

# Forgotten war, forgotten massacres—the Korean War (1950–1953) as licensed mass killings

DONG CHOON KIM

## Prologue

In 1999, the Associated Press (AP) revealed the existence of startling documents about the Korean War showing that United States troops had killed hundreds of civilian refugees in the early stages of the Korean War at No Gun Ri, a small town in South Korea. However, this news was neither “new” nor astonishing to the Korean survivors of the mass killings who had long pleaded with the Korean government to investigate the truth and to settle their painful grievances. For the survivors, this “revelation” merely confirmed a widely known story to which Westerners had until now paid little heed. The AP’s report forced the US government for the first time to inquire into the alleged mass killings committed by US forces during the Korean War. After a one-year joint investigation by US and South Korean officials on the No Gun Ri incident, a report acknowledging that American soldiers did shoot unarmed Korean civilians in July 1950 was released. Asked about the circumstances under which the US soldiers shot the civilians at No Gun Ri, however, the Pentagon said it found “no information that the First Cavalry Division was in that area.”<sup>1</sup> Later, the US government officially ascribed the shooting only to the “confusion of combat,” denying the existence of written orders directing the American soldiers to engage in the shooting of civilians at No Gun Ri.<sup>2</sup> Though President Clinton expressed regret in January 2000 for the death of the Korean refugees shot by American soldiers, no further investigations were made.

The No Gun Ri incident, however, may be the tip of the iceberg in regards to the matter of mass killings committed by US and South Korean troops during the Korean War. More than sixty cases of mass killing committed by US troops, by shooting, bombing, strafing or other means, have already been revealed in the aftermath of the news of No Gun Ri incident.<sup>3</sup> However, what may be more unknown are the mass killings committed by Koreans against other Koreans in the early days of the war. Under the aegis of removing “traitors,” whose threat

imperiled the very survival of the state, the Republic of Korea's (ROK) Rhee Syngman government ordered the execution of hundreds of thousands potential collaborators. Even though these stories have been officially left untold to this day, both the US troops' indiscriminate shooting of Korean civilian refugees and the illegal executions by Rhee's government have been "open secrets" among at least some Koreans since the end of the Korean War.

The Korean War may be one of the bloodiest wars of modern history; it resulted in several million deaths and several times that number of wounded and maimed. Despite such violent fighting and enormous casualties, the Korean War, and especially the aspect of mass killings, has remained a "forgotten war," not only to Westerners but also to many Koreans themselves. From the end of World War II to the present, almost no war has had so little attention paid to it by the world public as a whole. Due to its characterization by American political leaders as "an anti-communist crusade," "police action" and "war between good and evil," the bloody stories have been squelched during the last fifty year's Cold War period. As McCarthyism and the Korean War occurred at the same moment in time and played off against each other in a mutually reinforcing manner,<sup>4</sup> North Korea's "illegitimate" invasion" fostered a war time anticommunism that served to justify any methods that the US and South Korean army employed to oppose it. This is why existing books or articles dealing with massacres or genocides have never included the cases of the Korean War. Except for a few Western scholars who dared to mention the misconduct of American soldiers and the brutality of the ROK army, only a small number of scholars or reporters have ever raised the issue of "criminal" actions of the US and ROK army.<sup>5</sup>

Though thorough and comprehensive investigations on the Korean War massacres have not yet been conducted, existing records or testimonies of the survivors of the mass killings can demonstrate what the "forgotten war" was really about, because the manner in which a war was conducted may, in some sense, be more crucial to comprehending the nature of that war than the matter of who fired first. Moreover, the revelation of hidden stories of mass killings during the Korean War may help conclusively demonstrate the character of the US's anticommunist military interventions in the Third World and clarify what the US really did in attempting to "make the world free." The genocides or massacres are often committed simultaneously or in parallel with state-organized modern war. But it would be difficult to put the line between the "licensed killing" and "unjust killings" during a war. Especially in cases where warfare extended to cover an entire country, distinctions between soldiers and civilians may be blurred and war would bring mass deaths.<sup>6</sup> Theoretically or legally, it would be difficult to justify a war having massacre as a main component, a highly politicized war like the Korean War may be a typical case. For this reason, reviewing the mass killings during the Korean War would be instructive for clarifying the existing concept of massacre and the comparative study about the wartime mass killings or political massacres (policide) during conventional war or warlike situations.<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, most of the records of the Korean War atrocities, if any exist, have either been lost or deliberately destroyed over the course of the long Cold

War, just as those of other cases have been. Moreover, the majority of Korean War documents have not yet been released. Most victims and eyewitnesses to the massacres have already died. In spite of these difficulties, I will attempt to reconstruct the untold story of the Korean War massacres by using recently disclosed materials about it and testimonies of Korean survivors. Even though most of the nightmarish stories have not yet reached Westerners, South Koreans, many of whom have been forced to keep silent for more than half century, are now raising their voices about their traumatic experiences.

### **The political character of the Korean War—contextual considerations**

#### *The Korean War both as internal conflict and international war*

Since the Korean peninsula still remains divided and the two Koreas stand antagonistic to one another, the Korean War may be seen as an ongoing situation rather than as a past incident. This ongoing antagonism may be the primary obstacle for the two Koreas to overcome in reaching a common ground in their historical characterizations of the Korean War. Among the opposing viewpoints that have hindered dialogue between the two Koreas, one of the abiding questions of foremost importance is “who initiated the war and who is responsible for the tragedy and the sufferings caused by the war?” Traditionalists or neo-traditionalists among US historians have generally maintained that North Korea, under Stalin’s sponsorship, attacked the South first. In particular, new information from post-Soviet Russia bolstered the theory of Moscow-centered conspiracies as the catalyst for North Korea’s invasion of the South. As these viewpoints have been regarded as heavily imbued with a Cold War worldview, they intended tacitly to both demand that the communist bloc assume responsibility for every tragedy caused by the Korean War and also to justify American involvement in a “just war.” On the other hand, Western revisionist scholars focused on American responsibility and the internal origin of the Korean War.<sup>8</sup> Among them, John Merrill and Bruce Cumings were the first to focus on the political character of the Korean War, uncovering documents attesting to atrocities that occurred both before and during the war.

As it is said that the Korean War originated from the combination of the external clash of American and Soviet policy towards East-Asia and the internal conflicts in the Korean peninsula, it is undeniable that America’s foreign policy after World War II played a decisive role in shaping the regional politics of East-Asia. On the Korean peninsula, the question of who would disarm the Japanese imperial troops was a pivotal issue that was connected to the future of an independent Korea after the collapse of Japanese imperialism. Thus, the US and Soviet Union’s separate disarming of the Japanese troops according to their position above or below the 38th parallel was the de facto beginning of the Korean War. In this respect, the Korean War might be interpreted as the logical extension of US and Soviet occupation policy. Had US and Soviet troops not entered the Korean peninsula and

not picked preferential leaders, the post-colonial civil conflict over nation-building might not have developed into a full-scale war.

Particularly, the fact that the US military government favored the restoration of Japanese-trained military leaders and police instead of their removal ignited the political conflict in Korea after 1945. The Truman Doctrine of 1947 had inaugurated the US postwar policy that juxtaposed the “free world” against the “communist world.” His decision to aid Greece, Turkey, and later Western Europe expressed his “containment” policy against world communism. In East-Asia, this policy expressed itself in a naked counter-insurgency policy and the revival of Japanese capitalism as a “democratic basis” for containing the Soviet threat and Chinese communist “rebels.” As Johnson mentioned, South Korea was the first place in the postwar world where the Americans set up a dictatorial anticommunist government.<sup>9</sup> Like the Vietnam War, the Korean War was a result of US containment policy, even though it was ignited by the North Korean invasion. This background explains why the Korean War, though initially a sort of civil war, eventually developed into a war between the two blocs.

