The Children I Loved
1939-1945

Memories
of a Japanese Woman Teacher
in 'Japan's annexation of Korea' Days
Yeongsampo South Elementary School
- School for mainly Korean children
October, 1939 to April, 1944

School building
・central main building (with skylight windows on the roof): the principal’s office, staff room, and entrance hall
・right wing building: classrooms for over 3rd-year boys
・left wing building (connected by a roofed passage): classrooms for girls and 1st/ 2nd-year boys

School flag

Roko Nishimi (Roko Ueno, now) 19 years old, 1939
Women teachers seminar in Naju, November, 1942
The front line on the chairs: School Inspector and principals

The staffs of Yeongsampo South Elementary School, March, 1942;
Roko is on the front line, 2nd from the left
with 40 4th-year girls, March, 1942

Children of Yeongsampo South Elementary School
(names pronounced in a Japanese way)

(from the left)
Park Keinin
Jo Chonju
Kim Jungyoku
Kim Tatsujun
(from the left)
Kim Jinnin
Kim Shourei
Kim Jungyoku
Park Kirei

girls from the other classrooms
School activities at Yeongsampo South Elementary School

Aircraft Day: 5th/6th-year boys compete with their own model airplanes

2600th Empire Day, February 11th, 1940; making rice cakes for the pupils
Tsukimi Elementary School
- School for mainly Japanese children
May, 1944 to August, 1945

Tsukimi Elementary school's main entrance with beautiful cherry blossoms

Morning gathering
All the staffs and the graduates of TE school, March 1945; The front line, 2nd from the left (Roko), the center of the front (Mr. Kokoroishi: head of Naju Police Station)

The last photo with 3rd-year pupils I am in charge of, August, 1945
Despite the burning hot summer, 
white altheas blossom summer after summer, 
Korean blossoms, my memorable blossoms 

By Roko Ueno
Preface

In January, 2018, my mother Roko Ueno is 98 years old. Nine years ago, she fell with brain bleeding and became disabled in the left side of her body. From that time on she had lost control of her free movements. She is, however, moving around in her wheelchair every day, and enjoying her life in a nursing home and a day care center. Fortunately, she still has a clear thinking, and reads a lot of books, especially historical ones, and newspapers which her two sons bring to her once in a few days. She also likes making Tankas, Japanese traditional short poems, and contributes them to Mizuma Bungei, the local literary journal.

She has clear memories and remember especially quite well what she experienced when young. She remembers many things in detail when she was an elementary school teacher in Korea, which was under Japanese administration. And she also has a good memory of the days when she returned from Korea after Japan lost the War in 1945, and when she worked again as a school teacher in Japan.

It is more than 70 years since the Pacific War ended in 1945. There are getting fewer and fewer Japanese who experienced the War, one of the most tempestuous periods in the Japanese history, from the outbreak of the War to the defeat. Though she is old, and getting weaker, it is still possible to let her tell what she witnessed and experienced at that time. I believe it can be one of the clue to think about what the War was, and what the Japan
administration over Korea was.

Her experience during the war was not especially tragic. Because she and her family were in Korea those days, they spent rather peaceful days compared with those who were horrified with every night bombing in Japan toward the end of the war, and those great number of people who had lived at the places close to the border of USSR, or at the northern Korea. When they headed for Japan from those places, they had harsh experiences, which were told in 'So Far from the Bamboo Grove' written by Yoko Kawashima Watokins, who came back from the northern Korean Peninsula at the risk of her life.

In my family, my father Etsuo Ueno, who joined the Army and wandered in the jungle of the Myanmar without enough foods and weapons, suffered from malaria, had much more intense experience than my mom. If he were alive, I could put down all his war experiences he would tell.

'The Children I loved' ---original title of the first book, 'Schools in the Country where Althea Trees Blossom' in Japanese--- is the real story of the days in Korea which Roko Ueno (former name Roko Nishimi) experienced more than 70 years ago. It is the record of the footprint of a young Japanese woman who challenged and struggled bravely for the better education for the children in Korea. I believe we can find the true picture of the Japanese administration over Korea through her life.
It is my grandfather's diary which Mom has kept by her side all the time that helped me edit her reminiscence. It is an objective and precious source through his calm eyes to get to know what the Korean society then was like. 'It is late, but it can be still in time, as long as she is alive and has clear memories,' I told myself many times. After the great effort I finished my work at last.

What the relationship between Japanese and Koreans was like at that time? What the classes in the elementary schools in Korea were like? Did the administration over Korea by Japan have any meaning at all? What did it introduce to both countries? I felt I have come to resolve those questions little by little through editing this book, and I thought I could see the part of the whole history which Japan saw at that time.

This book consists of her memories, grandfather's diary, references, and comments by the editor. And I used aliases especially for the Korean names because I'm afraid that if I use the real names, it may cause the Korean people to be involved in a troubled because of the anti-Japan atmosphere in Korea.

July, 2016
Editor
Mikihisa Ueno
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Prologue

It was around 20 years ago that my friends, with whom I worked as Japanese teachers in an elementary school in Naju, the southern part of Korea, during the World War II, suggested that we visit the schools which we used to work for. Though I had been so depressed because it was not long after my husband passed away, I willingly accepted their warm-heartened idea at once. That's the reason I got a chance to visit Korea again. I was 75 years old then.

The members of our group were Ms. Higashihara, Ms. Morisaki, and I, who were teachers at Yeongsampo South Elementary School in Korea during the Japanese administration over Korea and we all happened to live in Fukuoka Prefecture then. We planned to visit three schools at which we worked for those old days. Ms. Hai Shakline (Japanese way of pronunciation), who was a good friend of us and used to be a teacher at a Teachers College in Korea after the War, guided us. She loved Japanese cultures such as Sumo wrestling, and very knowledgeable about Japan. We were offered a black big car with a driver by the company which was run by a man whose father Ms. Higashihara had taught.

The principal of the school we visited had prepared for us to show the class with the pupils learning. It was a class in which children were using computers actively, and it seemed to me that they were having more progressive education than Japanese children. Furthermore, what impressed us most was that pupils
would always stop and bow when they met the principal on the corridor. I was afraid that it might be difficult to expect Japanese kids to behave in the same way. We were very impressed with that they were progressing steady for the ideal future of this country on the bases of the old-day Japanese style education. After that we talked with the principal and donated one hundred thousand yen (about $1,000) from us three for the development of this school. The next year we invited Ms. Hai Shakline to Japan and enjoyed travelling around Kyushu together.

Twenty years from then on, it's a great pity that anti-Japan atmosphere got heightened in Korea, and the relationship between the two countries has become cooled down drastically. When looking back the pre-War days, I cannot have a clear idea that Japan's administration over Korea as a settlement was inevitable or not. But it is not deniable that all the countries including Japan and Korea were in a great stream of the Imperialism and Communism. Even though, at the turning point of the world between the two World Wars, it is my treasure that I, in my early twenties, had a chance to teach the children for the sake of their happiness and of the development of this country under the roof of the same school building with the Korean and Japanese teachers. Such memories with those teachers and pupils are the most wonderful and glorious ones for my life, and bonds with the kids living in Japan are still now continuing.

I always recall the school filled with the children's voices and laughter, and white blossoms of the althea trees of the local houses,
which are swaying in the sun as memories of my youth days in Korea.
Part 1
Father went to the Korean Peninsula

The turning point of his life

The history of my father's Nishimi family goes back to 700 year ago when Kusano-shi, the powerful family in Chikugo area, northern part of Kyushu island, owned a huge land and ruled this area. Our ancestors had been the land owners in Ukiha district of Chikugo area since the Edo period.

When men from Nishimi family came back from Japan-Russia War through the Korean Peninsula and saw the poor and barren land, they got an idea to begin the farming there. They sold as much lands they had owned as possible to make money, came back to Korea, and bought the land of around 500 acres from the Korean land owners. There were not a few land owners who were willing to sell their lands, for lands in this country were not irrigated and adequate for raising crops such as rice at all. They planned they would get some portion of the benefit from rice the local farmers made.

They had a strong motivation to buy the lands, for they had believed in the possibility of making the land fertile successfully if they introduced the Japanese way of running the farm. There was an old story from the Edo period in Ukiha district that local people worked hard to build up the irrigation canal from the Chikugo River and changed the barren land into a fertile rice fields.
It was Chujiro, my father's cousin, who was supposed to manage the lands in Korea. But he had to get in the Army suddenly, and then my uncle Arata, my father's eldest brother, succeeded the Chujiro's role. It was the time my father Shozo had just been accepted into Waseda University. He said he had planned to be a journalist after graduation with the help of Arata's close friend who was the head editor of Fukuoka Nichinichi Newspaper (Nishinihon Newspaper, now). He was 17 years old then.
Jeollanam-do: the place where Shozo lived

Korean peninsula in 1910

(Map 1)
Arata said, "If you go to the university in Tokyo, you'll not have a chance to visit Korea. Before then, why don't you come to Korea with me and see it with your own eyes." It was around the end of Meiji Era. And the invitation by Arata was the beginning of misfortune for our family.

Arata and Shozo landed at Mokpo, Southwestern port of the Korea peninsula and headed for the management office of the lands they had bought years ago. They stayed several days at the nearby house of the management office, and the night before they were going back to Japan the tragedy happened. Arata was reading under the lamp, while Shozo was enjoying calligraphy. At that time shots rang out. Shozo raised his head to see what happened. Blood was splashing out from Arata's forehead. Shozo fortunately escaped the bullet which was aimed at him thanks to a slight movement after the first bang. The book *Nihon Gaishi* written by Rai Sanyo Arata had been reading was stained with blood. Shozo put off the lamp at once, sneaked out of the back door, and ran up the hill behind the house. While hearing the cheering voices of the mob, he headed for the police station.

Later, it was made clear that criminals were the ex-Chosen soldiers of the late Lee dynasty period, and they often attacked and killed the wealthy Koreans and Japanese to get money and things. They made a hole through the shoji screen window and had been aiming at them. I had a chance to see the book my uncle Arata was reading at that time, which was dirtied with the black stains of
blood.

After Arata died, Nishimi family had a meeting on the problem who would be the manager of the lands in Korea. The second son, Arata's next younger brother, had already practicing a hospital, and the third son who was a doctor-to-be, just graduated from Medical school, had died of typhoid fever being infected from the patient. Under the circumstance like this, the conclusion was that the last son Shozo, my father, was going to manage the land in Korea as an adopted son for the Nishimi main family line. It meant that his will to study at Waseda university and to be a journalist was shut out forever. His standpoint as a land manager in Korea was a temporary one, because in the family system of Japan the eldest son was the only family member who would succeed the original family line. To tell the truth, this unstable position of his made it more complicated later.

Father's Endeavour in Korea

Following the course of Nishimi family decision, Shozo, my father, went over to Donggang-myeon, Naju county, Jeollanam-do, the southern part in the Korean peninsula), and started the life as a manager of 'Nishimi Farm.' In Jeollanam-do, there used to be Kudara, an ancient Korean country, which had a close relationship with Japan in the old time. It is now known as the stage of Kwangju (Kwangju) Uprising -Democratization Movement as well as the birthplace of Kim Dae-Jung, the 15th President of Korea, 1998-2003.
Nishimi Farm got a certain rate of rice as a payment for the tenant farming. On the other hand, Shozo decided to change the wet lands surrounding the Yeongsangang river mouth areas into the suitable lands for agriculture. He planned to construct long drain ditches which ran in all directions through the wet lands and make the barren places into the rice fields. He asked the Nishimi family in Japan for the help to hire a lot of local people for the drain construction.

He promised the local farmers that when they had completed the project and they could start growing crops there, they wouldn't have to pay the tenant fee (rice) for 5 years. Though it was a long and difficult work to carry out, he and the local people finally completed the project. I heard he had sometimes prepared dinner or sake alcohol for the workers to encourage them to be willing to work and foster a sense of solidarity. The wet land was changed into a vast farming land at last after a long time, and he kept his promise not to take any tenant fee from the farmers for 5 years.

In those days, the northern Korea was the industrial part, while the southern part was farming centered, which was because of the climate of Korea. Rice was the main and the only product at the southern places.

Shozo decided that cotton growing was definitely suitable to the southern Korean climate, and bought several kinds of seed of cotton from the farming laboratory in Japan. He learned the way to
grow cotton by himself, gave the seeds to the local people, taught them how to grow it, and encouraged them to grow it as a local special product, and so the income of the people increased rapidly. He also bought various kinds of young fruit trees, especially pear trees, from Japan, planted them in every vacant space in the village, and let the local people help themselves to the fruits when they grew ripe.

In 1913, Shozo got married to Yuki, a daughter from the Asada family, land owner in Fukudomi mura (now Ukiha city) close to Nishimi family house. Though the original family name was Koga, all the sons died of the Spanish Cold, which was going around in Japan and there became no successors for the Koga family, they adopted a man from Asada family. The new successor didn't use the family name of Koga, but used his original name Asada.

I had an impressive memory when I was young. My dad was leading a life as a manager of the rice growing farm in Donggang-myeon and he held a tenant farmers' meeting once a year, in which he always gave awards to the people of remarkable achievements of the year. They were decided on the point that they grew good rice or much rice from the area of their lands. He had prepared the prizes for the champion, such as a black cow for the first prize, the second farming tools, and the third… Most of the prizes were for agricultural work like hoes, plows, spades, and so on. I still remember the men going home happily with the prizes. It must have been his idea that encouraged the farmers to grow the motivation to the farming.
After the farmers' annual meeting, they had a great party, for which my family had prepared feast and a lot of sake men had made using the rice my father gave. Not only the tenant farmers but also the local people got together to join it, and the party was something like a village festival in a year. My mother had prepared a lot of Kimchi for this day.

Our house was built in a raised-floor-style, and we kept many chickens under the floor, some of which became the dinner for that night. We also served fruits as dessert which my father had planted in many places in the village. I remember I was watching the villagers drinking happily through the window, who were drinking fully till late at night. My father was the person who was generous with his money, fond of looking after the people around, and enjoyed looking at the people enjoying themselves.

On the other hand, he volunteered to teach the villagers agriculture, Japanese, mathematics and so on at night. I had once seen a photo in which he wore Korean formal clothes as the go-between of the wedding of the local people. After he struggled for the development of this region for long years, some of the tenant farmers offered to build an encomium monument for his contribution to the local people, to which he said no again and again. They finally persuaded him to accept the idea as a token of their gratitude and trust.

In 1928, when he was 38 years old, he had his encomium
monument built in Donggang-myeon. (Picture 1: This picture was taken three years after they built it. On the monument there are two names. One is Shozo Nishimi, my father, and the other is his uncle which he added for the honor of the Nishimi family.)

He was appreciated for his contribution to the development of agriculture in Korea, and honored by His Highness Prince Nashimotonomiya, principal of Japan Agricultural Conference. He was the only person who was awarded in Jeollanam-do in 1921.

(Picture1) encomium monument built by the local Korean people left - Shozo Nishimi (Dad)
right - Mr. Miyata, Donggang Elementary School principal

In 'The Matters and People in Jeollanam-do,' published at that time, he was referred to as following.

Shozo Nishimi (living in Woryang-ri, Donggang-myeon)
1891 born in Fukudomi-mura, Ukiha county, Fukuoka Prefecture
1908 January, soon after he went over to Korean peninsula, he began to manage the farming as a head of the Nishimi Farm, which had been founded in May, 1906.

Those days most land owners were living in the city and just got money through the farming, but he himself moved to the rural farming village with his family, instructing how to grow plants, showing the villagers the model of the living, and improving the public morals and sanitation.

1910 He abolished the sum system, old economical custom, which had been continued since the Joseon Dynasty, in which the intermediate tenant farmer got a huge intermediate exploitation. He changed the system into the cooperative organization system and devoted himself to improve the farming, following the prefectural farming policy and increased the amount of agricultural production greatly.

1921 10th, October, he was honored by His Highness Prince Nashimotonomiya, principal of Japan Agricultural Conference, as a benevolent farming manager. He had been devoted himself to the construction of the public irrigation system, and played an active part as a councilorship of the landowners in Naju and the Pang Nam financial association, and the president of the Woryang-ri
youth association.

1928 The tenant farmers and the other villagers, who had loved and respected him as a compassionate father, built an encomium monument which praise him publicly for his more that 20-year unrecognized effort, though he refused firmly.

Notes:  Rekishi wo gizosuru kankoku
(Korea - the country which fabricates the history)
By Yatsuhiro Nakagawa

How did Japanese own the farm land in Korea?

Toyo Takushoku Co., which was founded in 1908 by both Japanese and Korean government to develop the farm lands in Korea, owned totally 73,000 sq mi of lands, consisting of the 11,000 sq mi lands of ex-nationally owned lands and the others purchased from the private landowners or cultivated for farming. They tried to sell the lands to the Japanese and Korean farmers, but as the price of those lands for the Japanese was fairly high and the number of the Japanese who would buy and start farming was small (3,900 out of 6,000 intended), they stopped selling their land.

All the lands Toyo Takushoku Co. had was 2% of the farm land in Korea in 1921, which meant around 4% including the land they succeeded to from the ex-Korean government. The farm land Japanese government developed in Korea (220 sq mi) was bigger than Toyo Takushoku had (200 sq mi). Though they devoted themselves to constructing irrigation ponds and channels,
installing irrigation pumping stations, and researching the agricultural technology, they were always facing the financial difficulties in running the company.

Governor-General of Korea sold the lands cheaply to the Korean farmers who had been cultivating them so far as tenant farmers. By the way, the rate of the land ownership of Koreans were 90% at that time, and no lands in Korea were confiscated at all.

I was born in Korea

In 1920, I was born in Woryang-ri Donggang-myeon, Naju-county, Jeollanam-do as the second daughter of Shozo Nishimi. He named me Roko, which was after the word Rei-Ro from the Chinese classical literature, whose meaning is the state of a stone being shining and transparent. My older sister is Rei and me Ro.

As for the way of presenting the address in Korea, 'do' in Jeollanam-do where we lived meant 'Prefecture' in Japan, and the do office was in Kwangju city. 'Gun' in Naju-gun meant county, 'myeon' in Donggang-myeon meant 'village,' 'yu' meant 'town,' and 'ri' was added to the name of a small community.

Woryang-ri, Donggang-myeon we were living in was a remote village from a big town. There were no other Japanese except our family in the neighborhood, and so I played with the local Korean children all the time. The best place to play at was the cemetery,
where Korean style tombs called 'Man-jug tombs' were hilled up slightly like a mound and covered with grass all over. I can recall the happy days that we enjoyed running about there on bare feet and helped ourselves to pears or other fruits my father had planted in all over the village. I had many Korean friends and kept getting along with them, so it was said that I was the best speaker of Korean in my family. If anything, I may not have been good at speaking Japanese.

One day I got on a train with my dad. The car was the second class which we were seldom aboard. The train at that time had cars of two classes, one is the third and the other is the second, the fare of which was double of that of the third.
"On the train you were talked to in Japanese by the same age girl who was the daughter of the Japanese president of the local court, but you hardly understood what she said though it was your mother tongue." said Dad later.

As my parents might have thought that I should learn Japanese properly, Mom gave me a hard lesson in Japanese using Japanese textbooks for the 1st year pupils of the elementary school in Japan, which Dad had got somewhere. I learned by heart the whole sentences of the Japanese textbook beginning with 'Hana-Hato-Mame-Masu' to the end, and what I can recall even now was a 'Momotaro' story. She also taught me the way of calculation of addition and subtraction up to 10, and songs of 'Railway Song' or 'Sakurai-no-Ketsubetsu.'
On the other hand, the image of Dad comes back into my mind whenever the harvest season comes, who was always making a deep bow when the full moon rose in the east. He said that there was the Imperial Palace in the east direction. He seemed to admire the Emperor extremely all the more because he was living in the distant place across the sea. His solemn ceremony to the full moon seemed to be very awe-inspiring to his young daughter.

I cannot forget the happy days when my family went mushroom hunting in the nearby mountain. I must have been so pleased that I can recall it in detail nostalgically. In winter it was so cold that we got together into a room with on-tol, a Korean floor heating system, which was installed in one of the rooms of our house. When Dad decided to build a house, he asked a Japanese carpenter to come to Korea to build one in a Japanese style.

Compulsory education began at the age of six those days. My parents were going to send me to the local elementary school for the Korean children. As few Japanese lived around the area, there were no schools which only the Japanese children attend. My parents suggested me that I should experience a school life as a kind of preparation to be a 1st year pupil before the entrance of the elementary school, so I was made to go to the school with the children from the neighborhood. I, however, had my boxed-lunch eaten by someone at school, and came home crying and told Mom I would never go to the school again. I don't remember that I cried over the lunch, but I still remember the day clearly when the classroom teacher asked me, "What is your father's name?"
By the way, Naju county where we lived used to be a capital of Jeollanam-do in the old days and located in the big plain area. Its main industry was an agriculture, especially rice growing, and it is now famous for the production of fruits, such as apples, pears, jujube, figs, and so on. These orchards were said to have been started by the Japanese, and the fruits farming were succeeded by Korean farmers and now the amount of fruit production here is said to be the top in Korea.
I was put at my grandpa's family

My parents gave up sending me to the local school in Korea, because I firmly rejected to go, they said. They decided that I would be placed in the care of my mother's parents to attend the elementary school in Japan. The reason why I was sent to Mom's parents was that my 2-year-older sister, Rei, had already been put in Dad's parents' care to go the elementary school, and my parents may have hesitated to ask one family to care for two daughters. I began my life with my grand-pa, grand-ma, their son, and their daughter in one house. Since my grand-ma was a stepmother for my mom, and the two children were their son and their daughter, all except my grand-pa treated me coldly.

Wiping the wooden floors with wet dust clothes was my daily work since the beginning of my first day in this house. Every morning I had to carry a bucketful of water from a nearby river, wash dust cloth in it, and clean the floor with them. In the winter time the water running from the Mino mountain was so cold that I was always weeping. One day my grand-pa saw me crying and asked me why. When he knew the reason, I recall, he got angry with his wife and his children, saying, "Why do you make such a small girl do such a hard work, while you are washing dishes with hot water?"
My mom had sent a lot of beautiful kimonos for me, but they had all disappeared before I knew it. One day I wondered why a child in the neighborhood was wearing my kimono. Later, I guessed my step-grandma had given it to the neighbor in return for sake, because she was a heavy drinker and was often drinking around in the neighborhood. I was always being scolded by my grandma for the reason I couldn't understand. Though my grand-pa loved me so much, he seldom stayed at home because he was an influential person in the village and often went out to take care of the village affairs. In the evening I would often shout "Mom!" crying to the sun setting in the direction of the west where my parents lived.

My father's relatives, who lived in the next village, and the neighbors were all kind to me. Especially the next-door woman worried about me all the time, giving me some sweets or something to eat when other members were not at home. The father's relatives had always prepared books for me when I visited them on an errand, for they knew I loved reading books. I recall I was often reading books with all my heart without remembering to go home. It was a real disappointment for me there were no books to read in the mom's parents' house.

I later heard that Mom's family had been fairly wealthy before, owning a lot of farm lands and had a business of dealing with pit prop timber. But they were forced to lead hard lives after grandpa's brother failed in business. The huge sum of debts they owed was paid by the Nishimis, my father's family. I heard they had made
money by selling some of the mountains they owned.

I attended Fukudomi Elementary School close to the Mom's parents' house. It was a rare case at that time, but the school was co-educational from the 1st year to the 6th year. The homeroom teacher was kind and generous, and I was a favorite with my teacher. Nevertheless, I was bored with her class every day because I had already known what she was teaching; I had been taught by Mom before entering school. And I was often pointed out to behave myself by the teacher whenever I tried to leave the desk to play with a ball during her class. It is not always good to learn schoolwork before entering school, I can say it definitely now.

The next teacher in my 2nd year was an old woman. She was not good at teaching, and her classes were very monotonous and tiresome. She had been in charge of my class for 3 years. The teacher for the 5th and 6th year was Mr. Masayuki Nakagawa who had just graduated from the teachers’ college. He was a kind and capable teacher with a great leadership and loved by all the pupils in the class. Thanks to his earnest teaching, my grade score improved gradually, and I was the top of the class. Though naughty boys in those days were often enjoying bullying girls, I had not got such an experience at all, because, I guess, they admitted my superiority in my school work. I recognized that education was all dependent upon the teacher himself. Several years later when I became a teacher, his teaching technique and style gave me a great suggestion a lot. When I graduated from the elementary school, I got the reward for the 6-year perfect attendance and the 1st prize
of the school grade, and I was the only one from my class who passed the entrance exam for Ukiha Women's High School.

