

base extension. Artist Kinjō Mitsuru tells about a remarkable project spearheaded by Okinawa Prefectural Southern High School of Engineering Art Department students who numbered 236,096 stones, one for each death during the Battle of Okinawa, and then piled them in a sphere. Shots from Kinjō's "Voices of the Stones" details this moving story of students engaged in making memory with their bodies in the sun. Itō Tari contributes a video of her performance, discussed by Satō in the book, of paying homage to former "military comfort woman" Kim Soon-Duk. The visual experience is essential to understanding the complex emotional and political perspectives in this performance. For instructors, these DVD shorts are excellent for classroom discussion, and the essays provide helpful frames for understanding them.

Together, these critical essays, poems, photographs, and multisensorial artistic works form a powerful approach to creating memory and new relations for an "Asia to come."

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In-Mates directed by Yuki Iiyama. Tokyo: Rice Mountain Film, 2021.
26 minutes, 50 seconds.

Rap Performance Seeking Freedom and Liberation

The video work *In-Mates* created by artist Iiyama Yuki was banned by its sponsor, the Japan Foundation, in 2021, and again the following year by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's Human Rights Department, on the grounds that there were "concerns" about the film's reference to the "massacre of *Chōsenjin* [Koreans] at the time of the Great Kanto Earthquake [1923] as a fact." Iiyama held a press conference in protest on October 28, 2022, together with FUNI, a 2.5 generation Zainichi Korean who was the main performer in the film. Since then, they have continued their protest against censorship.

In-Mates is based on the medical records of two Koreans who were committed to Oji Brain Hospital in Tokyo in 1930, where they died in 1940. It includes rap by FUNI in response to their anguish. It is a short film, just over twenty-six minutes long, consisting of five scenes in total.

In the introductory scene, Iiyama and FUNI interview historian Tonoyama

Masaru who explains that the movement of Koreans from colonial Korea to the imperial capital of Tokyo began to increase in the 1920s. Expected to work as obedient, cheap labor in accordance with the imperial order, Koreans who rebelled or engaged in independence movements were subject to crackdowns. Tonoyama explained that Japan in the 1920s saw the rise of a relatively free labor and socialist movement. Regarding the massacre of Koreans in the aftermath of the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, in the interview, Tonoyama stated, “There is no doubt that the Japanese common people killed quite a few innocent Koreans because the Japanese people were fed false rumors.” The Japan Foundation and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government’s Human Rights Department found this statement problematic and banned the showing of *In-Mates*.

Killings were reported in official historical documents issued by the government of the time as well as in newspaper articles. In addition, there are many testimonies from people who actually witnessed the massacre.¹ *In-Mates* is not a documentary film specifically about this massacre, and yet the denial by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government’s Human Rights Department of the historian’s testimony further elucidates historical revisionism in Japan.

Tokyo’s present governor, Koike Yuriko, has ceased sending her previously customary condolences to rallies commemorating the massacre since 2017, and the banning of *In-Mates* by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government’s Human Rights Department is believed to be in line with the wishes of the governor. To date, the Governor of Tokyo (as well as the Japanese government) continues to deny the historical fact of the massacre of Koreans, Chinese, and socialists during the Great Kanto Earthquake.

The introductory scene mentions records of Korean patients frequently performing “*hōka*” (放歌). The Chinese character for *hō* in *hōka* has a strong verbal nuance of “to release, to set free, to liberate.” But the medical records do not reveal what kind of songs they were singing. In an interview with Iiyama and FUNI, a psychiatric historian, Suzuki Akihito, points out that a major limitation of the facility was that the doctors and nurses did not understand Korean, the native language of the Korean patients. Thus the “*hōka* songs” sung by the two Korean patients in their mother tongue were dismissed as completely unintelligible.

Of the two Korean patients, one was a day laborer who was poor and disheveled. The other was married with a family in Korea and had a relatively good education; he expressed strong dissatisfaction with his internment and

1. See, for example, Nishizaki 2018.

repeatedly demanded to be set free. They may have been singing *hōka* as an expression of *sinse t'aryōng* 身世打玲, a lively “internal form of dialogue” (Lee 1998, n.p.) that was popular on the Korean peninsula. But in Japan, their *hōka* fell on deaf ears. Similarly, FUNI explains that his expressive form of rap music was a survival skill that kept him from becoming violent when he felt unable to control his emotions in suffocating Japanese society. This image of FUNI overlaps with that of the two Koreans constantly mumbling their *hōka* in loud voices, sharing the power to recover and regenerate from serious damage and trauma from displacement.