From another perspective however, North Korea’s invasion in June 1950 may be regarded as a final event in the sequence of post-colonial internal conflict towards the unification of Korea. With the withdrawal of American troops from 1948 to the summer of 1949, violent political conflict in southern Korea had already intensified into a bloody civil war such that it was only a matter of time before that civil war would lead to a full-scale war between South and North Korea.<sup>10</sup> As the leaders of both halves of the Korean peninsula were desperate to unite the country before 1950, the withdrawal of US forces ignited the fever of unification by any means. Considering the international and ideological context of the Korean War, it was highly probable that the war would bring massive civilian casualties. According to this reasoning, the Korean War was, first of all, supposed to be the continuation of fierce political conflict over nation building. The situation that Koreans faced after 1945 was a combination of war and revolution. It should be pointed out that the 38th parallel was more an imaginary line than a hard and fast border between states. The fact that in the South more than 100,000 Koreans were already killed from August 1945 to the outbreak of the war of June 1950 and that about 20,000 suspected communist were in jail can support this argument.<sup>11</sup> When the total war began, there had never before been a major war like the Korean War, in which battle lines were so unstable and warfare swept south and north several times within a national territory. The Korean War was doomed to be guerilla warfare, waged among and, to some extent, by the entire population of Korea. Such a war invariably led to what John Horne called “an enormous number of civilian victims.”<sup>12</sup>

As has been often discussed, the fact that Truman decided to dispatch US troops against the North Korean attack seemed to be a drastic switch from their ambiguous position before June 1950 regarding the defense of South Korea. The discourse of “police action,” which Truman dubbed at the time of dispatching the US army to strike back against North Korea’s invasion,<sup>13</sup> well conveys the rationale of US intervention in the Korean War. This rationale was also used to

preemptively legitimize the possible civilian casualties that were sure to come. The US fought under the justification that they went to Korea on a kind of anticommunist “crusade,” characterizing the North Koreans as “subversives, bandits, and rebels,” whose defeat in war would serve to stop the aggressive designs of Soviet “imperialism.” Their intervention, executed under UN auspices, was authorized as the “United command under the United States” by the UN Security Council to defend South Korea. The ROK also yielded its troops to the US controlled command. Thus, General MacArthur became Commander-in-chief of all land, sea and air forces of the Korean Republic. On June 25, 1950, American troops took charge of not only military operations but of all Korean security affairs.

The intervention of US threatened the survival of the new born Chinese communist government. After US troops reached the 39th parallel of the Korean peninsula, China also reacted, with massive force. In January 1951, the war became a Sino-US war and its nature was transformed. The armistice agreement of July 27, 1953, was finally signed by General Mark Clark, the UN commander; Kim Il Sung of the Korean People’s Army; and General Peng Dehuai, commander of the Chinese People’s Volunteers. Since then, the US military has controlled the ROK army, leaving a lingering legacy in the minds of many that when the Korean people’s destiny fell on the military command of foreign forces, the ROK government could do nothing to safeguard their people. Lacking any security, they were destined to be victims of that hot war in the midst of the Cold War.

For the US commanders, the Korean War was a fundamentally different kind of warfare than the battles of World War II in Europe. The Korean War may stand as the first test case for US troops found suddenly engaged in a Third World civil war without fully understanding its historical background. As the US government taught their soldiers that those who attacked them were all “communists,” any Korean civilians who did not welcome them might be suspected as enemies, foreshadowing the later case of My Lai in Vietnam. To South Korean political leaders who had been entirely dependent on American military and economic assistance to preserve their precarious regime, North Korea’s invasion was a deadly crisis, because US had pulled its troops out of South Korea in 1949 irresponsibly without any firm promise to protect them in case of emergency. This life and death situation that South Korean leaders faced upon the communists’ invasion at the beginning of the Korean War may have forced them to resort to extreme measures of exterminating internal enemies who had been believed to rebel them in cooperation with the North Korean troops. In this way, both the international context and internal politics at the beginning of the Korean War created the dangerous conditions that made massive killings a sadly unavoidable probability.

#### *Counter-revolutionary mass killings preceding the Korean War*

Genocides or massacres in underdeveloped countries are an all too frequent by-product of the nation-building projects in which revolutionary fever and counter-

revolutionary violence coexisted in a post-colonial power vacuum. Between 1947 and 1950 the southern part of the Korean peninsula was shaken by violent political conflict as the ex-Japanese collaborators, with the assistance of US forces, tried to defend their vested interests against the nationalists and the communists by any means. The Korean peninsula at that time was positioned in a situation similar to that of Greece.<sup>14</sup> It was not only communists, but also those nationalists who fought against imperialism or fascism who were labeled as “communists” and forced to go underground to wage guerilla warfare. Contrarily, ex-collaborators of the Japanese were revived and given positions of authority as proxies of America’s anti-communist world policy. Through this anticommunist military campaign in the early stage of the Cold war, many “pure” nationalists were convicted as “puppets” of the Soviet Union and eventually removed by extreme rightists. As in the cases of Taiwan and Greece,<sup>15</sup> the coming to power of the rightists resulted in a “white terror” followed by widespread repression, torture and massacres. We can view the series of Korean War massacres that happened from 1946 to 1953 in this context.

The Cheju Insurrection and Yosu-SunCheon Rebellion in 1948 in southern Korea may have been a turning point where political conflict developed into a civil war with accompanying massacres. When left-wing activists fled to Halla Mountain in Cheju, the ROK army, under the consultation of the KMAG (Korean Military Advisory Group), burned villages and killed civilians who were suspected of collaborating with the communist guerillas. Even though the estimated guerrilla force in Cheju Island was less than 500, the number of civilians killed through the rooting out operations of the ROK army and Korean police was estimated to be more than 30,000.<sup>16</sup> Similar massacres continued around Yosu, where a band of left-wing soldiers openly refused to serve the counterinsurgency mission for subduing the Cheju Insurrection. This unorganized rebellion of the ROK army’s Fourteenth Regiment in Yosu was soon suppressed under the direction of the KMAG, but the operation was also accompanied by widespread violence by rightists against innocent civilians, as was the case in Cheju.

Given that the South Korean armed forces were trained by the KMAG and that their equipment was completely dependent on the US, “the withdrawal of US troops in June of 1949 threatened the very survival of the US-supported ROK.”<sup>17</sup> When US troops withdrew from South Korea, leaving only a handful of KMAG soldiers, a civil war seemed highly probable. This situation made the President of South Korea take recourse in “extreme measures,” namely “exterminating” guerillas and political dissidents.<sup>18</sup> From the winter of 1948 to June of 1950, massive “rooting out” operations were waged against rebels in the mountainous areas of South Korea. When even the guerillas attacked a police station or killed rightist figures in a village, combined forces of both police and troops would partake in reprisals twice or three times as severe against residents who were believed to have served the guerillas.

Rhee’s Korea has often been viewed as a reactionary police state, bolstered by vicious police and landlords, because its maintenance depended exclusively on the brutality of the police. When some of their members were killed by a surprise

attack by guerrillas, corrupt police and untrained soldiers often sought revenge on innocent civilians living in isolated areas, reporting to the top command that they succeeded in cleansing the base of “communists.” South Korea’s President Rhee also dehumanized “communists” as the enemy of human society. He used the discourse of “exterminating the traitors,” “rooting out the Reds,” and “removing the Soviet puppet,” legitimizing the secret killing of left-wing activists. The vengeful reprisals of Rhee’s police and soldiers on those who cooperated with guerilla force were relentless. While the guerilla force was rendered nearly inactive through effective military operations by ROK troops, North Korea’s invasion on June 25, 1950, constituted another opportunity when the weakened guerilla forces could revitalize their troops and, at the same time, restarted the unrestricted massacres against the internal enemies on a national level.

We can categorize the mass killings that happened during the entire war period (from the June 25 of 1950 to the July 27 of 1953) into three types. The first type contains those cases committed in direct confrontation with military forces in the course of military operations. US troops shot, bombed, and bombarded Korean civilians as a part of their combat activity. ROK troops also killed hundreds of thousands of civilians in villages that were suspected of serving the North Korean force. The second type would be the ROK’s executions of “suspicious civilians” or political prisoners who were expected to rebel or threaten the ROK government. Though most of the victims were “suspected communists” living in South Korea, North Korea also killed many POWs and rightists when they retreated toward the North. The third type is comprised of state-sponsored political or personal reprisals committed by irregular youth groups and civilians themselves. Oftentimes, when a family member was killed in a village by a band of youths under the authority of the occupying force, the victim group would avenged itself by killing all family members of their foe when the attackers eventually retreated. This sort of village-level mutual revenge occurred at every corner of the Korean peninsula during the war. These three types of mass killings occurred almost simultaneously, but in different places and different occasions, primarily in the early stages of the Korean War.

