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GENDERING THE "BLACK PACIFIC": RACE CONSCIOUSNESS, NATIONAL IDENTITY, AND THE MASCULINE/FEMININE EMPOWERMENT AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS IN JAPAN UNDER U.S. MILITARY OCCUPATION, 1945-1952

By

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ABSTRACT

GENDERING THE "BLACK PACIFIC": RACE CONSCIOUSNESS, NATIONAL IDENTITY, AND THE MASCULINE/FEMINE EMPOWERMENT AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS IN JAPAN UNDER U.S. MILITARY OCCUPATION, 1945-1952

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This dissertation examines the transnational identity and subjectivity formations of African American men and women, who were stationed in Japan under U.S. military occupation during the period from 1945 to 1952, from a gendered perspective. It argues that African American men and women in occupied Japan asserted and performed their racialized and nationalized sense of empowerment in gender-specific ways through their face-to-face or discursive encounters and interactions with the Japanese, as well as their investment in racial, gender, and class dynamics within the U.S. Army, in the larger American society, and in black communities on both sides of the Pacific.

After introducing the analytical framework of "gendering the Black Pacific" in Part I, I discuss in Part II the social construction of racial manhood among African American male soldiers in the all-black 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu through the tri-racial interactive dynamics among black and white Americans, and the Japanese. This section explores the masculinized contestations over racial, national, sexual, and class identities among African American GIs in occupied Japan, who could exert considerable power and prerogatives over Japanese citizens as members of the U.S. occupation force, while being segregated and discriminated against within the U.S. Army.

In Part III, I focus on African American women in occupied Japan as major actors in shaping the gendered formation of the "Black Pacific." This section examines how

black women achieved the feminine sense of empowerment by exploring alternative racial identities, gender roles, and class positions in Japan, while they continued facing and challenging racism and sexism within the U.S. military and from the patriarchal sector of the black community there.

In Part IV, I argue that the trans-Pacific debates over interracial intimacy, sexuality, and marriage between African American GIs and Japanese women during the U.S. occupation of Japan functioned as a transnational and international site of identity politics. Through this, African American, as well as Japanese, men and women on both sides of the Pacific grappled with the terms of race consciousness, gender conventions, and international and interethnic relations in the global context of the postwar U.S. political and military engagement with Japan as well as the domestic transformations in racial and sexual regimes during the early Cold War period.

To the Memory of My Father

Acknowledgements

This dissertation is a byproduct of my membership and intellectual engagement in the Comparative Black History Ph.D. Program at Michigan State University. First, I would like to thank the following professors in the Department of History who trained me, as members of my guidance committee in some points of my graduate program, in mastering historiographical knowledge and practice in a wide range of transnational and cross-topical fields, including African American history, Asian American history, Japanese history, and the history of sexuality in Western Europe and the U.S.: Sayuri Shimizu, Laurent Dubois, Dagmar Herzog, Victor Jew, and Michael Lewis. Richard Thomas was influential in shaping the contours of my research on African American soldiers in occupied Japan. Dr. Thomas, who himself was a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps from the late 1950s, enthusiastically showed his interest in my research topic by telling me how impactful his military experience in occupied Okinawa was on the transformation of his racial identity as a young African American man. Special thanks go to Pero Dagbovie for the critical comments and suggestions which he gave me in the final stage of completing this dissertation.

I single out Darlene Clark Hine for her intellectual and emotional mentorship as my academic advisor throughout my doctoral program at MSU, even after she moved to Northwestern University in 2003. I am grateful for the continuous encouragement and professional advice which she gave me at each stage of my program so that I could successfully develop my expertise and career as a historian. Various insightful comments and suggestions which I received from her were crucial in shaping my research agenda and sharpening my argument during the course of my dissertation research and writing.

Without my engagement with the bodies of scholarship on the histories of African American women, men, and gender which she produced for the past several decades, I would not have conceptualized this dissertation as a transnational gender history of the African American encounter with the Japanese. My academic experience in the Comparative Black History Ph.D. Program, for which she was most responsible in its foundation and development, challenged me to revisit the dominant analytical framework of the "Black Atlantic" in Black Diaspora Studies and investigate the transnational and diasporic experience of African Americans across the Pacific as a Japanese African-Americanist.

Next, I would not have completed this dissertation without various institutional and personal assistance and support which I received during the course of my research. I would like to express my special gratitude to Frank Shirer and Dena Everett of the U.S. Army Center of Military History at Washington D.C. for permitting and processing my access to the oral history collections of the veterans of the 24th Infantry Regiment. I am indebted to the archivists and staff at the following archives and libraries in the U.S. and Japan: the U.S. National Archives at College Park, Gifu Prefectural Library, Kagamigahara City Museum of History and Folklore, Kagamigahara City Library, and the MSU library. At MSU, I am grateful to Marshanda Smith, my fellow graduate student and assistant to Darlene Clark Hine, for facilitating my communication with Dr. Hine during her absence from MSU and keeping me in touch with the Comparative Black History families. I also thank Van Kalbach, Fumiko Sakashita, and Yuki Maruyama for their continual friendship and intellectual support in my graduate life in East Lansing.

Finally, I thank my family members in Japan for their continuous support and encouragement while I was pursuing my master's and doctoral degrees in American universities for the past decade: Norie Okada, Yukiko Okada, the late Ishi Okada, Mikako Nakagome, and Kenji Okada. This dissertation is dedicated to Kunihiro Okada, my father, who passed away in 2007 without seeing the completion of this dissertation and my receiving a Ph.D. degree. I wish him sleep in peace.

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Chapter 1
Introduction: Gendering the "Black Pacific"

This dissertation examines the transnational identity and subjectivity formations of African American men and women who were stationed with various statuses and purposes in Japan under U.S. military occupation during the period from 1945 to 1952. The major purpose of this project is to bring the traditionally marginalized perspective of "gender" as well as "sexuality" to the center in the historical analysis of transnational racial formations of the "Black Pacific," more specifically, the interracial and/or international encounters between African Americans and the Japanese within the specific historical context of the U.S. military occupation of Japan. In this dissertation, I argue that African American men and women achieved some racialized sense of empowerment in gender specific ways through their everyday, face-to-face interactions with Japanese men and women, based on their political and economic privileges, elevated social statuses, and broadened opportunities in occupied Japan which they enjoyed as members of the U.S. occupation forces. African American men and women also developed a gendered sense of racism and sexism in occupied Japan, where they continued facing and resisting racial and gender discriminations within the U.S. Army and in the American communities on the Japanese side, while they enjoyed the relative racial acceptance and the nationalized sense of superiority and power in their relations to Japanese citizens.

This study seeks to address the following thought-provoking questions on the intersecting identity politics of race, gender, nation, sexuality, and class among African Americans in occupied Japan: How did African American male soldiers construct their racial, masculine, and national identities through their engagement in the "tri-racial"

dynamics of interracial/international interactions among black and white Americans and the Japanese within the political context of the U.S. military occupation of Japan?; How did African American women achieve the nationalized, feminine sense of empowerment vis-à-vis Japanese citizens while they challenged the racism and sexism in the U.S. military and from the patriarchal sector of the black community in occupied Japan?; How did African Americans and the Japanese negotiate race consciousness, gender conventions, sexual practice, and international and interethnic relations through their engagement in the trans-Pacific debates over interracial intimacy, sexuality, and marriage between black GIs and Japanese women?

This dissertation attempts to bridge the historiographical gaps which deeply exist in African American military history and African American gender history in two ways: the introduction of a "gender" perspective in the historical analysis of the military experience of African American male soldiers and the inclusion of the "militarized" overseas experience of black women in the larger narrative of African American women's history.[1] It reveals that the "masculinized" sense of racial identity among African American male soldiers was socially constructed in the specific interracial and intraracial dynamics of their interactions with the Japanese, white Americans, and

[1] I use the word "militarized," instead of "military," to include both military and civilian African American women who were involved in the U.S. military occupation of Japan in certain ways, regardless of their official affiliation with the U.S. Army. African American women in the Women's Army Corps (WAC) or the Army Nurse Corps served in occupied Japan as official members of the U.S. Army. Those "militarized" civilian African American women who were stationed in occupied Japan included the civilian personnel in the Department of Army, Red Cross workers, missionary workers, and female family members of African American male soldiers or civilian personnel. For the concept and process of "gendered militarization," see the multiple work of feminist political scientist Cynthia Enloe, including *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, Rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

African American women in their garrison lives in occupied Japan, as well as the intra-organizational racial and class politics of the U.S. Army during that period. This study also sheds light on the diverse dimensions in the lives of African American women, both military and civilian, who achieved the "gendered" sense of racial empowerment in quite different ways from African American men, depending on their social status and occupation in Japan. Moreover, it pays attention to the transnational aspects of the "gendered" contestations over race consciousness, gender conventions, and national identity in the transnational debates over the interracial intimacy, sexuality, and marriage between African American male soldiers and Japanese women within the African American communities on both sides of the Pacific.

This dissertation also reconsiders the historical encounters between African Americans and the Japanese in occupied Japan from the perspectives of gender, sex, and intimacy, the categories which few historians employed in their race-centered narrative or analysis of black-Japanese relationships, especially those in the pre-WWII period. It sheds light on the gendered differences in the identity and subjectivity formations between African American men and women in Japan, which were manifested not only through their interracial/international interactions with Japanese women and men, but also in their intraracial gender negotiations within black communities. As historian Gary Okihiro notes in his revisiting essay of "Is Yellow Black or White?" in 2002, the introduction of gender and sexual perspectives to the comparative analysis of black and Asian racial formations "troubles the U.S. binaries of race, gender, and sexuality" and "inspires insurgencies and solidarities across the boundaries of race, gender, sexuality,

and nation."[2] This study reveals the ways African American men and women reconfigured the boundaries of race consciousness, national identity, and gender and sexual conventions in gender-specific ways, while they experienced interracial identifications or conflicts with Japanese men and women in various settings within the specific historical context of U.S. military occupation of Japan.

This dissertation further contributes to the international historiography of the U.S. military occupation of Japan by focusing on the gendered process of identity and subjectivity formations among African American men and women in interracial, international, and intercultural dynamics of the triadic relations among blacks, whites, and the Japanese in occupied Japan. The gendering of the transnational racial formation process in occupied Japan reveals the racial and sexual tensions and confrontations in which men and women of each groups contested over race loyalty, sexual access, gender relations, and national honor within the political parameter of the U.S. military occupation of Japan. Moreover, my research sheds light on the transnational and international dimensions of the mutual interaction and representation between African Americans and the Japanese across the Pacific during the period of the U.S. military occupation of Japan. By focusing on the transnational experience of African American men and women in occupied Japan, it reveals that black encounter with the Japanese was informed by the trans-Pacific exchanges and negotiations of ideology and practice, which intersected among the matrix of race, nation, gender, and sex, in the broader political and ideological context of the early Cold War period. The black press played a critical role in forging the trans-Pacific interaction and imaginary between the stateside and diasporic

[2] Gary Y. Okihiro, "Is Yellow Black or White? Revisited," in *Blacks and Asians: Crossings, Conflict and Commonality*, ed. Hazel M. McFerson (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2006), 58.

African American communities because of the transnational circulation of black newspapers and magazines.

Moreover, the conceptual framework of the "Black Pacific" will be employed in this dissertation to explore the transnational and international dimensions of the diasporic political and cultural encounters of African American men and women with the Japanese during the period of the U.S. military occupation of Japan. In this dissertation, I reconsider the transnational racial formations of the world of the "Black Pacific" from a gendered perspective by focusing on the masculinized and feminized experience of African American men and women and their encounters with the Japanese during the period of U.S. military occupation of Japan. Historian George Lipsitz argues that the understanding of gender was excluded from the politics of interracialism in the wartime America, while the racialized nature of the Pacific War promoted the formation of the interethnic, antiracist coalitions within communities of color. He further points out the gendered implications of postwar U.S. economic expansion and military engagement in Asia in the "new stage" of racial formation, informed by the complicated intersections of race, gender, class, and nation which were imminent in such phenomena as the sexual relations between U.S. servicemen and Asian women and the economic exploitation of low-wage Asian women workers by the project of transnational capital.[3] The gendered analysis of the "Black Pacific" explores the possible formations of the cross-racial gendered identifications and solidarities as well as the tensions and conflicts between black, white and Japanese women, while revealing the masculinized homosocial bonds

[3] George Lipsitz, "'Frantic to Join . . . the Japanese Army': Black Soldiers and Civilians Confront the Asia-Pacific War," in *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*, eds. T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, and Lisa Yoneyama (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 368-372.

which were constructed between black and white men upon their claim on American manhood vis-à-vis Japanese women and men.

In postwar U.S.-Japanese relations in which the military became a major vehicle for forging the black-Japanese encounters, especially those between black male GIs and Japanese women, their gendered and sexualized relationships have to be historicized within the specific "militarized" political and social context of the U.S. engagement with Japan during and beyond the occupation period. As feminist political scientist Cynthia Enloe theoretically elaborates, the processes of "gendered militarization" depended on the "maneuvers" to control women and the notions of femininity, as well as masculinity, by militaries and the militarized civilian elites.[4] During the U.S. occupation of Japan, the transnational racial formation of the "Black Pacific" was a highly gendered process of interaction and representation between African Americans and the Japanese in the specific political context of the militarized and colonial relations between the U.S. and Japan. Through this, African American, as well as Japanese, men and women accommodated, contested, and reconfigured the racialized hierarchies of gender and sexual ideology and practice within the tri-racial international dynamics of their trans-Pacific encounters and interactions in occupied Japan.

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This dissertation poses the questions and issues in the overlapping fields of historiography in the revisionist sense: the histories of African American masculinity, femininity, and gender, Afro-Asian relationships, the U.S. military occupation of Japan, and the Black Diaspora.

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[4] Enloe, *Maneuvers*, x.

There is an emerging body of historical scholarships which focus on the social construction of black masculinity and gender. In the preface to their pioneering anthology of African American men's history titled, *A Question of Manhood: A Reader in U.S. Black Men's History and Masculinity* (1999), Darlene Clark Hine and Earnestine Jenkins suggest that "men not only are as influenced by their gender as women, but have actively participated in a history of gender construction, shaped by certain prevailing notions about what it means to be a man in American society and culture."[5] As the authors point out, the traditional scholarship on African American men, which tended to view their lives within the social pathological framework, contributed to the production and reproduction of contemporary negative and "self-destructive" images and discourses of black masculinity. The authors, instead, stress the need to examine black manhood as a specific social construct which was subject to change over time and place in their project to reconstruct U.S. history by gendering of the African American men's lives and experiences.[6]

Some historians are beginning to reconsider the military experience of African American male soldiers from a gendered perspective. Steven Estes points out the implications of the "altered conception of African American manhood," either in the

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[5] Darlene Clark Hine and Earnestine Jenkins, eds., *A Question of Manhood: A Reader in U.S. Black Men's History and Masculinity, Vol. 1: "Manhood": The Construction of Black Male History and Manhood, 1750-1870* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), xv.

[6] Ibid., xv-xvii. Other major recent monographs which exclusively focus on the histories of gender and black masculinity include the following: Steve Estes, *I Am a Man!: Race, Manhood, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Michelle Ann Stephens, *Black Empire: The Masculine Global Imaginary of Caribbean Intellectuals in the United States, 1914-1962* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005); Martin Summers, *Manliness and Its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Herman Graham III, *The Brother's Vietnam War: Black Power, Manhood, and the Military Experience* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003); Darlene Clark Hine and Earnestine Jenkins, eds., *A Question of Manhood: A Reader in U.S. Black Men's History and Masculinity, Vol. 2: The 19th Century: From Emancipation to Jim Crow* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).

battlefield or home front during World War II, for the development of the postwar civil rights movement in one chapter of his work *I Am a Man: Race, Manhood, and the Civil Rights Movement* (2005). He suggests that the emerging sense of "camaraderie" and "confidence," which was forged among African American soldiers based on their shared racism in the military as well as their combat experience during WWII, encouraged the "militant" black veterans to join the civil rights movement in their communities.[7] In *The Brothers' Vietnam War: Black Power, Manhood, and the Military Experience* (2003), Herman Graham III argues that African American soldiers developed "counterhegemonic" notions of masculinity through their military service during the era of the Vietnam War, while they radically nurtured racial and "Third World" consciousness and solidarity in the context of the emerging black nationalism in the era of Black Power movement as well as of the masculinized U.S. military culture.[8] These historians challenge the lack of gender perspective in the traditional scholarship on African American military experience by focusing on the social construction of racial masculinity of African American soldiers in the specific historical context of the U.S. military engagement in the wars. In the traditional narratives of African American military history which almost exclusively focused on racial segregation and discrimination in the U.S. armed forces, black soldiers' "manhood" was considered as a given factor in the organization of their military lives by the essentialist associations between "manhood" and "military."[9]

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[7] Estes, *I Am a Man!*, 11-38.

[8] Graham, *The Brother's Vietnam War, passim.*

[9] For the major traditional scholarships on the general African American military history, see, for example, Gerald Astor, *The Right to Fight: A History of African Americans in the Military* (Cambridge: Da Capo

Other historians have investigated the military experience of African American women in the Women's Army Corps (WAC) or the Army Nurse Corps, especially during World War II.[10] Challenging the overall marginalization of African American women in the U.S. armed forces in the African American military historiographies, these historians pose the intersecting questions of race, gender, sexuality, and class which complicated the lives of African American WACs and Army nurses within the U.S. military as well as their representations in the larger American society. However, the diverse experiences of the "militarized" black women, including the civilian black women who were concerned in some ways with the U.S. military engagement overseas as female spouses of black soldiers or the civilian personnel of the Department of Army or Defense, as well as the

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Press, 1998); Bernard C. Nalty, *Strength for the Fight: A History of Black Americans in the Military* (New York: The Free Press, 1986). On the African American troops in World War II, see, for example, Bryan D. Booker, *African Americans in the United States Army in World War II* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2008); Alan M. Osur, *Blacks in the Army Air Forces During World War II: The Problems of Race Relations* (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2005); Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops*, (1966; repr., Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2004); David P. Colley, *Blood for Dignity: The Story of the First Integrated Combat Unit in the U.S. Army* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003); Neil A. Wynn, *The Afro-American and the Second World War*, Rev. ed. (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1993), esp. chap. 2; Robert L. Allen, *The Port Chicago Mutiny: The Story of the Largest Mass Mutiny Trial in U.S. Naval History* (1989; repr., Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1993); Stanley Sandler, *Segregated Skies: All-Black Combat Squadrons of World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992); Lawrence P. Scott and William M. Womack Sr., *Double V: The Civil Rights Struggle of the Tuskegee Airmen* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1992). On the postwar African American military history in this tradition, see, for example, John Darrell Sherwood, *Black Sailor, White Navy: Racial Unrest in the Fleet During the Vietnam War Era* (New York: New York University Press, 2007); James E. Westheider, *Fighting on Two Fronts: African Americans and the Vietnam War* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); William Bowers, William M. Hammond, and George L. MacGariggle, *Black Soldier, White Army: The 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1996).

[10] On the role of African American women in the U.S. military during World War II, see Martha S. Putney, *When the Nation Was in Need: Blacks in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2001); Brenda L. Moore, *To Serve My Country, To Serve My Race: The Story of the Only African American WACs Stationed Overseas during World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 1996); Darlene Clark Hine, *Black Women in White: Racial Conflict and Cooperation in the Nursing Profession, 1890-1950* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), esp. chap. 8. For the general history of Women's Army Corps (WAC) and the Army Nurse Corps, see, for example, Mary T. Sarnecky, *A History of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999); Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Bettie J. Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1990).

black WACs and Army nurses, have been generally marginalized in the historiographies of African American women and gender. Especially, the existence of the civilian African American women who were stationed overseas with various statuses and purposes has been almost ignored by the double bind of prejudice among historians, who tend to associate "military" and "manhood" in their studies of the U.S. military engagement with the world in specific periods and locations.

Second, this dissertation on the African American experience in occupied Japan draws on the recent development in the scholarship on interdisciplinary and transnational studies of "Afro-Asian" relationships. For the past decade, a growing body of literature has emerged in the overlapping fields of history, literary criticism, cultural studies, and Black and Asian American Studies, which investigated the interracial encounters, either in material or imaginary terms, between peoples of the African and Asian diasporas across time and space.[11] In his pivotal essay in shaping the historiography of black-Asian relationships, "Is Yellow Black or White?" Gary Y. Okihiro configures a comparative framework of analyzing the commonalities and differences in the racial formation and experience of blacks and Asians in U.S. history in order to look for the common ground upon which African and Asian Americans build interracial solidarities in terms of their "nonwhite" status. Okihiro states:

> We are a kindred people, African and Asian Americans. We share a history of migration, cultural interaction, and trade. We share a history of colonization,

[11] The recent general scholarship on Afro-Asian encounters include the following: Fred Ho and Bill V. Mullen, eds., *Afro Asia: Revolutionary Political and Cultural Connections between African Americans and Asian Americans* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008); Heike Raphael-Hernandez and Shannon Steen, eds., *AfroAsian Encounters: Culture, History, Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 2006); Hazel M. McFerson, ed., *Blacks and Asians: Crossings, Conflict and Commonality* (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2006); Bill V. Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004); *The Afro-Asian Century*, special issue of *positions* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2003); Vijay Prashad, *Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting: Afro-Asian Connections and the Myth of Cultural Purity* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001).

> oppression and exploitation, and parallel and mutual struggles for freedom. We are a kindred people, forged in the fire of white supremacy and tempered in the water of resistance. Yet that kinship has been obscured from our range of vision, and that common cause, turned into a competition for access and resources.[12]

As he points out, their shared status and experience of repression as "nonwhites" created the conditions of possibility for both the "debilitating aspect of Asian-African antipathy" and the "liberating nature of African-Asian unity."[13] Under the influence of his thesis on Asian-African interracialism, the recent historical studies on intersections between black and Japanese diasporas in the United States explore both the conflicts and solidarities which occurred through various interracial encounters and interactions between African Americans and Japanese Americans or Japanese immigrants in the context of domestic and international racial dynamics.[14]

The international dimensions of the formation of the interracial solidarities and conflicts between African Americans and the Japanese across the Pacific are attracting growing scholarly attention under the current historiographical trend of "internationalizing" U.S. history as well as in the broadening of geographical scopes in

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[12] Gary Y. Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 60-61.

[13] Ibid., 62.

[14] For the historical relationship between peoples in the African and Japanese diasporas in the United States, see, for example, Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); Diane C. Fujino, "The Black Liberation Movement and Japanese American Activism: The Radical Activism of Richard Aoki and Yuri Kochiyama," in *Afro Asia: Revolutionary Political and Cultural Connections between African Americans and Asian Americans*, eds. Fred Ho and Bill V. Mullen (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 165-197; Charlotte Brooks, "In the Twilight Zone between Black and White: Japanese American Resettlement and Community in Chicago, 1942-1945," in *AfroAsian Encounters: Culture, History, Politics*, eds. Heike Raphael-Hernandez and Shannon Steen (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 113-150; Daniel Widener, "'Perhaps the Japanese Are to Be Thanked?': Asia, Asian Americans, and the Construction of Black California," *positions* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 135-181; Quintard Taylor, *The Forging of a Black Community: Seattle's Central District from 1870 through the Civil Rights Era* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), esp. chap. 4.

Black Diaspora studies beyond Africa and the "Black Atlantic."[15] The most historical studies on black-Japanese relationships focus on how African Americans forged an internationalist sense of solidarity with the Japanese as racial allies, or critiqued Japan's imperialist aggression and colonial projects in Asia, in the global political dynamics of their struggle against racism, colonialism, and imperialism, as well as in the changing international context of the U.S.-Japanese relationship before and during World War II. Those historians reveal the trans-Pacific power matrix within the complicated nexus of race, nation, and empire which was contingent in the formation and transformation of the African American internationalist identification and interracial solidarities with Japan and the Japanese in the first half of the twentieth century.[16]

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[15] For recent scholarship which focuses on the international and transnational dimensions of the African American struggle against racism and colonialism within and beyond the African Diaspora, see for example, Jonathan Rosenberg, *How Far the Promised Land?: World Affairs and the American Civil Rights Movement from the First World War to Vietnam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Carol Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

[16] For the major historical studies on the relationship between African Americans and the Japanese in the international context before and during World War II, see Yuichiro Onishi, "The New Negro of the Pacific: How African Americans Forged Cross-Racial Solidarity with Japan, 1917-1922," *The Journal of African American History* 92, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 191-193; Etsuko Taketani, "The Cartography of the Black Pacific: James Weldon Johnson's *Along This Way*," *American Quarterly* 59, no. 1 (March 2007): 79-106; Keiko Araki, "Daiichiji sekaitaisen-go ni okeru beikoku kokujin no nihonjin kan: Gāvi undō wo chūshin ni [Black Americans' View of Japan after World War I: Focusing on Garvey Movement]," *Hōgaku seijigaku ronkyū* 66 (September 2005): 69-95; Gerald Horne, *Race War!: White Supremacy and the Japanese Attack on the British Empire* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), esp. chaps. 2 and 5; Onishi, "Giant Steps of the Black Freedom Struggle: Trans-Pacific Connections between Black America and Japan in the Twentieth Century" (PhD. diss., University of Minnesota, 2004); Hiromi Furukawa and Tetsushi Furukawa, *Nihonjin to Afurika-kei amerikajin: nichi-bei kankeishi ni okeru sono shosō* [Japanese and African Americans: Historical Aspects of Their Relations] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2004); Yukiko Koshiro, "Beyond an Alliance of Color: The African American Impact on Modern Japan," *positions* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 183-215; Horne, "Tokyo-Bound: African Americans and Japan Confront White Supremacy," *Souls* 3, no. 3 (Summer 2001): 16-28; and "The Revenge of the Black Pacific?," *Callaloo* 24, no. 1 (2001): 94-96; George Lipsitz, "'Frantic to Join . . . the Japanese Army': Black Soldiers and Civilians

The centrality of race and nation as analytical categories to investigate the prewar black-Japanese encounters in the international context, however, fails to reveal the gendered and sexualized dynamics of the interracial relationship between African Americans and the Japanese. The fact that there were few face-to-face encounters between African American and Japanese men and women before the period of the U.S. military occupation of Japan partly explains that the prewar black-Japanese encounter was mainly represented by historians as a male-dominant, transnational discursive site of cross-racial affiliations and unities across the Pacific. The existence of women, whether black or Japanese, is marginalized or even ignored in the current scholarship on the prewar black-Japanese relationships, except a few brief references to the black women who visited Japan or married Japanese men.[17] In contrast, the gendered and sexualized black-Japanese relationship in the postwar period, especially those between African

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Confront the Asia-Pacific War," in *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*, eds. T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, and Lisa Yoneyama (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 347-377; Mark Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japanese and China: Black Internationalism in Asia, 1895-1945* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Masaharu Sato and Barak Kushner, "'Negro Propaganda Operations': Japan's Short-Wave Radio Broadcasts for World War II Black Americans," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television* 19, no. 1 (March 1999): 5-26; Reginald Kearney, *African American Views of the Japanese: Solidarity or Sedition?* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998); and "The Pro-Japanese Utterances of W. E. B. Du Bois," *Contributions in Black Studies* 13, no. 14 (1995/1996): 201-17; Masaharu Sato, "Senji-ka nihon no taigai senden ni okeru 'kokujin kōsaku' [Japan's Wartime Propaganda against Blacks]," *Masukomunikēshon Kenkyū* 46 (1995): 157-170; Ernest Allen, Jr., "Waiting for Tojo: The Pro-Japan Vigil of Black Missourians, 1932-1943," *Gateway Heritage* 15 (Fall 1994): 16-33; and "When Japan Was 'Champion of the Darker Races': Satokata Takahashi and the Flowering of Black Messianic Nationalism, *The Black Scholar* 24, no. 1 (Winter 1994): 23-46; Yuko Takeuchi, "W. E. B. Duboisu to nihon [W. E. B. Du Bois and Japan]," *Shien* 54, no. 2 (1994): 79-96.

[17] For example, Ernest Allen, Jr. refers to the interracial marriage in 1934 of Pearl Sherrod and Satokata Takahashi, who was the leader of The Development of Our Own, the Detroit-based pro-Japanese association. Reginald Kearney mentions three black female teachers from St. Louis, Missouri, including L. M. Turner, Alice McGee, and Isabel Dickson, who visited Japan in 1935 to attend the Pan-Pacific New Educational Conference in Tokyo. Kearney also points out that some African American women were included in those who were arrested by the FBI for their pro-Japanese sentiment during WWII, like Mittie Maude Lena Gordon, the president general of the Chicago-based Peace Movement of Ethiopia. Allen, "When Japan Was 'Champion of the Darker Races'": 34; Kearney, *African American Views of the Japanese*, 84-85, 98.

American male soldiers and Japanese women, received more popular interest and academic scrutiny both in Japan and the U.S. Some scholars pay special attention to the discursive expansion of the interracial sexual relationships between Japanese women and black men in Tokyo and other base towns in the mid-1980s and early 1990s, through which some Japanese female writers and the masculinist Japanese media caused heated debates over intraracial gender relations and sexual practices among the contemporaneous Japanese men and women.[18]

Historian Yuichiro Onishi pays some attention to the gendered aspect of the trans-Pacific racial formations of interracial unity between African Americans and the Japanese within the context of the "New Negro" movement during the interwar period. Onishi argues that the black radicals in the "New Negro" movement who forged a cross-racial solidarity with the Japanese as the "New Negro of the Pacific" during and after the Paris Conference, 1917-1922, articulated the "masculinist vision of black freedom," when they employed the masculinized tropes of war and militarism or embraced traditional gender roles in their relation to black women. He further suggests that some African Caribbean and American women expressed a feminist sense of black internationalism. Onishi offers the example of Jessie Fauset, as the "New Negro" feminists, who evoked the motif of sexual violence of black women in her criticism of the 1917 East St. Louis race riot in the global context of imperialist aggression, but without giving any specific reference to Japan.[19] His gendered analysis of the "masculinized" dimension of the black

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[18] See Karen Kelsky, *Women on the Verge: Japanese Women, Western Dreams* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), esp. chap. 3; John G. Russell, "Consuming Passions: Spectacle, Self-Transformation, and the Commodification of Blackness in Japan," *positions* 6, no. 1 (1998): 113-177; Nina Cornyetz, "Fetishized Blackness: Hip Hop and Racial Desire in Contemporary Japan," *Social Text* 41 (Winter 1994): 113-139.

[19] Onishi, "The New Negro of the Pacific": 207-209.

internationalist engagement with Japan properly contextualizes the prewar black-Japanese encounters, which scholars formerly interpreted only within the nexus of race and nation, in the complexly intersecting histories of black gender ideology and relations, black radical and nationalist politics, global politics, and the U.S. relationship with Japan.

In one chapter of his dissertation entitled, "Giant Steps of the Black Freedom Struggle: Trans-Pacific Connections Between Black America and Japan in the Twentieth Century," Onishi explores the radical possibilities of the trans-Pacific formations of the cross-racial solidarities against militarism, racism, and colonialism in occupied Okinawa in the late 1960s and 1970s. He suggests that such transnational, cross-racial alliances against white supremacy and the militarized international security system emerged through the contingent, strategic convergence of the reversion movement of the Okinawans, American peace activism, and black freedom struggles into the politics of "nonwhiteness" in Okinawa during that period.[20] He describes the encounter between African American GIs and the natives in Okinawa in the specific historical context of colonial situations in Okinawa under U.S. military occupation, the Vietnam War, and the militant dimension of the postwar black liberation movement:

> In special colonial settings, these two groups exchanged understandings for each other and created a nonwhite space, where Okinawans' resentment toward the occupiers coalesced with Black Americans' resistance to white supremacy. Both groups recognized that what laid beneath the machinery of U.S. militarism abroad and in Okinawa was American democracy's refusal and inability to hold Black and Okinawans equals.[21]

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[20] Yuichiro Onishi, "Giant Steps of the Black Freedom Struggle: Trans-Pacific Connections between Black America and Japan in the Twentieth Century" (PhD. diss., University of Minnesota, 2004), part III.

[21] Ibid., 242-243.

Onishi underscores the commonality of racial domination in occupied Okinawa and Black America as the conditions of radical possibilities for the cross-racial unity between black GIs and the Okinawans against white supremacist political, social, and military regimes. However, his centering of racial identity and status of African American soldiers to the common ground for black-Okinawan solidarities fails to capture the more complicated racial, gender, sexual, and international dynamics between black GIs and the Okinawans inherent in the colonial relations in the U.S. military occupation of Okinawa. African American GIs, like white counterparts, enjoyed and exercised considerable privileges and prerogatives, which were conferred upon them for their U.S. citizenship, in their asymmetrical relationship with the Okinawans, although they continued facing racial oppression and discrimination within the U.S. military and in American society at large. More importantly, Onishi never questions the male privilege or patriarchal sense of power vis-à-vis Okinawan women, which black soldiers shared with white American GIs for their investment in the dominant masculinized sexual ideology and practice which were influential in the U.S. military culture. He only makes a brief reference to the tragic incident of 1995, in which three black Marines raped a twelve-year-old Okinawan girl and caused a large-scale anti-base movement among the Okinawan people as well as those in the mainland Japan, in the end of his chapter.

This dissertation is further built upon recent developments in the U.S. military and international historiography, especially in the field of the U.S. military occupation of Japan and Germany.[22] Historians of U.S. international relations pay more attention to the

[22] For recent scholarship focusing on the encounters between African American GIs and the Germans in occupied Germany, see Timothy L. Schroer, *Recasting Race After World War II: Germans and African Americans in American-Occupied Germany* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2007); Heide Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler: Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* (Princeton:

gendered and sexualized, as well as racialized, dimensions of the U.S. foreign policy and its imperialist and military engagement with the world in war and peace.[23] There are a growing number of scholarships on the U.S. military occupation of Japan, including Okinawa, which address the issues of gender, sexuality, and race in the encounters between American GIs and Japanese women and men under U.S. military dominance. They explore such topics as interracial intimacy and sexuality, military prostitution, international marriage, and mixed-blood children.[24] There are, however, few historical

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Princeton University Press, 2005); Petra Goedde, *GIs and Germans: Culture, Gender, and Foreign Relations, 1945-1949* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); Brenda Gayle Plummer, "Brown Babies: Race, Gender, and Policy after World War II," in *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights, and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1988*, ed. Brenda Gayle Plummer (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 67-91; Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); John Willoughby, *Remaking the Conquering Heroes: The Social and Geopolitical Impact of the Post-War American Occupation of Germany* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

[23] See, for example, Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Robert D. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001); Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Katharine H. S. Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Beth Bailey and David Farber, *The First Strange Place: Race and Sex in World War II Hawaii* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Saundra Pollock Sturdevant and Brenda Stoltzfus, *Let the Good Times Roll: Prostitution and the U.S. Military in Asia* (New York: The New Press, 1992).

[24] Keisen jogakuen daigaku heiwa bunka kenkyūjo, ed. *Senryō to sei: Seisaku, jittai, hyōshō* [Occupation and Sexuality: Policy, Reality, and Representation] (Tokyo: Impact shuppankai, 2007); Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); Sayuri Guthrie Shimizu, "Sei no kokka kanri wo meguru senryō-ki nichibei kankei: Amerika no kaigai gunji shinshutsu to jendā [Sexual Control by the State in the Japanese-U.S. Relationship during the Occupation Period: the U.S. Military Engagement Overseas and Gender]," *Gunji Shigaku* 41, no. 4 (2006): 26-49; Hirofumi Hayashi, "Higashi ajia no beigun kichi to seibaibai/seihanzai [U.S. Military Base in East Asia and Prostitution/Sexual Crime]," *Amerika-shi kenkyū* 29 (August 2006): 18-35; and "Amerikagun no sei-taisaku no rekishi: 1950 nendai made [A Historical Study of the US Military's Policy toward Prostitution: Through the 1950s]," *Josei, Sensō, Jinken* 7 (March 2005): 94-118; Hiromi Furukawa and Tetsushi Furukawa, *Nihonjin to afurika-kei amerikajin: nichi-bei kankeishi ni okeru sono shosō* [Japanese and African Americans: Historical Aspects of Their Relations] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2004), part 3, chaps. 1-3, 9; Yukiko Koshiro, "Race as International Identity?: 'Miscegenation' in the U.S. Occupation of Japan and Beyond," *Amerikastudien* 48, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 61-77; Robert A. Fish, "The Heiress and the Love Children: Sawada Miki and the Elizabeth Saunders Home for Mixed-Blood Orphans in Postwar Japan" (PhD. diss. University of Hawaii, 2002); Yuki Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women: The Military and*

studies which focus on the African American experience and their relations with Japanese people in occupied Japan, despite the relative visibility of black male soldiers in the popular memory and imagination in postwar Japan.[25] In *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (1999), historian John W. Dower argues that the fraternization between occupation soldiers and Japanese women became a viable cultural symbol in shaping the new U.S.-Japanese relationship after World War II. By employing a gendered metaphor to interpret "ubiquitous sexuality linking conqueror and conquered," Dower contends that Japan was transformed in the imagination of Americans from a "menacing, masculine threat" into a "compliant, feminine body on which the *white* victors could impose their will (my italics)."[26] But, the "white victors" were not the only crucial actors in the social and cultural formations of the interracial sexual dynamics in the U.S. occupation of Japan. The presence of African-American soldiers among the occupation forces and the practice of racial discrimination toward them in the U.S. military further complicated the problem of interracial fraternization between the U.S. occupation troops and the Japanese.

Involuntary Prostitution during War and Occupation (New York: Routledge, 2002), esp. chaps. 5-6; John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999); Yukiko Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Michael S. Molasky, *The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa: Literature and Memory* (New York: Routledge, 1999); Regina Frances Lark, "They Challenged Two Nations: Marriages between Japanese Women and American GIs, 1945 to Present" (PhD. diss. University of Southern California, 1999).

[25] On the literary and popular cultural representations of African American male soldiers in postwar Japan, see Molasky, *The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa*, chap. 3; Hiromi Furukawa and Tetsushi Furukawa, *Nihonjin to afurika-kei amerikajin*, part 3, chap. 9; John G. Russell, "Consuming Passions: Spectacle, Self-Transformation, and the Commodification of Blackness in Japan," *positions* 6, no. 1 (1998): 113-177; and "Race and Reflexivity: The Black Other in Contemporary Japanese Mass Culture," *Cultural Anthropology* 6, no. 1 (1991): 3-25; and *Nihonjin no kokujin kan: mondai wa "chibikuro sambo" dake dewa nai* [Japanese Views of Blacks: Beyond the Problem of "Little Black Sambo"] (Tokyo: Shinhyōron, 1991), esp. chap. 2.

[26] Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 138-139.

In *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (2002), historian Maria Höhn reveals the "multifaceted" experience of African American soldiers in Rhineland-Palatinate through their encounters with the Germans. According to Höhn, African American GIs, on the one hand, enjoyed a "liberating" experience in Germany for the "overall tolerance" toward black soldiers by Germans. On the other hand, black GIs faced the "widespread racism" against them by Germans who were especially intolerant of sexual relationships between German women and black American GIs. She further argues that German and American racial attitudes "interacted" in the postwar German reformulations of their racial perception of blackness, through which the Germans renegotiated racial attitudes, sexual mores, and national identity in their daily encounters with American soldiers.[27] The interactive social and cultural process in the face-to-face encounters between Americans, either black or white, and Japanese people in occupied Japan was influential in their reconfiguration of racial perception, gender and sexual convention, and national identity. But few scholars pay enough attention to the political and social implications of the interracial and international dynamics of everyday interactions between the occupiers and the occupied for the triadic racial formations and reformulations between the Japanese, blacks, and whites in Japan. The scholarship on race, blackness, and miscegenation in occupied Japan focuses mostly on the Japanese literary representations and popular discourses of black male soldiers, Japanese warbrides of black GIs, and the half-black, half-Japanese children, while diminishing the agency of

[27] Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins*, esp. chap. 3.

African American men and women, who were living either in Japan or the U.S., as major actors in shaping the contours of postwar black-Japanese relations.[28]

In *Race after Hitler: Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* (2005), historian Heide Fehrenbach stresses the "transatlantic" interaction and signification concerning racial and national ideologies, practices, and belonging in the racial reformulation of postfascist Germany. She states: "German and American responses to black occupation children after 1945 were therefore conditioned by an ironic yet momentous bit of historical synchronicity... the study of transnational responses to the children constitutes a rich field for the investigation of postwar reformulations of race, citizenship, and nationhood on both sides of the Atlantic."[29] Fehrenbach further suggests that historians engage in the comparative history of military occupation and racial reformulation within the transnational and international framework.[30] Some scholarship on the U.S. occupation of Japan pays attention to the transnational and international aspects of the postwar Japanese racial reformulation, the experience of Japanese warbrides, and the problem of mixed-blood children.[31] But, there are few studies focusing on the transnational experience of African American men and women, especially the gendered dimension of their lives, in occupied Japan.

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[28] See, for example, Koshiro, "Race as International Identity"; and *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*, esp. chap. 5; Molasky, *The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa*, chap. 3; Russell, *Nihonjin no kokujin-kan*, chap. 2; Hiromi Furukawa and Tetsushi Furukawa, *Nihonjin to afurika-kei amerikajin*, part 3, chaps. 1-3, 9. Hiromi and Tetsushi Furukawa make a brief discussion of the black press's coverage of Japan during the early occupation period and overview of the African American soldiers who were stationed in occupied Japan and Okinawa. Ibid., part 3, chaps. 1 and 3.

[29] Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, 3.

[30] Ibid., 13.

[31] See, for example, Koshiro, "Race as International Identity"; and *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*; Fish, "The Heiress and the Love Children"; Lark, "They Challenged Two Nations."

Moreover, this study revisits the dominant analytical framework of the "Black Atlantic" in Black Diaspora Studies. In the recent evolution of the Black Diaspora Studies in the cross-disciplinary fields, sociologist Paul Gilroy was highly influential for his theoretical formulation of the "black Atlantic" as the "intercultural" and "transnational" formation of the modern political and cultural world of the African Diaspora. Gilroy's conception of the "black Atlantic" as a "counterculture of modernity" challenges the tendency of nationalist and ethnic absolutism which he finds in the tradition of the black, as well as white, intellectual and political culture.[32] However, the dominance of the "Black Atlantic" as an intellectual framework to comparatively analyze the historical experience and imaginary of the peoples of African descent from slavery to freedom obscures the geographical and temporal horizon of the African Diaspora and underestimates its encounters and intersections with other politics of diasporas beyond the Atlantic world.

Challenging the centrality of the "Atlantic" in the transnational and comparative studies of African Diaspora, some scholars introduced the "trans-Pacific" perspective in their analysis of the international or transnational racial formations in black-Japanese relationships or in the broader black-Asian connections.[33] In *Afro-Orientalism* (2004), literary critic Bill V. Mullen argues that "Gilroy's narrow attention to a decidedly Westernized triangle of influence—Europe/Africa/North America—occludes significant

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[32] Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), esp. chap. 1.

[33] See for example, Gary Okihiro, "Toward a Black Pacific," in *AfroAsian Encounters: Culture, History, and Politics*, eds. Heike Raphael-Hernandez and Shannon Steen (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 313-330; Taketani, "The Cartography of the Black Pacific"; Onishi, "Giant Steps of the Black Freedom Struggle"; and "The New Negro of the Pacific"; Horne, "The Revenge of the Black Pacific?"

areas of the diasporic world and black experience."[34] Mullen configures "Afro-Orientalism" as an alternative discursive site on race, nation, and global politics for the "dialectic" formation of Afro-Asian solidarities beyond the temptations of cultural and racial essentialism. But Mullen's materialist criticism of the Afro-Asian connections in the U.S. narrowly focuses on the interracial formations in the radical and revolutionary terms along the nexus of race, class, nation, and gender. He fails to fully consider other critical dimensions of Afro-Asian interaction and imagination, especially the intimate and sexual aspects of their relationships, including interracial dating, marriage, and reproduction, in the overlapping diasporas of Africans and Asians in the global world as well as in the U.S.

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After discussing briefly the historical relationship between African Americans and the Japanese through World War II as background for the next seven chapters in Chapter 2, I examine in Part II the social construction of racial manhood among African American soldiers in the transnational and multiracial settings of the U.S. military occupation of mainland Japan, specifically at Camp Gifu in Central Japan during the period from 1947 to 1950. I focus on the military experiences of those in the all-black 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu to examine the contestations over racial, masculine, and national identities among African American soldiers, who could exert some power over Japanese women and men as members of the U.S. occupation forces, while being segregated and discriminated against within the U.S. Army.

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[34] Bill V. Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), xxix.

In *Black Soldier, White Arm: The 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea* (1996), military historians William Bowers, William Hammond, and George MacGarrigle reevaluate the achievements of the all-black 24th Infantry Regiment in the Korean War, challenging the racially-biased traditional interpretations of its history. Initiated by the directive of John O. Marsh, Jr., the Secretary of the Army in 1987 and conducted by the historians affiliated with the U.S. Army Center of Military History from the late 1980s through the early 1990s, this revisionist historical project aims at the reconsideration of the regiment's role in the Korean War from a more racially-balanced perspective on the basis of the results of their extensive oral history interviews.[35] As a result of the critical analysis of the operations of the 24th Infantry Regiment during the Korean War with about four-hundred oral history interview of individuals, two-thirds of whom were African Americans, and official records in the National Archives, the authors conclude that segregation and racial prejudice were the central factors which prevented the emergence of "effective leadership within the regiment" and the construction of the "bonds of mutual trust and reliance that were necessary if the unit was to hold together in combat."[36] The authors also stress the combat unpreparedness among the African American solders in the 24th Infantry Regiment who were enjoying the "relaxed conditions of garrison life" in occupied Japan, combined with the "hostility" and "frustration" which they experienced in their discriminatory treatments within the U.S.

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[35] The all-black 24th Infantry Regiment was recommended for its dissolution by Maj. Gen. William B. Kean, the commander of the 25th Division, in late September 1950 because it had revealed itself "untrustworthy and incapable of carrying out missions expected of an infantry regiment." Bowers *et al.*, *Black Solder, White Army*, v. For the traditional official history of the Korean War which criticized the performance of African American troops in the Korean War, see Roy E. Appleman, *U.S. Army in the Korean War: South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961).

