

Effects of the Korean War on Social Structures of the Republic of Korea

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Effects of the Korean War on Demographic Structures of the Population

The Korean War was among the world's most destructive wars, in proportion to the population. During the war, the population of South Korea declined by nearly two million, excluding an influx of nearly 650,000 North Korean refugees. During the same period, about 290,000 South Koreans migrated to North Korea, either by force or by choice.¹ Redistribution of the South Korean population continued on a large scale even into the immediate post-war years.²

Mortality. Changes in demographic processes serve as important indicators of the impact of the Korean War on the population of South Korea. Mortality is the most obvious demographic footprint left by a war, but its effects may also be observed in patterns of fertility and migration for the period of the actual conflict and the period immediately following the war.³ Between 1910 and 1945, the crude death rate in South Korea declined from 34 to 22 per 1,000 people. Following the period of liberation, mortality continued to decline to a low of 19 per 1,000 in 1950.

Mortality figures for the war years (1950-1953) are extremely incomplete. Indirect estimation procedures were heavily influenced by inaccuracies plaguing the censuses of 1949 and 1955, including serious undercounting and age misreporting.⁴ Nonetheless, according to death statistics compiled by the Office of Information, Republic of Korea (ROK) and the United Nations Forces, South Korean war deaths included 373,599 civilians and 29,294 ROK military personnel.⁵ An additional 150,133 South Koreans were reported "kidnapped or captured," and 408,884 were listed as "missing or prisoner of war."

The quality of the data in these reports is suspect, owing to unspecified compilation procedures. As noted by Kwon, assuming the category of "missing" to be comprised equally of South Koreans who had died, those who had migrated to North Korea, and those still living in South Korea, the number of war deaths increased to 540,000 and the number of migrants to North Korea increased to 290,000, bringing the total war-related decrease to 830,000.⁶ Underreporting of war deaths and inadequate death-registration systems following the war render this estimate less than half of reported war-related losses, which are likely to have been between 1.5 and 2 million.⁷

Kwon estimates the crude death rate for the war years to be between 36 and 47 per 1,000 population - a rate that only slightly exceeds the crude birth rate of the same period.⁸ The population of South Korea, then, had no appreciable natural growth, and may have actually experienced natural decrease between 1950 and 1953. If Kwon's estimates are accurate, the death rate during the Korean War was nearly twice that of the five years immediately preceding the war.⁹

The rise in mortality during the war strongly affected both the age and sex composition of the South Korean population, because war casualties included disproportionately high numbers of males between the ages of 20 and 34. In 1949, the sex ratio of the 20-34 age group was 101.1. The reported sex ratio of the same cohort had dropped to 80.5 by 1955. The ratio would have been much lower had North Korean refugee migrants - who were disproportionately male - not been included in the 1955 census.¹⁰

The marital status composition of the South Korean population was also affected by the rise in mortality during the war. Immediately prior to the war, the proportion of ever-married women between the ages of 15 and 49 listed as "currently widowed" was less than six percent. In 1955, the proportion for the corresponding age group had risen to 9.5 percent. Because remarriage historically has not been common among Korean women, particularly before 1960, the war had long-lasting effects on marital status composition and family structures in South Korea."

Migration. The migration of North Korean refugees to ROK was among the major migration streams caused by the war, as were the forced and voluntary migrations of South Koreans to North Korea, the movement of South Korean refugees from combat zones to southern provinces, and the subsequent return migration after the war.¹²

During the war, an estimated 646,000 North Korean refugees moved to South Korea, mostly during the two-month period between December 1950 and January 1951, immediately preceding the Chinese intervention and the retreat of United Nations forces from North Korean

territory.¹³ The estimated gender ratio of North Korean refugee migrants was about 121, suggesting considerable migration of entire refugee families.¹⁴

As reported in the census of 1955, about half of the North Korean refugees resided in the provinces of Kyonggi and Kangwon, while about 21 percent inhabited Kyongnam province. Thirteen percent of the refugees lived in Seoul, with the remaining refugees dispersed among all other provinces. The concentration of refugees in Kyonggi and Kangwon was largely due to the immigration of North Korean residents from the northern parts of those provinces and in the Whanghae province, which became part of North Korea at the end of the war. Additionally, the initial settlement of North Korean refugees was heavily concentrated in urban areas. In the 1955 census, about 47.9 percent of North Korean refugees lived in urban areas, compared with 24.4 percent of the total population.¹⁵ Combined with their residential concentration in large metropolitan areas, their occupational concentration in business and trade sectors led the North Korean refugees to become highly visible during the post-war period.¹⁶