### **Mass killings during the Korean War—Who killed whom, and under what context?**

#### *Military operations*

*US forces.* Under the aegis of “maintaining and restoring international peace,” the US decided to mobilize their soldiers onto the Korean peninsula when North Korea’s armed forces attacked South Korea. The US Eighth Army soldiers who stumbled into action in Korea at the beginning of July 1950 to repel the “communists” were an ill-prepared lot, pulled away from their job of occupying Japan. The US soldiers were composed of “boys in their teens and early twenties who couldn’t understand the nature and immense complexities of the problems in Asia.”<sup>19</sup> Nobody taught them that the Korean peninsula had

been in turmoil before the war; they were only told that the Soviet Union was behind North Korea's attack.

To further complicate matters, the North's surprise attack generated a severe refugee problem, clogging roads with civilians surging to the south. Fearing North Korean infiltration of these ranks of refugees, US leadership and soldiers as well panicked. Under these circumstances, the US Eighth Army, the highest command in Korea, issued unreasonable orders to stop all Korean civilian refugees and "fire at everyone trying to cross the lines." The panic and ill-preparedness of the US commanders might be partly responsible for the savagery that followed—blotting out whole villages and shooting randomly into crowds of refugees, among whom North Koreans were suspected to be hiding. In 1999, the AP and BBC discovered "top secret" papers showing that US commanders issued orders to forces under their control to "[k]ill them all."<sup>20</sup> The No Gun Ri incident, which might mark one of the largest single massacres of civilians by American forces in the twentieth century, occurred under this condition of confusion and panic of the early days of the war.

After killing civilians at No Gun Ri, US soldiers went on to demolish two bridges in North KyungSang province, Ouguan bridge and Dugsung bridge, that were jammed with refugees, including women and children. Directives ordering US soldiers to treat the refugees "enemies" might enable such indiscriminate shooting and bombing by American soldiers. Though it is understandable that these inexperienced soldiers could hardly distinguish their enemies from ordinary citizens, we have no records indicating that disguised North Korean columns attacked US soldiers. In the end, it is clear that the great uncertainty of the combat situation and the extreme fears of the soldiers who felt they were surrounded by an enemy disguised as civilians helped push American soldiers to commit unrestrained killings.<sup>21</sup> However, neither panic nor the confusion of US commanders can explain the continued killings of Korean civilians.

For example, on 11 July 1950, the US Air Force bombed the peaceful Iri railway station located far south of the combat line and killed about 300 civilians, including South Korean government officials. US warplanes also bombed and strafed gathered inhabitants or refugees in Masan, Haman, Sachon, Pohang, Andong, Yechon, Gumi, Danyang and other regions. Roughly 50 to 400 civilians were killed at each site and several times of that number were severely wounded. In dozens of villages across southern South Korea, US planes engaged in repeated low-level strafing runs of the "people-in white,"<sup>22</sup> In the southeast seaside city of Pohang in August of 1950, US naval artillery bombarded the calm villages and killed more than 400 civilians. In addition, another fifty-four separate cases of attacks equivalent to No Gun Ri are logged with South Korean authorities but have not yet been investigated.<sup>23</sup>

It has been known that "saturation bombing" by American air forces and naval bombardment destroyed some North Korean cities like Wonsan and Pyangang, leaving them almost completely in rubble with no more than a few buildings standing. As British journalist Reginald Thompson testified, civilians died in the rubble and ashes of their homes. Alan Winnington, a correspondent for the British

*Daily Worker*, when he saw how thousands of tons of bombs had obliterated towns and resulted in thousands of civilian casualties testified that “it was far worse than the worst the Nazis ever did.”<sup>24</sup> According to the witnesses, US air and ground forces shot at children, women, and aged people who were easily distinguishable as unarmed civilians. North Korean authorities have long accused American troops of “criminal acts” before and after the outbreak of the Korean War.<sup>25</sup> They maintained that the US army killed more than a million innocent civilians by bombing, shooting, and the use of napalm or chemical weapons.<sup>26</sup> While it must be acknowledged that the North has politically exploited such claims, the facts on the ground force us to not discount their veracity. For example, though the No Gun Ri incident was reported to the world through the AP’s report in 1999, this incident was first reported by North Korean newspapers and officially used as good materials for propaganda with other numerable cases.<sup>27</sup> In every aspect of the war—America’s use of napalm, indiscriminate bombing, and the shooting of “voiceless” civilians of the Third World, the Korean War preceded the Indochina War in many tragic ways.

Another factor that may have precipitated these mass killings by American troops may be related to the combination of deep racial prejudices of US soldiers on one hand and the relative isolation of the incidents on the other. With total ignorance of Asia, young soldiers regarded Koreans (and Chinese) as “people without history.” They usually called Koreans “gooks,” a term used during World War II for Pacific Islanders.<sup>28</sup> The fact that many Korean women in the villages were often raped in front of their husbands and parents has not been a secret among those who experienced the Korean War.<sup>29</sup> It was known that several women were raped before being shot at No Gun Ri. Some eyewitnesses say that US soldiers played with their lives like boys sadistically playing with flies.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, the “total isolation” of the Korean situation from the Western public; McCarthyism also emboldened US commanders to issue indiscriminate commands which would invariably bring mass death upon innocent citizens. With McCarthyism at its peak, US authorities tightly controlled the Western media and nobody could raise doubts as to the legitimacy of the US’s military intervention or the US’s responsibility for civilian deaths. Unlike other cases of genocide before and after the Korean War, it was not just international indifference but the US’s unilateral power in the midst of the Cold War that constituted a condition in which mass killings were both probable and politically defensible.

The mass killings inflicted by US military operations under the flag of the UN may not have been intentional or designed, but they were also far from accidental or inevitable. Despite the Pentagon’s denial that no orders were issued to shoot refugees, the oral testimony given by the veterans at No Gun Ri support the existence of orders to treat the refugees as enemy. Finally, the fact that US troops were put into a civil war in the name of a “police action” created the potential for unleashing mass killings against “noncombatants.” By any standard, these indiscriminate bombings, strafings, and shooting of defenseless civilians may be ranked as massacres at least, or possibly even genocidal at worst. There is some controversy whether relentless shooting and bombing during warfare could be

labeled as a kind of genocide. As we usually label genocide when the shooting and strafing were aimed at a certain race or community with clear cut boundaries and characteristics, America's military actions towards Korean civilians may not be regarded as a genocidal incident.<sup>31</sup> Of critical importance, however, is the fact that the US soldiers killed civilian refugees lacking even a modicum of self-defense, including women and children, even when no North Korean soldiers or grass-root guerilla forces threatened them. If we understand the massacre as denoting an organized, state fostered, form of destructive action against the defenseless civilians,<sup>32</sup> the existence of the orders at No Gun Ri and other places and the defenselessness of the victims can support this argument.<sup>33</sup>

### *South Korean forces*

In September 1950, US troops under MacArthur's command landed at Inchon, a harbor city located behind enemy lines of combat. The North Korean People's Army (NKPA) was forced to quickly retreat from South Korean territory, but those North Korean forces denied access to retreat were encircled by US and South Korean troops. These remaining NKPA soldiers then engaged in guerilla warfare, blurring the difference between the military and civilians. As the battle lines of the Korean War cut across cities and towns, the combat developed into a typical "peoples' war." Around 4 October 1950, the ROK Army, also under the command of MacArthur, launched massive rooting out operations against "bandits" dispersed around the Jiri Mountain (Jirisan) region of southern South Korea. As the war transformed into guerilla warfare, ROK commanders viewed the inhabitants of that region as "potential traitors" serving the enemy.