[36] Bowers *et al.*, *Black Solder, White Army*, 263.

military. They explain the unit's poor performances, which were characterized by a large number of stragglers in the battlefields, during the early months in the Korean War in the following way:

> The 24th Infantry in Japan was a model not only of the tensions that dogged all-black units in that day but also of the subtle interplay those problems could have in combination with the many challenges the Army faced in the postwar period. On the surface, conditions within the unit seemed favorable. The regiment was well situated at Camp Gifu, and life seemed good for its troops. Down below, however, there was much that was wrong.[37]

According to the authors, military unreadiness of the 24th Infantry Regiment in occupied Japan, mainly at Camp Gifu as its host camp, was conditioned, on the one hand, by the "extreme turbulence" which the U.S. Army itself was facing in the postwar period, including the rapid decline in the personnel strengths following World War II, incomplete training, equipment shortage, and lack of combat experiences. On the other hand, various problems which were contingent on the "occupation-oriented duties" in Japan afflicted the regiments of the Eighth Army, regardless of race: drug abuse, alcoholism, venereal disease, and black-market activities.[38]

In some parts of *Black Soldier, White Army*, the authors note the formations of the racial communities at Camp Gifu as an "enclave where black soldiers could pursue their own interests without undue stress from the outside world" despite "segregation" and "humiliations" within the U.S. military.[39] Especially, they pay attention to the role of Col. Michael E. Halloran, the 24th Infantry Regiment's commander, in the building of the "unit pride" among his black soldiers, who gained a reputation for its athletic prowess

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[37] Ibid., 65, 264, 266.

[38] Ibid., 64-65, 264, 266.

[39] Ibid., 50.

and fine marching.[40] However, the authors generally examine various dimensions in the military and social life of African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu only in terms of their combat readiness for the Korean War, when they discuss social segregation in base life, interracial and interclass conflicts within the regiment, and homosexuality among the unit's men, in addition to the underscored problems mentioned above.[41] Thus, they fail to capture how the experiences of African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment at Gifu affected their identities in the larger context of contestations over race, gender, nation, class, and sexuality in the history of the U.S. military occupation of Japan as well as in the African American struggle for rights during that period. More importantly, they ignore the African American soldiers' encounters with the local Japanese around the garrison community of Gifu, which I argue was crucial in their racialized and gendered subjectivity formations in occupied Japan. The interracial intimacy and sexuality between African American soldiers and Japanese women at Gifu, especially their marriages across racial and national boundaries, constituted the most provocative issue in occupied Japan to which both Americans and the Japanese responded by drawing on the complexly intersecting ideologies and practices of race, gender, sex, nation, and class during that period.

In Chapter 3, I discuss how African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment achieved the racial and masculine empowerment while they invested in the intra-organizational racial, class, and sexual dynamics within the segregated U.S. Army at Camp Gifu. In Chapter 4, I examine African American soldiers' encounters with the Japanese as a racial "other" as well as the "occupied" in the garrison community of Gifu

[40] Ibid., 51.

[41] Ibid., 48-60.

as influential in their identity formation and transformation process in occupied Japan. I draw mainly on the tapes and notes of the oral history interviews which were originally prepared by Col. John A. Cash of the U.S. Army Center of Military History for the publishing of *Black Soldier, White Army*, combined with autobiographies, black newspapers and magazines, Papers of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), official military records in the National Archives, to reconstruct the experiences of the 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu beyond the scope of military preparedness for the Korean War. These chapters explore the ways racial, masculine, and national identities of African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment were constructed through the "tri-racial" dynamics of international interactions among black GIs, white GIs, and the Japanese within the political context of the U.S. military occupation. Moreover, I consider the implications of the racial manhood of African American soldiers, which was both acquired and challenged by their military experiences in the Pacific area, for their involvement in the early stage of the modern Civil Rights Movement.

In Part III, I focus on the experience of African American women in occupied Japan as major actors in shaping the gendered formations of the "Black Pacific." Academic and popular discourses of American GIs in occupied Japan both in the United States and Japan have largely focused on African American men as racialized and sexualized subjects, especially in their representation of the intimate and sexual relationship between black GIs and Japanese women. In contrast with the high visibility of African American men, the presence of African American women who were stationed in occupied Japan for various reasons has been completely ignored, rather than

marginalized, in the dominant discourses of the U.S.-Japanese encounters. While the recent scholarship on the U.S. military occupation of Japan highlights its racial dimension, coupled with perspectives of gender and sexuality, with specific attention to the racialized experience of African American male soldiers and their encounter with the Japanese, most studies focus on the issue of miscegenation, or the interracial romance, sexuality, and marriage between black GIs and Japanese women and the problem of their mixed-blood children.[42] The overseas experiences of African American women contingent in the postwar U.S. military engagement with the international world have been often neglected by historians who were more attentive to the masculine aspect of the U.S. military deployment in the context of the Cold War.

In Chapter 5, I discuss the diverse experiences of African American women who were stationed in Japan under U.S. military occupation. Some African American women were directly involved with U.S. military occupation of Japan as military members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) or the Army Nurse Corps, or as civilian personnel of the Department of Army. Other black women were stationed in occupied Japan as family members of African American male soldiers or worked there as civilian workers in non-military American organizations. I argue that African American women, like their male counterparts, reconfigured racial, gender, class, and national identities in the gender-specific ways for their feminine empowerment in occupied Japan. Moreover, African American women continued facing the racism and sexism within the larger American or

[42] The representative historical studies of this tradition include the following: Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*; and "Race as International Identity/"; Fish, "The Heiress and the Love Children"; Lark, "They Challenged Two Nations"; Furukawa, *Nihonjin to afurika-kei amerikajin,* esp. part III.

African American community in occupied Japan, while they could enjoy various political and economic privileges over Japanese citizens by claiming their U.S. citizenship.

In Chapter 6, I consider the gendered implications of the presence of African American women for the formation of complex racial and sexual dynamics that developed among black women, men, and the Japanese. African American women resisted not only racism within the U.S. Army but also sexism in the African American community in occupied Japan. They experienced the gender backlash from the African American male soldiers stationed there, who tried to police the gender empowerment among some African American women, enjoying the broader opportunities, enhanced social status, and luxurious lives in Japan, in light of the dominant gender and sexual normativity of the period. I discuss the intraracial gender conflicts between African American women and men which were manifested over the issue of interracial intimacy and sexual relations between black men and Japanese women in occupied Japan.

In Part IV, I examine the transnational and international discursive formations concerning the interracial intimacy, sexuality, and marriage between African American male soldiers and Japanese women on both sides of the Pacific during and immediately after the U.S. military occupation of Japan.[43] In *Romance and Rights: The Politics of Interracial Intimacy, 1945-1954* (2005), historian Alex Lubin offers a brief comparative

[43] For the recent major studies on interracial intimacy, see, for example, Renee C. Romano, *Race Mixing: Black-White Marriage in Postwar America* (2003; repr., Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006); Alex Lubin, *Romance and Rights: The Politics of Interracial Intimacy, 1945-1954* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2005); Randall Kennedy, *Interracial Intimacies: Sex, Marriage, Identity, and Adoption* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003); Rachel F. Moran, *Interracial Intimacy: The Regulation of Race and Romance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Martha Hodes, ed., *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History* (New York: New York University Press, 1999). For the development of interracial intimacies between African American soldiers and German women in West Germany under U.S. military occupation, see Schroer, *Recasting Race After World War II*, esp. chaps. 3-4; Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*; Goedde, *GIs and Germans*, esp. chap. 3; Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins*; Willoughby, *Remaking the Conquering Heroes*, esp. chap. 2.

analysis of black magazine and newspaper representations of black/European relationships with those of black/Asian relationships, although most of his investigation focuses on black/white interracial marriage and romance. Rubin argues that "while the politics of interracial intimacy in Europe posited white women as the appropriate judges of black masculine desirability, the same politics in Japan posited Japanese women as engendering black patriarchy." As he notes, the black/Japanese interracial romance was represented through a narrative of "female submissiveness and male patriarchy" as well as a narrative of "vice" in the black press during the period of his study.[44] However, Rubin fails to capture the more complex racial and sexual dynamics contingent on the specific historical context of the U.S. military occupation of Japan which were reflected in the black press representations of black/Japanese intimacies in occupied Japan. On the one hand, African American soldiers experienced a highly enhanced masculine sense of power and pride through their interracial relationships with Japanese women, while they claimed a right to their patriarchal privileges vis-à-vis the native women of the occupied nation in the asymmetrical power relations between the United States and Japan. On the other hand, the masculinized ideologies and behaviors among African American soldiers in occupied Japan were defined not only in their interracial/international relationships with Japanese women, but also in their intraracial gender relationships with African American women, more specifically, those who were stationed in occupied Japan with various social statuses during the period.[45] Thus, the black newspaper and magazine

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[44] Lubin, *Romance and Rights*, 116.

[45] Lubin suggests that one 1952 *Ebony*'s article implies that "Asian women's docility was a welcome change from black women's aggressiveness," without further elaborating this point. Lubin points out the comparison of Japanese women and black women in the black representations of black/Japanese intimacy, but he seems to refer to the femininity of black women in general in his remark of "black women's

representations of black/Japanese intimacies in Japan served as a transnational site of identity contestations over race, gender, sexuality, and nation within the trans-Pacific African American communities. Through this, African American men and women on both sides of the Pacific employed the representations of Japanese women for their gendered purposes in the specific political and ideological context, both domestic and international, of the U.S. military engagement with the global world during the early Cold War period as well as the postwar African American struggle for rights.

I focus on the trans-Pacific formations of racialized, gendered, and nationalized discourses concerning the interracial intimacy and sexuality between African American soldiers and Japanese women during and immediately after U.S. military occupation of Japan. Using major black newspapers and popular black magazines as primary sources, I discuss in Chapter 7 the black press's coverage of interracial romance and sexuality between African American GIs and Japanese women as a transnational site of discursive contestations in African American gender and sexual politics between African American men and women who were stationed in occupied Japan. In Chapter 8, the focus of my discussion shifts to the black newspaper and magazine representations of the black-Japanese interracial marriage and their biracial children as an international forum for debating the possibility of racial acceptance and national integration of the Japanese brides of African American GIs, as well as their half-black, half-Japanese children, into the black communities in the United States. In Chapter 9, I examine the Japanese discourses of the interracial intimacy, sexuality, and marriage between Japanese women

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aggressiveness." He does not make any mention of the existence of African American women in occupied Japan and the intraracial gender dynamics between African American men and women there. Ibid., 117.

and African American GIs during the occupation period and their implications for the postwar reconstruction of racial perception of blackness in Japanese culture.

Chapter 2
A Historical Overview of the Relationship between African Americans and the Japanese through World War II

The relationship between African Americans and the Japanese had a long history of trans-Pacific racial, cultural, and political exchanges throughout time and space, either in imaginative or material terms, before they experienced a large scale of face-to-face encounters for the first time in Japan during the period of U.S. military occupation from 1945 to 1952. African American and Japanese people constructed, appropriated, and reconfigured the race-based mutual representations for their own political projects in the larger historical context of the changing U.S.-Japanese relationship as well as the global politics of race, empire, and colonialism in the modern world. In the first half of the twentieth century, the rise of the Japanese empire to power in the white-dominant world of international politics attracted the special attention of the African American political and intellectual leaders who articulated the racialized discourse of world affairs, which historian Marc Gallicchio calls "black internationalism." Japan, as he argues, occupied a "prominent" status among African American internationalists, who stressed the role of race and racism in world affairs and attempted to forge cross-national solidarity of the "world's darker races" in their antiracist and anti-imperialist struggle during the first four decades of the century before World War II.[1]

It was Japan's triumph over Russia in 1905 that was decisive in the formation of African American political and intellectual engagement with Japan from a perspective of international racialism. As historian Reginald Kearney notes, the victory of Japan over Russia awakened the internationalist sense of race relations among the contemporaneous

[1] Mark Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japanese and China: Black Internationalism in Asia, 1895-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), chaps. 2-3.

African Americans, since it was the "most emphatic refutation of the whole idea of white supremacy."[2] Kearney states:

> In the minds of African Americans... the victory of the Japanese over the Russians was vicariously satisfying an event as any achieved in their lifetime. The Japanese most convincingly demonstrated for all the world to see that white hegemony over nonwhites was merely situational, not genetic, a matter of strategy and tactics, not race.[3]

This historic event gave African Americans the opportunity to embrace the racialized image of the Japanese as a "colored" people and identify them as possible racial allies for overthrowing white supremacy in the global context of their antiracist and anti-imperialist struggle.[4]

The African American internationalist discourse of Japan was expanded by a series of world affairs after World War I: Japan's commitment to the principle of racial equality at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 and its confrontation with the Western imperial powers in the Washington Conference of 1921-1922. As historian Yuichiro Onishi argues, African American intellectuals and activists strategically mobilized the "symbolic importance" of Japan as the "New Negro of the Pacific" for their own political projects during this period, although their ideological and political orientations varied from black nationalism, socialism, to communism.[5] Japan's support of racial equality at Paris, on the one hand, encouraged some African Americans to project the image of

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[2] Reginald Kearney, *African American Views of the Japanese: Solidarity or Sedition?* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 37.

[3] Ibid., 38.

[4] For the detailed discussion of African American reactions to the Russo-Japanese War, see Kearney, *African American Views of the Japanese*, chap. 2.

[5] Yuichiro Onishi, "The New Negro of the Pacific: How African Americans Forged Cross-Racial Solidarity with Japan, 1917-1922," *The Journal of African American History* 92, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 191-193.

Japan as a "champion of the darker races." They interpreted the Washington Conference as the racially-motivated strategy of the Western powers to limit Japan's naval expansion in the Pacific area. Marcus Garvey, the black nationalist leader of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), and his followers regarded Japan as a leader of the "colored" world in the coming race war, although he left unquestioned Japan's imperialist motives in Asia and misunderstood that Japan jointly proposed a racial equality clause with China.[6] On the other hand, black radical leaders, including socialist A. Philip Randolph and communist Cyril V. Briggs, were critical of Japan's imperialist ambitions and colonial projects in Asia as well as white supremacist underpinnings of the Wilsonian internationalism and the Washington Conference in terms of class analysis, while they recognized the symbolic importance of Japan globalizing the issue of racial equality in the arena of world politics.[7]

During the interwar period, especially after Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931, African Americans reacted in ambiguous and complicated ways to Japan, which, similar to Western nations, was pursuing imperialistic interests in Asia while assuming the imagined role of the "champion of the darker races." Some African American political and intellectual leaders, including Randolph, Adam Clayton Powell Jr., and black communists, criticized Japan from a de-racialized, anti-imperialist perspective and refuted Japan's propaganda, advocating the role of a liberator of Asians and other

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[6] Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japanese and China*, 20-29; Kearney, *African American Views of the Japanese*, 54-62; Onishi, "The New Negro of the Pacific," 199-200; Keiko Araki, "Daiichiji sekaitaisen-go ni okeru beikoku kokujin no nihonjinkan: Gāvi undō wo chūshin ni [Black Americans' View of Japan after World War I: Focusing on Garvey Movement]," *Hōgaku seijigaku ronkyū* 66 (September 2005): 69-95.

[7] Onishi, "The New Negro of the Pacific," 194-207.

nonwhite peoples. However, the development of antiracist, anticolonial politics in the 1930s encouraged more African Americans to be tolerant of or even justify Japanese imperialism in Asia within the dominant race-centered framework of black internationalism while it attracted their attentions to the Ethiopian crisis and Western colonialism in Africa. Moreover, Japan's amicable relationship with Ethiopia, which was characterized by Japan's political support of the regime of Haile Selassie and its commercial and military cooperation with Ethiopia, contributed to the growth of pro-Japanese sentiments among African Americans.[8]

The race-centered analysis of the Sino-Japanese conflict in the broader context of Western imperial aggressions and colonial domination in Africa and Asia was central to the African American internationalist discourse of Japanese imperialism before World War II. Representative of the black internationalist view of Japan during this period, an editorial of the *Baltimore Afro-American* in 1938 declared full support of the Japanese government's objective to "boot the white races out of China and set up an Asiatic 'Monroe doctrine' through which Japan can control the destinies of the Far East."[9] It further stated that "Japan is kicking China in the pants to make it stand up straight and be a man," while it called China as "a kind of 'Uncle Tom' of Asia," whose leaders had "kow-towed to the white-exploiters, licked their boots and allowed themselves to become the footstools of Western conquerors (See Figure 2.1)."[10] As Gallicchio points out, this

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[8] Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japanese and China*, chaps. 3-5; Kearney, *African American Views of the Japanese*, chap. 5; Yasuhiro Okada, "African American Views of Japanese Imperialism, 1931-1945," (master's thesis, University of Chicago, 1999), 2-15.

[9] *Baltimore Afro-American*, January 15, 1938.

[10] Ibid.

Figure 2.1. Uncle Tom in Asia
Source: *Baltimore Afro-American*, January 15, 1938

trope of China as "Uncle Tom," as well as Japan as a leader of the darker races and victims of white racism, was influential in shaping the pervasive pro-Japanese view of the black internationalists.[11] W. E. B. Du Bois, the strongest pro-Japanese advocate among the contemporaneous African American intellectuals, deployed the image of China as "Asian Uncle Tom" when he compared the China's submissiveness to Western nations to the "same spirit that animates the 'white folks' nigger' in the United States."[12] The centrality of the color line in his view of world politics, combined with his experience of the direct observation of Japan's colonial project in Manchuria in 1936, the growing commitment to the principle of economic nationalism in his evolution as a socialist in the 1930s, and the tendency of racial essentialism in his understanding of the Sino-Japanese relationship, prompted Du Bois to consistently defend Japanese imperialism as a racial struggle to protect Asia from the Western imperialist aggressions, distinguishable from Western colonialism in Africa and Asia.[13]

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[11] Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japanese and China*, 114.

[12] Quoted from David Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois: The Fight for Equality and the American Century, 1919-1963* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000), 414.

[13] For Du Bois's endorsement of economic nationalism as a survival strategy for African American communities and its implication for his view of Japan, see Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 70-71. Plummer suggests that "rhetoric that described Japanese imperial ambitions in terms of a promising "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" and Japanese skill at exploiting the antiwhite sentiments of peoples of color mirrored his own resentments at that time (p. 71)." On racial essentialism in Du Bois's understanding of Japan and Asia, see Yuichiro Onishi, "Giant Steps of the Black Freedom Struggle: Trans-Pacific Connections between Black America and Japan in the Twentieth Century" (PhD. diss., University of Minnesota, 2004), part II. See also the following studies on Du Bois's view of Japan: Reginald Kearney, "The Pro-Japanese Utterances of W. E. B. Du Bois," *Contributions in Black Studies* 13, no. 14 (1995/1996): 201-17; Yuko Takeuchi, "W. E. B. Duboisu to nihon [W. E. B. Du Bois and Japan]," *Shien* 54, no. 2 (1994): 79-96; Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois*, esp. chap. 11; Bill V. Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), chap. 1; Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japanese and China*, passim.

After Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the patriotic call for the support of the American war effort against Japan replaced the pro-Japanese discourse of prewar black internationalism in the black public sphere. African American leaders and journalists on the one hand encouraged black people to rally to defend the country against Japan so that they could insulate themselves from the charge of sedition by the U.S. government suspicious of the pro-Japanese sentiments within African American communities. They deployed the image of Japan as the "enemy" nation in the continuing black struggle against racial discrimination and oppressions, as shown in the *Pittsburgh Courier*'s "Double V" campaign, which called for victory over fascism abroad and racism at home.[14] Soon after the outbreak of the war, the *Baltimore Afro-American* appealed for black loyalty to President Roosevelt, when it requested the erasure of the color line in the armed services so that African Americans could fight for the U.S. against Japan (See Figure 2.2).[15] The editorial of the *Chicago Defender* in May 1943 evoked the analogy of the brutality of Japanese soldiers in its criticism of southern lynching by stating, "If the inhumanity of our oriental enemy is revolting to America, then lynch law should be more so."[16] On the other hand, black leaders and journalists perceived the U.S. war against Japan from a racial perspective while avoiding their explicit identification with Japan as a leader of the colored people. Kearney suggests that the black press tended to view the war in the Pacific as a "race war" and blamed the U.S. policy toward

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[14] Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japanese and China*, 115-121; Kearney, *African American Views of the Japanese*, 92-98; Okada, "African American Views of Japanese Imperialism, 1931-1945," 15-35.

[15] *Baltimore Afro-American*, December 13, 1941.

[16] *Chicago Defender*, May 1, 1943.

Figure 2.2. Mr. President, Include Me "In"
Source: *Baltimore Afro-American*, December 13, 1941

Japan as a racial cause of the war. The black press focused more on the racist treatment of the Japanese in the mainstream American media than the war excesses of Japanese oldiers, which its writers explained as reactions to white prejudice and discrimination. Black newspapers covered the racialized views on such wartime events as the internment of Japanese Americans, the Japanese treatment of black POWs, and the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.[17]

Despite the black leaders' appeal for the close rank with the government in the U.S. war against Japan, the militant, pro-Japanese sentiments and organizational activities persistently existed at the grassroots level among African Americans during World War II. The pro-Japanese black organizations and activists became a major target of the surveillance by the FBI, which was highly vigilant of those black dissidents and the influence of Japanese racial propaganda on blacks as a threat to national security. This culminated in the arrest of a group of Japanese admirers in black communities early in the wartime. The most famous case among them was Leonard Robert Jordan, a former Garveyite from Jamaica and leader of the Ethiopian Pacific League, who appealed to black Harlemites for racial salvation through Japan's victory over the Allied.[18] In his case study of the pro-Japanese sympathies among black Missourians, historian Ernest

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[17] Kearney, *African American Views of the Japanese*, chap. 6. On the racist representations of the Japanese in the wartime American media, see John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), esp. chaps. 4-7.

[18] Gerald Horne, *Race War!: White Supremacy and the Japanese Attack on the British Empire* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), chap. 5; Gerald Horne, "Tokyo-Bound: African Americans and Japan Confront White Supremacy," *Souls* 3, no. 3 (Summer 2001): 16-28; Kearney, *African American Views of the Japanese*, 98-104; Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japanese and China*, chap. 6. On Japan's racial propaganda targeting African Americans during WWII, see Masaharu Sato and Barak Kushner, "'Negro Propaganda Operations': Japan's Short-Wave Radio Broadcasts for World War II Black Americans," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television* 19, no. 1 (March 1999): 5-26; Masaharu Sato, "Senji-ka nihon no taigai senden ni okeru 'kokujin kōsaku' [Japan's Wartime Propaganda against Blacks]," *Masukomunikēshon Kenkyū* 46 (1995): 157-170.

Allen Jr. explains that the "strong" pro-Japanese proclivities within numerous black communities had roots in a "messianic nationalist sentiment occasioned by the hard times of the Great Depression and a populist-based admiration for Japan which dated back to the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5."[19] The existence of pro-Japanese sentiments among black people prompted African American leaders and their white liberal allies to negotiate effectively between racism, dissidence, and national security with the U.S. government in order to promote racial reform throughout the war period.[20]

The U.S. military engagement with World War II caused several direct encounters between African American servicemen and Japanese soldiers in the Pacific battlefields.[21] In the attack of Japanese bombers on Pearl Harbor, Doris "Dorie" Miller, a black navy messman from Waco, Texas, fought against the enemy with a machine gun and shot down several Japanese airplanes aboard the USS *West Virginia*, although he had not received any training in the use of weapons. Miller was awarded the Navy Cross in May 1942, for his courageous act of risking his life to save his white officer and assist in rescuing shipmates, but he was returned to mess duties with few promotions. He became

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[19] Ernest Allen, Jr., "Waiting for Tojo: The Pro-Japan Vigil of Black Missourians, 1932-1943," *Gateway Heritage* 15 (Fall 1994): 17. See also Ernest Allen, Jr., "When Japan Was 'Champion of the Darker Races': Satokata Takahashi and the Flowering of Black Messianic Nationalism, *The Black Scholar* 24, no. 1 (Winter 1994): 23-46.

[20] Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japanese and China*, chap. 7.

[21] For African Americans in the military during World War II, see Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops*, (1966; repr., Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2004); Bryan D. Booker, *African Americans in the United States Army in World War II* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2008); Bernard C. Nalty, *Strength for the Fight: A History of Black Americans in the Military* (New York: The Free Press, 1986), esp. chaps. 10-12; Gerald Astor, *The Right to Fight: A History of African Americans in the Military* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2001), esp. chaps. 11-15; Christopher Paul Moore, *Fighting for America: Black Soldiers—The Unsung Heroes of World War II* (New York: One World Book, 2005); Bernard C. Nalty, *The Right to Fight: African-American Marines in World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Marine Corps Historical Center, 1995); Richard E. Miller, *The Messman Chronicles: African Americans in the U.S. Navy, 1932-1943* (Annapolis: Navy Institute Press, 2004), esp. parts 2 and 3.

a heroic symbol not only for African Americans in the struggle to desegregate the U.S. armed forces, but also for the Navy who employed the icon of Miller in its campaign to recruit blacks.[22]

Some African American servicemen in the U.S. Army, Navy, and Marine Corps saw fighting with Japanese soldiers in several battlefields in the Pacific Theater, while they were serving mostly in segregated service units. The 24th Infantry Regiment became the first among the few all-black combat units to militarily encounter the Japanese during WWII, since it was sent to Efate in the New Hebrides in May 1942, for the defenses of the islands of the South Pacific. After months of labor duties in the South Pacific, African American foot soldiers in the 1st Battalion of the 24th Infantry Regiment, joined in the combat against the Japanese on the island of Bougainville in March 1944. The 24th Infantry Regiment was officially recognized for its service as a garrison force against the resisting Japanese soldiers on Saipan and Tinian in the Marianas Islands in the final stage of the war in the Pacific.[23] As historian Steve Estes suggests, the new sense of justice, militancy, and manhood African American servicemen gained in the Pacific, as well as in the European Theater during WWII, motivated many black veterans to join civil rights activism in their local communities during the 1940s and 1950s.[24]

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[22] Christopher Paul Moore, *Fighting for America: Black Soldiers—The Unsung Heroes of World War II* (New York: One World Book, 2005), 31-34; Richard E. Miller, *The Messman Chronicles: African Americans in the U.S. Navy, 1932-1943* (Annapolis: Navy Institute Press, 2004), chap. 15.

[23] Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops*, (1966; repr., Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2004), 497-498, 502-504, 533-535; Bryan D. Booker, *African Americans in the United States Army in World War II* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2008), 146-150; William Bowers, William M. Hammond, and George L. MacGariggle, *Black Soldier, White Army: The 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1996), 21-22.

[24] Steve Estes, *I Am a Man: Race, Manhood, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 35-38.

As the Second World War ended with Japan's unconditional surrender to the Allied on August 15, 1945, African American public view of Japan drastically changed in the historical context of U.S. military occupation of Japan. The black press reported on the U.S. occupation of Japan as a racial, rather than national, issue informed by domestic racial situations of African Americans immediately after WWII. The editors of the *Chicago Defender* expressed, in September 1945, their anxiety about the possible importation of racism from the South into Japan as the "big battleship Mississippi" invading Tokyo with the "civilization of the Old South." The black newspaper began to publicly identify the Japanese as the "colored" people again after the war, although they did not, as Gallichio notes, admire them as a champion of racial equality any longer (See Figure 2.3).[25] In another article entitled "Democracy Abroad; Slavery At Home," in which they discussed the abolition of sharecropping in the Japanese agricultural reform under the U.S. occupational directive, the *Defender* editors asked, "Why should America so diligently root out this evil on foreign soil and allow the same abuse to flourish among its own people?"[26] The black press's sympathetic coverage of Japan from such a racialized perspective was influential in reshaping the Japanese image among African Americans in the renewed U.S.-Japanese relationship after the war. The black press paid special attention to the military activities and lives of African American soldiers and their intimate relationship with Japan, although its coverage was on an irregular basis. Black newspapers and magazines served not only as a major source of information for African

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[25] *Chicago Defender*, September 8, 1945; Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japanese and China*, 204.

[26] *Chicago Defender*, December 29, 1945.

Figure 2.3. Asiatics Are Colored Too
Source: *Chicago Defender*, September 8, 1945

American soldiers who were stationed in occupied Japan, but also as a public forum for appealing their overseas situations to stateside black communities.

Moreover, African Americans experienced large scale face-to-face encounters with Japanese people in occupied Japan for the first time in the history of the black-Japanese relationship. African American male soldiers constituted the most visible part of the popular and academic representation of black-Japanese encounter in occupied Japan, either in the U.S. or Japan, not only for their large proportion in the black occupation personnel but also for the discursive expansion of their intimate and sexual relationships with Japanese women. Underrepresented in the male-dominated discourse of black experience in occupied Japan were the African American women who were stationed there with various statuses and occupations, either civilian or military. Although their number was small compared to the black male GIs, the presence of African American women further complicated the racial and sexual dynamics in the black-Japanese relationship in occupied Japan. African American men and women developed a gendered sense of racial empowerment in Japan in political prerogative, improved economic conditions, and elevated social status vis-à-vis Japanese citizens as privileged members of the U.S. occupation forces, while they continued facing segregation and discrimination in the racial politics of the postwar U.S. Army.

Part II
Race, Manhood, National Identity, and African-American Soldiers in Japan under U.S. Military Occupation

Chapter 3
Racial and Masculine Empowerment within the Segregated Army in the 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu

In this chapter, I discuss the social construction of racial manhood among African American soldiers in the transnational and multiracial settings of the U.S. military occupation of Japan, especially in the garrison community of Camp Gifu situated in central part of the mainland Japan. I focus on the military experiences of those in the all-black 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu to examine the contestations over racial, masculine, and national identities among African American soldiers, who were segregated and discriminated against within the U.S. Army throughout this period, while they could exert considerable power and prerogatives over Japanese women and men as members of the U.S. occupation forces.

The 24th Infantry Regiment was one of the traditional all-black regiments, which was activated soon after the Civil War and joined the U.S. war efforts in the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, and Korean War, until it was finally disbanded and integrated into white units in October 1951.[1] The 24th Infantry Regiment became the first African American infantry unit which was deployed to the combat theater during World War II, since it departed Fort Benning, Georgia for the South Pacific in April 1942. As military historian Ulysses Lee notes, the 24th Infantry Regiment contributed to the war effort in the Pacific theater primarily as a service unit by loading and unloading ships, guarding air bases, building roads, and performing work details for quartermaster and ordnance services, while it continued its training and field

[1] For the history of the 24th Infantry Regiment before World War II, see William Bowers, William M. Hammond, and George L. MacGariggle, *Black Soldier, White Army: The 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1996), 3-20.

duties, on Efate in the New Hebrides Islands and Guadalcanal during the period from May 1942 to January 1944.[2] Some African American servicemen in the 24th Infantry Regiment, like those of the 1st Battalion, encountered the enemy when they joined the combat patrols of Japanese soldiers, as a part of the regimental tactical reserves attached to the 37th Infantry Division, on the island of Bougainville on March 1944. The 24th Infantry Regiment was officially recognized for its garrison duty against the resisting Japanese soldiers on the islands of Saipan and Tinian in the final stage of the war in the Pacific theater. In July 1945, it was deployed to Kerama Islands in the Ryukyus for its continued duty of clearing out the remnants of the Japanese fighting forces there. After World War II, the 24th Infantry Regiment was stationed in occupied Okinawa, including the islands of Okinawa and Ie Shima, where African American soldiers were engaged in various occupation duties while receiving basic training during the period from August 1945 through the end of 1946.[3]

In January 1947, the 24th Infantry Regiment was relocated from Okinawa to mainland Japan to join the occupation force of the U.S. Eighth Army as part of the 25th Infantry Division, which was in charge of the occupational assignments in Central Japan, headquartered in Osaka. The assigned strength of the 24th Infantry Regiment in the beginning of February 1947, the first month of its occupational duty in Japan, was 102

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[2] Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops*, (1966; repr., Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2004), 497.

[3] For the military operations of the 24th Infantry Regiment during World War II, see Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops*, 497-498, 502-504, 533-535; Bryan D. Booker, *African Americans in the United States Army in World War II* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2008), 146-150; Bowers *et al.*, *Black Solder, White Army*, 21-22. For the experience of the 24th Infantry Regiment in occupied Okinawa, see Bowers *et al.*, *Black Solder, White Army*, 39-42.

officers, 2 warrant officers, and 3,263 enlisted men.[4] Lt. Gen. Robert L. Eichelberger, commanding general of the Eighth Army announced on January 20, 1947 the plan to integrate the all-black 24th Infantry Regiment into the 25th Infantry Division of the Eighth Army. This plan of military desegregation in the Eight Army was based on the recommendations of the "Gillem Board" on the utilization of black soldiers in the postwar U.S. Army.[5] Appointed by the Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson with General Alvan C. Gillem as chairman, the Gillem Board called for the recruitment of black troops in the ratio of one to ten and the integration of black units into all-white divisions in the report and recommendations which were published as "War Department Circular No. 124" in April 27, 1946.[6] However, the 24th Infantry Regiment remained, in reality, segregated as the all-black unit even though it was integrated as an organic part of the all-white 25th Infantry Division. The editorial of the *Pittsburgh Courier* of February 22, 1947 pointed out the contradictions in the U.S. Army's racial policy toward black soldiers which were expressed in the supposed integration of the 24th Infantry Regiment in occupied Japan:

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[4] Annual History of the 24th Infantry Regiment for 1947, March 2, 1948, RG 407, Entry 427, Box 21132, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, Maryland. For reference, the strength of the black personnel assigned to the GHQ and the Eighth Army in Japan was 10,993 as of August, 1946. Report of Tour of Pacific Installations to the Secretary of War, Robert P. Patterson, November 8, 1946, RG 165, Entry 13, Box 299, NARA.

[5] "Army Integrates Troops: Mixed Division Formed for Peace Duty in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 1, 1947; "24th Joining U.S. Forces in Japan," *Pittsburgh Courier*, February 1, 1947.

[6] Richard M. Dalfiume, *Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces: Fighting on Two Fronts, 1939-1953* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1969), 150-151. On the development of the racial policy in the postwar U.S. military, see also Morris J. MacGregor, Jr., *Integration of the Armed Forces, 1940-1965* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981); Bernard C. Nalty, *Strength for the Fight: A History of Black Americans in the Military* (New York: Free Press, 1986); Sherie Mershon and Steven Schlossman, *Foxholes and Color Lines: Desegregating the U.S. Armed Forces* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

> This is really not integration as it is usually understood, because these segregated regiments are just as much segregated as they ever were and, as usually in the past, they are assigned to divisions consisting largely of lily-white unit. A sincere carrying out of the policy of integration would be the assignment of colored and white soldiers alike to squads, platoons and larger units.[7]

As historian Richard M. Dalfiume argues, the Gillem Board did not question segregation, or the "traditional premise of the Army's Negro policy" in its recommendations which became the basis of the postwar policy of the U.S. Army regarding the utilization of African American soldiers. Moreover, the board even condoned the segregation in aspects of off-duty social life, like housing, when it recommended the integration of the black troops into overhead units for "duty hours only."[8]

It was Camp Majestic, which was called Camp Gifu, that the Eighth Army chose as a site for its new postwar experiment in the desegregation of the U.S. military by merging the 24th Infantry Regiment with the 35th and 27th Infantry Regiments, other white regiments in the 25th Infantry Division. This camp was founded on Kagamigahara Airfield, the former Japanese airbase which was located about 10 miles east from the city of Gifu and 270 miles southwest of Tokyo (See Figure 3.1).[9] Camp Gifu became the host camp for African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment, stationed as part of the occupation force in Central Japan and for their military training as a combat regiment until the start of Korean War in July 1950 (See Figures 3.2).

Despite the sharing between black and white regiments of a common base, the military and social life which African American servicemen experienced at Camp Gifu

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[7] "The Saga of the 24th," *Pittsburgh Courier*, February 22, 1947.

[8] Dalfiume, *Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces*, 151.

[9] Bowers *et al.*, *Black Solder, White Army*, 42-43.

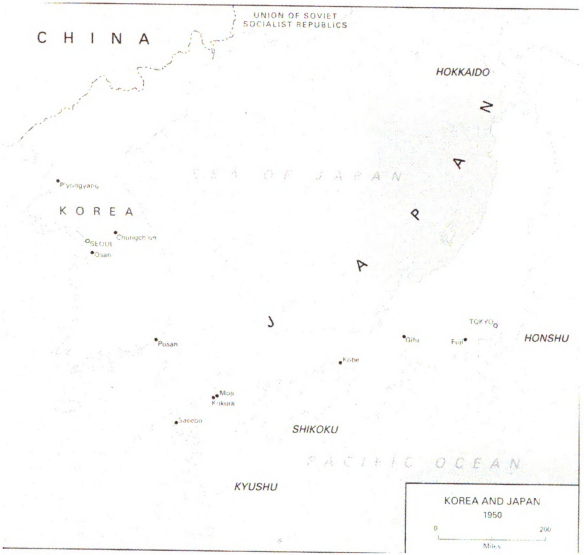

Figure 3.1. Location of Camp Gifu
Source: William T. Bowers, William M. Hammond, George L. MacGarrigle, *Black Solder, White Army: The 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea*

Figure 3.2. Camp Majestic, June 12, 1947
Above, Entrance; below, Overview

Source: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland

was the world of "isolation," separated rigidly by race and rank. In his letter to the *Baltimore Afro-American*, one African American GI critically assessed the racial situation at Camp Gifu in May 1947:

> The 24th Infantry Regiment..., which is presently undergoing a fresh "experiment" at Camp Majestic here, is a poor excuse for an even poorer mission. Nobody is interested in "integration" except the colored people. Camp Majestic is, for all practical purposes, an isolated, solid colored community. This situation follows the rule rather than the exception.[10]

As this letter suggests, the 24th Infantry Regiment remained, in reality, a separate black combat unit which was only attached to the white division, although the Eighth Army considered this process as the first step toward a future arrangement of the division in which officers of both races could lead. Some African American soldiers around the regiment testified that Executive Order #9981, which was issued by President Harry S. Truman in July, 1947 to officially declare the desegregation of the U.S. armed forces, was not strictly followed in the Far East and racial segregation continued to exist in the Eighth Army while they were stationed at Gifu.[11] How did social isolation and racial segregation, which marked the life of African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment at Gifu, influence the process of their identity formations in the intersections of race, gender, class, nation, and sexuality?

It is important to note that the 24th Infantry Regiment, the only all-black "combat" troop at the regiment level which was then stationed in occupied Japan, was not only racially segregated but also regionally isolated at Camp Gifu with some other black

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[10] "Poor Excuse," *Baltimore Afro-American*, May 24, 1947.

[11] See interview, John Cash with John "Tommy" Martin, January 12, 1990, the U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH) files. Tapes of all the interviews hereafter cited as the CMH files can be found in the archives of the United States Army Center of Military History in Washington, D.C. See also Charles M. Bussey, *Firefight at Yechon: Courage and Racism in the Korean War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 43.

combat units, including the 94th and 95th Infantry Battalions and the 77th Engineer Combat Company.[12] Most of the black combat units were doubly segregated in terms of race and geographical location in such remote areas of Japan as Gifu and Nara, while African American soldiers in the transportation, MP, or other service units were scattered all over mainland Japan and they were concentrated in Yokohama.[13] In addition, there were few black servicemen employed at Eighth Army Headquarters in Tokyo, except for one public affairs officer, some MPs, and a few civilian federal employees.[14] John Martin, who was the only black officer at Eighth Army Headquarters, attributed this disproportionate military assignment of black soldiers to the remote areas in occupied Japan to the prejudice of General Douglas MacArthur, who "did not really want any black soldiers at Eighth Army Headquarters."[15]

Because of this geographical isolation of Camp Gifu from Tokyo and other base towns in occupied Japan where a large number of white GIs were stationed, many African American servicemen did not encounter serious racial problems as long as their military duty was confined to the Gifu area. One African American reader of *Baltimore Afro-American* testified from Gifu in October 1948 that "agitation due to prejudice and

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[12] Other black combat units stationed in occupied Japan included the 159th Field Artillery Battalion at Nara and the 76th and 933rd AAA A-Weapons Battalions (Coast Artillery Corps) at Yokohama. "The Negro in the Army," A Special Report Prepared by the Office of the Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, April 1949, RG 319, Entry 2, Box 499, NARA.

[13] The base towns where black troops were stationed in occupied Japan included the following cities: Sendai, Tokyo, Yokohama, Zama, Tokorozawa, Gifu, Kobe, and Kyoto. "Location of Negro Troops in Japan," January 31, 1949, RG 335, Entry 5, Box 72, NARA. There were twenty-six black units stationed in Yokohama as of March 1, 1949, including 2 Coast Artillery Corps, 4 Corps of Engineers, 6 Medical Corps, 3 Corps of Military Police, 1 Band, 1 Ordinance Department, 9 Transportation Corps. "The Negro in the Army," RG 319, Entry 2, Box 499, NARA.

[14] Bowers *et al.*, *Black Solder, White Army*, 55.

[15] Interview, John Cash with John "Tommy" Martin, January 12, 1990, CMH files.

race," which was reported to have been occurring in occupied Germany, was not "frequent" there.[16] African American soldiers experienced few interracial interactions with white soldiers of the other two regiments at Camp Gifu, because of the isolation and segregation which shaped the military and social life of black soldiers. They rarely met white soldiers of the 35th and 27th Infantry Regiments, the other two, all-white, regiments of the 25th Infantry Division stationed at Gifu, except for special occasions, such as the parades on the 4th of July and Armed Forces Day in Osaka.[17]

Several racist incidents occurred when the African American soldiers of the 24th Infantry Regiment encountered prejudiced white soldiers during their duty at other base towns in metropolitan areas, including Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, and Kobe in occupied Japan. Ivory Perry of the 24th Infantry Regiment recalled that "we used to always have some racial conflicts with them (other outfitters) when we were in Yokohama or Tokyo."[18] When they went to Tokyo for parades in July 1948, the whole regiment became involved in a fight with the white soldiers of the 1st Cavalry Division and 11th Airborne Division, who intimidated and humiliated them with racist acts and remarks.[19] The geographical isolation of its location as well as the persistence of racial segregation

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[16] "Report From Pacific," *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 23, 1948. This *Afro-American* reader, identified himself as XYZ, wrote to the editor in response to the Ollie Stewart's article about racial strains in occupied Germany which was published in July 1948 and entitled, "Segregation Hurts Army: Ollie, Leaving Germany, Bares Occupation Wrongs." In this article, Stewart stated that "there is nothing wrong physically with American soldiers in Germany—but among the colored ones there is frequent agitation, due to prejudice and segregation." Oliver Stewart, "Segregation Hurts Army: Ollie, Leaving Germany, Bares Occupation Wrongs," *Baltimore Afro-American*, July 17, 1948

[17] Interview, John Cash with Alexander Shearin, August 17, 1988, CMH files.

[18] Interview, John Cash with Ivory Perry, September 8, 1988, CMH files.

[19] Interviews, John Cash with Willard D. Carter, September 24, 1988; Cash with Wilfred Matthews, September 23, 1988; Cash with Albert S. Kimber, March 11, 1989, CMH files.

at Camp Gifu created the conditions allowing African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment to explore their militarized racial manhood relatively free from emasculating racial oppression from a larger white-dominant world in Japan under U.S. occupation.

In the postwar military experiment toward integration at Camp Gifu, a substantial number of African American servicemen were appointed as commissioned officers in the 24th Infantry Regiment. There were 65 black officers and 69 white officers in the 24th Infantry Regiment as of May 1947. The commissioned black officers in the 24th Infantry Regiment contained one lieutenant colonel, one major, 20 captains, 19 first lieutenants, 18 second lieutenants, five chief warrant officers, and one junior grade warrant officer.[20] The *Black Soldier, White Army* reports that the number of black officers in the 24th Infantry Regiment ranged from 52 percent in June 1947 to 40 percent in March 1949.[21] One African American soldier gave a positive assessment of the increase in the representation of black officers in the 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu in his letter to the *Baltimore Afro-American* in October 1948: "While more colored officers are needed, most outfits have a preponderance of colored officers. The 24th Regimental Combat Team at Camp Gifu, for example, had about 60 percent."[22]

However, these African American officers in the 24th Infantry Regiment continued to face racial discrimination in the process of their placement and promotion

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[20] "65 Officers Serve 24th Infantry Regt. in Japan: Lt. Col. R. L. Pollard of Washington, Deputy Commander at Camp Majestic," *Baltimore Afro-American*, May 31, 1947; "24th Infantry in Japan Numbers 65 Race Officers," *Pittsburgh Courier*, May 31, 1947.

[21] Bowers *et al.*, *Black Solder, White Army*, 56.

[22] "Report From Pacific," *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 23, 1948.

within the regiment, while the black noncommissioned officers were able to advance their ranks more smoothly at the unit level without their competition with whites. For example, black officers were excluded from appointment to positions supervising or commanding white officers in the regiment except in rare cases. They rarely advanced to the ranks above the company-grade positions, which allowed some black lieutenants and captains to command only at the platoon and company levels. The few black majors and lieutenant colonels in the regiment never received positions or commands appropriate to their rank, in comparison with white counterparts.[23] African American officers also encountered the intraclass racial segregation among the regime's commissioned officers and experienced few interracial interactions with white officers in their social life at Camp Gifu. According to Jasper Johnson, the officer's clubs were "informally" segregated and there were no mixed companies with black and white officers under the unwritten rules that blacks and whites never sat or danced together.[24]

In spite of the persistent racial discrimination and segregation which they faced in the 24th Infantry Regiment, African American officers took advantage of their opportunities to develop leadership skills and foster a sense of camaraderie among black soldiers across ranks within the segregated black regiment at Camp Gifu.[25] The experience of Charles M. Bussey, the African American officer who served along with the 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu as a company commander of the 77th Engineer Combat Company from May through July in 1950, was representative of the ambiguity of

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[23] Bowers *et al.*, *Black Solder, White Army*, 55-59.

[24] Interviews, John Cash with Jasper Johnson, October 5, 1988; Cash with Roscoe Jones, June 16, 1989, CMH files.

