

GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

Bimonthly news on the struggle against the Jeju Naval base

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Gangjeong villagers and activists having a press conference on May 31 at the entrance of the cruise port. Photo by Grace.

Not a Deceptive Apology but Truth Investigation!

By Gangjeong Village Story

On May 31, the Jeju governor, Jeju Council chair, National Assembly member, and central government representatives, colluding together with the village association leadership, held a so-called 'declaration ceremony for co-prosperity and harmony' (hereafter, 'declaration ceremony') which is deceptive. The current village leadership, which has led the village association since 2018, made us ashamed again just as when it signed a civilian-military co-prosperity and development agreement with the navy chief last August. In the ceremony, the Jeju governor and Jeju Council chair made deceptive apologies to Gangjeong for their wrongdoing during the Jeju naval base construction, which is reminiscent of the apologies by President Moon Jae-in in 2018, and the navy chief in 2020. However, the people who have actively continued the anti-base movement were not only excluded but also insulted and discriminated against. The ceremony, above all, was a political show, of which the focus was on monetary compensation: 25 billion won over five years for local development.

We, the anti-base residents, activists, and their supporters have never demanded money from the government. When compensation comes before reflection, the truth dies out. We have never demanded amnesty, either. Amnesty is based on the premise of 'guilt.' However, it is the illegally and violently built Jeju naval base which is guilty. What we demand is for our honor to be recovered. What we demand, above all, is a thorough nation-level truth investigation so that there should be no more pain like the Jeju naval base construction. Any apology without truth investigation is merely a deception.

We refuse the declaration ceremony which seriously damages the spirit of life and peace, the spirit of the struggle against the Jeju naval base. We refuse the declaration ceremony which insults people, both domestic and international, who have fought for a 'Peace Island Jeju with no military bases.'

(Editor's note: The above is a summary/excerpt from the several statements by the Association of Gangjeong Villagers Against the Jeju Navy Base and Gangjeong Peace Network. On June 3rd, the Administrative self-governing committee of the Jeju Council shelved the examination on the 'co-prosperity agreement draft' made by the Jeju government and village association, pointing out its procedural and content problems. Therefore, the May 31 declaration got sidelined for now.)



On May 11, the Australian frigate HMAS Ballarat arrived at the Jeju navy base with no prior notice. It stayed there until the morning of May 15, and people protested for it to get out. Photos by Pang Eun-mi.

Gureombi Remembrance Pilgrimage

by Asha, translated by Neulbo

"Gureombi was a sea garden. Gureombi was a flowerbed. Gureombi was a playground. Gureombi was a shrine for desperate prayers. Gureombi had the healing Halmangmul natural spring water. Gureombi was Gangjeong." So reads the statement from the Mar. 7 pilgrimage event which was held to commemorate Gureombi Rock and its blasting 9 years ago. Originally planned to be broadcasted live with only a handful of guests due to the pandemic, the event was accompanied by an unexpectedly large number of 'pilgrims.' It showed that the yearning for Gureombi is still shared by so many people.

The pilgrimage started from the 'Haeorumnoeul-gil,' a new tourist walkway at the breakwater which used to have the best view of Gureombi. The walkway was designed by the current Gangjeong Village Association to promote civil-military-government cooperation, but the three simple syllables, 'Gureombi' were nowhere to be found. It is truly heartbreaking that the things we should keep in memory are hidden and that what's left is a showy 'co-prosperity.' The participants walked to the barbed wire-topped fence of the naval base, the site of Gureombi Rock, and made a performance of hanging memorial ribbons and pictures of living things that lived on Gureombi. On the opposite side of the fence, armed soldiers were monitoring the civilian acts. It is one thing to know that the military has long been deployed against civilians, though it exists for the pretext of protecting them, but it is another thing to actually experience such a scene. It was an opportunity to question once again the meaning of the existence of the military.

If we squinted our eyes, the fence blurred and disappeared and we could feel as though the lost creatures were still living on Gureombi. We should remember not only the people who have suffered, but also the cries of countless living things which cannot speak. The Gureombi pilgrimage continued. One by one, people shared their memories of Gureombi, wishing for it to be restored as it was. Gureombi is not dead, it is simply hidden from our sight by the illegally, violently-built naval base. We won't just remember Gureombi; we shall work on restoring Gureombi. Even if that needs more time and effort than we've spent so far these last 14 years.