The mass killings committed by ROK soldiers in "cleansing" areas in which there was reported "enemy" activity were brutal and devastating. One of the most widely known massacres that ROK soldiers committed was the Guchang incident in February 1951. The ROK Army's Eleventh Division, which performed the mission of searching for and exterminating the remaining guerrillas active in the mountainous areas around Jirisan, were responsible for that incident. The commander of the Eleventh division was Choi Duk Sin, who had originally devised this concept of operations serving under Chinese General Chang Kei Shek's corps. Choi's troops killed unarmed civilians indiscriminately because they were believed to serve the guerrillas and refused orders to evacuate. In the end, several thousand civilians, including babies, women, and elderly, were killed during the operations named "Keeping the Position by Cleansing the Fields (...)". That operation had been also been labeled the "three-cleanse-all" operations (kill-all, burn-all, loot-all), after tactics which had been developed by Japanese imperial forces fighting against anti-Japanese leftist rebels in China.

The Guchang incident, however, turned out to be a unique case in that it became officially recognized among the numerous undocumented mass killings at that juncture. This status is due to the fact that a South Korean lawmaker who represented that region "spoke out" about the massacres to the foreign wartime reporters who were present shortly after their occurrence. Similar mass killings

committed by the same division at villages across North and South Cholla near Guchang, such as Namwon, Sunchang, Kochang, Imsil, and Hampyung, have not yet been fully revealed or publicized. In some regions, assaulted villages were abandoned and deserted as most of the inhabitants were killed, the survivors having fled. From the fall of 1950 to the spring of 1951, we can roughly guess that about 10,000 civilians may have been killed by South Korean soldiers in the mission of cleansing the base of left-wing guerrillas.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, remaining family members of the victims were treated as “reds” and could not enjoy full citizenship during the last half century under the anticommunist political atmosphere dominated by extreme rightists and the military elite. More recent South Korean governments have also stubbornly denied that ROK Army and police killed so many innocent people.

This second type of mass killings in the Korean War may be the first case in the world of massive civilian casualties resulting in the course of what Holsti defined as a “peoples’ war.”<sup>35</sup> The ROK army killed isolated and unarmed Korean peasants who were suspected to have served the “enemies” as a concerted tactic of military operations.<sup>36</sup> However, these tactics were nothing new. They were but the repetition of the type of rooting-out operations against guerilla forces that had appeared well before full-scale war had begun in South Korea.

### **Mass killings under the guise of executions**

It is no longer a secret among Koreans that scores of so-called “communist traitors” were killed across South Korea in the early days of the Korean War, at just the same time when thousands of “un-American traitors” began to lose their jobs under the hysteria of McCarthyism in America. Some of the victims were political prisoners and the others were detainees or left-affiliated figures including members of Bodoyeonmang (National Guidance League, NGL), who were arrested on the order of “preventive detention” just after North Korea’s attack.<sup>37</sup>

At the outset of North Korea’s attack, about 30,000 political prisoners in South Korea were in prison. Most of them were put in jail for violation of the National Security Law. But larger numbers of them were kept in prison ostensibly awaiting trial. Even by rough calculations, more than 7,000 in Seoul, 3,500 of Mapo, 1,600 in ChungJu, 1,000 in Andong, 1,000 in GimCheon, 1,000 in GongJu, 2,000 in Daejon, 3,000 in Daeju, 1,000 in JunJu, 1,000 in Kwangju, 3,000 in Pusan, 2,000 in Masan were in prison. The conditions and treatment that they suffered were beyond description.<sup>38</sup> Among them, there were several thousand persecuted figures who were implicated in the Cheju Insurrection and Yosu/Suncheon Rebellion of 1948. Except for prisoners in Seoul, most were “disappeared” after the outbreak of war. It is believed that most political prisoners were secretly disposed of together with NGL members from July to August of 1950.

But the killings of NGL members overwhelm other atrocities during the Korean War in size and brutality. NGL was the state-led organization whose purpose was to put former, or “converted,” communists under constant surveillance. While it was declared that to be a member of the NGL or not depended on one’s free will,

former communist or anti-government activists had no choice but to enter this watchdog group. However, in the course of time the range of potential members was not restricted to active political activists, as the authorities forced those who were even once involved in antigovernment organizations to register with the NGL at the village level.<sup>39</sup> For example, the Bureau of Police ordered the head of the regional police station to fill the NGL with a quota of members. In addition, simple uneducated peasants were strongly persuaded to enter it. Thus, eventually more than 70% of the NGL rank and file might be comprised of innocent peasants who had no consistent political identity or ideology.

According to the recollection of survivors, ROK military police and the regular police called up the NGL members and detained them “preemptively” just after the outbreak of war, even though they did not plot any protest against the threatened South Korean regime.<sup>40</sup> The executions of the political prisoners and the “suspected communists” may have been practiced without due process in every isolated valley of South Korea. Initiated from Suwon and Incheon on June 28 of 1950, three days after the first attack of the North’s invasion, the killings were separately practiced until about the end of August 1950. Now that several graves have been found, the pattern of killing across the country has resembled testimony offered by the recollection of the survivors. The arrested NGL members, called “suspected communists” or “traitors,” were confined in jails for several days, and finally dragged to nearby valleys to be shot.<sup>41</sup>

A Korean government official once acknowledged the executions of suspected “communists.” Kim Tae Sun, chief of the Seoul Metropolitan Police, said he executed more than twelve “communists and suspected communists” just after the beginning of the war.<sup>42</sup> US Ambassador John Muccio said that he heard about these executions from Kim Tae Sun.<sup>43</sup> Kim explained that disposing them for “preventive” political measures was inevitable. It was said that South Korean President Rhee was in a state of panic when he heard that North Korea invaded South Korea, according to the memoir of the officials and Muccio. The nightmarish memory of the Yosun Rebellion of 1948, when rebels murdered police and family members of rightists might have been brought to the minds of Rhee or other governmental officials. They might have thought that North Korean troops would kill the government officials first if they occupied Seoul. Rhee’s government feared those ex-communists and the potential dissidents who would rebel if stirred by North Korea’s invasion. By this reasoning, the “unreasonable” policy of executing NGL members, labeled as “traitors,” might have been made by South Korea’s top officials, though definitive records about the order of execution has yet been found.<sup>44</sup>

Fortunately for the sake of history, several foreign reporters witnessed some of these killings. John Osborne, *Time* and *Life* wartime reporter, wrote an article on July 10, 1950, after watching the atrocities committed by South Korean forces.<sup>45</sup> Nichols Donald, US Intelligence agent, also saw the Suwon massacre of June 29.<sup>46</sup> Winnington, of the *Daily Worker*, also witnessed and reported on a massive execution around Taejon. July Peach, the Australian member of United Nations Committee on Korea (UNCOK), saw the prisoners who were going to be executed

around Gongju. James Cameron, the correspondent of the London *Picture Post*, took a valuable photo of a truckload of prisoners just before they were shot.<sup>47</sup> The publication of these pictures garnered a monotonous response; ROK authorities simply insisted that all of those who they executed were “communists.” While those foreign spectators were only able to report half the story of these atrocities due to the constraints of censorship, if we visit almost any village in rural Korea today we can easily obtain countless individual testimonies or recollections on the executions. This testimony consistently reveals that most victims were innocent peasants. The mass killings by ROK police and Military Police has only been revealed after the collapse of the long-lasting military regime, but the full shape of these events has not yet been made clear. Thus we currently cannot accurately calculate the exact number of victims. Some scholars argue that 300,000 people were killed based on the fact that the number of the NGL was estimated at 350,000 on the eve of the Korean War. My own estimate of the number of deaths is from 100,000 to 200,000.<sup>48</sup>

Even if the executions were inevitable to save the state in its time of emergency, the problem whether they were exercised through legal procedures and only after careful determination of “true” rebels from the innocent should be addressed. First, however, it must be acknowledged that all of the orders for executions came secretly “from the top” of South Korea’s government. The ROK lower rank officials who handed the prisoners over to the Military Police, remembering that the order had come down from the Ministry of Law and that the Military Police, were forced to obey their orders. Second, all the survivors and the eyewitnesses testified unanimously that there was not even the slightest appearance of due process preceding these “executions.” The arrested people and the prisoners were mostly dragged to the isolated valleys and, then, disposed of on-the-spot (JugkulChubun). Third, most executed political prisoners were then “under trial” (these ideas seem to contradict each other—no due process versus most were “under trial” and the majority of the “NGL members were innocent people who had never been involved in the communist or anti-government movements.<sup>49</sup>

Exemplifying Semelin’s observation that “the state resorts to massacre in order to overcome its position of weakness,”<sup>50</sup> threatened South Korean authorities felt forced to resort to “final solutions” in exterminating “potential enemies” for the sake of national security. Including the atrocities by US forces, this fear is why most of the mass killings and civilian deaths occurred in the early days of the Korean War, when North Korean troops pushed so far south, threatening the survival of the ROK.