[25] Interview, Timothy Rainey with Leopold Hall, June 2, 1990, CMH files.

leadership roles for black officers as the Eighth Army made initial steps to alter its racial foundation. The 77th Engineer Combat Company was another all-black company stationed at Camp Gifu which was attached to the 25th Division of the Eighth Army to provide engineering support for the 24th Infantry Regiment. As a commanding officer, Bussey was required to effectively manage a variety of personal problems of his company men, some of which were not directly concerned with military matters. Bussey took a chance to show toughness toward his troops in order to let them know who was boss, when he successfully disciplined Private Jack Beavers, who was resisting his advice on sending some money to his destitute families in the U.S. while spending money for living with his Japanese girlfriend. In another occasion, Bussey efficiently raised the sensitive issue of interracial marriage to Col. Horton V. White, commander of the 24th Infantry Regiment, and persuaded him to push through for his black servicemen who had been long waiting for the final approval of their marriages with Japanese girls by the State Department. Being caught between his white senior officers and his black junior officers and enlisted men as a black company commander, Bussey developed skills in negotiating race, rank, and power within the regimental organization in the U.S. Army.[26]

African American soldiers of the 24th Infantry Regiment, whether officers or enlisted men, continued to receive second-class treatment in the Army, because of the continuation of racial segregation and discrimination in the Eighth Army during the period of U.S. occupation of Japan before the opening of Korean War. However, the persistence of racial segregation in the Army created the opportunities for African American soldiers in the all-black unit to assert racial and masculine identities for their

[26] Bussey, *Firefight at Yechon*, 50-51, 58-65.

own empowerment in various ways within the confinement of garrison communities in occupied Japan.

African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment established their own space within the segregated Army for nurturing a sense of community and brotherhood among black soldiers at Camp Gifu. African American GIs developed black community institutions, such as their own newspaper and church, in response to their problems and needs at Camp Gifu where GIs' military and social lives were totally separated by race and rank. [27] For example, African American soldiers created their own racial congregation in the semi-segregated 24th Infantry Regiment's chapel at Camp Gifu in which they had a black chaplain, Lieutenant Colonel John Deveaux, and formed a chapel choir (See Figure 3.3).[28] As Richard Fields recalled that "there was that line dividing us," it was like a black church in the U.S. whose chapel services were predominately black with only a few whites attending.[29]

Some African American soldiers created their own racialized world of music within the Army's segregated band or jam sessions with other black musicians at Camp Gifu.[30] Walter Bufford, a trumpeter who traveled all over occupied Japan while stationed at Camp Gifu, played as a member of the famed all-black band, which was attached to the

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[27] Bowers *et al.*, *Black Solder, White Army*, 50. There is little information available about the black newspaper of the 24th Infantry Regiment published at Camp Gifu.

[28] Interview, John Cash with W. A. Bobo and Mrs. Bobo, date unknown, CMH files; "Chapel Choir of 24th Infantry at Camp Gifu," *Baltimore Afro-American*, April 23, 1949; Bowers *et al.*, *Black Solder, White Army*, 56.

[29] Interview, John Cash with Richard L. Fields, August 18, 1988, CMH files.

[30] "GI Jam Session," *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 2, 1947.

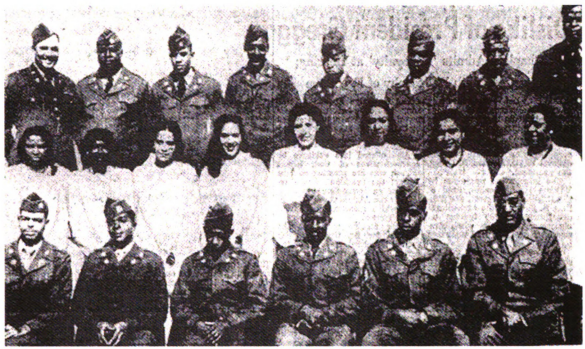

Figure 3.3. Chapel Choir of the 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu

Source: *Baltimore Afro-American*, April 23, 1949

25th Infantry Division as a part of the 8th Army Band.[31] There was an interesting testimony that Cannonball Adderly, a prominent saxophone player in American modern jazz was stationed at Camp Gifu as a member of the 291st Band and playing a tenor saxophone, although he was not called "Cannonball" at that time.[32] African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment effectively developed their own social world to forge racial, cultural, and spiritual ties among the black community members within the segregated spaces of the chapel service and music band in the U.S. Army at Camp Gifu.

African American soldiers of the 24th Infantry Regiment gained a sense of racial and masculine pride in the context of the segregation in the U.S. Army in occupied Japan, especially when they achieved honors for the unit's prowess in the interunit athletic competitions or the unit's fame for their own style of marching. Ivory Perry, the civil rights activist in Missouri who was then serving in the communications section of the 24th Infantry Regiment, recalled:

> At the time we were stationed in occupation duty in Japan I thought the 24th Infantry Regiment was tops in everything in the First [Corps] Command. In sports, best soldiers, best boxers. You name it. Because we always kept the E Flag. On the Fourth of July when we went to Tokyo to parade for Douglas MacArthur, we was [*sic*] outstanding.[33]

Assessing more critically than Perry, Richard Fields testified that parades and sports were the only source of honors conferred upon the 24th Infantry Regiment. He claimed that the

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[31] Interview, John Cash with Walter Bufford, March 13, 1989, CMH files.

[32] Interview, John Cash with Alexander Shearin, August 17, 1988, CMH files.

[33] Interview, John Cash with Ivory Perry, September 8, 1988, CMH files.

regiment did not receive the deserving credit for training from the higher headquarters, compared with the other two white regiments which were stationed at Camp Gifu.[34]

The prowess in the athletics of the 24th Infantry Regimen was demonstrated in the regularly-held interunit competitions of the Eight Army in such fields as baseball, boxing, basketball, and football.[35] As the authors of *Black Soldier, White Army* reveal, regiment commander Colonel Halloran, whose pride derived from the unit's athletic prowess, was instrumental in the strengthening of the regiment's athletic teams by assigning the soldiers with special talents to athletic practice and conditioning as their principal duties.[36] In an article featuring the unit's boxing team, the *Stars and Stripes*, the major military newspaper in the Pacific areas, praised the 24th Infantry Regiment as the "outfit where everybody knows the manly art of self defense and only to willing to prove it (See Figure 3.4)."[37] As the article associated the regiment's athletic achievement with its masculine empowerment, athletics became one of the crucial spaces for African American soldiers to enhance their racial manhood by demonstrating virility in the competitions with white soldiers as well as blacks in other units in light of the segregated and discriminatory conditions of the U.S. Army in occupied Japan.

The 24th Infantry Regiment was famous for its own style of marching, which was

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[34] Interview, John Cash with Richard L. Fields, August 18, 1988, CMH files.

[35] Bowers *et al.*, *Black Solder, White Army*, 51.

[36] Ibid.

[37] *Stars and Stripes*, June 15, 1947.

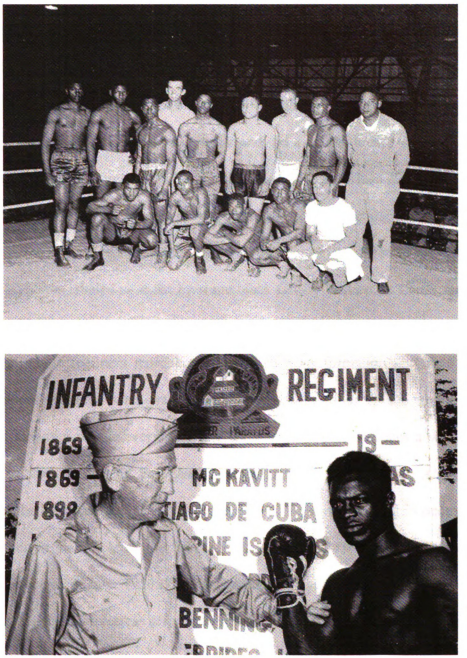

Figure 3.4. Boxers in the 24th Infantry Regiment, June 1947
Above, 24th Infantry Regiment Boxing Team; *below*, Col. Michael E. Halloran, Commanding Officer of the 24th Infantry Regiment with Pfc. Buffalo Simmons
Source: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland

demonstrated on various occasions, among the military personnel in occupied Japan (See Figure 3.5). According to Howard Rouge, the 24th Infantry Regiment "had a rhythm like nobody could believe" in its unique way of marching. Rouge, who participated in the parade in Tokyo as a unit's flag bearer, recalled that "everyone yelled" when the 24th Infantry Regiment's band "turned the corner and did a double kick," although they were put in the back of the march.[38] It was a great honor for the African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment to receive highly praise for its marching from Gen. Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, who had never visited Camp Gifu and who was labeled as racist by some black GIs.[39] Willard D. Carter remembered that General MacArthur said "they were the best marching troops he had ever seen" when he saw the whole regiment marching in battalion mass formation in Tokyo.[40] It was again Colonel Halloran who was influential in contributing to the unit's fame for marching, having a parade every Saturday and sometimes two parades a week at Camp Gifu.[41] Bradford Laws, the Far East Correspondent of the *Baltimore Afro-American*, attested to the honor which the 24th Infantry Regiment was achieving in occupied Japan for its parade in his article on the first U.S. Armed Forces Day program on the Haneda Air base in Tokyo in June 1950: "The appearance of the famed 24th Infantry Regiment, veteran of many years overseas service, in full dress was among the top highlights of the

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[38] Interview, John Cash with Howard Rouge, October 14, 1988, CMH files.

[39] Interviews, Jon Cash with John "Tommy" Martin, January 12, 1990; Cash with Walter Bufford, March 13, 1989, CMH files.

[40] Interview, John Cash with Willard D. Carter, September 24, 1988, CMH files.

[41] Interview, John Cash with Waymon Ransom, August 5, 1988, CMH files.

Figure 3.5. Parade of the 24th Infantry Regiment during an Inspection at Camp Gifu, June 1947

Source: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland

parades staged throughout the Japanese Islands."[42] For the African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment who had fewer opportunities to demonstrate effectively their combat efficiency in training than white units because of the prejudices among the higher headquarters, athletics and parades became major sources of their racial and masculine pride from which they could achieve a sense of empowerment within the segregated and discriminatory conditions of the U.S. Army in occupied Japan.

Besides, the relative tolerance toward homosexuality within the 24th Infantry Regiment led to a considerable number of homosexual acts among the soldiers, regardless of race and rank, at Camp Gifu. Several African American soldiers in and around the 24th Infantry Regiment attested that the homosexuals, who were called "sissies," were concentrated in the personnel, food service, and medical sections at Camp Gifu.[43] Some African American soldiers, like James Perkins, expressed negative reactions to their presence in their troops. Remembered being whistled at while drilling by the assumed homosexual sergeant and corporal, whom he had met and heard them saying, "Ain't he cute" on the train in his first travel to Gifu, Perkins said, "It was terrible, scared me half to death."[44] Other black soldiers did not consider the existence of homosexuals within the unit a serious problem, unless their behaviors created nuisance in their duties as well as in their relationship with heterosexual buddies. Richard W. Saxton

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[42] Bradford Laws, "Display of Real Integration: Far East Mixed Units Show Military Might," *Baltimore Afro-American*, June 10, 1950.

[43] Interviews, John Cash with William Shepard, October 27, 1988; Cash with Howard Rouge, Jr., October 14, 1988; Cash with Fred Thomas, August 24, 1989; Cash with Roscoe Jones, June 16, 1989; Cash with Waymon Ransom, August 5, 1988, CMH files.

[44] Interview, John Cash with James Perkins, July 28, 1989, CMH files.

recalled that the homosexuals were good on duty and they usually stayed to themselves and did not bother any of the "straight" soldiers.[45]

In addition to the relatively tolerant attitudes toward homosexuals among the servicemen in the regiment, Col. Halloran's position on homosexuality as a commander of the black unit was influential in shaping the lenient policy toward them in the 24th Infantry Regiment. Halloran, who was concerned about the concentration of homosexuals in the higher ranks within the regiment, declared, "If I got rid of them, the rest of them niggers are too dumb to run anything," when General Mullens, the division commander suggested that he "get rid of them queers" out of his outfit.[46] Halloran also responded, at a formation, to someone complaining about the homosexuals that "everyone should be a homosexual and there wouldn't be a VD problem."[47] Halloran's racist view of his African American soldiers, combined with his preoccupation with the VD prevention, was instrumental in the formation of a relative tolerant atmosphere toward the homosexuals in the 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu in the late 1940s, during which the homosexual personnel were highly repressed as a security risk in the military as well as by the federal government in the anti-Communist political context of the Cold War in the United States.[48]

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[45] Interview, John Cash with Richard W. Saxton, December 3, 1988, CMH files.

[46] Interview, John Cash with Waymon Ransom, August 5, 1988, CMH files.

[47] Interview, John Cash with Roscoe Jones, June 16, 1989, CMH files.

[48] For the development of the antihomosexual policy of the U.S. military during World War II, see Allan Berube, *Coming Out under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: Free Press, 1990). On the antihomosexual politics in the Cold War, see John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970*, second edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998): David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

The following story of Private First Class Artemis Moorehead, who was serving as a cook in the 77th Engineer Combat Company and was called "Mabel" at his specific request, reveals how African American gay soldiers created their own spaces to pursue their sexual desires and assert their sexual identities within the barracks at Camp Gifu by taking advantage of the unit's relative lenience toward homosexuality. Charles Bussey, as company commander, was at a loss how to deal with the problems which "hyperactive" homosexual behaviors of Mabel was causing among the unit's men for his "insatiable sex drive," "lack of discretion," and "exhibitionist" tendency as well as the reluctance on the part of the high commanders to take any disciplinary action against him. According to Bussey, Mabel's daily active practice of homosexual desires created turmoil in the barracks, where some fights occurred among men over the possession of Mabel as well as homophobic bashing against him. The Eighth Army headquarters refused to accept the Mabel's request for an "honorable discharge" from military service because of his propensity toward homosexuality and dismissed it as a "big joke" only with an advisory on the possible punishment of sodomy in the military. Recognizing the emergent need to intervene with this problem by himself, Bussey charged Mabel with "unbecoming conduct" and gave him "nonjudicial" punishment of "restriction to quarters for thirty days and forfeiture of two-third's pay for one month" under the *Uniform Code of Military Justice*. Bussey recalled on his disciplinary action against Mabel that "I didn't want bullying or denial of civil rights. I knew that the restriction was not wholly legal, but it was the best I could do with an ugly problem."[49] Certainly, some of Mabel's sex partners were just engaged in a "situational" type of homosexuality without

[49] Bussey, *Firefight at Yechon*, 65-69.

identifying themselves as homosexual in the homosocial male world of the barracks at Camp Gifu.[50] But, the relative tolerance toward homosexuality among the servicemen and commanders in the 24th Infantry Regiment and the 77th Engineer Combat Company at Camp Gifu might allow some African American regiment members to explore and define a gay identity through their contingent encounter with their fellow soldiers with the same sexual orientation in the Army.

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At Camp Gifu, African American male soldiers of the 24th Infantry Regiment transformed their isolated and segregated life there into a site of contestation over race, gender, class, and sexuality. Through this, they developed their sense of identity and community for racial and masculine empowerment within the segregated Army in occupied Japan. The geographical and social isolation of Camp Gifu allowed African American GIs to fully pursue their racial manhood, relatively free from the emasculating racist oppression from white GIs. Black soldiers took advantage of the segregation within the U.S. Army for fostering a sense of racial solidarity and brotherhood among themselves. They developed leadership skills as commissioned officers, created their own social institutions and cultural world, and derived racial and masculine pride from their athletic prowess and famed parades.

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[50] On the "situational" type of homosexuality in the U.S. military, see Allan Berube, *Coming Out under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 192.

Chapter 4
African American Soldiers Encounter with the Japanese in the Garrison Community of Gifu

In addition to the isolation and segregation within the U.S. Army, their encounter with Japanese women and men in the local community around the camp was crucial in the formations of racial, masculine, and national identities among African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment at Gifu. Regardless of their racial stigma in American society and their second-class status within the U.S. Army, the postwar encounter between African American GIs and the Japanese was principally established on the uneven international political dynamics between the "occupiers" and the "occupied." In the garrison community of Gifu, African American soldiers experienced greater racial acceptance among the local Japanese people and reconfigured their racial perception beyond the social context of racial oppression and the narrow black-white dichotomy in the U.S. Some African American GIs developed their intimate relationships with Japanese women into marriage and childbearing by challenging the U.S. civilian and military barriers against international marriage as well as the social stigma against miscegenation in Japanese society. Others asserted their conqueror's sense of militarized masculinity through their sexual interactions with Japanese prostitutes within the gendered colonial relations in occupied Japan.

Charles Bussey, who served as a black commanding officer of the 77th Engineer Combat Company at Camp Gifu, generally described the way of life among American soldiers in occupied Japan in the following way:

> Military duty in Japan as part of the U.S. Army of Occupation was comfortable and leisurely... Occupation meant occupying the best of Japanese commercial, residential, and recreational facilities, holding a glass in one hand and a Japanese girlfriend, or *moosimae*, in the other, and how much hell one could raise. Single soldiers concentrated

> on the good life with lovely Japanese girls, and married soldiers concentrated on opulent living with families, if they were present, with female servants, who were omnipresent. The only fighting the U.S. soldiers engaged in was negotiating a price for a single night's favor, for professional services on a month-by-month basis, or for Noritake china and Mikimoto pearls.[1]

Although Bussey did not refer specifically to the experience of African American soldiers in occupied Japan, he suggests that American soldiers, regardless of race and class, could enjoy some political and economic privileges through their American nationality in their relationship with the Japanese, or the people of the defeated nation. African American soldiers solidified their national identity as members of the U.S. occupation Army through their everyday interactions with the local Japanese people. African American GIs could derive a masculine sense of political and economic prestige, which had been denied in their country, in their relation to the Japanese, when they had Japanese workers, maids, and houseboys who served them in the camp or at their house to take care of various chores around them, including cooking, cleaning, and mechanical maintenance.[2] Some black GIs even took advantage of their national economic power to negotiate their relationship with the Japanese, whether exploitatively or intimately, when they engaged in the illegal black-market activities or satisfied desires for interracial romance and sex by soliciting Japanese girlfriends with their abundant commodities and monies.[3]

During the period of the U.S. military occupation, the local Japanese people around the base community at Gifu experienced, for the first time, the face-to-face

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[1] Charles M. Bussey, *Firefight at Yechon: Courage and Racism in the Korean War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 41-42.

[2] Interviews, John Cash with Gorham Black III, June 28, 1989; Cash with Al Brooks, August 6, 1988, the U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH) files.

[3] William Bowers, William M. Hammond, and George L. MacGariggle, *Black Soldier, White Army: The 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1996), 51. Interview, John Cash with Richard W. Saxton, December 3, 1988, CMH files.

encounter with a large number of American soldiers, whether they were black or white. In their everyday interactions with American GIs, Japanese people expressed a sense of shock and anxiety over the presence of a group of African American soldiers in their community, whom they distinguished clearly from white soldiers according to the Japanese pattern of racial categorization. Many Japanese men and women perceived African American GIs as "black" soldiers (*kokujin-hei* or more derogatory term, *kurombo*) with distinctive racialized terms, while they described white GIs only as "American" soldiers (*amerika-hei* or *bei-hei*) in terms of their nationality.[4] Fred Thomas of the 24th Infantry Regiment recalled the "Japanese kids licking their fingers and then running up to us and rubbing it on our skin to see if it would come off." According to Thomas, Japanese children called them "chockaltea" soldiers and called whites in the 27th Infantry Regiment "ice cream" soldiers.[5] African American soldiers consolidated their racial identity as being black men through their encounter with the Japanese as a racial "other," when they found their male and national identity racially constructed by the Japanese children, who showed, with their unguarded behaviors toward occupation soldiers, their curiosity about the skin color of black GIs more clearly than their adult counterparts.

It was difficult for many local Japanese men and women in Gifu to negotiate reconciliation with their wartime racial hatred against Americans in their attitudes toward

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[4] Kagamigahara-shi senji kiroku henshū iinkai, ed., *Kagamigahara shimin no senji taiken: heiwa na 21seiki wo mezashite* [Wartime Experience of the People in Kagamigahara: Toward the Peaceful 21st Century] (Kagamigahara: Kagamigahara-shi kyōiku iinkai, 1996), 244, 266-267, 276-277.

[5] Interview, John Cash with Fred Thomas, August 24, 1989, CMH files.

the U.S. occupation troops during the period immediately after World War II.[6] As historian John W. Dower notes, American and the British enemy were ideologically and culturally constructed as the "demonic Other" under the banner of "devilish Americans and British" (*Kichiku Bei-ei*) in the Japanese popular racial imaginations during WWII.[7] In addition, they were suffering from many casualties and severe physical damages by several bombings of American aircrafts in June 1945 in Naka and Kagamigahara, the communities surrounding Camp Gifu. These cities often became the targets of the American bombers during the war, because of the existence of an air base of the Japanese Imperial Army and several civilian aircraft factories in these areas.[8] The postwar racial attitudes toward African American soldiers among the local Japanese at Gifu were constructed in the complex dynamics within the specific historical juncture of their daily interracial/international encounters with black GIs, in which they contested over the wartime hatred against Americans, the postwar traumatic memories of the violence and deprivation of war, and the preexisting prejudice against blacks in the modern Japanese racial ideology.

Several local Japanese men revealed their vivid sense of fear and panic when they heard the news of the invasions of the occupation troops into their communities. The rumors of the possible occurrences of physical or sexual violence by GIs encouraged

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[6] Kagamigahara-shi senji kiroku iinkai, ed., *Kagamigahara shimin no senji kiroku: heiwa na 21-seki wo mezashite* [Wartime Record of the People in Kagamigahara: Toward the Peaceful 21st Century] (Kagamigahara: Kagamigahara-shi kyōiku iinkai, 1999), 229.

[7] John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), esp. chap. 9.

[8] Yoshinori Kobayashi, *Naka-chō shi* [The history of Naka] (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1964), 354-357; Kagamigahara-shi kyōiku iinkai, ed., *Kagamigahara no rekishi* [The history of Kagamigahara] (Kagamigahara: Kagamigahara-shi, 1990), 299-302.

them to make the local women and children escape as far way as possible into mountainous areas for their safety.[9] Some local Japanese attested to the tendency to criminalize African American soldiers in the popular memories of their encounter with American GIs in their communities. One of them recalled that his father frankly expressed his racial prejudice against black soldiers when the father instructed his mother to hide in the attic by saying, "Niggers (*kurombo*) are coming. Women will be all raped by them."[10]

Others had more ambivalent feelings toward African American soldiers in their daily interactions with them during the occupation period. One woman recalled that she chased a black soldier who shoplifted peanuts from her store and that black soldiers frightened the local people with their frequent invasions into their neighborhoods either in the daytime or at night. However, she gradually developed friendship with African American troops and became known among them as "Mama-san" who understood them

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[9] Kagamigahara-shi senji kiroku henshū iinkai, ed., *Kagamigahara shimin no senji taiken*, 243-244, 264, 266.

[10] Ibid., 266. *Kurombo* is the most derogatory term in Japanese language to describe the people of African descent, including African Americans and this term has a long tradition in the history of the Japanese encounter with the Western World as well as Africa. *Kuro* is a descriptive word for black skin, and *bo* has a connotation of infantilizing blacks as non-mature, adolescent, and dependent beings. This term has been used by the Japanese as a negative signification of blackness since their early contacts with the African and East Indian servants, who came to Japanese ports accompanied by Italian missionaries or Portuguese and Dutch traders in the 16th and 17th centuries. I used the N-word as the English translation of the term *kurombo* to describe the negative racial perception of blackness among the Japanese during the U.S. occupation of Japan. But, the contemporaneous Japanese used this term to express their inferiority complex toward whites and condescending attitude toward blacks within the specific historical and cultural context of the modern Japanese racial ideology and practice, differing from the American context in which the N-word was used. As anthropologist John Russell suggests, the modern Japanese employed the "black Other" as a "reflexive symbol," through which they attempted to negotiate their own ambiguous racial and cultural identity in the Eurocentric world within the boundaries of the influential Western dichotomy between "European Culture and Civilization" and "African Barbarity and Savagery." John G. Russell, "Race and Reflexivity: The Black Other in Contemporary Japanese Mass Culture," *Cultural Anthropology* 6, no. 1 (1991): 5-6. See also Hiromi Furukawa and Tetsushi Furukawa, *Nihonjin to afurika-kei amerikajin: nichi-bei kankeishi ni okeru sono shosō* [Japanese and African Americans: Historical Aspects of Their Relations] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2004), 27-29.

in English, while she courageously confronted their misbehaviors and tried actively to communicate with them in broken English. One day, her husband suggested that one black soldier, who was impressed with their "cutie" little son, take him out for a walk in their neighborhood. After a while, they found him coming back with some snacks with which he was treated by the black GI. She interpreted this incident as a reflection of the friendly attitude toward the soldier on the part of her family members, all of whom did "not belittle" (*tawakeni sezu*) him because he was black (See Figure 4.1).[11] Although her remarks revealed a condescending racial attitude toward African American soldiers among the local Japanese, this episode suggests that some local Japanese men and women tried to reconcile their wartime hatred of Americans and their preexisting prejudice against blacks with their friendly or, at least, tolerant racial attitudes toward black GIs in their everyday encounters with them in their communities surrounding Camp Gifu.

Through their daily interactions with the Japanese in the local community around Camp Gifu, some African American soldiers recognized that the Japanese also embraced racial prejudice against black people. Referring critically to the existence of a long tradition of racial superiority among the Japanese in their attitudes toward Koreans and other Asian people, Charles Bussey observed that "now they were being conditioned by the Caucasian majority to mistreat, cheat, and even hate the Negro and other minorities."[12] As Bussey points out, white GIs played a critical role in the reproduction of Japanese racial attitudes toward black men in occupied Japan. For example, white

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[11] Ibid., 276-277.

[12] Bussey, *Firefight at Yechon*, 44.

Figure 4.1. African American GI with a Local Japanese Child in Kagamigahara around the Year of 1950

Source: Yoshiko Kamitsu ed., *Shashinshu: omoide no arubamu: Kagamigahara*

soldiers told the local Japanese people that black soldiers had tails, so there were some Japanese who were really apprehensive about the tail question of black soldiers. Rollie Evans recalled that he was asked by the Japanese to take off his clothes on more than one occasion, so that he could show that he did not have a tail for those who believed in the myth of black tails.[13] Drawing upon their own tradition of racial attitudes toward blacks and different racial "others," the Japanese reinforced, reconfigured, and complicated their racial perception of black men during the period of the U.S. occupation, through their face-to-face encounters with black soldiers on the local community level, as well as their interactions with the white soldiers who brought their racist attitudes and practices with their Jim Crow Army to occupied Japan.

Despite the existence of racial prejudice toward blacks on the part of the Japanese, African American soldiers generally held a positive view of their interracial relationship with the Japanese in the local community around Camp Gifu. In the oral history interviews which were prepared by the U.S. Army Center of Military History for *Black Soldier/White Army* in the late 1980s through the early 1990s, many African American soldiers stressed their good relationships with the local Japanese people and the absence

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[13] Interviews, Timothy Rainey with Michael Pierre, November 29, 1989; John Cash with Theodore R. Eldridge, Jr., August 26, 1988; Cash with Rollie Evans, October 13, 1988, CMH files. The racist propaganda on black tails, which was spread among local people by white soldiers, was widely found in the domestic and foreign communities surrounding the U.S. military bases during and immediately after World War II, including Hawaii, Britain, and Germany. See Beth Bailey and David Farber, *The First Strange Place: Race and Sex in World War II Hawaii* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1992), 150-151; Brenda L. Moore, *To Serve My Country, To Serve My Race: The Story of the Only African American WACs Stationed Overseas during World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 120; Heide Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler: Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 32.

of racial problems in their interactions with the Japanese at Gifu.[14] Some African American soldiers interpreted their relationships with the Japanese within the framework of tri-racial dynamics of interactions in occupied Japan, believing that they got along better with the Japanese and treated them better than white soldiers did.[15] Other black soldiers were more conscious of the political power which was conferred upon them with their American citizenship in occupied Japan in their explanations of the relationship between black GIs and the Japanese. Remembering that there was no antagonism found on the parts of the Japanese with whom he associated, Richard Fields said, "Of course we were American soldiers in a beaten nation."[16] African American soldiers could enhance their sense of racial and masculine pride through their everyday interactions with the Japanese people, when they experienced relatively greater racial acceptance expressed in the general attitudes of the Japanese toward black men as well as the relative absence of racist incidents caused by the Japanese, advantages which they had never experienced in their local communities in America.[17]

For some African American soldiers, their encounters with the local Japanese around Camp Gifu gave them opportunities to expand their sense of the world, especially their perceptions of race and race relations beyond the domestic social context of the

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[14] Interviews, Bernard Muehlbauer with Clarence Ferguson, September 2, 1988; Cash with W. A. Bobo and Mrs. Bobo, date unknown; Cash with Alexander Shearin, August 17, 1988; Cash with Raymond C. Hagins, August 28, 1988; Timothy Rainey with Michael Pierre, November 29, 1989, CMH files.

[15] Interviews, Bernard Muehlbauer with Charles B. Gregg, September 8, 1988; John Cash with Theodore R. Eldridge, Jr., August 26, 1988, CMH files.

[16] Interview, John Cash with Richard L. Fields, August 18, 1988, CMH files.

[17] African American soldiers who were stationed in occupied Germany had a similar liberating experience from the relative racial tolerance toward black GIs on the part of the Germans. See Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), esp. chap. 3; Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, esp. chap. 1.

United States. In his biography of Ivory Perry, the local civil rights activist in St. Louis, Missouri, historian George Lipsitz argues that Perry felt that the "Japanese people treated black soldiers very nicely" while he was serving in occupied Japan as a member of the 24th Infantry Regiment.[18] Enlisted in the U.S. Army on November 2, 1948, Perry was assigned to duties in occupied Japan after eight weeks of basic training at Fort Knox, Kentucky and stationed at Camp Gifu until he was sent to the battle fields in the Korea War in July 1950. During his station in occupied Japan, Perry had a chance to meet students and professors from Japanese universities, who not only spoke English but also had "as much or more" knowledge about the U.S. racial situations as himself.[19] Lipsitz observed:

> From them, he learned that differences in skin color did not automatically have to mean prejudice and hatred. As he learned more about Japanese customs and beliefs, he came to feel that all human beings had the same basic desires. Army life had its problems, but Perry felt that as a soldier, he got to see other places and share other cultures, and that he could develop skills and abilities that would have remained dormant at home.[20]

As the case of Ivory Perry revealed, African American encounters with the Japanese in the specific context of U.S. military occupation of Japan were crucial in their reconfiguration of racial identities beyond the oppressive racist ideologies and practices in the U.S. which were dominantly shaping their racial subjectivities within the narrower dichotomy of black and white.

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[18] George Lipsitz, *A Life in the Struggle: Ivory Perry and the Culture of Oppression*, Rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 40.

[19] Ibid., 38, 40.

[20] Ibid., 40.

The interracial fraternization between African American GIs and Japanese women, which took both intimate and exploitative forms, became highly influential in the process of the gendered, as well as racialized and nationalized, subjectivity formations among African American soldiers stationed in occupied Japan. The Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) adopted the non-fraternization policy between American GIs and the Japanese in its military occupation of Japan. The SCAP prohibited all mention of interracial fraternization between the Japanese and Americans in the Japanese media under the November 26, 1946, directive. Historian Yukiko Koshiro suggests that the SCAP banned any discussion of the interracial interaction between American GIs and Japanese women, which could be interpreted as "having sexual connotations," because "such liaisons could both provoke Japanese racial hatred against whites and ridicule American authority."[21] SCAP had already launched the policy to prohibit any mention of race and racism in the Japanese media, particularly Japanese criticism of American racism, so that it could contain Japanese racial identity as the "colored" and maintain American authority as an occupation force. The SCAP's nonfraternization policies continued in occupied Japan until it began to remove them to nurture a more friendly relationship between Americans and Japanese in a series of cultural programs in the historical context of the growing danger of Communism since around the year of 1948.[22]

Despite the SCAP's policy of nonfraternization between the occupiers and the occupied, considerable interracial fraternizations occurred between American GIs, both black and white, and Japanese women in Japan under U.S. military occupation. Richard

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[21] Yukiko Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 63.

[22] Ibid., 62-66, 70-81.

W. Saxton of the 24th Infantry Regiment attested to the prevalence to which American soldiers developed intimate relationships with Japanese women in the base communities surrounding Camp Gifu, where Sears and Roebuck probably sold more than anywhere else in occupied Japan because of the GIs who were lavishing gifts on their girlfriends.[23] At Camp Gifu, the enforcement of the nonfraternization policy within the 24th Infantry Regiment had different impacts on its servicemen according to their race and rank. According to some GIs stationed at Gifu, the fraternization between American GIs and Japanese women was tolerated or ignored mostly in the case of enlisted men and the NCOs, while it was frowned upon and punished especially for commissioned officers, whether they were black or white.[24] Richard W. Saxton recalled that black junior officers were allowed to bring their girlfriends into the NCO club.[25] This rank-specific enforcement of the nonfraternization policy in the 24th Infantry Regiment created more opportunities for African American soldiers, many of whom remained in the lower ranks within the regiment, to develop interracial intimacies with Japanese women at various levels at Gifu.

Some African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment formed marital relationships with Japanese women at Gifu, whether they received official approval of the American consul or not.[26] The *Ebony* magazine article of March 1952 introduced the

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[23] Interview, John Cash with Richard W. Saxton, December 3, 1988, CMH files.

[24] Interviews, John Cash with Richard L. Fields, August 18, 1988; Cash with W. A. Bobo and Mrs. Bobo, date unknown, CMH files.

[25] Interview, John Cash with Richard W. Saxton, December 3, 1988, CMH files.

[26] For the recent studies on Asian warbrides, see Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); Regina Frances Lark, "They Challenged Two Nations: Marriages between Japanese Women and American GIs, 1945 to Present" (PhD.

story of Sgt. Paul Shaw, who was then stationed in Tokyo and living with his wife Mishiko, their daughter Paulette, and Mishiko's mother there, as typical of the African American soldiers who married Japanese girls in occupied Japan. Shaw met the former Mishiko Kawashima, who was working as an usher at the GI movie house in Gifu where he was stationed as a member of the 24th Infantry Regiment. Shaw and Mishiko married in 1948 in a Shinto wedding ceremony without getting their nuptials approved by the U.S. consulate, even though such a religious ceremony meant only a symbolic sanction of their marriage in Japanese society without any official status in terms of American law. Shaw and Mishiko encountered strong opposition to their marriage from a part of her Japanese family. Insisting that "Shaw was using a trick to seduce his sister," Mishiko's brother refused to attend their Shinto marriage ceremony and continued rejecting to have any relationship with them even after their wedding was finally confirmed by the U.S. consul.[27] This episode of Michiko's brother's refusal to accept her interracial marriage with a black American soldier attested to the existence of the prevailing stigma which was attached to Japanese women fraternizing with American GIs, regardless of race, and their families within the Japanese communities surrounding Camp Gifu during the period of U.S. occupation.[28]

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diss. University of Southern California, 1999); Gina Marchetti, *Romance and the 'Yellow Peril': Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

[27] "The Truth About Japanese War Brides: Negro Soldiers Lear to Admire Legendary Qualities of Attractive Nippon Women," *Ebony* 7, no. 5 (March 1952), 18.

[28] There was an aversion to interracial fraternization between Japanese women and American GIs, regardless of their race, among the contemporary Japanese. Yukiko Koshiro argues that Japanese people were intolerant of the interracial fraternization between Japanese women and American GIs, "whether in the form of dating, marriage, or childbearing," and a stigma by Japanese society was attached to the Japanese women who fraternized with GIs. She suggests that there was an aversion to any sexual or physical contact with American GIs among the Japanese, despite their rising interest in American culture

African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment, who decided to marry Japanese women despite official discouragement from the SCAP's nonfraternization policy, encountered various barriers which prevented the official approval of their marriages at the American Consulate and the immigration of their wives and their half-American, half-Japanese children into the United States. African American GIs who intended to officially marry the Japanese in terms of American law needed to first receive the approval of their commanding officers in the regiment. African American soldiers of the 24th Infantry Regiment were often discouraged from marrying the Japanese by the high commanders in the Army.[29] Alexander Shearin of the 24th Infantry Regiment claimed that the Army kept its "unofficial" policy of discouraging the marriages between GIs and the Japanese and blocked them, for example, by "threatening" to not reenlist them, even after the SCAP allowed soldiers to marry their Japanese girlfriends by changing its fraternization policy in 1947 to 1948.[30]

African American soldiers, who successfully had their marriage with their Japanese fiancées approved by their regiment's commanding officers, still encountered the legal barriers of the U.S. Immigration Act against their international marriage with Japanese women. American servicemen could not take their wives and their half-American, half-Japanese dependants to the United States because of the 1924 Immigration Act which barred the immigration of Japanese war brides to the U.S. either as citizens or permanent residents, until the enactment of the McCarran-Walter Act in

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and life styles in the postwar period. Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*, 69-70.

[29] Interview, John Cash with Roscoe Jones, June 16, 1989, CMH files.

[30] Interview, John Cash with Alexander Shearin, August 17, 1988, CMH files.

1952.[31] Japanese women were excluded from the application of the War Brides Act of 1945 and the G.I. Fiancées Act of 1946, which were enacted by President Truman to facilitate the entry into the United States of alien spouses, fiancé(e)s, and minor children of U.S. citizens serving in, or honorably discharged from the U.S. armed forces during World War II on a nonquota basis, because of their racial status as the aliens ineligible for the U.S. citizenship which had been defined under the Immigration Act of 1924.[32]

In July 22, 1947, the Amendment of the War Brides Act (Public Law 213) was signed by President Truman as a result of the lobby of the Japanese American Citizenship League (JACL), under the leadership of Mike Masaoka, to introduce and pass a bill for granting U.S. servicemen, particularly those of Japanese descent, the rights to marry Japanese women and bring them back to the United States. The 1947 Amendment of the War Brides Act permitted the entrance of the Japanese aliens, who applied their marriage applications within the 30 days of its enactment, into the U.S. without the racial restrictions under the 1924 Immigration Act.[33] During the period from July 22 through August 22, 1947, 823 American servicemen, the majority of whom were Nisei (597) and who included only 15 blacks compared with 211 whites, married Japanese women under this amendment.[34] Ira H. Blake was one of six African American servicemen who took their Japanese brides, under the extension of Public Law 213, to the American Consulate

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[31] Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*, 156-157.

[32] Masako Nakamura, "Families Precede Nation and Race?: 1947 Amendment of the War Brides Act and the American Family," unpublished manuscript.

[33] Ibid. I thank Masako Nakamura for sharing her unpublished paper with me and attracting my attention to the importance of this amendment in the U.S. immigration history regarding the Japanese warbrides. On the 1947 Amendment of the War Brides Act, see also Lark, "They Challenged Two Nations," 193-201.

[34] Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*, 157.

in Kobe on August 19, 1947, while he was serving as interpreter and translator with the 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu. In his letter to the editor of the *Ebony*, Blake expressed his appreciation for the "untiring efforts" of Joe and Mike Masaoka of the Japanese American Citizens League in its enactment.[35]

In August 1950, another amendment to the War Brides Act (Public Law 717), which was enacted as extension of Public Law 213 of 1947, permitted more African American soldiers in occupied Japan to apply for their marriages with Japanese women at the American Consulate only within the six months of its enactment without racial restrictions under the 1924 Immigration Act. After the outbreak of the Korean War in July 1950, many of the applications submitted under this amendment were supposed to come from the American soldiers serving in Korea, expecting to return to Japan to consummate their marriages with Japanese women upon the approval of their marriage applications.[36] L. Alex Wilson of the *Chicago Defender* reported that an estimated 400 servicemen of the 24th Infantry Regiment filed official applications to seek permission to marry Japanese women so that they could meet the eligibility deadline of February 18, 1951 under Public Law 717.[37] Corporal Ernest Steinback was one of those African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment who filed applications to marry their Japanese fiancées during this period. Steinback tried to take advantage of this opportunity within the temporary extension of the War Brides Act under Public Law 717 to make official his marital life with Teruko Enya and their two-year-old daughter, Marie,

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[35] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 7, no. 8 (June 1952).

[36] Lark, "They Challenged Two Nations," 206.

[37] L. Alex Wilson, "Lovesick GIs Marry 400 Japanese Girls," *Chicago Defender*, November 4, 1950.

in terms of American laws, so that he could bring his bride and daughter to the United States in the near future (See Figure 4.2).[38]

In the 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu, two African American officers played a critical role in the submission of a large number of marriage applications by black soldiers under Public Law 717. Lieutenant Colonel Harry Lofton, one of the few black commanding officers of the regiment, and Chaplain Captain Sullus B. Washington were positive about the interracial/international marriages between African American soldiers and Japanese women and strongly supported the request for marriage permission from their regiment's men, especially exhibiting their deep concern about the welfare of the "brown babies."[39] Colonel Lofton told James Hicks, the *Baltimore Afro-American* correspondent, that he "heartily" approved such marriages and felt that the women would "make the men good wives." Lofton was concerned about the current miserable circumstances of occupation marriages surrounding Camp Gifu where many Japanese mothers were suffering hardships after their American husbands left Japan for Korea and some of them deserted their "brown babies" in desperation. Hicks reported in November 1950 that Lofton had already approved some marriage requests of the returning black servicemen in the 24th Infantry Regiment from Korea and the first marriage under Public Law 717 was to be expected soon afterward at Camp Gifu.[40]

However, African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment who submitted marriage applications from Korea encountered another obstacle from the Army's high

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[38] L. Alex Wilson, "Why Tan Yanks Go For Japanese Girls: Wilson Reveals Story Behind Love Affairs Between Tan Yanks And Oriental Beauties," *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950.

[39] Ibid.

[40] James L. Hicks, "Many 24th Men Eye Brides in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 4, 1950.

Figure 4.2. Cpl. Ernest Steinbeck of the 24th Infantry Regiment with His Bride Miss Teruko Enya and Their 2-Year-Old Daughter Marie
Source: *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950

commanders in occupied Japan, even after they temporarily overcame the legal barriers within the U.S. immigration. L. Alex Wilson of the *Chicago Defender* was not optimistic about the situations of those African American soldiers intending to marry Japanese women in occupied Japan under American law. Wilson reported: "the big problem facing love sick Tan Yank, now engaged in mopping up activity in North Korea, is their return to their former base in Gifu in order to complete arrangements for marital unions with their Oriental sweethearts."[41] Two African American newsmen, Wilson and Hicks, reported by using some high officials as sources that the Army was taking some measures to prevent the 24th Infantry Regiment from returning to Camp Gifu for the consummation of their marriages until after the passing of the marriage deadline under Public Law 717.[42]

The following remarks of Ivory Perry further substantiate their coverage that African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment were not permitted to come back to Camp Gifu from Korea because of the high commanders' attention to the considerable black-Japanese intimate relationships there:

> They had put out a memo before we went to Korea that they didn't want to see no black walking down the street holding some Japanese girl's hand. They couldn't even come on the post in Gifu... They couldn't even—but the whites, they could come on Gifu and go to the service club. But they couldn't come, you know, on the black soldier's...[43]

Perry harshly charged General Walker, the 8th Army Commander, by name as the suspect of "putting out the memo" to block the black-Japanese marriages at Camp Gifu. Perry

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[41] Wilson, "Lovesick GIs Marry 400 Japanese Girls," *Chicago Defender*, November 4, 1950.

[42] Wilson, "Lovesick GIs Marry 400 Japanese Girls," *Chicago Defender*, November 4, 1950; Hicks, "Many 24th Men Eye Brides in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 4, 1950.

[43] Interview, John Cash with Ivory Perry, September 8, 1988, CMH files.

himself was assigned to Camp Sendai, not Gifu, when he was returned to Japan after the disbandment of the 24th Infantry Regiment in 1951.[44] The testimony of Ivory Perry, combined with two black newsmen, suggested that the racist concerns among the high commanders in the Eighth Army about black-Japanese interracial intimacy and sexuality might contribute to the disintegration of the African American GIs' familial relationships with Japanese women and their biracial children surrounding Camp Gifu, in spite of the enthusiastic supports for their marriage from black commanding officers in the regiment as well as the temporary lenience in the U.S. Immigration laws toward Japanese warbrides in 1950.

As African American officers of the 24th Infantry Regiment evidenced deep concern in their treatment of the issue of black-Japanese marriage, the welfare of the biracial children fathered by American GIs was one of the most serious problems which the base communities, both American and Japanese, surrounding Camp Gifu were facing as a result of the widespread interracial romance and sexual relations that occurred between American soldiers and Japanese women during the period of U.S. occupation of Japan.[45] L. Alex Wilson of the *Chicago Defender* observed that every child, except one, looked "healthy and well clothed" when he visited half a dozen mothers of occupation babies living near Camp Gifu. However, he learned during the course of his interviews at Gifu that the one exception, who apparently reflected the "neglect" or "desertion" on the part of the American GIs and the financial problems of the Japanese mother, was "typical

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[44] Ibid.

[45] For recent scholarship on mixed-blood children in occupied Japan, see Yukiko Koshiro, "Race as International Identity?: 'Miscegenation' in the U.S. Occupation of Japan and Beyond," *Amerikastudien* 48, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 61-77; Robert A. Fish, "The Heiress and the Love Children: Sawada Miki and the Elizabeth Saunders Home for Mixed-Blood Orphans in Postwar Japan" (PhD. diss. University of Hawaii, 2002).

of a large number of cases, of which something must be done to prevent suffering by the children."[46] More seriously, the infanticide of biracial children who were fathered by African American soldiers sometimes occurred at Gifu during that period. One local Japanese man vividly recalled that one half-black, half-Japanese baby, who was brought into the world "without crying," was soon taken away by a midwife, wrapped in an oil paper and stored in a small box.[47] This episode suggested that the economic hardships facing the Japanese mothers of those biracial babies, as well as the strong stigma attached to them by Japanese society, drove some of them to desperation without establishing stable relationships with their GIs under the current quasi-antifraternization policies of the U.S. Army and the federal government.

In response to the problems of biracial children in occupied Japan, some African American wives on Camp Gifu, a few of whom were opposed to the marriages between GIs and Japanese women, proposed their adoption by American families as a solution to the problem of biracial babies. One black woman, a wife of MSgt. "Big Boy" Jackson, the 1949 All-Army heavyweight boxing champion, was living with a "brown baby" deserted by its mother and seeking to gain approval of its adoption from the father who was then fighting in Korea.[48] However, Japanese mothers strongly opposed the adoption of their babies by American families. Sachiko Harai was one of those desperate mothers in Naka around Camp Gifu, who was living with her one-year-old daughter Treena while waiting for Sgt. M. Sammons, her fiancé, to come back from Korea. In response to L.