The second scene shows FUNI's rap performance in a long, narrow, dimly lit undersea tunnel in the Port of Kawasaki. This location was suggested by FUNI, who was born and raised in the Keihin industrial area of Kawasaki. The Port of Kawasaki Undersea Tunnel was opened in the 1970s, and at that time it was not a passageway for ordinary citizens but for day laborers working at the port. FUNI brings the two Koreans in *In-Mates* to life in this dark, subterranean space. The tunnel, about a kilometer long, symbolically represents the closed-off asylums that housed the two Koreans in the 1930s. At the same time, it invites viewers to visualize the invisible presence of the foreign workers beneath everything, who consistently support the industrial city of today, as they did the imperial Japanese city a hundred years ago.

In this scene, FUNI reproduces the words of Korean inmate “A” based on medical records from the 1930s. “A” uses his Japanese name “Okamoto Shinkichi” and says, “I will live in Japan, I can live here.” “A” is treated as deranged by the Japanese staff, who do not understand his native Korean language, and is not taken seriously by the other Korean, “B,” his only compatriot. “A,” tormented by a sense of isolation, explodes and utters the shocking words, “I'm Japanese. I'm Japanese . . . I'll kill every last Korean.”

In *In-Mates*, FUNI directly quoted “A's” words “Kill all Koreans,” prompting a complaint from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's Human Rights Department regarding possible hate speech. It is necessary to look at who is uttering the “discriminatory expression” and in what context. One can imagine that the two Korean patients living in Japan in the 1930s after the Great Kanto Earthquake were subject to constant discrimination and deprivation, and continuously exposed to such hate speech. It is impossible to separate the violent language that contributed to their mental illness from this context. Such words could even be uttered in a self-deprecating manner. Additionally, it is imaginable that “A” may even say, “I am a Korean, so kill me” in a fit of delirium. Furthermore, he may even emulate a racist Japanese in order to escape being a target of aggression.

In the third scene of *In-Mates*, FUNI seems to be at a loss as to how to perform “A’s” anguish. He invites his Zainichi Korean friend Sils to join him and inserts an interlude with dialogue. This scene resonates with the sentiments of young Zainichi Koreans who talk with each other about the multilayered issues that they face in Japanese society. FUNI discovers that the discomfort he feels toward “A” is due to the fact that “A” takes a Japanese name, “Okamoto Shinkichi,” and mumbles that he wants to live in Japan as a Japanese citizen. FUNI’s question, “So, is Okamoto Shinkichi a naturalized Japanese citizen?” leads to a deeper discussion between FUNI and Sils on issues such as “naturalization,” “identity,” and “ethnicity” for Zainichi Koreans.

FUNI’s repetition of the phrase “let me be myself/not my ethnicity” echoes the desire of the younger Zainichi generation to be respected for their individuality, irrespective of their ethnic background. FUNI sees the concept of ethnicity as ambivalent. He raps, “I wish my ethnicity could possibly / work positively, but it shouldn’t / work negatively at least.” His words invite a reconsideration of the unconscious “ethnic consciousness” of the majority living in the nation-state of Japan. In the prewar Japanese empire, the consciousness of the “Japanese nation” had worked negatively by exalting nationalism and superiority over other Asian peoples, while the majority of the Japanese were being subordinated to the absolute sovereignty of the Emperor as Japanese imperial subjects. Pushing one’s ethnic identity as a minority is a challenge to the exclusionary system of Japanese society, and doing so risks consequences and backlash. FUNI’s question about ethnicity, “What is that fiction? I think,” questions the fictional, mythic character of ethnicity. Here we may recall the concept of nation as defined by Benedict Anderson (1983) as a so-called “imagined community.” Anderson sees nationalism as a form of community imagined through shared language, and explains that people have a special feeling of attachment to the word “nation.” Anderson’s view that the modern nation-state is neither primordial nor natural, having been created by the development of capitalism and communication technology, shows that the ethnic-national consciousness is truly a fiction, an imagined community.

