a kimono. The caption of the picture reads: “Newcomers learn that pretty faces are not confined to certain races” (Baker 1949). The daily scenes of fraternization between GIs and Japanese women in public, whether their relationships were commercialized, short-term companionship, or enduring ones, disturbed Japanese public and also U.S. military commanders and officials.

Lieutenant General Robert L. Eichelberger, Commanding General of the 8th Army, for example, issued an order in March 1946 regarding a “ban against public display of affection” by U.S. Army soldiers toward Japanese women.⁵⁷ According to Lieutenant Eichelberger:

...no ban on fraternization was completed, but...arm-in-arm strolling, public display of affection, and similar actions would be treated as disorderly conduct by Military Police. Public displays of affection by men in uniform towards the women of any nation are in poor taste. Particularly is that so in Japan among these who were so recently our enemies and where the people have never been accustomed to such demonstrations.”⁵⁸

This military order did not necessarily prohibit fraternization. Indeed, fraternization was never officially banned in Japan by the occupation authorities partly because banning all social contact with the Japanese people would be not only “useless” and

⁵⁷ For the sailors in Yokosuka Naval Bases, no-fraternization order was already in effect in November 1945 in the order of the Commodore Kaasaing. The large photographs of an American sailor who was a prisoner of the Japan were placed in all the building of his command. The captions under each picture read “...the Japs did this to him. They did the same and worse to thousands of other Americans...Remember this if you ever catch yourself getting soft and being nice to a Jap” (*Stars & Stripes* 1945).

⁵⁸ The press release document entitled “General Eichelberger Bans ‘Public Display’ of Affection for Japanese Women by American Soldiers” has a date stamp of March 12, 1946 in JNDL Collection, GHQ/SCAP Records.

“unenforceable” but it also would violate the “inherent self-respect and personal rights of the American soldiers,” based on American rhetoric of individual freedom.⁵⁹

Nonetheless, banning of public displays of affection was associated with various regulations. As New York Times correspondent, Burton Crane describes, “it is hard to see how anybody wishing to fraternize could do so without violation a whole string of regulations” (1946). According to Crane, Japanese public transportation and facilities such as trains (except for GI cars), Tokyo subways, Japanese hotels, inns, restaurants, and bars were designated as off-limits to American soldiers. Japanese civilian areas enclosed by a fence were also off-limits to GIs. When a GI went out with a Japanese woman, he was not permitted to use an Army vehicle to transport her unless she was an “authorized civilian” such as an interpreter. Nor was a GI allowed to share Army food with a Japanese person even if he bought it personally from a post exchange. All army barracks were off-limits to Japanese females except servants.

Despite various regulations and sanctions to interrupt fraternization between GIs and Japanese women, these rules alone did not enforce the military order and stop romantic relationships between GIs and Japanese women. Indeed, hundreds of thousands of American GIs-Japanese women couples crossed racial and sexual boundaries in one way or another, and some were determined to marry. Among them, only these couples who successfully overcame various barriers, both at personal and institutional levels, married and reached their new homes in America.

⁵⁹ The press release document (no title) issued by Public Relations Office of United States Army Forces Pacific/GHQ has a date stamp of March 12, 1946, in JNDL Collection, GHQ/SCAP Records.

However, unlike Caucasian war brides, who married American GIs in postwar Germany, Italy, Britain, and many other countries (see Shukert and Scibetta 1988), Japanese women confronted institutional barriers particularly racialized immigration policies that kept American GIs from bring Japanese women back home (Spickard 1989).

Racialized Institutional Barriers and Orientalized Japanese Women

In 1945, Congress passed Public Law 271, known as the War Brides Act, which permitted foreign spouses and children of American servicemen to immigrate to the U.S. without following “usual immigration quotas, visa requirements, and restrictions on ‘physical and mental defectives’” placed on regular immigrants (Spickard 1989:132). This racialized act was created primarily in convenience for U.S. GIs stationed in Europe who wanted to bring their Caucasian war brides to their homes (Ibid). Japanese brides still suffered from the discriminatory immigration policy known as the Oriental Exclusion Act that had previously excluded virtually all Asian immigrants from entering the U.S. since 1924.⁶⁰

Based on the existing immigration laws as of 1949, migration to the U.S. was granted only to people who were classified as eligible for naturalization, which was limited to certain races of persons including:

Persons of African nativity or descent, persons who are descendants of races indigenous to the continents of North and South America or adjacent islands,

⁶⁰ Under national origin provisions, Northern and Western European nationals were granted relatively large annual quotas including Germany of 26,000 and Grain Britain of 65,000. For Asian countries, they were typically assigned quotas of 100 and mostly taken the slots by Whites born in Asia (Thornton 1992:66).

Filipino persons or persons of Filipino descent, Chinese persons or persons of Chinese descent, persons of races indigenous to India. Aliens in order to be eligible for naturalization and citizenship must have a preponderance of the blood of races to which this privilege is extended by laws; that is, more than one half (1/2) of the blood of such races, or any combination thereof.⁶¹

Eligibility for naturalization was extended to some Asians who were formally excluded under the provisions of the Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924. They were wartime allied-Asians such as Chinese and Filipina, thus they benefited from the War Brides Act (Fong 2002; Shukert and Scibetta 1988) while Japanese remained as “aliens ineligible for citizenship.”⁶² While GI-war bride marriages was institutionalized process, Japanese women were doubly disadvantaged: they were racialized as non-Caucasian and politicized as the former enemy, which made it virtually impossible for American servicemen to bring Japanese wives and their offspring to the U.S. even when they were married in Japan.

By 1947, there were growing numbers of American GIs who wished to marry Japanese women and take them back to the U.S., which pressured the U.S. Congress to amend the existing immigration laws to admit their racially ineligible spouse and minor children to the U.S. (Spickard 1989). Under the Public Law 213 or the so-called GI Brides Act, alien spouses of American GIs were permitted to enter the U.S. on a non-quota basis if they married between July 22 and August 21, 1947.⁶³ Another legislation, the Public Law 717, also became effective in 1950 and temporarily

⁶¹ “Digest of Immigration and Naturalization Laws Applicable to Marriage of Military Personnel, and Department of the Army and the Air Force Employees,” Circular No.51, 24 September, 1949 in JNDL Collection, GHQ/SCAP Records.

⁶² Chinese and Filipino became eligible for naturalization in 1943 and 1946 respectively under new provisions of the Immigration Act of 1924 (Shukert and Scibetta 1988).

⁶³ “Permitting the Admission of Alien Spouses and Minor Children of Citizen Members of the United States Armed Forces,” Report No.1878, 26 June, 1950 in JNDL Collection, GHQ/SCAP Records.

allowed Japanese spouses of American GIs to enter the U.S.⁶⁴ Because these legislations provided only temporary admissions to Japanese brides, they created a marriage rush between American GIs and Japanese women. For instance, *Stars & Stripes* (1951) reported that under the provisions of Public Law 717, 2,800 American-Japanese marriages were performed during the six month period.⁶⁵ *Asahi Shinbun* (1951) also reported that from as few as 20 or 30 to as many as 50 or 60 GI-Japanese couples came to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' overseas travel division daily to apply for passage to the U.S.

The amended immigration legislations made it possible for Japanese spouses of American GIs and their children to immigrate to the U.S. on a non-quota basis. However, it should be noted that they still were not granted U.S. citizenship. It was not until 1952 that Japanese became eligible for naturalization under the McCarran-Walter Act that removed racial barriers from formally restricted countries for immigration and naturalization (Kitano, Yeung, Chai, and Hatanaka 1984; Spickard 1989; Thornton 1992).⁶⁶ As a consequence, the number of Japanese women who married American GIs and immigrated to the U.S. increased dramatically from 125 in 1951 to 4,220 in 1952. According to the Japanese Foreign Ministry's accounts,

⁶⁴ Public Law 717, which permitted Japanese spouses and minor children of U.S. citizens, was originally in effect from August 19, 1950 to February 19, 1951. However, the bill extending the Public Law 717 for another half year was signed by President Truman primarily because many soldiers had been sent to Korea before carrying out their intended plan to marry Japanese women (see "Marriage Law Extended Year," *Stars & Stripes*, April (n.d.) 1949, in JNDL Collection, GHQ/SCAP Records.

⁶⁵ "Couples Swarm into Consulate to Marry before Law expires," *Stars & Stripes*, March 10, 1951 in JNDL Collection, GHQ/SCAP Records.

⁶⁶ While the McCarran-Walter Act eliminated racial bars to immigration and naturalization, it retained the quota system based on the origins of countries. Although only 2% of the total immigration quota was allotted to Asian countries, non-quota immigrant status granted to spouses and children of American servicemen contributed to the large number of spousal immigration to the U.S. (see Thornton 1992: 68).

approximately 25,000 Japanese women applied for travelling permission to foreign countries, namely to the U.S. between 1950 and 1957 in lieu of intermarriage to GIs (*Sandē Mainichi* 1957:4).⁶⁷

Even after Japanese war brides successfully arrived in the U.S, GI-Japanese couples confronted America's antipathy against misogyny at home. According to Weinberger (1966), in the U.S, there were 30 states, as of in 1945, which banned interracial marriage between whites and members of racial minority groups, particularly black Americans.⁶⁸ Weinberger also noted that even though the anti-miscegenation laws specifically targeted racially mixed marriages between white and black Americans, some states including Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Virginia prohibited marriage between white and Japanese under the racial categories of "Mongolia." White GIs who were from these five states were not able to take their Japanese wives to their home states until the anti-miscegenation laws was abolished in 1967.

While early immigration legislations and anti-miscegenation laws were just one dimension of institutional challenges to intermarriage between GIs and Japanese women, military "red tape" was another institutional barrier that discouraged intermarriage. As it is mentioned in many existing literatures on war brides, many war bride informants reported that these marriage procedures included submission of

⁶⁷ According to the article, almost all women married American GIs followed by Australian and Canadian GIs. The numbers of women married Australian and Canadian GIs were approximately 100 altogether (*Sandē Mainichi* 1957:4). For Japanese war brides of Australian soldiers, see Keiko Tamura (2001), *Michi's Memories: The history of a Japanese war bride*.

⁶⁸ Among these 30 states, thirteen states lifted the ban by 1966, while another seventeen states held the miscegenation law until the anti-miscegenation law became illegal in 1967 (see Weinberger 1966).

various official documents, a physical exam, and political and social background check of prospective brides and their families. The marriage application procedures usually took several months, and it was not uncommon for the prospective GIs to be transferred to other regions or sent back to the U.S. before they formalized marriages. The physical exam and background check were designed to find every possible reason to reject prospective Japanese brides of GIs, especially to weed out prostitutes, criminals and diseased from the list (Perry 1980).

U.S. commanding officers also interfered in the personal affairs of soldiers. A GI wishing to marry a Japanese woman had to obtain permission from his commanding officer; without permission, he had no other way to formalize his marriage, nor could he bring his prospective wife to the U.S. In Spickard's words, requests for such permission "usually meant refusal and a lecture on the virtues of Anglo-Saxon purity" (1989:133). Military authorities also expected chaplains to discourage couples from crossing ethnosexual boundaries, especially white GIs and Japanese women. The experiences of Yuriko, one of the earlier cohorts of Japanese brides admitted to the U.S. in 1952 under the provisions of Public Law 717, provide an example. According to Yuriko, she and all Japanese brides-to-be were summoned in a group and lectured to by a chaplain:

He told us...I mean, to everybody [who was wishing to marry Americans], we'd better not marry American soldiers because we wouldn't be happy in America. There were too many Japanese women who were wanting to marry American men back then, so I think the chaplain tried to stop us from marrying them.

Yuriko's account was supported by U.S. Navy Chaplain Frederick W. Brink (1953), who wrote "So You Want to Marry a Japanese Girl!" to persuade soldiers to reconsider marrying Japanese women.⁶⁹ Brink regarded American men's "fever" for Japanese women as a temporary fitful passion based on sexual desire, warning young soldiers "But remember: happy as you might be with her sexuality, sex alone is a weak basis on which to build a marriage" (Brink 1953:6). In Brink's view, American men who wanted to marry Japanese women were attracted primarily to the women's bodies, sexualities, and youth as temporary sexual companions, rather than as lifelong partners to build American families.

Brink (1953) also suggested that fundamental differences in social, moral, and religious customs between the U.S. and Japan would cause difficulties between American-Japanese couples:

[G]enerally speaking, there is in Japan more acceptance of the girl who helps out the family budget by hiring out her body, and she has little if any feeling of having done anything morally out of the way in so doing. It is only natural therefore, to assume that it would be difficult for a girl brought up by Japanese standards to fully understand and appreciate American standards (P.7).

Brink implied that Japanese girlfriends were former prostitutes and concluded that it would be more appropriate for American soldiers to find respectable American girls at home who would meet "American standards."

Interestingly, Brink never discouraged American GIs from companionship with Japanese girlfriends, so long as such relationships ended before the men returned

⁶⁹ Brink's article was printed in a pamphlet and distributed by Department of Chaplains and Service Personnel, Presbyterian Church U.S.A., Philadelphia.

to the U.S. Brink's perceptions of Japanese women were imbedded in Orientalist views of Asian women shaped by images of Madame Butterfly: "The Japanese people are familiar with that kind of sacrifice.... Your Japanese friend would probably be able to understand very well that despite your love for each other it would be wiser for you not to be married" (p.15). His statement reflects Orientalist perception of Japanese women willing to accept their tragic fates of romance with American men and ready to sacrifice themselves for western lovers, which justified GIs' affairs with local women.

Meeting Future Husbands: Women Working on Military Bases

Despite occupation authority policies that discouraged and tried to make intermarriages between American GIs and Japanese women difficult, Japanese women and American men engaged not only in short-term, commercialized relationships that were primarily physical and sexual, but also pursued enduring relationships based on love. Since the U.S. occupation forces created a wide range of service jobs on and around military bases that demanded a mostly female labor force, many Japanese women met their future husbands through jobs that catered to GIs. A 1954 survey conducted by the town hall office in Gotenba, Shizuoka prefecture suggested that most of the 111 Japanese women who married GIs and submitted marriage registrations to the town hall worked on military bases (Tanaka 1954:28-30). Many of these women had service jobs as PX employees, waitresses,

housemaids, and typists, which contradicted stereotypes of war brides as former bar hostesses and prostitutes (Tanaka 1954:28-30).

Similarly, in my sample of twenty Japanese women, all but two women had legitimate service jobs catering to GIs when they met their future husbands. Their job duties often involved direct interactions between GIs and Japanese female employees, which encouraged American GI's to ask Japanese women working at PXs for dates (see Sakuda 1979:464-467). In these and many other situations, Japanese women were under the surveillance of an Orientalist gaze that constructed women as sexual objects to be examined, evaluated, teased, and seduced by western men. Although the Orientalist gaze included the power to objectify Japanese women, that power had limits. Japanese women were not passive; they had their own lenses for responding with their own gazes, and for scrutinizing and evaluating American GIs. Moreover, as I show later in this chapter, Japanese women's assessments of American men frequently involved comparisons with Japanese men.

Embracing “Americanization”

In postwar Japan, American culture presented itself as a symbol of power, affluence, democracy and modern civilization that should influence Japanese values, lifestyles and social institutions (Honma 2001). Honma (2001:70) argues that American popular culture texts such as “Hollywood movies, American magazines and comic strips like ‘Blondie!’ spread the image of an ‘American lifestyle’” and that these media accelerated American culture's diffusion among Japanese people.

Blondie, which ran in a Japanese newspaper, played a pivotal role in the early postwar period, stimulating curiosity about and envy of the victors' affluence among Japanese people (Amano 1995:232; Ono 1991; Iwamoto 2007; Gekkan Akurosu 1989; Yasuda 1995).⁷⁰ Ono (1991) argues that the standard middle-class American family depicted in *Blondie* also symbolized the affluence and American style "democracy" in family relations as opposed to feudalistic Japanese family relations in traditional Japanese households.

According to Yasuda (1995), Japanese images of America were based on the power of *mono*, or "materials," ranging from refrigerators, washers, and vacuum cleaners, to the American-style living rooms, bathrooms, and individual bedrooms that existed only dreams for the Japanese majority in the early postwar period. While the majority of Japanese people could only imagine American middle-class lifestyles through exposure to various media sources, Japanese women working for the occupation forces encountered American affluence in their workplaces at PXs, restaurants, and through interactions with American GIs. Among this group, the Japanese women who worked for American military families as housemaids stood out because of their firsthand experience of what they perceived as "real" American middle-class family life. Four war bride informants in this study worked as housemaids at some points before marrying their husbands.

⁷⁰ *Blondie* by Dean Young and Denis Lebrun was the first popular American comic translated into Japanese. It appeared on the *Asahi Shinbun* (Asahi Newspaper) from 1949 to 1951 (Ono 1991).

For example, Tetsuko spoke of high demands for Japanese domestic workers to serve American GIs and their families in postwar Japan. According to Tetsuko, finding a housemaid's job was easy, even though she had no experience as a housemaid or knowledge of English. When I asked Tetsuko why she decided to become a domestic worker, she said:

I learned about this job from my friend who was working as a housemaid for an American family.... My friend talked about her work experience to me. I became interested in applying for the housemaid job, after I heard her story. ...Just like other Japanese girls who chose to work for the occupation forces, I think I too was yearning for something like this job that looked new and exciting.

Tetsuko's hopeful view of a housemaid's job echoed the voices of many young Japanese women who rushed into employment offices to apply for jobs catering to occupation forces. In addition to working as housemaids, Japanese women became waitresses, typists, housekeepers, telephone operators, clerks, and cooks (Atsuda [1948] 1997).⁷¹

Through an employment office, Tetsuko was assigned to work for a U.S. lieutenant who brought his family to Japan. Everything about the job was new to Tetsuko when she started work in 1947, from boiling water, making coffee, ironing, vacuuming, and dishwashing, to setting a table for guests in an "American way":

I didn't know anything. I did not know English either. So the lieutenant's wife taught me many things with hand gestures. In the kitchen, she showed me how to do dishes...put [dish] soap [in the sink], like this. And...first, wash glasses, you see? Next, wash silverwares, and then wash plates. After finishing them, wash pans and pots. Lastly, clean the sink....

⁷¹ Atsuda's article was originally appeared in a monthly Japanese women's magazine, *Fujin* published in March 1948. A 1997 version of *Fujin* cited in this chapter is reprint from *Fujin* originally published between January 1948 and April 1948 by Sekai Hyōronsha, Tokyo Japan.

Tetsuko noted how impressive it was to learn the systematic, efficient ways of doing housework with the advanced methods available to American homemakers. These methods contrasted with those of the Japanese people, who cleaned their dishes simply with water, and with Tetsuko's mother's use of ashes to remove grease from dishes, pots and pans. Through everyday experience working for U.S. families during the early postwar years, Tetsuko and other Japanese women recognized dramatic differences between the victors and the defeated in every aspect of their lives.

Yoneko, an Okinawan war bride informant, first worked as a waitress at a mess hall for GIs when she was eighteen years old. "It was pretty common for Okinawans to work on American bases," Yoneko recalled. "There weren't enough jobs for us after the war. I think almost half of the young Okinawans worked for the American military because of a lack of job opportunities." Yoneko quit the job three years; then, similar to Tetsuko and influenced by a friend, Yoneko applied for a housemaid's job and began working as a live-in maid in 1955 for an American GI and his family who had recently arrived in Okinawa. This was not only Yoneko's first time to see "American housing" inside the military base's fence, but also her first experience with American middle-class lifestyles:

It was so different. Each family member had his [/her] own room. There were a flush toilet, shower, and running water in the house! No Okinawan had [running] water in his/her house at that time. There was a stove, electricity, washer, TV, and so on in the American household. Okinawans did not have these things in their houses.

Similar to Yoneko, many Okinawan women who worked as housemaids commented on America's high standard of living. These women were impressed by spacious

floor plans, multiple bedrooms, and electronic appliances located in living rooms and kitchens (Okinawashiritsu Kyōdo Hakubutsukan 1996:8). Their reactions help explain why Japanese women working as housemaids found their jobs appealing for reasons other than economic survival.

These jobs also attracted diverse groups of women who wanted to learn American ways of life, which included learning English, the language of power. Other motives for applying for such jobs included anticipated material rewards in addition to regular paychecks from American employers: cigarettes, food, and clothing (Okinawashiritsu Kyōdo Hakubutsukan 1996:1).⁷² Many teachers in Okinawa gave up their careers and switched to service jobs catering to U.S. military personnel because of better salary and material rewards (Okinawashiritsu Kyōdo Hakubutsukan 1996:4).

Sometimes, local women were hired to perform dual roles as housemaids and “companions” for GIs’ American wives, who were unfamiliar with Japanese language and culture. Some Japanese housemaids eventually married the employers they served. For instance, Yoneko’s American employer was a widower who brought his mother and a stepdaughter to Okinawa; he proposed marriage to Yoneko within one year of her starting work as a live-in maid. Others women who worked as housemaids, but not as live-in-maids, recalled meeting their future husbands at on-base entertainment facilities such as “service clubs” that offered GIs dance music

⁷² Atsuda ([1948]1997), a reporter from *Fujin* (Japanese women’s magazine) visited the public employment office in Tokyo to write about employment situations for Japanese women. Referring to the popularity of jobs catering to occupation forces among Japanese women, a Japanese official mentioned many women casually applied jobs in hope of gaining access to material benefits as a perk of working for the occupation forces.

performed by live bands.⁷³ Several of my informants, who lived in a dormitory for base-employees, remembered how a U.S. military shuttle bus stopped by the dorm on weekends to pick up Japanese women and take them to the service club. Housemaid jobs offered a variety of ways for Japanese women to access American middle-class life experiences, and many opportunities for these women to meet American GIs outside of work. Their encounters with GIs in casual settings often facilitated romantic relationships, some of which became enduring relationships.

Japanese women working at PXs, officer's clubs, NCO clubs, barbershops, and restaurants also had increased chances to meet GIs on a daily basis, ranging from low ranked enlisted men to officers. One informant who worked at an officer's club mentioned that many Japanese women working on her base had GI boyfriends. She also said GI customers often brought gift items, such as chocolates and flowers, to young Japanese waitresses and/or sales clerks in hopes of winning attention that would lead to dating. Even though the economic resources American GIs enjoyed were not the only factor that shaped Japanese women's perceptions, material affluence was the most visible aspect of the U.S. occupation for Japanese people. Once they saw the "victor's world" through jobs at PXs, restaurants, and private homes of American families, Japanese women found it almost impossible to ignore what American GIs could offer them, in contrast to the material resources of Japanese men.

⁷³ A "service club" refers to a "servicemen's club," which is more commonly used among war brides I interviewed. The service club is designed to offer entertainments to lower-rank servicemen.

Feminized Japanese Men

The majority of Japanese war brides who worked in postwar Japan mentioned that wages were one of the most appealing aspects of working for the occupation forces. Some war bride informants told me they quit their local jobs and applied for U.S. military work once they realized that the latter paid much better than the former. Almost all of these women said they earned twice or three times as much as what Japanese people, including Japanese men, usually earned from civilian jobs in postwar Japan. This new economic opportunity for Japanese women challenged conventional Japanese gender relations in which men were traditionally expected to be providers and to support their family as breadwinners.

One informant who benefited from these circumstances was Suzuko, a foreign-born Japanese woman who grew up overseas, where she spent most of her life before repatriating to Japan at the end of World War II. After returning to Japan, Suzuko worked as a telephone operator on a military base where she met her future husband.⁷⁴ I asked Suzuko what made her decide to marry an American rather than a Japanese man. Suzuko did not explicitly answer my question. Instead, she explained her views of Japanese men who, in her estimation, failed to retain male authority and responsibilities after losing the war.