Internal migration within South Korea occurred on a large scale during the war in addition to migration streams between North and South Korea. According to Kwon, Korean wartime migration entailed: 1) an exodus from Seoul, Kangwon, and other front areas, 2) heavy migration from North to South, concentrated in southern cities, 3) movement in the northern provinces from urban to rural areas, 4) heavy refugee migration into Kyongnam, and 5) urban concentration of refugees in the South.¹⁷ Most internal migrants who fled to rural areas during the war returned to their urban places of origin at the close of the conflict, with the exception of migrants to Pusan, Taegu, and other southern cities, who took longer to return and resettle.¹⁸

In both scale and effect, the Korean War refugee movement was perhaps the most significant redistribution of population in Korean history. First, wartime migration consisted mainly of either "impelled flight" or "forced displacement," nearly destroying the economic, social, and psychological bases of refugee families.¹⁹ A substantial proportion of these losses was unrecoverable, and had profound effects on the life course of Korean families.²⁰ Second, interactions among the refugees themselves and with the residents of their host cities were made difficult by the massive and sudden influx of war refugees into a limited number of cities that had not experienced North Korean military invasion.²¹ Strained living arrangements combined with economic hardship and uneasy inter-group relations produced strongly antagonistic in-group/out-group attitudes.²² The widespread redistribution of population exacerbated regional prejudice,

stereotyping, and regionalism in general. The actions and behavioral styles of the North Korean Army and refugees led to negative regional sentiments manifested in such epithets as "pyungando chidul" - commoners from Pyungan - and "hamkyungdo abai" - guys from Hamkyung province. Additionally, the devastating effects of the war on economic, social, and industrial infrastructures served to heighten existing regional disparities in socioeconomic development.²³ I will discuss these effects further in a latter section.

A third effect of refugee migration during the war was that the large-scale settlement of North Korean refugees in urban areas and the intraprovincial rural-urban migration streams that developed in the southern provinces were turning points in the urbanization and modernization of South Korea. The wartime population movement led to extreme disjunctures in network interactions, due to massive displacement, settlement and resettlement.²⁴ The movement of migrants of rural origin into large cities required a fundamental shift from traditional life orientations and interpersonal behavior. Interpersonal relationships in rural Korea had traditionally been based on the direct, face-to-face interactions of primary groups, while urban environments encouraged differentiation and individuation based on membership in impersonal and casual "secondary groups."²⁵ The modernization of South Korea would most likely have accelerated in the 1950s, even in the absence of the war, but the process was intensified by the population redistribution during and after the war.²⁶

Fourth, the flight of the rural poor into urban areas represented more than a pattern of spatial movement; it had profound effects on the Korean system of stratification, traditionally based on Confucian order and agrarian economic models. Displaced war refugees and poor migrants of rural origin initially settling, for the most part, in shantytowns or the slums of large cities gave rise to an urban underclass, which eventually became institutionalized into the stratification structure. Although a "petty bourgeoisie" had existed even before the war, its emergence as a bona fide social class category coincided with the rapid expansion of urban centers following the war.²⁷ The war distorted the relationship of individuals and families to the economic system because of the breakdown of economic establishments and the consequent softening of prewar social class structures. The rapid urbanization process created new dimensions in social stratification systems in post-war Korea.²⁸

Fertility. In addition to its impact on mortality and migration, the Korean War substantially affected fertility levels between 1950 and 1953. During this time, the number of live births declined by about 15 percent from the preceding five years. The lowest wartime fertility was

government bureaucracy and its attendant network of police, security, and tax agencies.³⁸

According to Koo, Japanese colonialism simultaneously produced a strong state and a contentious society.³⁹ The dismantling of the *yangban* status system by the colonial government represented a fundamental shift in state-society relations; a complex bureaucratic state now took precedence over rigid social order. The oppressive colonial regime further separated state and society by giving rise to powerful anti-Japanese sentiment among the people of Korea. The coercive power exercised by the colonial governments, and their introduction of institutions designed to maintain a strong state, produced a restless and reactive society poised to redress the injustices of the past. Colonial rule also galvanized Korean nationalism into a powerful and articulate ideology.⁴⁰