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[46] Wilson, "Why Tan Yanks Go For Japanese Girls," *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950.

[47] Kagamigahara-shi senjikiroku henshū iinkai, ed., *Kagamigahara shimin no senji taiken*, 266.

[48] Hicks, "Many 24th Men Eye Brides in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 4, 1950.

Alex Wilson who asked her if "she would let the baby be adopted by a good family in America," Harai rejected point-blank its possibility with her face "frozen" and "clutching" her child.[49]

One African American soldier was planning to establish an institution at Gifu for the biracial babies, who were fathered but deserted by American GIs, in light of the desperate living conditions of their mothers. Corporal Theodore R. Washington, Jr., an African American soldier of the 567th Engineer Service Company stationed at Camp Gifu, wrote in July 1949 to Walter White, the executive secretary of the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to seek legal assistance in his plan to take care of the Japanese occupation babies by following a home or nursery in Europe as a model. Although Washington was then childless by his present wife and not involved in the intimate affairs with any Japanese woman, he appealed to White with an enthusiastic sense of mission to save the "unfortunate Babies" on behalf of his fellow American GIs for a humanitarian cause: "At present our laws place a barrier against admittance to the security of the United States of Mother or Baby. Yet both are human and the Baby does have our blood in it's veins. Can we stand by to ignore such a phase of humanity?"[50]

Washington also emphasized the miserable conditions of the Japanese mothers of those babies who were suffering from the patriarchal domination of Japanese men as well as the desertion by American GIs of their fathers when he noted that, "all Women of

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[49] Wilson, "Why Tan Yanks Go For Japanese Girls," *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950.

[50] Theodore R. Washington, Jr. to Walter White, July 19, 1949, *Papers of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)*, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., microfilm edition, pt.9-B, reel 14.

Japan are certain that once we depart the shores of Japan, the male will again revert back to the ways of old. The women, still carry in their hearts and minds the thoughts of inferiority as far as the male is concerned. They alone succor and love the Babies."[51] He invested highly in the dominant American Orientalist discourse of Japanese women during the period of U.S. occupation of Japan in his victimization of the Japanese mothers of those occupation babies.[52] In response to his letter, Franklin H. Williams, the Assistant Special Counsel of the NAACP, expressed his willingness to be of "assistance" to Washington and requested the "greater details" of his proposal so that the organization could advise him more efficiently in his plan.[53] It is not certain if any institution for occupation babies was established by the initiative of Washington, but the existence of a Methodist orphanage at Gifu was confirmed by the testimony of W. A. Bobo.[54] In addition to the shared interest in the welfare of biracial babies among African American soldiers and officers at Camp Gifu, the correspondence between Washington and the NAACP suggested the transnational dimension in the postwar black struggle for rights, in which some black GIs in Japan connected their humanitarian struggle for racial and gender justice for the biracial children of black servicemen and their Japanese mothers to

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[51] Ibid.

[52] Cultural critic Lisa Yoneyama argues that the U.S. occupation authorities and the U.S. media actively promoted the representation of Japanese women as victims of the male-dominant militarism and traditional gender norms so that they could emphasize "women's liberation," especially Japanese women's enfranchisement under the U.S. occupation in their cold war propaganda. Lisa Yoneyama, "Liberation under Siege: U.S. Military Occupation and Japanese Women's Enfranchisement," *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (Sep. 2005): 885-910.

[53] Franklin H. Williams to Theodore R. Washington, Jr., August 9, 1949, *Papers of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP),* pt.9-B, reel 14.

[54] Interview, John Cash with W. A. Bobo and Mrs. Bobo, date unknown, CMH files.

the larger contemporaneous antiracist movement in the U.S. thorough their trans-Pacific exchanges with the NAACP.[55]

The widespread interracial intimate relationships between African American soldiers and Japanese women surrounding Camp Gifu attracted the attention of African American men and women in the U.S., when their news were reported and spread by black journalists through the trans-Pacific circulation of black newspapers and magazines. On September 9, 1950, James L. Hicks, the *Baltimore Afro-American* war correspondent, wrote an article focusing on the Japanese women in Gifu, boosting the "fighting morale" of the 24th Infantry Regiment by contributing 10,000 Japanese yen, which was equivalent to about $26 in U.S. dollars, to the provost marshal for the purchase of delicacies for the regiment's members fighting on the front lines. Hicks explained that the intimate relationships which were constructed between African American soldiers and Japanese women around the Camp Gifu motivated their charitable donation to the regiment. Hicks elaborated that "many of them (black GIs) have sweethearts in Japan; and much of the mail received by men of the regiment comes from the women of Japan. Some of the 24th

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[55] On the postwar civil rights activism of the NAACP, see, for example, Gilbert Jonas, *Freedom's Sword: The NAACP and the Struggle against Racism in America, 1909-1969* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Mark V. Tushnet, *Making Civil Rights Law: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court, 1936-1961* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); and *The NAACP's Legal Strategy against Segregated Education, 1925-1950* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987). For the recent growing scholarly attention to the transnational and international dimensions of the African American struggle for rights in postwar America, see Jonathan Rosenberg, *How Far the Promised Land?: World Affairs and the American Civil Rights Movement from the First World War to Vietnam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Brenda Gayle Plummer, ed., *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights, and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1988* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Carol Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

Regiment Soldiers have children by Japanese women."[56] In spite of its small amount in terms of American standards, Hicks appreciated their monetary donation as "illustrative of the warm respect and feelings" of the Japanese women, many of whom were engaged to African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment and had been a waiting clearance to marry them for the previous eighteen months. As the title of this article, "Japanese Boost 24th's Morale," indicated, Hicks focused on the international cooperation on the part of Japanese women during the U.S. war efforts in Korea, rather than their intimate relationships with African American soldiers in occupied Japan in his article.[57]

However, Hick's article on the black-Japanese intimacies attracted some critical attention from his African American readers both in the United States and in Japan and provoked controversies on the issues of race, gender, and sex in occupied Japan within the African American communities across the Pacific. One of the problems stemmed from Hick's careless treatment of this sensitive issue of interracial romance in occupied Japan without taking the gendered reactions of black female readers into consideration in his report. As the outbreak of the Korean War in July 1950, the *Baltimore Afro-American* initiated a "pen-gal" campaign to boost the fighting morale of the African American soldiers stationed in Korea and Japan. A week before Hick's report on the Japanese women boosting the 24th's morale appeared, the *Afro-American* published an article entitled "Your Letter Can Cheer GI's Battlefront," which encouraged its "girl" readers to send letters with their pictures and a stamped-addressed envelope to African American soldiers on the battle line, with a list of names and addresses of some

[56] James L. Hicks, "Japanese Boost 24th's Morale," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 9, 1950.

[57] Ibid.

soldiers.[58] As the main advocate of this campaign, James Hicks asked his female readers to tell a soldier that "you are proud of what he is doing (You should be for he is fighting for your neck too)," as well as to "make it gay" by telling him the latest dance step in the U.S., number one song in the hit parade, and some "vital statistics" about themselves which "he looks for when he sizes a woman up on the street corner."[59] He called upon black female readers to make gendered contributions to the U.S. war efforts in Korea by emotionally comforting the fighting soldiers from their home communities as pen-pals and pin-up girls.

In response to the Hick's article on the black-Japanese intimacies in Gifu, which appeared in the middle of the *Afro-American*'s "pen-gal" campaign, one reader from New York, seemingly female, expressed her resentment against the supposedly "lonesome" black soldiers in Korea. She asked in her letter to the editor: "Why should nice girls in this country correspond with soldiers who have sweethearts in Japan? Moreover, some of the 24th soldiers even have children by Japanese women." She objected to interracial romance and sexual relations between black soldiers and Japanese women in occupied Japan, and suggested that the government "teach the Japanese females to write English so that they can write to their lonesome lovers in Korea" or "send them all to Korea."[60] Three months later, four soldiers who had been stationed in Japan as corporal or sergeant since 1946, responded in a jointly signed letter to the *Afro-American* to soothe this black female reader. These soldiers argued that "a woman is a woman regardless of race, creed

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[58] "Your Letter Can Cheer GI's at Battlefront," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 2, 1950.

[59] James L. Hicks, "Here're Some Do's for Pin-Up Girls: GI's Want to Know Latest Dances, Top Song, Some Vital Statistics," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 30, 1950.

[60] *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 14, 1950.

or color... until they prove otherwise" and opposed her idea of teaching them English by praising their high competency in writing English. They tried to persuade her and other black female readers not to be bothered by the temporary relationship between black soldiers and Japanese women in occupied Japan: "We tell the American women not to worry; their chances of becoming old maids are very slim."[61] The comments of those soldiers clearly revealed a double standard in the militarized sexual behaviors among many American GIs, who would eventually return home and marry American women, however intimate relationships they developed with native women while they were stationed overseas.

The above dialogue between one black woman reader from New York and four black soldiers in occupied Japan over black-Japanese intimate relationships in Japan was not an isolated event on the reader's forum in *Baltimore Afro-American*, but a part of the larger transnational debate over the problems of race relation, gender convention, and sexual practice in occupied Japan which were evolving in the African American communities across the Pacific in the early 1950s.[62]

The outbreak of the Korean War in July 1950 was the most impactful event on the already unstable relationships between African American soldiers and Japanese women that occurred at Gifu, whether they were married or not. African American GIs of the 24th Infantry Regiment were not certain either about returning safe from the battlefield in Korea, or coming back to Camp Gifu to see their wives, fiancées, or girlfriends even if

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[61] *Baltimore Afro-American*, January 13, 1951.

[62] See Chapter 7 and 8 for the discussion on the black newspaper and magazine representations of the interracial intimacy, sexuality, and marriage between African American soldiers and Japanese women in the trans-Pacific African American communities in the early 1950s.

they survived the war in Korea. Japanese women were left by African American soldiers alone or with their biracial children in the Japanese communities surrounding Camp Gifu, which were hostile toward the GI-Japanese miscegenation, while their intimate or marital relationships remained unstable in terms of the U.S. military and immigration policies.

During the week before they moved out for Korea, African American soldiers went to see their girlfriends without official leave and confronted the MPs who were trying to stop them. According to James T. Burke of the 24th Infantry Regiment, the incidents sometimes became "real heavy, real heavy" when, for example, a black soldier with a basic load of ammunition would shoot some fire against the MPs.[63] On the night before the regiment left Gifu, there was an "invasion vice-versa" of the Japanese girls coming on the post to see their soldiers.[64] Their separation at the Gifu train station in which African American soldiers were kissing and hugging their girlfriends, with both of them crying, became the most memorable scene among both African American GIs in the 24th Infantry Regiment and local Japanese people at Gifu.[65] Some violent confrontations occurred at the station between Japanese women who were breaking through the lines to approach as near as the soldiers in the train and the MPs who were keeping them back by force.[66] But, any action on the parts of the Japanese women who were resisting their separation with their GIs at the station did not prevent the African American troops from leaving the garrison community of Camp Gifu for Korea.

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[63] Interview, Bernard Muehlbauer with James T. Burke, January 23, 1989, CMH files.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Interview, Bernard Muehlbauer with Charles B. Gregg, September 8, 1988; Kagamigahara-shi senji kiroku henshū iinkai, ed., *Kagamigahara shimin no senji taiken*, 268-69.

[66] Interview, Bernard Muehlbauer with Charles B. Gregg, September 8, 1988, CMH files.

The combat mobilization of the 24th Infantry Regiment as the outbreak of the Korean War, as a consequence, contributed to the disintegration of the intimate or marital relationships between African American soldiers and Japanese women which occurred widely in the base communities surrounding Camp Gifu. As W. A. Bobo, the senior black officer in the 24th Infantry Regiment attested, the institutional blockade against the GI-Japanese marriage in the Army as well as on the part of U.S. government was so strong that most of the junior officers' marriages in occupied Japan were broken after they left Gifu.[67]

In spite of various institutional, ideological, and sentimental opposition against their interracial/international marriage or miscegenation both in Japan and the U.S., some African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment expressed their sincere decisions and efforts to consummate their intimate relationships with Japanese women in the marital and familial formations with their biracial children in the U.S. These African American GIs, who had been discouraged from fostering interracial intimacies, especially those with white women, in their own country, could fulfill their sense of racial and masculine prides, when they had opportunities to explore interracial romance and construct mutual relationships with Japanese women within the specific historical juncture of U.S. military occupation of Japan.

As indicated in the high rate of venereal disease among the soldiers at Camp Gifu, despite the regimental authorities' strenuous efforts to reduce it, the interracial sexual contacts between black GIs and Japanese women through the system of prostitution became another form of gendered interracial interactions in occupied Japan, through

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[67] Interview, John Cash with W. A. Bobo and Mrs. Bobo, date unknown, CMH files.

which African American soldiers consolidated their racial, masculine, and national identities in relation to both Japanese women and men.[68] Approximately five hundred Japanese prostitutes catered to occupation soldiers in the red light districts surrounding Camp Gifu during the period of the U.S. occupation.[69] Furthermore, the U.S. military at Gifu operated its own sex houses called "Shi-Naka club" or "houses of entertainment" to provide occupation soldiers with girls for a mere one dollar.[70] On the one hand, having sex with Japanese women while off duty became a means of measuring heterosexual masculine achievements as well as promoting homosocial bonds among the American occupation troops. American soldiers, regardless of race, appealed to the victor's sense of militarized masculinity through sexual conquest and subjugation of the native women in occupied Japan. Houston McMurray of the 24th Infantry Regiment recalled that it became a "matter of honor" how to respond when asked if the men had had a sexual intercourse while on leave in the sign-out book placed at the main gate of the camp.

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[68] On the postwar U.S. military policy on venereal disease and prostitution in Japan, see Sayuri Guthrie Shimizu, "Sei no kokka kanri wo meguru senryō-ki nichibei kankei: Amerika no kaigai gunji shinshutsu to jendā [Sexual Control by the State in the Japanese-U.S. Relationship during the Occupation Period: the U.S. Military Engagement Overseas and Gender]," *Gunji Shigaku* 41, no. 4 (2006): 26-49; Hirofumi Hayashi, "Higashi ajia no beigun kichi to seibaibai/seihanzai [U.S. Military Base in East Asia and Prostitution/Sexual Crime]," *Amerika-shi kenkyū* 29 (August 2006): 18-35; and "Amerikagun no sei-taisaku no rekishi: 1950 nendai made [A Historical Study of the US Military's Policy toward Prostitution: Through the 1950s]," *Josei, Sensō, Jinken* 7 (March 2005): 94-118. On military prostitution in other foreign or domestic communities surrounding the U.S. bases, see, for example, Katharine H. S. Moon, *Sex among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korean Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Beth Bailey and David Farber, *The First Strange Place: Race and Sex in World War II Hawaii* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1992), esp. chap. 3; Saundra Pollock Sturdevant and Brenda Stoltzfus, *Let the Good Times Roll: Prostitution and the U.S. Military in Asia* (New York: New Press, 1992).

[69] Kagamigahara-shi kyōiku iinkai, ed., *Kagamigahara shishi: tsūshi hen: kinse, kindai, gendai* [History of the City of Kagamigahara: General History in the Pre-Modern, Modern, and Contemporary periods] (Kagamigahara: Kagamigahara-shi, 1987), 584-585.

[70] Interview, John Cash with Fred Thomas, August 24, 1989, CMH files.

McMurray recalled, "if you put down 'no,' why everybody would laugh you out of the place or everybody checked off 'yes' as though big deal."[71]

On the other hand, catching VD from or as a result of sexual intercourse with Japanese prostitutes meant severe punishment which could damage the sense of honor and manhood. The commanders of the regiment, who were always apprehensive about the unit's prominent VD rate in the whole 25th Infantry Division, punished the soldiers contracting VD more severely than for any other offense. According to Fred Thomas, the soldiers found to be infected with VD for the first time were concentrated in a "VD camp" in Gifu where they endured hard training of eight weeks. The second time they had to talk with the chaplain and then a letter was sent home to their mothers, wives, or other family members. Finally they received an "undesirable discharge" for their third bout with VD infection.[72] Meanwhile, the inspections of their genitals by a white doctor proved to be a humiliating experience for many black soldiers in the regiment. Being bent over with their pants around their ankles in the parade field, the racial and masculine pride of black soldiers was violated through the sexualization of their black male bodies by white military doctors.[73]

American GIs, regardless of race, solidified their militarized masculinity as well as American manhood in their frequent sexual intercourses with prostitutes in occupied Japan or other areas under U.S. military occupation. Such interracial sexual interactions within the specific context of gendered colonial relations in Japan entailed misogynous

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[71] Interview, Bernard Muehlbauer with Houston McMurray, date unknown, 1988, CMH files.

[72] Interview, John Cash with Fred Thomas, August 24, 1989, CMH files.

[73] Interview, John Cash with Gorham Black III, June 28, 1989, CMH files.

depreciation of native women only as sexual objects or whores on the part of African American soldiers, while they were challenged by the danger of their racial manhood being damaged by contraction of venereal diseases from sex with prostitutes.

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African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment achieved their gendered empowerment partly through the de-masculinization of the local Japanese men as well as their interracial sexual relationships, either intimate or involuntary, with Japanese women at Camp Gifu. For many Japanese men, their daily encounters with American soldiers, either black or white, were humiliating and emasculating experiences which reminded them of the defeat of their country at World War II and their status as the "occupied." Since the U.S. occupation troops entered the Gifu area in October 1945, many local Japanese men in the surrounding communities worked for the U.S. Army at Camp Gifu, either voluntarily or forcibly. One Japanese man recalled that these Japanese workers, whose number reached about 2000, felt a sense of "resistance" (*teikoukan*) against serving for the former enemy nation, but they had "no choice but to" (*seni harawa kaerarenakatta*) work for the U.S. Army in the local base to compensate for their hard social and economic conditions during that period.[74] Another Japanese man, one of many local young men who were mobilized by the U.S. Army for the construction of the camp, expressed a sense of "misery" (*mijime na kimochi*) which he felt, when he saw a GI eating canned beans with a spoon while he was watching them, in light of the want of food which many Japanese people were experiencing during the period immediately after

[74] Kagamigahara-shi senji kiroku henshū iinkai, ed., *Kagamigahara shimin no senji taiken*, 270.

World War II.[75] Facing the material abundance of American GIs as a reflection of the power of the victorious nation at Camp Gifu, these Japanese male workers felt a diminishment of their masculine sense of pride vis-à-vis American soldiers for their failure to fulfill their gender role as breadwinners of their families under the impoverished conditions of their life during that period.

The most shocking experience for Japanese men, which clearly reminded them of the masculinized humiliation of the defeated nation, was the widespread intimate and sexual relationships which occurred between Japanese women and American soldiers in the local communities surrounding Camp Gifu. One Japanese man recalled that he often encountered the "indecent" (*midareta*) behaviors between "big" (*ōkina*) American GIs and Japanese prostitutes, who were called "pom poms," in his way to the elementary school and that Japanese children played with the condoms which were carelessly dropped on the roadsides.[76] He revealed the sense of powerlessness vis-à-vis American soldiers in their sexual control of the Japanese women among the local Japanese men: "We deepened our sense of "misery" (*mijimesa*) as the defeated nation, when we found the increase in sexual immorality in our community and saw the loudly-dressed Japanese women walking in town with their arms crossed with American GIs."[77]

Another Japanese man, named Minagawa, clearly drew on his racial prejudice against blacks in his expression of the indignation against American soldiers. Minagawa stated that he was "shocked speechlessly" (*nantomo ienai kimochi*) to encounter several

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[75] Ibid., 265.

[76] Ibid., 269.

[77] Ibid.

black soldiers walking around his community. He mentioned implicitly the deep involvement of African American soldiers in the frequent incidents of rape of Japanese women.[78] Several local Japanese men, as well as women, attested to the visibility of African American soldiers in their memories of interracial fraternities between American GIs and Japanese women and their biracial children as well as the popular association between black GIs and sexual violence.[79] The Japanese men in Gifu felt their national and racial subjectivities feminized by their powerlessness against the sexual incursions of Japanese women by Americans soldiers in their local communities, especially those committed by African American GIs, who were the most highly racialized "others" of the former enemy nation in the modern Japanese ideology.

The de-masculinization of Japanese men was essential to the social process of the racialized and gendered empowerment of African American soldiers in occupied Japan. In light of the sociologist R. W. Connell's model of the "relational" constructions of masculinity in dynamics between "masculinities," the racialized masculinities of African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment were not only defined in relation to the "subordination" of women, but also in relation to the "multiple masculinities" in the triadic racial dynamics between blacks, whites, and the Japanese in the specific historical context of U.S. military occupation of Japan.[80] On the one hand, African American soldiers, like white American GIs, claimed the "hegemonic" heterosexual American masculinity as members of the U.S. occupation forces through the "subordination" of

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[78] Kagamigahara-shi, ed., *Kagamigahara shimin no senji taiken* [The Wartime Experience of the People in Kagamigahara] (Kagamigahara: Kagamigahara-shi, 1996), 12.

[79] Kagamigahara-shi senji kiroku henshū iinkai, ed., *Kagamigahara shimin no senji taiken*, 266, 268, 277.

[80] R. W. Connell, *Masculinities*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 76-81.

Japanese men in the international political context of disparity between the U.S. and Japan during that period. African American GIs were "complicit" in the assertion of the "hegemonic" militarized heterosexual American masculinity when they developed the widespread interracial sexual relationships with Japanese women, either intimate or involuntary. On the other hand, black masculinity of the 24th Infantry Regiment was "marginalized" in relation to the "hegemonic" white masculinity in the contestations between the "hegemonic" American masculinities, when they were "subordinated" in the persistent segregation and discrimination in the white-dominant U.S. Army in occupied Japan. In the contestations between the "subordinated" masculinities in relation to the "hegemonic" white American masculinity, African American GIs were able to achieve some gendered empowerment when they "authorized" their national masculinity through the "marginalization" of Japanese men in terms of the "hegemonic" American masculinity in the specific political context of U.S. occupation of Japan. The multiple class and sexual dynamics within the segregated troop would further complicate the constructions of black masculinities of the 24th Infantry Regiment in relation to the "hegemonic" white, elite, heterosexual, American masculinity in occupied Japan.

In addition, the masculine empowerment of African American soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment was constructed upon the specific "gendered" relationships between the United States and Japan, which were contingent on the historical encounters of the two nations in war and peace across the Pacific Ocean. In *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (1999), historian John W. Dower argues that there was a gendered relationship between the masculinized occupation force and the feminized Japan in the American imagination of the defeated nation. Dower contends that Japan

was suddenly transformed from a "menacing, masculine threat" into a "compliant, feminine body on which the *white* victors could impose their will" after World War II (my italics).[81] However, the "white victors" were not the only actors in the U.S. occupation force who were influential in the formations of "ubiquitous sexuality linking conqueror and conquered" in occupied Japan. For African American soldiers whose racial subjectivity was feminized through the persistence of segregation and discrimination in the U.S. Army, their encounter with the Japanese as members of the U.S. occupation force was a masculinizing experience, through which they could revive their sense of honor by employment of their American citizenship in the international political context of the U.S. occupation of Japan. Moreover, the enhancement of racial masculinity among African American soldiers through their interracial fraternizations with Japanese women was achieved only through the de-masculation of the Japanese men. Thus, African American soldiers' encounter with Japanese women and men in the context of the U.S. military occupation of Japan had special "gendered" implications for their racial subjectivity formations at Camp Gifu.

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In summary, African American soldiers defined their racial masculinity and American manhood in their relation to the Japanese as a racial "other" as well as the "occupied," when they broadened their world views through their everyday encounters with the local Japanese or developed widespread interracial intimate or marital relationships with Japanese women despite discouragement from the U.S. Army or American consulate in Japan. Their interracial sexual interactions with Japanese

[81] John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999), 138-139.

prostitutes helped them to further assert or perform their militarized and sexualized masculinity in occupied Japan. Moreover, the masculine empowerment of the black GIs was achieved through the de-masculation of Japanese men in the international political disparity in occupied Japan. Thus, African American soldiers' encounter with the Japanese within the specific historical juncture of the U.S. occupation of Japan, as well as their investment in the intra-organizational racial and class dynamics within the U.S. Army, was crucial in their identity formation and transformation process which intersected among race, gender, class, sexuality, and international politics.

Some African American soldiers who experienced the overseas military service in Japan, Okinawa, or Korea became major actors in the postwar black struggle for rights when they returned to the United States.[82] Ivory Perry of the 24th Infantry Regiment was one of those African American veterans who joined in civil rights activism after his discharge from military service in Japan. With a "strong desire to see more of the rest of the world and less of his home state," Perry joined the U.S. Army in November 1948, after having grown up in a sharecropper's family in rural Arkansas in the 1930s.[83] Stressing the connection between Perry's military experience in East Asia and his later involvement in the community activism in St. Louis, historian George Lipsitz argues:

> For Perry, meeting Japanese and Korean citizens who seemed to him refreshingly nonracist compared to the White Americans he had known helped him see that White supremacy was a primarily historical national phenomenon and not human nature. In addition, the contrast between the freedoms he was sent overseas to

[82] For example, James Forman, a prominent civil rights activist of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), was stationed in occupied Okinawa as a member of the U.S. Air Force from 1948 to 1950. See James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* (1972; repr., Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985), esp. chap. 9.

[83] Lipsitz, *A life in the Struggle*, 39. See chap. 1 for Perry's background in Arkansas before joining the U.S. Army.

> defend and the freedoms he could not realize at home made him more determined than ever to bring about changes in his own country.[84]

As Lipsitz points out, his military experience in occupied Japan, as well as in the battlefield in Korea, brought Perry a new sense of the world and contributed to reshaping his racial perception in the broader international context of everyday interracial encounters with the local Japanese in the garrison communities surrounding Camp Gifu and other bases in occupied Japan.

The relative racial acceptance which Perry experienced in the broader occupation societies of Japan, especially in their relationship with Japanese people, made him more keenly aware of the persistent racial segregation and discrimination within the U.S. Army in occupied Japan, which was supposed to have brought democracy into Japan, as expressive manifestation of racial oppressions in the larger American society. Perry attested to the centrality of race in the shaping of his military life in occupied Japan: "Races play a big part because we really was [*sic*] not really integrated. We had white officers and very few black officers in the 24th Infantry Regiment...We used to always have some racial conflicts with them (other outfits like the 11th Airborne) when we were in Yokohama or Tokyo."[85] After he was transferred to Camp Sendai as the only black in the telephone and teletype communications company after the disbandment of the 24th Infantry Regiment in the middle of the Korean War, he faced more direct forms of racism in the white-dominant unit: he was called "boy" by white soldiers, branded as a "troublemaker" by his superior officers, and his promotions were often passed for less

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[84] George Lipsitz, "Frantic to Join... the Japanese Army": Black Soldiers and Civilians Confront the Asia-Pacific War," eds. T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, and Lisa Yoneyama, *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 367.

[85] Interview, John Cash with Ivory Perry, September 8, 1988, CMH files.

qualified white soldiers than he.[86] Moreover, Perry was court-martialed in February 1953 at Camp Sendai for two alleged violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice: possession of heroin and disobeying a direct order. Although he denied both of these allegations in his appeals, Perry was sentenced to two years' service in prison and finally received his "dishonorable" discharge in March 1954.[87] Based on a "secure sense of purpose" with which he returned to the United States as a black combat veteran, Perry played critical roles as a local community organizer in the grassroots struggle for racial and economic justice in St. Louis from the mid-1950s through the 1980s.[88]

African American soldiers in and around the 24th Infantry Regimen stationed at Camp Gifu, who achieved a sense of racial and masculine empowerment through their military experience as occupation soldiers in Japan, gained new perspectives on the problems of race and racism in a larger American society as well as within the U.S. Army. When African American soldiers returned to their home country after being released from their military service overseas, what they encountered in the civilian world of the United States was the cruel everyday reality of racial injustice and oppression. The African American veterans who had served their country as members of the U.S. Army often experienced white violence and insult. The incidents of racial injustice and oppression confronting the returning African American soldiers in postwar America included racial hostility and violence against black GIs in uniform, few employment opportunities, and

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[86] Interview, John Cash with Ivory Perry, September 8, 1988, CMH files; Lipsitz, *A life in the Struggle*, 57-63.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Lipsitz, *A life in the Struggle*, 62. See especially chaps. 3-8, for Ivory Perry's involvement in the local civil rights activism in St. Louis.

persistent Jim Crow practices in transportation, education, restaurants, and other public areas in the South. Facing the gap in racial reality between that which they experienced while stationed in occupied Japan and that which they encountered in their own communities, some African American veterans, like Ivory Perry, might have joined the grassroots struggle for racial equality, which led later to the development of the modern Civil Rights Movement, with a heightened sense of racial justice and masculine militancy which they nurtured during their overseas military experience in Japan and Korea.

Part III
Negotiating Race and Womanhood among African American Women in Occupied Japan

Chapter 5
Racial and Feminine Empowerment and Resistance among African American Women in Occupied Japan

In this chapter, I bring African American women, who were traditionally ignored in both the popular and academic discourse of the U.S. occupation of Japan either in Japan or in the U.S., to the center of analysis as major actors in shaping the gendered formation of the "Black Pacific." Regardless of their social backgrounds in the U.S., African American women, on the one hand, achieved the feminine sense of empowerment by exploring alternative racial identities, gender roles, and class positions in occupied Japan, while they enjoyed considerable political prerogatives and economic advantages vis-à-vis Japanese citizens as members of the U.S. occupation forces. Some black women, especially the civilian personnel who highly advanced their rank within the U.S. Army, enjoyed the luxurious lifestyles attendant to their privileged position to hire the Japanese maids as well as their access to extensive leisure and shopping activities. They developed an appreciation for the sense of interracialism and internationalism while living, working, and fraternizing with the Japanese and white Americans in the integrated and multiracial settings. On the other hand, African American women continued facing racism and sexism within the U.S. military and from the patriarchal sector of the black communities in Japan. Black Army nurses protested racial segregation and discrimination within the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in various ways.

The African American women stationed in Japan during the period of U.S. military occupation were diverse in their status and background, although the majority of them were affiliated with the U.S. occupational forces in some way, whether their status was military or civilian. These African American women can be divided into several

groups in relation to their social status in occupied Japan; such factors include their military-civilian status, organizational affiliation, occupation and assignment, military rank, and familial status.

The first group of African American women who served in occupied Japan was the Women's Army Corps (WAC) within the U.S. Eighth Army in Far East Command. The Women's Army Corps was established initially as the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) in 1942 and was converted to the WAC in 1943 due to the military and political exigencies of World War II. Some of the African American WACs, like the member of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, were assigned to overseas duties as a segregated unit and played an important role as a postal service unit in the European Theater of Operation (ETO) during WWII. [1] However, the numerical strength of African American WACs drastically declined after WWII and remained at a low level until the outbreak of the Korean War in July 1950. [2] Moreover, African American WACs remained racially segregated and discriminated in the postwar U.S. Army: black WACs were recruited under a quota system, received basic trainings in segregated units, faced

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[1] For the creation and history of the Women's Army Corps during World War II, see Bettie J. Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1990), chap. 1; Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), esp. chap. 1. On the 6888th central Postal Directory Battalion, see Martha S. Putney, *When the Nation Was in Need: Blacks in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2001); Brenda L. Moore, *To Serve My Country, To Serve My Race: The Story of the Only African American WACs Stationed Overseas during World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 1996); Charity Adams Earley, *One Woman's Army: A Black Officer Remembers the WAC* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1989).

[2] The numerical strength of African American members of the Women's Army Corps at the end of each fiscal year during the period of U.S. military occupation of Japan, 1945-1952 is the following: 3,849 (117 officers and 3,732 enlisted) in 1945, 673 (15 officers and 658 enlisted) in 1946, 319 (9 officers and 310 enlisted) in 1947, 125 (4 officers and 121 enlisted) in 1948, 352 (12 officers and 340 enlisted) in 1949, 648 (18 officers, 1 warrant officers, 629 enlisted) in 1950, 1,046 (30 officers, 1 warrant officers, 1,015 enlisted) in 1951, 1,332 (40 officers, 1 warrant officers, 1,291 enlisted) in 1952. Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978,* 415.

segregated work assignments until Executive Order 9981, which President Harry S. Truman issued in July 1947 to officially declare the desegregation of the U.S. armed forces, was finally executed. Racial quotas and segregation were eliminated in the WAC with the Army directive issued in April 1950. Initially, few if any opportunities for overseas assignment were open to African American women in the postwar WAC, although they were included in the WAC reenlistment program of 1946-1947.[3] Some black WAC detachments were assigned to the European Command in the late 1940s.[4] However, African American WACs were entirely excluded from the assignment to the occupation duties in Japan until the Korean War occurred in July 1950, while two WAC attachments (8000th WAC Battalion in Yokohama and the 8225th WAC Battalion in Tokyo), which were exclusively white, were already activated in occupied Japan in 1946.[5] Gertrude LaVigne, who had remained in the Army for eight years after serving as a member of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion during WWII, testified that many of the black WACs in the unit who were not discharged remained at Camp Stoneman, California for postal, clerical, and hospital duties without being assigned to Japan.[6]

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[3] Ibid., 85-86.

[4] Twenty four black women were sent to the European Command before June 30, 1949, in response to the requisition from the European Command for a detachment of 50 black WACs in February 1949. Putney, *When the Nation Was in Need*, 145.

[5] Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978*, 47.

[6] Moore, *To Serve My Country, To Serve My Race*, 166.

At the outbreak of the Korean War, the strength of the WAC in Far East Command, especially in occupied Japan rapidly increased.[7] The WAC had six detachments in Japan by the mid-1951, while there had only been two in July 1950.[8] The WAC personnel in occupied Japan were engaged primarily in the administrative, communications, medical, and intelligence duties at the Far East Command headquarters and other commands in Tokyo, the regional commands throughout Japan, and the general and station hospitals in Japan and Okinawa. In comparison with the members of the Army Nurse Corps who were assigned to the hospitals in Korea, the WAC detachments remained on duty in Japan and Okinawa without any requisitions for their assignment to Korea during the war, although individual WACs served in Korea on special assignments.[9] African American WACs, who had been previously excluded from overseas assignments, were included this time in the WAC detachments assigned to occupied Japan. But, African American WACs continued facing segregation in residence on the base in occupied Japan, although they were assigned as an integrated unit there.[10]

Ralph Matthews, the *Baltimore Afro-American* war correspondent, observed in September 1951 that there were several hundred WACs in the Yokohama area because of their big encampment there, while there were few female personnel seen in Tokyo and

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[7] The strength of WAC in Far East Command rapidly increased from 626 in 1950 to 2,604 in 1951, then gradually declined to 1,791 in 1952, 1,764 in 1953, and 976 in 1954. Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978*, 107.

[8] Those WAC detachments assigned to Japan were located at Yokohama, Tokyo, Camp Sendai, Camp Drew, Camp Zama, Camp Osaka, Camp Sagami, and Camp Schimmelpfenning as of June 1953. Ibid., 106.

[9] Ibid., 106-108.

[10] Historian Martha Putney points out that "blacks who were stationed in Japan in 1954 likewise lived in separate barracks." Putney, *When the Nation Was in Need*, 149.

throughout Korea.[11] The rank, place of duty, and type of assignment of the African American WACs stationed in occupied Japan varied depending on previous military experience in the WAC and their special skills. For example, Sgt. Laura A. Bullock, who had served for eight years in the WAC, was assigned to the U.S. Army Hospital at Camp Yokohama in an administrative capacity since arriving there in June 1950.[12] Another sergeant, Emma V. Routh, who had enlisted in the WAC in October 1943 and subsequently completed her assignment as a mess sergeant at Fort Knox, Kentucky, was selected to serve at the Headquarters and Service Command in Tokyo.[13] First Lt. Ossie Rountree became the first civilian woman officer in the Far East Command to be selected for a direct reserve commission in the WAC in 1952.[14]

Another group of African American military women who were assigned to duties in occupied Japan was the U.S. Army Nurse Corps. African American nurses were officially admitted to the U.S. Army and then to the U.S. Navy in January 1945. During World War II, African American community successfully engaged in the struggle to eliminate the quotas and discrimination against black nurses in the U.S. Army and Navy Nurse Corps under the effective leadership of Mabel K. Staupers, the executive director of the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses (NACGN).[15] After the war

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[11] Ralph Matthews, "Wacs and Pom Poms Wage War in Yokohama: GIs Counter-Attack in Battle of Sexes," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 22, 1951.

[12] "Attends Service School In Japan," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, December 8, 1951.

[13] "Wac Unpacks In Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, June 28, 1952.

[14] "First Civilian Woman Officer For Far East Command," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, February. 2, 1952.

[15] On the political process of the integration of the black nurses into the U.S. Army and Navy Nurse Corps during World War II, see Darlene Clark Hine, *Black Women in White: Racial Conflict and Cooperation in the Nursing Profession, 1890-1950* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), esp. chap. 8; and

African American women in the Army Nurse Corps, as military historian Mary Sarnecky suggests, continued serving in a segregated unit in the postwar U.S. Army, until their corps was racially integrated with President Truman's issuance of Executive Order 9981 in 1948.[16]

Some members of the Army Nurse Corps were assigned to duties at the military hospitals in Japan during the period of U.S. military occupation. According to Sarnecky, most of the Army nurses who were on duty in occupied Japan in the postwar period worked and lived in the Tokyo-Yokohama area, while they served in the occupation hospitals throughout Japan. Those Army nurses served with the American civilian nurses, who were employed by the military government in Japan for the purpose of raising the standards of nursing and nursing education in Japan.[17] There are records to indicate that some African American nurses were assigned to duties in occupied Japan in the late 1940s before the outbreak of the Korean War. African American Army nurses in Japan joined the celebration of the 48th anniversary of the founding of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps which was hosted by the 24th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gifu in early 1949 (See Figure 5.1).[18] Lt. Millie Hooks and Lt. Britto were two black nurses who were stationed at the 128th Station Hospital in Yokohama in the beginning of June 1949, while several other black nurses served at the 155th Station Hospital in occupied Japan. Hooks

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"Black Professional and Race Consciousness: Origins of the Civil Rights Movement, 1890-1950," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 4 (March 2003): 1279-1294.

[16] Mary T. Sarnecky, *A History of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 316.

[17] Ibid., 284-286.

[18] "Army Nurses of 155th Station Hospital, Japan, Feted as Corps Marks 48th Anniversary," *Baltimore Afro-American*, March 12, 1949; "Army Nurses in Japan Celebrating Founding," *Baltimore Afro-American*, March 26, 1949.

Figure 5.1. Army Nurses in Japan Celebrate Founding at Camp Gifu
Source: *Baltimore Afro-American*, March 26, 1949

also revealed that ten of the approximately thirty five nurses, who were processed for duty in Japan at Camp Stoneman in Pittsburgh, California in August 1949, were African American.[19] As discussed later in detail, the practice of segregation and discrimination within the Army Nurse Corps continued in some installations in occupied Japan even after the issuance of Executive Order 9981. Hooks and other African American women protested this by resorting to various means available in the trans-Pacific network of African American struggle against racism in the U.S. military.

After the outbreak of the Korean War in July 1950, more African American nurses were regularly assigned to the occupation hospitals in Japan to supplement the shortage of American nurses to treat the casualties evacuated from the battlefield in Korea. The *Baltimore Afro-American* highlighted the four African American women, Capt. Rosalie H. Wiggins, Lt. Laurence Martin, Lt. Alice H. Dolphy, and Lt. Olga Beaman, who arrived in Japan in mid-January 1951 as the first cadre of African American nurses to join the staff at the General Hospital in Tokyo.[20] Historian Mary Sarnecky points out the significant contributions of those Army nurses serving in Japan, who "suffered many of the same deprivations, rose to meet similar relentless challenges, and worked long, hard hours" in spite of their physical dislocation from the immediate combat zone.[21] In addition, some African American women served as a member of the

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[19] Millie Hooks to Franklin H. Williams, August 7, 1949; Millie Hooks to Franklin H. Williams, August 16, 1949, NAACP Papers. All the documents hereafter cited as the NAACP Papers can be found in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, *Papers of the NAACP*, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., microfilm edition, pt.9-B, reel 25.

[20] Milton A. Smith, "Four Army Nurses at Tokyo Hospitals: Philly Captain Heads Ward Staff; 2 Other Nurses in Korea Hospitals," *Baltimore Afro-American*, March 10; "Nurse in Tokyo," *Baltimore Afro-American*, March 17; "Nurse in Tokyo," *Baltimore Afro-American*, March 24, 1951.

[21] Sarnecky, *A History of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps*, 318.

newly-independent U.S. Air Forces Nurse Corps in occupied Japan. After serving as a chief nurse at the Tuskegee Air Force Base during World War II, Capt. Ruth Faulkner Johnson reapplied for a commission to Japan to follow her husband, who had been drafted and dispatched to Korea soon after their marriage.[22]

The next group of African American women who were stationed in occupied Japan were those who participated in the U.S. military occupation of Japan with civilian status. Some civilian African American women were employed under the contract with the U.S. Army in Japan under U.S. military occupation. Those uniformed civilian black women, such as Elvira Turner, a graduate of Wilberforce University were assigned to various positions within the U.S. occupational forces in Japan (See Figure 5.2). Turner visited Japan with the U.S. occupational forces in August 1949 and was first employed as a clerk stenographer there. She was soon promoted to the position of secretary and administrative assistant in the Civil Property Custodian office of General Headquarters of SCAP (Supreme Command of Allied Powers).[23] Ethel Payne was assigned to the Tokyo Quartermaster Depot to serve as director of the Special Services Seaview Club, the "interracial" club which was established for the welfare of the U.S. servicemen by the Red Cross worker Ocie Smith in 1947 (See Figure 5.3). Payne, a graduate of Northwestern University had served with the U.S. Navy at Great Lakes, Illinois during World War II, had been stationed in Japan for thirty months in November 1950. James L. Hicks, the *Baltimore Afro-American* war correspondent, focused on the role of Payne and her three assistants, Kathryn M. Davenport, Dorothy Mitchell, and June Wells, in the

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[22] Ralph Matthews, "Fate Provides Twisted Experience For AAF Nurse," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, October 6, 1951.

[23] James L. Hicks, "G-Girl in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 18, 1950.

Figure 5.2. Elvira Turner, Civilian Personnel, General Headquarters of SCAP, on the Streets of Tokyo Near Provost Marshall's Headquarters
Source: *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 18, 1950

Figure 5.3. Ethel Payne, Director of the Seaview Special Service Club in Tokyo, with Lt. Charles L. Gray of the 24th Infantry
Source: *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 11, 1950

successful management of the soldier's club in Tokyo. He declared that the four stateside women "make their program so appealing to the men that it simply outstrips the off-the-base places in providing entertainment."[24] In addition, Payne was active in the journalistic commitment to the black press in occupied Japan, writing and speaking about the interracial romance and marriage between African American soldiers and Japanese women from a perspective of African American women in her articles and interviews especially for *Chicago Defender*.[25] When she resigned from her position in occupied Japan and returned to the United States, Payne continued reporting on the lives of Japanese brides of black soldiers in the U.S. in several published articles which she wrote as a correspondent for the *Chicago Defender*.[26]

Other civilian African American women stationed in occupied Japan were those who were employed for the U.S. Department of Army, who were called "DAC's," or the Department of Army Civilians by the U.S. civilian and military personnel there. Nan Watson was one of the twelve African American women who were employed as DAC's in Japan during that time. Watson joined the Department of Army in occupied Japan in early 1947, when she transferred from her former job as a correspondence clerk at the New York Port of Embarkation. As she claimed that "we have some pretty smart people among the Negroes here, all of them a credit to the race," many of the African American

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[24] James L. Hicks, "Fine Haven For Soldiers: GI's Praise 4 Women Running Tokyo Club," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 11, 1950.

[25] Ethel Payne, "Says Japanese Girls Playing GIs For Suckers: 'Chocolate Joe' Used, Amused, Confused," *Chicago Defender*, November 18, 1950; L. Alex Wilson, "Why Tan Yanks Go For Japanese Girls: Wilson Reveals Story Behind Love Affairs Between Tan Yanks and Oriental Beauties," *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950.

[26] Ethel Payne, "New Year's Holds Sad Memories for Japanese Bride in Chicago," *Chicago Defender*, December 29, 1951; Ethel Payne, "Sgt. Japanese Wife Given Warm Welcome," *Chicago Defender*, March 15, 1952.

DAC's who were serving in occupied Japan, either women or men, had more advanced professional and educational backgrounds than the average American occupational personnel stationed there. Her friend Ann had worked as a secretary to the Dean of A and T University in South Carolina before she accepted her appointment with the Far East Command.[27] As I will discuss in the next chapter in more detail, their advanced professional and academic careers as well as their higher ranks in the military hierarchies of the U.S. Army became a source of the intraracial gender conflicts which occurred between the civilian black women and black male soldiers in occupied Japan.

In addition, there were some African American women in the Red Cross who were stationed at the military installations throughout Japan during the U.S. occupation period, whose service was deeply involved with the U.S. Army in spite of their civilian status. As the 1947 *Ebony* magazine article titled "Red Cross Girl" reported, there were 100 African American girls who were serving as Red Cross workers in occupation areas, including Japan, Germany, and Italy.[28] Sylvia J. Rock was one of the African American Red Cross workers, who served in Sasebo in Southwest Japan from October 1950. According to Rock, there were eighteen African American Red Cross women in Japan when she was serving there and then their number increased to fifty after she resigned in September 1951. She was proud of her service as a Red Cross worker in occupied Japan, when some African American men came up to tell her "how much better it made them feel to see some of us girls getting the chance to do some of the more exciting things in

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[27] Nan Watson, "Letter from Japan," *Negro Digest* 8, no. 9 (July 1950): 46-49.

[28] "Red Cross Girl: Myrtle Gross Find Fun and Work in Germany," *Ebony* 2, no. 6 (April 1947): 48.

life."[29] The service of other black Red Cross workers serving at Camp Gifu in Central Japan was considered to be "effective" among the African American GIs of the all-black 24th Infantry Regiment who were stationed there. Mrs. Bobo, who was stationed with her GI husband at Camp Gifu, observed that these female workers who were billeted in barracks were complaining that their male supply officer did not understand that women needed more tissues than males. The racial and intragender solidarity among the American base women was forged when the wives at the camp looked out for women in the Red Cross and supplied the tissues for them voluntarily.[30] As shown in these cases, African American Red Cross workers seem to have been scattered throughout the base towns in occupied Japan, while other black female personnel, either military or civilian, were relatively concentrated in Tokyo-Yokohama areas.