...I was disappointed by Japanese men, I think. They appeared weak and incompetent after the war..... Japanese men were somewhat inconspicuous. Economically speaking, Japanese men around me at that time earned much less money than I did, you see?.... Women working on the base and even those in the town, I mean prostitutes, could earn more money than men

⁷⁴ While in overseas, Suzuko acquired English language skills, which became highly valued and in demand in occupied Japan.

could.... I think Japanese men were a little bit envious of Japanese women like us working on the army post....

For Suzuko, the Japanese men's presence in postwar Japan was overshadowed not only by the American occupiers, but also by Japanese women who took advantage of new economic opportunities. Suzuko also noted that Japanese men did not have as many choices of jobs as women did. Male jobs working for the occupation forces were limited mostly to cooking, menial labor, and miscellaneous low profile tasks, while women were more visible in workplaces that often offered direct interactions with American GIs. Suzuko and other war brides emphasized the large gap in the earnings between Japanese women and Japanese men, especially those men who had no connections to the American occupiers. Thus, the economic opportunities created by occupation forces were gendered, which empowered some Japanese women through economic and/or sexual affiliations with U.S. personnel. The gendered economy located in and around U.S. military bases also reshaped Japanese female workers' perceptions of traditional gender relations, leading them to question expectations that men would be breadwinners and women homemakers.

Japanese Patriarchy vs. American Democracy

In postwar Japan, some Japanese women assumed that American marriage relationships were models of democratic relationships based on love and perceived gender equality, due to their portrayals in American television programs, movies, and comic strips (Amano 1995). Japanese women yearned for western chivalry, or what

Japanese commonly called “ladies-first,” as an expression of love, kindness, thoughtfulness, and respect for women by men. Taking a critical approach, Amano contends that this chivalry was evident in affluent, middle-class western gender relationships. Amano also argues that the American “ladies-first” ideology originally meant “protective attitudes of the dominants (men) toward their subordinates (women)” which rely on “asymmetrical gender roles” rather than gender equality (1995:p.xx).

For western-minded Japanese women, however, “ladies-first” represented a form of liberation from Japanese patriarchy, which demanded women’s “submissiveness” and “patience” with their husbands in every aspect of their lives (Amano 1995:232-233). Many war brides identified “ladies-first” and “gentlemaness” as unique attributes inherent to western men and absent from Asian men. Moreover, some women openly criticized Japanese patriarchy as a harmful cultural tradition that made Japanese men less attractive than American men. Kinuyo was one of these women; she shared her gendered experience in postwar Japan, recalling her introduction to a patriarchal Japanese veteran.

My uncle (her mother’s brother) brought a retired Japanese Army officer to my mother’s house hoping that the officer and I would be a good match. The officer sat down on the *zabuton* (Japanese cushion) first, then said “*suware*” (“sit down”) to me in an authoritative tone.I said to the officer, “Excuse me? What did you say to me? Is that the way [you] treat a lady?... I don’t want to talk to you. You are not a gentleman.” I despise men like him who order a lady what to do.... The retired officer then said “*damare!*” (shut up!) to me. That was like a language used in the Army. He couldn’t get over the loss of his military status. Even after the war, he still tried to use power from his past glory.

Kinuyo viewed the officer's behavior as arrogant, militaristic, and chauvinistic. She revolted against the traditional role that expected women to submit themselves to male authorities and accept domestic gender hierarchies. "I *never* had interest in Japanese men beyond the level of friendship," Kinuyo asserted. By contrast, Keiko expressed favorable opinions about American men who treated a "lady" properly based on the principle of "ladies-first." Kinuyo said she was overjoyed when her GI husband helped her take off her jacket and pulled a chair out for her at a table in a restaurant, unlike Japanese men. Kinuyo felt she was treated respectably, in the manner that a "lady" deserves. For most war bride informants, pulling out a chair, opening a door, and carrying a heavy bag for women represented elements of western "ladies-first," which did not exist in Japanese patriarchal traditions.

Mari, another war bride informant, expressed admiration of American men and their affluence in the early postwar era. Mari experienced American family life through her former classmate from high school, Yuki, who married an American GI and lived in a house specifically remodeled for American residents in a Japanese neighborhood:⁷⁵

I visited Yuki's house quite often and hang around at her house. Back then, everybody was curious about an American-style life and hoping to catch a glimpse of it.... It was during the Christmas season.... We had an informal school reunion at her house. Some of my classmates brought their younger

⁷⁵ Japanese landlords providing off-base housing to American families were required to "upgrade" their houses to meet specific criteria set by U.S. occupation authorities. When I interviewed my informant, criteria they told me slightly differed. But generally, Japanese houses should be equipped with a flushable toilet, shower, screen doors, and basic kitchen appliances such as an oven and refrigerator. American electric appliances and furniture were usually brought from a military warehouse to the designated Japanese houses.

sisters and brothers to show them a real American-style Christmas! A big Christmas tree with a lot of beautiful ornaments, Christmas decorations, candies, and more... Yuki prepared American festive dishes including a big turkey!... My friend could get a variety of American goods from PX and commissary through her husband, you know?.... I think we Japanese were yearning for affluent American lifestyles at that time...

Although Mari was aware that Yuki's American middle-class lifestyles were available only through her American husband, the American material power Yuki occasionally shared with her friends impressed Mari. Christmas was such an occasion, demonstrating America's affluence and intensifying the gulf between the victors and the defeated.

In addition to her respect for American affluence, Mari was particularly enthusiastic about what she regarded as the physical attractiveness of American men: "I thought they were attractive. They looked gallant...they looked good in well-pressed military uniforms and walking breezily. There were no Japanese soldiers at that time, right?" Mari cheerfully revealed that she fell in love with her husband when she first met him at Yuki's house:

I thought he (her husband) was the best looking guy among other GIs who came to Yuki's house [laughter].... My husband has changed a lot since our marriage [laughter]. But he was a beautiful handsome young man when he was young. Honestly, it was his looks that triggered me most!" [laughter].

In addition to good looks, Mari cited "ladies-first" as an attractive factor. Similar to other war brides, Mari said that American men knew how to make women happy by performing their gender roles such as pulling out chairs and opening doors for women. Although she had a long distance relationship with her Japanese boyfriend when she began seeing her future husband, Mari, in her words, "no longer found

Japanese men attractive.” Mari’s story and those of similar women show that Japanese women who chose American GIs yearned for democratic gender relations. Their idealized gender relations were constructed around a western ideology of “ladies first,” in sharp contrast to the dominance and presumed superiority of Japanese man.

Marriages as the Way of leaving Japan

Many informants mentioned “gentlemanliness” and “ladies-first” as positive personal qualities that made them choose American over Japanese men. However, some women, like Sachi, found nothing attractive about her American husband and married him somewhat “accidentally.” Sachi adamantly denied an economic motive for her marriage to a GI. “In my time (the late 1950s), women who married Americans were out of their minds [laughter]. We had everything [materially] in Japan by that time, so there was no need to marry Americans just for that purpose. Only those silly and crazy women married Americans,” said Sachi as she laughed cynically at herself.

Based on what she told me, however, Sachi was not a “silly” or “crazy” woman. She was independent and started her own barbershop near a U.S. military base when she was only 19 years old. Since Sachi was an only child, she was expected to marry a barber and succeed in her parents’ barbershop. Sachi said her parents pressured her to look for her future husband, a barber, through *omiai*

(arranged marriage), which was still practiced widely in postwar Japan.⁷⁶ Sachi resisted:

I did not want to marry someone through *omiai*. I did not believe in *omiai*. And, of course, all men I had to meet were barbers! [laughter]. During each date arranged by a matchmaker, I presented myself in such a way that he (her *omiai* partner) would not think I was a right woman to be his wife [laughter].

Young, adventurous, and independent, Sachi sought a life that did not yield to parental pressure to fulfill a family obligation. Sachi said she had a secret desire to leave Japan for America and to try something new. At the time, marrying an American GI was one of the only means for Japanese women like Sachi to realize their dreams of going to the U.S.

Even though she did not actively seek opportunities to meet American men, Sachi met her future husband when he started coming to her barbershop. A reduction of U.S. troops after the occupation period resulted in the closure of the barbershop on the base where Sachi's future husband was stationed. Since Sachi's barbershop was located near the base, GI customers soon appeared at her shop. "There were few more barbershops in my area but many GIs came to my shop," Sachi said. "I had two young Japanese girls working at my shop, so they came to my shop to get attention from these girls, you see? [laughter]." Sachi also became quite popular among GI customers, including her future husband. When asked why she chose him over other GIs, Sachi laughed and replied, "Why did I marry him? Well, it's still quite mystery for me too [laughter]....I don't think he was particularly a handsome guy compared to

⁷⁶ Under the western influence of individualism and democracy, the meaning of marriage was transforming from a family matter to a personal affair in postwar Japan. Also, the postwar constitution defined marriage as a union based on the "mutual consent of both sexes," which suggests that the individuals, not their parents, should have choice of suppose (Tanaka 1995:12).

others....I don't know, but I somewhat married him. I made a big mistake!

[laughter].” Other war brides had responses similar to Sachi’s.

Sachi’s marriage ended in divorce and she was not successful in settling legal issues, such as child support and a divorce settlement. Sachi was quite upset about what she considered her husband’s negligence, but she also blamed herself for underestimating his obvious “licentious behavior” early in their relationship:

I think I spoiled my husband too much even before we married.... I mean, when he came by my shop, I gave him some money so he could go to bars.... After we married, I somewhat allowed him to continue to live like a bachelor who had no family responsibility as a father and husband.... He went to bars frequently and spent all money. I started working. He knew we could live without his paycheck.... He rarely came back home.

After moving to the U.S, Sachi became a virtual single-mother with a breadwinner’s role because her husband abandoned almost all of his family responsibilities. Sachi’s barber skills helped her find a job despite her minimal knowledge of English. She earned more than twice her husband’s wages because “my pay was not by hour but by the number of GI’s head I shave. The more I shave, the higher my pay became [laughter].” Similar to Sachi, several other war bride informants brought marketable skills, such as hair styling, sewing, and a housecleaning, that enabled them to earn money.

Tetsuko, the wife of a veteran, also said she did not find her future husband particularly attractive when they first met. Prior to meeting the American GI, Tetsuko was married to a Japanese man for love, but their marriage ended in divorce because of his infidelity. Consequently, Tetsuko was labeled a “failed wife” in Japanese society for not being able to keep her husband’s attention on her and their

home. Moreover, divorced women in early postwar Japan were devalued for having lost their virginity, which made attracting “decent” Japanese men difficult.

After her divorce, Tetsuko moved to a U.S. military base dormitory to work as a housemaid for an American family, and soon met her future husband at a service club. According to Tetsuko, she and many of her peers went to the service club on weekends, where most of the American patrons were low-ranking enlisted men: “Things were fairly cheap at the service club. That’s why low-rank soldiers went to the club to drink and dance.... I met my husband at the club. I knew my husband didn’t have much money....” When they started dating, Tetsuko, and not her future husband, paid their expenses, even on their first date. Despite his lack of finances, Tetsuko decided to marry the man. I asked about the crucial factor in her decision:

My husband was a gentleman, I mean, he did not touch me.... He did not even hold my hands. After the date, he went back to his barracks and I went back to my dormitory. No sexual relationship. My friends in the dormitory teased me, “hey, don’t you two go to a hotel?” When I said “no,” they couldn’t believe me because when you were dating a GI, it meant to have sex relationship.... But we didn’t. I thought he was a gentleman. I trusted him.... I think I just wanted to leave Japan...without thinking much about what my future would be like in America.... My husband was born in Kentucky. He had little school education. I knew I would have a tough life if I married him. I knew it. But it did not matter to me. I was married once and failed it. I had nothing to lose.

Tetsuko divorced her husband not long after they moved to the U.S. because he became abusive and disrespectful in many ways. In addition to verbal abuse, Tetsuko’s husband “was always causing trouble in the military...and his rank went down. He was a heavy drinker and spent all money...we became out of money. He cheated me on money and woman. He was having affairs.” Similar to Sachi, Tetsuko

paid a high price for taking a chance on marrying an “available” GI in hopes of a better life in the U.S.

Racial Dynamics of Marriage: *Nisei* GIs

Not all Japanese war brides married Caucasian GIs, but little scholarly attention has been paid to women who married non-white GIs. This is due largely to methodological problems, especially in locating a sizeable sample of the target population within a given research site. No official demographic statistics on racial backgrounds of American GIs who married Japanese women during or after the occupation are available. Nor did the U.S. military keep records of the race of servicemen when they submitted marriage applications (Ebony 1952). However, multiple sources such as newspaper and magazine articles, documentation from archives, and literature on Japanese war brides, indicate that there were large numbers of marriages between Japanese women and non-Caucasian GIs, particularly *Nisei* GIs (American servicemen of Japanese ancestry), with many of these marriages taking place in the early postwar years.

For example, Koshiro (1999) cites Associated Press reports that among 823 American GIs-Japanese couples who married between July 23 and August 21, 1947, 597 were *Nisei*, 211 were white, and 15 were black soldiers (p. 157). An article in *Pacific Stars & Stripes* of February 21, 1951 reported that among 1,330 GI-Japanese couples who married during the six-month amnesty period under Public Law 717 (from August 19, 1950 to February 18, 1951), one third were couples consisting of

Japanese women and *Nisei* soldiers. Another source reported that among 8,381 GI-Japanese couples who married between August 1950 and March 1952 in Tokyo, 73% of GI husbands were white, 15% were *Nisei*, and 12% were black (Kalischer 1952:17).

Kanzaki (1974) noted there were fewer barriers for non-Caucasian GIs, such as *Nisei* and black Americans compared to whites, who requested military approval for marrying Japanese women. That *Nisei* GIs were often successful in obtaining marriage approval was likely due to their shared “Japanese blood,” which was not considered to constitute race mixing. This may also explain why such marriages rarely received attention from the American mainstream press, in comparison to white GIs-Japanese marriages. Shibusawa (2006:50) argues that American media may have considered marriages between *Nisei* GIs and Japanese women “unworthy of comment” because “most Americans interpreted race only within a binary white/black or white/nonwhite construct.” Therefore, *Nisei* GIs’ marriages to Japanese women did not represent the “American racial tolerance” that American white servicemen demonstrated through commitment to their Japanese spouses (Ibid., p. 47).

Whether or not *Nisei* GIs-Japanese romantic relations were publicized, *Nisei* GIs were popular among Japanese women in the early postwar period because of shared ancestry and cultural backgrounds. The *Nisei*’s Japanese language skills, while limited to spoken Japanese, helped *Nisei* GIs communicate with Japanese people. Their ethnic, cultural, and language compatibility with Japanese were

advantageous to developing intimate relationships with Japanese women faster and easier than their “American” counterparts did. Notably, several Japanese popular magazines publicized the marriage of Miura Mitsuko, a Japanese actress, and a *Nisei* GI as an example of a happy *Nisei* GI-Japanese marriage (Yasutomi 2001; also see the picture in Sakuda’s *Tōkyō Senryō*, 1979:197). This coverage likely was a positive influence on many Japanese women when they decided to marry *Nisei* GIs.⁷⁷

Although none of my war bride informants married *Nisei* GIs, Asako told me that she went out with several GIs, including some *Nisei*, when she worked at a U.S. camp in the early 1950s.⁷⁸ The outbreak of the Korean War caused many American servicemen to be stationed in the camp, according to Asako, who loved dancing and frequently went to a servicemen’s club to dance. Asako told me of the time she took the initiative and asked a *Nisei* GI from Hawaii to dance with her:

...I’ve never done the same thing to ‘American’ (she meant “white”) GIs, though. Of course not!... Most Americans were merely interested in a casual relationship with Japanese women, you know? They expected us to move on to a sexual relationship quickly...say after dating twice or three times, if not on the first date [laughter].... But I first thought *Nisei* were somewhat [morally] different from the rest of the Americans because they looked just like Japanese. Actually, I dated a *Nisei* GI a couple of times. After the dates, I realized that *Nisei* were “Americans” after all.

⁷⁷ Mitsuko Miura, a Japanese actress married a *Nisei* GI in April 1946 but divorced in November 1951, three years after moving to her husband’s home in Los Angeles, the U.S. (Yasutomi 2000). Another Japanese actress who married an American military officer and moved to the U.S. also divorced. Yasutomi (2000:196) points out that several Japanese magazines featured their stories and emphasized the declined images of the former actresses whose marriages with GIs ended in an empty dream. The media contributed to creation of negative images of intermarriage in connection to divorce and descent. Also see *Sandē Mainichi* (1957:5).

⁷⁸ *Nisei* GIs-Japanese women married couples are most likely to be found in California and Hawaii, where the large population of Japanese *issei* community exists.

Since *Nisei* looked Japanese, Japanese people expected *Nisei* GIs to behave accordingly (Perry 1980), but *Nisei* GIs identified themselves as “Americans” and behaved just as their fellow American GIs did.

Perry (1980) notes that the gap between *Nisei*’s Japanese appearance and their American attitudes as occupiers created tension and sometimes resentment toward *Nisei* GIs among Japanese citizens. According to Perry, the reality of *Nisei* GIs being “privileged to be among the victors” was particularly irritating to some Japanese (1986:174). As for Asako, she was disappointed by “Americanized” *Nisei* GIs, but she also criticized their Japanese parents, or *Issei*, who retained traditional ways of living and expected their daughters-in-law to conform to the Japanese patriarchal family system and gender roles in their Hawaiian homes.⁷⁹ Asako recalled:

At first, I thought everything would be much easier if I married a *Nisei* GI (than a white or black GI) because his parents would be Japanese. I mean, I would feel secure if I had my Japanese in-laws around...especially during a critical time, for example, when I had to stay at home alone waiting for my husband’s return from his deployment.... But in reality, I heard that they, I mean *Nisei*’s parents, were really traditional and hard on their Japanese daughter-in-law in Hawaii...they were even more traditional than Japanese in-laws living in Japan. That was what I heard.⁸⁰

Asako’s assertion about the *Nisei*’s parents was supported in part by Kimura’s (1957) earlier study on in-law and daughter-in-law relationships among war brides in Hawaii. Kimura found that Japanese war brides who married *Nisei* GIs were less

⁷⁹ *Issei* refers to the first generation Japanese who immigrated to the U.S.

⁸⁰ The marriage between Miura, the Japanese actress, and *Nisei* GI that I mentioned earlier ended in a divorce. The Japanese media sensationalized Miura’s divorce as a case of failed marriage involving an American GI in general, but a *Nisei* GI in particular. The media also reported that Miura decided to divorce mainly because she was not able to get along with her traditional-minded Japanese-in-law in Hawaii.

likely to consider their in-law relations as “congenial” as compared to their counterparts, who married non-*Nisei* GIs. In some cases, in-law and daughter-in-law relationships involved “acute conflict,” which could lead *Nisei* GI-Japanese couples to divorce.⁸¹ According to Kimura, negative relationships were particularly acute between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law, which were attributable to gaps in their expectations for each other. On the one hand, mothers-in-law often expected daughters-in-law to be “subordinate apprentices” in almost every aspect of life in Hawaii, while war brides tended to be independent. On the other hand, some war brides were doubtful about the qualifications of mothers-in-law (e.g., education levels, language skills, knowledge of American cultures) as teachers to guide them to new lives in the U.S. (Kimura 1957).⁸²

Ironically, war brides were prepared to be “acculturated” into the American way of life, specifically into white middle-class domesticity, regardless of their husbands’ racial backgrounds. Several war bride informants stated that they attended “bride schools” offered by the Red Cross, where American volunteers (mostly officers’ wives) taught them how to do American housework properly before their departure to the U.S. Moreover, the U.S. occupation authority (GHQ/SCAP) made popular films and TV dramas for Japanese people, which primarily depicted white Americans and their middle-class lifestyles (Perry 1980). Unsurprisingly, some

⁸¹ Kimura (1957) noted that there were approximately 2,000 Japanese war brides residing Hawaii in the late 1950s and many of them were assumed to be wives of *Nisei* GIs.

⁸² Kimura (1957) also noted that a war bride tended to look down her Japanese in-laws, especially when she discovered her socioeconomic class was better than her in-laws.’ Also a war bride was likely to have better education than her in-laws, which further negatively affected the in-law and daughter-in-law relations. From the in-laws’ perspectives, however, a war bride was too “Americanized” in her fashions and manners to fulfill her dutiful roles as a good daughter-in-law.

Japanese war brides became optimistic that they would enjoy such lifestyles once they arrived in the U.S.

Japanese Prejudice toward Black GIs and “Jim-Crowism”

The Japanese public’s views of intimate liaisons between Japanese women and former enemies were resentful from the beginning of the occupation. Japanese contempt for intermarriages was connected not only to memories of World War II, but also to fears of losing Japanese “racial purity” through racial mixing (Koshiro 1999). Hybridization with other racial groups, even the “superior” white race, was believed to produce offspring inferior to the “pure Japanese,” and consequently harmful to Japanese racial integrity and national harmony characterized by racial homogeneity (see Creighton 1997; Koshiro 1999; Lie 2001; Weiner 1997).

Repressed animosity toward the white occupiers, along with the Japanese inferiority complex in relation to the white race, reinforced resentment against white-Japanese intimacy.⁸³

Compared to skeptical views of intimate relationships between Japanese women and white GIs or *Nisei* GIs, Japanese perceptions of black-Japanese intimacy were even more hostile. This was partly because of Japanese prejudice toward people with darker skin complexions as the Japanese adapted the white concept of race and a racial hierarchy, with the white race (e.g., Europeans, white Americans) at the top, the yellow race (e.g., Asians) in the middle, and blacks and aboriginal peoples (e.g.,

⁸³ Koshiro noted that the Japanese bore the inferiority complex to whites (Europeans and white American) who stood above all colored people in a racial hierarchy (1999).

Africans, Australian aborigines) at the bottom (Leupp 2003).⁸⁴ Moreover, the Japanese quickly learned about American white racism against black soldiers stationed in Japan, which they used to justify their own negative attitudes toward black GIs.

Billy Rowe (1945), a columnist for a leading African American newspaper the *Pittsburgh Courier*, reported that “Jim-crowism” was not practiced exclusively practiced within the U.S., but noted that also existed among the occupation troops in Japan. One of the most visible areas of racial segregation between white and black soldiers involved Japanese women’s sexuality. According to Rowe (1945), brothels, or what some called “Geisha houses” catering to occupation troops, were divided along the color line and offered sexual services to white and black soldiers separately. Rowe also reported that white soldiers patronized brothels reserved for black soldiers freely, while black soldiers were barred from white GIs’ sexual territories. Violations of these territories became sources of tension and conflict between white and black soldiers that often escalated into street fights (*Pittsburgh Courier* 1945).

Similar to situations in the Jim-crow Southern states, the U.S. armed forces in Japan failed to provide equal facilities and services for black soldiers. Perry (1980:171) noted:

White troops generally were well looked after, with their snack bars, swimming pools, barbershops, and clubs. Black troops often lacked these amenities, and pent-up tensions would periodically explode into violence. Off

⁸⁴ Japanese intellectuals and elites were influenced by the western concept of scientific race and social Darwinism as an explanation of advanced Western civilization and justification of the white superiority. While the Japanese, as the yellow race, placed themselves below whites in the racial hierarchy, they viewed themselves as the most superior race among the non-white racial groups such as Chinese, Koreans, blacks, and others.

base, fueled with Saturday night booze, white and black would go after each other before crowds of interested Japanese bystanders.