The 1945 liberation from Japanese colonial rule saw the advent of a wide array of organizations oriented to political activities as well as concerns of labor, peasants, students, youth, women, religion, and culture. These organizations actively promoted agendas and policies designed to shape the emerging state. According to Choi, regardless of communist or conservative orientation, the nationalist leaders of the post-liberation period were united in their quest to establish Korea as an independent nation-state purged of all traces of colonial rule.⁴¹

The unified political environment was soon to be polarized, ironically, due to the interventions of the United States and the Soviet Union and their subsequent rivalry. In its support of the Syngman Rhee regime, the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) effectively undercut the effects of liberation by restoring to power those who had collaborated with the colonial forces. Relief from colonial coercion was brief, alienating civil society from the state, which itself lost legitimacy.⁴² A strong state quickly emerged in the North with the establishment of communist systems of politics and administration, aided by the Soviet Union. By September of 1948, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had been established as a strong satellite communist state, under the leadership of Kim Il Sung.⁴³

The post-liberation activities of citizens' organizations motivated USAMGIK to develop strategies to cultivate conservative, reactionary, and anticommunist orientations. Due to the lack of popular ideological consensus, the weak Syngman Rhee regime was plagued by bureaucratic inefficiency, corruption, and factional strife. Vestiges of conflict between the conservatively oriented state and progressively oriented elements of society were evident in the Cheju Island Rebellion of April 3, 1948, and in the Yosu-Sunchon Rebellion of October 19-27, 1948. These rebellions also brought to light many problems associated

name of national security and anticommunist sentiment.⁵⁰ The experience of the war, division of the country, and the constant exploitation of military threats and ideological confrontations by the state had enduring effects on the daily lives of individual South Koreans. This sociopolitical environment fostered the re-emergence of a strong state-weak society relationship.⁵¹

Following Rhee, successive authoritarian military regimes effectively utilized their coercive power, thus maintaining a strong state-weak society relationship throughout the 1980s. As noted by Koo, Park Chung Hee viewed economic growth as a means of establishing the political legitimacy of his regime.⁵² The developmental state mobilized all available resources to promote economic development: state initiative, free trade, state-business nexus, human capital formation, international product cycle, the abundant labor supply, and the Confucian work ethic.⁵³ The successive military regimes exhausted their public budgets on industrial development programs, and they therefore had to minimize "state programs for protecting and improving the everyday lives of ordinary citizens."⁵⁴ Furthermore, the authoritarian administrations consistently supported the *chaebol* groups in disputes with the labor unions. The military regimes sought to control labor in the interest of international competitiveness and — up until the end of the Chun Doo Hwan regime — the military-c/we&o/ alliance was politically invincible.⁵⁵ The leaders of the developmental state openly advocated such an ideology as "growth first, distribution later," and the South Korean government allocated its government expenditure to social security and welfare far less than those of other developing nations at similar levels of development.⁵⁶ Hence, a strong state-weak society relationship was an important cause of underdevelopment in Korean social security programs.

Militarization of Society

As indicated earlier, at the time of the outbreak of the Korean War on June 25, 1950, the total size of the Republic of Korea (ROK) military forces was 120,000. These forces were neither well-equipped nor well-trained.⁵⁷ The conflict itself led to important changes in their size, organizational structure, and capabilities. One major source of the drastic increase in the size of the Korean military was the institution of a draft applicable to all males. The consistent flow of draftees allowed for the maintenance of approximately 650,000 active duty personnel.⁵⁸ Extensive support from the United States also undergirded the ROK military, eventually making it the most well-supported, Americanized institution in Korean society following the Korean War.

Rapid military expansion both during and following the war

strategically adopted a policy of recruiting retired generals for high positions in government and in government-subsidized corporations, thus accelerating the militarization of the public sector. At the same time, high-ranking military personnel came to expect opportunities to pursue second careers after their terms of service. Many high government officials of the Park regime were retired generals. Because of their greater debt to the military and their extreme need to maintain favorable ties with the military, Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo relied even more heavily on the military and retired generals to fill high positions. The militarization of society therefore became institutionalized, and the continued recruitment of former military officers into influential positions allowed the trend to persist.