There were also some civilian African American women who were stationed in occupied Japan without any affiliation with the military or civilian branch of the U.S. occupational forces in Japan. Daisy Tibbs, a home economics teacher in Athens, Alabama was one of the four young Americans who visited Japan as a member of the "interracial, inter-faith" team to construct a "House of Hiroshima" as a "symbolic shrine of peace (See Figure 5.4)." The "House of Hiroshima" was a Quaker-oriented project which would house four of the 4,000 still-homeless families whose houses had been destroyed by the atomic bomb in 1945. She was selected by Quaker leader Floyd Shomoe as a member of this international mission to Japan because of her previous

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[29] Sylvia J. Rock, "Nippon Girls Look Like Americans: Ex-Red Cross Worker Says Yokohama Is Like Harlem," *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 13, 1951.

[30] Interview, John Cash with W. A. Bobo and Mrs. Bobo, undated, the U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH) files.

Figure 5.4. Daisy Tibbs, Quaker Missionary to Japan as Part of Interracial Team Building "House of Hiroshima"
Source: *Ebony*, January 1950

experience with the Nisei evacuees at West Coast concentration camps during World War II.[31]

Finally, there were other civilian African American women who were stationed in Japan as family members of the African American occupational personnel. Some of the African American women came to Japan to live with their GI sons, like the mother of Richard L. Fields who was living as his dependant in married officer quarters at Camp Gifu.[32] However, the majority of the African American women in this group were the spouses of African American male soldiers who were stationed in Japan for their military service at Army bases located throughout Japan or fighting in Korea. Mrs. Bobo was one of these wives of the African American soldiers in occupied Japan, and was stationed at Camp Gifu with her senior officer husband, W. A. Bobo and teaching at the high school on the base. Mrs. Bobo attested to the fact that the world of African American soldiers' wives was rigidly separated by race and rank at Camp Gifu, as was the male community of African American soldiers there. According to her, there was no officers' wives clubs at Camp Gifu because of race, where there were a relatively large number of black officers since it was a host camp of the all-black 24th Infantry Regiment. African American women organized a bridge club for field-grade officers' wives on a segregated basis. In addition, she explained that African American wives were not a "close unit group" at Camp Gifu because of the rank differences among their husbands. Bobo elaborated that a black officer's wife like Mrs. Wright, who was married to Cap. Wright and also a principle of the high school where she was on the faculty, could be a divisive

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[31] "Mission to Hiroshima: Interracial Team Rebuilds Homes as Shrine of Peace," *Ebony* 5, no. 3 (January 1950): 46.

[32] Interview, John Cash with Richard L. Fields, August 18, 1988, CMH files.

force which prevented the formation of the solid racial unity among African American women there. Mrs. Wright behaved like the "self-appointed social arbiter" for African American wives at Camp Gifu, because of her trusted relationship with the wife of Colonel Halloran, the commanding officer of the 24th Infantry Regiment. Bobo was embarrassed by Mrs. Wright's interference with one of her personal relationships, when Wright advised her not to socialize with one of her colleagues at the high school who was a wife of a noncommissioned officer.[33] Although the above story about African American officers' wives at Camp Gifu was not representative of the lives of the African American soldiers' wives in occupied Japan, it clearly revealed that some black wives of the U.S. servicemen experienced the intraracial tensions in terms of social status within the black women's community there because of the differences in rank of their husbands in the class hierarchies within the U.S. Army.

During the Korean War, African American wives who were waiting in occupied Japan for the return of their soldier husbands were as anxious as those stateside. Clovis Snead, the wife of Sgt. Fred Snead who was then fighting in Korea, remained in her home on the air base in Tokyo, because she could feel geographically closer to her husband there than in the United States. She confessed her worrisome and lonely life in Japan while waiting for her husband to return from Korea: "At night I say the Lord's Prayer and another day is done. I always add a few words about Fred and think of what to tell him in my next letter to him, but nothing ever happens to me that is interesting." Snead also engaged in some voluntary activities on the base by assisting at the service

[33] Interview, John Cash with W. A. Bobo and Mrs. Bobo, undated, CMH files.

club or attending various evening meetings with white women while her husband was absent.[34]

African American wives at Camp Gifu participated in voluntary work to "furnish aid and comfort" to the GIs fighting in Korea under the direction of the Red Cross workers. Some of these volunteer groups were organized on an interracial basis, as shown in the picture, which appeared in the black newspaper in February 1951, of the women of a mixed group who were preparing ditty bags, sweaters, and other goods to be shipped for the troops in Korea (See Figure 5.5).[35] These African American camp women contributed to the U.S. war efforts in Korea in gender-specific ways when they were actively involved in voluntary work to help their soldiers on the home front in the diasporic U.S. military community in occupied Japan, waiting for their men to come back from Korea.

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The diverse social positions and backgrounds of the African American women stationed in Japan shaped the heterogeneous experiences among them, depending on their status, occupation, and rank within or outside the U.S. Army in occupied Japan. In spite of these social differences, their investment in American national identity as members of the U.S. occupational forces, as well as their shared interest in the racial and gender politics, created a common ground for the peculiar experience of African American women in Japan under U.S. military occupation. For African American women, most of

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[34] Milton A. Smith, "Life One Of Waiting In Tokyo: Nearness To Battle Area No Help To Anxious Wife," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, January 6, 1951.

[35] "Women Volunteers Furnish Aid and Comfort To GI's In Korea," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, February 3, 1951.

Figure 5.5. Women Volunteers Furnish Aid and Comfort to GI's in Korea at Camp Gifu
Source: *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, February 3, 1951

whom had never been abroad before World War II, their overseas experiences in occupied Japan fueled consciousness raising and was influential in fostering a transformation of their racial, gender, and class identities. On the one hand, like their male counterparts, African American women could achieve a racialized and gendered sense of empowerment in occupied Japan, especially in their relationships with Japanese citizens, for the elevated social status conferred upon by their American nationality. On the other hand, African American women continued facing the double oppression of racism and sexism in the diasporic community of militarized as well as racialized and gendered American nationals in occupied Japan.

First, African American women were entitled to various political and economic privileges which were conferred upon them for their membership in the U.S. occupational forces regardless of their status in occupied Japan, however unequally their citizenship was defined within the diasporic military community of the United States there. Among them, African American women of the civilian occupational personnel especially enjoyed privileged lives, both economically and culturally, in their luxurious lifestyles, leisure activities, and shopping excursions in occupied Japan. In contrast, the lives of military black women in the WAC or the Army Nurse Corps were more regimented by the military regulations than the civilian one. Nan Watson, a Department of the Army civilian described succinctly the essence of the privileged life which was pursued by the civilian African American women in occupied Japan: "The expression, "You never had it so good," which is seen and heard everywhere, is not far wrong. I have luxuries I never

dreamed of—a private maid, masseuse, music teacher, art and sculptoring teacher, and still I manage to save most of my pay check each month."[36]

The additional personal narrative of African American women and their journalistic coverage by African American newsmen further substantiate such a luxurious life in occupied Japan as described by Watson. According to their accounts, African American women of the civilian personnel and in the Red Cross who were stationed in Tokyo were assigned to one of the several high-rise hotels which were reserved only for American women. The highly qualified services at these hotels, especially the Japanese maid service as well as various amenities in the hotels, including a snack bar, dining room, cocktail lounge, Post Exchange (PX), flower shop, and telephones in individual rooms, all enabled them to pursue a luxurious and comfortable life in occupied Japan which had been unattainable for them in the stateside. These African American women enjoyed their leisure hours off work by joining with their friends to pursue various entertainments available at the officer's clubs, theaters, sports facilities, and the like in their communities. They were entitled to inexpensively charter a jeep at the GHQ carpool with a Japanese driver to enjoy the nightlife. Some of them spent weekends at a Special Service Club which was located in any Japanese resort for just relaxing or enjoying various seasonal sports at a reasonable rate.[37]

Moreover, shopping in the Japanese market or at the military PX attracted special attention of the female personnel of the U.S. occupation forces, who could take advantage of their consuming power under the economic strength of the American dollar over

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[36] Watson, "Letter from Japan," *Negro Digest* 8, no. 9 (July 1950): 47.

[37] Hicks, "G-Girl in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 18, 1950; Rock, "Nippon Girls Look Like Americans," *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 13, 1951; Watson, "Letter from Japan": 48-49.

Japanese currency during that period. Nan Watson attested to this gendered pattern of exercising economic privileges by the U.S. occupational personnel in Japan with the following remark: "Dear to a woman's heart are the inexpensive values found in cultured pearls, jade, coral, star sapphires, and other jewels... The newly-opened Export Bazaar stores import the best quality goods from all over the world that sell here for amazingly low prices."[38] African American civilian women exercised their economic and political privileges attainable in occupied Japan for their own empowerment in gender specific ways. Those African American women pursued the gendered form of material desire in their social life in Japan, which was evident especially in their behaviors of leisure and consumption. Their access to luxurious social life, the release of their responsibility for domestic service to the Japanese maids in particular, encouraged those African American women to explore the alternative racial, class, and gender identities within the possibilities of newly-attained social status in occupied Japan.

As a member of the U.S. occupational personnel, African American women, like other Americans regardless of race, enjoyed their privileged position to employ the Japanese men and women to serve them for various menial jobs in occupied Japan. In the everyday situations in Japan under U.S. occupation, they saw many Japanese male and female workers serving for Americans as maids, doormen, elevator girls, drivers, and waitresses. Some African American women felt a sense of empowerment based on their national membership in the U.S. occupational forces, when they saw the Japanese people showing their respect for American personnel, regardless of race and gender, with their traditional custom of "bowing" and "grinning." Nan Watson, who just came back from

[38] Watson, "Letter from Japan," *Negro Digest* 8, no. 9 (July 1950): 49.

the stateside after a month of vacation, experienced a "feeling of potency," when she met a Japanese doorman at the office building who opened the door, "grinning and bowing," for her. Watson also felt the same way at the bank when two Japanese girls offered the way for her to enter the elevator, "bowing and grinning," upon noticing that she was an American. Sharing the same kind of experience as Watson in occupied Japan, her friend Lisa claimed, "In America we are just women, over here we each are very definite individuals."[39] For African American women who had been disempowered doubly by racism and sexism in the U.S., their experiences of enjoying the privileged national status over the native men and women in occupied Japan became a source of racial and gender empowerment which was unattainable in their home country during that period.

African American women, some of whom had experience as domestic workers in the U.S., found that they were then entitled to receiving the domestic service of the Japanese maids because of their elevated political and economic status in occupied Japan. African American civilian women who were staying at luxurious hotels were relieved of the household chores, all of which they had been doing by themselves on the stateside, by domestic service of the Japanese maids. The Japanese maids took care of various housekeeping jobs for them, including cleaning rooms, making beds, and doing laundry.[40] The maid service was also available for the married African American women who accompanied their husbands to occupied Japan for their military service in the Far East. Some of these African American wives took advantage of their economic opportunity to hire the Japanese maids for the advancement of their educational and

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[39] Ibid., 47.

[40] Hicks, "G-Girl in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 18, 1950; Rock, "Nippon Girls Look Like Americans," *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 13, 1951.

professional career as well as for the community service. Clovis Snead, the wife of Sgt. Fred Snead, who was then fighting in Korea, could afford to hire several Japanese servants in her four room bungalow on the airbase in Tokyo. Relieved of the burden of household chores with the Japanese maids and houseboys, Mrs. Snead was then able to teach two classes at the base school, take a course in flower arrangement, and was deeply involved in the voluntary activities of the base community.[41]

However, there were some ambivalent feelings found among the African American women in occupied Japan who were suddenly placed in the privileged position of being served by the Japanese workers for menial jobs, especially by the Japanese maids. Some African American women revealed their condescending attitudes toward the Japanese maids because of their complex feelings about them from their own experience as domestic workers on the American side. *Baltimore Afro-American* war correspondence Ralph Matthews reported from Tokyo that one African American wife, about whom he found that she herself had been a maid in the U.S., was complaining to him about the Japanese maid for whom she paid less than six dollars a week. This woman grumbled to him, "I'm sorry the house is so untidy. You see, my maid did not come in today. I don't know what I am going to do with that girl."[42] When she joined the privileged group of possessing a maid in occupied Japan, this woman projected her superiority complex toward the subordinate Japanese within the specific political context of dominance, colonialism, and occupation of Japan under U.S. Army, combined with her

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[41] Smith, "Life One Of Waiting In Tokyo," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, January 6, 1951.

[42] Ralph Matthews Sr., "GI's Ponder Peace Moves: Not All Anxious for War to Be Over," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 22, 1951.

own racial, gender, and class oppressions which she had experienced as a black domestic worker in the U.S., as evidenced by the distorted ways she treated the Japanese maid.

Other African American women, many of whom were placed in a position to hire domestic workers for the first time in their lives, were confused as to how to treat their Japanese maids in their house. Clovis Snead hired a college-educated Japanese girl named Suki as her live-in maid. Snead complained that Suki annoyed her husband by calling him the "master" and "waited on him too zealously." The Sneads, who were thinking of treating their Japanese maid in a "democratic" way, tried to stop Suki from calling him the master, but in vain.[43] Red Cross worker Sylvia Rock was another black woman who was puzzled to suddenly find herself in a position of hiring a maid in occupied Japan. For the first few weeks in her stay in the hotel in Tokyo, she had to battle with her Japanese maid about the details of what domestic services Rock expected from her. She frankly confessed her embarrassment about possessing a maid: "I was embarrassed to have another human being doing the things for me that I was perfectly capable of doing for my self... I did not treat them as if they were less than human. I did not try to build up my own ego at the expense of theirs."[44] Rock insisted on considering the maids as human beings, since the employment of the Japanese maids by Americans was another case of exploitative labor relations based on power disparities. She was also surprised to find that the menial jobs, including janitors, waitresses, chauffeurs, as well as maids, were exclusively performed in occupied Japan by the Japanese people, most of

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[43] Smith, "Life One Of Waiting In Tokyo," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, January 6, 1951.

[44] Rock, "Nippon Girls Look Like Americans," *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 13, 1951.

whom were university students or graduates.[45] Reflecting the history of racialized as well as gendered exploitation of black labor in the United States, the African American women, who were placed in a privileged position of receiving, rather than performing, the menial services for the first time in occupied Japan, were annoyed by the power disparities in human relations which were clearly manifested in the labor exploitation of the native men and women in occupied Japan. Moreover, the collective experience and memory of black domestic workers in the stateside armed some African American women with a heightened racial and gender consciousness and made them more sensitive to the domestic service of the Japanese maids catering to themselves than were African American men and white Americans.

Their overseas experiences gave some African American women the opportunities to expand their world views, especially their racial perception beyond the confinement of racially homogenous communities of African Americans as well as the bipolar race relations between blacks and whites in the U.S., while they negotiated various interracial and multiracial experiences in their residences, work, and social lives in Japan under U.S. military occupation. First, African American civilian women who were serving in Tokyo were assigned to stay in several luxurious hotels which were reserved only for the American female personnel. The testimonies of some black civilian women who were stationed there in the early 1950s revealed that the residential space of the civilian American personnel in Tokyo was segregated by gender and class, but racially integrated in terms of room assignment. In those women-only hotels, male visitors were strictly forbidden from going up higher than the main floor by the Japanese

[45] Ibid.

guards, in addition to the "off-limits" signs posted at each stairway. The women in those hotels were assigned according to their rank, but without regard to their race. Sharing the hotel rooms with her friends, both black and white, Nan Watson remarked excitedly, "it is amazing how the color line is forgotten on this side of the ocean, although occasionally it rears its ugly head among some few individuals."[46] Those African American civilian women were able to develop more cooperative and egalitarian relationships with white American women. The sharing of rooms in the integrated residential space at the women's only hotels was only possible within the specific political context of the U.S. military occupation of Japan.

In their work duties, some African American women were involved in various projects or assignments, which were integrated and occasionally multiracial, within or outside the institution of U.S. Army in occupied Japan. As a director of the Special Services Seaview Club in Tokyo, civilian personnel Ethel Payne was instrumental in the effective management of the interracial soldiers' club, which had a history of some racial contestations. The club was then officially declared by the Depot Commander to be "on limits" to all personnel on the depot, after the racial tension surfaced in the unit when one first sergeant ordered his white men not to patronize the club.[47] Quaker missionary Daisy Tibbs worked together and shared a room with Ruth Jenkins, a white American woman from Arizona on an interracial team ordered to build the "House of Hiroshima."[48] Mrs. Bobo, who had been a trained social worker with a master's degree in the United States,

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[46] Watson, "Letter from Japan," *Negro Digest* 8, no. 9 (July 1950): 46, 48; Hicks, "G-Girl in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 18, 1950.

[47] Hicks, "Five Have For Soldiers," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 11, 1950.

[48] "Mission to Hiroshima," *Ebony* 5, no. 3 (January 1950): 46-48.

had an opportunity to teach social studies and math at the high school on the base at Camp Gifu. This high school was an integrated institution, with a black woman as a head (Mrs. Wright mentioned above), where she was teaching both black and white students, all of whom were teenage children of field grade officers, without any problems (See Figure 5.6).[49] Moreover, African American Army nurses experienced more multiracial situations beyond the bipolar interracialism between black and white at the Tokyo General Hospital, where they encountered the United Nations soldiers of the numerous racial, national, and religious groups who were evacuated there from the battlefield in Korea. Capt. Rosalie Wiggins was impressed with the cultural diversity among the patients of "all creeds" who were hospitalized in the ward under her direction, including Turkish, Korean, and Greek soldiers as well as the "Americans of all the races and creeds that make America."[50] These civilian and military African American women thoroughly developed an understanding of and appreciation for interracialism or multiracialism through their encounters with non-black colleagues, soldiers, students, and patients in the racially heterogeneous work environment in occupied Japan.

Some African American women not only shared time and space with white Americans in the desegregated environment in their workplaces and residential areas, but they often got together with white American friends in their leisure time. In her account of their social life in occupied Japan, Nan Watson indicated that she and her DAC's colleagues spent leisure time in "mixed groups" for various sports such as skating and

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[49] Interview, John Cash with W. A. Bobo and Mrs. Bobo, undated, CMH files.

[50] Smith, "Four Army Nurses at Tokyo Hospitals," *Baltimore Afro-American*, March 10, 1951.

Figure 5.6. Teachers in the American School at Camp Gifu
Source: *Baltimore Afro-American*, December 18, 1948

horseback riding.[51] Another civilian worker Elvira Turner accepted the invitations to the homes of her Japanese friends in the company of both black and white Americans.[52] However, other African American women who preferred the company of their race and who may have yearned for black culture in the U.S. congregated at the "colored" spots. While she was stationed in occupied Japan as a Red Cross worker, Sylvia Rock often visited Yokohama, the city with the largest population of African Americans in Japan. Rock felt as if she was "back in Harlem" at the "400 Club," an "all-colored" spot where African American GIs and some Japanese girls accompanied by them were dancing to the music which was played by the Japanese bands catering to the tastes of black Americans.[53] Those African American women enjoyed leisure and entertainment off duty either in racially integrated or segregated groups by taking advantage of the opportunities to alternate interracial companionship and racial camaraderie in their social life in Japan.

More importantly, African American women expanded their sense of the world and renegotiated their racial self-perception through their interracial interactions with Japanese people. Some African American women became more conscious of their racial difference as a consequence of daily encounters with Japanese men and women. Indeed, many Japanese citizens showed special interest in the black American women who were, after all, less visible than black male soldiers due to their small numbers in the racial landscape of the U.S. military occupation of Japan. Red Cross worker Sylvia Rock often

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[51] Watson, "Letter from Japan," *Negro Digest* 8, no. 9 (July 1950): 49.

[52] Hicks, "G-Girl in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 18, 1950.

[53] Rock, "Nippon Girls Look Like Americans," *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 13, 1951.

felt exposed to the curious gazes of the Japanese people who, she suspected, saw the "first really brown American in Red Cross uniform" on the street: "When I walked down the street I would be surrounded by crowds of people who would gingerly touch me to feel my skin, my hair, and my clothes. People turned around while driving to watch me on the street. I have never felt so conspicuous in all my life."[54] Unexpectedly, Rock discovered the racial similarities between blacks and Asians as a member of the group of darker races through her daily encounters with the Japanese while she was stationed in Japan. Rock was embarrassed to find that she was racially mistaken for a Korean by the Japanese, as she was sometimes asked by them if she was American or Korean. This intriguing question of racial categorization which the Japanese posed based on their observation of her skin color was personally comprehensible to Rock, because she herself identified the Koreans as a "bit darker and taller than the Japanese" in the racialized terms. Moreover, she felt a sense of interracial sisterhood, or the gendered racial affinity for some young Japanese women in the clubs because of their appearance as well as their appropriation of black American culture. Observing the Japanese girls who were dancing in the black club in Yokohama, Rock stated that some of them were "rather brown, some had their hair cut short, and almost all could 'bop' better than many of us in the States."[55] Her encounter with the Japanese, especially Japanese girls gave Rock the opportunities to renegotiate both her racial and gender identities in terms of the broader racial dynamics of the international world. She was forced to think beyond the dominant model of racial dichotomy between black and white on the American side.

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[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid.

Some African American women contributed to the development of mutual understanding and respect between Americans and the Japanese while they actively engaged in the various forms of exchanges with the Japanese across race, culture, and nation in occupied Japan. Nan Watson attested to the wide range of international fraternization in which African American occupational personnel were engaged in Japan. She claimed that "Americans of both races are taking advantage of SCAP's decision to allow us to mingle with the masses of the Japanese people" after many establishments became "on limits" to both nationals. Watson found one social gathering at the Japanese YWCA as "highly entertaining and profitable," where she mingled and conversed with Japanese students over black coffee and dancing. The intercultural exchanges with young Japanese students at this occasion of fraternization became an illuminating experience for her to "become acquainted with the country, the people and their customs," while they seriously discussed various topics including religion, movies, FBI, and the mutual perception of their countries. Watson was also teaching a part-time English Composition class for the young Japanese students of the Business Men's Association, some of whom were expecting to go to America in the future.[56]

In addition to the black occupational personnel like Nan Watson, other civilian African American women played a critical role, as personal ambassadors to occupied Japan, for constructing a better international relationship between the Japanese and Americans at the grass-roots level during the occupation period. Quaker missionary Daisy Tibbs mingled actively among the local Japanese people either during her work hours or leisure time, when she engaged in voluntary work at the Hiroshima Memorial

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[56] Watson, "Letter from Japan," *Negro Digest* 8, no. 9 (July 1950): 47-49.

Hospital, attended the conference with the local Japanese leaders on the project, joined the multiracial congregation in the Japanese church, and enjoyed folk dancing with the volunteer Japanese students (See Figure 5.7). An *Ebony* magazine article in January 1950 featured her contributions to the interracial ideal of this mission, stating that "she fitted well into the house-building routine and won the hearts of Japanese in Hiroshima, many of whom had never before seen a black girl."[57] It is important to stress the intellectual, cultural, and labor exchanges in which African American civilian women like Watson and Tibbs engaged among the Japanese and the implications for the development of mutual understanding and respect between Americans and the Japanese during the occupation period, to balance the intimate and sexual aspects of fraternization between American GIs and Japanese women which are highly focused in both the academic and popular discourses of the U.S.-Japanese encounter in occupied Japan, especially in the case of African American male soldiers.

Some African American women were often invited by their Japanese friends to home parties to enjoy the Japanese style of hospitality and develop more familiarity with Japanese culture. Elvira Turner, a civilian occupation worker, sometimes attended Sukiyaki parties at the homes of their Japanese friends with her American friends, both black and white. At the party, she was treated with a series of Japanese dishes and drinks at the dinner table, with sukiyaki, a Japanese dish of thinly sliced beef cooked with sauce in a pot as a main dish, which was accompanied by rice and tempura and served with hot sake, the Japanese alcoholic liquor. On these occasions, Turner tried to expose herself as much as possible to the traditional customs of the Japanese by wearing a native Japanese

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[57] "Mission to Hiroshima," *Ebony* 5, no. 3 (January 1950): 46-48.

Figure 5.7. Interracial Social Activities of Daisy Tibbs in Hiroshima
***Above left*, in Volunteer Work at Hiroshima Memorial Hospital;**
***above right*, in Japanese Church; *below*, Folk Dancing**
Source: *Ebony*, January 1950

dress, taking off her shoes upon entering the house, and sitting on cushions on the floor.[58] These special occasions of intercultural exchange in the intimate atmospheres at private Japanese homes provided Turner, who continued her American lifestyle while stationed in Japan by taking American meals in a dining room at the hotel, with a chance to expand her cultural horizons by developing the level of her appropriation of the Japanese culture and life styles as well as constructing a more intimate personal relationship with Japanese citizens.

Moreover, some African American women, especially the military personnel were still segregated and discriminated against because of the institutional racism within the U.S. Army, while they achieved some sense of racial and gendered empowerment in their relationship with Japanese citizens, for certain periods during the U.S. military occupation of Japan. The following story of one African American woman in the Army Nurse Corps in occupied Japan shows how African American women suffered from racial discrimination within the U.S. Army and at the same time resisted it by soliciting the trans-Pacific assistance from a black civil rights organization in the U.S. as well as by exchanging information through the intraracial professional network among the black Army nurses in occupied Japan.

Lt. Millie Susan Hooks was serving as one of two black Army nurses in the 128th Station Hospital in Yokohama in the late 1940s. On June 6, 1949, Hooks suddenly received the notice requesting her "separation" from the Army Nurse Corps from the hospital commander.[59] Suspecting that this request was related to prejudicial judgment

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[58] Hicks, "G-Girl in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 18, 1950.

[59] Millie S. Hooks, "Request for Retention in Service," June 18, 1949, NAACP Papers.

on the part of her supervisor, Hooks filed a formal complaint with the Inspector General of the Headquarters of the Eighth Army on June 10, which stated that "since my assignment at the above installation (128th Sta Hosp), I have performed my duties efficiently in spite of the personal antagonism of the chief nurse, Capt. Johnson."[60] Hooks strongly protested the hospital commander's request for her "separation" in her complaint, claiming that Capt. Johnson ignored her "excellence of performance" and instead reported her "disqualifying inefficiency." According to her complaint, Cap. Johnson prevented Hooks from executing satisfactory performance at her duties by withholding the necessary personnel assistance from her, often reprimanding her for the insufficiency of her colleagues in the ward, and even intervening in her off duty activities.[61] On June 17, she submitted to the Headquarters of the 128th Station Hospital the certificate which indicated her "desire to remain in an active duty." In addition, Hooks filed a formal request for retention in service with the Adjutant General in Washington, D.C. on June 18th, after sensing a racially-motivated organizational plot which was targeting her beneath the internal exchanges regarding her complaint.[62] However, the Inspector General of the Headquarters of Eighth Army concluded that the "investigation did not develop facts which would warrant intervention in connection with the current action to relieve you from active duty." As soon as the investigation

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[60] Millie S. Hooks, "Formal Complaint," June 10, 1949, NAACP Papers.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Millie S. Hooks to Headquarters, 128th Station Hospital, June 17, 1949; Millie S. Hooks, "Request for Retention in Service," June 18, 1949; Millie S. Hooks to Franklin H. Williams, June 19, 1949, NAACP Papers.

concerning her complaint was concluded, Hooks received orders to return to the United States for "separation" sailing on July 1.[63]

Lt. Millie Hooks remained for another month in Yokohama, because her separation orders were suspended pending the outcome of the investigation.[64] However, Hooks found that she was involved in a more difficult situation than she had expected at the time of filing her complaint, while she testified in a series of inquiries conducted by the high commanders of the Headquarters, the Eight Army, including Maj. Hoag, the Inspector General and Maj. Clark, the Chief Nurse. These high commanders suspected Hooks' involvement in the heightened racial tensions within the Army Nurse Corps in their command, especially her complicity in the racial turmoil among some African American nurses at the 155th Station Hospital. According to Hooks, several African American nurses at the 155th Station Hospital were "aware of some conflicts and pressing for information" about her situation. There was some resistance to being transferred to the 128th Station Hospital among the black nurses at the 155th Station Hospital as replacements for Hooks and Lt. Britto, another black nurse at the 128th. Lt. Britto had already requested her transfer to the 8th Station Hospital in Kobe, when Lt. Lewis was transferred from the 155th to the 128th Station as a replacement for Hooks on June 13. The rumor about Britto's request for transfer created "furor" among the black nurses at the 155th Station Hospital, since "none of them wanted to go to the 128th." Lt. Jenkins, at first, strongly protested the order of her transfer to the 128th Station Hospital by threatening to resign from her commission when she was selected as a replacement for

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[63] Headquarters Eighth Army, Letter Concerning Formal Complaints, June 29, 1949; "Special Order," June 30, 1949, NAACP Papers.

[64] Millie S. Hooks to Franklin H. Williams, July 8, 1949, NAACP Papers.

Britto, although she "went placidly as a lamb to the 128th" in the end after Lt. Britto left there on June 17. In her letter to Franklin Williams of the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People (NAACP), Hooks clearly denied her involvement in the racial animosity among the black nurses at the 155th Station Hospital by claiming that she "gave them no information" concerning her complaint.[65] The charge of racial discrimination as practiced by the Chief Nurse at the 128th Station Hospital by Hooks heightened racial consciousness and created a chain of resistance among the African American Army nurses, including her colleague Lt. Britto and those at the 155th, who resisted serving under the prejudiced chief nurse at the 128th by various means.

In addition to the persistent inquiries about her attitudes toward army nursing and her social attitudes and relations by her commanders of the Headquarters, Eighth Army, the psychiatric evaluation which she received as a part of inquiry in the investigation regarding of her complaint was the most humiliating experience for her. She was treated by a military psychiatrist as if she was mentally disturbed for her action of complaint: "Shortly thereafter I was called in for a psychiatric evaluation, since I had been charged with being over critical, anti-social, aloof, eccentric, and possessed with an overwhelming superiority complex. Our discussion was informal, and I do not know what "expert" testimony he gave."[66] In the investigation which was ordered in response to her complaint, her commanders interrogated Hooks as if she was a racial instigator among the black Army nurses in Japan, rather than examined carefully the actual conditions of racial discrimination at the 128th Station Hospital. As a conclusion of the

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[65] Millie S. Hooks to Franklin H. Williams, June 19, 1949, NAACP Papers.

[66] Ibid.

investigation, Hooks was returned to the United States as "surplus" and for discharge under "honorable" conditions by the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, Far East Command on July 30. When Hooks arrived in the U.S. in August 11 and proceeded for "separation" to Camp Stoneman in Pittsburgh, California, her status in the U.S. Army was still suspended pending the outcome of a Board of Inquiry in the Department of Army in Washington, D.C. to determine whether she should be retained in the service or not, until her "separation" was finally instituted effective on August 24.[67]

Lt. Mille Hooks kept in contact with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund in New York. She solicited legal advice from the office about her charge of discrimination in the Army Nurse Corps in occupied Japan. During the period from June through August, 1949, several correspondences were exchanged across the Pacific by wire or by airmail between Hooks and Franklin H. Williams, Assistant Special Counsel who was in charge of her case. After a brief review of her charge, Williams promised Hooks that he would be "doing all possible to assist" and instructed her to keep him fully informed of the developments by wire on June 16.[68] Being "convicted of the just nature of her cause," Williams contacted James C. Evans, Civilian Assistants to the Secretary of Defense in Washington, D.C, on her behalf in order to determine the status of the investigation of her complaint.[69] Williams also pressured the Secretary of Defense to improve the racial conditions of the Army Nurse Corps in occupied Japan by raising

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[67] James H. Robinson to Franklin H. Williams, August 10, 1949; Millie S. Hooks to Franklin H. Williams, August 13, 1949, R. P. Ovenshine to Franklin H. Williams, August 19, 1949; Millie Hooks to Franklin H. Williams, August 23, 1949, NAACP Papers.

[68] Franklin H. Williams to Millie S. Hooks, June 16, 1949, NAACP Papers.

[69] Franklin H. Williams to James C. Evans, July 11, 1949, NAACP Papers.

another nonofficial complaint of the "only other colored nurse" who was stationed at the 128th Station Hospital, who seems to be Lt. Britto mentioned above. Expounding on her charge that she was assigned to an entire wing of the nurses' quarters for housing, Williams argued that this status of residential segregation within the Army hospital constituted the evidence to support the charge of discrimination which Hooks had raised against the chief nurse of that installation.[70]

The trans-Pacific battle of Lt. Millie Hooks against racial discrimination within the Army Nurse Corps in occupied Japan, with legal assistance of the NAACP, especially Franklin Williams, reached its climax in August 1949, when it became clear that her victory depended on the availability of the record of the investigation by the Far East Command. On August 15, Williams officially requested from the Office of the Inspector General of the U.S. Army in Washington, D.C., permission to review the entire record of her investigation before the final action could be taken for Hooks. But, Williams's request for disclosure of the record of her investigation was soon declined by the War Department which claimed that it was a "confidential" one.[71] The confidentiality of the record, which Williams thought was crucial for him to win this battle, prevented him from further assisting Hooks. On August 30, Robert Carter regrettably wrote to Hooks, in behalf of Williams who was out of the office during that time, that "in view of the fact we have been advised that the report of the investigation is confidential and cannot be disclosed except to an individual performing a governmental function, there does not

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[70] Franklin H. Williams to James C. Evans, July 18, 1949, NAACP Papers.

[71] Franklin H. Williams to Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Army, August 15, 1949; R. P. Ovenshine to Franklin H. Williams, August 19, 1949, NAACP Papers.

appear to be anything further we can do in the matter."[72] It seems from the records of their final correspondence that Hooks gave up her battle and accepted the decision of the Army authorities without further advice from Williams.[73]

The story of Lt. Millie Hooks reveals a transnational as well as gendered dimension of the African American struggle against racial exclusion and discrimination within the U.S. armed forces which continued after World War II in the 1940s, led by such black organizations as the NAACP and the League for Non-Violent Civil Disobedience Against Military Segregation, the organization which A. Philip Randolph formed in June, 1948 in response to the President Truman who reinstated the draft act without banning segregation in the military.[74] African American Army nurses who were stationed at the military hospitals in occupied Japan forged a diasporic racial consciousness in their trans-Pacific battle against the U.S. military authorities both in the Far East Command and Washington, D.C. Those African American women in the military diaspora linked their resistance against discrimination in Japan to the larger African American struggle for rights which was rising on the American side through their engagement with the trans-Pacific exchanges with the NAACP. Moreover, African American women's struggle against racism within the Army Nurse Corps in occupied Japan was configured by their gendered professionalism as Army nurses as well as their racial identities as black women. African American Army Nurses protested against serving under a prejudiced supervisor or in a segregated environment evident in some

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[72] Robert Carter to Millicent S. Hooks, August 30, 1949, NAACP Papers.

[73] Franklin H. Williams to Millie Hooks, December 29, 1949, NAACP Papers.

[74] Paula F. Pfeffer, *A Philip Randolph, Pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), 142.

hospital installations in occupied Japan, so that they could perform their duties as efficiently as possible as professional nurses.

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The experiences of African American women who were stationed in Japan with various statuses and backgrounds were crucial in the reconfigurations of their racial identities and womanhood on the basis of their American nationality in the specific historical context of U.S. military occupation of Japan. Regardless of social backgrounds in the U.S., African American women enhanced their social status in Japan as members of the U.S. occupational forces and could exercise various political and economic privileges conferred upon them for their American nationality in relation to Japanese men and women in occupied Japan. Some African American women, especially the civilian personnel, highly elevated their social status while they advanced their rank within the class hierarchies of the U.S. occupational forces and enjoyed such luxurious lifestyles, leisure activities, and shopping excursions which may have been unattainable on the American side. African American women could attain a broader perception of the world and themselves as racialized and gendered beings through their encounters with various international, intercultural, and interracial experiences in another world across the Pacific, especially by constructing friendly relationships with Japanese citizens in various settings. The enhanced social status and transformed self-perception among African American women in Japan became crucial conditions of possibility for engendering the New Black Womanhood as an alternative to the racial identities, gender roles, and class positions which they had been assuming in the U.S.

African American women still experienced racism and sexism and resisted discrimination in the white and male dominant world of the diasporic American military community in occupied Japan, while they achieved some racial and gender empowerment in the larger occupation society in Japan. African American Army nurses protested segregation and discrimination within the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in occupied Japan, so that they could fully perform their professional duties without any racial constraints from their prejudiced supervisors and commanders. As I discuss in the next chapter, African American women, either civilian or military, also experienced the black masculinist backlash against their feminine empowerment in Japan within the boundaries of conservative gender and sexual norms in the larger American society during the early Cold War period.

Chapter 6
Black Masculinist Backlash against Feminine Empowerment in Occupied Japan

African American women developed their experiences in occupied Japan for their own empowerment in terms of race, gender, class, and nation in various ways, while some of them continued to face exclusion and discrimination within the U.S. Army in occupied Japan. For some African American women, especially those of the civilian personnel who had come to Japan with more advanced academic and professional careers than others, their political and economic privileges gave them more opportunities to negotiate the alternative identities and lifestyles within the new possibilities attainable in the specific context of the U.S. occupation of Japan. While they enjoyed luxurious social lives, and lived and worked in integrated environments, they gained or acquired an enhanced a sense of the world and themselves in their relationships with Japanese citizens. However, those elite civilian black women, who were relatively free from racial discrimination within the bureaucratic organization of the U.S. Army in occupied Japan, faced the backlash from the highly masculinized African American men stationed in Japan, who tried to regulate their gender roles and behaviors by employing the idealized representations of Japanese femininity based on their patriarchal gender ideology. Some African American military women, who were enjoying relative freedom and privileges in their overseas duties in occupied Japan, also encountered gender conflicts with the African American soldiers who preferred dating Japanese women instead of black women.

One news article focusing on the interracial intimacies between African American soldiers and Japanese women in Japan under U.S. military occupation, which appeared in

Baltimore Afro-American on September 2, 1950, attracted a wide range of critical reactions from the African American communities across the Pacific, especially from the African American men and women who were then stationed in occupied Japan.[1] Under the sensational title, "GI's in Tokyo Lavish Gifts on Jap Girls, Shun Own Clubs," James L. Hicks, *Afro-American* war correspondent reported that gender conflicts existed between African American male soldiers and the civilian African American women, who were called "DACS" by the GIs as the abbreviation for Department of Army Civilians, over the black men's intimate relationships with Japanese women in occupied Japan. By showing his sympathy toward the African American women who were serving in Japan, Hicks reported from Tokyo the following story which he hated to write but felt obligated to report the "facts": "Colored women in civilian duty in occupied Japan are being ignored by colored soldiers stationed here to the point that many of the women swear that once they get 'stateside' again, they will never so much as speak to a colored soldier who has been stationed in Japan."[2] Hicks revealed to the *Afro-American* readers on both sides of the Pacific the existence of the heightened intraracial gender tensions within the African American community in occupied Japan and suggested the possible future negative impact of the widespread interracial romance in Japan on the gender relations in the larger U.S. black community.

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[1] For the recent major studies on interracial intimacy, see, for example, Renee C. Romano, *Race Mixing: Black-White Marriage in Postwar America* (2003; repr, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006); Alex Lubin, *Romance and Rights: The Politics of Interracial Intimacy, 1945-1954* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2005); Randall Kennedy, *Interracial Intimacies: Sex, Marriage, Identity, and Adoption* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003); Rachel F. Moran, *Interracial Intimacy: The Regulation of Race and Romance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Martha Hodes, ed., *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History* (New York: New York University Press, 1999).

[2] James L. Hicks, "GI's in Tokyo Lavish Gifts on Jap Girls, Shun Own Clubs," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 2, 1950.

James Hicks, in this article, critically examined the interracial romance between African American soldiers and Japanese women as an uneven relationship which was constructed upon the asymmetrical power relations between the U.S. soldiers and the Japanese in the U.S. military occupation of Japan. In his observation, African American soldiers who got "out on the loose in Japan" found that it was much easier for them to have a "good time" by dating Japanese women than hanging around with their own women, because of the "morals" of the Japanese women combined with black soldiers' position as a "conqueror of the Japanese people." Hicks questioned the sexual behaviors of Japanese women who were dating black GIs in terms of their morality by contrasting them with the civilian African American women in occupied Japan, who were there "under government regulations and subjected to rigid moral discipline."[3]

However, Hicks' criticism targeted mainly the African American men who "virtually own the Japanese girls" by wielding power from their overwhelming political and economic ascendancy over the subjugated Japanese. Those African American GIs not only lavished Japanese girls with the gifts which they purchased from the Army PX, but also bought homes in Japan to "shack up" with their Japanese girls. Such Japanese women who were dating the GIs were referred to as "Mooses," the GIs' slang for "Musume" which meant "girl" in Japanese. In his interview with the civilian African American women, they told Hicks straight, "No place to go. No escorts," when they were asked about their plan on a Sunday night. Those civilian black women, most of whom were single and considered "attractive" in Hicks' standards of beauty as well as "interesting" company, were reported to have remained in their hotel rooms and banded

[3] Ibid.

together for their own fun, while black men were chasing the "Mooses." In his opinion, it was the African American men chasing the Japanese women that were responsible for the intraracial gender conflicts over the black-Japanese interracial intimacy which were developing between African American soldiers and civilian African American women in Japan under U.S. military occupation.[4]

James Hick's controversial statement that African American GIs favored Japanese women over African American women in his coverage of visible black-Japanese interracial romance in occupied Japan attracted a variety of critical responses from his readers. First, Hicks was "sharply" criticized by the African American women, who had served as critical informants for his story, with the accusation that it made them "look like a group of women who could not get and hold their men." He also encountered the African American GIs, who got "hot" about his story because it "touched on a subject which might put them in an unfavorable light with the folks back home."[5] But he stressed that "no soldier was found who denied the truth of the article" in spite of the opinion that the article should not have been written.[6] Hicks' article opened a Pandora's Box which discovered the sensitive issue of gender and sexual conflicts within the African American community in occupied Japan. The disclosure of the intraracial gender and sexual confrontations among African Americans in occupied Japan to the larger black community on the American side, in his article, might have damaged the

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[4] Ibid.

[5] James L. Hicks, "Officer Says Our Girls in Japan Not Attractive: Defends Morals of Native Women," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 25, 1950.

[6] James L. Hicks, "Japanese or American Girls: Which? Why?: Soldiers Say They Prefer Type Which Ackowledges [*sic*] Man as Head of the House," *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 7, 1950.

respectability and pride of both African American soldiers and civilian African American women in gender-specific ways.

A year after the appearance of James Hick's sensational article on the African American soldiers who were favoring the Japanese women over the civilian African American women, the *Baltimore Afro-American* published in September 1951 another piece which, this time, highlighted the intraracial gender conflicts between African American soldiers and the military African American women in Japan under U.S. military occupation. Under the title of "Wacs and Pom Poms Wage War in Yokohama," *Afro-American* war correspondent Ralph Matthews reported the African American soldiers' association with the Japanese "Pom Poms," or street walkers, and the increased gender tensions between African American GIs and WACs as well as the racial tensions between African American WACs and Japanese prostitutes in Yokohama. Matthews explained that this racial and gendered confrontation around African American soldiers occurred most acutely in Yokohama where "several hundreds" of WACs were stationed.[7]

Reporter Ralph Matthews, like James Hicks, argued that African American soldiers were ignoring African American women in the military in favor of Japanese prostitutes. He interviewed dozens of complaining WACs in Japan. With his vivid illustrations of this three-sided racial and gendered battle in Yokohama, he suggested that African American WACs were "boiling mad" because of the African American GIs on duty who were escorting their Japanese girl friends around in their jeeps instead of picking up the WACs for their official duties (See Figure 6.1, above left). He also described the racially contrasted intimate situations between an African American WAC

[7] Matthews, "Wacs and Pom Poms Wage War in Yokohama," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 22, 1951.

and a Japanese woman in Yokohama, in which an African American GI was seen dating a Japanese woman who was wearing Western-style clothes and lavishing her with many goods on the shopping arcade, while an African American WAC was seen shopping alone there (See Figure 6.1, above right). In addition, Matthews clearly impressed his readers with the interracial antagonism between African American WACs and Japanese women, when he portrayed WACs laughing at the "heartbroken" Japanese girls who were left lonely with a "little brown baby to rear" by their African American GIs, who "promise faithfully they're coming back, but they seldom do (See Figure 6.1, below)."[8] In addition to their coverage in black newspapers, a popular black magazine also took up the gendered interracial tensions between African American women and Japanese women in occupied Japan. The *Ebony* magazine article of March 1952 reported that there was "more than a suspicion of distaste between many Negro women in Japan and the Japanese brides of Negro soldiers," as well as some intraracial friction between Japanese brides and Japanese personnel working in the U.S. establishments, in its coverage of the responses to the interracial marriage between African American soldiers and Japanese women in occupied Japan.[9]

In response to the assertion that African American men were ignoring black women in occupied Japan in favor of Japanese women, made by African American newsmen, African American soldiers defended their behaviors regarding their intimate

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[8] Ibid.

[9] "The Truth about Japanese War Brides: Negro Soldiers Learn to Admire Legendary Qualities of Attractive Nippon Women," *Ebony* 7, no. 5 (March 1952): 23. On Asian warbrides, see, for example, Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); Regina Frances Lark, "They Challenged Two Nations: Marriages between Japanese Women and American GIs, 1945 to Present" (PhD. diss. University of Southern California, 1999); Gina Marchetti, *Romance and the 'Yellow Peril': Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

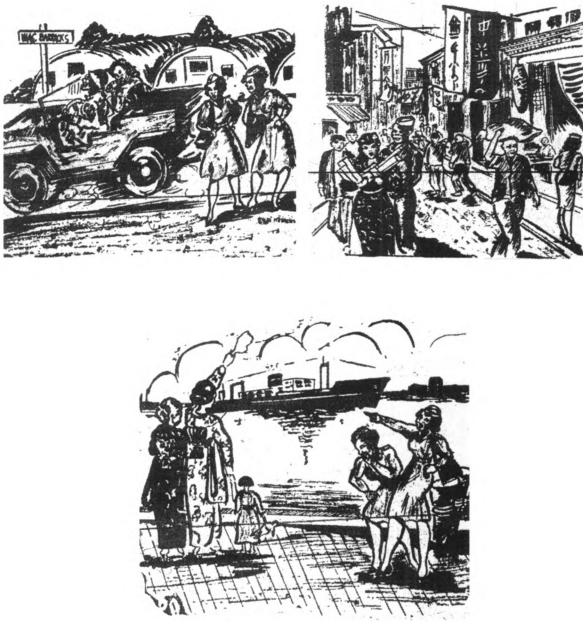

Figure 6.1. 'Battle' Between Wac's and Native Girls Rages in Japan
Source: *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 22, 1951

relationship with Japanese women by attacking the African American women whose gender attitudes and roles, they considered, were deviant because of their elevated social status in occupied Japan. Initially, the most critical reaction to Hicks' article came from incensed African American soldiers, whom he had accused of ignoring African American women in favor of Japanese women since they found that the morals of Japanese women were more tailored to the kind of life which they wished to pursue in Japan. These African American GIs, most of whom never denied the truth of his report but complained about his unfair treatment of the issue in favor of civilian African American women, defended their interracial sexual behaviors in Japan by blaming the civilian black women for various reasons.