### **State-sponsored reprisal**

ROK troops and police reentered Seoul in September 1950, and then occupied North Korean territory, following the US troops after January 1951. Rhee’s government arrested and killed those who were suspected of having collaborated with North Korean forces during the period of North Korean rule.

In the case of Seoul and areas of north Kyunggi province, members of the NGL

were not killed immediately upon the North's invasion, because North Korean troops had occupied the area too quickly. But those who remained in Seoul, that is, those who did not or could not flee to the south with Rhee's government, were later convicted as traitors who were believed to have acclaimed Kim Il Sung and served North Korean rule. Even the "loyal citizens" who lost the chance to take refuge with Rhee were eventually labeled "suspected people" within the atmosphere of the insane "red-hunt," as Rhee arrested those who remained, casting suspicion of their disloyalty and tacitly approving the execution of even the reluctant "traitors."<sup>51</sup> In Koyang, for example, family members of the victims have argued that more than 500 civilians were killed by a right-wing youth group under the sponsorship of the police. Their argument proved true when the grave was exhumed in September, 1995.<sup>52</sup>

"Counter-insurgency" atrocities in North Korean territory were also terrible. When ROK police and rightist youth groups crossed over the 38th parallel following the US military, they found many "communists" and collaborators active there. The Sinchon massacre (a county located in southern North Korea) was a typical case. North Korea has long argued that American troops killed 35,380 civilians in Sinchon, but a newly released document disclosed that it was mainly the right-wing civilian security police and a youth group that were responsible for killing their neighbors.<sup>53</sup>

How many civilians were killed in this madness of reprisal? Gregory Henderson, US embassy officer and also a scholar, argued in his book, *Korea: The Politics of the Vortex*, that probably over 100,000 people were killed nationally without any trial under the auspices of ROK soldiers and the Counter-Intelligence Corps.<sup>54</sup> North Korea's Labor Party also investigated the massacres under Rhee's regime when they reoccupied Seoul on January 4, 1951.<sup>55</sup> They estimated that about 50,000 civilians around Seoul areas were executed or killed under the authorization of Rhee's regime. At that time, the Korean civil and military police and right-wing youth groups arrested almost indiscriminately those who had been suspected of serving North Korea's occupation forces during that period of less than three months.

Intensifying their terror, these waves of reprisal were generally accompanied by looting and raping. The occupying forces, comprised of soldiers, police and youth groups, often confiscated property without any legal authority. Under this anarchic situation, the actions of the "liberators" dictated the law for "suspected" collaborators. Those brutal mutual killings showed what war was like for all Koreans.

### **Anticommunist crusade or massacres?—The character of mass violence during the Korean War**

As in other cases of civil war, neither side of the Korean War could claim to have clean hands. Both South and North Korean authorities pledged to obey the United Nations' plea for an end to atrocities just after the beginning of the Korean War. South Korean authorities stated that they would cooperate with the International

Committee of the Red Cross and abide by the Geneva Convention on the treatment of the prisoners. North Korean Foreign Minister Pak Hon Yong also cabled the UN that the Communist Army was “strictly observing all the stipulations of the Geneva Convention regarding prisoners of war.”<sup>56</sup> Despite these pledges, they did not keep their word. While the borderline between “execution” and “private revenge” seems quite dubious, most so-called “traitors” were killed under the ideological or rhetorical justification of the US led anticommunist “crusade.” In terms of the context, process of the killings, and the composition of the victims, there is nothing to distinguish the several types of mass killings during the Korean War from what can plainly be called massacres.

Although it may be futile to compare the number of the total victims killed by US, ROK and North Korean commands, it seems certain that the number of unarmed civilians killed under ROK and US command overwhelms those killed at the hands of North Korean command, contrary to the public knowledge about the Korean War atrocities. This result may, in fact, be the quite natural result of the US having advanced military technology, mechanized weapons to kill large numbers of people at one time. US intervention in Korea, undertaken in the name of a “police action” and an “anti-communist crusade,” resulted in bloody massacres, whether the forces intended to kill their victims or not. Hundreds of thousands of innocent Korean civilians were killed, not by unavoidable accidents but by ordered military operations, illegal executions and state-sponsored reprisals. Though the killings committed by both sides are often sometimes dismissed with a reference to their being wartime massacres, what makes the cases by ROK authorities different from those by the North Korean’s is the character of the mass killings: they were aimed at unarmed civilians.<sup>57</sup>

First, the ROK initiated the mass killings. ROK troops and police had already killed about 100,000 civilians before the outbreak of full-scale war. The executions of the “suspected communists” after the war were nothing but the extension of the Cheju and Yosun massacres of 1948 at the national level. The execution of NGL members was quite predictable when we recall Rhee’s “rooting out” policy and white terror against the guerillas and his political opponents before 1950.

Second, the command to execute “suspected communists” almost came from top government officials or from Rhee himself, while violence against rightists and their family members came mainly at the hands of local communists who were not under control of the top. North Korea’s Kim Il Sung strongly emphasized the prohibition against civilian killings, which seemed quite natural because the NKPA (North Korean People’s Army), as a revolutionary army, had to win the hearts and minds of the South Korean people. Most eyewitnesses of the violence during the war cautiously admit the fact that the NKPA did not kill ordinary people, although local leftists arbitrarily harassed and killed innocent people.

Third, ROK troops and police often killed people without distinguishing the innocent, whether children, women or the elderly, from the enemy, while the NKPA primarily killed adults or family members of rightists on their retreat back to the north. The NKPA also killed many innocent children and women among the

rightist family members once the war began, but ROK troops had already burned the villages and killed residents indiscriminately in Cheju, Yosu, Munkyung, and Yeongdug before the full-scale war had broken out. During the war, they repeated the same type of massacres in Guchang, Sanchung, Namwon, Kochang, and Hampyung, all in the name of “cleansing” guerilla areas.

The intention of the rightists was the cleansing of the “red-virus” looming in South Korea and they treated all residents around the mountainous areas, including children, women, and the elderly as potential “traitors” who had no right to live under the South Korean regime. This quasi-racist ideology of anticommunism, which often appeared in the genocidal policies of the rightists, created and justified mass killings against “suspicious civilians.” The illegal detaining and execution of the “suspected communists” may have inevitably occurred within the chaos of the emergency situations of warfare. However, these incidents took place under the official justification of the National Security Law and the Martial Law, both of which were enacted originally by imperial Japan and were then used again by the newly born “liberal” South Korean government, even after the imperialist rule ended.

It is notable that South Korea’s Japanese-trained soldiers and police assumed their position under the training and authorization of the American occupational force. After 1945 America’s anti-communist policy in Korea encouraged and revived pro-Japanese elites and police, who desperately tried to survive and maintain their vested interests after the end of the Japanese colonialism. When old fascists succeeded in seizing the oppressive machine of state, they took revenge on the nationalists and communists who threatened them. The most notable figure among them was Kim Chang Ryung, Korean CIC (Counter Intelligence Corps) commander and chief of the Fourth section of the Center of Ground Troops (CIC) during the Korean War,<sup>58</sup> a group that stood at the forefront in eradicating any components of the left-wing under the Rhee’s firm support. It has been believed by some that it was Kim who both ordered and superintended the executions of the NGL members and political prisoners under the tacit authorization of President Rhee.