The division of the Korean peninsula following liberation from Japanese colonial rule preordained a role for the military, particularly in South Korean politics. Because of the relatively low status of the military in traditional Korean social structures, the coalescence of the military elite into a formidable power group would have been much less likely had the Korean War not occurred. The Korean War and subsequent cold war politics of the Rhee and Park regimes allowed the military elite to emerge as bona fide members of the upper class. This change essentially reconfigured the composition of the ruling class in the traditional Korean system of stratification. According to one popular joke, a master's degree is better than a bachelor's degree, a doctorate is better than master's degree, and a KMA degree is even better than a doctorate ("Haksa wie seoksa, seoksa wie baksa, baksa wie yuksa!").

The wartime military expansion combined with the sustained military strength and presence in the post-war era had many significant effects on the social structure. First, despite its less attractive features, military service offered those with little education the opportunity to obtain basic skills needed to compete in a rapidly changing social environment. The draft system instituted at the outset of the war required all young men to serve at least two years in the military. The years of service came to be regarded as a period of orientation before entering the "real world," particularly for young men of rural origin. Military service exposed young men to organizational life and provided useful vocational training that could later be used in civilian occupations.

Second, mandatory military service indoctrinated young men into a "military culture." Because it occurred during the time of life when worldviews are still in formation, this influence extended into civilian life well after military service was completed. For example, many military concepts, jargon, and expressions have found their way into

strategies as personal networking and bribery.⁶⁵ The "rush-to-growth" orientation of the successive military regimes therefore resulted in corruption and created a "risk society."⁶⁶

American Images and Influences

Substantial anti-USAMGIK and anti-American sentiment was evident even before the eruption of the Korean War. Many Korean nationalists opposed the occupation of the Korean peninsula by Soviet and United States military forces following World War II. They were adamantly against USAMGIK policies, particularly with regard to the recruitment of former collaborators of the Japanese colonial regime into high administrative, judicial, and police positions. Preferring socialist or neutral political orientations, Korean nationalists particularly resented the United States support of Syngman Rhee in his quest for the presidency and control of political power. The American image deteriorated further as citizens came to blame the United States for installing an unpopular and increasingly authoritarian president.

Had the Korean War not occurred, and had the United States not involved its troops in the conflict, the extent of the American influence on Korea would have been much less than it has been. The direct participation of the American forces in the war, its continued military assistance and presence after the war, and substantial economic aid dispelled concerns over the necessity and desirability of close United States-Korea relations. The Korean War was, in fact, a watershed in Korean history that saw the emergence of considerable American influence on political, economic, social, and cultural structures. First, due to extensive military assistance, the armed forces of South Korea came to reflect the United States military system. The military also became an important vehicle through which American influences permeated Korean society. Since the war, many Korean military officers have taken training in various American institutions of military education. The organizational and administrative structures of the Korean military have been nearly identical to those in the United States, and most Korean military equipment and weapon systems have been made in the United States. The emergence of the military elite as political and corporate leaders contributed to the persistence of American influence, because the United States had a much more profound effect on the military than on civilian sectors. The American influence on the military created a dualism, in that the ethos of the Korean military leadership remained very much Korean or Japanese, while new organizational structures and weapon systems were decidedly American.

A second major source of United States influence on Korean social

were stationed in Korea - more than in any other country, with the exception of Germany and Japan.⁶⁹ The war and the persistent U.S. military presence have created favorable economic and social conditions for intermarriage between Korean women and American soldiers.⁷⁰ As discussed earlier, many young Korean males lost their lives during the war, and the economy was severely disrupted. As a result of the war, many young women were forced to assume responsibility for supporting their families, as traditional sources of income had virtually disappeared. In many locales, military installations were the only source of employment for local residents. Jobs catering to military personnel - both on and off bases - brought young Korean females into contact with American soldiers to an extent that would have been unthinkable under traditional Korean norms.⁷¹ Many young Korean women met their future spouses either through their own work experiences or through introductions by friends working with or for American soldiers.⁷²

Many of the women employed on or near military bases came from poor farm families or from low-income urban families, and many had lost their parents to the war. Following the war, few options existed for women who had neither wealth nor family support. Most of the jobs available to these women paid extremely low wages. Although involving no social stigma, employment as a servant, sweat-shop laborer, or service worker in such places as a bar, restaurant, and boarding house were regarded as little better than slavery.⁷³ One alternative to such unattractive employment was to work in "GI towns." Under other circumstances, this option would have been likely to arouse the contempt and suspicion of family and community members, but this did not pose a serious problem to impoverished or poorly educated young women in need of income.⁷⁴