First of all, some African American soldiers attributed the gender and sexual deviancy among the African American women, either civilian or military, to their miserable romantic situation in which they had difficulty in getting dates in occupied Japan. Lieutenant Clinton Moorman, who was then serving as a public information officer for the 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea, was one of the harshest critics of James Hick's "distasteful" article, claiming that it "contained very, very little truth." "To be brutally frank," Moorman stated, "I have been highly disappointed in colored DAC's here in the Far East as to looks, personality, general appearance and over-all conduct." Challenging the Hick's standards of "attractiveness" in his evaluation of the civilian African American women whom he had met in Tokyo, Moorman continued: "Now think yourself! A young girl 8,000 miles away from home and unmarried. Why? The average girl that is attractive would never go so far without marrying. That is nowadays. Oh, yes,

you may run across one but then *she is not interested in men anyway* (my italics)."[10] Another black officer of the 24th Infantry Regiment in South Korea shared a similar sentiment toward civilian black women in occupied Japan, claiming that "most of the girls who are willing 'to venture that far from home' are girls who have had some *maladjustment* and were looking for an escape (my italic)." He also characterized these civilian African American women, most of whom had held some degrees in social work, as "one-sided book worms."[11] African American officers in occupied Japan pathologized the African American single women who were engaged in the unfeminine military project of the U.S. occupation of Japan in peacetime, even if they served as civilian workers, as deviance from the traditional female gender roles and sexual standard in the United States.

African American WACs were more explicitly associated with gender and sexual deviancy for their unquestionably professional military background in occupied Japan by African American men, than were the civilian black women serving in the Department of Army there. Ralph Matthews' *Afro-American* article introduced the voice of one African American officer of high intelligence as the "consensus of male opinion" about the WACs in Yokohama. This black officer observed that his soldiers did not call the African American women in the U.S. military WACs but "SSRS," which in GI's parlance meant "Stateside Rejects." He explained the gendered motives of the "disillusioned" and/or "frustrated" African American WACs for joining the Army in "peacetime" as follows: "Most of them could not land a man back home where they could pretty

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[10] Hicks, "Officer Says Our Girls in Japan Not Attractive," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 25, 1950.

[11] Hicks, "Japanese or American Girls: Which? Why?" *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 7, 1950.

themselves up with all the frills the fashion experts could conjur [sic] up. So what makes them think of a GI, after a tough tour at the front, could go hunting somebody who looks as drab in a khaki uniform as he does."[12] This officer reinforced the pervasive gender assumption among African American soldiers in Japan that those women came all the way to join the U.S. military occupation of Japan, because they could not sexually appeal to black men on the American side.

These African American officers' critical remarks about the femininity of African American women in occupied Japan reflected the gender and sexual ideology of the larger American society in the early 1950s. The contemporary conservative African American gender and sexual norms were constructed within the anti-communist political and ideological context of Cold War domesticity. In *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (1999), historian Elaine Tyler May argues that the cold war ideology of "domestic containment," which aimed at regulating gender and sexuality within the confines of the heterosexual marriage and nuclear family, was pervasive beyond the racial and class boundaries during the 1940s and 1950s in the postwar American society.[13] Historian Megan Taylor Shockley suggests, in her case study of African American women in Detroit and Richmond during and after World War II, that the politics of domesticity and their emphasis on traditional gender norms were influential in the shaping of postwar racial activism among middle-class African

[12] Matthews, "Wacs and Pom Poms Wage War in Yokohama," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 22, 1951.

[13] Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*, Rev. ed. (Basic Books, 1999), esp. introduction and chap. 1.

American women.[14] The suspicion about the motives of African American women for joining the U.S. military occupation of Japan on the part of African American officers reveals that they embraced, like the middle-class black women in the U.S., the conservative gender norms about femininity in the dominant domestic ideology. For them, women's participation in the U.S. military engagement overseas was no longer tolerated in peace time in light of gender normativity of the period. This pathological view of the "unfeminine" African American woman owing to their military association was pervasive among African American enlisted men and officers, within the African American military community in occupied Japan.

When African American soldiers pathologized both civilian and military African American women who were serving in the U.S. military occupation of Japan as deviant from the gender and sexual norms of the period, they reproduced in some ways the negative popular discourse concerning the WAC during World War II. In her study of the Women's Army Corps during World War II, historian Leisa D. Meyer argues that a series of sexual images of American female soldiers, which were consolidated and resisted through the slander campaign targeting the women's corps during WWII were influential in shaping popular perceptions of the WAC during and after the war. The pervasive suspicion on the part of African American soldiers about black women's sexual motives for joining the Army or the Department of Army was established upon the popular representation of the WAC as the "morale booster" to male soldiers as well as

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[14] Megan Taylor Shockley, *"We, Too, Are Americans": African American Women in Detroit and Richmond, 1940-54* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), chap. 3. Shockley argues that the middle-class African American women in Detroit and Richmond embraced the dominant ideology of "domestic womanhood" as well as "traditional respectability" in their rearticulation of the discourse of "responsible patriotism," so that they could make claims on the postwar state for equal citizenship and economic opportunities within the Cold War context.

their alleged "sexual independence" or "sexual immorality."[15] In addition, Lt. Clinton Moorman rearticulated the popular discourse of the WAC which associated mannishness and lesbianism among female soldiers with his explicit reference to the lack of sexual interest in men among the civilian African American women in occupied Japan. He reinforced the African American masculine discourse about sexual deviancy among the civilian African American women, who were engaged in the manly military project of occupation in Japan, by invoking the popular association between women's sexual independence, female masculinity, and lesbians within the WAC.[16]

Second, some African American soldiers pointed out the existence of the gendered intraracial class hierarchy within the U.S. Army which prevented the African American enlisted men from asking out the civilian African American women in occupied Japan. According to the African American officer mentioned above, the African American women who were serving in a civilian branch of the U.S. Army in occupied Japan were not supposed to socialize with enlisted personnel as "equals," because they believed that they held the "simulated rank of an officer in the Army" by the briefing of the Department of Army which was given to them when they arrived in Japan. He claimed that "this little talk goes to many of the girls heads and they go around demanding that enlisted men, years their senior, reply to them with 'Yes mam' and refuse to talk with them if they do not."[17] Another African American officer stationed at Camp Gifu resented the overbearing attitudes of some African American women workers in

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[15] Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), esp. chap. 2.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Hicks, "Japanese or American Girls: Which? Why?" *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 7, 1950.

charge of running a service club, refusing to allow the enlisted men to having their Japanese girls in the club. According to him, these civilian African American women "threatened to quit if they were allowed," although there were only several women to entertain a battalion of soldiers in the service club.[18]

Challenging the James Hick's report that African American GIs were ignoring the civilian African American women in favor of the Japanese women, Lt. Clinton Moorman stated that it was the "GI's being ignored by the colored DAC's" for their class difference within the U.S. military:

> Then there were well over 3000 soldiers. I have yet to see the young (or what have you) ladies spend much time with the enlisted men. And none with any below sergeant. Why?? Because they would much rather associate with the officers and take advantage of the numerous privileges that we are fortunate enough to have. Many enlisted men have asked for dates, but have been promptly turned down.[19]

During the Christmas season, those African American enlisted men sent many gifts to the civilian women in an attempt to "crack the ice," but in vain.[20] By stressing the class dimension of this intraracial gender conflicts within the African American community in occupied Japan, Moorman, like other black officers, blamed the civilian black women in the Department of Army for their sense of superiority and class privilege over the African American enlisted men, whose chances of promotion were limited due to the persistence of racial discrimination within the U.S. Army in occupied Japan during this period.[21] The attitudes of the civilian African American women, who demanded respect and even

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Hicks, "Officer Says Our Girls in Japan Not Attractive," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 25, 1950.

[20] Ibid.

[21] See Chapter 3 of this dissertation for the persistence in racial segregation and discrimination within the U.S. Army during the U.S. military occupation of Japan.

obedience from the African American enlisted men by claiming their superior class status within the U.S. Army, violated the masculine pride of African American soldiers which had been supported by their sense of patriarchal privileges in the contemporary gender and sexual politics within African American communities.

Clinton Moorman further criticized the enhanced class consciousness among the civilian African American women in relation to enlisted men in occupied Japan in terms of their morality. Moorman claimed that "rigid moral discipline my eyeball!" when he observed the sexual behaviors of the civilian African American women, who frequented a Japanese hotel "for a night with their man of interest" or brought them to the DAC quarters overnight. He tried to confront Hick's assumption of the moral superiority of African American women who, Hicks argued, were morally disciplined under the rigid U.S. governmental control, over the Japanese women. Moorman ironically stated that "oftentimes money has been known to change the DAC's morals quite contrary to the description." In contrast, he argued, "there are Japanese girls from very good families who would stop [*sic*] no lower than the better young ladies of any other country."[22] Moorman suggested that morals were not racial but class matter, when he criticized the sexual morals and attitudes of the civilian African American women, who caused serious class tensions with a sense of superiority over black enlisted men in the intimate affairs within the African American community in occupied Japan. Moorman, on the one hand, employed the discourse of "respectability," which was historically influential among the middle-class African American men and women, in his judgment of the sexual morals

[22] Hicks, "Officer Says Our Girls in Japan Not Attractive," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 25, 1950.

and attitudes among the civilian African American women and the Japanese women.[23] On the other hand, he left unquestioned the sexual behaviors of African American soldiers in occupied Japan in light of his sexual double standard, whether they were dating African American women or Japanese women.

Next, African American soldiers tried to defend their sexual behaviors and morals in their relationship with Japanese women, which took both intimate and exploitative forms, in terms of their masculinized as well as militarized sexual norms which were nurtured within the U.S. occupation Army. In his defense against Ralph Matthew's allegation that African American soldiers were not asking African American WACs for dates in favor of the "pom poms," an African American officer stationed in Yokohama claimed that the WACs who "invariably travel in pairs" were inconvenient for an easy pick up, because a "guy on short-term leave hasn't got a lot of time to waste jockeying for position." He also admitted that African American WACs, who "expect to be pampered just as if they were at home under their mama's apron strings," were not suitable for a more casual sexual life which some African American soldiers expected to pursue in Japan. In contrast, the Japanese women, more specifically the street walkers, who were not only wandering alone but also not begging for dates, long courtships, or promise to marry, were more appropriate companions for African American GIs to

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[23] For the politics of respectability in the middle-class African American community, see Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993); Kevin K. Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Deborah Gray White, *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894-1994* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999); Victoria W. Wolcott, *Remaking Respectability: African American Women in Interwar Detroit* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Shockley, *"We, Too, Are Americans."*

"make a fast play."[24] This officer's explanation about the African American GIs' sexual preference for Japanese prostitutes over African American WACs reveals a highly exploitative dimension of the militarized masculinity and sexuality among African American soldiers, who degraded the bodies and womanhood of native women only as sexual objects in Japan under U.S. military occupation.

Most importantly, African American soldiers often drew on the patriarchal representation of Japanese femininity in their criticism of black womanhood in occupied Japan. One African American soldier in South Korea praised the Japanese women's traditionally-nurtured obedient attitude toward their men as their major charming point. He stated that "the whole thing is that the women of the Eastern world have been conditioned to the fact that a man is head of the house and when one falls in love with a guy she simply gets behind him and lets him lead the way."[25] Another African American soldier deployed the image of subordinate Japanese femininity as a point of reference for criticizing the gender behaviors among the civilian African American women in occupied Japan, with the following highly challenging remark: "They never saw the day they could hold a light to a Japanese girl when it comes to treating a man like he should be treated. Let them howl. Maybe it will wake them up and they will stop taking men for granted."[26] Revealing clearly the self-serving defensive rationale for male privilege within the contemporary patriarchal black gender politics, he attacked the femininity of the civilian African American women who, with their enhanced social status in occupied Japan,

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[24] Matthews, "Wacs and Pom Poms Wage War in Yokohama," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 22, 1951.

[25] Hicks, "Japanese or American Girls: Which? Why?" *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 7, 1950.

[26] Ibid.

seemed to be less subordinate and even more domineering than the Japanese women in their attitude toward African American men, especially toward the black enlisted men who were lacking any rank.

In response to the discursive denigration of their womanhood in the African American masculinist constructions of "submissive" Japanese women, some civilian and military African American women in occupied Japan confronted the charge of their gender deviancy by criticizing Japanese women as well as African American soldiers in both racial and gendered terms. Ethel Payne, who had been stationed for thirty months in occupied Japan and then served as a director of Army Services Club in Yokohama, was the civilian African American woman who most vocally opposed the interracial dating and marriage between African American soldiers and Japanese women. She especially focused on the "submissiveness" of the female Japanese. Payne rearticulated the dominant American Orientalist view of Japanese women as the victims of the Japanese patriarchy, when she stressed the emancipation of the Japanese women, who "even at best, had been virtually a slave," by a special Women's Division under the U.S. military occupation. Drawing on the contemporary Orientalist American discourse about Japanese women, she reconfigured a racially and class-based exotic representation of Japanese women as poor peasants on the rice paddies:

> The poorer class (Japanese women)... long-used to the straight-lined simplicity and full sleeves of the kumono [*sic*]. The awkwardness of hooks and eyes, buttons and the intricacies of Western dress proved to be very confining. Moreover, the peculiar Japanese physique of the average peasant is short torsoed and high waisted, was not easily adaptable to the long-limbed, long torsoed style of European and Americans.[27]

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[27] Ethel Payne, "Says Japanese Girls Playing GIs For Suckers: 'Chocolate Joe' Used, Amused, Confused," *Chicago Defender*, November 18, 1950.

Payne invested in the highly Orientalist representation of the Japanese women as "exotic" beings who were naturally incongruent with Westernization for racial as well as cultural reasons. According to Payne, it was an "Emancipation Proclamation" for a Japanese woman who had suffered from sexist oppression for long years to encounter the "GI Joe," who rescued her out of the rice paddies and the "centuries of submissiveness" in the specific political context of the U.S. occupation of Japan.[28]

Ethel Payne critically challenged the Japanese women's submissiveness toward their men, the gender characteristic which African American men admired so greatly. From a historical perspective of the patriarchal oppression of women in Japan, Payne regarded the Japanese women's obedient attitude in their gender relations just as a conventional cultural pattern of behavior. She declared, "By tradition, the Japanese woman is submissive. To the man of her choice or the one who wins her attention she presents a convincing superficial respectfulness and affection."[29] Payne also charged Japanese women for exploiting "coolly" their "very helplessness" as a "powerful weapon and asset" to them, so that they could win the hearts of African American soldiers. As the article featuring Payne concluded, the "Nipponese girls are playing GI's for suckers.[30]

In the discursive construction of Japanese femininity among African Americans in Japan under U.S. military occupation, both African American women and men drew on the contemporary American Orientalist discourse of the Japanese women as victims who were recently liberated from the Japanese patriarchal constraints by the U.S. occupation

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[28] Ibid.

[29] L. Alex Wilson, "Why Tan Yanks Go For Japanese Girls: Wilson Reveals Story Behind Love Affairs Between Tan Yanks and Oriental Beauties," *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950.

[30] Payne, "Says Japanese Girls Playing GIs For Suckers," *Chicago Defender*, November 18, 1950.

army, but they did it in gender-specific ways. African American soldiers and newsmen embraced the image of "subservient" Japanese femininity as a virtue catering to their gendered needs, without considering the historical context of patriarchal social structure and ideology in traditional Japanese society. In contrast, African American women, like Payne, problematized the submissive gender attitudes among Japanese women as a cultural manifestation of the uneven power relations between men and women in Japan, while they examined them in the historical context of sexist and patriarchal oppression in Japan.

Next, African American women in occupied Japan directed the brunt of their criticism against the gender and sexual behaviors among African American male soldiers in their interracial engagement with Japanese women in occupied Japan. Ethel Payne blamed African American men for their exploitation of Japanese women's submissiveness to satisfy their masculine pride and needs in their intimate relationships. She indicated, by quoting the Gallup Poll in 1946 and 1947, that what American GIs found most satisfactory about Japanese women was their "meekness" and their "willingness to serve," compared with "too independent" American women. According to Payne, African American GIs, like white American GIs, found their masculine egos more satisfied by the subservient attitude of Japanese women than less obedient American women: "Suziko San (Payne called Japanese women)—now shes [*sic*] different. Fetch your shoes, wash, cook, iron, and sew. 'Keep quiet' when you want her to. Never talk back, laugh when you want her to."[31] Thelma Scott, another civilian African American woman, agreed with her on Japanese women's subservience by

[31] Ibid.

insisting that it was "not unusual... for the Japanese girl to shut up when ordered to do so and to voluntarily look after every whim of her mate while he is with her," while the "American woman won't keep her mouth shut and resents bending to a man."[32] Their consolidated image of "submissive" Japanese femininity, combined with their apparent competition and rivalry with Japanese women, became a focal point among the African American women in Japan for opposing the interracial intimacies between African American men and Japanese women.

African American women also criticized the sexual behaviors of African American men in their interactions with Japanese women. Some of them were further shocked to find that African American soldiers were sexually pursuing the "pom poms," or the Japanese professional prostitutes who were walking the streets, looking for customers. One African American WAC who was stationed in Yokohama admitted that she was "ashamed" and "disgusted" by the African American soldiers, who were "burning the town catering their Pom Poms around" in their jeeps instead of picking up the WACs for their official duties, even while they were on duty. This African American WAC showed disdain for the "pom poms" for their degraded womanhood: "They get away with murder, because, to a girl who never had but one kimono in her life, even a $2 dress is a windfall."[33] However, she expressed more bitter contempt against those African American soldiers for their disrespectable sexualized masculine behavior: "Some of these fools from the backwoods, who perhaps never had a girl in their lives, think they are living great with a little straight-haired girl fawning all over them. Some of them

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[32] Wilson, "Why Tan Yanks Go For Japanese Girls," *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950.

[33] Matthews, "Wacs and Pom Poms Wage War in Yokohama," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 22, 1951.

spend all their earnings on their girls and their families while their own relatives back home are suffering."[34] In her eyes, these soldiers, who could not sexually attract women in the U.S., approached the professional Japanese prostitutes with an enhanced economic power which they attained through power disparities in the colonial relations between Americans and Japanese in Japan under U.S. military occupation. They also violated the familial ideal in the era of Cold War domesticity by lavishing money and gifts on Japanese prostitutes for sexual favors at the expense of the economic well-being of their families in the United States.[35]

Moreover, the exchanges between African American women and men over the latter's intimate relationships in occupied Japan revealed a complex politics of color, beauty, and femininity which was embedded in the triadic relationship between black men, black women, and Japanese women. The WAC's statement quoted above indicates clearly the importance of physical feature of race and its implication for the definition of femininity in the African American women's discourse against the black-Japanese intimacies. This African American WAC's explicit reference to the "straight-hair" of Japanese women suggests that hair texture served significantly in the contemporary black gender politics which defined the sexual norms concerning black femininity. Ethel Payne also argued that the skin color mattered in shaping of the interracial romance between African American men and Japanese women. Drawing partly on the historical myth of black men sexually seeking after white women, Payne claimed, "the hue of the girls

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[34] Ibid.

[35] On the endorsement of the traditional familial values in Cold War America and their pervasiveness within African American communities, especially among the middle-class black women during this period, see May, *Homeward Bound*; Shockley, *"We, Too, Are Americans,"* esp. chap. 3.

range from very fair to a nut brown. Hence it can be easily understood why our boys fall for them."[36] The relationship between African American men and the Japanese women, who assumed an ambiguous position in the bipolar racial spectrum between black and white in the politics of interracial intimacy, complicated the gendered problem of racial loyalty in occupied Japan.

The intraracial gender conflicts which developed between African American women and men in the U.S. military engagement overseas, as discussed above in the case of occupied Japan, was already manifest in the experience of the black WACs who were serving in the European Theater of Operations during World War II. In her investigation of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion which was assigned to Britain and France during WWII, historian Brenda Moore argues that members of the 6888th encountered "gender discrimination" in their relationship with black male soldiers stationed there unless they adhered to the "typical gender roles" in American society which their men expected of them. She suggests that African American male soldiers were vigilant especially about the sexual behaviors of the black WACs, as they felt their masculinity threatened when they were rejected by black women for dates or saw black women dating British or French men.[37]

There were also some tensions in terms of gender roles found between black WACs and black male soldiers in the area other than black women's sexuality. Maj. Charity Adams Earley, who served as the first black commissioned officer within the WAC in the 6888th, observed that some African American male soldiers, who had been

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[36] Wilson, "Why Tan Yanks Go For Japanese Girls," *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950.

[37] Brenda L. Moore, *To Serve My Country, To Serve My Race: The Story of the Only African American WACs Stationed Overseas during World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 133-137.

discriminated against within the military during the war, resented the presence of "successfully performing Negro women" in the military and mistook their supportive attitude toward their men as "competition" and "patronage."[38] Whether stationed in the wartime Europe or occupied Japan, African American soldiers, who considered the participation of African American women in the traditionally male sphere of the military and their subsequent racial and gender empowerment in the context of the U.S. military engagement overseas as transgression of their gender roles, attempted to police their behaviors overseas in light of the gender and sexual norms of the larger American society during that period.

Moreover, there was a clearly gendered difference between African American women and men in their engagement with interracial heterosexual intimacies in Japan under U.S. military occupation. As widely reported in the major black newspapers, a large number of African American soldiers developed intimate relationships with Japanese women and their romance caused a large-scale spectrum of intraracial gender conflicts between African American men and women in occupied Japan. However, there were few stories found in the contemporary black newspapers and magazines about the interracial romances between African American women and Japanese men in occupied Japan. The skewed sexual ratio in the African American population in occupied Japan partly explains the higher visibility of African American soldiers and their relationship with the native women than those of African American women in Japan during the period of U.S. military occupation. But, African American sexual politics of interracial intimacy

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[38] Charity Adams Earley, *One Woman's Army: A Black Officer Remembers the WAC* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1989), 187.

was more complexly arranged in the specific historical context of the U.S. military occupation of Japan.

Some African American women dated Japanese men, like civilian Elvira Turner, who dated "on alternative nights" men of diverse racial backgrounds, including a black soldier, a white American officer, and a Japanese man.[39] However, L. Alex Wilson of the *Chicago Defender* observed the African American women were not sexually attracted to the native men in occupied Japan:

> An extensive check on the love affairs of American Negro women in Japan revealed they spurn the Japanese men. Two very attractive women told me in a convincing manner that any thought of having Japanese as a boy friend causes cold chills. GIs now in Japan confirmed this. There was an exception or so, of course, but not worthy of detailed mention.[40]

Wilson additionally suggested that white American women, in contrast with black women, found Japanese men "quite attractive" in reference to the article in the *New York Daily News*, although he did not discuss this racial difference in American women's relationship with Japanese men in more details.[41]

This gendered difference between black women and men in their interracial sexual behaviors in occupied Japan was deeply related to the gender asymmetry in their sexual subjectivity formations in African American sexual politics and the masculinized sexual culture of the larger American society. The double standards in African American sexual politics of interracial intimacy discouraged most African American women from actively pursuit of sexual intimacy with the native men of the occupied nation. In this

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[39] Hicks, "G-Girl in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 18, 1950.

[40] Wilson, "Why Tan Yanks Go For Japanese Girls," *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950.

[41] Ibid.

regard they differed from many American men regardless of race and some white women in the occupation Army. Some of the sexual double standards in which African American women were socialized to embrace were informed by the masculinized sexual culture of the larger American society. In her examination of the interracial intimacies in the ETO during World War II, Brenda Moore observed that sexual double standards in American society were influential in the gendered sexual behaviors of African American soldiers stationed there: "Because it was commonly believed that women belonged to men of their own race, black men were upset when they saw black women socializing with British and French men. The women, on the other hand, could not make the same claim on the men because of the differences in the social standards and because of the traditional belief that what was good for the gander was not good for the goose."[42] Regardless of race, American men could make claims on this double standard in American sexual culture, when they policed their women's interracial sexual behaviors as a gender transgression while they actively pursued their intimate sexual relationships with Japanese women, or sometimes with American women of different races in occupied Japan.[43]

In addition to the double standards in the larger American sexual culture, there was a specific racialized history of interracial intimacy in the United States which was influential in shaping the gendered attitudes toward interracial sexual relations between

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[42] Moore, *To Serve My Country, To Serve My Race*, 136.

[43] There were some cases reported on the interracial intimacies which were developed among the American nationals between white men and black women or those between black men and white women. Observing the sight of American couples of different races in Old Kaijo Hotel in Tokyo, a *Baltimore Afro-American* war correspondent wrote, "The matter of race appears for the moment forgotten." Hicks, "G-Girl in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 18, 1950.

African American women and men. Feminist sociologist Patricia Hill Collins argues that double standards in the African American sexual politics of interracial intimacy, especially interracial marriage, operated differently for black men and women. Collins writes:

> Any expansion of the pool of female sexual partners enhances African American men's standing within the existing system of hierarchical masculinities. Thus, within Black civil society, African American women in interracial love relationships face the stigma of being accused of being race traitors and whores, where African American men engaged in similar relationships can find their status as men raised.[44]

Although Collins discusses mainly the case of black-white interracial intimacies by referring to the different histories of African American women and men in the racial and sexual politics of miscegenation in the United States, her theoretical view of a sexual double standard in African American sexual politics can be applied to the explanation of the black-Japanese interracial intimacies, but with careful attention to the specificity of the interracial relationships between African Americans and the Japanese in the historical context of the U.S. military occupation of Japan. In occupied Japan, African American men felt their racial and masculine pride enhanced in developing interracial relationships with Japanese women through the diminishment of the masculinity of the Japanese men, who remained powerless against the sexual conquest of their women by the men of the former enemy nation. African American women were positioned in the place of sexual competition with Japanese women for the sexual intimacy of African American men rather than sexually associating with Japanese men, because of the double standards in African American sexual politics of interracial intimacy.

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[44] Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 262.

Some factors, other than sexual double standards, also prevented African American women from constructing a wide range of interracial sexual relationships with the native men in occupied Japan. As historian Darlene Clark Hine points out, African American women, especially those living in the South, developed a "culture of dissemblance" so that they could protect themselves from sexual exploitation and violence by their male oppressors. African American women were traditionally socialized in a culture to dissemble their true sexual selves for their sexual autonomy in the masculinized American racial-sexual culture. The pursuit of their sexual association with the native men was not a desirable form of achieving a feminine sense of empowerment in occupied Japan.[45] African American women who were stationed in Japan, especially the black WACs whose sexual agency was already defined as dangerous in the sexual double standards of the U.S. military, shared little with the militarized as well as masculinized sexual cultures within the U.S. Army in their attitudes toward the native men and women in occupied Japan.[46] Moreover, the Japanese men were refeminized in the gendered imagination of Americans through Japan's defeat at World War II and her military occupation by the U.S. Army.[47] Such feminized men,

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[45] Darlene Clark Hine, "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women: Thoughts on the Culture of Dissemblance," in *Hine Sight: Black Women and the Re-Construction of American History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 37-47.

[46] By invoking the sexual double standards in its regulation of sexuality during World War II, the U.S. Army officials encouraged sexual "abstinence" and "chastity" among female soldiers to protect the reputation of the WAC, on the one had. On the other hand, they encouraged male soldiers' heterosexual activity as a sign of "virility" and discouraged men's responsibility for the consequences of their heterosexual behavior, including venereal diseases and fatherhood, by blaming the women with whom they had sexually involved. See Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, esp. chap. 5.

[47] Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 5; John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999), 138.

either in reality or imaginary, were far from sexually attractive for African American women, who were themselves involved in some ways with the military project of emasculating the Japanese as members of the hyper-masculinized U.S. occupational forces.[48]

In this gender asymmetry within the African American sexual politics of interracial intimacy in occupied Japan, African American men could enhance a sense of racial masculinity through their interracial sexual encounters with Japanese women, while African American women rivaled or competed with Japanese women for their men instead of sexually associating with Japanese men. This gendered reality made the intraracial gender and sexual antagonism between African American women and men more complex and explosive in occupied Japan.

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In summary, African American women confronted the gender backlash from some African American male soldiers stationed there, who tried to police the gender roles and behaviors of their women by employing the patriarchal representation of Japanese women. African American women defended their womanhood against the black masculinist construction of their gender and sexual subjectivities by criticizing the subservient femininity of Japanese women as well as the sexual behaviors of black soldiers. The race and gender oppression which African American women experienced in occupied Japan contributed to the development of their political consciousness about racism and sexism in the larger American and African American community, while they

[48] See Chapter 4 for the de-masculinized experience of Japanese men under U.S. military occupation.

achieved a sense of racial and gender empowerment from their broader opportunities, enhanced social status, and friendly relationship with the Japanese.

Part IV
Trans-Pacific Debates over Interracial Relationships between African American GIs and Japanese Women

Chapter 7
Black Representation of Japanese Femininity and the Politics of Interracial Intimacy in Occupied Japan

In Japan under U.S. military occupation during the period from 1945 to 1952, African American soldiers, like white American soldiers, developed intimate interracial and international relationships with Japanese women, despite the "non-fraternization" policy of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP). Some African American GIs casually dated Japanese woman to temporarily replace their American girlfriends, with whom they could enjoy their overseas military life together only while they were stationed in occupied Japan. Other African American GIs, who were engaged more seriously in their intimate relationships with a Japanese woman, married them and produced biracial children. The various contours of interracial intimacies which African American soldiers shared with Japanese women became one of the crucial factors important to their gendered, as well as racialized and nationalized, subjectivity formations and transformations while stationed in Japan. The news about the interracial romance and sexual relations between African American GIs and Japanese women in Japan reached the African American communities in the U.S. and provoked considerable debate among them. African American newsmen began reporting on the intimate relationships between African American soldiers and Japanese women since the outbreak of the Korean War in July 1950.

In this chapter, I examine the gendered representations of Japanese women in the transnational controversy on black-Japanese intimacies in African American communities across the Pacific in the early 1950s. The trans-Pacific debates over the interracial intimacy and sexuality between African American soldiers and Japanese women became

a transnational site of identity formations and contestations, through which African American men and women in both sides of the Pacific reconfigured race relation, gender convention, and sexual practice in the changing domestic and international political dynamics in the postwar period. African American soldiers stationed in Japan, on the one hand, consolidated their masculine, as well as racial and national, identities by claiming right to patriarchal privileges in their intimate relationships with Japanese women. On the other hand, their masculinist representations of "submissive" Japanese women in the black newspapers and magazines functioned as a disciplinary discourse to police the gender behaviors of African American women stationed there, who were exploring alternative gender identities and roles within the boundaries of their elevated social status and nationalized privileges in occupied Japan. The controversy on the black-Japanese intimacies served as a transnational site of African American gender politics thorough which African American men and women in both sides of the Pacific contested gender and sexual identities and ideologies concerning black masculinity, black femininity, and black gender relations in the political and ideological context of the U.S. engagement with the world during the early Cold War period. The Orientalist representations of "submissive" Japanese women were central to the black press coverage of the interracial intimacy and sexuality between African American men and women in occupied Japan. African American men and women who were stationed in Japan employed the image of Japanese women in gender-specific ways, so that they could reconfigure the tension-filled intraracial gender relations there either by conforming to or subverting the gender and sexual norms in the larger American society or in African American communities during that period.

It was not until the outbreak of the Korean War that news of the interracial intimacies between African American soldiers and Japanese women in occupied Japan were disclosed to stateside African American communities. Soon after the Korean War occurred in July 1950, the major black newspapers, including the *Baltimore Afro-American*, *Pittsburgh Courier*, and *Chicago Defender*, dispatched their own war correspondents, exclusively black men, to report on the U.S. war efforts against the North Korean Army in Korean Peninsula. Their racial journalistic mission as black newsmen was to provide extensive coverage of the military activities of African American soldiers in the war. The mainstream U.S. media tended to offer report only partially and sometimes with a deep-rooted racial bias against black military performance. The major assignment of these black war correspondents was to cover the military performance of African American soldiers and document their contributions to the U.S. military operations, especially those in the all-black unit like 24th Infantry Regiment, which remained segregated until its deactivation in October 1951.[1] Along with the constant coverage and interview of black soldiers on the battlefields of Korea, the black war correspondents often reported on the camp life of African American soldiers in Japan under U.S. military occupation, where the U.S. bases served as host camps for the U.S. soldiers under the intensive preparations for the combat missions, and for the furloughed GIs returning from the battlefields in Korea, during the entire period of the Korean War. It was the contingency of the outbreak of war in Korea that caused the exposure of interracial intimacies between African American soldiers and Japanese women in

[1] For the revisionist interpretation of the role of African American soldiers, especially those in the 24th Infantry Regiment in the Korean War, see William Bowers, William M. Hammond, and George L. MacGariggle, *Black Soldier, White Army: The 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1996).

occupied Japan. This coverage inspired the scrutiny of African American communities across the Pacific. The transnational circulation of the black newspapers and magazines fueled controversy and interest in black/Asian intimacies.

It was one newspaper article which appeared in the *Baltimore Afro-American* in September 1950, that ignited heated debate over black-Japanese intimacies in African American communities across the Pacific. Under the sensational title, "GI's in Tokyo Lavish Gifts on Jap Girls, Shun Own Clubs," James Hicks, its war correspondent reported that African American civilian women, called "DAC's," were ignored by African American soldiers in occupied Japan because of the Japanese women.[2] As discussed in Chapter 6, Hick's article solicited a chain of critical responses from both African American men and women stationed in Japan, who confronted his report on the heightened intraracial conflicts in the African American gender relations there in gender-specific ways. Here, more focus is placed on the examination of the gendered differences in the discursive construction of Japanese women found in the black press representations of black-Japanese intimacy and sexuality in Japan. How did African American men and women employ the dominant Orientalist representations of Japanese women in the racialized and gendered forms so that they could negotiate intraracial gender tensions in occupied Japan?

Initially, the most critical reactions to Hicks' article came from the incensed African American soldiers, whom he had accused of ignoring black women in favor of the Japanese women because they found that the morals of Japanese women were more tailored to the realities of garrison life in occupied Japan. Most of those black GIs never

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[2] James L. Hicks, "GI's in Tokyo Lavish Gifts on Jap Girls, Shun Own Clubs," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 2, 1950.

denied the truth of his report, but complained about his unfair treatment of the issue to appeal to civilian African American women. Those African American soldiers defended their interracial sexual behaviors in Japan by blaming the civilian black women for various reasons, as discussed in Chapter 6. The black press coverage of the black-Japanese intimacies in Japan indicated that African American men often drew on the masculinist representations of Japanese women as exemplars of domestic womanhood for their women. Thus, they implicitly criticized the African American women, who achieved a sense of gender empowerment in occupied Japan, as being deviant from the gender and sexual normativity of the period. Some of the gender characteristics which African American men assigned to the idealized Japanese womanhood, including "submissiveness" and "subservience," reflected the traditional gender roles and ideologies in the patriarchal societies, including their own black communities either in Japan or in the United States.

The black press coverage of the black-Japanese intimate relationships in occupied Japan illuminated the masculinized dimensions of sexual morals and behaviors among African American soldiers which were manifested in their sexual relationships with Japanese women. In their interviews with black newsmen, some African American soldiers claimed their patriarchal privileges vis-à-vis Japanese women in order to justify their interracial sexual relationships with Japanese women in Japan. They explained their own sexual behaviors there as male sexual nature, driving men across racial, class, and national boundaries to pursue heterosexual relationships with native women in the areas of their military occupation. One African American soldier in South Korea defended his intimate relationship with Japanese women as the universalized sexual phenomenon

shared by all men in the military without considering its political or social implications: "This is both flattering and extremely well linked by all men and whether it is good or not, the GI's in Japan have simply been doing what other men do everywhere else—going for the women who appeal to them most... And boy, do these Japanese girls have appeal."[3] Another black soldier claimed that "it's not just us" and even suggested that Hicks should have pointed out in his article that the "whites soldiers are doing the same thing."[4] Those African American soldiers unwittingly invested in the hegemonic discourse of the "militarized" heterosexual masculinity, which supported the "sexualization of military life" as well as the "militarization of male soldiers' sexuality" at the expense of the native women in the areas under the foreign military domination, when they shared a victor's sense of patriarchy privileges with white American GIs and other male soldiers in the world history.[5]

More modestly than those black soldiers, Lt. Clinton Moorman of the 24th Infantry Regiment claimed that the situation in which a "guy likes a girl and gives her presents" could be observed at least in several countries where he had been stationed so far, including England, France, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Hawaii, the Philippines, Korea and "most of the United States." However, Moorman stressed the sincerity of the relationship between some African American GIs and their Japanese women by distinguishing it from the militarized sexual relationships which could be widely found in

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[3] James L. Hicks, "Japanese or American Girls: Which? Why?" *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 7, 1950.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, Rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 74. For the concept and process of "gendered militarization," see also Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); and *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

other countries. He defended the legitimacy of these interracial couples by relating the fact that "many" African American GIs married Japanese women by "Shinto fashion" in Japan and that they were in the status of "common law marriages" in the American sense. He further stated that "any number of the fellows would be married to Japanese girls if it were not for the present law."[6] Moreover, Moorman, who himself became engaged to marry a Japanese woman, resorted to the prevalent ideology of "domesticity" in this period, when he defended the intimate relationships between African American soldiers and Japanese women.[7] By containing their intimate relationships within the institution of marriage, even if they were sanctioned only by religion in Japan, he tried to demonstrate the sincerity of their relationships in occupied Japan and appealed for their legal approval by the U.S. government.

The patriarchal sense of privileges vis-à-vis Japanese women among some African American soldiers could be found in their sexual relationships with Japanese prostitutes, too. In his defense against the allegation of Ralph Matthews, the *Baltimore Afro-American* war correspondent, that African American soldiers were not asking African American WACs for dates in favor of the "pom poms," an African American officer stationed in Yokohama claimed that the WACs who "invariably travel in pairs" were inconvenient for an easy pick up, because a "guy on short-term leave hasn't got a lot of time to waste jockeying for position." He also admitted that African American WACs, who "expect to be pampered just as if they were at home under their mama's

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[6] James L. Hicks, "Officer Says Our Girls in Japan Not Attractive: Defend Morals of Native Women," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 25, 1950.

[7] For the politics of "domesticity" in the larger American society during the early Cold War period, see Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*, Rev. ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1999).

apron strings," were not suitable for a more casual sexual life which some African American soldiers expected to pursue in occupied Japan. In contrast, the Japanese women, more specifically the street walkers, who were not only wandering alone but also not begging for dates, long courtships, or promise to marry, were more appropriate companions for African American GIs to "make a fast play."[8] This officer's explanation about the African American GIs' sexual preference for Japanese prostitutes over African American WACs revealed a highly exploitative dimension of the militarized masculinity and sexuality among African American soldiers, who degraded the bodies and womanhood of native women only as sexual objects.

The patriarchal sense of privileges which African American soldiers claimed in their sexual relationships with Japanese women was influential in shaping the black masculinist discourse of Japanese femininity. The black press coverage of the black-Japanese intimacies, which focused on "submissive" Japanese women, illuminated the masculinized gender consciousness on the part of African American newsmen, as well as African American male soldiers, who constructed Japanese femininity as ideal for domestic womanhood in contrast to African American women at large, especially those who were stationed in occupied Japan.[9] Franklin Whisonant, the war correspondent for the *Pittsburgh Courier* who joined the coverage of interracial romances in occupied

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[8] Ralph Matthews, "Wacs and Pom Poms Wage War in Yokohama: GIs Counter-Attack in Battle of Sexes," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 22, 1951.

[9] Historian Naoko Shibusawa points out that "Japanese women were held up as exemplars of femininity" in the shifting gender roles of American women during and after World War II in her examination of the mainstream American public discourses of the Japanese in the postwar period. But, Shibusawa does not pay attention to the racialized representations of Japanese women in black newspapers and magazines. Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 42.

Japan later than other major black newspapers, explained why the "moosey mae," or the "Japanese for girl friend" captured the hearts of African American soldier:

> The woman, since time immemorial has been taught to be submissive and servile to the men folk. She is supposed to cater to his every whim, be at his beck and call at all times and forever be ready, willing and able to work as much, if not more, than the man in any project undertaken by them.[10]

According to Whisonant, the African American soldiers who were fighting in Korea were so attracted by the "submissive" and "servile" conduct of the Japanese women that he never heard them talking of "going back to the United States," instead of "going back to Japan."[11] Ralph Matthews of the *Baltimore Afro-American* pointed out, too, the long history of Japanese patriarchy behind the gendered submissiveness among Japanese women, stating that Japanese women "have been taught for centuries that the man is boss and they accept this without question." Matthews indicated with his illustration how attentively Japanese women were catering to the various wishes and needs of her African American man by cooking his favorite dishes, sewing his clothes, and washing his body in a steaming bath every night (see Figure 7.1).[12] The African American newsmen who were stationed in occupied Japan played a critical role in shaping the African American masculinist discourse of "submissive" Japanese women and disseminating it within African American communities on both sides of the Pacific through the transnational circulation of their articles in black newspapers.

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[10] Frank Whisonant, "'Moosey Mae' Wins Hearts of Negro GIs," *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 9, 1950.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Matthews, "Wacs and Pom Poms Wage War in Yokohama," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 22, 1951.

Figure 7.1. Japanese Women Attending to African American Men at Home
Source: *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 22, 1951

Together with the role of the black press, African American soldiers whose voices were often quoted in black newspapers and magazines were central to the production of African American masculinist discourses of Japanese femininity in contrast to black womanhood. One African American soldier who was stationed in South Korea praised the Japanese women's traditionally-nurtured obedient attitude toward their male partner as their major charming point. He stated that "the whole thing is that the women of the Eastern world have been conditioned to the fact that a man is head of the house and when one falls in love with a guy she simply gets behind him and lets him lead the way."[13] Another African American soldier deployed the image of "subordinate" Japanese women as a point of reference for criticizing the gender behaviors among the civilian African American women in occupied Japan with the challenging remarks: "They never saw the day they could hold a light to a Japanese girl when it comes to treating a man like he should be treated. Let them howl. Maybe it will wake them up and they will stop taking men for granted."[14] Revealing clearly the patriarchal sense of privileges among African American men and the tensions in black gender relationships, he tried to contain the enhanced sense of femininity among some African American women, who seemed to be less subordinate and even more domineering than Japanese women.

Lt. Clinton Moorman of the 24th Infantry Regiment joined, too, the patriarchal brotherhood of male dominance with other African American soldiers when he described his favorite type of women. Moorman believed in race-blindness in his choice of a date or more intimate partner, claiming that "if a young lady is attractive, is cultured, has nice

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[13] Hicks, "Japanese or American Girls," *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 7, 1950.

[14] Ibid.

manners, who cares what color she is? Let her be pink, green, yellow, brown, white or blue."[15] However, he favored a specific type of woman when he fell in love with the Japanese woman: "That type of Japanese girl is loyal, devoted, thrifty and a good home-maker. Always YOU come first in her life." According to Moorman, in a relationship with such a type of woman, a man did "not have to spend a large sum of money on entertainment to win the appreciation of the girl." In the evening at a movie theater, she would be "thrilled by maybe a second or third rate picture" with him, while she let him know that she was "grateful for the attention given her."[16] In spite of his personal politics of race-blindness in his love affairs, Moorman racially as well as culturally preferred a specific type of femininity as ideal for his intimate companionship. He associated such characteristics as loyalty, devotion, thriftiness, and domesticity with Japanese women.

Another African American soldier, like Moorman, found some of the feminine characteristics of the Japanese women intriguing. He praised the economic sense and skill of the Japanese woman as a consumer. Not only would she not be cheated by a merchant "within her power," she was also thrifty. He noted, "When you give a musume say 200 yen to make a purchase for you, she'll come back every time with more money than you could."[17] Being a thrifty housewife was one of the distinctively traditional gender roles which were attributed to the ideal femininity in patriarchal societies. He was also impressed with the devotion of a Japanese woman for him in her intimate relationship. He did not have to worry about "wolves" or if she cared for him when he

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[15] Hicks, "Officer Says Our Girls in Japan Not Attractive," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 25, 1950.

[16] L. Alex Wilson, "Why Tan Yanks Go For Japanese Girls: Wilson Reveals Story Behind Love Affairs Between Tan Yanks and Oriental Beauties," *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950.

[17] Ibid.

took a Japanese girl to a dance. According to this soldier, "she'll sit the evening out beside you voluntarily unless you urge her to leave her seat and dance with someone."[18] He admired passivity as well as loyalty in her attitude toward him as an ideal feminine character, so that he could adhere to the traditional gender ideology which normalized the gender relations between "active" men and "passive" women.

Another African American soldier stressed the maternal nature of the Japanese women as a distinctive character of their sexual appeal. One black sergeant noted, "When my Japanese girl friend embraces me, I feel that nothing in the world can harm me—she makes me feel just that secure." [19] Frank Whisonant, the *Courier* War correspondent, explained this feminine nature of his Japanese girl friend as the "soothing quality" which he had been seeking "unconsciously for many years" and finally found in Japan. According to Whisonant, this sergeant, who had "never been quite so made over ever since the day he was born and his mother held him close to her until he was old enough to run in the streets," found a sense of relief in the maternal love of his Japanese girl friend.[20] Like other African American soldiers, Whisonant racially constituted the black masculinist discourse of Japanese femininity in contrast to the representations of black femininity in the larger African American community in the U.S. as well as in occupied Japan, when he attributed essentially the nature of maternity to the Japanese women with admiration.

Moreover, the black masculinist discourse of Japanese femininity was also racially constructed in relation to the Korean women among the African American

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Whisonant, "'Moosey Mae' Wins Hearts of Negro GIs," *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 9, 1950.