As the Japanese people gained knowledge of the racialized practice, they “looking down on the colored soldiers as inferior because they see them discriminated against by their fellow Americans” (*Pittsburgh Courier* 1945). Moreover, Rowe (1945) claimed that prejudice and discrimination were the main weakness of “American democracy” which convinced the Japanese that democracy was not for all Americans, but was a privilege for “whites only.”

Japanese media, especially popular magazines, also reinforced negative views of intermarriages between Japanese women and American GIs, but those involving black GIs were singled out as doomed unions. A magazine feature article “Umi o Watatta Kokujin Hanayome no Higeiki” (Tragedies of black GIs’ brides who crossed the sea) offered personal stories of three Japanese women who married black servicemen and moved to the U.S. in the early 1950s (Aoki 1953:24).⁸⁵ These women’s stories all focused on their struggles and the hardships they endured in the U.S., due to poverty, racial discrimination, and unfaithful husbands. Aoki contends, “the majority of Japanese women who married American GIs live unhappily today...but particularly, women who married black GIs, almost without exception, end up living miserable and tragic lives” (Ibid.). Special issues of *Ebony* magazines also portrayed Japanese women married to black GIs as “the loneliest brides in America” because of their difficulty in being accepted in “Negro communities” as outsiders and also by white communities as wives of Negroes (*Ebony* 1953a:17).

⁸⁵ Also see “Sanzen-nin no Hanayome,” *Sandē Mainichi* (July 28, 1957).

A survey conducted by the Japanese Ministry of Welfare in 1952 revealed a relatively high proportion of deserted children were born to black GIs and Japanese women.⁸⁶ According to the survey, approximately 4,000 Amerasian children born out of wedlock had been abandoned by GI fathers or by both parents at the time of the survey (Kalischer 1952; Trumbull 1967). Nearly 500 children were in orphanages, where 77.6% of them were Eurasians born to white GI-Japanese couples and 23.4% were Afroasians born to black GI-Japanese couples (Tsurumaru 1984:310).⁸⁷ In 1958, one orphanage reported that 30% of children were Afroasian, while 52% were Eurasian and 18% were “others” (*Shūkan Yomiuri* 1958). One might assume that the problem of Amerasian children ended with the occupation, but fifteen years after the occupation was over, one source estimated there were more than 20,000 deserted Amerasian children in Japan, and that one-sixth of them were believed to be Afroasian children (Wagatsuma 1978:120).

The records of deserted Afroasian children suggest that the marriage records alone could not provide a complete picture of the racial dynamics surrounding American GIs and Japanese women. On the one hand, Amerasian children were stigmatized regardless of their fathers’ racial background. They encountered neglect, prejudice, and discrimination by the people and governments of Japan and the U.S

⁸⁶ Foreign media tended to use “occupation babies” or “GI babies” while Japanese general public used the terms *ainoko* (child in between) or *konketsuji* (mixed-blood child) to refer to mixed race children. Since these terms contain derogatory connotation, they are no longer used. Many scholars use the term Amerasian. Some use Eurasian and Afroasian to distinguish between Japanese-white Amerasian and Japanese-black Amerasian (see Murphy-Shigematsu 2000).

⁸⁷ Japanese scholars, social workers, and media argued that the official statistics underestimated the actual numbers of illegitimate bi-racial children born to Japanese woman and GI parentages. For example, the statistics overlooked the number of children who were aborted in Japanese obstetrician clinics (Trumbull 1967) while others were kept “hidden” by their mothers from the mainstream society (Tsurumaru 1984).

(Burkhardt 1983; Murphy-Shigematsu 1988, 2000; Wagatsuma 1978). On the other hand, Afroasian children and their Japanese mothers faced greater social rejection from Japanese mainstream society than their Eurasian counterparts did (Burkhardt 1983; Wagatsuma 1978). The issue of deserted Amerasian children is not just a personal problem or legacy of U.S. occupation. It is a political issue that persists in Japan and other Asian countries where U.S. military bases are located.

A Japanese Wife of a Black GI: Konami's Story

Locating Japanese wives of black GIs in the Midwest was challenging, but persuading them to participate in the research was even more difficult. Japanese women who married black GIs encountered more curiosity, ridicule, hostility, prejudice, and discrimination, both in Japan and in the U.S, than did Japanese women who married white GIs. Such negative experiences made Japanese wives of black GIs more self-protective and distrustful, especially to strangers who appeared inquisitive about their personal life stories.

Fortunately, I was able to get to know Konami, the wife of a black veteran, who willingly agreed to meet with me for interview. Konami is an outgoing and energetic, and Similar to many of the war brides I met, she is friendly person who loves to talk. When I first visited her house, Konami enthusiastically showed me around the house. I saw familiar Japanese decorative objects, such as Japanese dolls in glass cases, Japanese paintings on her walls, and Japanese tableware in her cupboard, all similar to those I often saw in other informants' homes. There were

also many family pictures on display. A monochrome snapshot of Konami and her husband taken in mid 1950s Japan caught my attention: Konami, dressed in western clothes, and her husband, in an army uniform, stood in front of an American car.

The first thing Konami said about the picture was, “Look at the car! It’s big, isn’t it?... Our ‘first date’ was a train trip to the port town to pick up this car shipped from America. He did not understand Japanese, so I went there with him as a guide.” Konami stressed that not all American soldiers were allowed to own cars but her husband’s rank in the military enabled him to have his car shipped from the U.S. to Japan. She seemed proud of the car and said it stood out on the streets since there were few similar American cars in early 1950s Japan. When I asked how she met her future husband, Konami said they met at a bar in the entertainment district near a U.S. military base. Konami did not explain the details, but said almost all Americans she saw in that area were black GIs and her future husband was one who spoke to her. After some conversation, the GI invited Konami to move into a house he had just purchased. Konami accepted his offer instantly and married the GI within a few months after she moved into his house.

I asked Konami about her family reactions to her decision to cohabit with the black GI, then to marry him. Konami responded:

Well, of course, people said something bad about him because he was black.... But how could my sister oppose this marriage? My husband helped my sister’s family financially because they were in big trouble with their small business. They greatly appreciated my husband’s generosity.... If my parents were alive, they might have opposed to the marriage because of his skin color. But I had neither of them, you see?... In those days, my sisters and I...each of us was doing all the best we could in our own ways to get through the immediate postwar years....

As an unmarried young woman who did not have a guardian, Konami had no other place to go but depended on her sister's family who was also struggling with postwar economic hardship. Similar to the cases of Aki and Miwa (see Chapter 2), Konami's decision to marry the black GI reflects her vulnerable positions in the early postwar Japanese society where women, particularly those who had no guardians, minimal education and/or virtually no occupational skills, suffered most. Konami's circumstance gave her few options including marriage to the American GI through which, Konami gained access to material benefits that most Japanese were desperate to have at that time. To Konami, her husband's race, blackness, was not as important issue as the immediate economic hardship she wanted to overcome.

While women who established intimate relationships with American GIs similarly were stigmatized by the Japanese society as sexual collaborators with the former enemy, unlike Aki and Miwa, Konami additionally endured the contemptuous gaze from the Japanese public placed on women associated with black soldiers. Japanese wives of black GIs also felt they were placed in inferior positions by their Japanese female counterparts who married white GIs. The Japanese wife of a black GI interviewed in *Ebony* magazine said, "It seems that the Japanese girls who married white soldiers got very high hat when they came to America and drew a color line on us and our husbands" (1953a:17).

Japanese women came to identify themselves according to their husbands' race and followed both implicit and explicit racial rules practiced in America. According to the *Ebony* article (1953a), there was no race mixing between Japanese

wives of the two racial groups, which made it even harder for Japanese wives of black GIs to make friends outside their own circles. Konami said she socialized mainly with Japanese women who married black GIs, but there was no informal interaction with women who married white GIs:

After I moved to the U.S, I experienced, uh, racial discrimination by white folks.... When my husband and I lived in a black neighborhood, black kids called me “Chinese, Chinese!” But when I was in Japan, I was discriminated against even by the Japanese, I mean, Japanese women who married whites, you see? When I attended a bride school, these wives of white soldiers looked down on us with haughty attitude like “you folks are nigger’s woman.” They were too proud to associate with us....

Konami also shared her memories when she lived in military housing in Japan. There was a Japanese wife of a white GI who lived close to Konami’s house, but they never exchanged words. Konami felt her Japanese neighbor kept a distance from her to avoid establishing a personal relationship with someone who married a black GI. In Konami’s eyes, her Japanese neighbor appeared to be mimicking what her white husband would do to his black neighbor.

While Japanese wives of white GIs tended to view their husbands’ whiteness as a status higher than black GIs, their half-white-offspring also provided a sense of superiority to their Japanese counterparts who had half-black children. In a Japanese satirical cartoon, “Inferioritii konpurekkusu” (Inferiority complex), Ishikawa Kajio portrays a perceived racialized hierarchy between two Japanese women who are mothers of bi-racial children (see Mainichi Shinbunsha 1977). In the cartoon, the mother of a Eurasian baby (an Amerasian child whose father is a Caucasian GI) and the mother of an Afroasian child (an Amerasian child whose father is a black GI)

meet on the street. The woman who holds her Eurasian baby in her arms walks proudly, while the other woman hides her Afroasian child and casts an upward glance at the Eurasian baby, as though she envies the half-white baby. As the title of the cartoon “Inferiority complex” suggests, women with the Afroasian children felt compelled to accept their designated inferior status, in comparison to women with Eurasian babies.

Another piece by Ishikawa, “Kyō wa chokorēto bōi yo” (Today, I brought a chocolate boy) illustrates a Japanese-black GI couple walking on the street to a “hotel” and Japanese children mimicking the couple in their role play: Two children pretend to be a Japanese-black couple checking in a “hotel” where another child responds to the couple (see Mainichi Shinbunsha 1977). The pretended play that Ishikawa illustrates reflects the postwar GI-Japanese intimacy, as seen through Japanese children’s eyes. Just as children created *panpan* role-playing earlier, these children in Ishikawa’s cartoon imitated what they observed on the street where GI-Japanese romantic relationships were not limited to white GI-Japanese couples.

Even though the racial dynamics in postwar GI-Japanese intimacy is often overlooked, this study reveals that women’s experiences became complicated when their gendered and racialized experiences interacted with other attributes such as their GI partners’ race. Heterogeneity among Japanese women who have diverse experiences in the postwar Japanese society and in their relationships with GIs challenges the homogeneous images of Asian women constructed by the Orientalist gaze. Japanese women also became active analysts as they exposed American men

and Japanese men to their gaze for scrutiny, investigation, and evaluation, instead of allowing themselves to remain the objects of the Orientalist gaze.

In the following chapters, I will focus on younger generations of Japanese and Okinawan women who married American GIs and currently live in Okinawa. While younger generations of military wives and war brides share particular perceptions of American men, these contemporary women's experiences with GIs and their views of American men have become even more complicated and diverse. Reconstruction of the social meanings of race, especially blackness, and shifts in economic power relations between the U.S. and Japan, reshaped GI-Japanese intimacy, which in turn impacted Japanese women's perceptions of American men.

Chapter 4

Situating GI-Japanese Intimacy in Contemporary Okinawa

In preceding chapters, the personal narratives of my war bride interviewees vividly illuminate diverse experiences of Japanese women who married American GIs and moved to the U.S. under post-war social and economic circumstances. Although the term war bride is rare in today's Japan, GI-Japanese intimacy is not a remnant of postwar power relations between conquerors and conquered. Similar interracial liaisons exist in the context of U.S. global militarization, or what Chalmers Johnson (2004:5) calls an American "militarized empire," which shapes not only world politics and international relations, but also private spheres such as relationships between GIs stationed overseas and local women. Contemporary GI-Asian women intimacy is, therefore, a consequence of U.S. global militarization, which demands continuous relocation of U.S. military personnel to overseas duty stations since the U.S. involvement in World War II.

According to the U.S. Department of Defense's (DoD) quarterly report, *Worldwide Manpower Distribution by Geographical Area* ("Worldwide Manpower Report"), the U.S. military was distributed throughout almost 150 countries and regions including Asia and Pacific regions as of September 2005 (DoD 2005). Japan, one of the major U.S. "allies" in Asia, has been hosting the U.S. military since its unconditional surrender in World War II. As Table 2.1 shows, for the first two decades following the end of the World War II, Japanese women (war brides)

admitted to the U.S. as wives of American citizens outnumbered other Asian female immigrants to the U.S. However, nationalities of Asian women married to U.S.

Table 2.1 Asian Female Spouses of U.S. Citizens Admitted to the U.S., 1947-1975

<i>Year</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>Korea</i>	<i>Philippines</i>	<i>Vietnam</i>	<i>Thailand</i>
1947-1950	757	-	-	-	-
1950-1955	9,198	325	2,130	-	-
1955-1960	20,760	1,662	5,292	-	-
1960-1965	15,138	4,436	7,013	-	-
1965-1970	9,849	7,205	9,606	1,199	880
1970-1975	10,979	14,577	27,706	6,841	10,286
Total	66,681	28,205	51,747	8,040	11,166

Source: U.S. Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization, Annual Reports, 1947-1975, Table 6 (Washington, D.C.). This table was modified and reproduced from Table 1 Asian Women Immigrants Admitted to U.S. as Wives of American Citizens by Country of Origin and Year in Bok-Lim C. Kim (1977), "Asian Wives of U.S. Servicemen: Women in Shadows," *Amerasia*, 4 (1): 91-115.

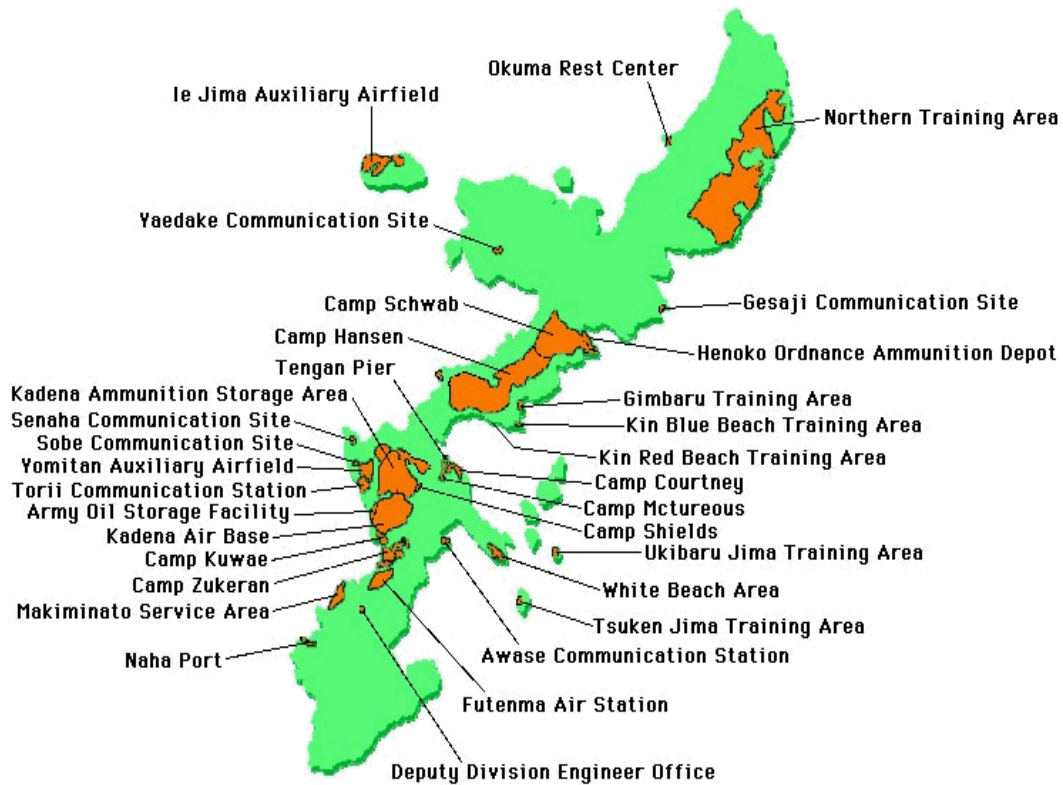
citizens became more diversified when U.S. military operations in Asia expanded and intensified due to the Cold War. The stationing of U.S. troops in numerous parts of Asia fostered more GI-Asian women intimacy, which in turn contributed to shifts in migration patterns among Asian women married to U.S. citizens.

As in "Worldwide Manpower Report" issued in September 2005, Japan hosted the largest active U.S. military population in East Asia and the Pacific region, followed by South Korea (DoD 2005). When looking at distribution of U.S. forces in Japan, however, one finds that Okinawa, a single prefecture of Japan, accommodates more U.S. military personnel than the rest of prefectures all combined on the mainland.⁸⁸ Okinawa, which makes up only 0.6% of Japan's total land area (about the size of Los Angeles, California), hosts thirty-eight military bases (as of March

⁸⁸ A Japanese prefecture is the rough equivalent of a state in the U.S. There are 47 prefectures and each prefecture elects its governor and representatives to serve the lower legislative assembly. Compared to the U.S. states, Japanese prefectures have more limited political power and autonomy.

2001) that account for 75% of the total land area used exclusively by the U.S. military in Japan today (See Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Distribution of U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa, 2001



Source: Reprint from Okinawa Prefectural Government, Executive Office of the Governor, Military Base Affairs Division, "Outline of the U.S. Facilities and Areas," *U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa*. <http://www3.pref.okinawa.jp/site/view/contview.jsp?cateid=14&id=589&page=1>

These 38 military installations represent the continuation of U.S. military occupation of Okinawa where new military personnel constantly move in, while others are being relocated to other duty stations. According to Okinawa Prefectural Government, Military Base Affairs Division, in 2004, some 26,000 U.S. servicemen and women were stationed in Okinawa; the total number of Americans related to U.S.

military in Okinawa reached over 50,000 when Department of Defense (DoD) civilian employees and dependents were included (See Figure 2.2).⁸⁹

Table 2.2 U.S. Military Related Population in Okinawa, 2004

Number of military personnel, civilian employees, and dependent	Military Personnel	26,282
	Marine Corps	16,015
	Air Force	7,100
	Navy	2,250
	Army	917
	Civilian Employees (Direct and Indirect Hire)	1,679
	Dependents	22,865
Total		50,826

Source: Okinawa Prefectural Government, Executive Office of the Governor, Military Base Affairs Division, *U.S. Military and Self Defense Force Bases in Okinawa*.

As a critical strategic location for the U.S. military during the Vietnam War, (and more recently, wars in the Middle East), Okinawa has been transformed into a U.S. military colony with financial and political support from the Japanese central government. The long-term impact of U.S. military presence on a relatively small island isolated from mainland Japan has shaped Okinawa’s experience in unique ways. Pervasiveness of GI-Okinawan women intimacy, including intermarriages is one aspect of Okinawan uniqueness that the majority of Japanese on the mainland overlook.

⁸⁹ Civilian employees in Okinawa are classified into two categories: Department of Defense civilian employees who were directly hired in the U.S. by the DoD (direct hire); Others resided outside the U.S. at the time of hiring, thus locally hired (indirect hire). Their benefits differ depending on the hiring status, direct or indirect. The first is offered full benefits by the DoD, while the latter’s benefits are limited.

Intermarriages in Okinawa

In Okinawa, I often saw GI-Okinawan couples in places such as military bases, base towns, entertainment areas, and shopping centers. Despite high visibility of such interracial couples, unlike their predecessors or Japanese war brides, little research has been done on contemporary GI-Japanese/Okinawan intimate relationships. GI-Japanese intimacy rarely receives public attention either, especially outside Okinawa. It was not until the late 1989s that Okinawa became a center of curiosity when Japanese mainstream media started reporting on young women congregating at U.S. Naval ports, and at bars and clubs near U.S. military bases such as Yokosuka on the mainland. The media tended to sensationalize behaviors of these young women derogatorily and tauntingly referred to as *amejo*.⁹⁰

Similar to the postwar-term *panpan*, *amejo* emphasizes promiscuous images of contemporary Japanese women who pursue *only* American men (GIs) in the vicinity of U.S. military bases. Where *panpan* were stigmatized as collaborators of American GIs in pursuit of a better economic lives and simple survival, *amejo* are stereotypically perceived as GIs hunting for sexual desires and short-term erotic adventures (Kobayashi 2003; Takushi 2000). Some of these women do frequent base towns in search of American GIs. In my research sample, several of Okinawan and mainland informants revealed they frequented clubs and bars in base towns for such purposes and had multiple relationships with GIs prior to their marriages. However,

⁹⁰ See Akiko Kudō, “Japanese women are so easy: Women sucked by GIs,” *Shinchō* 45, February 1999; Mutsuyo Satō, “Heartrending stories of Okinawa ‘amejo,’” *SPA!*, August 27, 2002; Yumi Yamashita, “Special report from Okinawa: ‘Amejo’ pursuing black American GIs,” *SAPIO*, November 1995; Ruika Katsuhira, “Japanese girls yearning for brothers in the U.S. military bases and turned themselves to ‘blacks,’” *Bessatsu Takarajima*, July 08, 1992.

since Japanese media dwell on images of promiscuous young women seeking short-term associations with American GIs, the fact that many of the women perceived as *amejo* ultimately marry GIs is overlooked.

According to 2004 Japanese government statistics on marriages by years and nationalities, 1,500 Japanese women married U.S. men in Japan (Kōsei Rōdō Shō [Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare] 2004). Even though this number appears insignificant at first glance, approximately one-fifth of these marriages (275 out of 1,500) took place in Okinawa alone. Moreover, intermarriages of Okinawan women and U.S. servicemen account for 62% of all international marriage cases in Okinawa (Kōsei Rōdō Shō 2004). On the mainland, however, this conventional intermarriage pattern, of women marrying Western men and moving to men's home country, is no longer dominant. As Japan's economy became stronger in the 1970s, and the 1980s, increasing numbers of Japanese men brought home wives from other Asian countries (Sellek 2001).⁹¹ On mainland Japan, gender-reversed intermarriages have outnumbered conventional marriages over the past three decades, while the postwar intermarriage pattern of women marrying American GIs remains dominant in Okinawa (see Kōsei Rōdō Shō 2004). Nonetheless, women associated with GIs in Okinawa tend to be labeled simply as *amejo* whether they are married or not.

As in postwar Japan, contemporary Okinawan and Japanese men seem more hostile to women associated with GIs than do their female counterparts. Prior to their

⁹¹ The majority of intermarried Japanese men had wives from other Asian countries such as China, Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand but very few Japanese men married Caucasian women (see marriage statistics by nationalities: http://www.dbtk.mhlw.go.jp/IPPAN/ippan/scm_k_Ichiran). The pattern of Japanese men marrying Asian women parallels with white men bringing Asian wives home through a mail order bride agency or internet dating sites.

marriages, many military wives, and particularly Okinawan women I interviewed, mentioned they experienced awkward or uncomfortable situations when male friends or colleagues discovered they were dating or had had GI boyfriends. Okinawan men tend to immediately perceive women associated with GIs as *amejo*, assuming that the women had sexual relationships with American men. These women are no longer considered acceptable as intimate partners for Okinawan men because, as some interviewees told me, such men would not tolerate the women who were “consumed” by Americans.