Compared with other employment opportunities, jobs in GI towns offered a number of advantages. In particular, they brought women into contact with American currency, products, and tax-free merchandise from Post Exchanges - as well as soldiers who were more than willing to provide such treasures. These soldiers were quite attractive to young, unmarried Korean women as potential mates, particularly because they asked few questions about their family backgrounds. Because they were already subject to the suspicion and stigma attached to working around GI towns, women who chose to date American servicemen had little chance of returning to normal and accepted status in the community.⁷⁵

While the young Korean women viewed American soldiers as potential marriage partners, the soldiers tended to view the women in sexual terms. Because most troops were stationed in "combat zones,"

their families could not accompany them. Unmarried soldiers, or those in strained marriages, soon found the polite, compliant, young, and exotic Korean women to be quite attractive, and the marriage and subsequent emigration of such women became quite common. Between 1941 and 1980, a total of 45,551 Korean women were admitted to the United States as the wives of U.S. citizens. An additional 8,178 Koreans were admitted between 1971 and 1980 as "spouse-to-be" under the Act of April 7, 1970.⁷⁶

As discussed above, the United States military presence in Korea during and following the war had far-reaching effects on the social, political, and cultural landscape of Korea. Intermarriage between American soldiers and Korean women has also made unique and important contributions to the Korean-American community. At least one fourth of all Korean immigrants to the United States since 1950 have been relatives invited by interracial married Korean women. Because educational opportunities for Korean women have improved over time, younger cohorts of these interracial married women tend to be more highly educated than older cohorts. The changes in race and ethnic composition of the U.S. military personnel since the 1970s also impacted the race and ethnicity of the spouses of the interracial married Korean women. The proportion of the women married to African and Hispanic Americans among younger cohorts is substantially greater than that among older cohorts.

The Separation of Families

On June 14, 2000, during the South-North Summit Meeting in Pyongyang, the leaders of the two Koreas signed a five-point agreement. According to the *The Korea Herald* of June 15, 2000, included in the accord is: "The South and the North have agreed to exchange visits of separated families and relatives around August 15 and promptly tackle humanitarian issues, including the issue involving long-term Communist prisoners (in the South) who refuse to renounce their ideology." It has been pointed out in *The Washington Post* of June 14, 2000, that the five-point agreement "appeared to be mostly general and vague." However, the agreement on the exchange visits of divided families is most definitive in that it even stipulates the starting date.

The reunification of families separated by war was the most important justification for the unification of the two Koreas according to 42.2 percent of respondents to one survey conducted in May of 2000 by a daily newspaper.⁷⁷ Family reunification was considered more important than mitigating the possibility of another war, the establishment of Korea as an economic power, improvements in the quality of life, or even the opportunity to extend freedom and human

rights to the citizens of North Korea.⁷⁸

"Separated families" are family members whose kin are lost or dispersed due to the war: in this context, family members include parents, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents, grandchildren, and first cousins.⁷⁹ Estimates on the number of divided families vary substantially. According to the Korean Red Cross, nearly 10 million Korean families experienced separation.⁸⁰ Data compiled by the Ministry of Unification show that about 7,667,000 families were divided.⁸¹ In 1977, Kwon estimated about 650,000 divided families, while the Association of North Korean Provinces estimated 1,643,000 in 1981.⁸² The variance in the estimates is primarily due to differences in the treatment of South Korean-born children and grandchildren of North Korean refugees. In any case, during the Korean War, more than one million North Koreans sought refuge in the South, and many had left their spouses, children, parents, siblings, or other close relatives behind.⁸³ Most of these refugees had migrated with the hope of returning to their homes immediately after the war.⁸⁴ Their separation would ultimately last over 50 years and continues to the present day; it is so complete that family members are forbidden to write, call, or visit one other. The problem of separated families in the Korean peninsula is perhaps the most tragic family situation in the history of the world, both in terms of the number of families and the duration of the separation.