[20] Ibid.

soldiers stationed in East Asia. Under the title of "GIs Spurn Korean Gals, Wait For Jap Lassies," Milton A. Smith, the National Negro Press Association (NNPA) war correspondent, reported from Northern Korea that three fourths of his responding black GIs were opposed to fraternization with the Korean women. Smith examined several social factors which prevented African American GIs from fraternizing with Korean women, including unsanitary conditions of the "Native" Korean restaurants, the absence of attractive "on-limits" recreational facilities in Korean, deteriorated security or law and order in the wartime Korean streets, and high rate of venereal diseases. However, Smith suggested that other cultural differences, especially the Korean dietary life and their fashion style mattered more significantly in inhibiting the formation of the black-Korean intimacies. In response to his interview, Cpl. Charles W stated that Korean women "try to wear stateside clothes but they look like hell in 'em." But, he confessed that garlic was the real reason which he did not like Korean women, claiming that "I would not kiss one of these dirty mouthed women." Another GI also responded, "I don't like the way they look and I hate the way they smell. They don't wash often enough for me..." Smith concluded in his article that "stateside girls don't have to worry about girls—in Korea, anyhow" because they could not attract African American soldiers.[21] Smith reinforced the African American masculinist discourse of Japanese femininity, when he implicitly compared the cultural components of Korean and Japanese femininity in terms of their attractiveness to black American GIs in East Asia.

African American men in occupied Japan articulated the masculinist representations of "submissive" Japanese women by drawing on the dominant American

[21] Milton A. Smith, "GIs Spurn Korean Gals, Wait For Jap Lassies," *Chicago Defender*, December 16, 1950.

Orientalist discourse which hyper-feminized as well as exoticized the Japanese women through the refeminization of masculine Japan after World War II. As historian Naoko Shibusawa notes, the feminization, as well as infantilization, of the Japanese was key to "reimagining" of the former "hated racial enemy" as "valuable ally" in the overlapping ideologies of race, gender, and maturity in the postwar American public images of Japan.[22] Anthropologist Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (1946) was influential in shaping of America's "gendered" discourse about Japan and the Japanese national character in contemporary America. Cultural historian Mari Yoshihara suggests that Benedict "feminized" Japanese culture through the "emasculation" of Japanese men and masculine renditions of social order, including patriarchy and gender relations, by characterizing them as "deviant from the Western norms of masculinity."[23] More importantly, the U.S. occupation authorities and the U.S. media, as cultural critic Lisa Yoneyama argues, actively promoted the representation of Japanese women as victims of the male-dominant militarism and traditional gender norms so that they could emphasize "women's liberation," especially Japanese women's enfranchisement under the U.S. occupation in their cold war propaganda.[24] Drawing on this mainstream U.S. Orientalist views of Japanese women as victims of Japanese sexism and patriarchal oppression during the occupation period, African American men in Japan constructed their masculinist discourse of "submissive" Japanese femininity to claim their

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[22] Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally*, esp. chaps. 1-2.

[23] Mari Yoshihara, *Embracing the East: White Women and American Orientalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), chap. 7.

[24] Lisa Yoneyama, "Liberation under Siege: U.S. Military Occupation and Japanese Women's Enfranchisement," *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (September 2005): 885-910.

patriarchal privileges through their intimate relationships with Japanese women, without scrutinizing the historical context and the material reality of male dominance over women in the patriarchal social structure of Japan.

Moreover, the black masculinist discourse of Japanese femininity also drew on the preexisting sexualized images of Japanese women in the long tradition of Western Orientalist representations of Japan.[25] James Hicks of the *Baltimore Afro-American*, in his first sensational article, pointed out the sexual availability of Japanese women for African American soldiers because of their loose sexual morals and the institutionalized sexual culture in Japan like the "off limits" clubs where "Geisha gals court their favor."[26] Pvt. Frank A. Topsail, an *Ebony* reader from Nurnberg, Germany, questioned the sexual morals and behaviors on the part of the Japanese women: "If you will check on the birth and sex rate in Japan, you will find that most of the girls of Japan are very sexually over-trained. The birth rate is one of the highest in the world. I really cannot believe that most of those rape cases, if so, are on the soldiers' part."[27] Topsail articulated the dominant sexualized, Orientalist racial representations of "lewd" Japanese women, when he blamed the widespread interracial sexual relations, either intimate or violent, in occupied Japan on the alleged sexual promiscuity of Japanese women and Japanese culture, without considering the masculinized sexual behaviors among African American GIs in Japan. Other articles reported on the Japanese sexual businesses catering to American GIs,

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[25] For the sexualization of Japanese women in the traditional Orientalist representations of Japan, see, for example, Ian Littlewood, *The Idea of Japan: Western Images, Western Myths* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996), chap. 13; Jean-Pierre Lehmann, *The Image of Japan: From Feudal Isolation to World Power, 1850-1905* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), chap. 3.

[26] James L. Hicks, "GI's in Tokyo Lavish Gifts on Jap Girls, Shun Own Clubs," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 2, 1950.

[27] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 7, no. 1 (December 1951): 8.

including cabarets, brothels, and geisha houses, and their implications for the morals of African American soldiers stationed in occupied Japan.[28] The black masculinist representations of GI interracial intimacies reproduced the dominant Orientalist discourse of "lewd" Japanese femininity in its re-sexualization of Japanese women, whether they were professional sex workers or not, under the historical circumstances of the widespread sexual relationships between American GIs and Japanese women in Japan under U.S. military occupation.

To be sure, not every African American soldier in occupied Japan shared the view that Japanese women were preferable to the African American women stationed there in terms of the dominant American gender and sexual norms in the early 1950s. As the controversy on the intimate relationships between African American soldiers and Japanese women intensified, some African American GIs began to worry about the influence of the articles appearing in the black newspapers on their women in the U.S. Seven African American soldiers, who consisted of four corporals and three private first classes, sent a co-authored letter from Fohxole, Korea to the *Baltimore Afro-American*, which had carried an article about black GIs marrying Japanese girls. Arguing against some women who were "squawking that many of us have no intention of marrying over here," these soldiers strongly solicited the intimate responses from single young women in the U.S.[29]

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[28] "Second D. C. Unit Alerted: 715th Truck Co. Called to Active Army Duty," *Baltimore Afro-American*, August 5, 1951; Ralph Matthews, "GIs Sing 'Inflation Blues': Spiraling Cost of Love is Joe's Biggest Gripe," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 8, 1951; "Is Vice Menacing Our GI's?" *Jet* 2, no. 2 (May 8, 1952): 14-17.

[29] *Baltimore Afro-American*, January 13, 1951.

In his defense, one African American soldier in the Eighth U.S. Army in Korea wrote to the *Pittsburgh Courier* and claimed that most black GIs still preferred their "lovelies" to Japanese women. However, this African American GI, who identified himself as "Andy Ammos Boys," did not deploy the negative representation of Japanese women as a focal point for his construction of respectable black womanhood. On the contrary, he criticized the *Courier*'s Orientalist representation of Japanese women as a middle-aged peasant type as being "prejudiced" and having done them an "injustice." According to him, the picture of a "middle-aged 'rice paddy' Mama-san," which the *Courier* published with an article on black-Japanese intimacies three months before, contradicted a typical GI's "Koibita (Moosey-Mae)," most of whom were younger and dressed like "most occidental women of her age and class." He argues that most of the Japanese women with whom black GIs were dating were not the "peasant, rice-paddy" type as the majority of black women were not "Aunt Jemima" or "Night Fighter" types. Embracing the respectable womanhood of the Japanese as well as African Americans, he pointed out that "as another race, we need them as our Far East allies." In addition, the "Aunt Jemima" type impression of black women was so pervasive among the Japanese, especially the "Moosey Mae," that he tried to correct that stereotypical racial image by showing the pictures of their "lovelies" who ranged from "lovely bronze to lighter hues.[30] His comment suggested that African American masculinist negative representations of African American women in occupied Japan were influential in producing and disseminating the stereotypical racial and gender image of black women among the Japanese women.

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[30] *Pittsburgh Courier*, February 24, 1951.

The transnational circulation of such articles on both sides of the Pacific was more serious for the African American soldier who had left his sweetheart, wife, or fiancé behind in the United Sates. In his correspondence to the *Pittsburgh Courier* and *Baltimore Afro-American*, Elmer Neely in Yokohama expressed his concern that those stories would mislead many American women, including his fiancé, to believe that "they have nothing to wait for."[31] Challenging the numerous articles in the black newspapers which admired Japanese women for their submissive gender attitude, Neely argued, in some ways, for the superiority of African American womanhood over the Japanese. He claimed that "I have nothing against any of these nationals personally, but their personal standards are just far off from those of our better women." He was also suspicious about their motives for dating African American soldiers, stating that "those Japanese women who take advantage of what they see in the GI do it at a fluctuating price that has nothing to do with genuine affection." [32] However, neither did Neely defend the black womanhood of those who were stationed in occupied Japan in spite of his negative comments about Japanese women. Rather, he rejected both African American women and native women in occupied Japan on moral grounds, when he compared the womanhood of these two groups with that of their "better" women in the U.S. Neely fully drew upon the dominant African American masculinist discourses about them in occupied Japan in his criticism of the African American women serving there:

> Whatever colored women we have here in the personnel are mostly below the average of our standards at home, and too, they have mostly eyes only for "rank."

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[31] *Baltimore Afro-American*, March 24, 1951.

[32] *Pittsburgh Courier*, February 24, 1951.

> By far and large the better thinking GI has little to do with either the native women or those in the Army personnel.[33]

His comment suggests that some African American soldiers negotiated their negative gendered attitude toward the African American women who were serving for the U.S. military in occupied Japan without employing the respectable representations of Japanese women as a reference. Such a negative comment about black women from an African American GI, who was not engaged in an intimate relationship with a Japanese woman, indicated how pervasively the African American masculinist discourse of African American women spread within the black community in occupied Japan as well as the serious nature of the intraracial gender conflicts between African American men and women.

African American soldiers and newsmen stationed in occupied Japan employed the masculinist discourse of "submissive" Japanese women to regulate the imagined deviant black femininity of the civilian and military African American women who were stationed in Japan. However, these African American men were largely unaware of their own patriarchal privileges and their complicity in sexual oppression within African American communities, when they comparatively evaluated the femininity of both African American and Japanese women in occupied Japan in light of their masculinist or patriarchal sense of gender ideology.[34] The masculinist construction of gender and

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[33] Ibid.

[34] For traditional black feminist critique of black patriarchy and intraracial gender conflicts, see bell hooks, *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (Boston: South End Press, 1981); Michel Wallace, *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman* (1978; repr., New York: Verso, 1990). More recent black feminist scholarship of black masculinity includes the following: Rudolph P. Byrd and Beverly Guy-Sheftall, eds., *Traps: African American Men on Gender and Sexuality* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001); Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism* (New York: Routledge, 2004); bell hooks, *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity* (New York:

sexual identities among African American men in occupied Japan reflected the contradictions in the anti-racist politics in the larger African American community in the early 1950s. The problem of intraracial gender conflicts within black communities, especially the patriarchal privileges, misogyny, and sexism on the part of African American men, had been marginalized for a long time in the African American struggle for racial equality. In *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894-1994* (1999), historian Deborah Gray White suggests that racial solidarity was privileged over gender identity in their struggle for defending black womanhood in the African American women's national associations in the mid-twentieth century. White argues that "for women to put gender consciousness ahead of race consciousness was judged inherently selfish, divisive, and inimical to the race."[35] As historian Megan Shockley points out, middle-class African American women in the 1950s even accepted, rather than confronted, the "patriarchal" nuclear family structure which they did not believe "fit with the reality of most wage-earning African American women," within the confinement of the anticommunist politics during the Cold War period.[36] African American men in occupied Japan, who were embracing the dominant masculinized racial consciousness

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Routledge, 2004); and *The Will to Challenge: Men, Masculinity, and Love* (New York: Washington Square Press, 2004); Mark Anthony Neal, *New Black Man* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

[35] Deborah Gray White, *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894-1994* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999), 174. According to White, African American women in the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) and the Ladies Auxiliary of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters did not challenge "black patriarchy" or "black male leadership" for the cause of "black female autonomy," in spite of the persistence of the gender tensions in the life of African Americans, during the period from the 1930s through the 1960s. It was in the early 1970s that African American women in the National Black Feminist Organization (NBFO) began to confront sexism and misogyny within the African American community in their anti-racist agendas, in response to the emergence of chauvinistic black nationalism as well as the rise of the national feminist movement in the late 1960s through the early 1970s. See esp. chaps. 4-7.

[36] Megan Taylor Shockley, *"We, Too, Are Americans": African American Women in Detroit and Richmond, 1940-54* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 104.

and gender ideology of the larger African American community, took their male privileges for granted and did not hesitate to impose their patriarchal ideology on their women, whether they were black or Japanese.

Some African American women in occupied Japan confronted the charge of their gender deviancy by attacking Japanese women as well as black soldiers in response to the black masculinist discursive denigration of their womanhood, as I discussed in Chapter 6. Ethel Payne, who was serving as a director of Army Services Club in Yokohama in November 1950, was the civilian black woman who most vocally opposed interracial dating and marriage in Japan. Payne critically challenged the Japanese women's subservient attitude, the gender characteristic which black men admired so greatly, just as a conventional cultural pattern of behavior in Japanese patriarchy. She declared, "By tradition, the Japanese woman is submissive. To the man of her choice or the one who wins her attention she presents a convincing superficial respectfulness and affection."[37] Payne charged Japanese women with exploiting their "helplessness" as a "powerful weapon and asset" to them so that they could win the hearts of black GIs.[38] It is worth noting that black women, like Payne, rearticulated the contemporary U.S. Orientalist discourse of Japanese women as patriarchal victims in their criticism of Japanese femininity as black men did, but they were more attentive to the historical context of their sexist and patriarchal oppressions in the traditional Japanese society. Payne also claimed that black GIs found their masculine pride and ego more satisfied by Japanese than American women. Compared with "too independent" American women, Payne claimed,

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[37] Wilson, "Why Tan Yanks Go For Japanese Girls," *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950.

[38] Ibid.

Japanese women "fetch your shoes, wash, cook, iron, and sew. 'Keep quiet' when you want her to. Never talk back, laugh when you want her to."[39] Their gendered criticism of "submissive" Japanese femininity, combined with their apparent competition and rivalry with Japanese women, became a focal point among the African American women in Japan for opposing interracial romance and marriage between black men and Japanese women.

In summary, the representations of "submissive" Japanese women were central to the black press coverage of the interracial intimacy and sexuality between African American soldiers and Japanese women in occupied Japan. In *Romance and Rights*, historian Alex Lubin argues that the politics of black/Japanese interracial intimacy in the black press only confirmed the status of black men as "deserving patriarchs" of Asian female submissiveness, while the same politics in Europe posited white women as the judges of "black male desirability."[40] As Lubin points out the interrelation between "female submissiveness" and "male patriarch" in the black-Japanese intimacies in occupied Japan, African American soldiers claimed their right to patriarchal privileges vis-à-vis submissive Japanese women. Thus, they aspired to achieve a masculinized and sexualized sense of empowerment based on their national membership in the U.S. occupational forces in Japan. However, the black press representation of black/Japanese intimacies reflected more complicated, than Rubin mentions, dynamics of intraracial and interracial gender and sexual politics in the triadic relationship between black men, black women, and Japanese women. The trans-Pacific controversy on the black-Japanese

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[39] Ethel Payne, "Says Japanese Girls Playing GIs For Suckers: 'Chocolate Joe' Used, Amused, Confused," *Chicago Defender*, November 18, 1950.

[40] Alex Lubin, *Romance and Rights: The Politics of Interracial Intimacy, 1945-1954* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2005), 115-116.

intimacies became a transnational site of identity contestations over race, gender, sexuality, and nation through which African American men and women on both sides of the Pacific negotiated appropriate gender roles and behaviors in relation to Japanese femininity. They appropriated or challenged the dominant gender and sexual norms of the larger American society during this period. In Japan under U.S. military occupation, African American men and women both employed the representations of "submissive" Japanese women in gender-specific ways, so that they could reconfigure African American gender politics and ideology for their own empowerment in the specific context of the volatile intraracial gender relations between black men and women there.

Alex Lubin also contends that nonwhite women, including black women, were excluded from the black newspaper and magazine representations of black GIs' intimate relationships with occupied women in Europe and Asia. He explains that the masculinized black politics of GI interracial intimacy privileged European women over nonwhite women and black men over black women.[41] As he notes, African American women were marginalized in the black press representations of interracial intimacies in occupied Japan in that there was little coverage of their intimate relationships with Japanese men in the black newspapers and magazines. However, African American women were not passive objects in the black press's exclusive coverage of the interracial intimacies between African American soldiers and Japanese women. Rather, African American women who were stationed in Japan participated in the counter-hegemonic discursive formations, when they defended their womanhood by resisting the negative representations of black women in the black masculinist discourse of "submissive"

[41] Ibid, 118.

Japanese women. African American women, especially those living in the U.S. played more critical roles in shaping the trans-Pacific discourses of the black-Japanese intimate relationships, as more Japanese brides of African American soldiers immigrated to the U.S. and the controversy on the interracial intimacy and sexuality between African American GIs and Japanese women focused more on the issues of interracial marriage and mixed-blood children than their romance outside the institution of marriage in Japan.

Chapter 8
Debating the Black-Japanese Intermarriage and Occupation Babies in Trans-Pacific Black Communities

The trans-Pacific controversy on the intimate relationships between black GIs and Japanese women attracted more attention from stateside African Americans especially when issues of interracial marriage and mixed-blood, or half-black, half-Japanese children were concerned.[1] While African American male soldiers and women who were then stationed in occupied Japan or in Korea were major actors in the discursive formations of the debate over the black-Japanese intimate relationships in black newspapers and magazines, the black press more often highlighted the African American men and women in the United States, especially the middle-class African American discourse of intermarriage in their coverage of the marital dimension of interracial intimacy and sexuality. The black newspaper and magazine coverage of black-Japanese interracial marriage and occupation babies functioned as a discursive strategy for African Americans to negotiate racial acceptance and national integration of the Japanese brides of black GIs and their half-black, half-Japanese children into African American communities in the U.S. by reimagining the former "enemy" race and "unassimilable" aliens as their national and racial allies in the postwar relationship between black America and Japan.

In contrast to the strong oppositions against the interracial romance and marriage between African American soldiers and Japanese women widely found among the black

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[1] For the recent studies on Asian warbrides, see, for example, Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); Regina Frances Lark, "They Challenged Two Nations: Marriages between Japanese Women and American GIs, 1945 to Present" (PhD. diss. University of Southern California, 1999); Gina Marchetti, *Romance and the 'Yellow Peril': Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

women who were stationed in occupied Japan, the news on the black-Japanese interracial couples generally received more positive reactions from the larger African American community in the U.S., especially from the stateside African American women. For example, Mrs. Carey Noaldin in Philadelphia, in her letter to the *Chicago Defender*, expressed her total approval of the black-Japanese intermarriage as the "only solution" to most of the problems of misunderstanding between races at the domestic and international levels. Noaldin stated, "How else can a real understanding of peoples be obtained except through so intimate a thing as marriage?" She also considered this case of interracial marriage as less controversial because the "color" perspective was subordinated in the intermarriage between the groups of "dark" people.[2] Racial tolerance toward the interracial marriage between black soldiers and Japanese women, like Noaldin, was more typical than opposition in their coverage of the black newspapers and magazines in the early 1950s.

The stateside African American women and men, especially those with middle-class backgrounds, debated the issue of black-Japanese intermarriage in light of the dominant conservative gender and sexual norms of that period as well as in the historical circumstances of the African American racial and sexual politics of interracial marriage in the postwar America. In November 1950, the *Pittsburgh Courier* reported the reactions of African American women in the U.S. to the issue of interracial marriage between African American soldiers and Japanese women by drawing on its interviews of scores of women nationwide. The article highlighted the generally tolerant attitude toward the black-Japanese intermarriage among their interviewees, mostly women,

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[2] *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950.

arguing that "if our boys find love and romance in far off Japan, let them have it, is the consensus." There was some regional variation in their responses, however. In terms of these differences, it suggested that the strongest opposition to the black-Japanese intermarriage was found among black women in Atlanta, where the majority of them thought it was "terrible! and awful" that African American men wanted permission to marry Japanese girls. The article also highlighted the ambivalence among African American women in their expression of racial tolerance toward such interracial marriage: "tolerance is rapidly taking the place of the former resentful attitude toward overseas girls, even though the foreign girls are taking away the scarcest commodity in the U.S. market, MEN."[3] African American women considered the interracial marriage between African American men and Japanese women from a more gendered perspective as the problem of interracial competition with Japanese women over black men as romantic partners, while they reacted to the black-white interracial marriage in more racialized terms in light of the long history of social taboos against their miscegenation in the United States.[4]

In the same article, the *Pittsburgh Courier* featured Nannie Helen Burroughs, the president of the Women's Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention, as a representative view of the black-Japanese intermarriage among African American women in Washington D.C. Born in Culpepper, Virginia in 1879, Burroughs assumed a leadership role in the Women's Auxiliary since its foundation in 1900 and raised gender issues within the male-dominated black denomination. In *Righteous Discontent: The*

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[3] "Most American Women Say: 'Let GIs Wed Japanese Girls,'" *Pittsburgh Courier*, November 18, 1950.

[4] For the African American discourse of black-white interracial marriage in postwar America, see Renee C. Romano, *Race Mixing: Black-White Marriage in Postwar America* (2003: repr., Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006), esp. prologue and chap. 3; Alex Lubin, *Romance and Rights: The Politics of Interracial Intimacy, 1945-1954* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2005), esp. chaps. 3-5.

Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920 (1993), historian Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham argues that "Burroughs, more than anyone else, embodied the Baptist women's independent spirit. Determined to maintain women's autonomy, she led the convention over a number of symbolic and real obstacles during the first two decades of its existence."[5] Burroughs' comments were representative of the gendered discourse about interracial marriage that occurred among middle-class African American women in the nation's capital, while they reflected her sensitivity to gender and women's issues in the black politics of interracial intimacy.

In the interview for the *Pittsburgh Courier*, Nannie Burroughs expressed her opinion about the interracial marriage between black GIs and Japanese women in the following way:

> What would be the objection? It's up to the couple; marriage is a *personal matter*. If it is not forbidden by law in Japan, and the soldiers entered the Army without knowledge of any restrictions on marriages of this kind, then the question should not be raised at all. The world's on fire... better that that fire be put out first; then the race question will settle itself (my italics).[6]

Burroughs' remark about the black-Japanese intermarriage was noteworthy, because Burroughs was more critical of black-white interracial marriage. She elaborated by suggesting that blacks "should pitch in and make the race worth belonging to instead of escaping into a race that is already made."[7] In her examination of black-white marriage in postwar America, historian Renee C. Romano argues that many African Americans were "ambivalent" about their acceptance of interracial marriage in practice, while most

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[5] Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 158-159.

[6] "Most American Women Say: 'Let GIs Wed Japanese Girls,'" *Pittsburgh Courier*, November 18, 1950.

[7] Nannie Burroughs, "Church Leader Argues against Mixed Marriage," *Ebony* 6, no. 1 (November 1950): 51.

of them supported the right to intermarry in principle in the 1940s and 1950s in postwar America. She also suggests that middle-class African Americans were most critical of interracial marriage within black communities because of their class-specific investment in the politics of respectability and the discourse of racial unity. On the one hand, as Romano notes, Burroughs criticized the black-white intermarriage as a form of assimilation into the dominant white American society and a lack of racial pride.[8] On the other hand, Burroughs was more tolerant of the black-Japanese intermarriage, because she saw it less problematic and explosive than black-white one in terms of the history of social taboos and legal prohibition/regulation of interracial sex and marriage in the United States as well as the legality of their marriage in Japan.[9] Burroughs did not associate black-Japanese intimacies with the black-white interracial relationships which evoked memories of the long history of sexual exploitation of black women by white men.[10] Moreover, she did not consider the African American GIs who married Japanese

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[8] Renee C. Romano argues that African American reactions to the interracial marriage between black and white took class- and gender-specific forms in the 1940s and 1950s in postwar America. According to Romano, interracial marriage was frowned upon especially among the black middle class. Blacks in the middle class saw in light the politics of respectability the interracial relationships, especially black female-white male relationships, as "disrespectful" or "immoral" for their historically sexualized connotations, or perceived such relationships as a lack of black racial pride, while they cautioned themselves not to reproduce the racist thinking in the whites' intolerance of interracial marriage in their oppositions. Romano, *Race Mixing,* chap. 3.

[9] Anti-miscegenation statues which were originally enacted for targeting the white-black sexual relations were eventually expanded to prohibit the interracial marriage between whites and "Mongolians," which included the people of Japanese descendants, in various states of the United States. Susan Koshy, *Sexual Naturalization: Asian Americans and Miscegenation* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 3-12.
For the U.S. history of anti-miscegenation laws, see Randall Kennedy, *Interracial Intimacies: Sex, Marriage, Identity, and Adoption* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003); Rachel F. Moran, *Interracial Intimacy: The Regulation of Race and Romance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

[10] On the rape of black women by white men, see, for example, Deborah Gray White, *Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South*, Rev. ed. (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999): Darlene Clark Hine, "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women: Thoughts on the Culture of Dissemblance," in *Hine Sight: Black Women and the Re-Construction of American History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 37-47: Nell Irvin Painter, "Soul Murder and Slavery: Toward a Fully Loaded Cost

women across a racial line as racial betrayal, because their marriage with the Japanese did not promise them upward social mobility within the racial hierarchies in the dominant white American society during that period.

Nannie Burroughs also drew on the middle-class racial and gender discourses of the African American community in her public expression of approval of interracial marriage between black soldiers and Japanese women. It is important to note that Burroughs privatized the issue of black-Japanese intermarriage instead of politicizing, when she considered marriage as a "personal matter," or the problem of the individual's choice of partner. As Renee Romano points out, this was the major strategy of African American civil rights leaders in their treatment of the issue of interracial marriage, especially between blacks and whites during the period. Romano argues that prominent African American leaders, by the late 1940s, took a public position to "divorce the issue of interracial marriage from the larger civil rights agenda," so that they could reconcile their interest to support the individual's right to intermarry with their need to refute their opponent's charges that they were advocating intermarriage.[11] Burroughs tried to diminish the provocative racial and sexual implications of interracial marriage between black soldiers and Japanese women with their privatization, especially for the African American women who were concerned about their own marital prospects and opportunities, in the larger racial political context of the black civil rights struggle in postwar America. In addition, Burroughs invoked the middle-class politics of "respectability" as well as the Cold War ideology of "domesticity" in her articulation to

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Accounting," in Linda K. Kerber, Alice Kessler-Harris, and Kathryn Kish Sklar, eds., *U.S. History as Women's History: New Feminist Essays* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 125-146.

[11] Romano, *Race Mixing,* 95-96.

contain the interracial couples within the institution of heterosexual marriage. As Romano suggests, interracial relationships were frowned upon especially among the middle-class African Americans, since "most took place outside the confines of marriage."[12] Burroughs approved of interracial marriage as a more respectable form of interracial relationships between black GIs and Japanese women than interracial intimacy and sexuality formed outside the institution of marriage which clashed much the dominant class and sexual standards of morality during the period.

African American newspapers and magazines sometimes highlighted the instability of the international mixed-race unions that did not receive official approval from the U.S. Army and the U.S. Consulate. Some articles reported that many of the GI-Japanese marriages were religiously sanctioned in the Shinto services in occupied Japan and they were not recognized by the American government. Ralph Matthews, the *Baltimore Afro-American* correspondent, stressed the "risky" status of these Shinto marriages which were "little more than common law arrangements" in spite of their social acceptance among the brides and families in Japan. Matthews pointed out that these unions would be automatically terminated as American soldiers were returned to the U.S., while their Japanese brides were left behind with their babies.[13] The *Ebony* magazine article of March 1952 reported that most of the 6,000 American GIs who married Japanese women since the relaxation of the U.S. prohibitions against occupation marriage in Japan had "already been married in Shinto services," because of the "honor-conscious" Japanese families insisting on the Shinto wedding ceremony which "legalized

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[12] Ibid., 83.

[13] Ralph Matthews Sr., "Shinto Ceremony Very Popular: Mixed Marriages Thrive in GI-Occupied Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, August 25, 1951.

the unions in Japanese eyes even when the Americans refused to recognize them."[14] It is important to note that any reference to the racial composition in the figures about the occupation marriage in Japan was missing from the reports in the black press, because the U.S. Consulate did not keep such figures according to racial categorization any more.[15]

The African American press appealed for the U.S. legal sanction of the marriage between African American GIs and Japanese women. It occasionally covered the Japanese brides who were not permitted to enter the United States. In the article titled, "Japanese Bride, GI Win Home," *Pittsburgh Courier* reported the story of the former Miyo Matsumoto, who was permitted temporarily to stay in the United States to visit her husband Sgt. Alex Porche in Detroit with Mayumi, their daughter. According to the article, Porche won his battle to have Mayumi recognized as an American citizen after four years of struggle to have their marital status approved by the American Consul at Yokohama. Unfortunately, Miyo failed to gain a U.S. citizenship and she was then admitted to the U.S. only on a six-months visa.[16] Some black newspapers carried a story about Mrs. Latonia Dickerson, the mother of Sergeant First Class Robert Dickerson who was missing in action with the 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea. Mrs. Dickerson was seeking assistance from several institutes to bring to the U.S. the former Mieko Oishi, her daughter in law, and her two grandchildren, who was financially desperate after being disowned by her family in Japan. The papers published the following letter which Dickerson wrote in response to her "daughter," who had expressed her desire to visit the

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[14] "The Truth about Japanese War Brides: Negro Soldiers Learn to Admire Legendary Qualities of Attractive Nippon Women," *Ebony* 7, no. 5 (March 1952): 20.

[15] Matthews, "Shinto Ceremony Very Popular," *Baltimore Afro-American*, August 25, 1951.

[16] "With Little Daughter: Japanese Bride, GI Win Home," *Pittsburgh Courier*, March 8, 1952.

United States with her children: "You and the children are the only ties I have left with my son. I want you to come to America. I will do everything in my power to help you get here."[17] The black press appealed to its readers for their support of the cause of those troubled Japanese brides of African American soldiers. Such appeal attracted interest and sympathy for those couples and shed light on the precarious situations concerning the occupation marriage in Japan and the battle for legal sanction of the international unions between American GIs and Japanese women.

In the early 1950s, major black newspapers and magazines published follow-up articles on the lives of Japanese brides of African American soldiers after more were admitted into the United States. The press stories focused on the ethnic identity of the Japanese brides and their acculturation into the American way of life. Under the subheading titled, "Japanese War Brides Adjust Very Easily to Western Civilization," an *Ebony* article in March 1952 explained that "in a wedding involving so many vastly different cultures, a great number of adjustments have to be made and the Japanese bride does most of the adjusting." The article reported the contested process in which Japanese brides were accommodating their own cultural differences from their African American husbands so that they could adjust themselves into the American way of life ranging from sleeping styles, table manners to courtships in their interracial marital lives in occupied Japan.[18] The black newspapers and magazines reported on the continuing process of their acculturation in the U.S., as Japanese brides negotiated their ethnic identities in their

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[17] Lois Austin, "Missing Yank's Mother Begs U.S. For His Children, Japanese Wife," *Chicago Defender*, December 2, 1950; "GI's Mother Wants Tots, Japanese Wife in America," *Baltimore Afro-American*, December 9, 1950.

[18] "The Truth About Japanese War Brides," *Ebony* 7, no. 5 (March 1952): 24.

daily encounters with the material and cultural life of the American civilization. They mastered English, learned American cooking in a modernized kitchen, and enjoyed American popular entertainment such as movies and dancing.[19]

The African American press paid close attention to the reactions to the coming of the Japanese brides of black soldiers within African American communities. Moreover, the African American press sometimes shed light on racial prejudice among the Japanese which was shown in their attitude toward the Japanese women who married African American soldiers either in Japan or in the U.S. Some articles referred to the conflicts, ruptures, and tensions that occurred between Japanese brides and their families who opposed marriage with American GIs in general, and with black soldiers in particular.[20] An *Ebony* article in January 1953 attested to the existence of racial distance between Japanese brides living in the U.S. according to the race of their American husbands. It reported that there was "no mixing" between the Japanese brides who married black soldiers and those who married white soldiers in Indianapolis, Indiana in accordance with the existing color line.[21]

There were several positive articles that highlighted the cordial welcomes which Japanese brides of African American soldiers received from black families and relatives.

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[19] W. A. Reed Jr., "WO, Japanese Bride Spend Yule in U.S.: International Nuptial Knot Sparks Nashville, Tenn., Family Reunion," *Baltimore Afro-American*, January 5, 1952; "3-Year Courtship in Japan: Baltimore GI, Tokyo Bride Find Love Is All Languages," *Baltimore Afro-American*, April 26, 1952; "The Loneliest Brides in America: Japanese Brides of Negro Soldiers Find Friendships Hard to Make in New, Strange World in U.S.," *Ebony* 8, no. 3 (January 1953): 20.

[20] For example, *Baltimore Afro-American* reported that the father of Etsuko Yonamoto, who had visited the United States as a Japanese merchant marine before World War II, at first "refused to consent to his daughter's marriage to a colored man," although Sgt. First Class Emanuel Lewis, her husband, successfully won his heart by the time of their marriage. "3-Year Courtship in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American*, April 26, 1952.

[21] "The Loneliest Brides in America," *Ebony* 8, no. 3 (January 1953): 17-18.

For example, Ethel Payne, who was then working as a *Chicago Defender* correspondent in the U.S., reported the story of Michiko Hashimoto who was "warmly welcomed" into their home by her husband Sgt. Solomon Douglas's uncle and his wife in Chicago, who had "spared no effort to make the bride feel at home in a new land.[22] Still, adjustment for the Japanese brides could prove to be difficult, such as the social isolation they experienced within African American communities as well as in the larger American society. Under the dramatic title, "The Loneliest Brides in America," an *Ebony* article in January 1953 revealed that the Japanese war brides of African American soldiers living in Indianapolis, Indiana found it hard to make friendships in a "new, strange world in U.S." where they had "not yet been freely accepted in Negro communities" and were also avoided in white communities as the "wives of Negroes." It reported that those Japanese brides socialized only in a small world of Japanese girls married to black Americans and had few social interactions with the Japanese girls married to white Americans living there. Many factors contributed to the social isolation of Japanese brides within African American communities. The article pointed out that "one of the most baffling barriers between the Japanese wives and the Negro women of America is that of language. Few of these most lonesome brides have become glib in English. Most speak a soft-voiced but weird, omelette of basic English peppered with GI slang."[23] In its treatment of the isolation problem of the Japanese brides in black communities, the *Ebony* magazine

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[22] Ethel Payne, "New Year's Holds Sad Memories for Japanese Bride in Chicago," *Chicago Defender*, December 29, 1951. Other articles which focused on the cordial reception of Japanese brides within African American communities include the following: Ethel Payne, "Sgt. Japanese Wife Given Warm Welcome," *Chicago Defender*, March 15, 1952; W. A. Reed Jr., "Wo, Japanese Bride Spend Yule in U.S.," *Baltimore Afro-American*, January 5, 1952.

[23] "The Loneliest Brides in America," *Ebony* 8, no. 3 (January 1953): 19.

stressed cultural barriers, rather than racial difference, as the major factor which prevented the formation of interracial friendships between Japanese brides and African American women.

The *Ebony* magazine article elicited many reactions from readers throughout the nation, most of whom were sympathetic to the loneliness of the Japanese brides in the United States from a more racialized perspective. Some African American women expressed their sympathetic view toward the Japanese brides and even suggested making friends with them as pen pals, by drawing on the shared experience of social isolation which they experienced in their relationships with their neighbors or as wives of army career man.[24] Gladys Durham, a reader from Augusta, Georgia wrote as her advice to the Japanese warbrides: "Keep your chin up and face this thing bravely for we often are shunned by in-laws and friends of our husbands and *we are of the same race* (my italics)."[25] Durham expressed her acceptance of the racial membership of the Japanese brides in black communities as wives of African American men, whom she found commonality with them in their racial and gendered experience in the U.S.

In comparison with the deracialized treatment of the issue in the article, some readers were more critical of the racial attitude toward the Japanese brides on the part of African Americans. R. D. Pitman, Jr., a reader from Altoona, Pennsylvania called for African Americans to be "patient" and "understanding" toward the Japanese brides who were learning American ways. He bluntly declared that the "Negroes should be the last

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[24] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 8, no. 5 (March 1953): 6-7; Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 8, no. 6 (April 1953): 9.

[25] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 8, no. 6 (April 1953): 9.

persons to look down on anyone."[26] Edward A. Coble, who had been previously stationed for two and a half years in Japan as a member of the U.S. Navy, harshly criticized the "intolerant" and "unfriendly" treatment of the Japanese brides by African Americans as "un-American." Coble was concerned about the effect of their "cool reception" from the African Americans in the U.S. on the relationship between black soldiers and Japanese women in Japan, where many people believed that "Negroes would be the last to discriminate against Japanese warbrides."[27] The diverse opinions shown in these letters to the editor revealed that African Americans responded to the issue of Japanese brides in highly racialized as well gendered terms. In contrast, the *Ebony* magazine editor tried to downplay the racial dimension of the black-Japanese marriage by stressing the ethnicity of the Japanese brides.

The African American press continued focusing on the gender attitudes of the Japanese brides toward their black husbands in its coverage of their interracial marital relations during and immediately after the U.S. military occupation of Japan. *Ebony* magazine's 1952 article, "The Truth About Japanese War Brides," highlighted the "legendary qualities of attractive Nippon women," by quoting the following remark as representative of the African American soldiers in occupied Japan: "Man, try to find a girl on Seventh Avenue that is as kind and sweet and appreciative as these little mooses. They appreciate the least little thing you do for them."[28] In response to this article which implicitly critiqued black womanhood in comparison with the more "appreciative"

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[26] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 8, no. 5 (March 1953): 6.

[27] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 8, no. 6 (April 1953): 8-9.

[28] "The Truth About Japanese War Brides," *Ebony* 7, no. 5 (March 1952): 17.

Japanese women, some African American women, like Nellie Hand, a married reader from Milwaukee, agreed and wrote that she considered it as a "plain admission of guilt on the part of the Negro women neglecting to be good wives and companions to their husbands."[29] Other African American women, especially single ones, rejected the black masculinist bias in its idealized representation of Japanese women. Ethel Jones, a reader from Vallejo, California countered that "there are some of us that are more kind and considerate than those Japanese girls... a lot of American girls that could make good wives to service men, but you'll only know by giving them a chance."[30] Sara A. Trower, another black single woman from Pittsburgh, blamed African American GIs, instead of Japanese women, for their preference for interracial marriage in Japan: "I have nothing against the Japanese girls. But I do think that our fellows should give us a chance... try looking around you with your eyes open and respect and decency in your heart."[31] In contrast with the African American women stationed in Japan who targeted the submissive Japanese women in their opposition to interracial romance and marriage there, the stateside African American women questioned the gender attitudes on the part of African American men, who idealized Japanese women just for their appreciative characters while they devalued black women without any sincere concern about the virtue of black womanhood.

For the African American women living in the U.S., who were less critical and more tolerant of the gender attitudes of Japanese women than those stationed in Japan, their participation in the debate over the Japanese brides gave them a chance to negotiate

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[29] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 7, no. 9 (July 1952): 11.

[30] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 7, no. 7 (May 1952): 6-7.

[31] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 7, no. 8 (June 1952): 8.

their own gender consciousness in relation to the much lauded Japanese femininity and superior womanhood. As black newspapers had done in their coverage of interracial intimacies between black soldiers and Japanese women in occupied Japan, *Ebony* magazine highlighted the antagonism between African American women and Japanese brides over the latter's subservient attitudes toward African American men in the United States. Under the subheading titled, "Japanese Girls Treat Husbands like Their 'Masters' in Home," the *Ebony* article in January 1953 argued that "some U.S. Negro women accuse the Japanese brides of 'spoiling our men' and are hostile to them." It reported that one Japanese bride, who was discovered in sight of her neighbors greeting her husband on "bended knees" to welcome him home just as her mother had been doing to her father in Japan, "embarrassed her husband and made her Negro women neighbors accuse her of 'spoiling our men.'"[32] Over the issue of whether Japanese brides were "spoiling" their black men through their excessive show of deference and devotion to their husbands, some African American female readers of *Ebony* magazine emphasized the cultural difference. One reader from Columbus, South Carolina, whose pen name was Mrs. E. B. B., stated that "as for the customs towards their husband—these women were taught this just as we were taught many American customs. If more of our women would try 'spoiling' their husbands, they, too, will be happy as these women are."[33] Even more positively, Letha M. Wade, a reader from Philadelphia confessed, "I felt neither envy nor hostility toward these young women—rather I envied their husbands!"[34] Other African

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[32] "The Loneliest Brides in America," *Ebony* 8, no. 3 (January 1953): 23.

[33] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 8, no. 5 (March 1953): 6.

[34] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 8, no. 6 (April 1953): 8.

American women praised the Japanese brides' devotion to their black husbands as an exemplar of womanhood which black wives, too, could emulate in their marital relationships. Janie C. Butts, a reader from Philadelphia claimed: "I am a Negro woman myself, and I have a deep feeling of admiration for these women who have the spirit and courage to defy the world in letting it know of their deep love and devotion they have for their husbands."[35] These generally positive responses of black women to the reported subservient attitudes of the Japanese brides toward their black husbands indicated how African American women employed the dominant representation of the Japanese brides in gender-specific ways so that they could negotiate their gender identity and roles within the parameters, boundaries, and confinements of the domestic imperatives during the early Cold War period. But, those African American women were unwittingly complicit in the maintenance of patriarchal privileges among their men, when they praised the submissive femininity of Japanese brides as an exemplary womanhood. They did so leaving the history of Japanese patriarchy unexamined as a critical pretext for this submissive gender attitude.

In addition to the interracial marriage between African American soldiers and Japanese women, African American newspapers and magazines paid attention to the problem of the mixed-blood occupation babies, especially the fates of the half-black, half-Japanese children in Japan. On the one hand, the African American press tended to stress their illegitimacy and the miserable conditions which children of mixed parentage faced in occupied Japan. Observing the foundling children of Japanese mothers and American GI fathers at the Elizabeth Saunders Home in Oiso, Japan, the *Ebony* article in

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[35] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 8, no. 5 (March 1953): 7.

September 1951 stated: "The tragedy of the forlorn tots in these homes is one of the most woeful and deplorable in the world today. It is a story of wholesale abandonment of children not only by their mothers but by an entire nation as well as by the occupying army which created the problem."[36] Some article in the black press focused on the racist attitudes on the part of Japanese society toward the mixed-blood children, whether they were half-black or half-white. The same *Ebony* magazine article highlighted the prejudice against race-mixing among the "full-blooded" Japanese, regardless of color in miscegenation: "Because the Japanese people are as race-minded as Georgia whites, the children of the conquerors are already feeling the cruelty of race prejudice."[37] The article was pessimistic about the future of those mixed-blood youngsters in Japan because of racism against them, claiming that "all of the children unconsciously absorb some hope of coming to America" at the Saunders Home.[38] Another article, published in the *Norfolk Journal and Guide* in January 1951, stated that there was "no place in Japan for 'super-colored' babies," where the child of mixed parents would be teased by other Japanese whether he was blonde or his hair was "too curly or his skin too dark." The article also reported a shocking news story that some Japanese mothers of half-black children switched their babies: "At a public bath house a mother placed her baby in a sunny place and went back to finish her bath. She returned in five minutes and found a colored baby

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[36] "War Babies of Japan: Shunned and Deserted, More Than 2,000 Racially-Mixed Youngsters Face Tragic Future," *Ebony* 7, no. 10 (September 1951): 15.

[37] Ibid., 17.

[38] Ibid., 18.

in its place."[39] These articles impressed onto the consciousness of African American readers across the Pacific the strong nationalist racial stigma which was attached to the mixed-blood occupation children and their mothers, while they downplayed the racial hierarchies in the Japanese racist attitude toward those children in order to stress the Japanese abhorrence of miscegenation in the context of the U.S. military occupation of Japan.

The African American press also blamed the U.S. government and American society for the problem of the mixed-blood children in occupied Japan, while it criticized the lack of policy on the part of the Japanese government and the racist attitudes among the Japanese toward them. Milton A. Smith, the National Negro Press Association correspondent, asserted that the "Japanese government makes little if any provision for the care of these Occupation born youngsters and the Americans would rather think they did not exist."[40] The unwillingness on the part of the U.S. government to intervene in the problem of these occupation babies in Japan was revealed by the *Norfolk Journal and Guide,* which reported that some American families were not allowed to bring the half-Japanese children whom they had adopted in Japan to the U.S., because of the immigration regulation which required the consent of both of their parents in the admission of the internationally-adopted children. The *Guide* articles took up the case of Clinton and Gwendolyn Coles, who were seeking congressional relief for Gregory, a half-black, half-Japanese three-year-old son whom they had adopted from an orphanage

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[39] Milton A. Smith, "Countless 'Brown Babies' Face Gloomy Future In Japan: Both Parents Often Forsake Illegitimates: Government Makes Little Provisions For GI Offspring," *Norfolk Journal and Guide,* January 6, 1951.

[40] Ibid.

in Kobe. But their appeal for the special Act of Congress concerning the relief for Gregory was blocked by Mississippi Representative John M. Rankin, who protested that such bills would cause a flood of "un-American elements" and would be "destroying our immigration laws."[41] In response to the article on the "war babies" in Japan which was published in *Ebony*, Catherine Daniels, a reader from Miami, appealed to the national responsibility on the part of Americans for the problem of the mixed-blood babies in Japan:

> Why doesn't our government do something about their situation? After all, our soldiers were the direct cause of the tragedy. Then why, when we spend billions of dollars helping our so-called allied nation, can't we provide some type of institution for these children whereby they may grow up with the feeling that they 'belong,' instead of being frustrated human beings?[42]

The African American press played an important role in raising national as well as racial consciousness among its readers about the problem of half-American, half-Japanese children in Japan by internationalizing as well as racializing the issue, when it underscored the burden of responsibility which Americans, regardless of race, shared with the Japanese for those mixed-blood children who resulted from the miscegenation in the context of the U.S. military occupation of Japan.