The massacres during the Korean War, in a very real sense, may constitute the turning point toward the development of new political massacres, or pocide, which became popular in the Third World during the Cold War. In this age of political independence after 1945, most massacres have been committed not under the command of foreign conquerors but by domestic rulers. In the current age of highly mechanized weapons, weapons of mass destruction can kill several times more civilians than combatants. Such mass killing was often committed or sponsored by US forces, who justified their intervention to the war as “liberating” the indigenous people from the shackle of communism. In the name of liberty and democracy, mass killings and state terrorism by the Right came to be tolerated, as in the case of the Korean War. The extreme rightist leaders in Asia and Latin America after 1945, supported openly by the US, executed “suspected communists” and political dissidents in the name of national security.

Thus, the massacres in Vietnam and Indonesia in the 1960s seemed to follow the

example of Korean massacres. The Korean War in this sense was a bridge to connect the old type of massacres under colonialism and the new types of state terrorism and political massacre during the Cold War. At the risk of oversimplification, it can be argued that the mass executions in the early stage of the Korean War might have been the start of state terrorism policies. And the mass killings committed by US soldiers in the Korean War marked the inception of military interventions by the US in the Third World at the cost of enormous civilian deaths.

## Epilogue

The mass killings committed by friendly troops during the Korean War have been either totally neglected or justified by the fact that communists launched the invasion and violated the peace. The rhetoric of “freedom,” “rule of law,” and “restoring the peace” used by US and South Korean governments have justified the killings and violence they committed against Korean civilians. To understand this violence, it is imperative to first consider that the political situation before June 25, 1950, was far from peaceful and that the character of the 38th parallel dividing the two Koreas helped determine the way the war was conducted by US forces under the flag of the UN and as part of the “extreme” emergency measures that the ROK government resorted to in facing the communists.

Every conceivable precondition for a massacre was met when the full-scale war broke out in Korea. At the peak of the Cold War, the US army entered a Korean War that was fundamentally different from any kind of warfare they had encountered during World War II in Europe. The Korean War thus stands at the first test case for US troops to engage in a civil war in the Third World, aiming toward the project of nation building without fully understanding the historical background of the region in question. The American government interpreted the aspiration for building an independent nation as an exclusive “communist conspiracy,” and thus took responsibility for killing innocent people, as in the case of My Lai incident in Vietnam.

The discourse and rhetoric that US and ROK elites used dehumanizing the target group (“communists”) was similar to what has occurred in other cases of genocide. The communists were labeled as an absolute “enemy,” “traitors” plotting conspiracy who should be destroyed and exterminated completely.

Second, as US intelligence was well aware, even on the date of the invasion, US and ROK forces met continual defeat at the hands of the strong attack by North Korean troops. This overwhelming offensive put the President of South Korea and US commanders into a state of panic. The sense of crisis forced them to take recourse in unreasonable on-the-spot executions of suspected persons and other operations that knowingly might kill civilians. The weakness of the state and the lack of legitimacy of South Korea made a favorable condition for massacre. In addition, and obviously not by design, the temporary setback of US forces and the fear of soldiers may have also been responsible for mass killings by shooting, strafing, or bombing.

Third, as a continuation of guerilla warfare, the Korean War was likely to develop into bloody mutual killings of Koreans against themselves. When the battle line moved up and down across the peninsula several times due to the intervention of the US and China, the warfare extended to cover the entire country and brought about a series of killings motivated by revenge and counter-revenge.

Finally, viewing the war within its international context, the total isolation of Korea and the severe censorship that US and English authorities put on reporters blocked the dissemination of what really happened in Korea from reaching the public. Unlike in the Vietnamese War, the Korean War was not fought on TV. Regardless, even if the alarming news of these atrocities was to have been made available at this time, no country would have been able to openly voice concerns or criticize the mass killings that were committed by US and South Korea. As the “war before Vietnam,” every aspect of the Korean War preceded the case of Vietnam. Neither antiwar demonstrations nor news debunking the immorality of the war occurred at the peak of Cold War. Only now has it been made possible to uncover the full story of the Korean War, including its darkest aspect, the massacres of unarmed civilians. By verifying the background and the truth of the Korean War massacres may contribute to understanding the relationship between US foreign policy after 1945 and the repeated occurrence of political terror and massacres in the Third World.

Even though the long Cold War ended with the collapse of Soviet communism, the Korean peninsula is still technically at war. This situation may explain why the historical legacy of the hottest war from the beginning of the Cold War has not yet been resolved. The brutal mass killings and atrocities committed while driving out the North Korean communist forces may be one of the most difficult tasks to be addressed under such conditions. The history of the Korean War may show how massacres, genocide and state terrorism in the Third World after the 1960s followed the example of those of the Korean War, and also how the collective ignorance or negligence concerning its truth contributed to the repetition of such tragedies.

## Notes and references

1. This statement proved to be incorrect. Clay Blair mentioned in his book, *Forgotten War*, that “the First Cavalry would relieve the shattered Twenty four Division at Toungdong on July 22” (Blair, Clay (1987), *The forgotten war : America in Korea 1950-1953*, New York:Times book). The Pentagon’s argument also contradicts the oral testimony given by the veterans who did in fact recall orders to open fire on the civilians at No Gun Ri. See Air Force Colonel Turner Rogers’ memo of the events of the day before the massacre at No Gun Ri: [www.henryholt.com/nogunri/](http://www.henryholt.com/nogunri/) and [www.army.mil/nogunri/](http://www.army.mil/nogunri/)
2. The commanders repeatedly and without ambiguity ordered forces to target and kill Korean refugees caught on the battlefield. See [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/war/coldwar/korea\\_usa\\_06.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/war/coldwar/korea_usa_06.shtml)
3. This is not based on the systematic investigation. When the No Gun Ri incident was officially confirmed, emboldened survivors reported the incidents one by one, reporting their testimony to Korea’s newspapers and confirmed by Korean Human Right activists.
4. Ellen Schrecker (2000) “McCarthyism and the Korean War,” in Davis McCann and Barry S. Strauss, eds, *War and Democracy: A Comparative Study of the Korean War and Peloponnesian War* (New York: M.E. Sharpe), p 191.