My Dad's failure

Though we had been leading a wealthy life during my young days before I entered the elementary school in Japan, our living condition was getting worse and worse. What with recession and what with frequent poor harvest, which caused the farmers not to pay any rice for tenant farming, the family finances were getting worse and worse. Furthermore, the control of the managing farmland business was transferred from Dad to the Nishimi main family members. He was just a temporary land manager as an adopted son, after all. The Nishimi main family having a great debt because of their indulging in luxury and standing surety for other debts, began to sell the lands my dad had been managing. They were struggling to make ends meet all the time, coping with the Japanese and Korean real estate brokers. Finally, they decided to give up all the real estate in Korea.

Shozo, always suffering from an asthma attack, was not a strong man enough to live through bravely in such a tough situation, because he had been brought up as the last son of the wealthy family, taken good care of by everyone. He was not so keen on getting money, but a person of tastes. Then, even under such an economic crisis of our family, he invited Mr. Bokusui Wakayama, a famous Japanese poet, and his wife to let them stay at the most gorgeous hotel in Jeollanam-do as long as they liked.
guess it was because of his drinking too much at that time that he
died the next year his stayed in Korea.

Under such a condition, our large family, Dad, Mom, 5
daughters, and one son, had changed the life style to survive. My
older sister, Reiko, got a job after graduating from Ukiha Girls' High
School, and was supporting our family budget. When I was
in the first year at the high school which was the same as Reiko
had graduated from, it turned out to be difficult to keep paying the
school fee. That was why I transferred to Kwangju Girls' High
School in Korea to save the living expenses and the travel fare to
come and go between the two countries.

Having my palm read on the train

I began to commute to the new high school in Korea by train. The
train track was a broad gauge, and the cars were spacious and
clean, different from the narrow-gauge train in Japan, which is the
same even now in Japan. We had moved from Donggang-myeon,
Naju-county, to Nishiki-Cho, used to be the capital city of this
area. The streets were built in a grid pattern. Our family had lost
all the land Dad was managing and we came to this town where
many Japanese lived, and public communication systems were
good. We had to walk 5 miles from the former house to the nearest
railway station on the mountainous road, but we had only to walk
from the new place to the Naju station for 20 minutes.

Along the street a lot of shops run by Japanese and Korean
merchants were lined. I used to take the train which left Naju station at 6:30 to go to Kwangju Girls' High School. There were about 20 girls who got on the same train to the school, I was always with Ms. Nakabayashi, my classmate.

The line from Mokpo to Daejeon was called Honam Line. I got on Honam Line train bound for Daejeon from Naju to Songjeong Station, changed trains there to Yeosu, got off at Kwangju Station. Yeosu was a port town at the southern end of Jeollanam-do, and we used the regular, sea line between Yeosu and Shimonoseki whenever we went back to Japan. Though Busan had a much bigger port and had a regular, direct sea line to Fukuoka, we had to go a long way around to get there.

One morning on my way to school, I offered an old man a vacant seat on the opposite side on the train. Sitting down, he recognized us as Kwangju Girls' High School students from our school uniform, and said, "I am a friend of Mr. Matsubara, Kwangju Girls' High School teacher. Shall I read your palm?"
I am relieved at his words and stretched out my hand to have my palm read by him, out of the curiosity. He took my hand, looked at carefully, and said smilingly, "You'll be a good teacher in the future. You are cut out for a teacher."
- **Kwangju** (光州): the town where my high school was located
- **Naju** (羅州): The town where Tsukimi Elementary School was located and I was living with my family
- **Yeongsampo** (榮山浦): the town where my first school was located
- **Donggang-myeon** (洞江面): the village where I was living when a small child
- **Mokpo** (木浦): the town from which I was going to repatriate after Japan lost the War
- **Busan** (釜山): the town from which I repatriated to Japan
- **Jeollanam-do** (全羅南道): Southern Korea where I spent my youth days
### 図3 朝鮮全羅南道地名（昭和11年）

(Figure3)
Next, he took Ms. Nakamura's hand. He said severely, "You are like a sly fox. You'd better try to be loved by others." "A sly fox' is too harsh." I said in my mind, "But it is not off the point." Because she always came to me to check my score after the exam papers were returned, and would never show me hers. I thought that his words might not be far from the truth, and they never left my mind from that time on. After all the old man's trivial words on the train became the start of my career in my following life.

There was another word which oriented my course of life. The vice principal of Kwangju Girls' High said to us students some day later. "You, young girls, should create your own future by yourselves, not by others." which had always stayed in my mind, as well.

Note:
Japan's Annexation of Korea - The truth of 36 years of Japan Imperialism Rule which rescued Koran People - By Chee Keiho (Korean Professor)

The road situation in the Joseon Dynasty and railway construction by the Japanese government

In the Joseon Dynasty before Japanese rule, even the main roads were like footpaths which a small cart wagon could barely go through. The most important road between Seoul and Úiju, a town near the border between China and North Korea, through
which the messenger from the suzerain China came and went on was the only one they can name the main road. It had been narrowed and not repaired. It was said that it had taken 25 to 26 days to send cargos from Seoul to Busan, about 250 miles. Japan made great efforts to construct the railway network all over Korean Peninsula.

In 1900, the first train railway in Korea, Gyeongin Line between Seoul and Incheon of 24.3 miles, was opened at last. In 1905, all the line between Seoul and Busan of 281.6 miles opened. After all, the expenditure of the two-railway construction was 35 million yen those days, adding two more railway lines, costing 66 million yen, which means 7 trillion (, not billion) yen today, were paid from the tax Japanese people paid. Considering that the whole income of the Korean Empire at that time was 7.84 million yen, we find how much Japanese government expended for the infrastructure construction of this land.

The construction of the railroad was continued till 1945, the last year of the World War II. The total extension of the railway was 4,145 miles, the number of the station 763, and the employee of the railway 100,527.

When it comes to a memory in commuting to the High School, I often saw Westerners on the train, while I had never had a chance to see them in Japan. (I didn’t know why there were many Westerners in Korea.) Whenever I found them on the train, I never failed to approach them and tried to
communicate with them. They also frankly talked to me. At such time all my friends on the train came close together and enjoyed ‘English’. I often asked them to read the English textbook we were using at school, which they would accept willingly. I was fascinated with the beautiful, melodious pronunciation of English all the time.

Friendship with the Son Family

It was Mr. Son (note; fictitious name, in order for their descendants not to be troubled by using their real name) who my Dad, Shozo, made a very close relationship with. We both families lived in the neighborhood in Donggang-myeon, Jeollanam-do, and Mr. Son, who was at the same age as Shozo, was a wealthy and learned landowner with a profound knowledge of Chinese classical literature. Shozo who was also keen on learning classical literature was a very best friend for Mr. Son. Mr. Son, however, had been seriously ill in bed in his later years. When he had but a few days to live, he repeatedly begged a favor of Shozo to take care of his own three sons. After Mr. Son passed away, Shozo kept his words and continued the family relationship, helping his family on opportunity.

In 1933 when Shozo was 48 years old and launched into a nursery and charcoal business, Mr. Son's first son Chol (fictitious name) funded him. Shozo's diary said as following.

Most of the funds for my business were provided by Chol, Mr.
Son's first son, in Donggang-myeon. The amount was 500 yen without any written acknowledgment of the debt. He said that it was OK that I would pay back only when I made money. Seeing me trying to start the business in poverty, Chol, for whom I am a man of different race, and whose deceased father was just a friend of mine, lent me such a big money, saying "Give it a try, anyway." Even my relatives were not willing to help me, though. I'll never forget his warm heart for the rest of my life.

Shozo kept his promise between the two, supporting Mr. Son's family. He sent Mr. Son's second son to the Military Academy in Japan, and the third son to the Kagoshima Agriculture School (now Kagoshima University)

A small hope for the future

Back then we were badly off, struggling dreadfully to live lives. Reiko, my older sister who had already graduated from Girl's School, demanded that I should quit the school at once and work for the family. I sent a letter to my Mom's father in Ukiha and explained my situation that I would have to give up attending school, although I'd like to study more. He read my letter with tears running down, I heard later. At once he asked his brother, my granduncle who was a lumber merchant in Kagoshima, to help me on the school expenditure. Owing to him I could continue the school life, transferring from Kwangju Girls' High to Ukiha Girls' High. I came to live in the same grandpa's house as I used to live before and attended the same school again. As for me I was lucky,
but my family in Korea were still leading a hard time.

The school trip to Nara, old capital of Japan, was planned for the 4th grader of Ukiha Girls' High School. I decided not to join in it in order not to impose a further burden on the people around me, not telling my grandpa about it, though I referred to the school trip and my decision not to join it in my thank-you letter for his support to my schooling. There were some 10 girls among the 4th grader who couldn't participate in the trip.

On the previous day when they were going to Nara, I was told by a teacher to be a leader of the left-over students. On the evening of the same day, my grand-uncle in Kagoshima came to our house suddenly and said,
"I heard Roko was not going on a school trip because of the financial reason. This is for her, and you don't have to pay it back, for I don't need it." He put enveloped money and left for Kagoshima on the last train of the day. After he left, my grandpa asked me what I needed for the school trip and noted each of them.

Next morning, with a heavy bag I went to Yoshii Station from which the 4th graders were going to start. My grandpa negotiated with the teachers to allow me to join in the group, and they admitted me to the trip. I deeply appreciated what he had done for me, because he had visited many shops in the village before dawn on the day to buy things necessary for my trip. They must not have been open yet at that time, but the shop owners were willing to accept his requests, for he, I guess, was kind to everyone and
always looking after affairs of the village. Owing to my granduncle and grandpa, I could enjoy my Nara school trip which was the best memory in my Girls' High School days.

(Picture2) School trip to Kyoto and Nara of Ukiha Girls' High School at the Sarusawa Pond in Nara

Not only my granduncle in Kagoshima but also another granduncle of mine in Tokyo also helped me to enjoy my school life. While I was in Kwangju Girls' High School in Korea, he sent me a magazine for students every month which was published by Shogakukan, Tokyo. I passed it around the class members and read it in turn. Thanks to many people around me, I could graduate from Ukiha Girl's High School successfully.

My older sister Reiko began to work as a nurse, and I also had to find a job to support my family after graduation. When I was
wondering what job I would take, I remembered what the fortune-teller on the train said. I imagined hopefully that the teaching profession might be suitable to me. I, however, could not leave the grandpa's house, because my grandparents were old, and I am supposed to help them with the farming.

My grandpa looked tired all the time those days. One day I asked him the reason.
"I am volunteering to guide the ancient tomb mounds which were found here and there in the neighborhood in the mountainsides of Mt. Mino for the sake of Prof. Kagamiyama, archaeologist of Kyushu University. I don't mind walking into the pitch-darkness of the old tomb cave, but I sometimes feel sick in it. That may be because of deficiency of oxygen, or divine punishment by the ancient people, maybe." said he, laughingly. I said to him, "You should use a candle lantern instead of a flashlight when you are in the oxygen deficient place. If you were in such a place, the candle would soon go out."
"You are clever, aren't you?" he praised me. He was in the latter half of his 70s at that time and looked exhausted from frequent tomb exploration.

Before long, my grandpa passed away because of the overwork for his age, and I began the life with my step-grandma alone. My younger brother Kinzaburo was a 6th grade kid of an elementary school in Korea. He decided to aim to go to Ukiha Middle School in Japan and came to us to prepare for it. He had not been so diligent in his studies that I had to teach him beside him for a long
time every day, and gradually his school work was getting better steadily. He got the third place among 70 pupils when he graduated and passed the entrance exam to the Ukiha Middle School.

In April, 1939, Kinzaburo entered Ukiha Middle School and was placed at 'Nishimi Clinic,' my dad's parents’ house, instead of my mom's. There were two reasons for his changing home. One was that Dad's parents’ family were fairly wealthy, and the other reason was that my old sister Rei, who was staying with them, had already left them. I decided to go back to my family to realize my dream to be a school teacher in Korea.

Note:

Japan's Annexation of Korea - The truth of 36 years of Japan Imperialism Rule which rescued Koran People -  By Che Keiho (Korean Professor)
The difference of the ruling styles between the Western imperialism and Japanese one

The UK never spend any national budget on ruling India. The Indians who were governed by the UK even paid all the expenditure on the UK troops in India, including soldiers' wages and holiday allowance. Since the UK government office in India sent about 25% of the tax from the Indians back to its home government, India originally in poverty became much poorer for that. The Indian national finance was almost bankrupt.

As for Ireland colonized by the UK, the Irish who had given
way under the burden ran away from their home country to the New
Continent as immigrants. The rate of the Irish land owners’
population was less than 5 %. The population of Ireland was 4.44
million in 1911, while 8.2 million in 1841, reduced by half. They
have three colonial policies.
#1 confiscating the land
#2 leaving the people uneducated
#3 stopping being industrialized

On the other hand, the population of Koreans living in Korean
peninsula became 25.53 million in 1942 from 13.13 million in
1910, almost double in the 32 years. Gross Domestic Expenditure
was also doubled from 0.58 million in 1910 to 1.19 million in 1938.
We can see that the Koreans' living conditions was surely improved
with more population and more income during the ‘Japan’s rule
over Korea’ days.

It might be believed that the time from 1910 to 1945 is often
called 'Japanese colonial rule days over Korea,' and Japan must
have been benefitted by Korea on the term of finance and labor
force. But the fact is on the contrary. Japan were forced to expend
a huge amount of national finance to Korea in order to strengthen
it as one nation, Japan. The Japanese were obliged to pay
increased tax for running Korea, and exploited, in a meaning.

Stagnant Korean economy began to improve from the
commencement of Japan ruling. Through the introduction of
capital and various kinds of supports from Japan, Korea could
establish the modern market economy, proprietary rights, commercial laws necessary for the modern corporation system, trust banking system, and means of communication and transportation.

During the colonial days total sum of $8 billion flowed into Korea from Japan, farms and factories run by the Japanese increased, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Korean peninsula area developed greatly, and GDP per person and consumption of daily commodities also increased. For 25 years from 1912 to 1937 Korean real GDP went up at 4% every year even under the Great Depression.

Above all, the population in Korean peninsula began to increase rapidly in the beginning of the 20th century, though it was decreasing gradually in the 19th century.
Part 3
Yeongsampo South Elementary School

School for the local Korean children
October, 1939- April, 1944

Home Room Teacher

October, 1939 - March, 1940 -------------- 1st & 2nd year girls class
(combined class)
April, 1940 - March, 1941 -------------- 3rd & 4th year girls class
(combined class)
April, 1941 - March, 1942 -------------- 4th year girls class
April, 1942 - March, 1943 -------------- 1st & 2nd year girls class
(combined class)
April, 1943 - March, 1944 -------------- 1st year girls class
April, 1944 - April, 1944 (one month) -------- 1st year girls class

Combined class of 80 pupils

In April, 1939, I was going to begin to work for an elementary school for the Japanese children in Sanpo-myeon village, Naju county, Jeollanam-do as a substitute teacher, the principal of which was Mr. Miyata, an acquaintance of Shozo. (See picture 1) It was not until the middle of April that I could go over to Korea, because
my grandma's caretaker who would succeed me was not decided.

When I arrived there, another substitute teacher had already been allotted to the post I was going to take. So, I registered my name to the county office for a substitute teacher, and I spent the days enjoying flower arrangement or sewing kimonos. Before long the tax office superintendent who was on good terms with Shozo invited me to work for the tax office to fill a vacancy as a part time job, and I began to work there. Two months after I got a job at the tax office, I was informed of a job interview for a substitute teacher by the county office.

In October, 1939, I began to work at Yeongsampo South Elementary School, close to my parents' house in Jeollanam-do. I was 19 years old then. A substitute teacher meant a teacher who worked for a school on a one-year contract, worked full-time, and was supposed to do the same work as a regular teacher.

At the night I got the first salary, I said to my Mom, "If Grandpa (Mom's father) were still alive, I could buy him a bottle of Sake with my pay." She began to cry to hear that. He cherished me from the bottom of his heart. I fully owed my graduation from the Girls High to him. My Dad wrote in his diary as following later;

In October, 1939, Roko got a job at Yeongsampo South Elementary School as a part time teacher. She began commuting to school from our house. 40 yen a month. In August, 1940, she
took a license course and passed the teacher license examination, getting the teacher's license. And on April 1, 1941, she got a teacher job formally in charge of the third-year pupils class. 40 yen for the main salary, plus 24 yen for the overseas additional salary and 6.5 yen for the housing allowance.

Yeongsampo South Elementary School, which was just for the Korean children, was built and run by the Japanese government. There were one more elementary school in Yeongsampo West Elementary School, which was just for the Japanese children.

The YSE school staffs were both the Japanese and the Koreans. The principal was the Japanese, and the vice principal the Korean. The number of the teachers was 10 altogether, the Japanese 5 and the Koreans 5, and one Korean janitor. The language in the class was all Japanese. The contents of the lessons were in accordance with those of the school education in Japan.
(Picture3) Yeongsampo elementary school staffs in March, 1941

me: the front chair line, the 2nd from the left
Ms. Nam: the 1st form the left, my closest and best colleague

In April the class in my charge was a girl’s class combined of the 1st and 2nd year (6 and 7 years old). There were more than 70 pupils in one class (See the picture on the front page), and it was hard to go over so many pupils among the desks in the classroom.

Though the number of the newly-enrolled pupils was increasing year after year, overwhelmingly larger number of boys were entering school every year than girls, for Korea was a man dominant society at that time and parents counted on their sons heavily. The classes were separated such as 'boys class' and 'girls class,' one boys class for one-year grade, while one girls class for two-year grades. I later had a chance to take a class for a single
year grade 40 girls class once. Although man teachers were generally supposed to take boys classes while woman teachers girls classes, vigorous woman teachers were sometimes allotted to the lower grade boys classes. The layout of the school buildings also reflected the idea of the boys-girls separation. (See the frontispiece picture on page 1)

(Picture4) 1st and 2nd year girls in my charge (a combined class)
October, 1939 - March, 1940

At the center of the school main building were there the teachers' room, the principal's room which was also served as a guest room, and the entrance hall. The right wing of the building was for the 3rd to 6th year grade boys’ classes, while the left wing all for the girls and 1st and 2nd year grade boys’ classes. At the farther end of the left wing were there a janitor's room and the official residence of the principal.

Because of this layout I seldom have a chance to see the higher
year grade boys' classes. Women teachers were required to be fully
careful with the clothing and expression in order not to be seen as
women by the Korean boys, for Korean men got matured faster and
married younger than Japanese men, even though they were then
elementary school kids.

In my combined class 1st-year group was drawing pictures,
while the other was studying arithmetic. It was a hard job for one
teacher to manage the 2 year groups at the same time. More than
anything, I had to take a long time to make up the teaching plans.

It is not rare to see the kids fighting. Even in the class, while I
was teaching for one group, the other group pupils sometimes
began quarrelling or fighting. A girl named Kim was a little rough
now and then, and she was often hitting or kicking her classmates,
though she was a very attached and helpful girl to me. She had
difficult background and her mother was a stepmother, and so she
may have given out her complex feeling from her home to her
friends. I often wonder how she is doing now, and whether she has
been living her life happily. I miss her very much.

Shozo's new job

In 1938, Mr. Sanzo Sato, one of Shozo's close friends, offered
him a job as an associate partner of a new business. Mr. Sato
suggested him to join the business with his acquaintance Mr.
Okada, for the biggest seeds and nursery company in Korean
Peninsula, Fukoku-En, which was going to extend the market in
Manchuria (now in China). It was the very moment that luck had turned in his favor, for he didn't have any fixed job at that time. After that he started another business of selling wood charcoal, my family getting well off. While living in Donggang-myeon, he associated with a lot of people and had a large circle of acquaintances, which led him to be saved in the predicament.

In 1944, he began to assist the priest of the Naju Shinto Shrine as the head representative of the believers. Whenever Shinto ritual events were held, he did his job as a priest in the priest clothes. Shozo wrote as following.

_I was designated for the head representative of the Naju Shinto Shrine believers. As Japan-China War is getting worse and the front line is expanding, the number of the drafted men was increasing. Besides the yearly and monthly Shinto rituals, we hold prayer rituals for them before going to the war. The shrine is getting busier._
Shozo was a man of literature and made it a hobby to make Chinese poems, Tankas, and Haikus. Furthermore, he enjoyed practicing musical instruments, especially Japanese flute for the Shinto rituals. He played not only the flute but also the shakuhachi bamboo recorder, koto, shamisen, and accordion very beautifully. I heard the Nishimi Family had loved performing music as a family tradition, and the girls of the Family were supposed to learn koto and shamisen when young.

In 1940, the World's Fair and the Olympic games, which were going to be held in Tokyo, were cancelled owing to the War. Shozo was 50 years old. In April he was offered a job of the office director of the controlled economy conference of Naju established in the Naju Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In September he became representative of the wood coal marketing cooperative, and he also
lead 12 cooperatives, such as grocery, rice, wood coal, hardware, liquor, shoes, medicine and seeds, restaurants, agriculture, printing and paper manufacturing and selling, cotton and silk, and fish stores.

Start as a regular teacher

During the summer vacation in 1940, I took the seminar course for the teachers' license held by the School Affairs Section of Jeollanam-do. (See the opening page picture) At the end of the seminar I took the exam, which was not so difficult, and luckily, I passed it, which was a great joy for me. I started as a formal teacher at the same school as before from April in 1941.

The regular teachers’ pay was wholly different from the substitute teacher's. Though the latter got just 40 yen a month, the former's salary was 40 yen, plus 24 yen for overseas allowance which is 60% of the main salary, and 6.5 yen for housing allowance. Teachers in Manchuria and Taiwan got 32 yen, 80% of the main salary Totally I got more than 70 yen a month, which I handed to my parents without opening the pay envelope.

Korean teachers in Korea didn't get overseas allowance of course, which meant they got the same pay as the ordinary Japanese teachers in Japan. When Koreans went to Manchuria or Taiwan as teachers, they could get overseas allowance, and housing allowance, too. There seemed to be some Korean teachers who was always complaining the salary difference between the Japanese and
the Korean teachers, not knowing the allowance system. Those days the currency we used was not only Japanese yen, but Korean won.

Soon after I was formally hired at the Yeongsampo South Elementary School, I was told to have a demonstration lesson, for it was an inevitable custom, a kind of rite of passage for a new face teacher to have. He or she were supposed to show the lessons to the other teachers and be pointed out the problems by them to improve his or her lessons, which was a hard job for me. As expected, after the class I was criticized harshly, which encouraged me to improve the way of my teaching. I keenly felt my immaturity as a teacher, and made up my mind to study more, reading a lot of books on teaching and education, and observing many classes by other teachers. The monthly magazine 'Teaching Skills' which I was subscribing to was very helpful to me to know how to manage the class and teach the subjects.

The next teacher who came to YSE School was Ms. Higashihara, for whom the demonstration class was set up, too. The criticism in the evaluation meeting held after her class was also thoroughly. I cheered her up, who was weeping after it, and we promised to improve our teaching skills by the next time.

For the demonstration class the next year, I tried with 'Art and Craft' which was my favorite and confident subject. I prepared notice boards, which Shozo wrote for me in calligraphy, and dolls which were useful for progressing the class. After the class many
teachers praised my lesson so much that I got self-confidence in teaching.

The staffs at YSE School

The principal Mr. Kenji Tsurumoto was in his late 40s from Oita Prefecture, Kyushu. The vice principal was Mr. Moon, an intelligent and serious-minded Korean teacher. I remember he was always reading a handbook of *The Tannisho*, Japanese Buddhism, all the time which he was subscribing to every month.

*The Tannisho*, also known as the *Lamentations of Divergences*, is a late 13th century short Buddhist text generally thought to have been written by Yuien, a disciple of Shinran. In the Tannisho, Yuien is concerned about the rising doctrinal divergences that emerged in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism after the death of their founder, so he wrote down dialogues between himself and Shinran that he could recall when his master was alive.