On the other hand, the African American press extensively reported the trans-Pacific commitments, both in the U.S. and Japan, to the problems of the mixed-blood children in occupied Japan. The coverage of the half-black, half-Japanese children in the black press suggests that some of those orphans were adopted or in the process of

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[41] Ralph Matthews, "Future of Brown Baby in Japan Depends on An Act of Congress: Adopted Son Problem For Army Couple: Returning Sergeant And Wife May Not Be Allowed Baby," *Norfolk Journal and Guide,* September 22, 1951; "Rankin Blocks Bill To Admit Japanese Child," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, October 6, 1951.

[42] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 7, no. 12 (November 1951): 6.

adoption by some African American soldiers in Japan, in addition to the case of the Coles discussed above.[43] Some readers in the U.S. expressed their interest in adoption of these occupation babies, like Mrs. W. V. Inctaw from Richmond, Virginia who wrote to the editor of *Afro-American* that "I would love to have a little colored Japanese girl in my home to care for."[44] Lora D. James, an *Ebony* reader from Dallas, Texas proposed the international adoption of those babies by Americans as a possible solution to the problem of mixed-blood children in occupied Japan: "I wish it was so they (mixed children in Japan) could be over here. I would love to adopt one and I feel that if anyone feels as I do, there would be lots of the babies adopted. I hope some day all of the children will be able to come to America."[45] In response to the lack of policy toward them on the parts of both the U.S. and Japanese governments, these black readers suggested the possibility of national integration of these half-black, half-Japanese children into American society by adopting and raising them as Americans.

The black newspapers and magazines highlighted various interracial and international social activities which were developing at the grassroots level for the welfare of the mixed-blood children in occupied Japan. Several articles published by the black press focused on the critical role of Miki Sawada, who established in Oiso in 1947 an orphanage named the Elizabeth Saunders Home to foster the half-American, half-Japanese children abandoned by their mothers, in the internationalization of the problem

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[43] "Babies Of Colored Veterans In Japan Face Bleak Future," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, January 13, 1951; "He's Going to Be Adopted," *Baltimore Afro-American*, March 3, 1951; "Aids Japanese Orphans," *Pittsburgh Courier*, April 19, 1952.

[44] *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 17, 1951.

[45] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony* 7, no. 1 (December 1951): 8.

of mixed-blood children in occupied Japan.[46] The black press also reported on some African American individuals and groups which supported the activities or management of the orphanages caring for the mixed-blood children in Japan in various forms. According to the article published in the *Pittsburgh Courier* in December 1950, the Golden Dragon Club, the black enlisted men's club through which African American soldiers made a monthly monetary contribution to the home, was the "biggest and most consistent donor" to the Lourdes Baby Home in Yokohama. The same article suggested that the Elizabeth Saunders Home had been "practically adopted by the Twentieth-fourth Regiment," whose members frequently visited there to play with the children when they were in camp near the home and they continued sending money to it monthly while fighting in Korea.[47] In their coverage of black philanthropy for the half-black children in Japan, Joe Louis, the former heavyweight champion, was the most featured person in the black newspapers and magazines for his charitable activities during his stay in Japan in December 1951. Louis donated 54,000 yen, which he had earned in his exhibition bouts there, to the orphanages in Tokyo area, split evenly between the Elizabeth Saunders Home and the Lourdes Baby Home.[48] The *Jet* magazine article highlighted Lewis

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[46] "War Babies of Japan," *Ebony* 7, no. 10 (September 1951): 15-18, 21-22; Smith, "Countless 'Brown Babies' Face Gloomy Future In Japan," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, January 6, 1951; Frank Whisonant, "Brown Babies OK in Japan," *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 2, 1950; "Japanese 'Foster Mother' Arrives In U.S.," *Jet* 2, no. 22 (September 25, 1952): 15. On Miki Sawada and the Elizabeth Saunders Home, see Robert A. Fish, "The Heiress and the Love Children: Sawada Miki and the Elizabeth Saunders Home for Mixed-Blood Orphans in Postwar Japan" (PhD. diss. University of Hawaii, 2002).

[47] Whisonant, "Brown Babies OK in Japan," *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 2, 1950.

[48] "Japanese Welcome Warms Joe's Heart," *Baltimore Afro-American*, December 1, 1951; Ralph Matthews, "Louis Presents 54,000 Yen To Tokyo Orphanage," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, December 22, 1951; Ralph Matthews, "Louis On Way Back To U.S.: Still No Decision About Ring Future," *Baltimore Afro-American*, December 22, 1951; "Children In Japan Cheered By Joe Louis," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, January 5, 1952.

meeting with four half-black, half-Japanese orphans of the Elizabeth Saunders Home, who visited his hotel in Tokyo, accompanied by Miki Sawada, their foster mother to thank him for his donation to the home (See Figure 8.1).[49] Featuring the transnational dimensions in the issue of occupation babies in Japan, the coverage in the black press gave African American readers the opportunities to imagine and forge the trans-Pacific community of interracial and international collaborations between African Americans and some Japanese people based on their shared humanitarian and egalitarian interest in the welfare of the half-black, half-Japanese children.

In summary, the black press representations of the interracial marriage between African American men and Japanese women and their mixed blood children became an international site of identity contestations through which African American men and women renegotiated national identity, race consciousness, and gender and sexual norms. They grappled with the terms of racial acceptance and national integration of the Japanese brides and their half-black, half-Japanese children into the African American communities in the U.S. The controversy on the black-Japanese interracial marriage functioned in some ways as a touchstone for the African Americans to test their racial tolerance in the larger context of the postwar African American struggle for the right to intermarry, especially with white Americans. The black press representations of "submissive" Japanese brides of African American soldiers gave the stateside African American women the opportunities to reconfigure the gender relations with their black husbands within the boundaries of a conservative gender and sexual norm which was

[49] "A Visit of Thanks," *Jet* 1, no. 12 (January 17, 1952): 35.

Figure 8.1. "A Visit of Thanks": Joe Louis, Miki Sawada, and Four Black-Japanese Orphans in the Elizabeth Saunders Home
Source: *Jet*, January 17, 1952

pervasive both in the larger American society and in African American communities in the early 1950s.

The African American press invested in the discursive practice which historian Christina Klein calls the "Cold War Orientalism" in its representations of the Japanese brides of African American soldiers and their biracial children. The black newspapers and magazines were instrumental in the production of the racialized discourse of U.S.-Japanese "integration," both in domestic and international context, by featuring the potential Americanization of the Japanese women and their half-Japanese children, those who belonged to the race which had been discursively and legally constructed as "unassimilable aliens" ineligible for U.S. citizenship.[50] Historian Mae M. Ngai contends that the Immigration Act of 1924 was instrumental in the legal constitution of "Asian" as a distinct racial category upon which Japanese, as well as Chinese and Asian Indians, were excluded from immigration as aliens who were racially ineligible for U.S. citizenship.[51] Placing more focus on the possibility of the national integration and cultural assimilation of Japanese brides and their half-Japanese children into American society than the racist dimension of Japanese society in their coverage of the black-Japanese intermarriage and mixed-blood children, the black newspapers and magazines played critical roles. In the word of Naoko Shibusawa, the black press was crucial in

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[50] Christina Klein argues that middlebrow intellectuals and Washington policymakers produced a "sentimental discourse of integration that imagined the forging of bonds between Asians and Americans both at home and abroad" in their discursive strategy which she calls the "Cold War Orientalism." Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 16.

[51] Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), esp. chap. 1. For the legal construction of the racial "unassimilability" of the Japanese, see also Ian F. Haney López, *White By Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: New York University Press, 1996).

"reimagining the Japanese enemy" among the stateside African American men and women.[52] The discursive constructions of the "assimilable" Japanese brides and their half-Japanese children in the black press functioned as an ideological vehicle for African Americans to globally renegotiate national, racial, and gender identities in the postwar transformations of international relationship between the U.S. and Japan during the early Cold War period.

[52] Naoko Shibusawa examines the "remarkable reversal from hated racial enemy to valuable ally" in the postwar images of the Japanese in American public discourse in the broader political and ideological context of the domestic changes in race and gender relations as well as the emergence of the U.S. as a "global power" confronting the Communism after World War II. Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally*, 4.

Chapter 9
Race, Blackness, and Miscegenation in Japanese Culture during the U.S. Military Occupation

A substantial amount of interracial sexual interactions between American male soldiers and Japanese women occurred in various situations in occupied Japan, despite the Super Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP)'s nonfraternization policies.[1] The sexual relationships between American GIs and Japanese women, which took both intimate and exploitive forms, were always perceived by the Japanese as well as American occupiers as a tri-racial phenomenon among whites, blacks, and the Japanese. The Japanese experience of everyday, direct interactions with a large number of American soldiers, either black or white, in the specific historical context of the U.S. military occupation of Japan was influential in the process in which the Japanese reinforced, reconfigured, and complicated their racial perception of blackness, as well as whiteness, within the boundaries of modern Japanese racial ideology and practice.

As anthropologist John G. Russell points out, Japan has a long tradition of the derogatory representation of the "black Other" since its early contact with African and East Indian servants who came to Japanese ports accompanied by Portuguese and Dutch

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[1] The Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) initially adopted the non-fraternization policy between American GIs and the Japanese in its military occupation of Japan. The SCAP prohibited all mention of interracial fraternization between the Japanese and Americans in the Japanese media under the November 26, 1946, directive. Historian Yukiko Koshiro suggests that the SCAP banned any discussion of the interracial interaction between American GIs and Japanese women, which could be interpreted as "having sexual connotations," because "such liaisons could both provoke Japanese racial hatred against whites and ridicule American authority." SCAP had already launched the policy to prohibit any mention of race and racism in the Japanese media, particularly Japanese criticism of American racism, so that it could contain Japanese racial identity as the "colored" and maintain American authority as an occupation force. The SCAP's nonfraternization policies continued in occupied Japan until it began to remove them to nurture a more friendly relationship between Americans and Japanese in a series of cultural programs in the historical context of the growing danger of Communism since around the year of 1948. Yukiko Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 62-66, 70-81.

traders in the 16th and 17th centuries. Russell argues that "Euro-American supremacy" was central to the modern construction of the racial hierarchy in the Japanese ideology. According to him, the Japanese tended to employ the "black Other" as a "reflexive symbol," through which they attempted to negotiate their own ambiguous racial and cultural identity in the Eurocentric world. The Japanese as Asians occupied a "liminal" state in the Western racio-cultural dichotomy between "European Culture and Civilization" and "African Barbarity and Savagery."[2]

This chapter examines how the postwar Japanese reconstructed their racial perception of blackness in highly sexualized terms thorough their experience of the widespread interracial sexual interactions between blacks soldiers and Japanese women during the occupation period, combined with their encounter with the stateside racism which white American soldiers brought there, as well as the preexisting Japanese racial images of blacks. It argues that Japanese men and women articulated the gendered sense of national honor, racial homogeneity, and the sexual anxiety over the presence of the U.S. occupation force in their reactions to the widespread intimate and sexual relationships between black GIs and Japanese women. The interracial relationships between black men and Japanese women developed through various circumstances of the sexual encounters and interactions in occupied Japan, which included the sexual violence, either in real or imaginary, against Japanese women by GIs, Japan's comfort women system, interracial marriage, and mixed-blood children.

The historical memories of the Japanese encounters with African American soldiers in their local communities during the U.S. military occupation took gendered

[2] John G. Russell, "Race and Reflexivity: The Black Other in Contemporary Japanese Mass Culture," *Cultural Anthropology* 6, no. 1 (1991): 5-6.

forms in some ways. Several local Japanese men in Gifu revealed their vivid sense of fear and panic when they heard the news of the invasions of the occupation troops into their communities. The rumors of the possible occurrences of physical or sexual violence by GIs encouraged them to make the local women and children escape as far way as possible into mountainous areas for their safety.[3] Some local Japanese attested to the tendency to criminalize African American soldiers in the popular memories of their encounter with American GIs in their communities. One of them recalled that his father frankly expressed his racial prejudice against black soldiers when the father instructed his mother to hide in the attic by saying, "Niggers (*kurombo*) are coming. Women will be all raped by them."[4]

The most shocking experience for Japanese men, which clearly reminded them of the masculinized humiliation of the defeated nation, was the widespread intimate and sexual relationships which occurred between Japanese women and American soldiers in the local communities surrounding Camp Gifu. One Japanese man recalled that he often encountered the "indecent" (*midareta*) behaviors between "big" (*ōkina*) American GIs and Japanese prostitutes, who were called "pan pans," in his way to the elementary school and that Japanese children played with the condoms which were carelessly dropped on the roadsides.[5] He revealed the sense of powerlessness vis-à-vis American soldiers in their sexual control of the Japanese women among the local Japanese men:

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[3] Kagamigahara-shi senji kiroku henshū iinkai, ed., *Kagamigahara shimin no senji taiken: heiwa na 21seiki wo mezashite* [Wartime Experience of the People in Kagamigahara: Toward the Peaceful 21st Century] (Kagamigahara: Kagamigahara-shi kyōiku iinkai, 1996), 243-244, 264, 266.

[4] Ibid., 266.

[5] Ibid., 269.

"We deepened our sense of "misery" (*mijimesa*) as the defeated nation, when we found the increase in sexual immorality in our community and saw the loudly-dressed Japanese women walking in town with their arms crossed with American GIs."[6]

Another Japanese man, named Minagawa, clearly drew on his racial prejudice against blacks in his expression of the indignation against American soldiers. Minagawa stated that he was "shocked speechlessly" (*nantomo ienai kimochi*) to encounter several black soldiers walking around his community. He mentioned implicitly the deep involvement of African American soldiers in the frequent incidents of rape of Japanese women.[7] Several local Japanese men, as well as women, attested to the visibility of African American soldiers in their memories of interracial fraternities between American GIs and Japanese women and their biracial children as well as the popular association between black GIs and sexual violence.[8] The Japanese men in Gifu felt their national and racial subjectivities feminized by their powerlessness against the sexual incursions of Japanese women by Americans soldiers in their local communities. The visibility of black soldiers, the most highly racialized "others" of the former enemy nation, in the landscape of interracial fraternization in occupied Japan reinforced the sense of national humiliation and emasculation among the Japanese men, because of their powerlessness vis-à-vis American soldiers in terms of their sexual control of the Japanese women.

At the end of World War II, before the influx of the U.S. occupation troops into Japan, comfort stations for American GIs were set up to protect Japanese women and

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[6] Ibid.

[7] Kagamigahara-shi, ed., *Kagamigahara shimin no senji taiken* [The Wartime Experience of People in Kagamigahara] (Kagamigahara: Kagamigahara-shi, 1996), 12.

[8] Kagamigahara-shi senji kiroku henshū iinkai, ed., *Kagamigahara shimin no senji taiken*, 266, 268, 277.

girls from their sexual violence, at the initiative of the Japanese government. The Special Comfort Facilities Association, which was soon renamed as the Recreation and Amusement Association (RAA), was founded as an organization to provide sexual and other recreational services for occupation soldiers on August 23, 1945. From the time that Komachi Garden, the first RAA brothel opened for business on August 28, Japan's comfort women system continued its operation for about seven months, until the SCAP declared all RAA facilities off-limits as of March 27, 1946 because of the rapid rise in venereal disease among the occupation force. The comfort women system was established to serve as a "female floodwall" to protect "respectable" women from rape or other sexual crimes committed by occupation soldiers. The RAA recruited comfort women primarily from a group of Japanese women who had been engaged in the sex industry or the amusement and entertainment trades, including geishas, licensed and unlicensed prostitutes, waitresses, barmaids, and illicit prostitutes.[9] In addition to the protection of the "virtue" of Japanese women, the protection of the "purity" of the Yamato race (Japanese race) was another crucial cause of the establishment of Japan's comfort women system. Historian Yukiko Koshiro explains this plan of creating "segregated" comfort facilities exclusively for foreign occupation troops as an "antifraternization project" on the part of the Japanese government.[10] The Japanese participants in the RAA, including prostitutes and male staff, perceived this comfort women system for the occupiers from a racial perspective, and they paid special attention to the racial differences between white and black soldiers whom they served.

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[9] Yuki Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution during World War II and the US Occupation* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 133-166; Michael S. Molasky, *The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa: Literature and Memory* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 101-115.

[10] Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan,* 69.

Race and racism characterized the construction of Japan's comfort women system for occupation soldiers through the interplay of RAA and the American General Headquarters (GHQ). Mitsuru Yosano, the head of Tokyo Metropolitan government's hygiene department, was summoned by GHQ in the latter part of September 1945. Yosano was asked to help it allocate the prostitutes into districts to be separately reserved for white and black soldiers. Colonel surgeon Bruce Gordon, who was in charge of VD prevention among the occupation forces, anticipated the racial conflicts which would occur by racially mixing white and black soldiers at the comfort facilities. It was decided that in Tokyo, the comfort facilities in the districts of licensed prostitution (Yoshiwara, Senju, and Shinagawa etc.) were designated for use only by white soldiers and those in the areas of unlicensed prostitution (Mukōjima, Kameido, and Suzaki etc.) were reserved exclusively for black enlisted men. The rumor about the Japanese prostitutes who had served black soldiers at RAA brothels spread so widely and quickly among the white enlisted men that they could never access the patronage of white soldiers.[11]

The comfort facilities for the U.S. troops were racially segregated in local cities surrounding the U.S. military and navy bases, too. According to the testimony of Ms. K (anonymous), who was a comfort woman at the RAA brothel in Shintenchi, Yokohama, the facility was divided across the corridor into the rooms for use only by white soldiers and the ones only for black soldiers. In her memory, white soldiers did not want to have sex with the Japanese prostitutes who had slept with black soldiers, so there were two

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[11] John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999), 130; Masayo Duus, *Makkāsā no futatsu no bōshi: tokushu shisetsu RAA wo meguru senryō-shi no sokumen* [Two Hats of MacArthur: One Facet of Occupation History Concerning the RAA Special Comfort Station] (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1985), 19, 192.

groups of Japanese comfort women at the RAA brothels: those who specialized in the sex with white men and those with black men. The former was called "shiro (white) pan" and the latter was "kuro (black) pan," when "panpan" or "panpan girl" became a familiar name to indicate the female prostitutes who catered to the occupation soldiers in contemporary Japan. [12] The former manager of the brothel in Honmoku, Yokohama testified that the black soldiers, who were angry about the policy of racial separation at the RAA brothels, often attacked the white-only comfort facilities. As this manager suggested, the ideology and practice of anti-black racism in the U.S. society was brought to Japan by the occupation force and was translated into its comfort women system in occupied Japan.[13]

In addition to the racism within the U.S. occupational force, the testimonies by the Japanese men and women who were involved in the RAA reveal their racial stereotypes about black soldiers, especially their sexuality. The prostitutes shaped their own racial stereotypes about black soldiers with whom they had had sexual intercourse at the RAA brothels. Ms. M, a former prostitute at RAA brothel in Mukōjima, Yokohama, in an oral history interview with Setsuko Inoue, strongly rejected the popularity of black soldiers among the Japanese prostitutes at that time. According to her, there were some racist rumors about black soldiers, which were spread among the Japanese comfort women, that venereal disease which was transmitted from blacks was incurable or that the pigment of blacks could not be deleted from their body for a thousand years. She also testified to the

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[12] Setsuko Inoue, *Senryōgun ianjo: kokka ni yoru baishun shisetsu* [Comfort Stations for the Occupation Troops: Houses of Prostitution Operated by the State] (Tokyo: Shinhyōron, 1995), 67, 75.

[13] Meiko Yamada, *Senryōgun ianfu: kokusaku baishun no onnatachi no higeki* [Comfort Women of the Occupation Troops: The Tragedy of Women Subjected to the National Prostitution Policy] (Tokyo: Kōjinsha, 1992), 223-224.

existence among comfort women of bias against the members who sexually served black American soldiers.[14] In her study of military prostitution in U.S.-Korea relations, historian Katherine H. S. Moon contends that Korean camptown prostitutes, despite their powerlessness, played a role of "personal ambassadors" for improvement in the U.S.-ROK civilian-military relations in the early 1970s.[15] Japanese prostitutes, who experienced the most frequent sexual and intimate encounters with the occupation troops, like Korean prostitutes, were influential in shaping the postwar black-Japanese relationship, although their sexualized view of blackness, combined with white American racism, contributed to the stereotypical formations of black male sexuality among the Japanese.

Not only did the Japanese women who participated in the comfort women system for the occupiers, but also the Japanese men who held staff jobs in the RAA and its opponents viewed the sexual behaviors of black soldiers in the racial or even racist terms by distinguishing them from white soldiers. Seiichi Kaburagi, who was a public relations officer for the RAA, stressed the appeal of the bodies of black soldiers and their sexual virility as well as their kindness to the Japanese prostitutes in his memoir of the RAA:

> The Japanese women at the RAA brothels were first horrified by the grotesqueness of black skin and red tongue of black soldiers. But, they were captivated by the appeal of their blackness and welcomed black soldiers, as soon as the prostitutes encountered their gentle and kind attitude, their careful way of treating women, and their sexual technique. We were surprised by the strong sexual power of black soldiers. Some of them made it twenty times a night and made women faint the next morning.[16]

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[14] Inoue, *Senryōgun ianjo: kokka ni yoru baishun shisetsu*, 76.

[15] Katharine H. S. Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), esp. chap. 4.

[16] Seiichi Kaburagi, *Hiroku shinchūgun ian sakusen* [Secret Record Concerning Comfort Stations for the Occupation Troops] (Tokyo: Akita Shoten, 1972), 45-46.

This exaggerated and stereotypical comment of Kaburagi on black male soldiers reflected the discursive expansion of black male sexuality which was contingent on the institutionalized black-Japanese sexual interactions in the specific historical context of Japan's comfort women system under U.S. military occupation.

One can also find racialized or racist remarks about black soldiers in a series of works on the RAA which were written by journalists and activists after the end of the occupation. Kiyoshi Kanzaki, a literary critic who was tackling the social problem of prostitution and those related to the U.S. military base in Japan, stated in an essay published in 1953, that black soldiers were generous and some of them never received their change because "they had less sense of economics than white soldiers and they were probably satisfied with controlling Japanese women by money."[17] Kanzaki also expressed his romanticized view of the sexual relationships between black soldiers and the prostitutes at the RAA brothels: "There developed a more humane bond between those who had been oppressed and subjugated, than mere economic transaction of the sex, in the intimate interactions between black soldiers and the women in Yoshiwara."[18] Kanzaki, as a leftist critic, showed his interest in the issue of race and racism in the U.S. and recognized its implications on the social problems of discrimination and prejudice in Japan, including prostitution. But, he analyzed the behaviors of black soldiers and their sexual relationships with Japanese comfort women within the dominant framework of racial stereotypes about blackness in contemporary Japan.

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[17] Kiyoshi Kanzaki, *Baishun: ketteiban kanzaki repōto* [Prostitution: Definite Report of Kanzaki] (Tokyo: Gendaishi Shuppankai, 1974), 147.

[18] Ibid., 150.

The GHQ adopted the race-based policy against fraternization between GIs and the Japanese during the U.S. occupation of Japan, which barred the approval of interracial marriage between U.S. servicemen and Japanese women by the American consulate. American servicemen encountered various military and civilian barriers against international marriage when they decided to take their wives and half-American, half-Japanese dependants to the United States, because the 1924 Immigration Act barred the immigration of Japanese war brides to the U.S. either as citizens or permanent residents, until the enactment of the McCarran-Walter Act in 1952.[19] Conversely, there was an aversion to the interracial fraternization between Japanese women and American GIs among the Japanese people. Japanese men and women were intolerant of any sexual or physical contact between Japanese women and American GIs, whether it took the form of dating, marriage, or childbearing, despite their rising interest in American culture and life styles in the postwar period. The stigma by Japanese society was attached to the Japanese women who fraternized with GIs, regardless of their race.[20] Kaori Hayashi, the nonfiction writer whose work extensively covers the problems of the war brides, points out that Japanese war brides during the occupation era were associated with prostitutes and a discriminatory attitude was held against them among the contemporaneous Japanese. She explains that the equation of war brides with prostitutes in the Japanese imagination can be attributed to the existence of the comfort women system for

[19] For the U.S. policies on the immigration of Japanese warbrides, see Chapter 4.

[20] Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*, 69-70.

occupation soldiers.[21] Whether they developed intimate or marital relationships with black or white GIs, Japanese women suffered from the prejudice and discrimination against interracial intimacy, sexuality, and miscegenation in Japanese society for their fraternization with American GIs.

However, the racial background of their American husbands was a crucial factor in shaping the ways Japanese war brides were regarded in Japan as well as in the U.S. during that period. The Japanese war brides who married black GIs faced more hostile attitudes against their interracial marriage from the larger society both in Japan and the United States than those who married white GIs. Some Japanese parents of the war brides opposed their daughters' marriage with black GIs because of their racial prejudices against black men. Misako Nowry got married in 1951 to Thomas, a black serviceman in the antiaircraft gun unit whom she met in 1948 when she was working at the U.S. Navy hospital in Yokosuka. In the oral history interview for photojournalist Tsuneo Enari, Misako told him that she had never seen her father for more than thirty years since he disowned her for having married a "Nigger (*kurombō*)."[22] Some Japanese war brides of black U.S. servicemen, who emigrated to the U.S. with their husbands, experienced racism in American society for being black men's wives. Misako remembers that when she lived in the base housing in Fort Knox, Kentucky, she had a fight with a white woman who said to her, "I haven't time to talk to a Nigger Bitch."[23] Other war brides

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[21] Hayashi Kaori, Keiko Tamura, and Fumiko Takatsu, *Sensō hanayome: kokkyō wo koeta onnatachi no hansēki* [War Brides: Half-Century Record of the Women Who Crossed the National Border] (Tokyo: Fuyō Shobō Shuppan, 2002), 33-35.

[22] Tsuneo Enari, *Hanayome no amerika* [America of the Brides]. (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1984), 49-53.

[23] Ibid.

testified to the existence of the discrimination among the Japanese war brides based on the races of their husbands: the Japanese women who married white GIs discriminated against those who married black GIs. T. C., who met a black serviceman in the information unit of the U.S. Air force in 1952 and married him in 1957, remembers that when she was working as a waitress in a Japanese restaurant, the Japanese wives of white husbands became friends with each other, but they treated her coldly because her husband was a black man.[24] The Japanese women who married white or black GIs shared the common experience as a war bride by facing the hostility directed against interracial marriage in Japanese society. But, those who breached doubly the racial barriers by marrying black servicemen, experienced a more oppressive social stigma than those who married white men within the community of Japanese war brides as well as in the larger Japanese and American societies.

Miscegenation was discouraged by the regulations of the American occupation authorities as well as by Japanese social attitude toward race matters. It was in the debate over mixed-blood children that the problem of race and sexuality was manifested most clearly in the U.S. occupation of Japan. The presence of "occupation babies," or the racially mixed children born to American GIs and Japanese women, became a taboo subject which was avoided by both the Japanese government and SCAP during the U.S. occupation of Japan. SCAP prohibited the Japanese government from officially gathering the statistics of the mixed-blood children and pressured the Japanese press not to publish the stories about them by its censorship policy. Yukiko Koshiro argues that both Americans and the Japanese demonstrated their abhorrence toward miscegenation

[24] Ibid., 81-83.

and desire for exclusion of the hybrid offspring from their societies in the debate over the problem of mixed-race babies. She explains this "mutual racism" or "mutual hatred of miscegenation" as the American and Japanese obsession with "racial purity" as a national ideology. According to Koshiro, the preservation of "white purity" was essential to the anti-miscegenation policy of SCAP, which prohibited the fraternization between GIs and Japanese and never acknowledged the mixed-race children as legitimate. Conversely, the Japanese believed that racial purity was a source of uniqueness of their national identity and their hybridization with white, black, or other Asians would "produce racial groups inferior to the pure Japanese." Moreover, the Japanese took different attitudes toward half-white and half-black children because of their inferiority complex toward white Americans combined with their condescension toward black Americans.[25] The problem of racially mixed half-Japanese, half-American children was a transnational, tri-racial phenomenon, in which racial identities of whiteness, blackness, and the Japaneseness were complexly contested in the overlapping racial, sexual, and national ideologies and practices on both sides of the Pacific.

In response to the miserable conditions facing the mixed blood children who were deserted by their parents in Japan, Miki Sawada, an international philanthropist and a granddaughter of Iwasaki Yataro, the founder of the Mistubishi zaibatsu (combine), established in January, 1948 the Elizabeth Saunders Home as an orphanage which was exclusively reserved for racially mixed children.[26] Sawada had a special concern with the

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[25] Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*, 159-168. Also see Yukiko Koshiro, "Race as International Identity?: 'Miscegenation' in the U.S. Occupation of Japan and Beyond," *Amerikastudien* 48, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 61-67.

[26] For the institutional development of the Elizabeth Saunders Home and the socialization and identity formation process of the mixed-blood children in the Home, see Robert A. Fish, "The Heiress and the Love

half-black children, who suffered from more discrimination than half-white children in Japanese society because of the color of their skin. In her autobiography, Sawada remembered that some "heartless" visitors to the Home curiously stared at the half-black children and called them "Nigger (*kurombo*)."[27] Japanese children in the Home's neighborhood often entered the Home through the crack in the fence and played some pranks on the grounds of the Home. When they were scolded by Sawada or other staff members at the Home, they escaped beyond the fence shouting "Nigger." They also teased half-black children in the Home by calling them "Nigger" and hurt their feelings.[28] These impressionable Japanese children might have learned racial prejudice in a social context by observing the discriminatory attitudes which adult Japanese around them took against blacks and mixed-blood children.

Miki Sawada advocated separation of mixed-blood children in public education in the national controversy over the education program for these children in the early 1950s, when they reached the age to enter elementary school. She believed that the separate educational facility would protect the children's "mental and physical handicaps" from the hostile outside world.[29] Sawada promoted the adoption of the racially mixed children

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Children: Sawada Miki and the Elizabeth Saunders Home for Mixed-Blood Orphans in Postwar Japan" (PhD. diss. University of Hawaii, 2002). Fish points out that racism tended to be exaggerated and dramatized in the dominant discourse of the mixed-blood children in postwar Japan, especially in the American media for fundraising appeals. He argues that the lives of those biracial children were defined by more complex social interactions between ideology, policy, and individuals, and caretakers and children rather than racism and oppression.

[27] Miki Sawada, *Sawada Miki: kuroi hada to shiroi kokoro* [Sawada Miki: Black Skin and White Heart] (1963; repr., Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Sentā, 2001), 243-247.

[28] Miki Sawada, *Konketsuji no haha: erizabesu sandāsu hōmu* [Mother of the Mixed-Blood Children: Elizabeth Saunders Home] (Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbun Shuppansha, 1953), 196-199.

[29] Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*, 178.

in the Home by American families during a lecture tour in the U.S. She informed Americans of the problem of mixed-blood children in Japan in order to solicit their financial support for the Home. Especially, she tried to contact prominent African American leaders to ask their assistance with finding adoptive families for half-black, half-Japanese children within African American communities.[30] She relied on the help of William L. Dawson, the black congressman in Chicago who was always willing to sponsor special bills authorizing the issuing of visas for mixed-race children in the Home.[31] Moreover, black dancer Josephine Baker, with whom Sawada had a long close friendship, visited Japan in 1954 to give a series of concerts for the benefit of the Elizabeth Saunders Home.[32] Being aware of the oppressive discrimination in Japanese society against the racially mixed children, especially against the half-black, half-Japanese children, Sawada believed that a bright future for them would lie in the black American community rather than in Japan and made a special effort to find ways to secure their adoption by black American families.

Moreover, black soldiers were featured in some of the literary works written by Japanese novelists after the end of the U.S. occupation of mainland Japan. According to Hiromi and Tetsushi Furukawa, it was in the postwar period that black people appeared as main characters or major themes in numerous works of Japanese literature, although some works dealt with them in prewar Japan. Furukawas suggest that black soldiers

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[30] Ibid., 189. The African American leaders whom Sawada paid a courtesy visit included Rev. Mordecai Johnson (president of Howard University), Roy Wilkins (NAACP), and Hubert T. Delany (justice of the Domestic Relations Court of the City of New York).

[31] Elizabeth Anne Hemphill, *The Least of These: Miki Sawada and Her Children* (New York: Weatherhill, 1980), 119.

[32] Ibid., 97-98.

attracted special attention to the postwar Japanese writers, because of their visibility, or racial "strangeness" in contemporary Japan, the problem of mixed-blood children in Japanese society, the escalated racial tensions, and the development of the black liberation movement in the U.S.[33] In addition to these factors, I argue that the development of the interracial sexual encounters and interactions between Japanese women and African American GIs was central to the reconfiguration of the racialized and sexualized image of black men in the postwar Japanese literary and cultural representations.

In "Prize Stock" ("Shiiku," 1958), Kenzaburō Ōe, the 1994 Nobel Prize Winner for Literature, wrote the story of the initiation of one Japanese boy into adulthood through an encounter with a black soldier, who was taken captive and "kept like an animal" by the villagers during World War II. Ōe's description of the black soldier drew on the traditional association of blacks with animality in Japanese racial imagination. Ōe contributed to the sexualization of black men in Japanese imagination with his attentive description of the black soldier's bodies, especially his penis, and his vital sexuality.[34]

In "Painting on Black Canvas ("Koroji No E," 1958), Seichō Matsumoto, who was famed as mystery novelist, fictionally reconstructed the actual incident of the gang rape of a Japanese woman by a group of African American soldiers who deserted the U.S. military base in Kokura in Southwest Japan during the Korean War. In his highly racialized description of their sexual behaviors during this incident, Matsumoto conveyed

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[33] Hiromi Furukawa and Tetsushi Furukawa, *Nihonjin to Afurika-kei amerikajin: nichi-bei kankeishi ni okeru sono shosō* [Japanese and African Americans: Historical Aspects of Their Relations] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2004), 353.

[34] Kenzaburō Ōe, *Shisha no ogori, shiiku* [Arrogance of the Dead, Prize Stock] (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1959).

the black soldiers' primitivism and hypersexuality, although he showed some sympathy for the destiny of a large number of black soldiers, who were forced into the frontline in the battle field and killed by the racist American military policy during the war.[35]

Sawako Ariyoshi dealt fictionally with the problem of interracial marriage and of mixed-blood children in a story of a Japanese woman and a black GI in *Not Because of Colour* (*Hishoku*), which was originally published in the *Chūōkōron* magazine from 1963 to 1964. Ariyoshi shed light on the social reality of the complex racial dynamics inherent in interracial intimacy and its implications for both Japanese and American society. But her view of blacks reflected the racial prejudice which was shared among the contemporaneous Japanese.[36]

As literary critic Michael Molasky suggests, the postwar Japanese writers, who featured black soldiers in their works, showed a "political empathy with the plight of African Americans while indulging in a stereotypical treatment of black men that may seem perplexing at best and racist at worst."[37] Witnessing the widespread interracial sexual interactions between Japanese women and black GIs in Japan under U.S. military occupation, these Japanese male and female writers played a critical role in the discursive formations of the postwar Japanese views of African Americans, especially those of black men. The gendered representations of African Americans in postwar Japanese culture were constructed based on highly sexualized images of black male bodies,

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[35] Matsumoto Seichō, *Kuroji no e* [Painting on Black Canvas] (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1958). This work was originally published in the *Shinchō* magazine in 1958.

[36] Sawako Ariyoshi, *Hishoku* [Not Because of Color] (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1967).

[37] Molasky, *The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa: Literature and Memory*, 71.

potency, and behaviors, combined with the preexisting negative racial perception of blackness in modern Japanese ideology and practice.

The social and cultural formations of the interracial sexual interactions between African American male soldiers and Japanese women during the U.S. occupation of Japan were crucial in reinforcing, reshaping, and complicating the cultural representations of blackness in postwar Japan, dealing with black soldiers, the Japanese war brides who married black GIs, and their half-black, half-Japanese mixed-blood children. Japanese men and women articulated the sense of national honor, racial homogeneity, and the sexual anxiety over the presence of the U.S. occupation force in gendered ways in their reactions to the widespread intimate and sexual relationships between black GIs and Japanese women. The images of black soldiers were constructed through the tri-racial dynamics of interracial encounters between whites, blacks, and the Japanese, which occurred through various circumstances of the interracial sexuality and intimacy in occupied Japan, including military prostitution, and interracial marriage and reproduction.

The Japanese women's sexual relationships with black GIs meant the double transgression of the color line in the Japanese racial ideology. The Japanese people, who believed in racial and ethnic purity as a source of the uniqueness of their national identity, abhorred the Japanese women's sexual contact with American GIs, whether white or black, and opposed their interracial fraternization. Combined with their encounter with the stateside racism against black GIs among the occupation troops, Japanese men and women reasserted the modern Japanese discourse of racial hierarchy in their responses to the black-Japanese relationships. They attached more oppressive social stigmas to the

Japanese women who dated, married, or sexually served for black servicemen than those who fraternized with white GIs. Their observations of the widespread interracial sexual interactions between Japanese women and black men, which took both exploitive and intimate forms in occupied Japan, stimulated the imagination of a number of Japanese writers and became a dominant motif in the fictional representation of black men and their intimate relationships with Japanese women in postwar Japanese literature.

Conclusion

In Japan under U.S. military occupation, African American men and women asserted and performed their racialized and nationalized sense of empowerment in gender-specific ways through their face-to-face or discursive encounters with the Japanese, as well as their investment in racial, gender, and class dynamics within the U.S. Army, in the larger American society, and in the black communities on both sides of the Pacific.

African American male soldiers in the 24th Infantry Regiment transformed their isolated and segregated lives at Camp Gifu into the contested site of their racial and masculine empowerment. The geographical and social isolation of Camp Gifu allowed African American GIs to fully pursue their racial manhood, relatively free from the emasculating racist oppression from white GIs. Black soldiers took advantage of the segregation within the U.S. Army for fostering a sense of racial solidarity and brotherhood among themselves. They developed leadership skills as commissioned officers, created their own social institutions and cultural world, and derived racial and masculine pride from their athletic prowess and famed parades. African American soldiers experienced greater racial acceptance among the local Japanese people and reconfigured their racial perception beyond the social context of racial oppression and the narrow black-white dichotomy in the U.S. Some African American GIs developed their intimate relationships with Japanese women into marriage and childbearing by challenging the civilian and military barriers against international marriage as well as the social stigma against miscegenation in Japanese society. Others asserted their

conqueror's sense of militarized masculinity through their sexual interactions with Japanese prostitutes within the gendered colonial relations in occupied Japan.

Regardless of their social backgrounds in the U.S., African American women, on the one hand, achieved the feminine sense of empowerment by exploring alternative racial identities, gender roles, and class positions in occupied Japan, while they enjoyed considerable political prerogatives and economic advantages vis-à-vis Japanese citizens as members of the U.S. occupation forces. Some black women, especially the civilian personnel who highly advanced their rank within the U.S. Army, enjoyed the luxurious lifestyles attendant to their privileged position to hire the Japanese maids as well as their access to extensive leisure and shopping activities. They developed an appreciation for the sense of interracialism and internationalism while living, working, and fraternizing with the Japanese and white Americans in the integrated and multiracial settings. On the other hand, African American women continued facing racism and sexism within the U.S. military and from the patriarchal sector of the black communities in Japan. Black Army nurses protested racial segregation and discrimination within the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in various ways. African American women, either civilian or military, experienced the black masculinist backlash against their feminine empowerment in Japan within the boundaries of conservative gender and sexual norms in the larger American society during the early Cold War period.

The trans-Pacific debates over the interracial intimacy, sexuality, and marriage between African American soldiers and Japanese women became a transnational and international site of identity formations and contestations, through which both African Americans and Japanese reconfigured race consciousness, national identity, and gender

and sexual norms in the shifting U.S.-Japanese relationship as well as changing domestic race and gender relations in the postwar period. African American men and women who were stationed in occupied Japan employed the dominant Orientalist discourse of "submissive" Japanese women in gender-specific ways so that they could renegotiate the tension-filled intraracial gender relations in Japan for their own gendered empowerment. The black newspaper and magazine coverage of black-Japanese interracial marriage and occupation babies functioned as a discursive strategy for African Americans to negotiate racial acceptance and national integration of the Japanese brides of black GIs and their half-black, half-Japanese children into black communities in the U.S. by reimagining the former "enemy" race and "unassimilable" aliens as their national and racial allies in the postwar relationship between black America and Japan. Moreover, the postwar Japanese experience of the widespread interracial sexual interactions between African American soldiers and Japanese women in the context of the U.S. military occupation of Japan, combined with their encounter with the stateside racism which white American soldiers brought there as well as the preexisting Japanese racial images of blackness, was influential in reshaping their racial perception of African American men in highly sexualized terms.

The discursive formations of the interracial intimacy, sexuality, and marriage between African American soldiers and Japanese women both in the U.S. and occupied Japan were instrumental in forging the trans-Pacific interracial and international communities between Japan and African American societies in the U.S., whether imagined or materialized, in the complexly intersecting ideologies of race, gender, sex, and nation on both sides of the Pacific. In the postwar relationship between the Japanese

and African Americans, either living in the U.S. or Japan, Japanese brides of African American soldiers and their half-Japanese, half-black children played a critical role as transnational mediators for their liminal status in terms of their racial and national belonging in the triad among Japan, black, and America.

After World War II, the "Black Pacific" reemerged and expanded as the crucial transnational site of the real, face-to-face encounter and interaction between African Americans and the Japanese beyond the imaginary or discursive formations of their interracial identification and solidarity in the prewar period, as the United States deepened its political, economic, and military engagement in the Asian and Pacific areas in the global context of the Cold War politics. Military service and its attendant civilian duty became a major, although not exclusive, vehicle for African American men and women to forge the trans-Pacific, diasporic encounters with Japanese people, including Okinawans, within the parameter of the specific militarized international relations, shaped by the U.S. occupation of mainland Japan and Okinawa as well as the Japan-US Security Treaty. As this dissertation reveals, the "Black Pacific" was a highly gendered sphere and process of interracial, international, and intercultural interaction and signification, through which African American, as well as Japanese, men and women negotiated and contested race consciousness, national identity, gender convention, and sexual practice within the boundaries of racial, gender, and international hierarchies of the tri-racial dynamics between blacks, the Japanese, and whites.

The gender and sexual matrix in the postwar "Black Pacific" was instrumental in the transformation of the traditional black-Japanese solidarity within the nexus of race and nation into the more complicated trans-Pacific formations of interracial and

international understanding and identification as well as tensions and conflicts among blacks, whites, and the Japanese along gendered lines. The victor's sense of militarized masculinity and patriarchal privilege vis-à-vis Japanese women, which American soldiers, regardless of race, asserted through the diminishment of the Japanese manhood, ironically promoted the interracial formation of the homosocial bond between black and white men, despite their interracial competitions for access to women in Japan. The presence of the African American women, who were traditionally invisible in the masculinized discursive world of the "Black Pacific" in the prewar period, as well as in the militarized sphere of the postwar black-Japanese encounters, was central to the reconfiguration of power alignment within the intersections of race, gender, nation, sex, and intimacy in occupied Japan. Despite the interracial rivalry between black and Japanese women over black men, some African American women developed a sense of racial affinity and interracial sisterhood with Japanese women based on their common experience as domestic workers and of patriarchal oppression or feminine isolation, either in Japan or in the U.S. As some black WACs critiqued the black GI's pursuit of Japanese prostitutes, the subjugation of the native women by American male soldiers in the areas of the U.S. military presence might have created the conditions of possibilities for the transnational and interracial formation of the women's alliance against not only the militarized masculine sexual behaviors but the globalized patriarchal institution and sexist regime beyond the U.S. military occupation of Japan.

The gendered narrative and analysis of the African American experience in occupied Japan offers an alternative discourse to the dominant stereotypical representation of blackness in the Japanese media, literature, and popular culture and its

implications for the postwar black-Japanese relationship. Their obsession with black male sexuality was influential in shaping the postwar Japanese views of blackness from the traditional hyper-sexualized representations of black male soldiers and their interracial relationships with Japanese women by Japanese writers and the media, to the more contemporary commodified appropriation of black culture among the young Japanese in the Hip-Hop generation.[1] Instead of avoiding discussion of the sexualized dimension of African American male experience in occupied Japan, I reconstituted the problem of their sexual behaviors as the nationalized, rather than racial, and militarized sense of masculinity and patriarchal privilege which American GIs, regardless of race, shared and exercised in relation to Japanese women within the specific gendered colonial relations in Japan under U.S. military occupation. As I revealed in Chapter 4, some African American men expressed their sincere decisions and efforts to consummate their intimate relationships with Japanese women in the marital and familial formations with their biracial children in the U.S. They challenged various institutional, ideological, and sentimental opposition against their interracial/international marriage or miscegenation both in Japan and the U.S. Moreover, the integration of African American women into the larger narrative of the U.S. occupation of Japan contributes to the valorization of the gender-skewed discourses, both academic and popular, of the postwar black-Japanese

[1] For the contemporary Japanese view of blackness, see the multiple work of anthropologist John G. Russell, including "Consuming Passions: Spectacle, Self-Transformation, and the Commodification of Blackness in Japan," *positions* 6, no. 1 (1998): 113-177; "Race and Reflexivity: The Black Other in Contemporary Japanese Mass Culture," *Cultural Anthropology* 6, no. 1 (1991): 3-25; *Henken to sabetsu wa dono yō ni tsukurareru ka: kokujin sabetsu, han-yudaya ishiki wo chūshin ni* [How Are Prejudice and Discrimination Shaped?: With a Focus on Anti-Black Discrimination and and Anti-Semitism] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1995); *Nihonjin no kokujin-kan: mondai wa "chibikuro sambo" dake dewa nai* [Japanese Views of Blacks: Beyond the Problem of "Little Black Sambo"] (Tokyo: Shinhyōron, 1991). See also, Karen Kelsky, *Women on the Verge: Japanese Women, Western Dreams* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), esp. chap. 3; Nina Cornyetz, "Fetishized Blackness: Hip Hop and Racial Desire in Contemporary Japan," *Social Text* 41 (Winter 1994): 113-139.

encounters which focus highly on the sexualized relationships between black men and Japanese women, either in intimate or violent terms. African American women, as well as men, on both sides of the Pacific participated as active agents in the transnational racial formations of the "Black Pacific," when they negotiated power, identity, intimacy, and respect in gendered terms through their encounters and interactions with the Japanese in the formative period of the postwar black-Japanese relationships.

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