To American GIs seeking casual relationships with local Asian women, whether these women previously had sexual relationships with Japanese men or GIs was not the issue. Instead, when I interviewed several GIs in the entertainment district, they talked about women they encountered in the base town in terms of the two groups, Okinawan (and Japanese) women and Filipinas. These GIs usually view young Okinawan women “available” for casual relationships, while such men are likely to perceive Filipinas as “professionals” to be purchased. Despite such distinctions, these women around military bases are objectified and sexualized under the Orientalist gaze. As I did for war brides, I use a feminist strategy of reversing the gaze to make a platform for women to speak out their experiences with and perceptions of American men. Reversing the gaze emphasizes women-centered perspectives and their subjective viewpoints rooted in non-Western cultural and social worlds within the specific historical and social contexts. Therefore, understanding a

significance of historical, cultural, and social landscapes of Okinawa helps locate and understand the trajectory of contemporary GI-Okinawan intimacies.

How Okinawa Became U.S. Military Colony

Okinawa, once was an independent kingdom known as the Ryukyu kingdom, has a culture and history distinct from that of mainland Japan. However, the modern state of imperial Japan (Meiji government) invaded the Ryukyu Kingdom and annexed it to Japan as Japan's last prefecture, or Okinawa in the late 1800s (Kerr 2000; Taira 1997). Although Okinawan people were forcefully converted to faithful "Japanese citizens" and fought against the U.S. for the Japanese Emperor, they developed different relationships and experiences with the U.S. from the rest of country in postwar Japan and thereafter.

When U.S. occupation began in Japan, the U.S. differentiated treatment of its former enemy by putting Okinawa under separate U.S. military occupation from mainland Japan. When Japan was granted official independence from the U.S. military rule in 1952, Okinawa was left out of liberation from U.S. occupation.⁹² In return for Japan's independence, the U.S. gained the rights to retain Okinawa, which made Okinawa entered the second phase of American occupation. Unlike conventional colonial rule, the U.S. gained nothing economically from ruling

⁹² Japan regained its sovereignty from the U.S. occupation one year after it signed the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951. The Japanese government simultaneously signed the Japan-U.S. security treaty, which allowed continuing presence of U.S. military forces in Japan. In return, the Japanese government expected the U.S. to protect Japan from the threat of Communism. By having the U.S. handle military affair, Japan intended to focus on economic recovery and further economic development.

Okinawa. Instead, a vast amount of land was confiscated from local Okinawans to construct and strengthen U.S. military bases during the Korean War and the Vietnam War (Johnson 2004; Sarantakes 2001).

It was essential for the U.S. to secure Okinawa because of Okinawa's strategic importance in the Pacific at the height of the Cold War. As an American military colony, Okinawa was administered directly by the Pentagon without being granted a legal status from the U. S. Nor, did Okinawa retain their Japanese citizenship. They became stateless people who belonged neither to the U. S. nor to Japan until 1972 when Okinawa was reverted to Japanese authority. Even after Okinawa came under Japanese authority, the U.S. military bases in Okinawa remained undisturbed under the Japan-American Security Treaty.

Ironically, the reversion of Okinawa to Japan was realized based on the agreement that Japan guaranteed the U.S. to retain its right to maintain its military bases and use Okinawa as the strategic function (Taira 1997:161). Therefore, as Johnson (2004) points out, "reversion was a convenient way to perpetuate the status quo while transferring responsibility for the Okinawa people to Japan" (p. 200). Consequently, the Japanese central government has become an official "host" of the U.S. forces on behalf of Okinawa based on the Japan –U.S. security treaty. This arrangement leaves Okinawans not only *a de facto* colony of the U.S. military but also into out of decisions that affect them directly (Jonsoh 2000; Nagamoto 2000). Today, Okinawan people continue to shoulder the burden of the U.S. military

including 37 installations spread throughout the islands under the Japan-U.S. security treaty.

In recent years, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, Japanese defense minister Yoshinori Ohno, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and Japanese foreign minister Nobutaka Machimura met at the so-called “2 plus 2” ministerial-level security meeting in Washington, D.C., and accepted the reduction of U.S. Marine personnel (Allen and Sumida 2005). In the proposed plan, the 7,000 Marines in Okinawa will be moved to Guam over the next six years. Transfer of Okinawa-based Marine is part of the U.S. military realignment plan that intended to reduce the burden of U.S. military forces on Okinawa. However, the “deal” of reduction of Marine forces in Okinawa is not separable from the relocation site of the U.S. Marines’ Air Station, Futenma, which has been a controversial issue. Local residents, environmentalists, and anti-U.S. military base activists have protested against the relocation site which was agreed by the U.S. and the Japanese government (see Inoue 2007; Spencer 2004). Okinawa’s strong rejection to the relocation site demonstrates their continuing resistances against their “2nd class citizen status” and unequal positions where Okinawans have been excluded from the decision making process that affect them directly.

The Impact of the U.S. Military on Okinawa and its People

Because Okinawa has been a strategic position for the U.S. military, as I mentioned earlier, one element that distinguishes Okinawa’s experience from that of

mainland Japan is the overwhelming presence of U.S. military bases and its long-term impact on Okinawan people and their lands. Unlike the majority of people living in mainland Japan, virtually every person in Okinawa has been affected, directly or indirectly, by the U.S. military bases. For example, military bases along with large numbers of U.S. military personnel and their families have created demands for a variety of local labor (e.g., manual labor, service jobs) and businesses (e.g., taxi drivers, housing agencies). While these military-related jobs and businesses have boosted the local economy and are integral to Okinawa's economic life during the Occupation era (1945-1972), they also created economic dependence on the U.S. military. After the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, the overall base-related economy declined. However, Naha Defense Facilities Administration Bureau (NDFAB 1999) reported that the U.S. military is still the largest single employer in Okinawa today.⁹³

Aside from economic factors, the long-term impact of the U.S. military presence on Okinawan people and the environment is enormous. Okinawa has faced numerous military-related problems ranging from crime (e.g., rape, murder, theft, and vandalism), noise pollution, aircraft accidents, environmental damage (e.g., oil spills, red soil runoff, and forest fires), to exploitation of women in the sex industry (Hook and Siddle 2003; Pekin NGO Forum 1995; Takazato 2003; Okinawa Women Act Against Military Violence 1998). According to the Okinawa police department, the total number of American GIs, civilian employees and dependents who have been

⁹³ 'According to NDFAB (1999), the U.S. military is one of the top four major employers that provide a large number of jobs for people living in Okinawa: The U.S. bases (24 facilities) in Okinawa hire 8,500 Japanese employees followed by ten city halls (8,000), three local banks (4,000), and Okinawa Electric company (1,500).

arrested in criminal cases between 1972 and 2001 is nearly 5,000 (Okinawa Prefectural Government 2000). These problems have become the sources of longstanding tensions between local Okinawans and the U.S. military. However, these issues are rarely covered by the mainstream media on mainland Japan, nor are they treated as a national issue except for few incidents including the 1995 rape case of an Okinawan school girl.

The notorious 1995 rape of a twelve-year-old Okinawan school girl committed by three U.S. military personnel intensified the tensions between Okinawans and U.S. military. Public outrage sparked a mass political rally protesting against the U.S. military bases in Okinawa. The incident is still a source of anguish and painful memory for many Japanese citizens, particularly for Okinawans (Angst 2003; Johnson 1999, 2000; Takushi 2000; Tanji 2003). In addition to the 1995 rape case, there have been more than a dozen reported sexual assaults involving nearly two dozen American personnel over the past 10 years (Okinawa Prefectural Government 2000). As demonstrated by Okinawa Women Act Against Military Violence (OWAAMV), Okinawan women play vital roles in activism and campaigns against the perpetuation of U.S. military bases in Okinawa and U.S. global militarization (Fukuma and Matsuoka 2002; OWAAMV 1998; Takazato 2003). Despite the long-lasting struggles, Okinawa continues to shoulder a disproportionate burden of U.S. military bases compared to the mainland.

Military Bases in Okinawa

As a mainland Japanese who grew up in a region where there are no military bases within a close proximity, it was not until I settled into my fieldwork site that I began to grasp the overpowering presence of the U.S. military. Various military installations surrounded by wire-net fences with signs reading “Unauthorized entry prohibited” symbolize the legal existence of U.S. Armed Force in Okinawa legitimized by the Japanese government (see Figure 2.2 and 2.3). These fences are visible markers that draw legal boundaries between the U.S. and Japan (Okinawa). Checking posts located at the entrance/exist point of military bases function as “Immigration” where unauthorized visitors must be escorted by authorized military members to cross the border to the U.S. side.

Figure 2.2 “Unauthorized Entry Prohibited”



Figure 2.3 Wire-net fences around the military base



Kadena Air Base, the largest airbase in the Pacific, is one of the major U.S. bases among other and located in the central part of Okinawa where military bases are concentrated (see Figure 2.4). This vast scale multifunctional base accommodates

more than 20,000 people including U.S. military personnel, Department of Defense (DoD) civilian employees, their dependents, and Japanese employees.⁹⁴ As were other overseas bases in U.S. foreign territories, Kadena Air Base in Okinawa was constructed according to American standards to offers “Little America” for members of the U.S. military who are away from their home. Baker (2004) explains that “Little America”

provides a safe and sanitized environment for American personnel and their families, where they could move from Panama to Okinawa to Great Britain to Libya and find the same recreation options, the same products in the stores, the same information on television and radio and in newspapers that they had become accustomed to in their previous station (P. 58).

Figure 2.4 Kadena Air Base, 2004



Source: Courtesy of Okinawa Prefectural Government, Executive Office of the Governor, Military Base Affairs Office.

⁹⁴ See Kadena Air Force, <http://www.kadena.af.mil/>.

As other “Little Americas” elsewhere do, military bases in Okinawa provide a variety of services and facilities ranging from U.S. fast food and family restaurants, shopping centers, PX/BX, bars and clubs, banks, post offices, movie theaters, schools, libraries, hospitals, private beaches, marinas, and recreational facilities such as golf courses, tennis courts, to swimming pools.⁹⁵ High rise apartments and U.S.-style military housing with well maintained “green lawns” provide spacious American style floor plans equipped with central air conditioning.⁹⁶ U.S. cultural and social icons familiar to U.S. soldiers and their families make them feel at home and offer a particular quality of life in a foreign country.

Some military bases occupy populated areas and stretch out like a gigantic doughnut: a center hole symbolizes the U.S. military base and the ring represents fences. There are also small and middle-sized “American doughnuts” that scatter over the island, and some of them lay across two or three towns. Because local Okinawans are prohibited from crossing the center hole, they are forced to take a long way around the ring in order to move from one side to the opposite side. To local Okinawans, especially those commuters who are affected by this inconvenient arrangement on a daily basis, U.S. military bases are not merely physical obstacles but also a daily reminder of U.S. domination and power over Okinawan people and their lands.

⁹⁵ PX stands for Post Exchange, where military personnel and eligible family members purchase a variety of merchandise at reasonable prices. The term, BX or Base Exchange, is also used to refer to an exchange facility in Air bases. For military pay and benefits, see Rush (2003).

⁹⁶ To Japanese, a spacious front yard covered with green lawns symbolizes American homes as they see in American movies and TV dramas. In Japan, green lawns are rarely used to cover the front yard of individual homes. Central air conditioning is not common especially in Japanese style houses primarily due to high cost of electricity in Japan.

To people like Okinawans, who have been forced to “co-exist” with multiple U.S. military bases in their lands for more than half a century, military bases are an unavoidable reality. However, what U.S. military bases mean to them differs depending on their relationships with U.S. military in Okinawa. Indeed, many Okinawan people have some connections to U.S. bases through different channels including base employment. *Okinawa Taimusu* (2003), one of the major Okinawan newspapers, reported that there were more than 20,000 applicants for 550 full-time base jobs in 2002. This is another ironic fact but military bases employment attract Okinawans because they offer wages, benefits, and working conditions better than in most local companies do in Okinawa.⁹⁷

Part-time and temporary jobs on base such as waitresses at restaurants, sales clerks at on-base stores, and cashiers at food courts are also available to local people. These jobs are popular, particularly among young Okinawan women. Many of them consider this job opportunity as a way to practice their English, to experience an “American atmosphere,” and most importantly, to gain access to “Little America.” Some people also expressed their optimistic hopes to move up to fulltime positions once they are hired as part-time employees. Regardless of these base employees’ work status, full-time or part-time, their activities on base are restricted to minimal use of certain services and facilities such as a food court and movie theater.

⁹⁷ There are more than 8,000 local people working on U.S. military bases as fulltime employees in Okinawa alone. These Japanese base employees are hired and paid by Japanese government, Defense Facilities Administration Agency. They receive wages and work conditions similar to those of civil servants in Japan while they follow American rules such as holidays (see *Okinawa Taimusu* 2003).

Unlike Okinawan base-employees, Okinawans who have personal connections to military members (e.g., family members or close friends of military wives; girlfriends of GIs or U.S. civilian employees) cannot go into military bases without being accompanied by their “connections.” However, they may enjoy some privileges that are not available for the majority of Okinawan base-employees. For example, it is prohibited for base workers to shop or even to enter such places as commissaries and BX/PX; however, GIs’ girlfriends may be able to buy products from these prohibited stores through their GI boyfriends. Similarly, family members of military wives could enjoy lunch at a NCOs’ (Non Commissioned Officers) club or an Officers’ club, depending on their GI husbands’ military ranks. It is important to note that only U.S. military personnel and DoD civilian employees whose legal status in Japan is governed by the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) could fully enjoy military benefits and extend them to their spouses.

Military Wives and SOFA in Okinawa

The term SOFA, which is less likely known to most of the mainland Japanese, was mentioned by almost every military wife with whom I interviewed in Okinawa. The SOFA is a key element to understanding military wives’ dual identities and positions in Okinawa. The SOFA is a bilateral agreement between the U.S. and a host country regarding use of U.S. military bases and the status of United States Armed Forces in the host country (Kirk, Cornwell, and Okazawa-Ray 2000; Ryūkyū

Shinpōsha and Chii Kyōtei Shuzaihan 2004).⁹⁸ Japan and the U.S. signed the SOFA in 1960 but Japanese civil groups and activists have since criticized it as an unequal treaty in favor for the legal protection for U.S. bases and military personnel stationed in Japan while it does not adequately address protection of local communities from military related accidents or crimes committed by U.S. troops (Jonson 2004; Kirk et al. 2000). Johnson (2004:1-2) argues that the SOFA could be used by American authorities in civil and criminal jurisdiction to “shield military felons from the application of Japanese law” and let them “fly out of the country before local authorities can bring him to trial.” Whether the SOFA is viewed as an unequal or unjust treaty by Okinawan people, certainly U.S. SOFA members stationed in Japan enjoy various benefits such a treaty offers.⁹⁹

Because the SOFA applies only to U.S. citizens, it does not cover Okinawan spouses of U.S. military personnel.¹⁰⁰ However, through their marriage to U.S. GIs or DoD civilian employees, Okinawan women are integrated into the military institution and entitled to various benefits as “dependents” of their husbands. For example, military wives are granted the I.D. card and a special car license plate,

⁹⁸ The content of the SOFA varies depending on the host country laws, power relations between the two governments, and their willingness to negotiate terms (Kirk, Cornwell, and Okazawa-Ray 2000). For the complete documents of the SOFA, see the official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/usa/sfa/pdfs/fulltext.pdf>.

⁹⁹ Under the SOFA, Japanese government has been offering financial support for the maintenance of the U.S. military bases in Japan. This financial support, the so-called “*omoiyari yosan*” (sympathy budget) is used to pay such expenditures as construction of military housing and entertainment facilities, wages of Japanese employees working at the U.S. bases, and the military’s utility bills. Consequently, Japanese tax payers shoulder the financial burden of U.S. military. See Ryūkyū Shinpōsha and Chii Kyōtei Shuzaihan (2004).

¹⁰⁰ Even though a Japanese spouse is not granted the SOFA status, their bi-racial children, who normally possess both U.S. citizenship and Japanese nationality, are classified as SOFA members as long as they possess U.S. citizenship (see Sullivan 2001).

known as “Y-number” by the military authority, which enable them to cross the boundary between Japan (Okinawan civilian areas) and the U.S. freely. The free pass to “little America” is one of the various benefits that are granted to authorized members of the U.S. military community under the SOFA.

The I.D. card granted to Okinawan military wives also enables them to escort non-SOFA visitors such as their family and friends to take a tour of some facilities on the military bases. For the majority of Okinawans, the life inside the military fences is not accessible except for special occasions such as a military open house and holiday events (e.g., Halloween).¹⁰¹ Having an opportunity to visit military bases becomes something special for local Okinawans because it offers a unique “American experience” without leaving Okinawa and traveling to the U.S. Granted a free access to the military bases and facilities through their marriage to U.S. servicemen, military wives are often perceived as “privileged,” and as Enloe (2000:156) points out, they are “defined by society not only by [their] relationship to man but by [their] membership to a powerful state institution.”

It is ironic, but on the one hand, many Okinawans are explicitly against the persistence of the U.S. military bases in Okinawa and actively participate in anti-base movements from time to time. On the other hand, U.S. bases are popular destinations for local Okinawan who want to experience a “real” American atmosphere.

Okinawan people, especially older generations, have longer and more intensive associations with Americans and American culture than the mainland Japanese have.

¹⁰¹ American Fest at Kadena Air base is the biggest U.S. military open house in Japan, which attracts not only Okinawans but also tourists from mainland Japan.

Certain American material cultures, diet, and lifestyles are deeply embedded in Okinawan lives as a result of the long-term impact of the U.S. military occupation (see Kinjyo 1995; Miyagi 1995). For instance, certain American products are still valued, favored, and consumed by many Okinawans even though they are generally more expensive than domestic products. I saw a variety of U.S. brand name imports (e.g., canned food, instant coffee, toothpaste, detergent, etc.) sold at Okinawan local supermarkets as well as at street stands. It is common knowledge among Okinawans that the same imported items are sold at base stores cheaper than local stores because of tax exemption eligible for U.S. SOFA members and their families.

During interviews with military wives, many of them, particularly Okinawans, said that they often felt pressured to escort their Okinawan friends and relatives eager for the unique American experiences. Military wives also reluctantly purchased American products such as imported beer, brand name cosmetics, and even food items (e.g., meat, rice) on base stores for their friends when they found it difficult to refuse. Such activities are considered illegal as the military authority restricted purchases at base stores to personal use and consumption by eligible members. However, many Okinawan military wives told me they routinely practice “illegal purchases” on behalf of their friends, family, relatives, and neighbors.

Black marketing has also been a persistent problem among U.S. GIs who resell various items purchased at on-base stores to local vendors. The military radio and TV channels routinely broadcast a warning to such illegal activities. Despite military authority’s consistent efforts to discipline their servicemenbers, military

bases continue to function as the distribution center where American material culture informally flows into local markets and into the hands of some Okinawans. With persistent popularity of certain American material culture, some Okinawans envy military wives for their “privileges” to enjoy various military benefits under their GI husbands’ SOFA status. Their privileges can also become a source of tension that reinforces the negative views toward military wives in Okinawa.

While various military benefits are apparently positive assets associated with marriages to military personnel in Okinawa, being wives of U.S. servicemen adds another dimension to such relationships, which make their experience quite different from intermarried civilian couples. In addition to dealing with the language and cultural differences with their spouses, Okinawan military wives also face completely new lifestyles in a hierarchical masculine world organized around training, deployment, cultures and languages shaped by the military institution. Because the military structure is complicated, understanding the military rules and system is challenging for any outsiders but especially for foreign wives.

R & R (Rest and Recreation) Districts

Many women I interviewed mentioned there are particular nightspots such as bars, clubs, and live music houses carting to GIs in the base town and its vicinity. These nightspots are popular “intimate sites” where Japanese women and GIs meet, interact, and possibly develop intimate relationships. Some of these intimate sites located in the base town overlap with former entertainment districts known as “rest-

and recreation” (R & R), which crystallize a sexualized landscape of U.S. occupation in Okinawa where women were particularly affected by militarized masculinities. During the Vietnam War, for example, Okinawa’s R & R districts offered various sex businesses for countless U.S. soldiers returning from the battlefields and those going back to Vietnam. These R & R business such as bars, strip clubs, and brothels flourished and experienced economic booms as U.S. soldiers spent U.S. dollars “like water” into the R & R districts (Okinawa Kokusai Daigaku, Ishihara Zemi 1994; Sturdevant and Stoltzfus 1992; Okinawashi Heiwa Bunka Shinkōka 2000).¹⁰²

The short-term R & R economic prosperity generated by the Vietnam War depended heavily on women’s various kinds of labors, but particularly, sexual and emotional works for U.S. soldiers.¹⁰³ While these Okinawan women tremendously contributed to the local economy, they also faced greater risk of being victimized by militarized masculinity that involved violence, sexual assaults, and in the worst case, murder by U.S. servicemen who were professionally trained for combat (see Takazato 2003). However, the victims of militarized masculinity are not exclusively women working at sex businesses. Indeed, as I show in Chapter 6, several military wives

¹⁰² There are many local publications that vividly portray the R & R era in Okinawa. For example, in Okinawa Kokusai Daigaku, Ishihara Zemi (1994), a group of college students at Okinawa International University explored a history of base town by conducting oral history interviews with Okinawan business owners engaged in R & R business during the Vietnam War. Their interviewees’ narratives provide valuable information about the rise and fall of entertainment districts and R & R business in Okinawa.

¹⁰³ According to Takazato (2001), Okinawa had more than 1,200 A-sign bars serving as R & R locations for U.S. soldiers in the late 1960s. The official report compiled by the police department estimated there were 7,362 prostitutes in 1969, but Takazato argues that the official account underestimated the real number, which was estimated more than twice as much as the police estimate.

shared their personal stories of a date rape and domestic violence that involves both verbal and physical abuses by their own GI husbands or GI boyfriends.

Surviving Entertainment Districts: Gate-2 district

Today, Okinawa's R & R districts and countless small R & R businesses that flourished during the Vietnam War era declined, transformed, abandoned or vanished as a result of the reduction of U.S. forces associated with U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam.¹⁰⁴ When I visited some surviving former R & R districts, the chaotic enthusiasm and crowds of GIs I saw in the old photographs taken in the 1960s and early 1970s have disappeared. The run-down old bars and stage-show clubs with faded signs are common scenes. Although the atmosphere of the surviving entertainment districts today is not the same as in the past, they continue to provide a variety of paid sexual services to GIs, while at the same time, serving as popular intimate sites where GI-Japanese intimacy emerges, develops, and/or vanishes.¹⁰⁵

A base town Koza, located just outside the gigantic Kadena Air base in central part of Okinawa, is my primary fieldwork site that houses some surviving entertainment districts including a bar strip known as "Gate-2 Street" to Okinawans

¹⁰⁴ Development of new local businesses such as multi-purpose shopping centers outside the base town increased choices in off-duty activities for American GIs other than exploring nightlife in the entertainment districts. These new businesses attract a wide range of customers, from local Okinawans, tourists from mainland Japan, both male and female military personnel, married couples, to military families.

¹⁰⁵ Koza is located in the old part of Okinawa city in the central Okinawa. 36% of the total land area of Okinawa city is occupied by U.S. military facilities which is ranked in the seventh highest in terms of the proportion of land sacrificed to the U.S. military (Okinawa Shiyakusho 2003a).

and GIs stationed in Okinawa.¹⁰⁶ The Gate-2 Street bar strip and surrounding areas offer a variety of establishments such as American-style bars, live music houses, hip-hop clubs, restaurants, souvenir shops, clothing shops, pawn shops, tattoo parlors, hotels, along with Filipina bars and clubs, massage parlors, and red-light alleys behind the main street. Even though the Gate-2 Street and nearby areas has little vestige of the past prosperity in the 1960s and early 1970s, it remains as one of the most popular and notorious entertainment districts among U.S. GIs but especially young servicemen.