The relationship between the Japanese and the Korean teachers was really good, and two young teachers of the Japanese Mr. Yamasaki and the Korean Mr. Lee were especially on good terms with each other, always joking with each other and laughing loudly. But vice principal Mr. Moon was sometimes uttering something contemptuous toward Japan. Feeling he had a strong antipathy to the Japan's rule over Korea, we took care when talking in front of him. By the way, Koreans didn't like to be called 'Koreans' but 'Peninsulers,' while Japanese used the words
'Koreans,' and 'Inlanders' for the Japanese, though formally we were all 'Japanese' after all.

It was Ms. Juke Nan (Japanese pronunciation), a Korean teacher, who I got along best with among all the teachers. I called her Ms. Minami in the Japanese way of pronunciation, instead of Ms. Nan, (See Picture 3; Left end in the front chairs) and I sometimes called her Ms. 'Manju-no-Hime,' Princess of Manju (sweet rice cake). She used to study at a Japanese school when young and was so smart and excellent. She spoke Japanese so fluently and had a lot of Japanese friends.

She was so kind to me enough to lend me many books such as 'Gone with the Wind' by Margaret M. Mitchell and 'The Good Earth' by Pearl S. Buck in Japanese translation, which she said she had borrowed by a Japanese friend. I read them till late every night in order to give them back in no time. Owing to those books I was so much stimulated to consider my way of living as a woman, which set up the milestone for my life as a woman and a teacher from that time on.

What I was moved most by her was that she troubled to seek and find a boarding place for my stay during the summer course of the teacher's license. She visited her acquaintances around the area one by one and found me a house of Mr. Oh, who was a lawyer.

It was on Sunday a few day later that I met the master of the house Mr. Oh for the first time. As I couldn't see him on the day I
began to stay at his house, I saluted him and said, "Mr. Oh, I am Roko Nishimi. Nice to meet you. Thank you very much for allowing me to stay at your house. Ms. Nan introduced your family to me. I am grateful for your kindness." He was the very gentleman and I remember he gave me so polite an answer. If I had rented a room of the Japanese, the rent must have been much higher.

I shared the room with a girl Ms. Jutoku Lee (Japanese pronunciation), Korean teacher, (See picture 6) who was the same substitute teacher as me and was aiming to be a regular teacher as well. In no time we got good friends and attended the course together.

It was Ms. Junji Kim that especially impressed me, who had been working for YSE School till the year before I came. (See picture 7) Her sister-in-law was attending our school, and she sometimes dropped in at it. Though I didn't have an experience of working together as a colleague at the same school, I soon came to be good friends with her and often visited her at her boarding room. Being a reliable senior teacher by two years and a close friend of mine, I adored her as if she were my real sister.
Even after she got married, I visited her at her home several times, and sometimes stayed at night with some of my friends. She looked really happy with her husband, with whom she had worked as a voluntary member for local events. He was working for an agricultural cooperative association.

I believe there are no difference between the Japanese and the Korean as for the quality of being a good teacher. Whether he or she is a Japanese or a Korean, an excellent teacher is excellent after all.

The last person I would like to talk about was Mr. Suiyo Kyo (Japanese pronunciation), who was working as a school janitor. Being an honest and devoted man, he responded any kind of requests from teachers trustfully. He often walked a long way to the county office to hand in the school documents, and I offered him to stop at my house which was located close to it. I had asked
my mom to serve him tea and cakes whenever he came, explaining that I was grateful for his helpfulness. From then on, he often dropped in at my house, had a short rest, and went to the county office.

Among us young women teachers we had three unspoken rules. One: to refrain from chatting with a man teacher personally. Two: not to put on the clothes of too loud colors such as red or pink. Three: not to be alone with a man teacher in a classroom.

My lodging life at a Temple cottage

It was a Zen temple named Eiko-Ji that I chose as a lodging house, which was in the mountainside and close to our school. Eiko-Ji had many cherry trees, which blossomed in spring so gorgeously.

The priest Mr. Nakamura of this temple, who was from Saga Prefecture, Kyushu, reformed an abandoned house into a temple and had been working as a Buddhist. It was run by volunteers from Yanagawa, Fukuoka Prefecture, and the believers were all Japanese.

I started my life at a cottage with 8 tatami mats (15.5 sq. yds.) separated from the main temple building. As for meals, I cooked rice and soy bean soup using a portable clay cooking stove outside the house. It took ten minutes to walk down the mountainous road to the school. I never overslept luckily because Mr. Nakamura
began Buddhism praying loudly at 5 o'clock every morning.

One day I said to him,
"Are you from a Priest family?"
"No. I'm not. I was a soldier when Japan fought against Russia. In the battle, my best friend was shot to be killed beside me. I got disheartened, and after the war was over I decided to become a priest to console his spirit."

I was alone at the temple cottage at the beginning, till another young teacher Ms. Kawakami who had been transferred to my school came to live with me. She was so proud and far from modest a woman that she was always boasting of herself, such as her graduating from a sewing school. Furthermore, she was stingy enough not to pay for our living expenses, though she would eat anything such as sweets or fruits without hesitation, which Mr. Kim, a house-helper from my parents' house, sometimes brought for me. I taught her how to cook rice, because she said she had never done it before.

Whenever I invited my close friend Ms. Nan, to our cottage, Ms. Kawakami never failed to become bad tempered. One day I had invited her and had a good time, and as soon as she left our place, Ms. Kawakami said to me,
"Why do you invite her here? Korean people don't even take a bath, you know?"
"So, what? Any problem? Doesn't matter at all. Japanese or Korean? We are all the school teachers, you know? It's absurd to
say such a thing. We are all able to get salary of teachers for the Koran kids. That's why we are here in Korea, isn't it? You should never say that again." I refuted her sharply and coldly. She said nothing more, but she seemed to have somewhat discriminatory thought toward Koran people.

After that though I invited Ms. Nan to come to my place several times, she would never come again. That was because she must have felt something uncomfortable at that time, I guess.

By the way, let me introduce Mr. Kim, a house-helper at my parents' house. My parents hired him who had just graduated from school to have the house work helped. He was in the middle of teens, and a gentle young boy, and soon after he came to our house, he and my younger brother Kinzaburo got very close friends. I often saw them talking together happily. In addition to the monthly pay, my parents offered him every meal three times a day and a bath at the end of the day.

When Ms. Kawakami with whom I was living together was transferred to another school, I decided to move to my parents’ house in Naju and commute to school by bus.

What was taught at school

What we were teaching at school was the same content as was taught in Japan, and the subject 'language' was not Koran, but Japanese. It was divided into three fields. The first was the
composition class, in which pupils were supposed to write something like their daily lives. The second was the reading class, where they read books such as stories or poems. And the last was the calligraphy class in which they practiced Chinese character using writing brushes. To my surprise, every Koran pupil could master Japanese so easily in no time, though they began to study it for the first time after they entered the elementary school.

Almost all of arithmetic for the 1st and 2nd year students were addition and subtraction. In the science class, we went out to gather flowers and observed them to identify the organ systems, such as pistil, stamen, and so on. Music class was a mainly singing class since the organ in the classroom was broken. There was no repairman of the instruments around such a remote local school, I guess. I also taught them dancing to the music. Art class was still-life or landscape painting, and manual arts such as origami, paper folding, or clay work.

In the 'public moral' class, we didn't have any textbook, so I talked to them on various values such as kindness, friendliness, unselfishness, peacefulness, and so on. There were no teachers' manual for teaching, and so all the teachers had to manage to create their own way of teaching. 'Social study' for the 5th and 6th year included geography and history.

Children learned the content of these subjects using Japanese, while they were talking with each other in Korean all the time. It never occurred to us to prohibited them from speaking Korean,
which was unreasonable and impossible. (I recently heard that the Koreans were saying Japanese at that time punished them for using Korean, which is a lie.) I also tried to remember and use Koreans as often as possible.

One day when I happened to use a newly learned Korean words, one of the Koran colleague pointed out me not to use them for they are so vulgar words.

As I had led a life in Kora till 5 years old, and been playing with Koran children all the time, I was a good speaker of Korean and sometimes I was a translator between my parents and the local people. I was rather a poor speaker of Japanese then. But after that I came back to Japan and stayed there for a long time, I could not speak so well as I had been speaking when young. The only expression I remember clearly even now was this, "U-ri hak-kkyo son-saeng," which means "We are school teachers."

Note:

Shin-nichi ha no tameno benmei
(A vindication for the pro-Japanese Koreans)
by Kim Wan Sop  (Korean Writer)

After Japan annexed Korean peninsula as one nation, it did its best to heighten the educational level of Korean people. It planned to build one elementary school in each 'myeon,' a small community called 'village' in Japanese. In order to increase school enrollment rate in Korea, parents' expenses for the school pay was kept much
lower than those of Japanese.

Before the annexation there were 100 elementary schools all over Korea, and 5 years after the annexation, the number of the elementary school was 410, pupils 61,700. In 1943, public elementary schools (6 years) were 4,271, and the number of the pupils 1,940,000. Government-General of Chosen, which was the office set up to govern Chosen (Korean peninsula) by the 'Japan's Annexation of Korea' treaty in 1910, made a great deal of effort to build up secondary education as well as primary education, building a lot of middle schools all over the peninsula. Furthermore, for the higher education, as early as in 1924 they established Gyeongseong University, now Seoul University, before Osaka University in 1931 and Nagoya University in 1939.

In 1904, it is said that the school education was only restricted to Seoul (called 'Gyeongseong,' then), and that there were just 7 or 8 elementary schools. There were only 500 children among 12 million people in the Chosen peninsula attending modern public schools, plus some private elementary schools which were mostly mission schools. In 1910 after the Japan's Annexation of Korea, the number of the public elementary school pupils was 110,800, more than 200 times. In 1937, 1,210,400, 11 times. It is said that they were planning to introduce compulsory education for all the Koran people in 1946, even under the urgent situation of the Pacific War.
While the number of the people who got more than 6-year education was only 2.5% at the end of Korean Empire, during the Japan rule over Korea it gradually increased and more than 78% of the people born in the 1930s got more than 12-year education. Those people supported the development of Korea to modernize it after the War and made the base of actual industrialization of this country.

The lives of the ordinary people in Korea

I'll talk about Korean clothes, foods, and housings at that time. The clothes they wore were 'Hanbai,' national costume. Upper wear was 'jeogori' and women wore skirt called 'chima,' (see picture 8) men wore pants, 'baji.'

The color of the children's clothes was all black, which I heard used to be all white as well as adult's clothes, but because children often made them dirty while playing, they became black at last. All the adults' clothes were not with colors nor stripe patterns. In Korean movies these days people in those days appear in very colorful clothes, which is not true.

Though the main industry in Korea was agriculture those days, agricultural production was scarce with the poor soil and agricultural technology, and as a result, the living standard of the ordinary people was not high. There were many pupils who came to school in the school uniforms with thin under wears in them even in cold winter days. We didn't have any heating system in the
school building, but there were many pupils in one classroom and it began to warm soon.

As for foods, as you know, Korean people enjoy kim-chi for meal all the time. Children's lunch boxes included kim-chi, of course, so after the lunch time the classroom was full of smell of kim-chi.

At my parents' home they asked a Korean housewife to make kim-chi, which was our house-helper Mr. Kim's special favorite. The main ingredients of it were Chinese cabbage, radish, dried laver, salted sardine, garlic, and red pepper.

(Picture8) Friendly sisters in hambok

Those days their houses were all small, made of red clay, and the roofs of them were thatched with rice straw, which was rotten
more easily than barley straw. Some houses were surrounded with red clay walls with pebbles.

Mr. Oh, whose house Ms. Nan introduced to me and I had been staying at for one month before, seemed to be very wealthy. His house was fairly large and surrounded with brick walls. After going through the entrance gate, there was a main house at the center of the property, which was built with red clay and wood, in the Korean style. On the left hand there was a house with three rooms for the house-helpers. The first was for man, the second for woman (two women helpers at that time), and the last had been used for their oldest daughter, who had already been married and left the parents' house. We, I and Ms. Lee, could rent her room luckily. (In fact, we began the first day happily, but on that very night we found that it was very difficult to have a sleep because of the attack of bedbugs.)

The meals at his house, which included grilled pork, chicken, or fish, and kim-chi in addition to rice and Korean miso soup were very delicious for me. Especially Korean rice tasted very good because of its climate, I guess.

The houses of the Japanese in Korea were mostly made of wood in the same way as in Japan, but most of them were thatched with zinc roofing, not with roof tiles, which was, I guess, because of the construction costs. I remember such Japanese style houses were terribly cold in the wintertime. Soon I could understand why the Korean houses were made of clay.
I had many chances to see inside of the Korean houses when I visited my pupils, which was one of the teachers' annual tasks to know their real lives and I often visited them at home to talk to their parents. People were leading their lives on the red clay floor, over which thick oiled paper was spread. At night they laid out blankets there. In the cold wintertime they used an 'on-tol' heating system under the floor, through which the hot air from a cooking stove circulated and warmed up each room.

Take the vice principal Mr. Moon's house which I had visited with other colleague teachers for example. It consisted of earth floor kitchen, on-tol living room, closet room with wardrobes, and on-tol bed room, which was the common layout of the Korean houses. Some poor families lived in one room houses.

As Korean people didn't have a habit to take a bath at that time, in the summer time they would often wash themselves in the river instead of taking a bath. That can be the reason for that many of the pupils had not only head lice in their heads but also body lice, or white lice, in their clothes which we seldom saw in Japan. Body lice inhabited in the underwear, and sucked blood, leaving red dots in the body. We teachers contacted with children physically every day, and we got lice very often.

The toilet was outside the house, and people feared tigers which appeared in this area at night, so they were shitting in the human waste container put in the room. I didn't know what it was for when I saw one for the first time, which was beautifully painted with
flower designs.

There was a pig shed in the roadside on the way to school, the second floor of which was a human lavatory. Pigs kept on the first floor were eating human wastes, which could be a reasonable way of raising pigs without any special pig foods. I saw that for the first time.

Though Koreans didn't have such customs as to plant trees or flowers and make gardens in their property as Japanese did, some althea trees were planted around the house, and they had white blossoms in summer. Althea blossoms are now Korean national flower.

What I focused on most when teaching the children

What I made efforts on most was to find how I could attract children's attention in class. I had my own experience when I was a Girls' High students. It was obvious that the English teachers at Kwangju Girls' High School in Kora was much attracting for the students than the Ukiha Girls' High teachers. In my High School days I had keenly felt that learning should be active and based on the learners' interests and concerns at the same time.

While the English teachers in Japan just wrote English sentences on the blackboard without saying anything, which made me got bored in no time, at the Kwangju Girl's High a young teacher from Japan tried to get us interested in English. For
example he handed us three post cards per student, on which pictures of Japanese cultural scenes or landscapes were printed. He told us to write letters to foreign students, which were sent to the cities in the world whose population was over 50 thousand. One of my post cards was sent to a girl in Los Angeles, and in the reply letter from her, which came after months later, a piece of soft pink cloth was enclosed in the envelope. I found it was part of her school uniform. I remember answering her in English excitedly with the help of the English teacher.

The reason I cannot forget the English class was that the practical learning had a kind of sense of achievement for the students and encouraged them to take part in the class actively. The young English teacher must have managed to find the way for us to have a motivation to learn English. Once they got interested in learning, they would definitely eager to learn more, I believed.

Through my experience of the two teaching styles I determined to keep in mind that I would teach them in the way they might get interested. Especially, for lower grade kids it was difficult to let them understand just in words, but effective to use concrete teaching materials. For example, in the sentence "morning sun light, shining brightly in red," I taught them 'red,' using a piece of red cloth comparing with blue, yellow, or green. In the music class I suggested them to recall their daily lives and natural landscapes and taught them the song 'Yu-yake, Ko-yake,' which is the nostalgic song to represent the scenery of the sun setting.
Another point on my way of teaching was to make up their learning habit, daily manners, and a voluntary mind. Especially, in the cleaning time, I worked with them all the time and showed them how to clean the floor, windows, and desks with wet dust cloth. I asked some weak kids to do easy tasks such as dusting window pans. Soon they were willing to clean the classroom voluntarily.

At the lunch time I told them to say 'Itadakimasu' before eating and 'Gochisosamadeshita' at the last, which was the Japanese way of expressing our gratitude to everyone who had prepared it. Korean culture hadn't had such a custom of greetings. I, also, told them not to make too much noise including eating noise at the table, and they soon got a habit of eating in 'good' manners.

I believed in the benefit to get into decent manners while young for their future lives. It was common to see both adults and young children blowing their nose with their hands and spitting phlegm out in public, which I told them to stop because it was not desirable for sanitation and manners.

By the way some of the man teachers, both Japanese and Koreans, sometimes hit children when they were punishing them, which I hated terribly. I felt horrible and barbaric to see such a scene, but at that time it was not rare in the school education to see physical punishment in inland Japan as well. For example, small kids would throw sand to their classmates when they were sitting on the ground in the PE class. On such a case the teacher chased the naughty boy and caught to hit them on the butt. I doubted how
the teachers had prepared to let them understand why the behavior was not good. Whenever I came across a man teacher hitting children, I cried out in a loud voice and condemned him for his cruelty, saying, "Stop it, mister. You should tell him how to do it. He just doesn't know how to deal with it. And if he could do it, praise him for it, please."

I never failed to cry out even from the window on the second floor whenever I saw such an awful scene. Gradually the teachers came to talk to the pupils in a polite way.

I never punished children physically but explained them the reason they should not do it or do it, and tried to praise them as much as possible when they worked hard, which meant every child's personality and human rights should be valued by any means. I took care of my words in talking to the 1st year pupils, using the word 'Anata,' a polite way of saying of 'You,' ‘Watashi,' of 'I.' I also taught them to use polite expressions to the elderly people in the everyday scene. I believed that we teachers also should behave decently so as to be a good example to the children.

I had three basic attitudes in teaching the children. The first is to praise them for their efforts and let them gain confidence. The second is to make them have a goal even though it may be a small one. And the last is not to deal with some children differently and adoringly, but to attend to children fairly. One day I was said to by a Korean teacher,
"The parents deeply trust you."
I was sure that they must have understood my way of teaching.

An Offer of Marriage

It was when I was leading a boarding life at a temple after I began to work for Yeongsampo South Elementary School that I got an offer of marriage. Mr. Fuji, who had retired as a principal at a Japanese school in Mukden (Shenyang, now) Manchuria, and went back to Japan to lead a retirement life, was a colleague at the same school as a substitute teacher. He came to Korea to be a teacher again to answer the request of his friend, who was working at a School Affairs Section of Jeollanam-do, Korea. One day Mr. Fujii said to me,
"Would you mind becoming a wife of my first son?"
He offered me a marriage to his son, who had graduated from medical school of Manchuria University in Mukden, and was a doctor at the University Hospital. He had been spent a lot of time looking for his son's wife not only in Manchuria but also in Fukuoka, only to fail. It was at that time he happened to know me.

I was, however, struggling to support my family financially with my small salary at that time, when my family had been living at the bottom of the life. Furthermore, the social status of the families between his and my family was not balanced. I knew what a doctor's life was like, because my uncle, father's elder brother, was practicing a clinic and I often visited and looked at their household while I was living in Ukiha. Even though I explained it
many times, he said,  
"I know that, but I would be happy if you were his wife. He is a more sensible man than I, and he will never give you any trouble and I'm sure he'll definitely make you happy."
He visited me at the temple house again and again with a lot of presents.

He said the reason he begged me so enthusiastically was that I resembled his daughter who had died when young, and that he liked the way I spoke politely. Most of the other Japanese teachers spoke fairly roughly after the long stay in Korea, but he said I spoke differently. That was because I had been using Japanese for about ten years while living at a rural town in Japan, I guess.

I, however, continued to say no.  
"I have an elder sister who has not been married yet. I cannot get married before her" --- it's a kind of a Japanese way of thinking. Mr. Fujii came to know that I had no intention to get married at all and gave up finally.

By the way, I think it was around the same time I had another incident. A girl came into my class from Tokyo, whose parents were Korean. They had move to Tokyo for some reason and came back to their home town, Yeongsampo. I still remember what her mother had quietly talked about the impression of Japan.

"While we were living in Japan, all the people around us were Japanese, of course. They were all kind enough to visit to give us
Korean family foods or something now and then. They were taking care of us kindly all the time. Japan was the land for me to be able to live comfortably and safely, and I wanted to continue to live there, but we had to come back to Korea to look after my husband's parents. Now there are nobody who would share foods with us. Japan was really a beautiful and wonderful country."

Soon after that the girl stopped coming to school without any notice. I wonder whether she couldn't afford school, or something might have happened to them.

The Town of Yeongsampo

There used to be an area called 'Market' in the center of Yeongsampo where people were trading everything. Just as the name implied, markets were opened there once in ten days and it was crowded with the local people. They were selling everything from vegetables grown in their garden to fishes they got in the river or the sea and pork they produced at home. I enjoyed walking around the market when I had a chance to leave school earlier.

In Yeongsampo there were some bookstores, drugstores, seeds and nursery stores, and hotels which were run by the Japanese who had moved here. On the other hand, the Koreans ran dry goods stores, fish stores and so on. I had an impression that the Japanese and the Koreans lived friendly and peacefully.

The Yeongsangang river, which is as large as the Chikugo
river, Kyushu, flows through the town of Yeongsampo and we crossed the wooden bridge over the river on the way to and from Yeongsampo station and the center of the town. The river is a fairly large one, and was often flooded, resulted in the bridges being washed away each time. The Japanese made bank protection works and constructed a river port which enabled people to transport products from Yeongsampo to the riverside towns and the many towns out of the river mouth.

It was a fairly big wooden bridge, the wood of which was supposed to be sent from Japan because in Korea there were no mountains from which we could get wood to build houses or bridges.

On the foot of the bridge was a small wharf, and next to it there was tobacco shop which was run by Mr. Tokuyama, a Japanese from Kurume, Fukuoka. He, about 50, would often be sitting on a stool in front of his shop and bluntly talking to the people walking through the street. One day when I happened to pass by the shop, he said to me bluntly,
"Hey, you, an elementary school teacher. I know your principal is betting on playing mah-jongg. Is it OK for a school teacher to gamble?"
"No problem, man. I know that, but I don't think it may cause any trouble at all. It's none of your business, isn't it? Stop speaking ill of our school."

I talked him back in his face at once without stopping at the
place. Even the teachers could be allowed to do small gambling, I thought.

After a while my father said to me, "Mr. Tokuyama, the owner of the riverside tobacco shop, said that you were so manly and competitive and that to his surprise you had retorted him. What happened?"

I explained the whole story of the other day. He laughed happily, saying, "I understand it now. Good job for your daring to talk the foul mouth man back. Well done!"
I cannot recall the flow of the Yeongsangang without this incident coming back to me.

By the way how did the Japanese begin to live in the town of YeongSaudi and how had they been leading their lives there? In 'Formation of the Japanese town in Yeongsampo,' which was given by Tatsuo Kawano, one of my acquaintances, the beginning of this town is described as following.

'Formation of the Japanese town in Yeongsangpoe'
After the victory of Japan-Russia War (1904-1905), it was decided that the Korean Peninsula belonged to Japan. It was around 1910 when the Japanese came to live in Yeongsampo. They landed on the river shore of the Yeongsangang, and built their houses at the slightly higher places in the marshy lands around the 'Market.' Merchants, however, opened their shops in the very marshy areas
beyond the river, where everything would be floated away once flood happened.
It is said Korean people were so surprised to see the Japanese chose the places to live at which Koreans were never willing to choose. Mr. Kim Keishu (Japanese way of pronunciation), Korean geographer and historian, points out that Japanese don't mind feng shui, or divination by geography. Korean people have been so suffered from the river flooding since the beginning of their history that their fear toward the natural disaster is far greater than that of the Japanese. Generally speaking, Japanese, especially Japanese merchants, tend to focus on the convenience for the transportation rather than feng shui. They gave the banks levee works and made the land easier to live on artificially.