In the fourth scene, FUNI recreates Korean inmate “B” in the 1930s, starting off his rap with “Born on March 1.” Inspired by “B’s” biography found in the medical record, FUNI begins to mumble in a mixture of Korean and Japanese, “t’aeŋnan kosŭn” (where I was born) is “Jeollanam-do, Jeollanam-do, Jeollanam-

2. Naturalization is an extremely serious issue among Zainichi Koreans. Naturalization is a system of selection and discrimination within the current nation-state system, which selects who is to be recognized as a legitimate citizen or excluded as a *hikokumin* 非国民 (non-national, unpatriotic person), that reproduces xenophobia.

do, Korea.” Compared to “A’s” mutterings, “B’s” feeling of independence and self-respect are clearly expressed in this rap. The repetition of his own birthday in the refrain—a date which coincides with the uprising of the March First Independence Movement—underscores his persistent, rebellious attitude towards Japan. Likewise, the reality of the colonized Korean peninsula is reflected in the lyrics through questions such as, “Where are the fields left by our ancestors? / Who took the fields that our ancestors left behind?”

Both Iiyama and FUNI struggled to find the right expression for the fifth and final scene of *In-Mates*. FUNI’s question at the end of the previous section, “What is freedom?” leads to an outpouring of his own thoughts as he reenacts inmate “B.” While responding to the anguish of “A” and “B” in the 1930s, FUNI ultimately confronts himself. What emerges in response to the question “What is freedom?” is the image of more than twenty Korean workers standing with a large banner inscribed with the words “Korean Workers’ Declaration” across the screen. During the 1920s, labor and social movements persisted despite the Japanese Empire’s violent suppression, highlighting the breadth of people who were fighting for freedom. Furthermore, the superimposing of videos of the 1950s Civil Rights Movement of African Americans over the photos of Korean workers illustrates the expansion of the struggle for freedom beyond Japan.

Jazz singer Nina Simone’s songs about fighting racism in the United States overlaps and echoes the raps of FUNI, the words of the two Koreans detained in a mental hospital in the 1930s, and those currently suffering from racism in Japanese society. “How would it feel to be free?” FUNI asks “Patient A, Patient B, and Nina Simone,” next to Iiyama, the artist who created *In-Mates* before turning to the audience. “What is Free? I don’t know! So touch/ Go beyond the screen/ I’m going beyond the screen/ I’m going beyond the screen . . . Yeah, me too . . . Yeah, don’t leave it to me alone.” FUNI’s rapping, sung not only in Japanese but also in Korean and English, resembles an earnest *hōka*, seeking the liberation and freedom of a trapped human being.

Sociologist Jung Yeong-Hae³ described FUNI’s rap as “efforts to push up tombstones,” and responded to FUNI’s question by saying, “I have stepped over the discrimination that binds my hands and feet. I can decide my own life. That is freedom for me.” Censorship, said Jung, “is to deprive artist Iiyama Yuki and

3. On April 29, 2023, Doshisha University hosted a screening and symposium “Censorship/ Colonialism/Gender: What the Ban on Screening Iiyama Yuki’s *In-Mates* Raises.” Jung reported as one of the rapporteurs at this symposium. Since Jung could not participate in this symposium on the day, her report “Cultural Genocide and Intergenerational Transmission Trauma” was recorded in advance and projected on the screen in the framework of the symposium on the day. All of Jung’s quotes here are from the videotaped reports at the symposium.

the rapper-poet FUNI of their freedom of expression, to contain their identity, to deny them their existence, to exclude them from their place in society, and to kill their souls by suffocating the lives of the artists.” Jung also argued that censorship that repudiates the historical memory of the massacre of Koreans immediately after the Great Kanto Earthquake work to “cover up the historical memory of the Korean genocide, which caused intergenerational transmission of trauma to Zainichi Koreans.” At the same time, Jung called our attention to the cumulative intergenerational transmission of trauma that can occur on the part of perpetrators of genocide. As she pointed out, “the social climate of unwillingness to confront uncomfortable historical facts contributes to the ‘un- livability’ and violence of our time.” Jung asked us another poignant question: “We are all in the invisible prison. How are you fighting your way out?”

Inspired by the powerful video work *In-Mates*, we, as “inmates” of the invisible prison, would like to continue to try to sing our own *hōka* and not give up on our own struggle for freedom and liberation.

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