The majority of GIs who come to the Gate-2 area on weekends, especially payday weekends, are young enlisted servicemen. Many of them live on base and come out for shopping, dining, bar hopping, dancing at clubs, enjoying live music, or searching for local women. Even though the Gate-2 Street bar strip functions as a shopping district during the day, it does not come to full life until the nightlife begins. When the Gate-2 and nearby area are lit up with various English neon signs such as “First Chance,” “Key Stones,” “JET,” “Hawaiian Night,” “Palm 29,” “Good Times,” “Honey Bee,” “The Shooter’s,” “Dragon,” “Seventh Heaven,” “Fujiyama,” and “Gate 2 Garage,” the whole area create a peculiar atmosphere and lure young servicemen into a world of temptation and adventure.¹⁰⁷ Though the majority of Americans coming out to the Gate-2 area are male servicemen, I saw quite a few female servicemenbers strolling along the bar strip with their fellow GIs.

¹⁰⁶ The street name, “Gate-2,” is named after one of Kadena Air Base’s checking points commonly known as “Gate 2,” because the street stretches from just outside the checkpoint.

¹⁰⁷ While most of the bars, clubs, and live houses, including Filipina nightclubs, are owned by Okinawans, some bars are run by mainland Japanese and retired American servicemen.

Bars and nightclubs in the Gate-2 district are unique in their own ways. Some of these establishments are owned by U.S. veterans and provide authentic American styles, which create a “little U.S. world” within. For example, in these American style bars, almost everything one could find in these bars, from the drinks, menus, décor, to music, and in some establishments, pool tables and dart boards, create American atmospheres and tastes. Bartenders, who are mostly Okinawan women, take orders in English and chat with U.S. customers. Conversations in English are taking place at almost every table. The U.S. dollar, common currency on the Gate-2 bar strip, makes money transactions easy for U.S. customers, thus encourages them to spend more money.

Women in Base Towns: Under American GIs’ Gaze

American GIs’ opinions about the Gate-2 Street area and women coming to the base town vary, but to most GIs, the Gate-2 Street is a “party town” that offers various nightspots catering specifically to U.S. servicemen. A representative example comes from an anonymous GI who posted nightlife information on an Internet message board site to share with his fellow GIs. He wrote:

Outside Gate 2 of Kadena Air Base in Okinawa lays a string of streets lined with bars and strip joints. It offers anywhere from a sit down and drink to a sit down “buy me drinkie [sic] while my friend strips onstage for you” bar. It is sin city out there my friends. SIN city. But if your [sic] single, not an avid church goer, then I suggest you go and indulge yourself on a payday or weekend. You can dress like a homeless bumb [sic] with just a towel around

your waist to a high class business man [sic] the “mama-sans” out there are there just for you [sic] money.¹⁰⁸

The anonymous GI also mentioned the specific name of a “bar/brothel” in the Gate-2 Street area where GIs can “get attention from hot Filippina [sic] women and maybe some sex too” if they want. One of my GI informants, Kyle who has been living in Okinawa nearly for three years, said there are two dozen or more Filipina “bars/brothel” around the Gate-2 Street. These establishments are commonly known as “Juicy Bars” or “Buy Me Drinks Bars” that often function as “brothels” in a concealed area behind the bar counter.¹⁰⁹

Because Filipinas are overrepresented in the sex business in base towns today, most GIs with whom I talked mentioned that they look at Filipinas in Okinawa instantly as “bar girls” and identify their relationships with these women based on money.¹¹⁰ They believe that Filipinas view U.S. GIs as economic resources and that many of Filipinas have economic motivations to marry Americans. GIs make a clear distinction between Filipinas and Okinawan or Japanese women they see in base towns. Kyle said,

¹⁰⁸ “Anywhere outside Gate 2 Street Kadena, AB: Drunken U.S. Military personnel hangouts” and “Yakiniku: Drink, Sing, and then have sex!” posted on December 31 2003 by Drunken local69. <http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Asia/Japan/Okinawa/Okinawa-971699/Nightlife-Okinawa-BR-1.html#tips>.

¹⁰⁹ Kyle explained how Filipina juicy bars work. At these Filipina bars, customers are expected to buy “drinks” not only for themselves but also for Filipina hostesses who sit with them. As a rule, the customers are expected to buy alcoholic drinks that the hostesses ask for. Alcoholic drinks are overpriced (\$10-20 per glass) compared to non-alcoholic beverages. The “alcoholic” drinks the hostesses receive are actually non-alcoholic such as an apple juice in a cocktail glass, so the hostesses are able to keep asking for another drinks and the customers accumulate a big bill quickly.

¹¹⁰ The majority of women working for sex businesses, especially catering to U.S. servicemen are the Filipina immigrants. Japan’s economic growth associated with improved living standards for Okinawans demand cheap sex workers from outside the country who are willing to take Okinawan women’s place.

when GIs bring local women to their barracks for overnight relationships, Filipinas are mostly 'juicy girls' who are picked up at a juicy bar as a 'takeout.' Japanese women are not sex workers. They are mostly bar and club hoppers and come to the Gate-2 Street to look for the right GIs. So they could be easily picked up at any bars and nightclubs frequented by GIs.

Both Filipina and Japanese women are sexualized and objectified, but the former are more likely to be seen as "commodities" to be purchased, while the latter are seen as promiscuous women who are sexually available without monetary compensation.

James, who was recently discharged from the military, told me that many GIs in Okinawa view Japanese and Okinawan women in the base town as objects or potential sex partners. He said, "Younger American guys have an attitude, like 'Let's get a woman tonight' and go to a place like the Gate-2 Street to look for a woman." According to James, Japanese women coming to base towns are not perceived as professional sex workers, but they look too "Westernized" in their provocative dresses and behaviors, which include speaking "broken" English and using slang learned from GIs. In James' view, "Young Japanese girls hanging out in the Gate-2 Street dress and behave based on what they believe American men like to see, so they can get attention from American guys."

In some Orientalist eyes, these Japanese women, who come to the base town in provocative clothes make themselves look "slutty" and sexually available for U.S. men to pick up. Japanese women in base towns not only are perceived to be picked up easily, but also to be discarded easily when they are no longer wanted. Bruce, another young enlisted GI said: "Some GIs don't take local women seriously at all. They just see a Japanese woman as a temporary girlfriend in Okinawa and throw her

away as if she did not exist when they go back to the U.S.” Dehumanizing Asian women as disposable objects has been routinely repeated. Hundreds of thousands of deserted Asian “girlfriends” became merely part of the overseas experience for U.S. GIs since the postwar era.

Aside from perceptions of Asian women as temporary sexual objects, many GIs I interviewed also looked at Asian women from the other end of the spectrum of Asian stereotypes, constructing Asian as demure and submissive in contrast to American women. Some GIs mentioned faithfulness and a domesticated nature as Asian women’s qualities that American women lack. Scott, who plans to marry his Okinawan girlfriend in the near future, thinks

Japanese (Okinawan) women are nicer than American women because they know how to take care of their boyfriends and husbands. They care about men more (than American women do), you know? Like, they want to cook for men. They are faithful and don’t cheat on their husbands during a deployment, too.

Similarly, Dave, who used to have an Okinawan girlfriend, told me that Japanese women are not only faithful to the relationship but also “prepared to stay at home and take care of the home and children” when they marry.

GIs tend to idealize Asian women as “good wives and good mothers” who are giving, caring, submissive, soft, quiet, respectful, polite, shy, and agreeable, especially in comparison to American women. Tony, who has a Filipina wife, seems to have antipathy toward American women and views them as uptight, self-oriented, materialistic, and status conscious, in contrast to Asian women who have strong family bonds and values and respect for their traditions and cultures. Andy, who

recently divorced his Okinawan wife, believes that Asian women in general possess “natural beauty” and they are caring and emotionally attached. He also thinks Japanese women are passive in a good way: they are easier to communicate with because they are less aggressive and more easygoing than American women.

Some GIs relate Japanese women’s images to Japanese pop culture, the global phenomenon of *Anime*. Peter, an unmarried enlisted GI, points out the influence of popular Japanese female *Anime* figures on young GIs. Some Japanese female *Anime* figures, such as schoolgirls, are portrayed as innocent and childlike. GI *Anime* fans may have fantasies about these figures and look at Japanese girls through imaginary lenses. Bruce calls himself an *Anime* fan and describes images of young Japanese women as “pink and bubbly.” He said,

it seems to me Japanese girls show off their femininity. I mean they wear short skirts, some pink color and cute things on them... They have tons of cute straps on their cellular phone too, you know? They wear some cute little things on their hair too...

His images of “pink and bubbly” Japanese women overlap with hyperfeminine *Anime* figures fantasized in the *Anime* world. The “pink and bubbly” Japanese woman can also be a contemporary version of the overly feminized tiny “China dolls.” Bruce views feminine women as more attractive, and such a view is reinforced by his contrasting image of American women as strong and aggressive.

Some GIs shared their views of peers who have Japanese girlfriends or wives. Roger, who recently divorced from his Okinawan wife, told me that getting women in the U.S. is difficult and competitive, but easier overseas. For American men, it is understood as common knowledge that they can find women easily in Asian countries

and take them back home if they want. Roger said, “Lower rank GIs who come to Okinawa get local women with full nice things. But they ended up mistreating their women. These guys don't provide what they (women) want. This is a reality and makes American men look bad.” Jessie, who has a Filipina wife, cynically said “American men who are in relationships with Asian women think they can't be hooked up [with women] other than those [Asian] women.” From some GIs' point of views, GI-Japanese intimacy is a form of compensation or “welfare,” as a last resort for American men who failed to find partners in the U.S.

Economy of U.S. GIs in Okinawa

Whether GIs come to the base town to objectify Japanese women as short-term sexual partners or not, Okinawans whose livelihood depends on GI patrons welcome them. Various factors such as military curfews imposed on GIs, deployment of a large number of GIs outside Okinawa, and GIs' financial situations affect their businesses. I became acquainted with Jun-mama, an Okinawan woman, who works for a “buy me drinks bar” featuring Filipina “dance shows” for several years.¹¹¹ The owners of Filipina “buy me drinks bars” often hire elderly local women, like Jun-mama, to stand in front of their establishments to solicit GIs who pass by.

¹¹¹ Few months after I started exchanging greetings with her, we became more like friends than strangers. She let me in the stage-show club where she works a few times. There was a Filipina “dancer” in a bikini swinging her body with music at the center of the small stage. There was only one middle-aged American customer at the table with several Filipina hostesses. As Kyle, my GI informant told me, these hostesses were constantly asking for drinks until the customer was ready to leave.

Jun-mama spoke to GIs passers-by in English, “Hello, do you have free time?” or “Do you want to see the show?” while pointing to pictures of Filipina dancers in the display showcase at the entrance. Most GIs either ignore Jun-mama or make jokes in response to her as they kept walking. Jun-mama complained: “Americans used to have a lot of money and spent a lot too. But today’s young soldiers don’t have much money...and they are tight-fisted.” I heard similar comments on financial situations of young GIs from other people who have business in the base town.

An owner of a small bar whom I interviewed grumbled about young GI customers who occupy the counter stools for hours with few orders of drinks. She said, “Young poor GIs try to stay at the counter stools with just one drink they’ve ordered. These guys take as much time as possible to finish the drink, you see? It’s their ‘tactics,’ you know?”¹¹² When I visit her bar, I often see her encouraging “slow” GI customers to buy more drinks for themselves or to buy one for her. Her voice is soft and polite, but her message to GIs customers is clear: buy drinks or leave.

Lower rank GIs who could barely make their money last until the next paychecks are not uncommon. Although their personal problems might be attributed to their poor financial managements, their financial situations are also connected to political and economic circumstances. For example, Japan’s economic growth,

¹¹² Throughout my stay in Okinawa, the exchange rate between the U.S. dollar and Japanese yen was consistent. 1USD was approximately 100YEN. A bottle of beer (e.g., Budweiser, Heineken) at bars in the Gate-2 area normally costs \$5 to \$6 while the same beer costs less than \$2 on base.

especially since the 1980s into early 1990s, strengthened Japan's position in the global market. The shifts in power relations in a global economy over the past decades have changed political and economic power relations between the U.S. and Japan (McDougall 2007). The changes of U.S.-Japan power relations from time to time since the end of the World War II consequently affect personal finances of U.S. servicemen stationed in Japan.

In postwar Japan, for example, the U.S. victor fixed the exchange rate between the U.S. dollar and Japanese yen in favor of the U.S. currency.¹¹³ The U.S. dollar with a high value relative to the Japanese currency made it possible even for lower ranked U.S. soldiers in Japan to lead a "luxurious" lifestyle, the kind such as hiring a housemaid[s], that would not be possible if they were in the U.S. One war bride informants told me that her husband hired a Japanese housemaid largely because his fellow GIs had one. More recently, GIs stationed in Okinawa during the Vietnam War era continued to benefit from strong U.S. dollar against Japanese currency and they also "had enormous economic advantages over Okinawans, because women and other forms of 'entertainment' had been 'cheap'" (Inoue 2007: 122).

In contrast, contemporary U.S. GIs, especially junior servicemen, are affected not only by the overall increases in prices and services in Japan but also by fluctuated

¹¹³ In the postwar era, the value of Japanese yen (YEN) per one USD was fixed at 360YEN until the U.S. allowed Japanese yen to float in 1972. See Nomura Shōken (Nomura Securities Company, Ltd.) web site: http://www.nomura.co.jp/terms/japan/ka/exchange_r360.html.

exchange rates with diminished values of U.S. dollar to Japanese yen.¹¹⁴ For example, throughout my stay in Okinawa, the exchange rate between the U.S. dollar (USD) and Japanese yen (JPY) was consistent: 1USD was approximately 100YEN. A bottle of beer (e.g., Budweiser, Colona) costs less than \$2 per bottle on base while the same beer normally costs \$5 to \$6 at bars in the Gate-2 area. The shifts in political and economic power dynamics between the U.S. and Japan over years affected GIs' consumption power and social life in Japan.

While Japan's strong economy negatively affected U.S. GIs stationed in Japan, it helped Japanese women improve their economic and social status domestically and internationally. The new economic power relation between the U.S. and Japan also reshaped GI-Japanese women relationships. Women's economic power helped to reduce or even overcome an economic gap that had previously existed between Japanese women and U.S. GIs. Japanese women's strong financial situations challenge the traditional gender roles where men are essentially "givers" and women are "receivers." Therefore, the current economic order gives some power to new generations of Okinawan and Japanese women in their relationships with U.S. GIs, which was not available for the war brides in the postwar era.

Despite the reality that most of the rank-and-file servicemen were forced to live on the tight budget from one payday to the next, these young GIs still make up

¹¹⁴ The devaluation of the U. S. dollar was agreed to in the Plaza Accord signed by the five leading industrialized nations in 1985. As a result, the exchange rate of the U.S. dollar to the yen declined dramatically. For instance, 238YEN per one U.S. dollar in 1985 decreased to 168YEN per one U.S. dollar in 1986, which consequently discouraged U.S. dollar holders to purchase Japanese products and services. Kikumura and Kinjo (1990) detail the impact of the decline of value of the U.S. dollar on the Okinawan base economy in their *Dokoe Iku Kichi Okinawa* (1990).

the majority of customers who contribute to the survival of night businesses on the Gate-2 district and nearby areas. These nightspots, ranging from small karaoke bars, American style bars, Filipina “Buy me Drinks” bars, live music houses, to hip-hop clubs, welcome and entertain U.S. servicemen in their own ways. Women predominantly occupy the workforce in night businesses as in the past: they are young female Okinawan bartenders (occasionally female mainlanders or Americans), Filipina dancers and hostesses, elderly Okinawan women such as “*mama-sans*” at old karaoke bars and Jun-mama who solicit GI passersby for Filipina bars. Whether the workers are young Okinawans, mainlanders, Filipinas, or *mama-sans*, all play their own roles in encouraging GIs clients to return to the bar districts.

Although many night businesses in base towns cater primarily to U.S. servicemen, they also attract local customers including new generations of young women who seek first hand “U.S. experiences.” Some establishments frequented by GI customers such as clubs (e.g., hip-hop clubs), live music houses, and American style bars offer gate-ways to the initial contact with American cultures and U.S. men.¹¹⁵ These nightspots also often turn into “intimate spaces” for local women and GIs to meet potential partners. In the following chapter, I focus on the relatively recent trend of hip-hop music in Japan that has influenced Japanese women’s views of American men along the racial lines of white and black. Second, I discuss how women perceive American men based on idealized images of “American men” that

¹¹⁵ “Club” generally refers to off-base discos that are distinguished from on-base clubs such as Officers’ clubs, NCO’s (Non Commissioned Officers’) clubs, and E (Enlisted men’s) clubs. While majority of my informants used the term “club,” women who are in their 40s and older tended to use “disco” instead of “club.”

transcend racial divisions, while military institutions and militarized masculinity complicate Japanese women's perceptions of American men. In the last section, I show how socioeconomic improvement of Japanese women enables them to gain power in relationships with GIs while they remain Orientalized to some degree by American men.

Chapter 5

Reversing the Gaze: Redefining Racial, Gender, and Sexual Boundaries

The preceding chapter provided historical, social, and economic contexts of U.S. military bases and base towns in Okinawa and their impact on Okinawan people, especially on women. I described the Gate-2 Street and surrounding entertainment areas in detail as important sites for understanding the pattern of GI-Japanese intimacy in contemporary Okinawa. The entertainment districts offer various intimate sites such as bars and clubs where U.S. GIs and Japanese women meet, interact, and sometimes develop romantic relationships. These spaces also contribute to production, reproduction, and perpetuation of Orientalist images and stereotypes of Asian women. While these women are objectified and sexualized under the Orientalist gaze, these contemporary women are more active, assertive, expressive, and resourceful in their relationships with GIs. By shifting the positions of those who gaze and those who are objects of the gaze, I expose American men to the gazes of Japanese women, which enables new generations of Japanese women to express subjective views of American men and to represent themselves in their own voices.

Clubs as Intimate Sites: Hip-hop Fever in Okinawa

One remarkable feature of contemporary GI-Japanese intimacy is that many relationships started in base towns where Japanese women come as *consumers* to enjoy the nightlife. Unlike previous generations of women working at R & R districts, and Filipina migrant workers more recently, contemporary Japanese women

are more likely to establish personal relationships with GIs for enjoyment and not for money. Table 2.3 shows that a high proportion of military wives and military girlfriends I interviewed met GI boyfriends or future husbands at nightspots such as clubs (e.g., hip-hop, disco), bars, and live-music houses that American servicemen frequent.

Table 2.3 Where did you meet your GI husband or boyfriend?

	Military Wives N	%	Military GFs N	%	Total N	%
Base town (clubs, bars, etc)	25 ^a	58	6	67	31	60
Through friends	9	21	2	22	11	21
At work	2	5	0	0	2	4
Other	7	16	1	11	8	15
	43	100	9	100	52	100

^a One woman met her GI husband at an on-base bar.

Nearly every military wife I interviewed (one out of three women) told me she regularly went to clubs near the Gate-2 Street in the 1990s and identified herself as a former “clubber.” These women often talked about their “club debut,” referring to the first time they experienced clubs popular with U.S. GIs.¹¹⁶ The majority of ex-clubbers, now in their thirties, started going to “American” clubs when they were in their late teens and early twenties. These women often started going to clubs out of curiosity, but many ended up becoming regular club-goers. The trend of hip-hop music and culture in Japan added a new dimension to GI-Japanese relationships, especially those involving black GIs and Japanese women.

¹¹⁶There are also clubs in Okinawa where the majority of male and female patrons are Okinawan and Japanese. Some of my informants told me that they initially went to these “Japanese” clubs but they switched to “American” style clubs after a while. They believed that the type of music played in Japanese clubs was not as good or cool as it was in clubs frequented by U.S. GIs.

In Japan, U.S. hip-hop culture emerged in the mid-1980s as “underground” music and became part of the mainstream culture for Japanese teens and young adults in the 1990s. According to Broder (2006:40), musical components such as the lyrics and cadence of rap are crucial in the U.S., but hip-hop in Japan is “visceral, sensual, and based in images: its highest articulation is found in high-priced clubs rather than on recorded albums” (Broder 2006:40). Condray (2004) also contends that the striking feature of hip-hop in Japan is the way young Japanese express devotion to hip-hop through imitation of black rappers, not just by wearing dreadlocks and hip-hop fashion, but also by fetishizing black skin.

Since Japanese hip-hop emphasizes visual interpretation and presentation of “black music” with strong connotations of “blackness,” nightclubs and discos become sites for performing and consuming blackness (Condray 2004). Cornyetz (2006) points out that for female hip-hop lovers, hip-hop style includes not only music and fashion but also “acquisition” of male African American lovers. However, the high visibility of intermarriage between Japanese women and black GIs in today’s Okinawa suggests that these women view blackness as more than a “solely erotic fetish” (Kelsky 2001), or black men as more than merely “desired” sexual objects for consumption (Russell 1998).

Women I interviewed also look at blackness as the reality that shapes their lives and identities as wives of black U.S. servicemen. Similar to the mainland, hip-hop clubs in Okinawa attract Japanese clubbers who seek “authentic” black hip-hop experiences. While the “black fetish” is a major part of hip-hop trends in Japan and

elsewhere, blackness in the context of Okinawa's hip-hop clubs around U.S. military bases is inseparable from and enhanced by militarized masculinity. As I discuss later, many military wives complimented GIs' well-built bodies, especially those of Marines whose physical training (PT) maintains their masculinity and physical strength. Since young black GIs in Okinawa are mostly Marines, their bodies add masculine attractiveness to the hip-hop styles in Okinawa.

Interviews with women who are associated with black GIs in Okinawa revealed that the trend of hip-hop music was an influential factor that in the popularity of young black GIs. Many wives of black GIs mentioned the connections between their interests in "black music," or hip-hop, and their preferences for black men. Mariko, the Okinawan military wife, explained how her fascination with hip-hop music stimulated racial desire for black men:

Oh, yes, I loved them [black men]! They were definitely my type [laughter]. When I was a high school student, I became interested in black men. Well, black music sparked me. First, I started liking music by Janet Jackson. She was so cool when I first saw her dancing in the TV commercial for an airline company. I liked rap music by MC Hammer too. But anyway, ever since I saw Janet Jackson on TV, I was always looking for that type of music... I wanted to have a black boyfriend. I wasn't interested in white men.

Since Mariko's musical preferences value blackness, she said her attraction for the opposite sex always centered on black men. She also told me that she frequented a hip-hop club near a military base where she eventually met her future husband.

While hip-hop clubs have become visible representations of blackness, they rarely are associated with white maleness, which manifests persistence of racial divisions between black and white GIs in the entertainment districts around U.S. military bases.

Racial Dynamics among Japanese Female Clubbers in a Base Town

Historically, U.S. race relations based on the black-white binary shaped sexual territories in entertainment districts during the U.S. occupation of postwar Japan, while such racialized sex territories existed until the mid-1970s in Okinawa (see Hiroyama 2000; Ishikawa 2004; Okinawa Kokusai Daigaku, Ishihara Zemi 1994; Onga 1998). Local women who worked as bar hostesses and prostitutes reinforced the racialized sexual division in the entertainment districts. These women served either white GIs or black soldiers, but not both. Violations of the sexual boundaries along the racial line created tension and often led to fighting between white and black soldiers (Hiroyama 2000; Okinawa Kokusai Daigaku, Ishihara Zemi 1994:275).