The author Mr. Shimizu, who ran a rice mill house, built a two story house in case of river flooding. The second floor was a living space and on the first floor was a room with a rice mill machine and a rescue boat. This is the very way of the Japanese reasonable thinking from the economical viewpoint.

The river-route between Yeongsampo and Mokpo was the main artery which meant it was also important not only for Yeongsampo but also Gwangju, Yeongam, and Gangjin of the inland towns. The improvement of the river route artery was urgent and vital for the town of Yeongsampo. The plan was proposed by Mokpo Chamber of Commerce founded by the Japanese.

In 1909 they began dredging the Yeongsangang. There were
quite a few shallow places in the river between Yeongsampo and Mokpo route, the big boats being in danger of going onto them. They demanded financial assistance from the prefectural government of Jeollanam-do, getting a subsidy of 7,700 yen from it. Nothing to say, Korea was governed by Japan, and all the money was from the Japanese government. In 1911 dredging work was completed and a lot of boats began running along the river with course signs also set up. The construction work of a bridge over the Yeongsangang started that year and for the first time of the town's history the big bridge was completed. The embankment work on both sides of the Yeongsangang had also been done, which was well known to be flooded all the time.

In 1914 Honam Line between Daejeon and Mokpo was opened to traffic, and Yeongsampo station was set up. The main street from the front of the station to the big bridge was constructed, and the traffic condition was completely changed. The rotary near the bridge became the traffic importance and the strong river port was constructed for big boats.

In 1915 at the port of Yeongsampo was a lighthouse built, which worked not only to shine the port but to measure the water level of the river in case of flooding. This lighthouse was said to be the only one which was installed along the inland rivers. Mr. Kyoji Suzuki who lived close to the port went to the lighthouse to check the water level of the river, and reported it to the prefectural office of Jeollanam-do every day, he said. The water level equipment was a newest style one, recording the level automatically on the rolled paper.
Dr. Kumaso, who saved my life

Around one and half years after I became a teacher, I caught a serious cold. I was suffering from pneumonia with high fever and lingered on the brink of death for several days. There were two doctors in our village, one was a Japanese, and the other a Korean. The former being very busy as a member of the prefectural assembly and running his fruit firm, it was impossible to ask him to come to see me. All the treatment I got from him was get some medicine after all.

Being a good friend with the Korean doctor, my dad would often say that I should see him when something urgent happened. He was so kind enough to visit us anytime that he was very popular among the villagers. Dad asked him to come and see me. He was a hairy man, which was a rare case for the Koreans, and the local Japanese called him Dr. Kumaso: The Kumasos were the people who used to live in the southern Kyushu in the prehistoric days, and they were said to be very hairy.

My pneumonia was revealed to be a fatal one. "Your daughter," Dr. Kumano said to my parents, "is in critical condition now. If she gets over it tonight, she will recover. I will stay at the house I own for rent in this village, instead of going home, so don't hesitate to call on me whenever something happened." And he left.
That night my condition got worse and worse, and my dad hurried to Dr. Kumaso, who immediately came to me and gave me an injection. Thanks to him at that night, I miraculously got over the crisis, and I became better little by little. One day when I almost recovered from the disease and he came to see me, I expressed my gratitude to him from the bottom of my heart with the both hands laid on the floor.
"I owe my recovery entirely to you. It is all of your devotion to me that saved my life. Thank you a lot."
"Don't mention it. But, you have recovered because your parents served you faithfully. You should be thankful to them." said he.

It was more than two months later that I recovered completely and could go back to school. One day when I called at the house of Ms. Lee, one of the pupils having belonged to my class since the previous school year, her grandmother rushed out of the house, saying,
"I am very happy that you've become so fine again. My daughter said you were wandering between life and death, so I have been anxious about your health all the time." She was crying, embracing me. Ms. Lee, my pupil, said,
"Stop it, Grandma. Your wear is so dirty that her clothes get dirty, too."
"You never say that, Ms. Lee. Actually, I am truly happy, because she seems to be my real Grandma." said I to her.

After the War when I traveled in Naju, Korea, I visited Dr. Kumaso's clinic with a lot of souvenir from Japan. He, however,
had already moved out of it, and I could not see him again. As I always called him Dr. Kumano, his nickname, I could never remember his real name and look for him. He is the very person to whom I owe my life after all.

Outbreak of War

December 8, 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii and started the war against the US, which didn't cause a big topic among the teachers and never changed the everyday school activities. That was because the Japanese teachers may have considered the feeling of the Korean teachers, I guess. But the Japanese colleagues were talking with each other where the Koreans were away, "I'm sure we Japanese will definitely win the war at last." They believed so from the bottoms of their hearts, but I couldn't agree with them. That was because of what I had heard from my local friend Tsuneko when I was living in Ukiha, Japan. Her mother went to America when they were young, and she was born and brought up there. They made their fortune and had just come back to Japan. She explained the much wealthier lives of the people in the US than the Japanese. She said, "US, you know, is a rich country. Every family has more than one car. Some have three or four cars." From her words it was clear that the national power of the US was unbelievably bigger than Japan, for there was only one car in Ukiha county, which was owned by a taxi company. I could be never sure of the winning of Japan toward such a developed country. I didn't
Dad wrote about the war in his diary on the day of the breakout of the War.

In December the War broke out. Japan declared the war against the US and the UK. At the same time Japan expanded the battle line in the Philippines, south sea islands, French Indochina, the Malay Peninsula. A lot of young men were drafted for soldiers, or sent to the private military factories, the whole country was enveloped in the war atmosphere. As goods of every description are getting in short supply month by month, they are being traded more and more in the black markets. I have been terribly busy with eight jobs of paid and unpaid, leaving my seeds and nursing wholesale business to my wife Yukiko exclusively. I help her in selling firewood and charcoal once in a while. As the housework became busier and busier, our family budget is getting well. I am a little relieved now.

In addition to the original business of selling seeds and seedling Dad was offered a variety of jobs such as a director of Society of Commerce and Industry and so on. This time was the best period in which our family was getting quite well off in Korea days.

A Chinese girl and a dance in the Athletic Meet

Every year one of the women teachers was supposed to join in
the dance course during the summer vacation held by the Education Board and to teach the pupils the dance for the Athletic Meet held in fall. Here in Korea as well as in inland Japan dances or expression activities were introduced into the PE class. One year I volunteered to join in the course.

That year I took part in the dance seminar held in Kwangju as the one out of our school. Though the dances in themselves were so exciting and interesting, it's quite a hard work to remember all the dances at one time. So I bought a book which explained each dance movement precisely, read and learned by heart all of them, and taught them to the kids. I taught one dance to all the pupils from the 1st to the 6th graders, one to each of the three groups of 1st – 2nd graders, 3rd – 4th graders, and 5th – 6th graders, and one to each graders, which means every child was supposed to learn to dance three different kinds of dances. Even now I cannot help admiring those young people for learning such difficult dances by heart.

When I was in charge of the 1st graders class, there was a Chinese girl named Kinin Cho, who was an only Chinese in my class. She was living with her father who ran a Chinese restaurant, her mother having been dead since she was very young. She looked lonely all the time. She was a very honest girl and fond of me, always following me wherever I went in the school and hanging on my arm. She may have felt as if I were her mother.

Kinin being so good at dance and quick to learn the dance, I
asked her to perform on the drill platform in the playground as a demonstration for all the other pupils. Leaving her to dance there, I instructed each child individually.

After a few years when I was going to leave school for being transferred to another school, I happened to hear that Kinin had died of illness in her 5th grader. I was so shocked because her homeroom teacher hadn't told me anything about her illness and her death even though I was in the same school. It was regrettable that she died young and nobody let me know about it. I couldn't believe she was dead.

I visited the cemetery she was buried at once. Korean tombs were mounds called 'Manju-Haka.' I couldn't find her tomb because not all the tombs were named, so I prayed for a rather small and new tomb which seemed to be hers. While I was praying, the memory of her smiling, laughing, and dancing scenes came back to me. I couldn't stop tears running down.

Поехон Ээ

The school system had not been completely built up yet in Korea at that time, though the Japanese government hurried to improve the literacy of the Korean people. And some children from poor families had to choose not coming to school.

In my combined class consisted of 1st and 2nd graders, there were children from 6 to 11 years old, while in general the children
enter school at the same age in the compulsory education. The combined class wasn't always faulty, though managing it was not an easy task. The advantage of the age difference among the pupils was that they could learn a lot from the elders as their models. Poejoun Ee was an eldest girl who had a strong leadership. Poejoun, being clever and good at speaking Japanese, often came to me in the staff room and enjoyed chatting with me together.

One day a man teacher said,
"Poejoun is the plainest girl in our school."
I retorted to him instantly,
"I'll say this as I'm also a woman. You never say that again. You cannot decide what she is from the facial look. You had better marry such a trusty woman as Poejoun, which is my kind advice to you."

I had been in charge of her for 4 years continuously after all. One day, three years after she entered the school, she suddenly came to me and said,
"I'm going to leave school."
"Why? Do you have any reasons to do so?" I asked her.
She said with a sorrowful expression,
"My Dad lost his job, and we can't pay the monthly tuition of the school." He was in tears.
"You don't have to worry about it at all. No problem. I can afford your tuition. I'll pay it for you. So, please do come to school just as so far." said I. She looked relieved a little.
The tuition in those days was not such a considerable sum of money, 0.55 yen a month for one pupil from one family, while for two pupils from one family 0.28 yen for the elder and 0.27 yen for the younger. Though I didn't know what she said to her parents at home and how they managed to make it, she continued the school and graduated from it without my support.

From the very first year I came to this school I was appointed to be an oral test examiner for the applicants for admission to this school, and had been in charge of this task every year on end. I gave them several questions with the other Korean examiner, whom I learned some expressions in Korean for the questions, because they didn't know Japanese at all. When I encountered some difficult language, I could ask him the meaning.

What I noted down at the oral test were vital data when we tried to decide who to choose. I found later that the newly entered children were not so different from what I recorded at the oral test, and that the interview job was a good exercise for me to improve the skill to evaluate the children's abilities and characters instantly.

Celebration events and Japan's national flag

February 11th was National Foundation Day, or the birthday of Japan called Kigensetu. On the day the first Emperor, Jimmu, was said to be enthroned 2600 years ago and all the Japanese nationally celebrated the day. We teachers made mochi, or rice cakes to give to each of the pupils to celebrate it. (See front page picture 11) In
those days’ daily materials were getting scarcer and scarcer because of the wartime shortage, and so we had to use not only rice-cake rice, or glutinous rice, but powder of acorn. They were so delicious, though, and we felt happy to see the pupils pleased to get them. That's all we did for the national holiday, and we didn't have any celebration ceremony at school, because, I guess, the top of the local government education section may have thought that Kigensetu ceremony would cause the Korean people to have complicated feeling. The celebration ceremony of Kigensetu were held only by Japanese at the Naju Shrine, where my dad was helping the priest.

We had four big annual ceremonies called 'Four Big Seasons,' The New Year Day (Jan. 1st), Kigensetu (Feb. 11th), The Emperor's Birthday (Apr. 29th), and Meiji Emperor's Birthday (Nov. 3rd), which were being celebrated only by the Japanese. On those days we had the ceremonies in solemn atmosphere. The principal would take a wooden box out of Hoanden, a small shrine in the school yard, in which the Emperor and Empress's picture and Kyouiku Chokugo, or the Imperial Rescript on Education, were dedicated. While he was reading Kyouiku Chokugo, all the people were supposed to bow. I remember him handling it very politely with white gloves on. At Tsukimi Elementary School, the next school I was transferred to, the picture was put on the speech table in the auditorium, and we bowed to them with the voice of the vice principal.
Once a week we had a morning gathering in the playground, in which the principal made a speech, some teachers gave announcements, pupils sang a school song, and all did radio physical exercises. The reason we often used the playground for the meeting is that it rained less in Korea than in Japan. Once a month the national flag of Japan was raised at the playground gathering, and one day I had looked into the faces of the Korean teachers, wondering how they were feeling and looking at the flag. They were all looked sad, which remained in my mind from that time on.

At that night when I came back home, I told of the scene I had seen at the playground gathering to my dad, and asked him about the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty. I didn’t know much about it. He just said, "The Prime Minister Hirofumi Ito was against the annexation, but
it is said he was overcome by the driving force at the end." He said nothing more. Mr. Ito was assassinated by a Korean at Harbin station, China, in 1909.

"Dad, it's a pity that Mr. Ito was killed in spite of his objection against the annexation, isn't it?" I remember we had such a conversation.

Cosmos

In 1941 I got in charge of the 4th year girls' class. The 4th and older pupils were supposed to grow vegetables such as radish and cabbage at the school garden, and used excrement from the school lavatory as the fertilizer of the soil. Though the boys from the boys' class could do it themselves, the girls in my class were small and powerless. So I did 'it' instead of them, but as I had never experienced farm work before, it was a hard job for me to take out and carry 'it' as well as plowing up a field. It was so heavy that I could carry just a little at one time, which must have been the reason the radishes were very thin and small like burdock after all.

"I'll go and sell them." said the eldest girl Park and went home with those poor radishes. A few days later she came to me with small money and said,

"My mom bought them." It was natural that there should be no one who wanted to buy such a shabby vegetable at all.

"Nobody else wouldn't buy the radishes," she added, "and Mom said that you should not do such a dirty job as taking out and carrying excrement from the school lavatory. So, don't do it any more, please."
"Yes, I can. You are all small girls, and I cannot ask you to do it." I answered, giving the money back to her.

Next spring, in 1942, I was in charge of the 1st and 2nd year pupils class. I decided to plant flowers at the 'memorable' school garden, for I felt it possible for me to grow them instead of vegetables. I asked Dad who had a business on trading seeds to get some cosmos seeds. There were no cosmos flowers in Korea those days, and we seldom saw them even in Japan, too. It was quite rare in general to see the Western flowers.

Cosmos flowered beautifully in fall, different from those radishes. I came back with an armful of flowers into the staff room, and put them into a big vase in it. Seeing me, the vice principal laughed at me saying "This is a work of a woman from a good family, isn't it?" But he himself looked happy. I also decorated the classroom with flowers.

Fall in 1995 was far advanced when I visited Yeongsampo South Elementary School for the first time in fifty years. Then what I found first were cosmos flowers which flowered at the road sides or graveyards here and there around the school. The Western seeds like cosmos didn't grow natively in Korea, and there were no houses in the neighborhood, and so they didn't seem to be planted by the local people. It could be descendants of the ones I planted at that time. Cosmos flowers welcomed us with a nostalgic scenery and episodes at that memorable days.
My Colleague Kimi and her daughter Michiko

Ms. Kimi Shimizu, who arrived at Yeongsampo South Elementary School a few years after I came and was 5 years senior to me, was the woman I associated with most closely. After her husband was killed in the battle of Japan-China War, she had been leading her life with her mother-in-law suffering from rheumatism, 3 daughters (older 2 sisters were elementary school pupils), a niece whose parents had been dead. All were women in her family. She said she had had an opportunity to be invited as a war widow to the Prime Minister's Public Office of Japan in Tokyo and been offered a small reception. It was perhaps because it was at the beginning of the war and the number of the war widows were very small. Hideki Tojo was the Prime Minister of the Cabinet at that time.

All the present wore the name plates. Mr. Tojo came to all the individuals one by one and spoke to them. He said to Kimi considerately,
"Mrs. Kimi Shimizu, you have come here all the way from Korea to Tokyo, haven’t you. Thank you for everything."
"Though there was something stern about him in his military uniform, he was actually a gentle person." said she.

He was sentenced to death later at the Tokyo Trial (The International Military Tribunal for the Far East), and most of the Japanese today seem to have an image of a severe man who continued the reckless war, but he can be a mild man as a private
person.

Mrs. Shimizu's brother-in-law (his husband's elder brother) ran a rice-mill shop in her neighborhood, and supported her family, providing them with rice once in a while. One day when she went to his shop, he said wonderingly, "Your family are all women, but why are you consuming rice so rapidly? You had better check the amount of rice carefully."

Shortly after that she found the truth. The Korean woman she hired had been ladling rice out of the rice box and taking it home every day. Hearing that, he suggested, "The reason for this may be that your family is an all women family. It's unsafe for you to live in the same way as before. Why don't you get married under these circumstances? I know a man who is suitable for you." He told about the man and suggested her to remarry him. She told her brother-in-law to wait to answer for a while, and came to me. She said, "What would you do if you were in my place?" asked she. I remember what I said to her, "You will be OK with him. But your daughters are not little babies, but already at the age of an elementary school year. I'm sure they must have complex feeling. I doubt they can call him 'Dad' frankly. And how about your mother-in-law, who had lost her son in the war? They will feel embarrassed and find it difficult to get along with the stranger. If I were you, I wouldn't get married to him."

To tell the truth, my advice at that time was going to have her and her family lives influenced drastically.
By the way, Mrs. Shimizu's second daughter of her three daughters, Michiko, the 1st year pupil of the elementary school, was fond of me, and would come running to me all the time when she caught me, calling my name "Miss Nishimi!" as if I were her mother.

One day Michiko had a typhoid fever and was hospitalized. I wanted to see her in the hospital, but it was an infectious disease and I couldn't visit her. Soon after that Mrs. Shimizu stopped coming to school in order to attend her daughter. I was afraid that Michiko's condition got worse. It was one or two days after Michiko died that we school teachers were told about it. I did want to go to her as soon as possible, but I was in charge of my class pupils, so the moment the classes were over, I rushed to her house. The funeral had already been over, and she was being laid in her bed as if she were sleeping, peacefully. Mrs. Shimizu said sobbing with tears in her eyes, "Though I know the body should be sent to the crematory soon after the funeral, I'd like you to give her a glance and say good bye to her before that, and so I kept her here. I had believed you'd surely come. Thank you for coming."

I couldn't expect I would see her like this. I couldn't stop crying over her small body. Too short, too short a life of hers.

New Names in Japanese, and a Korean Volunteer
I'll talk about the Family names of the Korean people. They are not so many as those of the Japanese, including some numerous ones such as Kim, Lee, Park, Song, Choe, Moon, Oh, Nan, and so on. Though it was difficult to tell the boys' given name from girls', some girls' names had 'ki' whose literal meaning is 'princess,' which never appeared in the boys' names. It was similar way of naming girls with 'ko' in the Japanese names.

In 1939 a new naming system called 'Soshi Kaimei' started, in which all the Korean people were allowed to have both Korean and Japanese names, which was fully spontaneous for them. Some of the pupils in my class used their Japanese names, one of whom was Gyokuki Nagatomi.

One day she gave me a picture of hers, in which she had a school backpack on her back. She must have been from a wealthy family because schoolchildren's backpacks were expensive in those days. Her original family name was Park. She was a rather fair colored, well-behaved, and a little spoiled girl.
In the staff room, Korean teachers would often talk about their new names happily.
"What Japanese name shall I have?"
Korean teacher Mr. Park named himself 'Kimura,' Mr. Lee 'Moriyama.' If they had truly hated Japan, they would never have named themselves with Japanese names.

I had never seen or heard the scene in which Japanese and Koreans were quarreling or fighting with each other in the town we lived. Furthermore, I had never ever heard that Korean people were moved or taken forcibly by the Japanese Army or police, though Korean people began to say recently that Japanese had treated Koreans terribly as something like slaves.

If such a story had been true, the whole society in which Japanese and Koreans had been living together peacefully for a
long time under the good relationship would have been split into two and chaotic, and resistances or riots must have broken out all over the Korean peninsula. The Government-General in Korea must have paid close attention to the trend of public opinion in case that it should lead to the independent movement from Japan.

We sometimes used the word 'colony' to Korea. Though I don't know what Asian colonies by Western countries were like, in Korea we Japanese and Koreans had the same rights and were equal with each other as the same human beings. We were getting along quite well with each other.

There was a conscription system in Japan, while entering the army was voluntary for Koreans. One day one of the graduates from Yeongsampo South Elementary School several years before visited us, who had been to the battle fields in the Southern Asian countries as a soldier of the Japanese Army and been just discharged from military service. I really respected him for his courage to have volunteered for the military service of Japan. Women teachers who didn't know the war came together around him and asked a lot of questions individually. He said to us what the battle was like.

"It was indescribably fearful, dreadful, and nightmarish. Some of my fellow soldiers went mad, who couldn't put up with the shooting sounds of cannons and machine guns, and explosions. It was the world where only the man who had nerves of steel could survive. It is not the place women can go to." All of us went silent.
suddenly.

Korean men didn't have to go to the war unless they should wish. Though, Japanese men would be called up for the Army anytime. Two Japanese men teachers from our school had already been called up and gone. Men teachers were getting fewer and fewer those days.

After school one day, a Korean teacher who was said that he had once worked for our school and was working for another school then came into the staff room and began chatting with a Korean teacher. Except them there were only a few Japanese women teachers and an old part-time Japanese office worker in the room then. He came to Ms. Higashiwara and said arrogantly, again and again, "You know, a lot of Japanese men are now being killed in the war, and the number of them is getting smaller and smaller. You must be eager to get men. I can introduce many Korean men to you."

She, who was naturally a modest and quiet woman, kept silent with her head down. I felt unsettled at the situation and looked around the room for someone to help her. The old Japanese man was just pretending not to hear in spite of being clear that he knew the whole going. I stood up and said sharply to him, "Stop it, man. This is a holy teachers' room, where we are supposed not to speak such an idiot matters, you know?"

He looked at me taken aback by my attitude, and left the room without saying a word. I had completely forgot this incident, but
when I moved to another school a few years later, one of my female colleague said, "How brave you were to say such a thing! I was thrilled to hear that from the standpoint of women."
I was surprised to know that it had spread to another school.

Note:
What's 'New Name in Japanese'?

'New name in Japanese' is the policy in which Japan government allowed Korean people to make up other Japanese-like family names and change their given names into names of Japanese style as they like if they want to. Korea, in which Confucian culture had been dominant for a long time and only male descendants of a family were allowed to perform the religious services of the family, had the tradition of men succeeding the family name. That was the reason the couple didn't share the same family name. Japan intend that Korean people should have a sense of unity as a family through the same family name, which was none of their business.

Hare Hunting

Around 1943 the war situation of the Japanese Army in the southern Pacific islands was reported to be getting worse day by day. In May soon after I got in charge of the 1st year class, we were let known a symbolic incident. The plane in which Mr. Isoroku Yamamoto, Commander-in-Chief of the Japan Navy Combined Fleet, was boarding was shot down by the US fighters over the
Bougainville Island, Papua New Guinea on April 18th. He had opposed to the war against the US and the UK until the very last moment of the time, and after he got the position he fulfilled his responsibility to pursue the war. The Japanese had adored him and mourned his death.

On June 5th the national funeral of Commander Yamamoto was held at Hibiya Park, Tokyo. Its radio broadcasting was sent through the speaker of each class. I told the pupils to work their own work by themselves and was crying with my back to the children at the teacher's desk.

On the other hand, we had annual school events as usual. One of the kid's favorite events was hare hunting, which was held in the nearby mountain during the wintertime every year. I was always remembering the song 'Furusato,' my old country home, which I used to sing when a child.

_I chased hares on that mountain. I fished for minnows in that stream. I still dream about those days I spent when a child. How I miss and long for my old country home. ..._

Most of the mountains in Korea were bald and exposed their bare surface of red and brown soil, because people had cut down mountain trees for the use of the on-tol fuel. Different from the mountains in Japan, mountains or hills in Korea were low and easy to go up even for children, which may have been why they had started the hare hunting custom. The younger grade children
surrounded the hill at the bottom and went up to the top in a circle, saying "choee, choee" individually. If you were lucky, a hare would rush out of a bush, and they would chase it after to the summit. The older grade children waiting for hares to come at the top with sticks in their hands would gather around it and hit to death.

There was not always a game for them. Once I saw one of the teachers release a rabbit in the circle secretly, which she had been keeping as a pet for her son. She must have felt painful for it. The hare they caught was cut into pieces, boiled with vegetable, and served to them, though each share must be just a little.

After the War, when I visited Korea, I found all the mountains covered with green trees. I heard the new Korean government took over the policy of tree-planting campaign which Japan Government-General of Korea had been driving forward at that time.