5. Among journalists, we can point to Osborne (*Times* and *Life*), Winnington (*The Daily Worker*), Cameron (*Picture Post*) as those reporters with a conscience who proclaimed the atrocities committed by friendly armies. Among scholars who dealt with this point, we can remember Goulden, McCormack, Macdonald, and Cumings *et al.*
6. Mark Levene (2000) "Why is the twentieth century the century of genocide," *Journal of World History*, Vol 11, No 2, pp 305–336; John Horne (2002) "Civilian population and wartime violence: toward the historical analysis," *International Social Science Journal*, 174/2002, pp 484–490; Paul Bartrop (2002) "The relationship between war and genocide in the twentieth century: a consideration," *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol 4, No 1, pp 519–532.
7. The omission of political massacres into the concept of "genocide" on the Genocide Convention was pointed out by Kuper. See Leo Kuper (1980) *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press), p 39. The concept of "policide," in which victim groups are defined in terms of their political status or opposition to the state, was used Harff and Gurr. Barbara Harff and Ted Robert Gurr (1988) "Toward empirical theory of genocides and policides: identification and measurement of cases since 1945," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol 32, No 3, pp 359–371.
8. See Gabriel Kolko (1968) *The Politics of War: The World and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1943–1945* (New York: Vintage Books); Bruce Cumings (1990) *The Origins of the Korean War, Vol 2: The Roaring of the Cataract, 1947–1950* (Oxford: Princeton University Press); William Appleman Williams (1995) *Empire as a Way of Life* (Oxford University Press).
9. Chalmers Johnson (2001) *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (New York: Henry Holt, 10 July 1950).
10. The main reason that the US delayed withdrawing its troops from Korea until 1949 and kept about 500 soldiers as military advisors (Korean Military Advisory Group: KMAG) was not only for training Korean soldiers but also to deter the possible attack of South Korean troops against North Korea.
11. John Merrill, *Korea: The Peninsula Origins of the War* (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press).
12. John Hoand Company, p 25.
13. "War in Asia," *Time*, op. cit, 485.
14. John O. Iatrides and Nicholas X. Rizopoulos (2000) "The international dimension of the Greek Civil War," *World Policy Journal*, Vol 17. No 1, pp 87–103.
15. About the "228" massacre in Taiwan, see Michael Rand (1993) "Taiwan confronts its past," *History Today*, Vol 43.
16. Currently, a special governmental committee has been assembled to investigate the cause and the truth of the Cheju Insurrection in Korea. About 10,000 victims have reported that family members were killed through the suppression or the conflict. According to an unofficial source, 80% of the victims were killed by ROK army, police and youth organization.
17. CIA, "Consequences of US Troops Withdrawal from Korea in Spring 1949," 28 February 1949, Warner, Michael ed (1994) *The CIA Under Harry Truman*, History Staff, Center for the Study of Intelligence, CIA, Washington, DC.
18. South Korea's President Rhee SyngMan always used the discourse of "exterminating the traitors," "rooting out the Reds" and "removing the Soviet puppet."
19. John Osborne, "Men at War," *Ties*, July 26, 1950.
20. Jeremy Williams, "'Kill them all' – American military conduct in the Korean War" (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/about>). However, the Pentagon maintained in the report that no orders were issued to shoot refugees at No Gun Ri. Oral testimony of the Seventh Cavalry veterans contradict the Pentagon's position.
21. Charles J. Henly, Sang-Hun Choe, Martha Mendosa (2001) *The Bridge at No Gun Ri: A Hidden Nightmare from the Korean War* (New York: Henry Holt).
22. This is based on the recollection of survivors. The testimony was conducted in a conference named "2001, the Kyongnam Yujog JungUn DaeHoi" (2001, A Meeting for Oral Testimony of the Survivors) held at Masan, August 12, 2001.
23. *Yeonhap News*, October 24, 2001. Original material had been kept in the Korean Ministry of Defense and it was given to a Korean lawmaker.
24. Winnington, Alan (1950) *I Saw the Truth in Korea* (London: Peoples Press Printing Society Ltd.) p 4.
25. See, [http://www.korea-np.co.jp/pk/118\\_issue/99110404.htm](http://www.korea-np.co.jp/pk/118_issue/99110404.htm)
26. "DPRK Foreign Military Memorandum on GI mass Killings," see <http://www.Korea-np.co.jp/pk/135th-issue/2000032902.htm>
27. In July 20, 1950, it was seen at that time full of pictures of "inhuman atrocities" committed by US soldiers in North Korean Newspapers.
28. Walter Sullivan, "G.I. View of Koreans as 'Gooks' Believed Doing Political Damage," *New York Times*, July 26, 1950.

29. When the US soldiers entered villages, it was usual that old men hid their daughters and daughters-in-law for avoiding them to be raped. Some young women tried to disguise themselves to look like old ugly women.
30. Edward Daily, of Tennessee. Park Hee-sook, then a girl of 16, said, "I can still hear the moans of women dying in a pool of blood. Children cried and clung to their dead mothers." <http://www.wsws.org/articles/1999/nov1>
31. However, as Bertrand Russell and Jean Paul Sartre argued when they established a "War Crimes Tribunal" attacking America's in the war against Vietnam, the "genocidal intent" of war may be identified even when official military policies may deny such an ambition "Russel Vietnam War Crimes Tribunal," <http://www.infotrad.clara.co.uk/antiwar/warcimes/v1101sar.htm> 999/kor-n17.shtml
32. Semelin, op cit, p 212.
33. It is reported that 83 percent of the No Gun Ri victims were women, children and elderly people. This calculation is based on a unpublished report on the casualties at No Gun Ri
34. BumKukMinWui (2001) *MinGanInHaksal SilTae BogoSu* (Nationwide Commission, 2001, A Report on the Massacres During the Korean War
35. Holsti categorized the war in the modern age into three kinds. He said that war between the powerful sovereign states, the first type, and the acts of sovereign state against the "illegitimate state," the second type, were prevalent. After 1945, in the age of total war, he argued that we watched the surge of the third type of war what communities are often intermingled so that battle lines cut across cities, towns and neighborhoods).
36. Holsti, op cit, pp 25–28.
37. "Bodo" (...) literally meant "caring and guiding." Originally, under the Japanese imperialist rule, the policy put emphasis on the "caring" rather than the "detaining" because the ex-political prisoners had difficulties in getting jobs and managing their family life. But we can not find any component of "caring" in the case of South Korea's NGL Earlier imperial Japan even organized the "The League for Servicing the State" in order to re-oriented rehabilitate the released Korean political dissidents. Later a band of South Korean rightist prosecutors who had been educated under the Japanese rule thought that such organization would be useful in controlling the left-affiliated political dissidents by structuring it to "preserve the national security and maintain law and order." Finally, they built the NGL.
38. Harold Joyce, Noble (1975) *Embassy at War* (Seattle: University of Washington Press), p 225.
39. Kim Tae Kwang (1989) "Bodoyeonmang Sagun" (The NGL Incident), *Mal*, December 1989.
40. Kim Gi Jin (2002) *KukMinBoDoYeonMaeng (National Guidance League)*, YeokSaBiPyungSa, pp 84–245.
41. Kim Dong Choon (2000) *Junjang gua Sahoe (War and Society)*, Seoul: Dolbaegae; Kim, Seon Ho (2002) *The Process and Character of the Kukmin-Bodoyeonmang Affair*, Kyunghee University.
42. He had an interview with *Reuters*, the British news agency. See *New York Times*, 14 July, 1950 and communist newspaper, *The Worker*, July 16, 1950.
43. See the Muccio's memoir, [ist/muccio.htm](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralr) <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralr>, July 16, 1950.
44. U.S Intelligence "Top Secret Report" (26 April 1950) conformed this, which was prepared by Bob Edwards (Lt Colonel GSC) with 15 pictures. Bob E. Edwards reported "the orders for execution undoubtedly came from top level as they were not confined to towns in front of line areas". The 'top' he mentioned might be the South Korean President (The pictures and documents can be seen at [www.genocide.or.kr](http://www.genocide.or.kr)). Macdonald concluded "Rhee ordered the execution of political prisoners"(Callum A. Macdonald, *Korea: The War before Vietnam*, London: Macmillian Press, 1986, p 41).
45. "South Korean police and South Korean marines whom I observed in front line areas are brutal. They murder to save themselves the trouble of escorting prisoners to the rear; they murder civilians simply to get them out of the way or avoid the trouble of searching and cross-examining them. .... Too often they murder prisoners of war and civilians before they have had a chance to give any information they may have" John Osborne, "Report from the Orient: Guns Are Not Enough," *Time*, 2 August 1950.
46. "The unforgettable massacre of approximately 1,800 at Suwon—the most atrocious I had ever seen. I stood by helplessly witnessing the entire affair. .... Their hands were already tied behind them. They were hastily pushed into the grave. An efficient group of personnel followed, their .45 pistols could hardly miss the fatal head shots from 2 to 3 feet away from the ones who were still kicking. .... The worst part about this whole affair was that I learned later that not all the people killed were communists (Nichols, 1998, p 128).
47. Cameron, James (1967) *Point of Departure: Experiment in Biography* (Liverpool: C. Tinling & Co. Ltd), pp 130–133.
48. A recent investigation in South Kyungsang province, one of the largest provinces in South Korea, showed the total civilians who were killed reach about 25,000. If we suppose the killings occurred with similar pattern in other provinces, the size would be at least 100,000 (South Korea has eight provinces).
49. To count the exact percentage of innocent people among the victims would be almost impossible. But the oral testimonies of the survivors or eyewitnesses can support this argument. See Kim Seon Ho, op cit, pp 31–32) We can conclude that these mass killings were certainly massacres, or examples of pocide under the guise of executions.