Today, the racial boundary in entertainment districts in Okinawa is not as explicitly or rigidly maintained as it was in the 1950s and into the early 1970s (Hiroyama 2000). However, “voluntary” racial divisions persist in some bars, clubs, and live-music houses catering to GIs in the entertainment areas. Sturdevant and Stoltzfus (1992), who conducted research in the Kin bar area near Camp Hansen in the northern part of Okinawa, noted:

The Kin bar area is not racially segregated to the extent that bar areas in the Philippines and Korea are. However, there are some clubs that are predominantly Euro-American, which usually play hard-rock music; clubs favored by African-American play more rap and may have a dance floor (P. 256).

I observed a similar pattern in nightspots in the Gate-2 Street area that were racially divided between white and black GIs, depending on the types of music they played and the atmospheres they offered.

While GI patrons themselves are largely responsible for the continuing U.S. racial divisions in bar areas, Okinawan and Japanese women who frequented the entertainment districts also reinforced these divisions. Mina, an Okinawan military wife who frequented “white” clubs in the 1990s, explained the racial divisions between clubs:

I started going out with my friends who love *gaijin* (foreigners). Well, there were some well-known clubs near the Gate-2 Street where *gaijin* hang out. We went to clubs together almost every weekend.... We used to go to [club] “Manhattan.” Only locals knew about this situation, but at that time, clubs were divided into two depending on who went there, I mean, blacks or whites. Blacks went to [club] “Pyramid” and whites usually went to [club] “Manhattan”....

Other former clubbers I interviewed stated that female clubgoers were divided roughly into two groups along the white-black color line. These women often expressed their racial affiliations explicitly, through choices of “black” or “white” clubs, depending on their racial and musical preferences.

Masami, an Okinawan military wife, also frequented “white” clubs with her friends when she was a college student. During the interview, she identified herself in a self-deprecating way as *amejo*, but distinguished herself from women associated with black GIs, who sometimes receive the derogatory labels *kokujo* (*koku* = black; *jo* = woman) or *blapan* (*bla* = black; *pan* = *panpan*). While *amejo* is the more generic term, referring to women perceived as loving only U.S. men, *kokujo* or *blapan* specifies *amejo* who pursue only black men. According to Masami,

There weren’t many Japanese women who liked both (black and white men) but usually they were divided into “black” or “white”.... I had no connection to women who hung out with black men because they were in a different

group... It was like...I simply drew the line between “us” (whites) and “them” (blacks). It’s like “we are not *kokujo!*”.... Do you know [the club] “Pyramid”?... In my time, it was a place for blacks to hang out and *kokujo* followed them. I occasionally went there, but it wasn’t fun because I didn’t care for *their* music.

Masami refused to be included in the category of Japanese women associated with black GIs (*kokujo*) and drew a line between herself and these women. Many Japanese ex-clubbers I interviewed distinguished themselves from each other based on racial affiliations in choices of music, fashion, and men. Despite their self-identification and racial preferences, women in the base towns were lumped together, and often labeled as *amejo* collectively, by media and society because of their associations with U.S. servicemen.

During interviews, all ex-clubbers told me that black GIs outnumbered GIs of other racial groups in clubs that offered what they called “black music,” such as hip-hop and R & B. Consequently, women with strong interests in black music and/or black men sought out these clubs. According to ex-clubber informants, clubbers who disliked black music were more likely to go to clubs that played mostly “white music,” such as rock, punk, pop, and alternative, and which attracted white GI patrons. Live-music houses in the Gate-2 Street area also attract white GI audiences because they play heavy metal, punk, and hard rock. When I visited these live-music houses, I found that the majority of American patrons were indeed white GIs. On the other hand, the hip-hop clubs I visited were filled mostly with black GIs and Japanese female clubbers.

Club Scene: Hip-hop Clubs and Japanese Female Clubbers

I conducted ethnographic observations at two hip-hop clubs and became acquainted with a young Japanese woman, Akemi, who moved to Okinawa from the mainland several years ago.¹¹⁷ She identified herself as a clubber and agreed to take me to one of the popular hip-hop clubs that black GIs frequent. Once inside the club, I immediately noticed a pattern of gender and racial composition of the crowds: the majority of male patrons were black GIs and most female clubbers were young Japanese and Okinawans. Even though it was a weeknight, black men and Japanese women packed the small dance floor as the night went on.¹¹⁸

All hip-hop clubs have some unique characteristics, but each provides an exotic ambience that encourages erotic adventures between black GIs and Japanese women. The popularity of hip-hop clubs depends on a total package of the hip-hop style that includes DJs, colorfully illuminated mirror balls suspended from the ceilings, dimly lit rooms, cash bars, and most important, black GIs or “brothers” who take leading roles on the dance floor. Black GIs accompanied some Japanese women in the clubs I visited, but most women seemed to arrive in small groups without male partners, which made it easier for the GIs to approach the women. Not all of the

¹¹⁷ Okinawa has been a popular beach resort destination for mainland Japanese tourists. More recently, Okinawa also attracts young mainlanders who intend to live in Okinawa for longer periods or semi-permanently. In one account, about 20,000 mainlanders move to Okinawa every year while about the same number of people returns to mainland after living few years in Okinawa. “Okinawa Immigration Boom: A pitfall of Paradise,” *JCAST News*, March 04, 2007. <http://www.j-cast.com/2007/03/04005921.html>

¹¹⁸ Akemi suggested that we go to a club on Lady’s Night when the admission for women was free so that we might see more Japanese female clubbers, which in turn attract GIs. We went there around midnight and stayed for three hours. When we left the club, it was still filled up and there was no indication that the crowds were getting ready to leave.

women in the clubs wore hip-hop styles, but many dressed in miniskirts, hip-hugging jeans, and other tight-fitting outfits that emphasized their bodylines. Others dressed in skimpy outfits that revealed a great deal of skin.

Kiko, an Okinawan military wife, pointed out that the total fashion style (e.g., clothes, makeup, hairstyles, languages) of female clubbers often reveals their racial affiliations. According to Kiko, Okinawan and Japanese women who were dating black GIs dressed to match their boyfriends, who tended to be more conscious about fashion than did white men. Some military wives also mentioned that these Okinawan and Japanese “sisters” consulted U.S. fashion magazines to learn how “*real black sisters*” dress. These “wannabe black” women often have access to American products, including fashion magazines and cosmetics at on-base stores, through connections to their GI boyfriends. By contrast, Kiko and other informants said that women associated with white GIs dress more casually because white GIs usually wore casual outfits, such as jeans and T-shirts, while off-duty.¹¹⁹

As hip-hop music, formerly known as underground music, entered the Japanese mainstream, it challenged stigmatized post-war GI-Japanese romances, specifically those between black GIs and Japanese women. Kelsky (2001) points out that Japanese women began to challenge the whiteness that has signified U.S. economic power and racial superiority in Japan since the U. S. military occupation. Pursuing black men rather than whites enabled younger generations of Japanese

¹¹⁹ Military wives also mentioned that there are informal dress codes for GIs in the Marine Corps during the off duty time. For instance, they are suggested to wear a button down shirt rather than T-shirt when going out privately even though their dress codes are not mandatory.

people to reconstruct negative perceptions of blackness positively, within a global context of hip-hop music and culture. In many respects, this reconstruction counters the hegemony of whiteness and white culture, which in turn enables women associated with black GIs to empower themselves and openly express their racialized desires.

Some of my interviewees associated with black GIs also mentioned that a Japanese novelist, Yamada Eimi, gave them new perspectives on black-Japanese intimate relationships. Yamada's *Bedtime Eyes* (1985), for example, boldly depicts a sexual and erotic relationship between a Japanese nightclub singer and a black GI, which created a sensation among Japanese readers at that time. As Kuwahara (1994) notes, the publication of *Bedtime Eyes* and her sequential pieces on a black-Japanese relationship, contributed to the increase in the numbers of Japanese women who viewed a black lover as cool and fashionable. In Yamada's books, Japanese female characters are depicted as rebellious, who reject the traditional gender ideology for young women (e.g., passive, virgin) and choose to become "independent in a sense that they are emotionally strong, bold, confident of themselves and in charge of their own lives" including sexual relationships with men (Kuwahara 1994:108). Japanese women, who see themselves as unfits or deviators from the Japanese traditional gender roles and expectations, relate themselves to Yamada's female characters in her books. An Okinawan interviewee, who just began dating a black GI said, Yamada's novels are inspiring and give her strength and encouragement to act and think positively in her relationship with her black boyfriend.

White Men Under the Gaze: Wives and Girlfriends of Minority GIs

When I interviewed wives and girlfriends of black, Asian American, and Latino GIs, some discussed white GIs from the perspectives of women of color who are racialized and sexualized, primarily by white men. These women view white GIs as arrogant, rude, and prejudiced, not only against black GIs but also against other racial groups, including Asian women. For example, Yukie, a military girlfriend, shared her memory of the experience of working as a bartender at a “white bar” in the Gate-2 Street area. Yukie said she felt that some white GI customers did not take her seriously, and treated her disrespectfully because of her gender and her Asianness:

White customers who came to the bar tend to look down on Asians. I think they feel superior to Asian women and treated us in the way they think we deserve.... Many of them think it's okay to touch Asian women's bodies when they were drunk. I mean, they touched our butts.... They were rude, haughty, and disrespectful.

Most military wives or girlfriends of minority GIs talked about perceptions of white men that were based on their interpretations of occasions involving direct interactions with white GIs. Some also view white GIs through the lenses of their partners' perceptions. For example, some wives of black GIs insisted there is racism in the military and complained that their husbands are treated unfairly in comparison to white peers. One woman married to a black GI claimed her husband was denied a promotion at the same time his white colleague received one. According to this interviewee, her husband was as qualified as the white serviceman was, but the white serviceman received preferential treatment from a white superior officer.

While military wives of minority GIs tend to focus on unfair treatment of racial minorities in the military, others found a racial dimension in unequal power relations between whites and other racial groups in the U.S. Kanako, an Okinawan wife who identifies herself as a former hip-hop clubgoer, problematizes white men's power in the U.S.:

To me, America is attractive because it's a country of racial diversity. I think racial diversity is powerful. But when you think 'who rules America?' I think it's whites after all. America is the country of white men who have power.... But black people are trying to assert themselves in their own way, like through music. This appeals to me.... I don't think I have chemistry with a white man, anyway. I don't like Rock music. I can't stand country music, either [laughter]. I love hip-hop music and dancing at clubs.... I want to share and enjoy the same kind of music with my (black) partner.

Although Kanako explicitly expresses a preference for black men and hip-hop music, she views hip-hop music not merely as a fashion and acknowledges it as a form of cultural expression and empowerment. Kanako, like most women who addressed issues of power, racism, and sexism associated with white GIs, are military wives of minority GIs. By contrast, few military wives of white GIs perceived whiteness as a negative component of white men that might affect other racial groups, including Asian women.

White Men Under the Gaze: Wives and Girlfriends of White GIs

Similar to women who expressed preferences for black men, many military wives of white GIs openly talked about race as a factor that encouraged or discouraged them to pursue relationships with certain men. Motoko, an Okinawan

wife, discussed her preference for white Americans. She said she yearned to date a white man and eventually to marry him. In search of the right man, Motoko frequented “white” clubs in the base town where she met her future husband.

When I asked Motoko what influenced her to become interested in white Americans, she responded:

The first time I started liking American men was when I read a love story in a Japanese comic book.¹²⁰ In that comic book, [white male] American characters were depicted so caring and sweet...since then, I became interested in [white] Americans.... I prefer white GIs.... I like a man who looks truly *gaijin* who has blond hair...tall, and has white skin (generally, *gaijin* means foreigners but in this context it refers to Caucasians) [laughter]. I dated some GIs who were just like my ideal images of *gaijin* but only to find myself being dumped [laughter].... I was serious about every relationship I had. Marriage was always in my mind.

Motoko fantasized about white male characters portrayed in idealistic manners in Japanese comic books. Russell (1998: 153) notes that Japanese comic books designed to attract female readers tend to treat white males as representative of Western men, who are portrayed as “sensitive, refined, and without sexism,” and comparable to traditional images of Asian patriarchy. Motoko said she particularly likes Western male attributes such as “ladies-first” that American (white) GIs in Okinawa performed for her, just as her favorite white characters did for female characters in comic books.

Sayaka, an Okinawan military wife, candidly spoke of her racial preference for whites and of frequenting “white” clubs until she married. As these conversations

¹²⁰ Comic books are popular in Japan not only among children and youth but also young adults and middle-aged Japanese regardless of their gender. Comic books that target female readership often use Caucasians but not racial minorities, especially for romantic stories taking place in Europe and America.

continued, I found a similarity between Sayaka's and Motoko's perceptions: media representation of Americans influenced Sayaka's views of Americans and of whites:

...I am not exactly sure what makes white men so attractive but I never looked at a black guy as my potential boyfriend. It's okay if he is just a friend.... My images of Americans were always whites ever since I started watching foreign soap operas when I was a child. As far as I remember, I've never seen any American TV dramas that featured black families as main characters. When it came to American [middle-class] families, to me, it was always whites.

For Sayaka, whites represent the American middle-class family, but she thinks there is no black equivalent to the middle-class family in America. Therefore, marriage to a white GI would mean starting an American middle-class family life that would provide her with the kinds of lifestyles Sayako saw on television. Popular media, in the form of American TV dramas, movies, magazines, and Japanese comic books, contributed not only to creation of images of "Americans" but also to diffusion of these images to Japanese people.

Media representations of whites as model middle-class U.S. citizens date back to the early post-World War II era in Japan. As Chapter 3 mentioned, the comic strip *Blondie* and the movies selected by GHQ during the U.S. occupation shaped Japanese perceptions of Americans (Gekkan Akurosu 1989). Even though contemporary Japanese mainstream media acknowledge racial diversity in American middle-class families, they continue to manifest the ideology of whiteness and portray white Americans as more desirable partners for Japanese people than men from other racial groups.

Black Men Under the Gaze: Wives and Girlfriends of White GIs

When I asked wives of white GIs about their perceptions of black men, some told me they feel black GIs are more promiscuous and more likely to "cheat on women" than white men are. These women tend to look at black GIs under the influence of stereotypical images of black male as hypersexual and therefore dangerous to "respectable" women.¹²¹ Other prevalent images of black men in the U.S., which portray them as poor, as criminals, and as violent, contributed to negative perceptions of black GIs in Okinawa. Some white GIs' wives expressed fears of black GIs, whom they think may harm them, which contrasts sharply with their idealistic images of white men constructed around white heroism in American movies.

Other military wives of white GIs mentioned that perceived cultural "differences" between blacks and Japanese discouraged them from developing close relationships with black GIs. Most of these interviewees identified black GIs with hip-hop music and viewed hip-hop music as essential to and inseparable from black men's lifestyles. Kiriko, the Okinawan single mother of a bi-racial child from a previous marriage to a GI, said:

Basically, I have no chemistry with black men at all.... I like some hip-hop hit songs, but I don't think I want to play these songs all the time. I can't put up with their (black) language either, like when they say "hey yo." For people who like hip-hop music, this kind of language may sound cool and appealing, but it's not my style.... I hate when they teasingly ask me if I like whites better than black guys.

¹²¹ For black sexuality and masculinity, see Patricia Hill Collins (2004), *Black sexual politics: African Americans, gender, and the new racism* and bell hooks (2004), *We real cool: Black men and masculinity*.

Similar to Kiriko, other interviewees associated with white GIs refer to hip-hop music and styles as obstacles to developing intimate relationships with black GIs. These women consider their lifestyles and cultures to be closer to the American mainstream than to blacks, because they see black culture as too foreign.

Michi, a Japanese military wife, emphasized “differences” and rejected any possibility of dating or marrying a black GI:

I... (after a long pause)...I don't think there was a possibility for me to marry a black man. Well, it has nothing to do with his race. I mean I am not prejudiced against black people. But there are vast differences between us, you know? That's why I hesitated to date a black GI.... I mean, I am not that interested in black music and culture anyway. So there is nothing attractive about black men to me.

Similar to Michi, other wives of white GIs spoke carefully about race and were concerned about being seen as prejudiced against black GIs. When I interviewed white GIs' wives, many of them began with an “I am not prejudiced against blacks” disclaimer before talking about racial issues. By contrast, as I mentioned earlier, some wives of minority GIs accused white GIs of being prejudiced against Asian women and other minority groups. Military wives tend to identify themselves with their husbands' race and quickly learn about race relations among GIs and “proper” expressions when they discuss race.

Persistence of Prejudice and Discrimination against Black GIs in Okinawa

In addition to perceived “differences” between Japanese and blacks, some informants said that the likelihood of family opposition was a reason not to pursue a relationship with a black GI. Above all else, these women excluded black GIs from a potential marriage avoid disputes with their families. Sayo, an Okinawan military wife, pointed out that her family had a negative attitude about black GIs stationed in Okinawa and that this made her self-conscious about selecting a partner.

...I don't know [if there was a possibility for me to marry a black GI], but I would have to think about it carefully.... I don't think my parents would accept him [if he were black].... Well, personally, it's just fine with me to date a black person, but I worry about what other people think about him. Many Okinawans are still prejudiced against blacks, you know? I have a friend who married a black GI. She told me that her parents don't want their gossipy neighbors to see their black son-in-law. So my friend hesitated to bring her husband to her parents' house. Actually, her husband visited her parents' house once or twice so far and only at night...because he would not stand out in the neighborhood if it's dark, you see?

Sayo also mentioned that prejudice against U.S. servicemen remains strong among older generations, particularly in the southern part of Okinawa.¹²² She was not the only informant concerned negative reactions of parents, relatives, and even neighbors to their GI partners. Many of the military wives I met in Okinawa revealed there was some parental opposition to their marriages regardless of their partners' race, but especially when their partners were black.

¹²² Wounds from the Battle of Okinawa remain deeper, especially among Okinawans in the South because their regions became the final fierce battlefield as the U.S forces advanced South to occupy Japanese Military Headquarters located at Shuri Castle. Thousands of Okinawan civilian refugees from Central Okinawa and South who were moving toward the Southern shore were killed or commit suicide toward the end of the war.

Hatoko, an Okinawan military wife, faced severe parental disapproval and opposition from relatives. Hatoko is from a small community where neighbors know each other as if they were a big extended family. According to Hatoko, others accused her of creating a family disgrace because of her “selfish” decision to marry a black GI despite strong family opposition:

People in my hometown have negative opinions about women who hang out with American GIs because there are many crimes committed by Americans. The rape case of 1995 [by three black Marines] particularly affected their views about black Americans, I think.... When I asked my mother to meet my GI boyfriend for the first time, she instantly asked me, “Is he white or black?” Some Okinawans still call blacks *kuronbo* (“nigger”). When I said he is a black man, my mother refused to meet him.... I was accused [by my mother]: “Why isn’t he a white GI? What is good about that black man?”

Similar to Hatoko, Minako, an Okinawan military wife, also faced severe family opposition. When Minako became pregnant, she told her family she wanted to marry her black boyfriend, who is the baby’s father. All of Minako’s family members were outraged; her grandmother came close to suicide because she was ashamed that Minako was pregnant by a black man; Minako’s mother was so furious that she told Minako to abort her baby:

There was strong prejudice against blacks. My mother angrily said to me, “even an Okinawan boozier would be better than a black man. If you really want to marry a GI, why don’t you choose a white man?” They think black GIs are worthless just because they are black, and they also believe that a half-black child is destined for an unhappy life because of prejudice and discrimination by society.

In Minako’s case, premarital pregnancy with an American GI, and particularly with a black man, made it even more difficult for her to obtain family approval.

When I began interviewing military wives in Okinawa, I expected that fewer women faced parental disapproval because the majority of their parents are from the post-World War II generations, who did not directly experience the war. I assumed these middle-aged parents are more tolerant of intermarriages with U.S. servicemen. However, the more military wives I interviewed in Okinawa, the more I realized that these young women encountered as much family opposition as war brides did half a century ago. Many young informants in Okinawa told me that they endured severe emotional stresses because of their negative family reactions to their marriages, particularly marriages to black GIs.

Persistence of family opposition among younger generations is supported in Takushi's (2000) survey on Okinawan military wives living in the U.S. According to Takushi, the younger generation of military wives often experience more family opposition than did older generations. Among her sample population of Okinawan wives of U.S. servicemen, 86% of the younger generations of Okinawan women (26-39 years-old) experienced family opposition, while only 40% of older generations (60-72 years-old) had faced family disapprovals of their marriages to U.S. GIs.

As I discussed in Chapter 3, women who married GIs in early post-World War II Japan, often found that their marriages to "wealthy" Americans meant not only relief from extreme economic hardships, but also survival.¹²³ In many cases, these women's families benefited from resourceful American GIs for securing basic needs and obtaining material items that were not available to the majority of Japanese at that

¹²³ According to Takushi (2000), many of these women married to GIs include Okinawans who had lost their parents during the war as well as Okinawan war widows with children.

time. Consequently, families of war brides found that material benefits compensated for the psychological burdens they associated with the disgrace of their daughters' marriages to American GIs.

By contrast, many middle-class parents of young Okinawans find their daughters' marriages to young GIs both disgraceful and socioeconomically degrading. Their reactions are especially prominent in this study because more than two-thirds of military wives were college educated, whereas most of their husbands had only high school educations. Moreover, their daughters' GI partners were likely to be low-ranking enlisted men at the time of marriage, who would need to wait a long time before promotion before quitting or retiring from the military. In addition to perceived socioeconomic degradation, marriages to U.S. GIs continue to be sources of humiliation in a society where prejudice against all women associated with GIs, and particularly against women in relationships with black GIs, persists.

Although parental reactions to intermarriages varied, interviews with contemporary Okinawan military wives revealed that their families' reactions to U.S. GIs were racialized and especially harsh where black men were involved: "Why do you choose a black man but not a white GI?" is a common question that some women must answer. No matter how popular blackness has become among the young generations in a global context of hip-hop music and culture that influences contemporary Okinawa, the stigma attached to blackness remains too strong for many Okinawans' perceptions of black servicemen to change. Intermarriages of black GIs

and Okinawan women are less likely to be accepted by family or by society, while white GI-Japanese intimacy is often tolerable and even desirable.

Military wives I interviewed in Okinawa have race-specific views of U.S. men depending on racial affiliations with their partners, but they also have general images of “Americans” that transcend, to some degree, the racial differences they discussed previously. As the following section shows, these “raceless” images are of generalized and idealized American men, often created in comparison with Japanese men. Japanese women interviewees also have share some views of American men in military uniforms stationed in Okinawa, views that may contradict their idealistic, general notions of Americans. Japanese women’s images of American men shift, overlap, and contradict one another under their gaze, thus complicating their perceptions of U.S. men.

“American Men” under the Gaze of Japanese Women

What makes American men, and especially men in uniform, special and attractive to women in Okinawa? There were variations in interviewee responses, but many women shared common views of “American men” regardless of the men’s racial differences. The interviewees listed images of American men, which include ladies-first, kind, good-looking, tall, brawny, spontaneous, considerate, sweet, romantic, caring, friendly, fun, straightforward, affectionate, and expressive. Japanese war bride informants also cite these attributes when describing their perceptions of American men. For both generations of Japanese women I

interviewed, Western men are idealized in the sense that they treat women properly, as equals, and with respect based on Western democracy and gender ideals. In these women's views, male actions such as opening doors, carrying grocery bags, and giving up seats and chairs for women reflect a women-centered Western culture that is unique to Western men.

As was the case for war brides in post-World War II Japan, "ladies-first" remains a common term among military wives in contemporary Okinawa when they describe American men. Rinko, a Japanese military wife, identified a sharp contrast between American and Japanese men concerning the way they treat women:

The main reason why I decided to marry my husband is...well, realistically, I got pregnant [laughter].... But, of course, my husband is so caring, understanding, and has a sweet heart. I think Japanese and American men are fundamentally different in this respect. [Unlike Japanese men] Americans perform ladies-first spontaneously as their expressions of caring for women. They give women's needs first priority before their own in every aspect.