Notes:

Shin-nichi ha no tameno benmei
(A vindication for the pro-Japanese Koreans)
by Kim Wan Sop  (Korean Writer)

Tree-Planting Policy of the Mountains in Korea

It is said that the mountains in Korea were all bald when Japan began ruling this country. A Russian soldier Jetrowich wrote as following.
'The mountainous ground surrounding the capital is sandy. Though we can see tombs and stone monuments in the mountains, there were barely any vegetation, trees, and glasses. People will cut down trees as soon as they found them, and as a result all the ground in these areas are exposed.'

The Government-General in Korea financed Koreans who would plant trees in the mountains, and when they succeeded in planting, it alienated the land to them and after that make them Koreans' private property. GGK had the intention of turning the bald mountains in Korea into green ones as in Japan.

It established the institutions of nursery tree fields in Suwon, Daegu, and Pyeongyang, and grew nursery trees there, in which all the money to carry out the project was from Japan. By the end of August, 1910, the year when Japan annexed Korea, Japan planted 800 thousand trees, and the tree area was more than 2 sq. mi. Technical advisors from Japan instructed the local people how to grow the trees voluntarily.

In this country people as well as the rulers had never planted trees through the history. The reason was that local people would cut trees in the mountains freely for their on-tol use in winter, and there were some groups of farmers who engaged in burning fields for agriculture. Traditionally there was no idea of valuing mountains and trees.
GGK also promoted constructing landslide control dams and planting trees on the private mountains which occupied 70% of all the land of Korea. In 1930, for example, it spent not only 820 thousand yen from its budget but also 2810 thousand yen from the prefectural budgets, which was an amazing amount of money. More than 95% of the land owners of the mountains were Koreans, and 56% of the Korean farmers came to own their own mountain in the end.

As for constructing landslide control dams, in 10 years from 1933 to 1942, GGK's construction area of the dams covered 582 sq. mi. all over Korean Peninsula, for which it paid over 42 million yen (the value of money at that time). The number of the trees they planted was 500 million.

Soon after the new year term of the 1944 started, I was told by the principal to be transferred to another school all of a sudden, which I couldn't believe in. No only had I already been in charge of the 1 year girls class, but I was also particularly attached to Yeongsampo South Elementary School. I loved the pupils and this school. I begged him to keep me here with tears, only to be said 'No.' He added, "Tsukimi Elementary School you are going to work for is a good school. Furthermore, it is very close to your home, you know?"

After all I had to say goodbye to my dear Yeongsampo South Elementary School, in which I had spent 4 years and 7 months since I was a rookie teacher.
Move to Tsukimi Elementary School

At the end of April, 1944, I was told to move from 'Yeongsampo South Elementary School' to 'Tsukimi Elementary School', in which the pupils were all Japanese. I was allotted after a man teacher who had gone for the Army.

The school was also called 'Naju Elementary School' among the Japanese because in Naju it was the only school mainly for the Japanese children. The school building stood on the hillside of a small hill, commanding a view of the town of Naju. I heard that the reason this school was called 'Tsukimi,' which literal meaning was 'Enjoying the moon,' was that the moon seen from the school yard was incredibly fascinating. At the top of the hill there was a shrine.

It took only 20 minutes to walk to school from my parents’ house, which was very convenient for me. My father was so pleased that he wrote down about my transfer to Tsukimi Elementary School as following.

Tsukimi E. School is the model school in Jeollanam-do, and
there are many teachers who want to work for this school. It is said that they ask the local government to move themselves to this school. Though, Roko, who hadn't asked anyone to be transferred, got a job at this popular school, and others were stunned. Among the female teachers she is the oldest and has got a responsible position. It is close from our home, so it's very convenient to commute. The salary is the 9th level. She worked very hard for the former school, so the school inspector must have admitted her, and gave an honor to work for this school, I think.

(Picture11) Main entrance of Tsukimi elementary school
a lot of cherry trees had been planted

The pupils' number of the Tsukimi Elementary School, which was a co-education school, was about 250. This school consists of both the elementary school section mainly for the Japanese
children and Upper Classes section for the Korean children. The principal was also in charge of an Upper Class, and the vice principal was of a 5th grade class. The female teachers were in charge of the younger grade classes, and the male teachers were of the older classes.

I was in charge of the 2nd year class. In comparison with girls who were so quiet, boys were very energetic and mischievous. In this school I also kept the same teaching style to the kids as in the former school.

"You can definitely do it if you try hard, because you have a great power." I often encouraged those kids who tended to be idle. Since I was focusing on developing their basic daily routine all the time, they gradually became independent. One day a colleague praised me that the pupils in my homeroom had been working quietly without any indication during the cleaning time.

Lesson-Presentation gathering in times of war

Our school had been nominated for the model school of the practical subjects, and was going to have the lesson-presentation gathering in December, 1944. We were in wartime, and we were spending very busy days working for the preparation for the war and practicing for the civil war.

Every day after finishing the lessons and class duties, all the teachers got together in the staff room. We spent a lot of time
preparing for the gathering, discussing the contents of the presentation, practicing for the presentation, printing the reports and materials. When preparing lasted long and it got late into night, the principal sent the female teachers home with a lantern.

The main theme of the presentation was how the pupils should acquire the practical skills through the practical learning, such as homemaking, sewing, handicrafts, and drawing pictures. I chose homemaking, because I thought it was useful to know how to treat the patients who broke the bone. So, my main activity in the class was to put a sprint on the arm.

After my presentation on the day, my demonstration class was highly evaluated among the participants, because I had learned from the local doctor beforehand. I was terribly happy to hear that Mr. Kokoroishi (see picture, center of the people), head of the Naju police station, who saw my class said to the principal that Ms. Nishimi's class was very good.

The Lesson-Presentation Gathering was over successfully with a lot of teachers from every part of Jeollanam-do. The war situation was getting worse and worse.

By the way, I got a second marriage offer or something. One day when I came home, Mom asked me, "Didn't you see a young man standing by the electric pole in front of the house?"
"No. I didn't notice anyone at all. It's dark and I was walking
looking downward."
Mom explained me that some young man and his family, who said he is a government official, came to the house and offered a marriage to me.
"I won't marry anyone before the end of the War." I answered.
Mom said,
"If you say so, you'll never have a chance to get married forever. There are fewer males in this situation. Besides, he is a government official. Good offer, isn't it?"

"Why can I get married in the days a lot of Japanese are dying every day? Our country is on the verge of being perished. I have the responsibility to support our school without male teachers, you know?"

I refused the offer once and for all. I couldn't believe there were such a stupid Japanese man who would give priority to his own private life instead of the Japan's affair.

Everyday lives of the kids

What was the lives of the Japanese kids living in Korea was like? When the War was over in 1945, the pupils I was in charge of were very young, 8 to 9 years old, 3rd year of the elementary school. So, they only have obscure and fragmentary memories about the days in Korea. Ms. Tamiko Maeda, one of the pupils from my class, recalls her childhood days in Korea.
Boys loved playing mimic war, which was the mirror of the time. And there were some mimic wounded in the mimic battle. Now was the girls turn.

"There are some wounded!" "Some fell ill!" cried boys, and girls would run to treat the poor boys with bleached cotton cloth. Pretending a nurse was a girls’ favorite. It was in the backyard of the house of the local post office master that we were playing.

On the cold day in winter, to be warmed up, we often played Oshikura-Manju, children's game in which three or more stood back-to-back in a circle and jostled.

I, as an eldest daughter of the family, helped my mom with her housework all the time. As she was ill and weak when young, it had been my duty before going to school to make miso soup for the breakfast, since I was 2nd year of the elementary school. I often put sweet potatoes for the ingredients into miso soup. When I went to buy kimchi, Korean pickles, or garlic, my mom taught me how to make conversation beforehand, though I had forgotten almost completely when I arrived at the destination. But I was likely to have bought the items without any trouble.

Since February 1945, when my dad was called up for military service, my duty for the household increased more and more. I recall I had little time to study at home. The most challenging work was to get water. We had one well among a few families. At that time, we had no pumps, and we had to pull up a heavy well-bucket full of water, pour into another bucket, and stored it in a family
jar. We used the well water for drinking and cooking. For the bathing water we used the water sent through the bamboo pipe from the well.

I cannot recall the detail of the school lives, but I have one memory of Ms. Nishimi, our homeroom teacher. It may have been the day of Kigensetu, the celebratory day of the birth of Japan. We had yearly regular events once in a while at the shrine which stood at the top of the hill. We pupils were supposed to attend it, led by the teachers. It was a really cold day in winter and the ceremony itself was something boring and painful for small kids. When I was sobbing over the terrible coldness, Ms. Nishimi said to me, "What's wrong with you, Tammy-chan?" I told her the reason, then she said to me in a low voice. "Go back and enter the school from the back gate. In the staff room there is a big hibachi heater. And you can warm up yourself there. It will not long before we come back. And Tammy, you don't have to tell others about this, you know?" And she let me go back to school. I don't know why, but I remember it clearly.

After the war, when I started school life again in Kumamoto, Japan, I was praised by the homeroom teacher. "Tamiko-san, your manners and behavior should be a model of others, say, the way of greeting, reading, or raising hand in class. Your former teacher in Korea must have been a good teacher. I was happy to hear that. Though I don't remember the days in detail when Ms. Nishimi was my homeroom teacher, I am grateful to her for her teaching me the bases of my life and learning.
In September, 1945, soon after the end of the War, her family left Korea in an illegal boat with the tickets which they bought with the money for all their furniture and household goods. It was said that they were stopped at Tsushima Island for one week by the typhoon on the way back to Japan, but fortunately at Karatsu they happened to encounter her father who was also on his way back.

Labor Mobilization Services and a Military Drill at School

As the war situation became worse, the number of the lessons were getting fewer and fewer than that in 1944, and the athletic meet held in spring every year was called off. The large stairs in the playground used as the spectators’ seat on the athletic meet day were now cultivated for growing sweet potatoes. And the children were required to work as a labor mobilization.
(Picture 12) Parents are enjoying the Tsukimi ES athletic meet day in 1943

Some of the mobilizations of kids' labor services were to help local farmers take care of crops and weeding on the fruit farms. Upper year class pupils helped cutting rice, and teachers carried bundles of rice plants, which was a kind of hard work. Lower pupils were collecting rice grasshoppers, which they put in bottles they had brought from each their home. At home, they put the grasshoppers into a bag for a few days, and after all the grasshoppers' dropping came out, they boil and cook them with soy-sauce and sugar. That meant they made tsukudani; preservable food. The tradition to eat rice grasshoppers was not for the people from Kyushu, but for the people from Tohoku, northern part of
Japan, insects used to be an important food in their long, cold winter time with scarce food. Grasshopper tsukudani was so good and we enjoyed them all the year round.

One day I led the 1 to 3rd graders to the apple farm to help weed the farm ground. The kids were so happy in the open space, and they were running, playing around without doing their work. I drew a line on the ground with a stick and allotted each area to each kid, according to their physical strength and their grades. "This is your country, Matsuo-Kun. You can weed and make a beautiful land. When you complete you own beautiful country, you can play around." I talked to each kid one by one to do their jobs. Then they were pleased to engage in weeding very hard, and to my amazement the apple farm was completely weeded.

In the evening on the day, the owner of the apple farm brought a big bag full of apples as a thank to us. Though the apples had not been ripe yet for this season, they were precious food for us all. Kids would be pleased so much.

In the afternoon on the day, a military man who used to be an elementary school teacher at Mokpo, southern Korea, and had been called up for military service came to our school. He belonged to the nearby military unit, and often visited our school to get some stationery. His face looked thin and he seemed so hungry. So I gave him all the apples we've just got, and said, "Please take back these apples for the people at the unit." "Can we get so much? Thank you very much. Every soldier is
hungry all the time, for we don’t have enough food. They will be so pleased." said he, with the tears in his eyes.

Children sometimes had military drills at school. Male teachers instructed us how to use the bamboo spears. 'Bamboo spear practice' was to practice stabbing American soldiers made of rice straw with the bamboos whose ends were cut sharply. "Do you really think American soldiers will be killed by women and children with such 'weapons'?'" said I and laughed, because I felt the practice was too stupid. I'm not sure whether it is because I said so or not, but the practice was not repeated again.

Selecting the class president

In April, the beginning of the new school year, we had to select 'Kyucho,' the class president who was the leader of the class. It was the homeroom teacher's job to decide 'Kyucho' from among the pupils who was smart and had a leadership. In my 3rd year class, the pupil who got the highest grade was Yamakawa. I believed he was the best for the class president, and went to the principal to report it. I said to him,

"Please allow me to choose him as a class president. His grade is No.1, and he has an active and positive mind to everything, and has a great leadership." I asked him.

The principal seemed to be at a loss for an answer to hear me. He said,

"Though I understand you, he is not a Japanese. This school was
established just for the Japanese children with the fund of the local Japanese people, even though we exceptionally accept Korean children. If we chose a non-Japanese child as the class president, there could arise complaints from parents. It's impossible, sorry."

I knew his mother was a Japanese and his father a Korean. But I didn't think that could be any problem at all. Silent for a long time. Furthermore, Yamakawa himself knew that he was the No.1 grader in the class, I guessed. After all, I had to announce the name of the new class president to the class. It was a very hard work for me to do what was against my will. Even now, I cannot forget Yamakawa who were staring at me with sad expression on his face.

As I worked for schools for Korean children (Yeongsampo South Elementary School) and Japanese children (Tsukimi Elementary School), I noticed one big difference between the children of the two peoples. They were all children, and so it is the same that they were naturally so cute and innocent. But the biggest difference was that there were almost no quarrels or fighting between the Japanese kids. Their most clear feature was the lack of the mind of struggle and independence. Furthermore, they were tame and had credulous personality. Generous, maybe, if you said in a good expression.

One day, when a boy used a scornful expression to Korean children in the class, I said to him,
"Though you say such a thing now, you can never ever win the Korean kids if you actually fight with them. Understand?"
I was feeling that Korea would overtake Japan someday though they were poor then.

Air-raid Alert in Korea

It was said that war situation was getting severer. Air raid shelters were dug by the advanced course students beside the school building or cherry trees in preparation for the air raid. Air raid alert was announced through the public speakers in the town in case there should be a possibility of the air raid by the enemy planes. Air raid alert siren rang twice during the lesson time. At that time, even when we couldn't identify the figure of the planes, teachers gathered children in the playground and made them go home in a group.

Once at night when the alert was announced, we heard a faint sound of planes. I guessed they were passing through the fairly high sky. My father said that they were likely to be heading for Yahata bombing by the Korea route.

In the music class, pupils were required to distinguish chord sounds. They listened to the sounds which I made with the organ, and answered me what chords of the musical scale the sounds were. We taught them music, using the words 'I Ro Ha' instead of 'Do Re Mi,' because 'Do Re Mi' were foreign words and we avoided using enemy words. About half of the organs in our school were out of order and remained unfixed. What this chords teaching aimed was to develop children's sense of sounds, because it was necessary for
the kids to distinguish the different sounds of different bombers and fighters.

Before long, draft cards were sent to the male teachers one after another and they went to the battle fields. And at last the young principal of our school was also taken to the army. A young male teacher who had just been graduated from Teachers College came to our school for the place of the former teacher who had been drafted, but his teaching skills were fairly poor. Ms. Kagawa, one of the female teachers, went back to Japan after getting the telegram of her sick mother being in a critical condition, and she never returned. At this time the war situation was getting worse and worse, and I heard later that because the channel between Japan and Korea was full of underwater mines by the American Navy, it was terribly difficult to make a safe voyage between the two lands.

In this situation, I gradually came to have to play an important role in the school, though I didn't have a long career as a teacher. I heard it was difficult to find a new teacher instead of Ms. Kagawa, because a lot of women in Japan had to work at the factories as 'Teishin-tai,' or voluntary working group consisting of unmarried women. Men had gone to the War, and women worked to produce war weapons instead of men. After all I often directed all the pupils of the school in the playground at the morning meeting.
At home my dad would often say teasingly, "Your voice was clearly heard today." He was working for a nearby company close to the school.

I heard Japan's main lands were being bombed every day by the American bombers, and the urban areas were all destroyed into ruin completely. But in Korea we didn't have any bombings and didn't feel that the war situation was getting worse. We had never been air-raid ed, nor run into the air-raid shelters. After the War, I heard that among the united nations they had had a secret arrangement that they would not attack Korean peninsula.
Editor’s note:

According to 'So Far from the Bamboo Grove' (by Yoko Kawashima Watokins), toward the end of the War the industrial districts in the northern Korea were bombed by the United Nations planes. It seemed that there wasn’t any necessity to destroy the southern part because most of the area was farm land.

My father noted those days as following.

In January, Japan's old (lunisolar) calendar, two big earthquakes occurred at Nagoya district. Damages in producing military supplies were great, and the production was all stopped. It is not difficult to imagine that the effect of those earthquakes the Japanese Army would get was terrible.

At last the enemy got on the shore in the Philippines. The transportation route has been cut off by their airplanes and submarines since last year, and it is impossible to supply materials. The Japanese corps in the Philippines were defeated completely. Furthermore, except for Rabaul, most of the other south sea islands of the Pacific Ocean, including New Guinea, were attacked and Japanese corps were annihilated there. After Japanese bases there were destroyed completely and all the soldier were killed, 'gyokusai,' in Saipan island and Io-jima, they began attacking Okinawa and occupied it. From the air base they occupied in Io-jima and Okinawa, a large formation of US B29 bombers began air raid to the big cities in Japan more and more day after day. On the ocean a lot of submarine are attacking
Japanese boats one after another, and it became impossible to transport materials on the sea.

As the foreign radio stations broadcast the war situation every day, Korean people come to know everything in detail. Their attitude toward the Japanese became worse gradually, and anti-Japanese sentiment has grown thicker.

In Japan students are being sent to the war field as 'student soldiers' one after another. Some are being trained as 'Yokaren,' navy apprentice pilots, or 'Yobitai' reserve soldiers. Young students and female students work for the munitions factories without studying at school. Most of the men under 45 were enrolled in the military service and sent to the front.

In Japan farmers are being encouraged to increase yield of foods and they began to cutting down fruit and mulberry trees. All the farming work in Japan are done by old people, women, and children. Even though they say they are doing this just in order to win the War, I doubt it. The propaganda they announce is that it is the strategy of Japan to let the enemy land on our country and annihilate them completely. Though everyone including women and children are forced to practice the 'bamboo spear' training, or the fire drill every day, I'm sure everything will be destroyed once we are raided by enemy planes.

I think over and over that the difference of the wealth and scientific knowledge between the two countries will cause such a
miserable result. Yamato-damashii, Japanese Samurai spirit, which we rely on when in crisis is not useful at all, and Kamikaze, miracle wind, is never blown for our country. I just grieve.

A young boy killed in the dark sky

A boy named Kiyoshi Oka lived in the neighborhood, who was the best friend of Kinzaburo, my younger brother. His mother ran a grocery store and was raising 6 children by herself. The children were all so smart and the oldest son graduated from Tokyo University and became a banker, and the second son entered the Naval Academy at Etajima, Hiroshima. Kiyoshi was the third son. I remember he often came to my house and was talking happily with my brother in a kotatsu warmer. When I finished the job and came home earlier, I would often offer them a cup of tea.

Kinzaburo got a job as a substitute teacher at the nearby school after the middle school, and Kiyoshi joined the navy to be a pilot. At dinner Mom murmured, "They say Kiyoshi has received a draft card, and will go back to his unit."

It was a moonless night several days after Mom talked about Kiyoshi. Kiyoshi visited us by himself. Kinzaburo was not at home, for he had gone back to Japan then. I welcomed him with my mother at the entrance of the house.

"I've come to make my farewells to you. As I got a draft card, I will go back to my unit. Please say good-bye to Kinzaburo from
me. I hope you all will be fine. Thank you for everything." To see
him off, Mom ran after him going to the station. This was the first
time I saw her running, because she had a chronic heart disease. I
had a strong feeling intuitively that he will be killed in the war. I
was seeing the vague figures of the two in the town light. I saw
him off from behind the curtain, praying, "Value your life. Never
be killed. Your mom prays so." I knew this was the last I could see
him alive, and tears were running down endlessly. My mother was
the only one who saw him off at the station. When we saw the
soldiers off, there usually came a lot of people to the station.
However, as it became clear that anti-Japan Korean group members
slipped into the people who gathered to see a soldier off and
counted the number of the drafted men, even the soldier's family
seldom came to the station to see him off in order not to be
recognized. And the soldier himself was in an ordinary clothes
instead of a military uniform.

It was not long after that departure day. Mom said to all our
family with a sad expression on her face,
"I heard that he, Kiyoshi, got killed."
We got silent suddenly.

US bombers had made a night air raid on Osaka a few days
before. In his unit in Osaka there was only one fighter left at that
time, which was Kiyoshi's. He got on the plane and took off to fight
with the large formation of bombers. An air fight at night. All the
men on the ground could just see it in the sky. Before long a plane
fell in flames. All the unit members knew that it was Kiyoshi's.
How helpless he felt when he headed for the enemies by himself! Dad, I, and all my family cried at the news.

Note:

US B-29 bombers made seven air raids on Osaka at night in 1945. Kiyoshi seems to have been killed at the second to the last air raid. At this time, 116 planes from Saipan island dropped 13,000 (778 ton) bombs and killed 1,370 people. The night air raids were done from a fairly low altitude of 6500 feet high and they were indiscriminate bombings, aiming at the ordinary houses. Leading bombers caused big fires with Napalm bombs, big fire bombs, and the following bombers dropped cluster bombs at the fires. In Osaka more than ten thousand people were totally killed in the fires caused by the fire bombs.

Kiyoshi's older brother (the second son) in Etajima also went to the battle field and never came back again. Kinzaburo, my younger brother, decided to be an executive trainee of the Navy at the news of his best friend's death. For my parents he was the only son, and I think they didn't want him to go to the war, but they gave him up for dead at last.

Kinzaburo passed the exam of the executive trainee. On the day when he left to join the unit in Jinhae, the town of the biggest military port in Korea at that time, I was the only one of my family, who saw him off at the station. Mom said she would stay home against possible intruders, and Dad had left for his office. I guess
they both felt the pain of parting with their son.

"You, never be killed, Kin-chan!" I screamed in my heart to the train getting smaller. I felt I could understand how mothers felt in sending her son to the war.

The last photograph of my class

In August, 1945, Ikeda, class president, and Tsuji were changing to another school in Japan unexpectedly because of their fathers' job. Their fathers were the branch managers of a bank and a credit union respectively. They were the two who helped me all the time and were the organizers of the class. On the parting day I felt so sad that I said to them, "Is it possible for you two to stay here in Korea?" though I knew that impossible, of course. I thought I would never see them again. Just then I got an idea so as to remember the two from then on, that is, to take a photograph of all the pupils. I recalled there was a photo studio in this town run by a Korean photographer. If you ran, it would take only 10 minutes.

One of the two boys had to go home as soon as possible because they were leaving Korea on that day. The other children had already finished preparing for going home. I told the pupils to stay in the classroom and dashed out of the school in my bare feet not to waste time. On arriving the photo studio, I said to the master, "It's a very important photo. Please take a picture of the kids in my class."
But he answered sorrowfully,
"I'm sorry, but I don't have the materials to take pictures, for it's a time of war. I can't even do my daily job."

Then I remembered that he and my Dad were good friends, so I asked again. "My father is Shozo Nishimi. Please help me for your friendship's sake." "Gee! You, a daughter of Shozo Nishimi! Well then, I'll do it anyway. I can manage just one photo." I put my hands together, grateful for his kindness. I ran back to school, the photographer following me with a camera and equipment.

I said to the children, "We are going to have a photograph taken. So, line up in front of the school entrance door." They hurriedly got together there without putting on their shoes. Ikeda, who was going to change schools, had already put on geta clogs. (See the picture. Center of the front line)

Soon after that, Japan lost the War and all the children were scattered and this photograph became a very precious one. Out of two pictures I got which the photographer took at that time I gave one to the principal' second son who was in my class, and I kept another. (See the front page picture)

After the War I photocopied it and sent it to many former pupils. It is one of the good materials to talk about at the alumni
meeting. I guess I might have expected that we would lose the War and the final day would be coming closer and closer, while I was running to the photo studio.