50. Jacque Semelin (2003) "Toward a Vocabulary of Massacre and Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 5, No.2, p 195.
51. Park, Won Sun (1990), "JunJang Buyeokja Oman Ottoke Cheridoet Na?" (How Were the Fifty thousand of "Traitors" Disposed?), *YoekSa BiPyoung, Summer, 1990*.
52. See, <http://haxalgy.jinbo.net/gul14.htm>
53. Some reporters argued that American CIC ordered the massacre, but it is not verified (*Hangeore 21*, April 25, 2002).
54. Gregory Henderson (1968) *Korea: The Politics of the Vortex* (Harvard University Press), p 167.
55. Chosun Nodongdang Seoul siding (City Branch of Korean Labor Party) (1951), "Seoul Si Wa Gu JuByon Giyeok esu ui Jugdul ui Man Hang" (The Enemy's Atrocities in Seoul and Surrounding Regions of it)
56. *New York Times*, July 10, 1951.
57. An American historian wrote, "The tradition and practices in the Orient are not identical with those that have developed in the Occident. .... Individual lives are not valued so highly in Eastern mores" when he heard about the atrocities in the Korean War (*New York Times*, 20 July, 1950). This explanation typifies the Western bias about the uncivil events in the world.
58. Kim Jong Pil, a G-2 agent during the Korean War and one of the most popular politicians in contemporary Korea, attested that Kim Chang Ryong had superintended all processes of the executions. This testimony was given accidentally when he defended his innocence against Lee Do Young's (a victim's son) aggressive question whether Kim Jong Pil had been involved in the incidents Lee Do Yeong, *Jug Em Ui YeBiGumSok (Deadly Preventive Arrest, Mal: 2000, p 66)*.

## Bibliography

- Aldrich, Richard J. (2001) *The Hidden Hand: Britain, America and Cold War Secret Intelligence* (London: John Murray).
- Bartrop, Paul (2002) "The relationship between war and genocide in the twentieth century: a consideration," *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol 4, No 1.
- Bix, Herbert (2001) "War crimes law and American wars in the twentieth century Asia," *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies*, Vol 33 (2001).
- Blair, Clay (1987) *The Forgotten War: America in Korea 1950–1953* (New York: Times book).
- BumKukMinWui (2001) *MinGanInHaksal SilTae BogoSu* (Nationwide Committee, 2001, A Report on the Massacres During the Korean War).
- Cameron, James, *Point of Departure: Experiment in Biography* (Liverpool: C. Tinling & Co. Ltd).
- Chalk, Frank and Jonassohn, Kurt (1990) *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press).
- Chosun Nodongdang Seoul siding (City Branch of Korean Labor Party) (1951), "Seoul Si Wa Gu JuByon Giyeok esu ui Jugdul ui Man Hang" (The Enemy's Atrocities in Seoul and Surrounding Regions of it).
- Clausewitz, Carl von, translated by Colonel J. J. Graham (1968) *On War* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul).
- Cumings, Bruce (1990) *The Origins of the Korean War, Vol 2: The Roaring of the Cataract, 1947–1950* (Oxford: Princeton University Press).
- Cumings, Bruce (2001) "When Sparta is Sparta but Athens isn't Athens: Democracy and the Korean War," in Davis McCann and Barry S. Strauss, eds, *War and Democracy: A Comparative Study of the Korean War and Peloponnesian War* (New York: M.E. Sharpe).
- Edwards, Paul M. (1986) *To Acknowledge A War: The Korean War in American Memory* (Westport: Greenwood Press).
- Gittelsohn, John (1990) "War and remembrance: Forty years on, the origins of Korean War inspire debate and reassessment," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol 19 (July), pp 32–33.
- Harff, Barbara and Gurr, Ted Robert (1988) Toward Empirical theory of genocides and policides: identification and measurement of cases since 1945," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol 32, No 3, pp 359–371.
- Halliday, Jon and Bruce Cumings (1988) *Korea: The Unknown War* (New York: Pantheon Books).
- Henley, Charles J., Sang-Hun Choe, Martha Mendosa (2001) *The Bridge at No Gun Ri: A Hidden Nightmare from the Korean War* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC).
- Hess, Dean E. (1956) *Battle Hymn* (New York: McGraw-Hill Books Company).
- Hirsch, Herbert (1995) *Genocide and the Politics of memory* (The University of North Carolina Press).
- Horne, John, (2002) "Civilian populations and wartime violence: toward the historical analysis," *International Social Science Journal*, p 174.

DONG CHOON KIM

- Iatrides, John O and Nicholas X. Rizopoulos (2000) "The international dimension of the Greek Civil War," *World Policy Journal*, Vol 17, No 1, pp 87–103.
- Johnson, Chalmers (2001) *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (New York: Henry Holt and Company).
- Kaufman, Burton I. (1999) *The Korean Conflict* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press).
- Kim, Dong Choon (2000) *Junjang gua Sahoe (War and Society)*, Seoul: Dolbaegae.
- Kim, GiJin (2002) *KukMinBoDoYeonMaeng (National Guidance League)*, YeokSaBiPyungSa.
- Kim, Seon Ho (2002) *The process and Character of the Affair of Kukmin-Bodoyeonmang* (Kyunghee University).
- Kim Tae Kwang (1989) "Bodoyeonmang Sagun" (The NGL Incident), *Mal*, December 1989.
- Kolko, Gabriel (1968) *The Politics of War: The World and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1943–1945* (New York: Vintage Books).
- Kuper, Leo (1981) *Genocide: Its Political Use in the twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press).
- Levene, Mark (2000) "Why is the twentieth century the century of genocide," *Journal of World History*, Vol 11, No 2.
- Macdonald, Callon A. (1986) *Korea: The War before Vietnam* (London: Macmillian Press).
- McCormack (1983) Gavan, *Cold War, Hot War: An Australian Perspective on the Korean War* (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger).
- Merrill, John (1989) *Korea: The Peninsula Origins of the War* (Newark: University of Delaware Press).
- Mitchel, Richard (1976) *Thought Control in Prewar Japan* (Cornell University Press).
- Mirkovic, Damir (1996) "Ethnic conflict and genocide: reflections on the ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia," *Annals, AAPSS*, 548, November 1996.
- Nichols, Donald (1981) *How many Times Can I Die: The life Story of a Special Intelligence Agent* (Florida: Brownsville Printing).
- Noble, Harold Joyce (1975) *Embassy at War* (Seattle: University of Washington Press).
- Oliver, Robert T. (1950) *Why War Came in Korea*, (New York: Fordham University Press).
- Oliver, Robert T. (1955) *Syngman RHee: the Man Behind the Myth* (New York: Dodd and Mead Company).
- Park, Myung-Lim (1996) *Hankuk GunJang ui Balbal gua GiWon* (The Korean War: The Outbreak and Its Origins), Seoul: Nanam.
- Park, Won Sun (1990) "JunJang Buyeokja Oman Ottoke Cheridoet Na?" (How Were the Fifty thousands of "traitors" Disposed?), *YeokSa BiPyoung, Summer 1990*.
- Russel, Bertrand (1967) *War Crime in Vietnam* (London: George Allen and Unwin).
- Seoul City Branch of Korean Labor Party, *Enemy's Savagery in Seoul and it's Outskirts*, 1951 (SeoulSi wa Gu JubyonJiYok Ee su oi JukDuloi ManHang).
- Semelin, Jacques (2001) "In consideration of massacres," *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol 3, No 3, pp 377–389.
- Semelin, Jacques (2002) "From massacre to the genocidal process," *International Social Science Journal*, p 174.
- Schrecker, Ellen, "McCarthyism and the Korean War," in Davis McCann and Barry S. Strauss, eds, *War and Democracy: A Comparative Study of the Korean War and Peloponnesian War* (New York: M.E. Sharpe).
- Shen, Zhihua (1996/1997) "The Discrepancy Between the Russian and Chinese Versions of Maos 2 October 1950 Message to Stalin on Chinese Entry into the Korean War: Chinese Scholars Reply", *The Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.
- Waltz, Kenneth N. (1959) *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Colombia University Press).
- Winnington, Alan (1950) *I Saw the Truth in Korea* (London: Peoples Press Printing Society Ltd).
- Ysobong (1951) "A journey through Korea," *The New Republic*, Vol 124, No 22, May 28.
- U.S. Congress (1953) *Korean War Atrocities: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Korean War Atrocities of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate, Eight-Third Congress*.
- Walzer, Michael (1997) *The Just and Unjust War* (New York: Basic Books, Inc.).
- Warner, Michael, ed. (1994) *The CIA Under Harry Truman*, History Staff, Center for the Study of Intelligence, CIA, Washington, DC.
- Williams, William Appleman (1995) *Empire as a Way of Life* (Oxford University Press).