The Ministry of Unification handles requests from citizens to locate separated family members in North Korea. Its statistics show a sharp increase in the number of requests over the last two years. More specifically, 801 requests were filed for the month of May 2000, while there were only 54 applications for May 1999.⁸⁵ Since 1990, information on the whereabouts of 2,068 separated family members has been obtained; 5,650 cases involved exchanges of letters with family members and 525 reunions with family members in a third country ~ primarily China. Only seven cases were actual reunions with family members in North Korea.⁸⁶

It should be noted that the dialogue between the two Koreas concerning the reunion of separated families began in 1971. In September of 1985, the two countries arranged for an exchange visit of 151 "hometown visitors and performing artist groups" between Seoul and Pyongyang.⁸⁷ North Korea proposed a second exchange visit in May of 1989, but it did not materialize, due to North Korean insistence on a program that included showing South Korean visitors an opera with a revolutionary theme.⁸⁸ At a government-level meeting between the South and North held in Beijing in April of 1998, South Korea proposed to establish a reunion center for separated families and

simultaneously to supply fertilizer to North Korea. Once again, North Korea insisted that the shipment of fertilizer precede the establishment of the reunion center, and thus no progress was made on the issue. On December 14, 1998, the National Assembly of South Korea passed a resolution calling for the confirmation of status and reunion of living members of divided families. In view of the history of the negotiations on the issue, the June 14, 2000, agreement to allow exchange visits of divided families is a long-awaited and much welcomed outcome. It is not clear at this time how many divided families will be allowed to visit North Korea for reunions under the program, or whether it will be a one-time or continuing arrangement.

The war-related separation of families had significant effects on several different dimensions of the family life. First, the involuntary separation left deep psychological scars on millions of Koreans. Longing for family members left behind in North Korea and anxiety about their whereabouts and well-being produced *han* among many affected families. In the context of the war, *han* refers to suppressed emotional suffering due to sorrow, grief, anxiety, guilt, fear, and deprivation caused by the separation of immediate family members and loved ones.⁸⁹ The psychological and emotional wounds with which separated families have had to cope over the past 50 years serve as constant reminders of the tragedies of war.

Secondly, the involuntary separation of husbands and wives and the war-related deaths of spouses led to serious adjustments in traditional norms concerning marriage, remarriage, and chastity. As the macro-level separation of the two Koreas and the micro-level separation of families became permanent, those with interrupted marital relationships were forced to make decisions about remarriage, which up until then had been regarded as unacceptable. Changes in marriage and remarriage norms occurred through the realities of separated families and those widowed by war. Men and women remarried at different rates. Males whose wives were left behind in North Korea were more likely to remarry than were females whose husbands were kidnapped by the North Korean military, and this pattern of sex differentials had important economic and financial implications for surviving spouses. Wives who lost their husbands to death or involuntary separation were forced to enter the labor market in order to provide financial support for their families.⁹⁰ Many war widows opened small restaurants, "tea rooms" and coffee shops, and retail fabric and clothing stores; many worked as hostesses of bars and restaurants, peddlers, money changers, and maids. The financial distress left by the war served to remove some of the barriers that had traditionally discouraged women from entering the labor force.⁹¹

Thirdly, the traumatic experience of the Korean War in general and the emotional distress of separation increased the importance of religion among the Korean people to its highest level since the beginning of the 20th century. Although Koreans had traditionally been a religious people, the Korean War was a turning point at which Christianity gained wider acceptance, and the churches emerged as a bona fide institution.⁹² Humanitarian aid programs organized and spearheaded by American churches and other charity groups during and following the war gave Christianity a favorable overall reputation among Koreans.⁹³ Furthermore, many North Korean refugees already professed the Protestant faith before their migration, and their numbers included many ordained ministers. The chaotic expansion of the reformed churches following the war saw the emergence of various Protestant sects and schisms, along with political and regional factions with the denominations.⁹⁴

Introduction of American Culture Through U.S. Military Bases and Troops

As indicated earlier, the United States has maintained a considerable military presence in Korea over the past 50 years. Many troops have been stationed near the demilitarized zone around the Uijongbu, Tongduchon, and Moonsan areas, with support units located in Seoul (Youngsan), Chunchon, Osan, Koonsan, Wonju, Taegu, Pusan, and other areas. Various types of businesses, including shops, bars, saloons, and restaurants were established around each of the U.S. military installations. U.S. military bases provided employment for local residents, and the money spent by U.S. soldiers contributed a healthy proportion of the local economy. *Kijichon* (military base towns) manifested a unique subculture, with their Western-style buildings, English signs, shops with American names and services, entertainment, and sex-oriented business establishments catering primarily to U.S. military personnel. Due to necessity and to the nature of their employment and businesses, Koreans working in and around *kijichon* tend to have a better command of the English language than do other Koreans with comparable educational attainments. They are also more attuned to fashion styles of American soldiers and tend to emulate them more readily than the rest of Korean society. Because of the proliferation of bars, saloons, and brothels in GI towns, illegal drugs are more readily available there than in other places. The black market for PX goods and the exchange of U.S. dollars into Korean currencies have become essential parts of the business lives of military towns.