The day we lost the War

In 1945. This is the second year for me in Tsukimi elementary school. I was in charge of the third year class, the same pupils as the previous year. Every year, we usually got into the summer holidays in July, but that year the summer holidays was not announced to begin. I asked the vice principal the reason, but I couldn't get clear answer.

On the 13th, August, the first day of O-bon festival, vice principal got a draft card, too. We were told that the first term would end on the 15th, August, and that we wouldn't have the closing ceremony of the first term.

On the 15th, after the whole school cleaning time was over, I handed over the school report cards to the pupils and let them go home. While I was walking along the corridor back to the staff room, I heard Kimigayo, national anthem, sounding from the radio loud speaker of the principal's official residence. I thought it very strange to hear Kimigayo, because it was not the national holiday at all that day.

The teachers were chatting peacefully in the staff room after the children went home. Just then all of a sudden Kokoroishi, class
president of the 6th year and the son of the head of Naju police station, ran into the staff room crying, "Japan has lost! Japan has lost the War!"
"Really? Is it true?" said everyone individually.
"Mom and Dad said they had heard the broadcasting of the Emperor on the radio."
All the teachers burst into tears. Everyone was stunned at the news.

After a while Kokoroishi, 12-year-old boy after all, went home, saying "I got hungry." Now I sometimes think about the reason why they decided the final day of the 1st term was the 15th, August. The top of the school administration may have known something and had planned so, but I don't know the truth. In the evening of the day I heard a big sound of explosion, though I didn't know what it was.

"Why don't we stay at the school tonight?"
I suggested to other teachers and it was decided that all the teachers would be doing so. I felt we should keep guard over the school in order not to be robbed or set fire. And above all I would like the principal's wife, who was waiting for his husband in the front to come back with an elementary school kid and a baby, to feel safe, and we'd like to support her.

"Hurrah!", "Hurrah!" At night when we went out of the school and were looking over the town of Naju, we heard the voices coming floating on the wind. There must have been meetings here and there in the town.
Next day, a soldier of Japanese Army base near the school came, asking us to borrow a school tent for the funeral. I thought it had something to do with the blast yesterday, and asked about it. "To tell the truth, one of the men of our unit killed himself at the nearby field, knowing that we lost the War. It must have been the explosive sound of the hand grenade at that time." said the soldier.

A wild rumor and potassium cyanide

On the 17th, August, Mr. Kokoroishi, head of Naju Police Station, came to our school in the black car. He was well known for his fairness in treating both Japanese and Koreans. The purpose of his visiting was to collect the picture of the Emperor. But there was no one except me in the school at that time. The Hoanden, a small shrine in which the picture of the Emperor and the Empress was kept, was locked all the time, so I kept him waiting outside, and searched for the key everywhere in the principal's room. Finally, I found it.

While he was opening the Hoanden and taking out the picture, I stood behind him without moving at all. "Why are you going to take the picture?" I said to him. "I'm collecting them beforehand in case they should be handled roughly by the thoughtless Koreans." "Then, what are you going to do with the pictures you collected?" "At the meeting of the heads of the police stations in Jeollanam-do, we decided to collect them in the prefectural office and burn..."
them all."
"You burn them!" I broke down crying there. It was by far the saddest thing that I had experienced at school, for we had thought a great deal of the picture of the Emperor and the Empress. He was standing still with his head hanging down.

Later I heard he had got arrested by the anti-Japan former subordinates, and put into the cell of Naju Police Station.

After the War there were uneasy rumors spreading among the Japanese society. One of them was that all the Japanese were forced to be lined up on the bank of the Naju river, upstream of the Yeongsangang river, and to be shot to death. All the Japanese people were living lives in the fear and terror. On the other hand, it was said that we could be safe because a Japanese troop was stationed in Naju.

One day a young man teacher delivered a paper packet to all the staffs, saying
"I've found potassium cyanide in the science room. When the time comes, let's choose to die without hesitation."
I can still recall the beautiful, vivid water color of the powder of potassium cyanide, which I saw for the first time when I opened the packet. I didn't scare of losing my life at all at that time.

After all the pupils left school for Japan, there stayed some families in the classroom, who had escaped from the rural areas of inner Korea. They were eager to go back to Japan as soon as
possible, and they disappeared in a few days. It seemed that they must have headed for Japan in an illegal boat.

I didn't have a chance to use the drug after all, because I wasn't exposed to any special danger during the time. The execution by shooting could be just a rumor. I, however, really feel it strange now that such a poison as potassium cyanide was found in the science room of a local elementary school.

note:

In August, 1945, all the nine female telephone operators, who had been working in the northern island of Karafuto, Sakhalinskaja, fulfilled their duties till the last moment and killed themselves with poison in the face of Russian soldiers approaching them. They used potassium cyanide at that time. I think potassium cyanide might be in circulation among the Japanese societies overseas. It seems that they would choose the death when the time came.

My father wrote down deploringly about the change of the Koreans toward the Japanese after Japanese losing the War, as following.

*The Emperor himself made an Imperial rescript of the end of the War through the radio announcement. We Japanese people have been all equally disheartened and hopeless once Unconditional Surrender was accepted. Countless soldiers killed themselves with bitter grieves in their hearts. The War in which*
Japan had been battling hard for several years ended, stamped as a 'defeated nation.' Once Japan lost the War, the Koreans completely changed their attitude to us. The Japanese inlanders, who had been feeling superior to them, are now being treated as loser country people. Some Koreans who had been working for the Japanese till yesterday took the superior positions, and organized an 'independence committee,' led by the anti-Japan group members. Young Koreans formed 'security forces,' robbed the weapons of the police, and armed themselves. Since they are inspiring the people with an idea to boycott Japan, their attitudes toward us are getting worse day by day. Korea is in a state of anarchy. The oppression to the Japanese is getting extremely worse. I heard there were a lot of Japanese people attacked and injured, some killed.

Though, thanks to the Japanese base in Naju, we are safe now, for they are on the alert and guard us from the riot of Koreans. We are often harassed with their excessive arrogant behavior, but we have nothing to do fearing of being attacked later.

I have been working hard for the prosperity of the people of this land since I came here a few decades ago. Some other families are now in the 2nd or 3rd generation. Though we decided to work and die here, we are obliged to leave for Japan with a little money, leaving all the wealth and estate. Everything.

To the pupils going back to Japan
The colleagues stopped coming to school one after another without saying good-bye under the dangerous circumstance. Everyone felt his or her life was in danger.

"Ms. Kitayama, will you stay with me at school till the end of this school, please?" I begged Ms. Kitayama, who had come to our school as a successor of Ms. Kagawa from the Taisho elementary school, which was for the Korean children. She agreed to stay. This was how we young teachers came to wind up of pending school affairs. Some Japanese soldiers from the nearby base stayed at school at night every day and guarded our school. I'm not sure of the reason they did this, but it may be because there were only two female teachers staying at school at that time. I still felt uneasy, though. I asked the old Japanese priest of the nearby shrine to come to school once in a while. We two were only waiting for the principal to come back from the battle field.

One day a young soldier on charge of school watching came into the staff room without saying anything. He being too over-familiar, I said to him,

"You, don't come in to the staff room without permission. When you come in, you should say your own name and the military rank, say, 'This is a private, Taro Yamada. Can I come in?' You are supposed to get a permission to enter this room all the time, you know? " I directly pointed out of his rude attitude. He grimaced and said,

"A girl of this school talk big." Then I said to him,

"No, I am not talking big. It's a rule. This is not a place to play around."
He grimaced more and went out. Even the small kids knew the rule as a matter of course that they should say their own name and the class when entering the staff room.

Children went back to Japan one after another after the end of the War. They didn't need any documents for changing schools in this case, but some came to school to take them. As for Ms. Kitayama, she was busy sewing Kimono in the classroom, using the cloth which she said her father got, and so it was my job to wait for the pupils to come, make the documents for changing schools, and hand them over to them. I saw off the children from my class at the school gate, and the other children at the shoes boxes corner. Totally, around 30 pupils came.

Among them there came a boy who was two year older brother of Fujii, a boy in my class. He came to get his own documents, and his brothers as well. At the shoes boxes, I said to him, "Never give up, never. you know, however hard your lives are from now on."
When I met him again at the reunion meeting a few decades later, he said to me, "Your words have been supporting my life since then."
Not long after that, I heard he had passed away because of an illness.

Entreaty for staying in Korea from the local people

One day some people who used to work for the Nishimi Farm
my father managed at Tongan meyon came to our house in Naju. They had walked all the way of 15 miles on the mountainous road to express their gratitude. My father noted down what the meeting was like. I can sense the close relationship between him and the Korean people.

Dad's diary

Though Koreans' thought and behavior toward us Japanese got worse after the War, on the other hand there are sympathetic and understanding Koreans taking care of us on various occasions. I and my family didn't have any special persecution, because of their gratitude for us looking after them, I guess. 5 to 6 people from Tongan-myeon said,

"Segen-gon, when you get back to Japan, you'll definitely find it difficult to make a living. Why don't you come to live as a Korean permanently? We'll manage to find a house, a land, and a good job. We'll never forget your good will you showed us. You'll never get in trouble for the rest of your life."

They came from Tongan-myeon all the way of 15 miles to express their gratitude for my favor they had got since we began to live there before the War. I answered, "I'm grateful for your kind offer, but since we inlanders are supposed to go back to Japan anyway, I'll be back to Japan anyway. If the day come when two country enter into a peace treaty someday and we are able to come and go, we can see each other again."
I expressed my great gratitude to them for their kindness and asked them to give my best regards to the villagers from me. After all those who have been kind to them are not in trouble, others are in trouble.

He was called 'Segen-gon' all the time. 'Segen' is the Korean way of reading 'Nishimi,' and 'gon' is an honorific title. They also talked about the encomium monument they had raised many years ago. They said that it was regrettable and painful for the local people to see that it would be mistreated or destroyed by the thoughtless Koreans. They proposed an idea that it would be buried in the ground till the day come when they can take it out. My father agreed the idea willingly. He may also have hoped that the day would come in the future. The monument must be sleeping somewhere in Naju, Korea. This story tells how Dad was loved and respected by the local people.

Preparation for the return to Japan

Kinzaburo, my younger brother, who had enlisted in the Navy in Jinhae was discharged from military service and came back to us at the end of August. He came to the school and said, "Hi, my sister!" I cannot express my feeling of how I was relieved and pleased to see him waving his hand, for I had been anxious about his life all the time. Thanks to him we could carry big luggage such as futon or blanket when we were coming back to Japan. Furthermore, we felt much more secure with him.
We Japanese had to leave almost everything behind here in Korea. All we could have were luggage we could carry with ourselves and at most 1,000 yen in cash. We are not allowed to take out any more. The other member of my family insisted that we should do as we were told, because the General Headquarters (GHQ) said we'd be punished if we should violate the rule. But it was clear that we would have to face the hardships of living in Japan with such a small money we had. We needed to take back as much money as we could, I thought.

We had deposited money in the five accounts of the post office, Korean banks, and financial credit unions at that time. I thought the post office must be under the Ministry of Posts Office of Japan, so I suggested to them, "Let's withdraw as much money as we can from our bank accounts of the Korean banks and financial credit unions, and deposit it again in the post office. Otherwise, we'll carry cash with us to Japan. I will sew the notes and the pages of the bank book into our clothes. If they should find it at the port, I myself would stay here instead of you all."

I persuaded my parents who were stubbornly against my plan to change their mind. I and my mom withdrew small amount of money each time, being careful not to be recognized. Under the defeat of Japan, we were strictly restricted to withdraw money from the banks.
I sewed the crumpled notes we withdrew and the pages of the Post Office books torn apart into the clothes. After we came back to Japan, we could survive with the money we had brought with us safely. (Though, actually, the amount of money was fairly small and we left almost all of the wealth and money behind in Korea.) I came to believe it important to be calm even under emergency through this experience of mine.

Photos were also precious. If we had taken back them in album books, they would have been fairly heavy. So I decided to take the pictures apart one by one. Seeing me taking pictures off, my father laughed, "Stop it, since we'll be back here someday, leave the pictures behind here."
But I didn't stop it, for I knew we would never come back here again. What we should carry back to Japan was important. I knew hard days were waiting for us in Japan and what we needed were daily necessities or precious items. Photos were of no use to live on, but memories are valuable as the token of our lives in Korea, I thought.

When we Japanese met together again in the reunion meeting long after that, how excited we were at the photos in Korea. Nobody didn't keep pictures of those days. We had a good time at the pictures I brought back from Korea with me.
What were my father doing as a preparation of returning home?

_We started the preparation of returning home. Some had_
already left Korea in an illegal boat this month. I have to wind up the affairs of my company, and Roko (me) of her school, but on addition to it, I have to dispose of everything of my household goods and the charcoal union at the same time, too. I paid quite a little retirement allowance to the Korean workers of the company, declared the dissolution of it, and stopped everything of the company.

Carrying the luggage to Mokpo

For the repatriation to Japan, we carried our luggage to the Hashimotos, our relatives at Mokpo, and stayed there temporarily. Mokpo was the largest port city in Jeollanam-do, though there was no regular ship line to Japan. The Hashimotos had already gone home, and we and the family of Mr. Hashimoto's sister lived in the same house. Since I still had some important work to do to close the Tsukimi Elementary School, I decided to continue to live in the house in Naju with my mother and frequented Mokpo to carry the luggage left.

It was at the night I happened to stay at the house in Mokpo that some Koreans intruded into the house. They said, "Don't you have Kokoroishi here, the man who used to be a head of Naju police station?"
"No, we don't." answered I.

But they entered the room without taking off their shoes, and looking for everywhere, including the closet, toilet, and bathtub. Did he escape from prison? They were searching for him
frantically. If he were found, he would be sure to be executed at once. I prayed to God in my heart that he might not be found.

Because of the defeat of Japan, the local people came to act to us differently. When I was going to buy a ticket at the station, a station employee said bluntly, "Japan has become the 5th rate country at last. I won't sell a ticket to you."

Though I begged him many times, he didn't hear me. I declared to him decisively, "Japan will surely be the first class country again someday."

I went to the nearby official residence of the stationmaster I knew. Though Japan had lost the War, the Japanese stationmaster was still in authority over the station staffs, and I could get the ticket.

There were a lot of things we couldn't bring back, such as furniture, household goods, and foods. I said to Kim Sam Fun, who had been working diligently for us even in such a situation, "Ms. Kim, we cannot bring these back to Japan. So, take them back to your home as soon as you can, please."

Handing over the documents to the new government as a representative of the school

We were going to leave everything behind here, beginning with the school buildings of Tsukimi Elementary School, which had been built by the donation of the local Japanese people for the children of the Japanese. They would be handed over to the Korean
government, and the school name would also disappear.

At last the principal came back to school from the war, which relieved us a lot, but he went back to the official residence soon, leaving words and a furoshiki bundle to me, "Ms. Nishimi, Hand over these documents to the School Affairs Section of the Korean government, please." Was it because of his pride as a Japanese principal that he himself didn't hand over the documents to them? I'm not sure.

Next day, a staff of the School Affairs Section of the Korean government county office came to our school. I was the only one who was staying at school on that day. After all I, only 25 years old, played an important role of handing over the school documents. I said to him with an irresistible feeling, "You must be happy, for you have got such a beautiful school." "Don't make ironical remarks." He said sullenly.

Ms. Kitayama, who had promised to come to school till the end of the school, had engaged with a Japanese soldier who came to watch the school. She said he often came to her house to take a bath and they got a close relationship. I said to her, "You will regret later if you decide your marriage without knowing him well. Do you have a preparation for the worst?" But she just answered, "I like him. That's all."
I heard the kimonos she was sewing frantically in the classroom were for her marriage. I guess she might have sewed many kimonos, but how many kimonos she could take them back to Japan? After I came back to Japan, I heard that her husband was very poor and he himself had a lot of faults, so she divorced and went back to her parents’ house with her 4 girl children. But her parents couldn't offer her a comfortable place for them to live. She had to engage in a hard work night and day with other day laborers to support her 4 children. As a result, she was said to harm her health and died.

Blue eyed doll

The time had come when I was going to say good bye to the school after handing over the documents to the Korean government. There was no one at school except me.

I visited my classroom, first. After I erased the blackboard, lined up the pupils’ desks in rows, and wiped the teacher’s desk clean, I played the organ. A lot of happy memories with the children came back to me one after another, I couldn't help stop tears running down.

After that, I went to the other classrooms one by one. I was nostalgically recalling the colleagues' faces. In the home economics room, I found a closet which had seldom caught my attention. We were going to leave everything in it as it was. "What are there in it?" I opened it. In it, there were kimonos which the
children used in the school art festival, and a strange wooden box. When I opened it, I found a doll, a Western girl doll. I remembered it was the one of the dolls which America had presented to the kindergartens and elementary schools in Japan as a goodwill mission of the two countries before the War. It looked like the one which my neighborhood friend Esaki in Ukiha had, who had been in the US before.

When I held it in my arm tenderly, the doll said "Mammy" with her blue eyes open. It was mechanized to do so, but I was moved with her voice sounded very sad. The blue eyed doll which was sent as a present all the way from the US across the ocean. However, the two countries became enemy each other, fought the war, and now Japan had got beaten by America. How ironic the fate of the blue eyed doll was! Her eyes seemed to be appealing me to bring her back to Japan with me.
"I'd like to keep her in my arms and take her back to Japan."
I put her back into the wooden box softly, resisting the urge to do so. What fate was waiting for her from then on?

I, then, went out of the school building, and walked around the school yard. Tsukimi Elementary School was a very beautiful and gorgeous school which had been built on the basis of the donation of the local Japanese people. Especially, a lot of cherry trees planted in the school yard were beautiful, and we enjoyed the trees in each season. Full blossoms in spring, vivid green leaves in summer, red leaves in fall, and in winter they stood in the white snow field with the pheasants walking under the trees. I stroked
the cherry trees one by one and said good bye to them. Standing in front of the dignified school gate post, I made my final farewells to this school.

The next day when I passed by the Tsukimi Elementary School on the way to the Naju station with my mother, holding the luggage for the repatriation, we looked up the slope way to the school to find a Korean flag flying there.

Note: 'Blue eyed dolls'

In 1920s, in the situation that Japan-US relationship was getting worse, Mr. Sidney Lewis Gulick, American missionary, who later worked for the Doshisha University as a professor and had been living in Japan for 25 years, tried to strengthen the ties of peaceful friendship between the two countries. He planned to send dolls to elementary schools and kindergartens in Japan for the day of Hinamatsuri doll festival, addressing his doll project to all Americans. As a result, they could buy 12,739 dolls with the donation from as many as about 2,600,000 people. They prepared their handmade dresses for the dolls, sending them out to Japan with letters and imitation passports in 1929 in time for the Hinamatsuri Festival. In Japan, on the other hand, people raised voices, "Let's send Japanese dolls to America on Christmas in return," sending 58 traditional Japanese dolls, which were the gorgeous ones made complicatedly, as 'answer dolls,' though they said Japan didn't have to worry about return presents. It was Eiichi Shibusawa, an ex-samurai and businessman, that worked hard for this non-official international exchange.
The time, however, was heading for the war in spite of their wishes. The blue eyed dolls which were sent as ambassadors of friendship became targets of anger and hatred as symbols of the enemy country. The military authorities ordered that all the blue eyed dolls should be thrown away. The newspaper those days said, "Children raise cries, 'Tear the blue eyed dolls down!' ", and they came to be looked on as the target of hostile, most of the dolls being abandoned. However, some of the dolls were hid away secretly by the Japanese teachers. There remain 278 blue eyed dolls in Japan now.

(Jojima Town public information brochure, 'Jojima' August 1st, 2004)
The blue eyed doll in Jojima elementary school, Kurume city, Fukuoka, is one of the dolls which were sent from the US. as ambassadors of friendship in 1927, and one of the 3 remaining dolls in Fukuoka prefecture. Before the War, it used to be displayed on the top shelf of the rack in the Japanese room of the school. But once the war began and it was faced to a crisis of being abandoned, teachers put it in a box along with the other important documents and hid it at the corner of a closet.
Blue-eyed doll: Jojia Elementary School in Kurume City, Fukuoka

When the Chikugo river flooded in 1953, it was water-soaked, and the doll's dress got tattered in pieces. Some voluntary teachers made her a new dress and she is now put carefully on the self in the reception room of the school. She is named 'Shoerry,' after the fact that Jojima is the place famous for Sake producing, and the literal meaning of 'Shoerry' is 'the hometown of Sake.'

On October 28th, 2015, the grandchild of Dr. Sidney Lewis Gulick sent Jojima elementary school a new blue eyed doll as a gift.
Part 5
Repatriation

Illegal Boat

When it was made clear that we Japanese were going to repatriate from Korean peninsula, one of the Korean woman said to me, "We Koreans became definitely as unhappy as we used to be before Japan began to rule the peninsula. We had been scared by the unreasonable punishment or oppression, sometimes slaughter by the Yangban—the ruling class of the Joseon Dynasty, while we didn't have to worry about anything as long as we didn't commit a crime under the domination of Japan. We also want to go to Japan with you." And I have to say that she was not the only Korean who said this. Not a few Koreans miss us Japanese going away. Anyway, all the Japanese who had been living in the Korean peninsula were going to repatriate to Japan.

Note:

Almost all of the Japanese living in Korea left their places for Japan soon after the War. On the other hand, about 600 thousand Koreans out of 2 million, who had been living in Japan, rejected to go home and chose staying in Japan on their own will. Even now, 520 thousand people of them and their descendants keep living in Japan with their Korean nationality. However, since they have the 'special right of permanent residence in Japan,' they can enjoy the same privileges as the Japanese in every aspect of their lives, such as social welfare, security service, or public rights.
In November, 3 months after the end of the War, 6 people of my family (my parents, me, Kinzaburo younger brother, Yoko and Yoshiko youngest sisters) were going to repatriate to Japan. Reiko, my older sister, who had been a nurse in the hospital of Hainán Dao island, China, had not come back to us yet. Kenko, another one of my younger sister, had been left in the care of my uncle in Kagoshima.

We had to cross the sea between the Korean peninsula and Japan when going back home. To cross the sea, we came to Mokpo, the port town of south Korea, which illegal boats were sailing from for Japan. In his diary, my dad wrote down about what the things were going on there.

They say there are a lot of people who got abroad in Mokpo but lost their lives or barely escaped with their lives, hitting a sea mine. Though the repatriates had booked the boats - illegal ones, many of them were deceived and cheated several thousand yen of the deposit. I also lost the deposit of 2,000 yen. The standard fare of the illegal boat was 300 yen a person, 200 yen a luggage. The landing places are mainly northern parts of Kyushu or the area of Karatsu. The boats will sail along the coasts of Jeollanam-do and Gyeongsangnam-do, stop at Tsushima and Iki islands, and reach Kyushu. It will take about 20 days for the whole voyage home, I heard. The boat are 60 to 70 tons of the sailing boats with heat engine, passengers jam-packed in a small cabin. It is fairly dangerous. After all, US Occupation Forces came to Mokpo,
ordered to stop setting sail, and all the repatriates had to move from Mokpo to Pusan on the train, from where repatriation boats are departing.

My family had planned to sail to Japan from Mokpo in an illegal boat on October. My dad's diary says,

*We got the news that an illegal boat was going to set sail to Karatsu port in Kyushu through the course of turning around the lighthouses. We carried the luggage to the boat in a hurry. But unfortunately, the day before the departure, US Occupation Forces came to order that the illegal boats shouldn't be set sail. The captains negotiated several times, but they got turned down for their request. We went back to the Hashimotos' house again after staying in the boat for 5 days.*

*We will follow the transportation plan of the US Occupation Forces. About 200 ordinary families living in Naju had come to Mokpo to repatriate to Japan. They are now staying and self-cooking at the Buddhist temples of Higashi and Nishi Honganji in Mokpo, waiting for the repatriation order from the US Occupation Forces. Though there stayed 30 to 40 thousand of Japanese soldiers in Mokpo before the end of the War, they have all gone home by the end of October.*

Following the order of US Occupation Forces, we got together at the Mokpo station with as much luggage as we could carry.
With small money and clothes we'll repatriate,
cooking pans and foods holding on our backs

By Roko

Transportation Freight Train from Mokpo to Busan

On November 17th, 1945, The day had come when our family
got on the train bound for Busan. My father's diary says,

Our family's turn has come at last. Preparing in a hurry, we
arrived at the Mokpo station at around five o'clock p.m. Soon after
the sunset, we got on the train. Around 8 o'clock pm the train
departed, leaving Mokpo, in which everything has been familiar
and memorable to me for more than 30 years. I know I would not
have a chance to see Yudalsan mountain for the rest of my life. The
train was a freight train of ten cars, absolutely packed with less
than 100 people with big luggage in each car. (The sick are treated
specially in a passenger car.) We organized a group for each car
and selected a group leader who would negotiate about everything.
It's a great pity that we Japanese people who had been proud as
the 1st class people are now being treated as if we were cargoes.
It told on me, though I know all of the worldly things are transitory
all the time.