Yaeko, a Japanese wife, has views similar to Rinko's: "I had been wanting to marry an American guy, but not a Japanese man.... Why? Japanese men are not faithful to their wives. They are not so caring for women and not ladies-first, either....

Actually, I never thought about marrying a Japanese man." I heard similar voices repeatedly from other military wives. The idealized images of Western men as practicing "ladies-first" were constructed, exaggerated, and reinforced particularly in contrasts to Japanese men.

Erina, an Okinawan woman who recently divorced a GI, is a military wife who emphatically denies the possibility of marrying a Japanese man:

I had no desire to marry or even date a Japanese man.... My father represents a typical patriarchal Japanese man [laughter]. To him, women should remain a little bit behind the men.... I can't stand it. I have positive images of American people. They have freedom to do what they want in America and they enjoy it. Everyone is equal. Men and women are equal too. I had these images about Americans before marrying my husband....

Erina and other Japanese women told me that they would not want to take on their expected Japanese gender roles as wives, mothers, and daughter-in-laws. Other women, especially Okinawan women, complained that maintaining cultural and familial traditions as females bound by strong family ties is burdensome. For these women, marriage to American GIs is seen as a way to liberate themselves from cultural and gender oppression. American men appear to be rescuers who can take such women to the country of gender equality and freedom.

Many Okinawan and Japanese military wives pointed out that Japanese (and Okinawan) men lack the communication skills they value in men. For these women, Japanese men's non-verbal communication styles and their implicit expressions when displaying feelings and emotions are not appealing. Interviewees give high marks to American men for their direct, candid communication styles, in which they openly express affections for women verbally, and also physically, by touching, holding, hugging and kissing in public and private.

Mikage, an Okinawan military wife, blamed Japanese and Okinawan men for losing Japanese and Okinawan young women to American men. In Mikage's view, what makes Japanese men less attractive compared to American men is that Japanese men stop treating their wives as "women" (as lovers) once they get married:

I felt that, to American men, their wives are still their lovers no matter how old they become.... I think this is something Japanese women want from their husbands. I think women today want their men to demonstrate affection more directly (verbally and physically). They want to see that they are truly loved and cared for by their boyfriends or husbands. American men do this for women so easily, you see?...even if their affection might be just a performance. They are such big performers [laughter]. Anyway, this is why Japanese women are so easily attracted to American men.

For Japanese women who grew up in a culture where men rarely express affections directly, affections that American men display for them are new, exciting experiences. Whether American men's performances are sincere or not, the Japanese women I interviewed in Okinawa seem more eager to adopt the Western style of communication than to preserve the Japanese style.

Although women know American men often flirt with Japanese women casually, women still like this attention because it makes them feel they are attractive and that they deserve men's attentions. Yurine, the single mother of a bi-racial child fathered by a GI whom she divorced, explains:

No matter what other people say, Americans are so sweet. They compliment women a lot. They say something like...“you are so cute” or “the color of your lipstick looks gorgeous on you.” Japanese men never say things like these to women. If you have a kid, you are viewed simply as a mother of the kid. But American men treat us as ‘women’ whether we are young or older and married or not. In response, I do my part to make them happy...like, I wear makeup and dress nicely for them.

As Yurine noted, Japanese women with children are more likely to be identified as the children's mothers than as women in Japanese society (Tanaka 1995).

Furthermore, Sato, the Japanese wife of a civilian employee, claims that American men can give women more emotional fulfillment in their marriages than Japanese

men can. Sato also believes that Japanese women who married Americans look younger, are happier, and are more confident compared with women who married Japanese men.

In the same way that Japanese women build their images of American men around the ideal of ladies-first or Western chivalry, these women also have stereotypical views of Western men's physical appearances. They tend to view Western men through the images of movie stars whose body images are physically imposing (e.g., sturdy, brawny) and attractive (e.g., long legs, tall) compared to Asian men. Such physical attributes make up the basis of western male body myths mentioned frequently by war bride informants and by contemporary Japanese women.

Miyoko, an Okinawan military wife, said

At first, my images of Americans were all white [laughter]. They somewhat looked attractive. By saying attractive, I mean they are tall...[they have] long legs, blond hair, and blue eyes...different eye color.... I think these features make people somehow believe all Americans are good-looking guys [laughter].

Although Miyoko married a non-white GI, her images of American men are of white, tall, blond haired, blue-eyed men who have long legs. Movie star images of Americans persist among contemporary Japanese women.

To some young women, their associations with "Americans" have special values as if they carry brand-name bags. Misuzu, a Japanese military wife, recalled when she was young and dated American GIs; "It was like...I was showing off an American boyfriend as if he has a brand name.... I was proud because I was dating an American, not an Asian (American) guy." Women like Misuzu view American

boyfriends almost as fashion accessories. Many informants stated that women with American GIs perceive themselves as envied by other women; this made them acutely self-conscious about their appearances when they were in public with GIs.

Another military wife, Hisae, noted that the particular value of the status attached to something or someone “American” makes many Japanese women want to marry U.S. GIs in Okinawa:

I think it’s a matter of the status. I mean, Americans have a high status than people in other countries. I think America is a great country.... Women who like blacks are picky about Americans. I don’t think they, my friends too, marry blacks if they are from Africa. American blacks are popular because they are Americans but not Africans.

Hisae’s remarks echo similar statements from wives of black GIs who corrected me when I used the term “African American” to refer to their husbands’ race. These women said their husbands are not Africans, but Americans. Their resistance to “African American” is due in part to unfamiliarity with racial terms used in the U.S., but also is shaped by their perceptions of black GIs in Okinawa as “authentic” Americans who have nothing to do with Africa or with people in Africa.

Many of these women also use English for public display. As I noted in Chapter 3, Japanese people who appear to have command of the English language were valued in postwar Japan because of the language’s associations with powerful people. English remains popular in contemporary Japan; those with good English skills tend to be admired by other Japanese people. Some informants mentioned that Japanese women associated with U.S. GIs often think of themselves as “cool” when they speak English. They become self-conscious in a positive sense, especially when

they realize that other Japanese are looking at and listening to them speak in English while using cellular phones. Moreover, their boyfriends' military status sometimes adds more values to "Americans" in Okinawa because of access to military bases and benefits.

Despite many positive assessments of American men, some women are cynical about GIs popularity among Japanese women in Okinawa. These women complain that GIs exploit their status as "American." Tatsuko, an Okinawan military wife, explained:

My friend married a GI. My husband and his colleagues happened to know him. They had no idea why my friend wanted to marry him because, in their opinions, the guy is one of those nerds who are less likely to get an attention from girls if he were in America....

Kumiko, another military wife, said, "Well, honestly, it is like, those geeks who can't find American girls back home suddenly become flattered by Japanese girls simply because they are Americans" [laughter]." Reflecting on their relationships with GIs, many military wives (including Tatsuko and Kumiko) found themselves trapped by "American magic" as if they were hypnotized, and consequently pursued relationships with U.S. GIs despite reservations.

American Men in Military Uniforms under the Gaze of Japanese Women

Although idealistic perceptions of Americans are constructed on images of Western democracy, male chivalry, and handsome Hollywood stars, American men in military uniforms are perceived differently. When Japanese women view idealized American men as providers of emotional support in their relationships, they also see

the same men in military uniforms as providers of a stable economic life. Specifically, many contemporary Okinawan women find that marrying U.S. GIs brings a more financially secure and stable life than marrying Okinawan men does. Therefore, the GI's military career is attractive factor to contemporary women, although it is not motivated by the same socioeconomic desperation that caused many Japanese women to marry U.S. GIs in the early post-World War II period.

Aside from basic pay, military benefits associated with a GI's SOFA status in Okinawa are attractive. Yoshie, an Okinawan military girlfriend currently deployed in Kuwait, dated several GIs before meeting her partner. Yoshie has been yearning to marry a U.S. GI and hopes to marry her boyfriend, as they planned, when he returns:

Once I started dating American men, I could no longer even think about Japanese men as potential boyfriends [laughter]. But among Americans, I was always interested in GIs, not civilians. Well, GIs are financially stable and have various benefits.... And the great thing is they can request Okinawa as a destination for PCS, so I can live close to my parents at least for 3 years.¹²⁴ Eventually I may have to move to the U.S, which I don't mind because I don't want to live in Okinawa for the rest of my life. I want to see different parts of the world.

From a financial viewpoint, numerous military wives and girlfriends I interviewed consider marrying U.S. GIs in Okinawa to be desirable. Although marriage to junior-ranked GIs does not necessarily improve women's economic status, benefits such as subsidized military housing and utilities, schooling, and access to base stores contribute to images of GIs as economically stable and fulfilling. Their status as military wives in Okinawa is particularly attractive because it allows them to

¹²⁴ PCS=Permanent Change of Station (see Glossary)

travel freely between “Little America” and the Okinawan civilian community. This privileged position means that many of the women I interviewed, especially Okinawan women, hope their husbands will be granted extensions to stay in Okinawa.

Saki, an Okinawan military girlfriend, is another informant with a strong desire to marry a U.S. GI and had several relationships with GIs in the past. Unlike Yoshie, Saki’s search for a future husband has not been successful.¹²⁵ Saki told me that her most recent relationship with a GI boyfriend lasted nearly three years, even after he returned to the U.S. After going through a long-distance relationship, Saki gave up on marrying her boyfriend because he decided to quit the military without a clear goal for his future:

When looking at American military life in Okinawa, base housing is spacious; utilities are free; and shopping at the PX is cheap and fun. Because GIs receive an overseas station allowance, they can enjoy a middle-class like lifestyle even though their basic salary is low. Many Japanese women tend to think that marriages to GIs would promise you an American middle-class life. But most of them only know GI’s life in Okinawa.

For many Okinawans, living in spacious military housing equipped with American electronic appliances, shopping at base stores, and using recreation facilities in “Little America” represent American “middle-class lifestyles.” I visited both on-base and off-base military housing. On-base housing is uniform and reminded me of two- and three-bedroom apartments in the U.S. For most Okinawans, however, “American style” floor plans in military housing appear spacious when

¹²⁵ When I first met Sara at a live music house in the base town, she told me that she recently met a new boyfriend, a white GI who could be possibly her future husband.

compared to standard Japanese apartments. Some of the off-base private homes in which higher-ranking GIs and civilian employees' families resided were even more impressive; moreover, the military subsidizes their rents. However, as Saki noted, the middle-class life that some couples enjoy in Okinawa may end in disillusion when GIs return to the U.S. and lose eligibility for their overseas station allowances.

I noted that Japanese military wives described the overseas station allowance, or the Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA), as an attractive supplemental income for their husbands' basic pay.¹²⁶ Shinobu, a Japanese military wife who recently moved to Okinawa from the U.S., mentioned that COLA is the best benefit that GIs stationed overseas can receive:

In America, when my husband's military rank was not as high as it is now, I worked to support family finances. But later my husband got promoted, so we can live comfortably now without my financial contribution. There is quite a large gap in income among GIs. Many Japanese women who are married to young low-ranked GIs in Okinawa have not realized that their lives are still quite nice over here because of COLA. They will feel a gap between the kind of lifestyle they have in Okinawa and the one waiting for them in the U. S. when they move to America. Maybe, they don't speak English well and don't drive a car either. So, they cannot find a job in America and no extra income...

For most Japanese military wives in Okinawa, COLA and other military benefits make their lives more fulfilling. Most military wives in this study did not work outside the home at the time of interviews, which suggests there was no financial necessity for them to work. However, once they move to the U.S, many of these women find it hard to maintain a similar economic standard, especially when

¹²⁶ COLA is paid to members living in high cost of living areas in the U. S. as well as to military members stationed overseas.

their husbands' military ranks are relatively low, or when their husbands decide to leave the military without having financial security.

While marriage to GIs provides economic security for some Japanese military wives, reliance on their husbands for living and military benefits also makes these women vulnerable. Enloe (2000) stresses that military wives live within "the economic system of a militarized state," which is similar to the situations of women who rely on state welfare programs. Resources for housing, schooling, and medical care, often food, and even recreation flows come from the government. Eligibility for some family services and benefits are determined by the service members' ranks rather than by the family's needs (Kohen 1984; Moelker and Kloet 2003). Moreover, access to these military benefits available only so long "as the military recognizes family members as dependents" (Kohen 1984:408). Due to this economic dependency, several informants noted that they experienced tremendous economic difficulty and mental stress when they divorced or when their husbands left the military without job security.

Emi, an Okinawan wife of a civilian with SOFA status, shared her experience of a "downfall" from the position of military wife to that of a civilian wife when her husband was discharged from the military due to physical injury. Emi and her husband moved to Okinawa only after her husband found it difficult to find a civilian job in the U.S.:

You don't necessarily become rich just because you marry American GIs. But military wives are economically better off because of a stable income and various military benefits. We lost everything. Now, my husband works as a SOFA but not a GI anymore. Because he is no longer in the military, we

cannot live in military housing; we have to pay utilities; we have to send our kids to a civilian school...and my husband has to pay an expensive premium for his insurance. All of these were free when he was in the military.... I know many Japanese military wives whose husbands want to quit the military...well, but if they want to quit the military, what are they going to do next? Can they support their family? Can they find a decent civilian job?

Emi stressed that the economic security the military offers to GIs should not be underestimated. She encourages her Japanese friends to persuade their GI husbands not to quit the military, especially without future prospects in civilian employment. Similarly, many military wives told me that they want their husbands to stay in the military, especially when they know their husbands are not likely to be assigned “life threatening” duties on the front lines in war zones.¹²⁷

Militarized Masculinity under Japanese Women’s Gaze

Whether or not GIs are assigned combat duties in conflict regions, they are expected to bolster their masculinity and maintain physical fitness. Soldiers’ masculinity is built up and enhanced through training designed to create warriors who are prepared to kill and die for the state (Dyer 1985; Whitworth 2004). Such physical and mental preparation focuses on gendered practices such as violence, aggression, risk-taking, misogyny, stoicism, and heterosexuality within the military organizations (Hockey 2003; Higate 2003) and also in sexualized civilian contexts (Enloe 2000). Military masculinities are inseparable from ideological aspects such as self-discipline,

¹²⁷ There were some informants whose husbands or boyfriends were deployed to the Middle East at the time of interview. They said the length of deployment often extended and the return date changes. There are other women whose husbands just came back from the conflict area. They cope with the long separation and prepare for reunion in different ways but few of them are integrated into a social support network of military wives within the military organizations.

self-confidence, and self-respect that are essential for GIs to perform their duties as soldiers (Rush 2003).

Although militarized masculinity is praised and celebrated when it accomplishes its purposes within military organizations, civilians also recognize and compliment those who achieve in this manner. Michi, a Japanese military wife, is one of these outsiders who gives attention to military masculinity and compliments GIs' bodies.

...Their bodies are sturdy and strong. Well, I don't think my husband's body looks exceptionally great but he is much more masculine than the majority of Japanese men [laughter]. I think their physical differences are not simply because Americans in Okinawa are military men. It's more related to their racial differences...I mean they are genetically different.... That's why Japanese men are incompetent.... Of course, American men, I mean GIs do military trainings. They run a lot too. So, they earn great bodies by their efforts and deserve compliments.

When Western male body myths are combined with masculine images of U.S. servicemen, contrasts between American GIs and Japanese men become even starker. In response to my bringing up the topic of masculinity and GIs in Okinawa, many military wives mentioned that PT (physical training) is an essential part of military life for GIs because physical fitness is an indicator of physical strength and self-discipline. Hisae, an Okinawan military, told me that her husband is a "typical" Marine who has strong patriotism and loyalty to the country and the military.

My husband is proud to be a Marine.... He used to do PT all the time whenever possible until he married me. It's amazing to see some GIs devoting themselves so much to the physical training, even on off-duty days.... My husband thinks he would gain weight and look fat if he does not work hard on PT. Well, I like GIs who maintain fit bodies. They look great.

Although PT varies depending on the branches and units of military service, the Marine Corps carries out the strictest and most intensive training and Marines have the most physically powerful bodies in the armed forces. As some informants made clear, this makes the Marines the most popular GIs for some Japanese women.

Marines' wives are also conscientious about negative stereotypes of the Marines, such as being poorly educated, bloodthirsty, aggressive, troublemakers, and playboys. I heard about these stereotypes from a young GI I became acquainted with in the Gate-2 Street area, and from military wives, especially from women whose husbands belong to the Air Force. Marines' wives do not always deny these negative perceptions, but they often use humorous comparisons between the Marines and other military servicemen to defend their husbands. For example, Sakura, an Okinawan military wife said,

GIs in the Air Force look at the Marines as a bunch of boneheads. They said the Marines have muscles but no brains. Seriously, they are saying this. Well, obviously, the body structures between Airmen and Marines are definitely different. Airmen are feeble; I mean they have poor physiques compared with the Marines. The Marines have to watch their weight all the time because they have strict weight-control regulations and physical tests. If failed, they are humiliated. Their salaries might be cut back, they are threatened to be discharged, and are ordered not go outside the base until they lose weight.

The majority of GIs stationed in Okinawa belong to the Marine Corps (61%) followed by Air Force (27%), Navy (8.5%), and Army (3.5%) and Military wives adopt their husbands' views and attitudes toward other military branches. Marine wives tend to perceive Airmen as physically weak, elitist, snobbish, quiet, undisciplined, lazy, and not manly compared with Marines. Minako, an Okinawan military wife, asserted that

“Airmen’s wives seem to have a sense of superiority over us because their husbands work for the Air Force.” Military wives tend to identify not only with their husbands’ races but also with their military branches. Other informants echoed Minako’s observations.

Some women characterized Japanese men of being effeminate in their physical appearance and behavior. In fact, they used the word “effeminate” or “unmanly” to describe their general views of young Japanese men. Fujiko, a Japanese military wife, strongly values the manliness and toughness of GIs and despises men that she considers effeminate:

Young Japanese men today are becoming more effeminate and weak.... Once you date American men, you will see the clear difference between them. I like the way Americans express their opinions and positions straightforwardly. American GIs are confident about themselves. They are proud of their manliness and toughness, especially among the Marines.... Japanese men tend to lack self-confidence and pride. To me, Japanese guys seem to be trying to become sensitive for everything. I mean, they avoid taking a position and leave things ambiguous.... And, Japanese men are too skinny. If I push them, they may fall down [laughter].... My friends also agreed with me. They are saying that even old Japanese patriarchy may be more attractive than these effeminate young men [laughter].

Similar to Fujiko, numerous military wives choose men who are stronger and more powerful as their intimate allies and protectors, while looking at Japanese men as comparable to their biological family members. Other informants explained that Japanese men lack sex appeal because they look more like their younger brothers than like their potential lovers. Like their war bride counterparts, Japanese military wives in present-day Okinawa tend to justify their choices of marriage partners by

constructing dichotomous images of U.S. and Japanese men, which underscore what they see as Japanese men's inferior qualities.

Disadvantages of Militarized Masculinity

Although military wives I interviewed view military benefits and masculinity as positive assets and motivations to pursue intimate relationships with U.S. GIs in Okinawa, there are also disadvantages. Militarized masculinity is not constructed only in daily PT, in boot camp, and on the battlefield, but also in civilian bars and brothels (Enloe 1997). Prostitution around military bases throughout the world is thought to provide soldiers with sexualized services that maintain their morale and discipline to prepare for long, lonely, fierce missions (Enloe 1997; Takazato 2003). Watanabe (1995) notes that local women living near military sites have been sexualized and commodified by global militarization: they are “involuntarily drafted in the sexual service of militaries as rape victims and sexual slaves” (Nagel, 2003).

Military husbands and boyfriends bring gendered and sexualized practices to intimate relationships in various forms including domestic violence, sexual and child abuse, and verbal abuse. Some military wives reported victimization by former boyfriends or husbands. Misae, a Japanese military wife, told of being beaten and choked by her former GI boyfriend in his dormitory room. As soon as she recovered consciousness, Misae ran away, but not to a hospital or a police station. When I asked why she did not take any action, Misae hesitated and said, “Well, I was in his room alone at that time. If I reported to the police...they would ask me many

personal questions and say ‘He is your boyfriend after all, isn’t he?’” Similar to cases in which women do not report date rape incidents, Misae remained silent about the attack because she anticipated intimidation from Japanese authorities and humiliation from the Japanese general public. Misae also feels she is to blame for the trouble since she went to his room alone and of her own accord.

Miri, an Okinawan military wife was assaulted by her GI ex-boyfriend in a club frequented by American GIs. Miri said she was beaten, choked, and dragged to a staircase in the club, where she was beaten even more severely. Since Miri’s ex-boyfriend attacked her in a public place, the incident received public attention and police intervention, as she explained:

Look at my nose. Can you see a scar around here, the scar from the incident? A bone in the nose was cracked.... My ex was violent. We repeatedly broke up and made up for 2 years.... He threw objects at me in my apartment. He also knocked out things like a dining table.... I tried to break up with him many times but he insisted, “I will change my behavior.” But it never happened [laughter].... I heard that the military men can’t control their physical strength in offense or defense when it happens abruptly....

Harrison (2003) argues that military personnel who abuse their intimate partners are obsessed with control because the military values controlling behavior, which is an important aspect of the combat morale. Whitworth (2004) notes that soldiers may try to reassert control through physical violence or psychological abuse when they are faced with a lack of control in their personal relationships. In fact, both Misae and Kae’s incidents took place in similar situations where they were arguing with their GI boyfriends about breakups. Several more military wives reported that their husbands vent their anger and frustration on objects in the homes when they cannot control

their tempers. For example, these husbands pound their fists against walls; throw, break, or knock down objects; many shout, curse, and use the word “fuck” at home.

Domestic violence is not unique to military men and their relationships with women. What makes these incidents unusual is that domestic violence is not only gendered, but also militarized. Women can easily become victims of militarized masculinity by men who are mentally and physically prepared to kill people professionally. Takazato (2003) emphasizes the gendered aspects of militarism and violence, claiming that when soldiers return home from being trained in violence, their skills on battlefields and in camps return with them, making wives and girlfriends potential targets.¹²⁸ All too frequently, wives and girlfriends of military men are vulnerable to the risks of severe or fatal injury.

Illusions of the “American Magic”

Although most informants never imagined becoming victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse, many learned quickly about a pattern of GI-Japanese intimacy in Okinawa that often involves emotional trauma. Specifically, their GI lovers could disappear anytime due to deployment or PCS. My informants’ narratives taught me that for many women, developing relationships with GIs whose duty in Okinawa is as short as three months is common. Many women agreed that GIs take advantage of short-term duty in Okinawa and view Asian women merely as

¹²⁸ Takazato (2003) also reports that Okinawan women, who worked in the sexual services for the American soldiers during the Vietnam War era constantly faced the physical and sexual violence by their clients.

playthings or as sex objects. These women came to learn about illusions of fantasized American men in general and GIs specifically from their own experiences.

I heard the voices of numerous military wives who had several short-term love affairs with GIs who had no intention of committing to these relationships.