In addition to the influence of American troops and businesses surrounding military bases, U.S. military radio and television, the

Armed Forces Korea Network (AFKN), became an important source of American influence on Korean society. Although intended to serve U.S. troops stationed in Korea, many college students and young adults listen and watch the programs of the AFKN radio and television stations. During the 1950s and 1960s, as Korean radio and television broadcasting systems were still in their developmental stages, the popular programs produced by major U.S. television networks and broadcast via AFKN stations attracted large numbers of college-educated listeners. Ironically, sensitive information about domestic political and military developments - which might have been censored by the authoritarian military regimes - was contained in news broadcasts aired over AFKN channels. AFKN radio and television channels were instrumental in disseminating American popular culture - especially music - to Koreans. Had AFKN radio and television stations not been available, Koreans would likely have received much less exposure to the American popular music of the 1950s and 1960s.

Entertainment programs designed for American troops were another source of the infusion of U.S. popular culture in Korea. The administration of the Eighth U.S. Army contracted with several Korean entertainment companies to stage variety shows on U.S. military bases. The programs, later dubbed the "Eighth Army Show," included American popular songs sung by Korean singers, music by Korean bands, dancing by "show girls," and stand-up comedy routines. Talented but hungry Korean musicians would learn American popular songs and would then entertain U.S. military personnel stationed at various camps in Korea. Many popular singers and instrumentalists of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s began their careers in the "Eighth Army Show."⁹⁵ The show's effects spilled over into mainstream Korean society, as its singers and entertainers began to perform for larger audiences through radio, television, and live stage shows. Because the experience they had gained by entertaining American soldiers left them fairly well trained, and their repertoires were very current, these musicians emerged as stars in the Korean popular music industry, starting early in the 1960s. Thus, AFKN, the "Eighth Army Show," and its musicians were key players in introducing American popular music to Korean audiences and infusing American flavor and traditions into the development of Korean popular music later on.⁹⁶

The War and Regional Inequality

The North Korean troops had occupied Seoul within three days of the outbreak of the Korean War, and they had captured all but the Pusan Perimeter - the small southeastern tip of the peninsula extending from the Naktong River to the city of Pusan.⁹⁷ United States troops joined

with the military forces of other countries to eject the North Korean troops from South Korea and then advanced to the Yalu River by September 1950. In October 1950, the People's Republic of China intervened and Seoul fell once again into communist hands on January 4, 1951.⁹⁸ United Nations forces reclaimed Seoul on March 12, 1951, and reached a stalemate roughly along the 38th parallel. The armistice truce agreement was reached on July 27, 1951.

As indicated earlier, the economic structures of both North and South Korea had been devastated by the three years of the Korean War. Property losses in South Korea amounted to approximately \$2 billion - the equivalent of its gross national product for 1949 — to nearly half of its industrial capacity, and a third of its housing was destroyed.⁹⁹ About 41 percent of South Korean power plants sustained damage, as did about 61 percent of railway locomotives, 69 percent of passenger coaches, and 57 percent of freight cars. Nearly half of all train stations and workshop facilities were destroyed.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, more than 70 percent of elementary school classrooms were damaged or destroyed during the war.¹⁰¹

The extent of damage was substantially greater in the Seoul, Kyonggi, and Kangwon areas than in other regions. Because most of the Youngnam region avoided the invasion of DPRK troops, the industrial establishments of the Kyoungbuk and Kyongnam provinces survived the war without damage. In fact, by the end of the Korean War the industrial and economic establishments in the Youngnam area were the only ones intact. These facilities had a considerable advantage in the post-war recovery efforts, because investments in these concerns yielded faster returns than did investments pouring into war-ravaged facilities. In particular, the "three white industries" (sugar, flour, and cotton), which expanded rapidly during the immediate post-war period, flourished initially by using the existing facilities of the Youngnam area.¹⁰²

Concentrated post-war investment in the surviving facilities of the Youngnam region exacerbated existing regional inequality within economic structures.¹⁰³ Regional disparities have historically been apparent, particularly between the Youngnam and Honam regions, throughout the colonial period due to the Japanese policy of developing the Honam as a primary supplier of agricultural products, while the Youngnam was designated for industrial development.