At one o'clock pm, we arrived at Daejeon station. We changed
trains bound for Busan from Seoul after a few hours stop. There
were 30 to 40 American soldiers of the US OF in the passengers’
cars, and we repatriated in the freight cars. The train stopped once
in a while. How were things going on for the passengers? His diary says,

*The freight cars have no lavatory, of course. Though men can make water from the moving train, it is difficult for women to do the same. Whenever the train stopped at the station, they got off and made water on the platform. Even young ladies threw away the sense of shame on this occasion, doing this with their hips exposed as if nothing had happened. Men were trying to not to see them doing it.*

When the train stopped, American soldiers of the Occupation Forces came to give chocolates or candies to children and young women. They gave me chocolates and tobaccos. But they were the American soldiers who had been our enemy till recently. I threw away the things they gave me on the floor. Then a woman sitting next to me said,

"Since America robbed us of a lot of things in the War, you can take this much. Your father will be pleased with this tobacco."

She picked up the things I threw away and put them back in my hand. When I gave my dad the tobacco, he said, smoking happily,

"This is better than the Japanese one."

After that I gave tobacco to my father, candies to my sisters, but I never take myself.

On the way to Busan, the Koreans who were operating the train often stopped the train and came to our cars to plunder from us. Each time it happens, American soldiers came and ordered to
continue running the train with the gun pointing at them. Thanks to the American soldiers who kept peace and order in the train, we could have safe journey.

"If we had not been guarded by the Occupation Forces, the repatriation trains would have been attacked definitely by the hoodlum Koreans." said my father later. Actually, many Japanese repatriates from the northern Korea, which the USSR army occupied, got attacked, robbed of their belongings, raped, and killed by the local Koreans. (See So Far from the Bamboo Grove by Yoko Kawashima Watkins)

By the way, on the way back to Busan I happened to see Mrs. Shimizu at one stop who used to be a colleague at Yeongsampo South elementary school, boarding on the other car of the same train. She was repatriating with her family, 6 women altogether. From that time on we met together whenever the train stopped, and we talked mostly about the lives after going back to Japan.

**Luggage Inspection at Busan Port**

There were three hurdles waiting for us at Busan Port. The first hurdle was an inspection gate through which we are supposed to walk with luggage we could carry individually. My luggage was too much for me to carry by myself, though I had carried it all the way with the help of my family. The resolution to this problem was just one. It was to go through the gate twice. I divided my luggage into two and put the half into the furoshiki, wrapping cloth, which
I had found thrown away. My plan was this. First, I go through the
gate with the one luggage and put it where they cannot see, and
come back out of the gate and carry the other one. I had a fair
confidence that American soldiers were sure to allow me to come
back after my first entrance, because I had experienced their
kindness and generosity they showed to us young women on the
train. I thought they should not remember each face of repatriates
in such a crowded place, and I did it at once. The problem was that
I had to find out the reason to return through the gate, so I just said
to the gate man, with a gesture of drinking water,
"Water, water."
The soldier at the gate nodded, smilingly. Once out, I picked up
another luggage and I successfully go through the gate again.

The second hurdle was the body check. A Korean woman
examined whether or not we might have hidden something with us,
touching our whole bodies with the clothes on in detail. Since notes
and the pages of the post office book had been sewed into my
clothes, I was almost beside myself with fear.
"OK"
Even now I can remember vividly that I was greatly relieved to
hear the inspector’s sign.

The last hurdle was the examination of the content of the
luggage. We had to display all the things we had in the open space,
for we are firmly prohibited to take out too precious things, or
maybe weapons. American soldiers walked around to check in
detail. I had heard they liked red kimonos, women's underweare
kimono, as souvenirs for their wives or girlfriends. Some soldiers who came to my family took out the red kimonos and mompe pants of my youngest sister's. As they were newly made and her favorites, though they are not expensive ones, she began to cry frantically. I cried out to them pointing at the red underweare and her respectively.

"No, my sister's! No!"

He looked embarrassed and gave it back soon. I took back her things from them, to which they said nothing at all.

A woman next to me advised me that it should be dangerous to annoy the US soldiers, but I had a confidence that those young, cheerful, and beautiful boys could never be so rude to a young woman, for I had seen their attitude on the train. I don't think it would have succeeded if it had been my father or my brother, not me, who protested to them. Furthermore, if I were reserved and moderate like other typical Japanese woman, I would have no choice but to just give in.

It may have been just I who went through the inspection gate twice and took back the belongings which had been taken up.

To Japan in a Cargo Boat

The repatriation boats to Japan were bound for either Hakata, Fukuoka, or for Maizuru, Kyoto. I had to part from Mrs. Shimizu at Busan, who was going back to Gifu at Busan. In his diary my father wrote down the day we got aboard from the fullness of his
At 8 o'clock a.m., on November 30th, we headed for the pier. They checked about 100 passengers at one time, and it took us long to progress in a long line. Though we could go into the inspection area at last in the evening, they announced to stop checking the passengers of the tonight departure, with about ten people ahead of us. Disappointedly, we were going to spend the night staying there. And then, to my pleasure a new boat came. 'Tokujumaru,' a repatriation boat. After the sunset we could get on board at last. The next morning, they raised the anchor. The boat sailed south strait on. When I looked back at Busan Port and mountains behind it fading away, thousands of emotions crowded in on me. I was 18 when I first left Japan for Korea and got to my feet on the land of Korea. I have been living here for 38 years. Now I am going back to my home country after I got old. Why am I doing this? Because we've lost the war.

The cabin was so jam-packed with the repatriates that I couldn't even lie down. As my father's condition was not so good, I decided to leave my space for him and went up on the deck by myself. There, it was crowded with too many soldiers. Even though, the soldiers gave me room to sit down with their body got closer.

I found a room of a second floor cabin lighted brightly when I happened to look up.
"Do you know who is in that room?" I asked the soldiers around. One of them answered,
"Colonel of Army, Seishiro Itagaki, Commander of Korean Army, is."
He was later pronounced death sentence at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East in Tokyo, and hanged. When I heard his death, I couldn't help but cry with tears running down. The final poem Mr. Itagaki wrote before being hanged.

'Under the Potsdam Declaration I'll give my life to the eternal peace'

By Seishiro Itagaki

To avoid the underwater mines, the US laid during the war, the boat seemed to sail in zigzags.

Repatriates and soldiers kept good order in the boat sailing on the dark Sea of Genkai

By Roko

At dawn the land of Kyushu came to be seen. All the repatriates and soldiers got together at the side railings of the boat staring at their home country which was becoming clearer and clearer under the brightening sky, thinking about our own future lives.

When the land of Japan came into the view of us, roars of joy applause swept among the repatriates

By Roko

These are my Tanka short poems, which I later made
nostalgically. But I feel Dad's nihilistic impression from his diary.

*I cannot expect anything pleasant will occur to us repatriates, though the sun was appearing above the horizon of the Japan Sea magnificently, rising gradually, and shining all around the world. We went past Tsushima island without noticing. We arrived at Hakata Port at 3 o'clock. However, we were not allowed to land soon. We stayed in the boat that night, too.*

At 8 o'clock on the next day, 23rd November, I got a certificate of the repatriates in the landing procedure. We didn't have further inspection any more.

The condition of Fukuoka City swept by the flames was quite appalling for the eyes of us repatriates. When I saw a woman wearing a nice dress scavenging for kitchen waste, I could not stop tears from running down endlessly.

*Note: On July 19th, 1945, 239 B-29 bombers flied to northern Kyushu from Mariana Islands and air-raid Fukuoka City. About 60,000 people were suffered from it and more than 1,000 people were killed mostly in the fire.*

*Public Speech to the soldiers*

Special trains bound for several parts of Kyushu from Hakata Station had been organized. Though we tried to send all the
luggage to Yoshii, my hometown, it seemed to take a long time for us to finish all the procedure. So, my parents who were both ill went home with Yoshiko, my youngest sister, earlier than us, Kinzaburo, Yoko, and me. We stayed at the Hakata station at night, and headed for Yoshii the next day.

The train for Yoshii/Hita which was specially arranged for the demobilized soldiers and repatriates came into the Hakata terminal. The train, however, had been already crowded with the soldiers, some of whom prevented us from going into the car with their arms spread wide. Being annoyed, I banged on the window persistently. Then one of the soldiers gave up and opened it at last. We entered through the window after all. The passengers, all demobilized soldiers except us, were looking at us in utter amazement. I said to the soldiers in the car in a clear, loud voice, "You all are the same Japanese, aren't you? We have just repatriated after the defeat of the War, too. Not only you but we are also heading for our hometown with a little money and luggage allowed for us. Could it be reasonable not to let us get on the train? Isn't it you soldiers' first duty to protect us, the ordinary people, is it? If you had worked a little harder, Japan could have avoided losing the War, couldn't it?"

My brother Kinzaburo pulled my sleeve at a loss, appealing me with his eyes.
"Stop it, please, my sister."
But I couldn't help saying that to them. Though I thought it was a little harsh for them to be blamed for the responsibility of the defeat of the War, soldiers' duty was, I thought, to protect the
ordinary people prior to themselves. I couldn't overlook them to take seats comfortably leaving others standing. And another reason I couldn't help saying it was that I had experienced the kindness the soldiers in the boat showed me. They made room to sit down for me when I explained the situation and asked them to let me sit down. The soldiers in the train were completely different from those in the boat. Hearing my words, some in the train may have felt embarrassed. They gave us seats for us.

Later, the episode on the train got around among the relatives and the friends as 'the public speech to the soldiers,' through my brother's mouth.

There remain the mountains and the river without change after everything was destroyed

The train bound for Yoshi/Hita left Hakata station soon after noon. It was heading for my sweet old home with the sound of the steam engine. Since I was filled with the happiness that I could return home safely and I was going to set foot on my hometown soil, I found that I hadn't eaten at all for a long time. The train stopped at the Kurume station on the way. Kurume was also air-raided and it was just the ruins. The station building was burnt down, and there stood a temporary small building. At the Kurume station many soldiers got off.

After we started again, we could see the familiar Chikugo fields through the train window on the way to Yoshii from Kurume. I was
deeply impressed with the vivid red leaves of the succedanea trees standing in the lonesome rice field in the late fall. While I was looking at the scene, I remembered the fact that they had planted those trees which produced wax for their industrial development during the days of Feudal Clan of Kurume, and furthermore I was repeating the tanka, Japanese short poem, in my mind which was made by the Emperor Tenji (the 38th emperor; 668 BC-672 BC in the reign),

"Coarse the rush-mat roof
Sheltering the harvest-hut
Of the autumn rice-field;
And my sleeves are growing wet
With the moisture dripping through."

I was feeling I was also in the flow of history from the past to that day.

At last the train arrived at the Yoshii Station, where we were the only passengers who got off there. In front of the station there stood the Mino mountains majestically with the whole mountains reddened with autumn leaves. I was so moved at the sight that I just stood there without moving with tears running down endlessly. The mountains welcomed us warmly who came back disappointed.

Japan broken, I step on the platform of my hometown,
the reddened Mino welcomes us warmly

By Roko
My fathers' diary ended there with the completion of our repatriation. His last line is this,

38 years in Korea. Oh, it's just a short dream.

By Shozo Nishimi

Note:

*Fantasy of 'Colonial ruling'* (Wack Press, 2014),
by Oh Sonfa (A Korean professor)

What did Japan leave in Korea?

The reason why the kings in China didn't govern Korea directly and had been keeping the relation of master and servant with the tribute … (omission) … was that the land was not worth occupying. They didn't need to conquer it because the weather there was not good, the soil was barren, and natural resources were not rich. At the end of 19th century, Russia which had been wanting ice-free ports and Japan who had wanted to gain ground in the continent with the military reasons wanted it. After many twists and turns Japan, that accept Korea which had the worst condition as a colony, made a large investment into it from the first. They constructed railroads, made a road on which cars could pass through, made a measurement of the land, introduced the modern bureaucracy, and built schools to educate Korean children. The worst condition of Korea was that,

1 The climate of Korea was not mild and it didn't have any special
natural resources.
2 Politically, economically, and culturally, it was a retarded place. 3 Since it was the society in which Confucianism Fundamentalism was deeply rooted in it, it took great effort to disseminate the new way of thinking corresponding to the capitalistic economy.

The sum of the investment to Korea was much bigger than to Taiwan, which it was also governed by Japan after the Japan-China War (1894-1895), because the land and the population of Korea were bigger than Taiwan. Huge sum of money was given to Korean government - general from the national budget every year. It was more than 200 thousand dollars (monetary value those days) at most, which was equivalent to 20 % of Japanese national budget of those days. The funds were used to build government and municipal offices and schools, pay school teachers and public servants, and established and managed social infrastructure such as roads, railways, ports, and power facilities.

Invisible elements were much more important for the social development. Education systems, principles, social customs, laws, experiences, and technologies were not destroyed even by the war. The reason the economy of German and Japan which had been burned to the ground and had to pay a lot of compensation after the Second World War came to life again so rapidly was that they had the experiences as developed, industrialized countries, which was not the miracle caused by God. The society which had built and enjoyed an advanced civilization once has the ability to rise again in a moment even though their material basis was destroyed
by the temporary catastrophe. This meant that those invisible properties, storage of the experiences, and human resources with them are much more important for the national modernization.

As a result, what we should evaluate most on the contribution to our Korean society by Japan was not only for the environmental infrastructure improvement, but also for the fact that Japan completely destroyed pre modern factors of Korea in such a short time, and transplanted a society of the new culture, social systems, ideas and so on into the Korean society.

As for Japan, I'm sure they must have been offended by the fact that they had to pay 800 million dollars’ compensation instead of getting money, after they had invested on a massive scale for 40 years, educated people, and built modern industrial facilities in the undeveloped Korean peninsula.
Part 6
The Life after the War

Settlement into the Site of ex-Tachiarai Air Base

The place we came back to was my mother's parents' house in Ukiha, where I used to live from 5 to 18 years old. There lived no one in the house because my grandmother had already passed away, and my young uncle was called up to the Army and hadn't come back then. Generally speaking, the repatriates were treated coldly even by the relatives, and we weren't exceptional.

My father's parent's family was in utter confusion because they had been a big land owner and were taken up almost all the lands they had had by the Farmland Reform ordered by the General Headquarters (GHQ). They must have been too occupied with their own affairs, so they paid little attention to us.

At the end of March, 1946, we could luckily get a block of the settlement land in Tachiarai, which was disposed of by the government. Tachiarai Air Base was the biggest air base in the East, where a lot of Kamikaze pilots were training their plane techniques.

We began to live in a rented house in Hongo close to the Tachiarai settlement field. It was Mr. and Mrs. Inoue, my cousin, who helped me with everything for our family. Mr. Inoue, ex-major, used to be an instructor of the Tachiarai Air School. It was
ferociously attacked again and again and a lot of people were killed in March, 1945. He was not there at that time and could avoid the air raid, because he had been sent to Korea to build a new air base there.

**note:**

*Tachiarai Air Base was bombed twice by the large formation of B-29 bombers in 27th and 31st March, 1945. It is said that the number of the victims was about 1,000 people by the first attack. Airplane maintenance shops, the military headquarter, and barracks were got exploded, neighboring houses in the neighborhood also bombed. At this time the pupils of Tateishi Elementary School on their way home who had escaped into the woods in Tonda were aimed at and 31 kids were killed with the bombs.*

Mr. Inoues who were living close to the ex-Tachiarai Air Base let us know about the settlement itself there and took great care of us in preparing necessities from farm tools to rice straw for the settlement. At the beginning the land was too hard for us to cultivate with a hoe, so the cow they lent us was of great help to break the field.

Before long my father decided to have a house built. It was a small one with two rooms and a mold floor, but we were happy to get our own home for the first time after we left Korea. We were the first to build house among the settlers. Dad and my brother added the kitchen and the store room to the main building by
themselves. All the living expenses till then, the settlement expense for the land, and the cost of building the house were all come from the notes and the post office books we brought back. If we had followed what my father had said, we must have been in great trouble for living.

You, migratory birds to Korea, have nothing to carry with you in comparison with us repatriate  

By Roko

How did my father feel in leading a settlement life those days? He made a lot of Tankas and Haikus, calling himself an 'old settler.' I'll quote some of them.

Hoeing with unskillful hands after my repatriation has become improved before I know

Tachiarai where the special candidate-executive chased the dreams is now the field with rapeseed flowers

I am living where we can have a fine view of old mountains, but I, a repatriate, seldom hear from anybody

You drenched swallows are flying all day in the rainy May for the sake of your baby birds

I found a snail on the window while I am fed up with this rain and reading books

By Shozo

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Sweet potatoes in the backpack

It was about two years since we came back to Japan that Mrs. Motoko Kawaguchi, who used to be my colleague at Yeongsampo South Elementary School, came to see me and said, "You don't have such a physical strength enough to cultivate these fields. You should be back to the teaching profession. Let me negotiate with the prefectural board of education on you." She left with the words that I was supposed to see the school inspector on the arranged date. I greatly appreciated her kindness she showed me from the bottom of my heart. Her husband had not come back to Japan yet, and she didn't even know whether he was still alive or not. She herself had been leading a tough life then.

She had already got a job of an elementary school teacher in Chikushi county as soon as she had repatriated earlier than others in an illegal boat. She was a social lady and had a lot of acquaintances. That's why I could get a job as a school teacher again after the oral test with the school inspector. I began to work for Mada Elementary School in my neighborhood, and worked for one month as a substitute teacher for a maternity leave teacher. Next April I began to work at Miwa Elementary School as a regular teacher, to which it was one hour's walk.

I was in charge of the 1st year pupils class, and the first important job for the teachers was visiting the pupils' homes at the beginning of the school year. I visited Noriko Hayashi, one of the
pupils, at one of the tenement houses, which were former barracks for the airplane repair shop workmen.

Those days in the tenement houses there lived repatriate families and people whose houses had been burned down by the air raids. Noriko's family was one of the repatriates from Manchuria. When I went into the room through the barrack entrance, I stood stock still completely stunned by the scene and at a loss for words with tears running down endlessly. There was nothing, except a small rice cooker and a pot in the small room. Nothing. Even a piece of vegetable leaf nor a grain of rice couldn't I find. In this place this family, the mother and her 6 children, were living waiting for the father to come back from the Siberia Concentration Camp of the USSR. Though I was also a repatriate and was leading a hard live, that was too miserable and sorrowful scene for me. I wept with a cry.
"Don't cry, Miss Nishimi." said the mother, who was also crying. "If my husband came back, we could make a better living... We have nothing to eat."
"I hope your husband will be back soon. Never give up, and wait for him bravely, will you?"
I encouraged her, but my tears wouldn't stop.

At the night, after all the family went to bed, I talked about the Hayashis to my mother.
"Though we are leading a miserable live, the Hayashis are much more miserable than us with her husband away. Why are all the repatriates so miserable? ", said she with a sigh.
Next morning, I awoke to find a backpack at the bedside, in which a lot of sweet potatoes were packed full. My mother had put them in it one by one in order the last night.

"Carry them to the Hayashis, please." said my Mon, and saw me with a heavy backpack off at the gate smilingly a little. The Hayashis place was on the way to Miwa Elementary School. I entered the house after I made sure there were no one around, and handed the sweet potatoes to the mother. She said shedding tears, "Oh, my. We can survive with these. Though you are also having a hard time, ...."

I headed for the school with an empty backpack on my back.

It was a few years after that time when I got a letter from her. It said that her husband had come back after a long Concentration Camp in Siberia, and that he could get a job at a local government because he used to be a public servant and later moved to the main office of the prefecture, and the life had got much easier.

**Good bye children, Good bye my parents**

Fall is the season cosmos bloom beautifully. However, not long after the War we didn't have any peace of mind to enjoy the beautiful season because all we could do was to support ourselves every day. On such days, a lot of cosmos bloomed beautifully in the garden of my house. I wanted the children to pick flowers and experience of digging sweet potatoes, and invited 8 children from the barrack tenement houses, who were all the repatriates or the
sufferers of the War. My mother prepared lunch for them. She cooked rice, and chicken which she had got from a neighbor for that day. They said jumping for joy, "Rice, rice meal!" "And chicken, too!"

Such an incident became the last memory in my teaching career, for suddenly I came to get married and gave up the job.

I won a prize for my educational paper I had submitted to the contest by Fukuoka Prefectural Board of Education, in which I wrote on my daily school practice in Miwa Elementary School. Etsuo Ueno, my future husband, an elementary school teacher, happened to read my award-winning thesis and asked about me to my ex-colleague who had been transferred from ME school to his school the previous year. He decided to see me and after we met several times, I got engaged to him. I was 28 years old when I married him on December 27th, in 1948, 3 years after I repatriated from Korea.

Though his family used to own a large area of rice fields before the end of the War, almost all of them were taken away due to the Farmland Reform by the GHQ. They, nevertheless, believed in vain that the lands which had been cultivated by the owner themselves instead of the tenant farmers might be admitted of the right of the ownership. There had been almost neglected lands of theirs because they were not adequate for farming, but if we couldn't keep even such sterile lands, it was clear that the family, his parents, 7 small brothers and sisters, and us two, would soon starved. All of
us were living in a same house.

In January 1949, next month after the marriage, I was begged to quit the job to join in the farm work with them by the stern father-in-law. I unwillingly agreed. My newly-married life began with cultivating lands from dawn to dusk.

It was my hard experience to have left my pupils at ME school behind. Whenever I heard the bell of the nearby school ringing, I remembered the peaceful and cheerful days with the children in ME school and shed. Later I heard that the principal and parents were very perplexed with the complaint of the ex-pupils saying, "I like Ms. Nishimi. I won't go to school without her"

Though my career of a teacher in Japan was just less than two years, I had been spending a substantial, fulfilling days at school. Our school was appointed to be the 'experimental school' by the Fukuoka Prefecture, and the teachers often went out to the other schools and the institute to study, or the staffs came to our school to give us lectures. I was in charge of the subject 'Art' and had many chances to get taught the procedure of Art class by Mr. Aoyagi, a teacher at Fukuoka Elementary School attached to Fukuoka University of Education. Furthermore, I had good acquaintance with the wonderful bosses, Mr. Toshio Tomokiyo and Mr. Koichiro Inoue, who later became the leaders of Board of Education Secretariat of Fukuoka Prefecture.

Especially, the Principal Tomokiyo was respected by all the
teachers of our school because of his gentle personality and his good care of us teachers. One day one of his sons, who were the pupils of ME school, asked the homeroom teacher to allow him to be absent from the PE class because he felt sick. But the teacher said, "You must be a liar." and forced him to join the PE class. He fell down during the class and died without recovering consciousness. Mr. Tomokiyo grieved over his loved son's death so much, but he never blamed the teacher for it. I never think of him without remembering this incident. The late Mr. Yoshio Tomokiyo, former vice principal of Fukuoka Elementary School attached to Fukuoka University of Education and one of Mr. Toshio Tomokiyo's sons, was said to be so great a teacher as his father.

After the defeat in the War, our family experienced repatriation from the Korean peninsula with almost nothing, and settling in a barren land and inexperienced farming. They must be so harsh for my parents who are naturally invalid. It was getting more frequent that my mother who had a chronic heart disease was ill in bed. She, though, cherished Mikihisa, my first son and their first grandchild, with him lying beside her bed when I went back to their house with him. Five years after the repatriation, my mother Yuki, 57, passed away of heart failure without waking up from a nap. It was a peaceful end.