Interviewees tend to blame themselves for being naïve and for taking such words as “I love you,” “Let’s marry,” and “Let’s go to America together” seriously. In many cases, these women told similar stories. Many of them became serious about their relationships with GIs only to find these men were “players” who went from one woman to another. Some women realized that their boyfriends had left Okinawa only after losing contact with the men. Others learned that their GI boyfriends had girlfriend or fiancées in the U.S. Still other informants followed their boyfriends to the U.S. and discovered that their boyfriends were unfaithful to them. One interviewee, Motokoko, an Okinawan military wife, shared her stories of the disappointing relationships she had with several GIs before meeting her husband:

Well, I dated several GIs but none of them turned out to be a marriage partner until I met my husband.... Some GIs simply stopped contacting me. Others told me completely out of the blue that they were leaving Okinawa in the next few days. There was another GI who pretended to be a bachelor, but later I found he had a son from his previous marriage. He daringly put his son’s picture in his room and said the boy is his older sister’s son! There are a bunch of liars. It’s not unusual for married GIs to make local girlfriends and manage to keep their secrets until leaving Okinawa permanently.

Harumi, a Japanese military wife, also shared details of relationships she had with black GIs before meeting her husband:

Well, until I met my husband, I was dumped by several black guys [laughter].but I kind of got used to it, though. I think my experiences with these slick guys made me stop worrying about whether the relationships last or not

[laughter]. I was telling myself, ‘relax, just have fun.’ After all, they just toyed with me. But...at least I made good use of these guys to practice my English conversations [laughter].... There were tons of silly Japanese girls who let GIs seduce them. When I started hanging out with Americans, I was one of these silly girls. I usually ended up having disappointing relationships, but I kept moving on to a new relationship until I met my husband.

Similar to Motoko and Harumi, most women I interviewed had painful and disappointing experiences with GIs before they met their future husbands. However, some women refused to be perceived as sexual objects who had little or no control over the relationships with GIs. These women situated themselves in subject position where they pursued casual relationships with GIs by their own choice. They are a small number of women in the study but said they celebrated their youth and sexual freedom by exploring casual, short-term relationships with GIs.

Each woman had her own motivations for pursuing GI-Japanese intimacy. As carefree young women in their late teens and early twenties at the time, they were enjoying “American experiences” such as receiving attention from American men, gaining access to “Little America,” and feeling “cool” about having American boyfriends to show off. What “American experiences” can offer to those women associated with GIs in Okinawa makes young women being trapped in a cycle of short-term relationships with GIs. However, most of the women gave up on expecting mutually committed relationships with GIs after experiencing disappointments. Notably, some informants said that when they started dating their future husbands, they were always skeptical about the men’s real intentions and doubted their future husbands’ fidelity until they married.

Numerous and often contradictory images of American men exist for Japanese women: chivalrous Western men practicing ladies-first and masculine self-disciplined GIs who embody images of protection for women and their country; cruel Western men who treat Asian women as disposable objects. Even though Japanese women acknowledge their illusions of “American magic” based on personal experiences, they chose American GIs as their partners over Japanese men, just as war brides did.

Shifts in Gender Relations between GIs and Japanese Women

Although two generations of Japanese women, war brides and contemporary military wives, share similar perceptions of U.S. men and experiences in their relationships with U.S. GIs, there is also fundamental difference between them. As I stated earlier, economic aspects of gender relationships between GIs and Japanese women have changed over the past half-century. For the war bride generation, U.S. soldiers’ economic resources and power in occupied Japan established a gendered power relationship: U.S. GIs as providers and Japanese women as beneficiaries. Today, economic gaps between U.S. GIs and Japanese women are closing. Young Japanese women are often in superior positions compared to young, lower ranking enlisted GIs because of Japanese women’s improved socioeconomic status in the context of more equal Japan’s economic and political relations to the U.S.(see Chapter 5).

Many informants stated that some Japanese mainlanders who have economic freedom and purchasing power become “patrons” of their GI lovers, most of whom

are black GIs because of the hip-hop trend. Japanese patrons provide GI lovers with incentives that include brand-name clothing and accessories, paying for leisure activities including restaurant dining, and in some cases, buying expensive watches and cars to make their men happy and help them look good in public. These women are part of a global consumer phenomenon in which resourceful single Japanese office workers travel the world to fulfill their desires by buying brand-name products, enjoying gourmet restaurants, and sampling local men for casual sex. The activities of Japanese global consumers enable some GIs to benefit from give-and-take relationships. In some respects, these patronized GIs are inversions of Japanese *only-san* in the post-World War II, era when women served U.S. soldiers as temporary wives to obtain a room, board and other resources.

None of my informants' economic situations resemble those of Japanese global consumers, but their improved socioeconomic status in contemporary Okinawa still has an impact on conventional gender relationships between GIs and Japanese women.¹²⁹ Some informants said there were occasions when they unexpectedly ended up paying expenses during dates. Yayoi told me, "Young and low-rank GIs made little money and had attitudes like 'If we are going out, you will pay because I don't have money.' I paid. I don't know why [I did]...but it wasn't a big deal. It didn't bother me much back then." Many informants were aware that some young GIs who approached them for dates were not particularly interested in them as people,

¹²⁹ Okinawa's average income is located at the bottom among 47 Prefectures in Japan. When Okinawans talk about Japanese global consumers (e.g., patrons around U.S. military bases; Yellow Cabs overseas), they usually refer to mainland office ladies (OLs) who are assumed to have better careers and income than Okinawan women.

but more in what they could offer materially. Getting free restaurant meals is one thing, but Akibayashi and Takazato (2009) note that young GIs with scant economic resources seek “free” sex with local women instead of soliciting prostitutes.

Many informants said they sometimes felt that low-rank young GIs used them as free cab drivers. According to these women, young GIs were not permitted to own cars in Okinawa and had to use either free military shuttle services or take taxis to reach their local destinations, such as Gate-2 Street. Some GIs expect their Japanese girlfriends to offer free rides when they need them and rely on Japanese women for transportation. From the perspectives of GIs who have little money and are unhappy about being stationed in Okinawa, Japanese girlfriends are there to make their lives easier and tolerable until they leave. Matsuko, a Japanese military wife, does not like the ways some GIs take advantage of Japanese women. However, Matsuko also blames “rich” Japanese mainlanders for spoiling young GIs with material favors and criticizes Japanese women in Okinawa for not being able to say “No” to American men. Matsuko thinks Japanese women’s ambiguous responses are particularly problematic because they give U.S. GIs the impression that Japanese women are passive and will do whatever men want.

Recalling some of her disappointing dating experiences with GIs before she met her husband, Matsuko said:

...I dated some blacks and went out for dinner. I was so disappointed. I mean they were cheapskate, very stingy. It was a big turn off [laughter].... They were trying to make *me* buy dinner. I was shocked. Can you believe this? Why do I have to pay? No way. I am a woman. Why do I, as a woman, have to pay money for dates?

These GIs probably expected Matsuko to buy dinner because they perceived her as a rich Japanese woman willing to pay for things they wanted in exchange for dating or sex. On one hand, Matsuko's refusal to perform a patron's role shows her assertiveness and strength. On the other hand, it also shows resistance to changes in men's traditional gender roles, which call for men to pay all expenses during dates. Matsuko advocates traditional gender relations, with men as givers and women as receivers, which could make her financially dependent on men. Other informants, including Yayoi, said there was not much of a financial burden when they paid for expenses such as meals for their GI boyfriends. These women found emotional costs of their relationships more hurtful than monetary costs. Many Japanese women I interviewed said they constantly question their relationships with GI boyfriends and wonder whether the men are worth keeping, until they see a reason to make a decision about the relationship's future.

Although Japanese women's economic resources could lead to their economic exploitations by GIs in Okinawa, such resources also enabled Japanese women to assert some control in their relationships. Mina shared details of her experience of visiting her GI boyfriend in the U.S. Prior to leaving Okinawa, Mina's boyfriend asked her to marry him and move to the U.S., but had no definite plans. Mina traveled to the U.S. at her own expense and lived with her boyfriend to determine whether she would marry him or not. The boyfriend quit the military after returning to the U.S. and began living with his parents.

I went to America and lived with my boyfriend in his parents' house for three months as a "trial" [laughter].¹³⁰ His family was very nice to me and treated me well. But my boyfriend did not. He was mean to me. Well, when he was enjoying conversations with his family, I wanted to join them but I could not understand English well at that time. My boyfriend did not care about me and I was often left out. There were many occasions like this that made me upset during my trial trip in the U.S.

The longer Mina lived with her boyfriend, the greater were the gaps in numerous aspects of their relationship. At the end of her third month in the U.S, Mina decided not to marry him and she returned to Japan.

Mina's case is not unusual. Several military wives I interviewed used their economic resources for "trial trips" to the U. S. and stayed with their boyfriends before making decisions. This strategy was particularly effective when GI boyfriends left Okinawa with promises of marriage but without suggesting any plans for the future. Some of these women went to the U.S. only to find out their boyfriends were committed to hometown girlfriends or were already married. Although these trips do not always yield positive outcomes, economic resources make it possible for Japanese women to take initiative and find clues that help them decide whether they should commit to marriage with their GI boyfriends or move on to new relationships. When this option was available (which was not the case for war brides), contemporary Okinawan women could minimize risks of enduring unhappy marriages.

Where Mina and other women used their resources for trial trips to the U. S., another group of women used the money to return to Japan alone or with their bi-

¹³⁰ There is a bilateral agreement between Japan and the U. S. in respect to a visa waiver program that allows Japanese citizens to visit the U. S. and stay for no longer 90days without obtaining a visa. The same stipulation applies to the U. S. citizens when visiting Japan.

racial children after their marriages failed in the U.S. Economic resources help contemporary Japanese women end their failed relationships with GIs and return to Japan. For most war brides, however, returning to Japan was more than a financial issue; it was an emotional burden not only on war brides but also on their families in Japan. Many scholars on war brides support my research findings, which show that Japanese war brides lost the option of returning to Japan in when they left the country with their American husbands. Some war bride informants said they still feel their surviving family members in Japan were unwelcoming or gave them some reasons not to visit, especially after their parents died. Family reluctance discouraged some war brides from making even a short visit to Japan.

By contrast, younger generations of Okinawan military wives whose marriages ended are likely to go back to Okinawa. Several military wives in my study returned to Okinawa after separating from or divorcing GI husbands in the U.S. Many of these “returnees” said they decided to return to Okinawa mostly because their husbands quit the military, which made it difficult to sustain even a basic family life in the U.S. Factors such as limited English communication skills, racism, sexism, and cultural and social differences kept divorced Japanese women from finding good jobs, especially when these women were raising children.

Japanese women’s economic power gave them some control over their relationships, but sometimes led to further sexual and financial exploitation by GIs. However, these women are not merely victims. When Sakura told her mother that her GI boyfriend (her future husband), whom she had been dating for a couple of months

before he proposed, Sakura's mother (who became pregnant in a relationship with a GI and gave birth to Sakura out of wedlock) was not supportive at first. However, Sakura's mother eventually became an advisor figure:

My mother told me that I should be very careful and should ask my boyfriend his social security number. My husband had no idea why he had to tell his social security number to me. My mother said she would not trust GIs because of her own experience and familiar stories from other women. "When a GI said, 'I am not like other jerks,' he anyway turned to one of them at the end," sad my mother. My mother didn't want me to get hurt. She didn't want to see me going through a similar kind of pain she had went through.

In most situations, GIs would not give their girlfriends their Social Security numbers or military I.D. numbers. However, Japanese women must be aware that they need to take the initiative in obtaining information about their GI boyfriends, and that such information includes more than just their first names and military branches. Without contact information, reaching their boyfriends once they have gone is virtually impossible. Many women experienced the sudden disappearance of their boyfriends, but these men sometimes left problems for their girlfriends.

I met several single mothers with bi-racial children fathered by GIs who have legal issues to solve. Some are mothers of out-of-wedlock children who seek paternity establishment from their ex-boyfriends, so that their children can obtain U.S. citizenship. Other women, who divorced their GI husbands for various reasons, take legal action to obtain child support from their former husbands. Some ex-military wives do not explicitly demand child support from their former spouses. These women expressed fear that legal action might upset their ex-husbands, which might affect relationships between the children and their fathers. For bi-racial

children living outside the U.S., connections to their American fathers and obtaining U.S. citizenship are essential to making sense of their Japanese identities, and the identities associated with their fathers.

Conclusion

This project explored GI-Japanese intimacy as it developed within specific historical, cultural, and socioeconomic contexts of post-World War II Japan, specifically in relation to the U.S. occupation and the continuing U.S. military presence in Okinawa. The feminist concept of reversing the gaze provides a framework for my investigations of, and challenges to, the Orientalist gaze, which objectifies Asian women as exotic in general, and as short-term sexual companions in the specific context of U.S. global militarization. Reversing the gaze shifts the positions of Japanese women from objects to subjects, which enables these women to determine their own spaces for agency and to express subjective views of American men, as alternatives to their objectification under the Orientalist gaze. Sensitive, emotional, complex, and empowering, reversing the gaze is a process in which each woman's vibrant voice is central to analyzing a wide range of aspects of GI-Japanese intimacy.

This study found that when American men are exposed to the gazes of Japanese women (i.e., war brides and younger generations of military wives), multiple and often contradictory images of American men coexist in these women's perceptions. For both groups of women, perceptions of American GIs include idealized and fantasized "Americans," constructed around images of Western democracy and chivalrous Western men practicing "ladies-first" courtesies. At the same time, Japanese women perceive these men as traditionally masculine, self-disciplined soldiers who embody values of protection for women and country. These

idealistic images make up a large part of the “American magic” that has enraptured Japanese women from the postwar era to the present.

Although American magic has similar effects on Japanese women from both generations, its positive images of Americans exist alongside negative representations of cruel, manipulative Orientalist men who treat women as disposable sex objects while temporarily stationed overseas. Many interviewees, and especially the younger women, volunteered stories of bitter, painful, and often traumatic experiences from past relationships with American men. In many cases, these experiences stem from the abrupt endings of relationships due to GIs receiving orders that assign them to new military destinations. Short-term romances with local women have become part of gendered and sexualized military traditions practiced routinely by GIs stationed overseas. These traditions overlap with Orientalist perceptions of Asian women, exemplified by images such as “Madame Butterfly,” which justify and sometimes encourage short-term GI-Japanese romances.

Militarized masculinity is another attribute that creates contradicting images of American GIs under Japanese women’s gaze. While many women praised GIs’ physical fitness and strength maintained by military training, some of these women were victimized by militarized masculinity, which took forms such as domestic violence, sexual and child abuse, and verbal abuse in intimate relationships. As I noted in the preceding chapter, domestic violence is not unique to military men and their relationships with women. However, unlike domestic violence committed by male civilians, this violence is not only gendered but also militarized, performed by

men who are professionally trained to prepare for the combat. Militarized masculinity is not confined to the battlefields and training camps. When it travels to intimate sites, wives and girlfriends of military men are vulnerable to severe or fatal injury.

Older and younger generations of Japanese women acknowledged their disillusion with “American magic” through their own experiences and through similar stories that their friends told them. However, many women also found themselves trapped by “American magic” and continued pursuing new relationships with GIs. Core elements of “American magic,” such as images of chivalrous, masculine, and strong Western men, did not emerge spontaneously. Nor were fantasized Western men merely imaginary creations of Japanese women. Instead, chivalrous and democratic Western men were constructed through contrasts with representations of Japanese domestic patriarchy in Japanese society, where male dominance is embodied in its cultural values and traditions. Similarly, Japanese women’s perceptions of Western masculinity were constructed, exaggerated, and enhanced in contrast to “feminized” Japanese men, whom the West had castrated symbolically. Ironically, this means that Japanese women also contributed to the maintenance of American masculinity. Furthermore, Western men reinforced their self-images as strong and masculine in contrast with Orientalist images of Asian women’s hyperfemininity and excessive sexuality that they created, since “‘masculinity’ does not exist except in contrast with ‘femininity.’” (Connell 2005: 68)

As Japanese women construct polarized images of GIs and Japanese men, which highlight Japanese men's inferiority to American men, these women justified their choice of American men as marriage partners. The contrasts between American and Japanese men became starker when the women addressed differences in what each group of men had to offer. Conditions during the early post-World War II years compelled many Japanese women to see American men as victors in every aspect of their lives and to view Japanese men in opposite terms, as men who failed to offer even basic life's necessities. Japan's economic and social circumstances during the postwar period intensified these gaps and made American GIs more attractive to Japanese women. Economic desperation was a crucial factor in understanding early postwar GI-Japanese intimacy, especially among women who were severely victimized by the war. While their choices were limited, I want to stress that it was these women who ultimately made decisions whether or not to take the opportunity to marry American GIs.

Even though economic rewards are no longer major factors for younger generations of Japanese women, many Okinawan military wives and girlfriends believe that marrying GIs will provide the means to a more financially secure and stable life than would be available through marriage to Okinawan men. Focusing exclusively on the size of the paychecks that young enlisted GIs bring home would not necessarily suggest that their military careers are attractive. However, the benefits associated with GIs' SOFA status add a high value to relationships with American GIs in Okinawa. When some younger Japanese and Okinawan women

perceive American men as status symbols to “carry” with them and see themselves as the envy of other women, they know that such Americans are in military uniforms, but not civilians without SOFA status, in Okinawa. To most Okinawan women, “Americans in Okinawa” refers to GIs, though such perceptions of American men are less likely to be shared by Japanese women on the mainland. Therefore, for both generations of Japanese women, their perceptions and images of American men are constructed inseparably from the U.S. military, including military benefits, culture, practice, and masculinity.

This study also found that war brides and military wives tend to identify themselves with their husbands’ race, by learning about American race relations and their husbands’ positions relative to other racial groups. These women’s perceptions of race differ depending on their racial affiliations; their husbands’ experiences with and attitudes toward other races shape these women’s perceptions. Some women who married racial minority GIs perceive whiteness in relation to the power, inequality, racism, and sexism that affect racial minorities, including Asian women. Women associated with white GIs, however, do not always view whiteness as a negative component of white men, though they were aware of the racial hierarchy in the military and in civilian life. Some women associated with white GIs adopt cautious attitudes when referring to black GIs and deliberately choose “proper” language.

Although race is a sensitive subject among Japanese women married to American GIs, women of the earlier generations seemed especially reluctant to talk about racial issues. As I discussed earlier (see Chapter 3), the Japanese have

culturally and historically imbedded prejudices against some racial, ethnic, and status groups. They also have a sense of superiority over people with darker skin complexions. While Japanese people in the postwar era perceived black GIs through their own prejudiced lenses, segregation and white racism practiced in the U.S. military intensified their contrasting views of white and black GIs. Therefore, Japanese women associated with black GIs were compelled to accept the American racial hierarchy, in which black GIs were designated as inferior to white GIs. This racialized white-black relation shaped personal relationships and interactions between Japanese women with whites and with black Americans.

In contrast to older generations of Japanese women, younger generations of Okinawan and Japanese military wives talked about race more freely. To some women, race was a major factor that encouraged them to, or discouraged them from, pursuing relationships with GIs of particular racial groups. These women expressed their racial preferences such as white and black, for their boyfriends or future husbands. Older, often negative perceptions of American GIs persist among the general public. The stigma attached to blackness creates family disputes over marriages between black GIs and Okinawan women, placing psychological burdens on Okinawan women and their families. However, perceptions of black GIs among some populations of Japanese are no longer associated with negative images. Young generations of Japanese reconstructed blackness in response to the global trend of hip-hop music, which redefined blackness as “cool” and fashionable.

As I showed in Chapter 5, most military wives of black GIs I interviewed in Okinawa mentioned a connection between their musical tastes for hip-hop and their racial desires for black GIs. These women's preferences for black men over white GIs counter the conventional marriage pattern of an Asian female marrying a white man. Reconstruction of negative images of blackness into new images, in the context of global trends of hip-hop music and culture, challenges the hegemony of whiteness and white mainstream culture. Interviewees' bold, positive statements about blackness contributed to empowering Japanese women as they made a claim for black men over white men as their intimate partners.

Although this study focuses primarily on military wives of white GIs and black GIs, I noticed many Latino GIs in base towns in Okinawa. The high visibility of the Latino population in the U.S. military could reflect recent increases in Latino enlistment rates, as Kleykamp (2007) suggests. I expect marriage rates between Japanese women and Latino GIs to increase if these enlistment rates continue to rise. The inclusion of men from other racial and ethnic groups would enrich future research, especially since the military is more racially diverse than ever.

The economic aspects of GI-Japanese intimacy have changed tremendously over the past half-century. This affected the gendered power relationships and Japanese women's perceptions of American men. In postwar Japan, Americans monopolized power and resources, which created a clear-cut gendered power relationship between GIs and Japanese women. American GIs in present day Okinawa, of whom most are young enlisted servicemen, do not have the same kind of

economic advantages that American soldiers in the postwar era did, since power relations between the U.S. and Japan shifted in favor of Japan over the past three decades. In contrast, Japanese and Okinawan women improved their socioeconomic status compared to their counterparts in postwar Japan, which enabled contemporary young women to become consumers with increased purchasing power. While these young women with resources gained some control over relationships with GIs, their economic resources could also lead to purposeful material exploitation by GIs. Some young GIs perceive Japanese women as providers, not only of free sexual services, but also of material rewards (even if such rewards cover only petty expenses) while in Okinawa.

The current study suggests that the Orientalist gaze is inseparable from militarized masculinity, and its impact on Japanese women is not limited to reproduction and persistence of Orientalist stereotypes. As I stated earlier, militarized masculinity could victimize its gendered and sexualized objects through sexual assaults, physical violence, and verbal abuse. Ironically, when reversing the gaze, it is militarized masculinity and military status that enhances American men's other qualities (e.g., ladies-first) and motivates women to pursue relationships with GIs in Okinawa. Merits and potential danger associated with militarized masculinity exist side-by-side, though most military wives and girlfriends I interviewed tend to see danger only within military training and battlefields, but not in intimate spheres. Similar to militarized masculinity, militarized patriarchy in domestic spheres needs to be addressed in the future research.

The issue of single motherhood and biracial children fathered by American GIs is another vital research area. At the end of Chapter 5, I recalled talking with several single mothers of biracial children dealing with problems such as paternity establishment and child support. In my interview with Eddie Callagain, an African American lawyer working in Okinawa since 1995, Callagain stated that she has filed 102 cases dealing with support for children parented by Japanese women and GIs. Sixty-nine of her cases collect checks from GI fathers using voluntary methods, while 33 cases use the involuntary method of withholding fathers' wages. Callagain expects there are more women who have similar problems, but do not seek help.

Although these single mothers' situations may appear to be private issues or personal problems between Japanese or Okinawan women and their GI boyfriends or ex-husbands, these problems are also political issues. Noiri (2000), an Okinawan scholar, argues that the problems of children abandoned by their servicemen fathers should not be blamed on individual women, since it is not Okinawan women or men who decided to turn Okinawa into a U.S. military colony and bring in thousands of American GIs. Unfortunately, "victim-blaming" attitudes are prevalent among Japan's policy makers, its media, and the general public, all of which have stigmatized Japanese women and biracial children deserted by American GIs since the occupation era. Extensive research on contemporary single motherhood and deserted children in the context of U.S. global militarization is necessary for identifying patterns and effects of these problems on women and children and the urgency of solving them.

Appendix : Abbreviations and Military Terms

BAH	Basic Allowance for Housing
BX/PX	Base Exchange/Post Exchange
COLA	Cost of Living Allowance
Commissary	Grocery store on active installation where service members and families can purchase food, beverages, etc., at price usually lower than in civilian stores.
Company	The basic administrative and tactical unit.
GHQ	General Headquarters
Liberty	Short periods of authorized absence
Liberty Cards	
MCCS	Marine Corps Community Service
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer: An enlisted person with a minimum rank of Corporal or Sergeant.
PCS	Permanent Change of Station
PT	Physical Training
PX	Post Exchange
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
TDY	Temporary Duty
Y-number	A car plate issued for members of SOFA

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