At least temporarily, the "haves" sustained greater losses from the Korean War than did the "have nots," thus reducing interclass inequality in terms of economic wealth. While on one hand, the Korean War reduced the extent of economic inequality by destroying the economic bases of all people, on the other hand, regional variations in

war damage intensified the potential for increasing inequality between Youngnam and Honam. Historical incidents and developments were not favorable to the Honam region. General Park Chung Hee, who became an authoritarian president, spearheaded state-led economic development and industrialization initiatives that concentrated investment into the heavy and petrochemical industrial sites in his home province, Kyungbuk region. Arguably, the Honam region suffered double jeopardy: the invasion of the DPRK troops and war-related destruction combined with the regionally biased economic development policies of Park Chung Hee.

Discussion

This paper has examined the various effects of the Korean War on the social structures of the Korean society. The demographic consequences of the war were analyzed from the perspective of each of the major demographic processes: fertility, mortality, and migration. The Korean War was indeed the most destructive in the history of wars in terms of the proportion of the total population involved and the extent of war-related mortality and displacement of the population. The division of the Korean peninsula and separation of families caused by the war and division have had irreversible effects on the Korean psyche and family life over the past 50 years. The South-North Korean summit meeting in Pyongyang on June 13-15, 2000, and the subsequent exchanges of visits by separated families (albeit only about 100 families on each side were involved each time) were truly welcome developments in inter-Korean relations. In view of the urgency of reunions of the families, due to old age of those members of separated families, it is essential for the two governments to develop a much more expanded program in the future.

With regard to the political consequences of the Korean War, the war was an important turning point in the Korean political development especially in terms of state-society relations. The Syngman Rhee administration and subsequent authoritarian regimes maximized the division and concomitant ideological confrontations in solidifying their political power structures by mobilizing legislative, judicial, administrative, security, intelligence, and military organizations and their programs. The military became one of the most powerful institutions as a byproduct of the war and division of the country, and the military elite possessed the necessary organizational leadership experience and network structures, more so than any other institution or group, including the political parties, which made it possible for them to emerge as power elite during the period 1962-1992. The military ethos and subcultures have had profound effects on the norms

and values of the larger society through the continuing draft system and the mandatory military service of all young adult males.

The war and subsequent division of the peninsula have enabled the authoritarian regimes to utilize the National Security Laws and Anti-Communist Laws as effective vehicles in controlling any movements against the regimes. It is interesting to note that the civilian governments of Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung have not yet shown any serious interests in modifying any aspects of the existing National Security Laws and Anti-Communist Laws. Some liberal members of the government party have expressed a desire to amend some portions of the security and assembly related laws in recent years. Furthermore, the North Koreans have addressed their concerns about the National Security Laws as possible stumbling blocks for the improvement of inter-Korean relations. Nevertheless, the political mood of South Korea is not at the point where such abolishment of the National Security Laws would likely be supported by the general population. It would be reasonable to argue that the Korean War was also an important historical juncture where Korea and the United States started a close and long-standing bilateral relationship in terms of military, political, and trade relations. Obviously, the war did not give Korea much choice with regard to the establishment of close international relations with other superpowers. Furthermore, in view of the history of relations between Korea and Japan and ties between China and North Korea, the development of Korean-United States relations was a rather natural outcome. In any case, close ties with the United States and the continuing presence of the American military troops in Korea have influenced the cultural, educational, and social characteristics of Korean society over the past 50 years. The Kim Dae Jung administration has shown some new and balanced directions in terms of developing closer ties with China and Japan than the previous regimes. Furthermore, some younger cohorts have demanded that terms of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) be amended to the extent that the Korean courts would have the same extent of judicial jurisdiction as the Japanese and German courts in handling the legal cases of American troops in Korea. On the whole, Korean-U.S. relations are solid, as the two countries have developed a partnership in a true sense over the years, and the American influence on Korean affairs will remain substantial in the years to come.



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