Shozo called my son "Micky-boy!" and loved him, reading a lot of Tanka poems about him. The last few years must have been the short happy days for them. Two years after my mom's death, Shozo who had a chronic disease of asthma also passed away of
heart failure as if he followed her. At dawn he left the last words to my sister who had run to his bed, "Yuki's spirit has come to see me. Give her a cup of tea on the Buddhist altar"

He was at the age of 60, and he also gone out as peacefully as my mom.
"What if my father had not gone to Korea at that time?"
"What if my uncle had not been shot to die?"
If it had not been for those "What-ifs, my dad's life could have been much more brightened. I sometimes wonder what his 38 years in Korea was, and all the time I come to find my youth had much to do with the history of my dad and Japan. When I look back my 98 years, I find I have been all too often helped by someone at the turning point of my life. Without my uncle's support, I couldn't have been able to continue the school life and get a job of a teacher. Without the Korean doctor, I must have died at that time. I cannot help feeling as if I owe my life to someone or something great I cannot see.
Epilogue

After the War, Kinzaburo, my brother, kept good terms with the Son's family. The third son who studied at the Agricultural School in Kagoshima (present Agricultural Faculty of Kagoshima University) had visited Kinzaburo several times. I heard when he came back to his old school, Kagoshima University, a lot of classmates and seniors got together and held a big reunion party for him. Mr. Son said that he was deeply moved by the broad-mindedness and the warm heart of the Kagoshima people or Japanese people. He visited the cemetery in the mountains of Ukiha all the way to worship for my dad's tomb and planted a tree next to it, saying to his sons who had accompanied him, "The true Japan is not what you are learning at school in Korea, based on anti-Japan sentiment. Japan is completely different from what you know and is a wonderful country. Look at it clearly through your own eyes."

The Son's family, though, have been persecuted for the reason of 'pro-Japanese' family and they had a hard time to make a living. The second son who had studied at the Military Academy in Japan went to the front battle line in the Korean War and never came back. The first son who had aided my father Shozo financially was arrested by the Korean government, tortured, and died with a mental breakdown after a long time in prison. When Kinzaburo visited Mr. Son in Korea a few years after he and his sons came to Japan, he was so shocked to see their poverty that he left all the money he had with him behind for him.
It was not just Mr. Son's family that were suffered persecution. I heard that after all the Japanese, including troops, had repatriated from Korea, all the Korean land owners were collected at the school ground without telling the reason, made to line in a row, and shot killed. Those who had been rich or had a close relationship with the Japanese were said to have been mostly killed from that time on.

In 1985 when my second son Masahiro visited Korea, leading the high school students for his school trip, Mr. Son and his family came to see him at the hotel and were very pleased to see Shozo's grandson. Masahiro said,
"I was so impressed to see that Mr. Son valued the bonds of the friendship between the two families even after 40 years since the end of the War."

Note:
The reason Korean government has labeled many Koreans as 'Japan sympathizer's and oppressed them.

The constitution of the Republic of Korea (Jul. 17, 1948)
Preamble:
We, the people of Korea, proud of a resplendent history and traditions dating from time immemorial, upholding the cause of the Provisional Republic of Korea Government born of the March First Independence Movement of 1919 and the democratic ideals of the April Nineteenth Uprising of 1960 against injustice, having

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assumed the mission of democratic reform and peaceful unification of our homeland and having determined to consolidate national unity with justice, (omitted below)

Korean government takes the standpoint that the Republic of Korea was born of the March First Independence Movement of 1919. Though, the Provisional Government of Korea based in Shanghai, China, was not recognized as one of the participating nations in the World War II by the United Nations nor Axis Power, and so it was not allowed to sign the Treaty of San Francisco. The Koreans have contradictory two views. One is that Korea won the independence by themselves, which is in the government-designated textbook. They emphasize the war declaration to Japan, which was not even transmitted to the Japanese government. And the other is that they lost the chance forever to get independent of Japan by themselves. Such a resentment has become a motive power to the Anti-Japan sentiment of the Koreans.

It was a legal result on the international law that Japan annexed Korea in 1910, and the United Nations recognized the fact that Japan had been governing the Korean peninsula from the time on. So, the right of sovereignty on this place was transferred from Japan to the United Nations, and to the Republic of Korea established in 1948.

They expressed the validity of the provisional government in the Preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea, which
gave them the ground to punish legally those who had been cooperative to the Japanese, labelling them as the anti-government and anti-racialism traitors and as 'Pro-Japanese.'

Soon after the War a new law named 'Law of Anti-Korean race action punishment' was passed, in which all the 'Pro-Japanese's property or estates were going to be confiscated. The Korean War, however, began in 1950 and this law was not adapted strictly to all the cases. In 2005 the Roh Moo-hyun government passed the law called 'Special Law on the property of the pro-Japanese and anti-racial behavior' and the oppression on the sympathizers for Japan came to life again. Today it supports the anti-Japan movement in the Korean society legally.

What are the teachers who worked with doing now? I was told the sad fact when I visited Korea in 1995. It was that Ms. Junko Kim, a Korean teacher, whom I adored like my older sister had already been dead. Actually I had been looking forward to meeting her again for a long time, which was one of the reasons I had decided to come to Korea again, and I was there in Korea with a lot of souvenir from Japan for her....

I heard that after the War her husband was arrested under suspicion of being a communist and before long executed. She committed suicide jumping into the sea of Yeosu-si in the east of Jeollanam-do. I missed her very much. I couldn't stop running tears when I heard the story.
On the other hand, I could meet Mr. Park, a Korean teacher and my colleague at Yeongsampo South Elementary School. He was a humorous teacher and very popular among the pupils, and he made a great effort to develop this country after the War, I heard. When we were alone, he told the secret he had never let open.

"After the War I went to Japan every year, though it was hard to do it because we were so poor."

"Did you have your girlfriend in Japan?" I asked him kiddingly.

"No, this is the very secret, but to tell you the truth my mom is a Japanese. I have never said this to anyone, never." said he.

I remembered his father's gentle features and felt I could understand the reason his father had caught a Japanese woman's heart. At the same time, I felt sorry for him that he had to conceal his mother's national origin, which I couldn't help feel unreasonable.

What has become of Mrs. Kimi Shimizu, a Japanese teacher? Her husband went to the front in China and she received the notice of his death in action. She told me an unexpected story.

After the War I and my 5 daughters came back to Nagoya, my home town. I was at a loss what to do because I had nothing to rely on. Fortunately, a relative, who was a member of the prefectural assembly, helped me to rent a room of the local agricultural cooperative office. One day long after that, I felt I heard a voice say, "I'm home." When I came to the entrance hall, I found my husband, my dead husband, standing there. I lost words. His soul must have come back to us, I thought.
“It's me, Kimi. I am not a ghost.” said he.
I touched his body, hands, face, legs, head...
“Are you alive?”
“Yes, sit down, anyway.”
He told the whole story so far.
“I was terribly injured and fell unconscious in the battle of Japan-China War, which was a fierce battle between Japan and Chinese Nationalist Party led by Chiang Kai-Shek. After the battle was over, their army patrolled around the battle field to make sure whether the Japanese soldiers were alive or not. They carried wounded soldiers on stretchers to the hospital and treated them. When I came to myself, a Chinese senior officer, who had studied at the Military Academy in Japan, said to me,
"Never do anything rash, Mr. Shimizu, OK? I know you have a 'Battlefield Instruction' which says 'Never be a prisoner alive.' Japanese soldiers are so brave and proud that they refuse to be a war prisoner, but you are not a war prisoner. You were almost dead, not alive. You happened to be lucky to be rescued, you know. I have to send you back to Japan for your wife, which is my duty. Let me leave your life in my care."
"I decided not to kill myself to hear his enthusiastic persuasion." said my husband.
His return was a great pleasure and happiness for me and our children. Though in those days everyone was leading difficult lives, I began to make a living as a cram school teacher and started a new life with my husband. If I had got remarried at that time, everything must have been chaotic. Thanks to your advice, we could live a wonderful life, Ms. Nishimi. Thank you very much,
thank you.

It was an unexpected development, and her decision not to get remarried saved her life from getting out of tune

Ms. Shimizu never failed to visit my home whenever she had a chance to come to Kyushu, and stayed a few nights, chatting far into the night. She always thanked me for my advice not to remarry at that time. Ms. Shimizu, such a close friend of mine, passed away in April, 2005, 3 days before my husband passed away.

What are the Japanese pupils I taught at Tsukimi Elementary School doing now? They are leading their own lives happily and peacefully after they returned to their home town and struggled to overcome the difficulty.

"We are dealing the most amount of wood in our prefecture," said Mr. Miyashita, the ex-president of a lumber company in Nagano Prefecture. He sends me a cardboard box of Nagano premium apples every year.

Mr. Inoue was working for a company in Tokyo, who used to be a member of the yacht sailing team of Seinan Gakuin University in Fukuoka. His older sister living in the neighboring town of my place, he comes to see me whenever he visits her sister or comes for the university reunion party. It is my great pleasure to talk with him about the old days over lunch.
Ms. Kiyoko Saito sends me letters once in a while, who married a professor of the University in Oita. She was a distinguished and smart girl.

Ms. Yukie Ehara was a pioneer of a woman principal in the educational field in Kawagoe City, Saitama. She was so intelligent a girl and had a great leadership. She said she still kept a school report I had written 70 years ago.

Ms. Tamiko Tanoe in Kumamoto prefecture sometimes visits me at the nursing home. We enjoy chatting over everything even after such a long time of 70 years, which makes me feel very happy.

Though the period of the teacher-pupil relationship between us was only 15 months, I can still enjoy myself with them. We were all living in a violently changing social situation.

In the reunion party of Naju I could get the information of what Mr. Kokoroishi, head of the Naju police station, had become of afterward. He was arrested and put into the jail of the Naju police station, and at one heavily rainy night one of his men who was a Japan sympathizer and had trusted him helped him to escape from prison, making him put on a Korean clothes. It is said that he hid himself in the mountains in the daytime, moved for the Busan Port in the dark, and went back home to Hiroshima safely. His son, who was 12 then and let us know about the Defeat of the War has become a doctor in Hiroshima.
I have been leading a life in a wheelchair life since I suffered from the bleeding in the brain 9 years ago and no longer able to attend the reunion party of Naju. But at any time my mind fly back to Naju, Korea where I lived in my adolescent days. I, at the age of the latter half of 90s, clearly recall the days I spent with children of Korea and Japan.

It is already more than 70 years since the end of the War. Why don't you look back on the history of Japan? How were they leading lives when your grandparents or great-grandparents were young? How drastically the whole Japan changed during and after the War? I'd like you to know about Japan, Korea, and all the conditions of the world at that time. I wish that we Japanese and Koreans would understand each other and keep on good terms with each other forever from the bottom of my heart. It would my greatest pleasure if this book were useful for it.
"I heard Japan had done evil to Korea after colonizing it." said one of my acquaintances recently. He looked very surprised when I talked him about what I heard from my mother and what my grandfather's old diary said. He, who is almost at the same age of mine, doesn't even know correctly about Korea, or Taiwan, under the rule of Japan, much less young Japanese people, because they don't have enough chances to be taught the recent history of Japan in the school curriculum nowadays for the reason of shortage of lesson time. I'm afraid a lot of young people, who simply believe in what the biased newspapers or the TV stations say, may have misunderstanding of those days like him.

Ms. Hai Shakline, (Japanese way of pronunciation) who guided my mother and her ex-colleagues to the schools when they revisited Korea, had been working for the school administration office in Kwangju City and took part in the education reform of Korea, contributing to the prosperity of this country. I heard she had said to my mother as following, "It was a hard job for us to rebuild the school system after the Japanese went back to Japan in 1945. Even though, we could carry on the school education with the documents you had left, keeping the school system as before. Thanks to Japan, we could build up the base of the school education in Korea and continue to develop human resources who would support our nation."

It's a pity the modern Japanese don't know the fact that the
education system Japan introduced into this country took root in Korea, and laid the groundwork for the economic development of this country.

It was in 2015 that I made up my mind to edit my mother's memories, when mass media was taking up 'The Japanese rule over Korea' as one of the '70 years after the War' special program. I couldn't help feeling something was wrong with the news of Korea in those days, and I came to believe it a duty of a Japanese who knew the detail of the days. For 3 months from that time on I had heard her talk about her experiences at her nursing home. Though she has a clear memory, she is hard of hearing, and I sometimes had to communicate with her in a loud voice or by means of writing, which was a tough job for me.

She collected her memory from her old far-off days, sometimes with tears in her eyes or happy expressions on her face. Though it took a long time to complete the work, which was something like a puzzle for me to try to put together the pieces she told in fragments into a whole picture, the work was enjoyable. While editing her dramatic life before, during, and after the War, I could see her pride in herself as a school teacher or a Japanese. She seemed to me to be such a reliable and a strong woman.

As I didn't have an intention to sell the book at the beginning, I published it privately, which was named 'the schools in the country where althea trees blossom,' and gave the copies for free to my friends and acquaintances. Afterward, some people
suggested that I should publish it openly if I wanted it to be read by as many people as possible, and so did I.

After I completed the interview with her, I made sure that Japanese government had tried to treat Korean people as equal human beings as Japanese, through the Japanese way of ruling in the days the Great Powers struggling for supremacy in Asia. Japan not only built a nationwide infrastructure but also concentrated on raising a lot of educated Koreans who would be leaders in the future, developed their talent and activated the industries in the Korean peninsula. On the other hand, I understand those people who wished the independence from Japan with the identity of the Korean race.

I couldn't help considering the recent cold and tensioned relationship between Japan and Korea while editing down the incidents in order and reading a lot of reference materials. I came to the conclusion that it was the Korean Constitution and the national leaders of Korea that affect the Korean people's emotion.

It is often said that one of the causes of the nowadays terrible relationship between Japan and Korea is that Japan has not brought forward a counter argument, not even been willing to protest, and after all has overlooked these problems, which is often said to be a Japanese typical way in dealing with troublesome issues. Above all the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been passive all the time and has maintained a low profile on everything so as not to antagonize other countries. It's a great wonder for me that Japan
hasn't tried to establish, or has neglected an equal diplomatic relations based on the historical facts. It is the most important for us Japanese including politicians to look straight at 'Korea problem,' learn the history from the Meiji era up to this day, and verify the facts based on the historical materials and testimony. We should focus not only on the negative aspects but on the positive ones that Japanese ruling drastically laid the foundation of the modern state on Korea; otherwise correct information would die out and only the wrong one announced from Korea will be stored and believed as an established fact around the world.

So called 'Military Comfort Women' problem is one of them. Korea and China are now making an application to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has a Memory of the World Program, claiming that they were the women taken by the Japanese Army forcibly and obliged to be sex slaves. Though the Newspaper, the only source at that time which made this matter public for the first time in 1982, had already apologized publicly for the false information from a Japanese who wanted to be famous, I'm afraid that it may be too late to make out the message to the world, because the matter became too spread by the Korean people all over the world.

The only way Japan should take to solve the problems between Japan and Korea is to keep actively saying what were based on the historical facts to Korea, and the world. To make a concession or compromise to Korea without any precise understanding, the very nature of the Japanese, in the negotiation between the countries
will create an irreparable future problem. Nothing has been solved on this issue between us, though the Japanese government came to an agreement with Korea again and again, believing that it could be one of the ways to avoid the conflicts. They brought up the matter over and over, and are continuing to blame us to be a criminal. They even began to maintain the Japan-South Korea 'Comfort Women' Agreement in Dec. 2015 between Presidents Park Geun-hye government and Japan to be reconsidered.

It is said that in Taiwan they think highly of the 50 years, 1895-1945, when Japan ruled it. The friendly and close bond between the two country resulted in a huge amount of contribution not only to the East Japan Great Earthquake in 2011 but to the Kumamoto Earthquake in 2016. On the other hand, in Korea a lot of people posted online their pleasure for the earthquake, and anti-Japan movements are not calmed down.

There were no differences between the ways of ruling both of the countries by the Japanese government. Many people of Korea and Taiwan in those days say there were good relationships among the people of the two countries. There has been a great difference on the school education and mass media information, though. Especially the textbooks Korean students use have a lot of false stories based of anti-Japan sentiments.

I believe it is our duty to claim the historical truth and never to let our descendants be humiliated by the fake propaganda.
When my mother fell ill with brain bleeding, the doctor said it was quite difficult for her to recover. However, she recovered and had a chance to tell her own experiences in the days under Japan's rule over Korea.

"I am made to be alive by someone." said she.

The 'someone' could be Shozo Nishimi, I guess. He might be saying,

"Roko, do talk for the sake of the honor of Japan and the Japanese who tried hard in the hope of developing Korea. You are the only survivor who could tell the truth." I feel as if I could hear his words.

Through the editing her experiences, I came to see the fact that they, both Japanese and Koreans, were trying to live peacefully and friendly, aiming at the wealthier lives in the future.

She had never talked of Korea critically. Instead, all she talked was from her firm sense of mission as a school teacher or as a woman. She loved people and their country where althea trees blossom, for it was the place she was born and brought up in the love of her parents. Korea was her home country and the place where she dreamed to be a better school teacher in her youth days.

I'll devote this book to Roko, who devoted her youth to Korean pupils, and her parents who had lived with the benevolence of Confucianism.

*All the hardship Mom experienced was decorated*
with the althea blossoms

By Mikihisa Ueno

July, 2017
Editor
Mikihisa Ueno
A Message from the Translator

The very reason I made up my mind to translate my Mom's book into English was that I happened to know the news; there are a lot of Japanese or Japanese descents, especially their small children, all over the world bullied by the Korean people, who are blaming them for that they are the descendants of the devil Japanese who forced Korean people to be slaves under 'the Japanese annexation of Korea' days. I began to translate it into English in order to have the truth known by all the Japanese kids in the world.

They are insisting that the Koreans those days didn't only have the basic human rights but they were also treated like slaves and tortured, young women taken away and forced to be 'comfort women' or 'sex slaves,' while young men forced to work at dangerous work places such as mines. Furthermore, hundreds thousands of Korean people were killed finally, they say. The Korean government have even made 'comfort women' one of the biggest issues for their country, and are demanding an apology and monetary compensation from Japan insistently.

It's awful that some of the Japanese came to believe in such an absurd made-up story owing to the repeated false articles from a newspaper company in Japan and Korean
propaganda, though the company apologized officially for their misleading wrong articles at last.

What she told on this book is not especially new for her children and most of the incidents are quite familiar to us, for she talked about them frequently when she was young. Owing to her repeated 'memories of her teacher days in Korea,' I grew up to feel intimate with the country.

In 1972, soon after I graduated from high school, I visited Korea for the first time. I traveled around the country for around one week and had a lot of chances to talk with many young Koreans with my poor English. Even now I remember what a Korean girl student said at a youth hostel in Seoul.
"I envy your country."
Korea was developing rapidly with the huge amount of money Japan had paid for the peace treaty, and all the people in the country were aiming to reach the level of Japan.

In 1985 I visited Korea again as a school trip of the high school I had been working for. At that time Mr. Son, whose brother helped my grand-pa Shozo and who was a close friend with my uncle Kinzaburo, came to see me at a hotel in Seoul. I was awfully impressed to see Mr. Son, who had been labeled and persecuted as a pro-Japanese, talking of the days with tears in his eyes when Korean people had
been happy. I noticed then that he was paying a close attention to the people around for fear of being seen as a Japanese sympathizer. It had already been 40 years since the War ended.

The third time I visited Korea was in 2011. I chose Korea the destination of the school trip of the high school I had been working for as a principal. The relationship between the two countries were getting worse gradually then, but I really hoped that if the young people had equal, good terms with each other through the school exchange, they could improve this awkward relationship in the future.

Though, these days the anti-Japan sentiment in Korea is becoming fiercer and fiercer, and the movement in Korea has become quite deteriorated one that we have never seen before. It seems to be quite doubtful that the day will come again when we build such a friendly relationship as peoples in both nations had more than 70 years ago.

If we hoped Japan is an honorable nation in the world at a time like this, we should avoid being a coward who wouldn't say anything true for fear of getting the other offended. We'll be able to maintain the honor and dignity of ourselves, our ancestors, and our descendants, only when we speak out on the fact based on the historical facts, rather than keep silent. And it'll be able to have this
relationship altered for the better eventually.

Through this book I'd like all the people who are interested in this matter as well as Japanese kids to know what the real relationship between the two countries was like at that time..

March 1st, 2018
Translator
Masahiro Ueno
訳者からのメッセージ

私が母の手記を英語に直すことを決意した理由はまさにたまたま聞いたニュースにあります。世界中でたくさんの日本人や日系人、その幼い子供たちが、彼らは日本の韓国統治時代、韓国人を奴隷にした悪魔の日本人の子孫であると言って、韓国系の人々から迫害されている、というものでした。私は世界中の日本人の子弟に真実を知ってほしい、との思いで英訳を始めました。

彼らは、当時の韓国人は基本的人権がなかっただけでなく、奴隷のように扱われ、拷問をされた、若い女性は連れ去られて「慰安婦」、即ち「性奴隷」を強要され、男性は炭鉱のような危険な場所で強制労働を強いられた、と主張しています。更に、何十万人もの韓国人が最終的には殺害された、と言っているのです。韓国政府は「従軍慰安婦」を自国の最大の課題のひとつにされており、執拗に日本の謝罪と金銭的保障を要求し続けています。

恐ろしいことに、日本人の中にも、日本の新聞社の繰り返された虚偽の記事、（もっとも、その新聞社は誤報を最終的に公式謝罪しましたが、）や韓国のプロパガンダのせいで、そんなばかげた作り話を信じているものもいます。

母がこの手記の中で語ったことは、その子供たちにとって特に新しい事柄はなく、ほとんどの出来事は私たち子供にとって極めてなじみ深いものでした。というのも、母は若い頃からよく当時のことを話していたからです。母が「韓国での教員時代の思い出」をよく語っていたために、私は彼の国に親近感を覚えて成長しました。
高校を卒業してすぐの 1972 年、私は初めて韓国を訪れました。1 週間程かけて韓国を旅行し、私は下手な英語でたくさんの若い韓国人と話す機会がありました。ソウルのユースホステルで韓国人女子学生が言った言葉は今でも覚えています。それは、「私はあなたの国がうらやましい」というものです。韓国は、日本が平和条約のために支払った巨額のお金で急速に発展しつつあり、韓国の人々は日本のレベルに到達することを目指していました。

1985 年、私は勤めていた高校の修学旅行で再び韓国を訪れました。その時、その兄が私の祖父西見省三を援助し、自身は私の叔父欣三郎と親しい友人であるソンさん（仮名）がソウルのホテルの私に会いに来てくれました。親日派とレッテルを貼られ迫害されてきたソンさんは、目に涙をため、韓国人が幸せだった時代のことを語ってくれました。私はひどく感動しましたが、同時に、その時にソンさんは、「親日派」と見られることを恐れてか、周囲の目にひどく注意を払っていることに気づきました。戦争が終わってすでに４０年が経っていました。

３度目に韓国を訪れたのは２０１１年。私は校長として勤めていた高校の修学旅行の目的地に韓国を選びました。当時、二国間の関係は徐々に悪化してきていますが、もし若い人たちが学校交流を通じて対等で、良好な関係を築くことができるなら、このぎくしゃくした関係を将来彼らが改善できるだろう、と私は本気で期待していました。

しかし今日、韓国の反日気運はますます激しくなり、韓国の動きは
かつてないほどに悪化の一途をたどっています。70年以上前の両国民の友好な関係を構築する日が再来することは極めて疑わしく思えます。

こんな時代にあって、日本が世界で名誉ある国家であることを望むなら、私たちは相手が怒ることを恐れて何ら真実を述べない臆病者であってはなりません。沈黙を守るのでなく歴史的事実に基づいた事実に関して声をあげるとき初めて、私たちは、私たちの、祖先の、子孫の名誉と尊厳を守ることができるのです。そしてそれが最終的には、この両国関係を改善することに繋がると信じています。

この本を通して、日本人の子供たちはもちろん、この問題に関心のある全ての人々に当時の真実の両国関係がどのようなものであったのかを知ってもらえたら幸いです。

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