Photos by Yang Sang, Kim Soo-oh, Neulbo, Choi Sung-hee

Despite the lawsuit, military road construction continues

By Oum Mun-hee, People Protecting Gangjeong Stream

It is uncertain when the court will rule on the people's lawsuit for an injunction to stop the military road construction, which seriously damages Gangjeong stream. Meanwhile, the road construction is making speed. Iron beam structures were carried in for the upper bridge support construction. Even though the Environmental Impact Assessment recommended refraining from construction during the rainy season in the summer, these days one can easily see that the rebars rapidly rusted as soon as they were put near the Gangjeong stream. The archeological excavation research was finished. A big wall appeared which evokes the time of navy base construction.

Meanwhile, another construction started with the aim to clean-up (cut down) trees other than camphor trees and to clear the thicket along the stream under the pretext of helping the smooth growth and development of camphor trees, which grow naturally next to the Gangjeong stream. But the late spring is the season when many birds lay and hatch eggs. In particular, Gangjeong stream is the habitat of mandarin ducks, a natural monument. Some of them remain all year while others fly away after the winter. Hatching time is approaching soon. It is obvious that the birds' survival will be in danger during the cleaning of the thickets. Currently other birds are also incubating their eggs along the stream: shorebirds, spot-bill ducks, mandarin ducks, Japanese bush warblers, brown-eared bulbuls, flycatchers, great tits. Many people protested to the Jeju headquarters of the Natural Heritage Administration and Jeju World Natural Heritage Center. After three weeks of battles, they answered that they would stop the activities along the stream. We are also constantly taking surveys to save Gangjeong stream.



With the bridge support construction in earnest, iron structures such as beams and heavy equipment began to be carried in. Photo by Oum Mun-hee.



They are destroying the ecological system of Gangjeong stream under the pretext of cleaning up the thickets. Photo by Oum Mun-hee.

MOLIT and the Jeju Island Government should respect the result of the public opinion poll

The poll measuring public opinion for and against the Jeju 2nd airport project carried out this February was the result of a mutual agreement between the Jeju Island Government and the Jeju Council under the agreement and mediation of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport (MOLIT). The result of the poll showed that Jeju islanders chose opposition to the 2nd airport, which meant people choose preservation rather than reckless development, realizing that Jeju's environmental capacity had reached its limit. People have also long been concerned about the very high probability that the 2nd airport would be used as an air force base. However, on Mar. 10, Jeju governor Won Hee-ryong, totally ignoring the result of the opinion poll, delivered the Jeju government position favoring the 2nd airport to MOLIT. In the expression of his position, he distorted the result of the public opinion poll, only mentioning the result of the Seongsan-eup opinion poll which had been conducted merely for reference, with no mention of the result of the official opinion poll which targeted the whole island.

Behind Won's unreasonable drive for the 2nd airport is the pressure placed on him by real estate speculation traders. The media have investigated the circumstances and reported how real estate speculation had been intensified around the Seongsan area, mainly by

those who had benefited from the information which was illegally and privately given by some of the workers of the Korea Land and Housing Corporation, before Nov. 2015 when the government announced the Jeju 2nd airport project. However, even though all those circumstances were exposed to the island people, the Won-led island government is still insisting on its position in favor of the 2nd airport. Furthermore, MOLIT, which has a strong collusive relationship with the Won-led government, has persisted for the last months in not declaring the withdrawal of the 2nd airport project. That even goes against the position of the Moon Jae-in government and ruling party who have expressed their position of accepting the people's opinion. Thus, the islanders, including the Jeju People's Assembly Against the 2nd Airport, are constantly demanding that MOLIT and the Won-led Jeju government keep their promise and withdraw the Jeju 2nd airport project.



People in Susan-ri, Shinsan-ri, Nansan-ri and Onpyeong-ri of Seongsan-eup are directly affected by the Jeju 2nd airport project and strongly oppose the project. Other villages of Seongsan-eup are more inclined to favor the project, in contrast to the island-wide public poll result which showed a majority opposing the project. The photo shows people in Nansan-ri expressing their opposition to the project this May. Photo by the Jeju People's Assembly Against the 2nd Airport.

Stop Anti-Asian Violence

The Mar. 16 killings of six Asian women in Atlanta brought global attention to the particular ways that Asians have suffered racist attacks. In an article in Flux Hawaii, Christine Ahn described how “anti-Asian violence is driven by capitalism, enforced by militarism, and justified by racism” and the how dehumanization of Asians throughout the history of US imperialism and war-making in Asia has caused repercussions for Asian Americans. “Today, the hawkish rhetoric against China will adversely impact all Asians in the United States because most Americans view Asians as a monolithic group,” she asserted. “It’s time for the United States to reckon with its imperial past and fundamentally reorient US foreign policy away from racist, patriarchal notions of domination and control.”

Kings Bay Plowshares Update

By Curry

On April 4, 2018, 7 Catholic activists entered the Kings Bay nuclear submarine base in Georgia, USA, to carry out a non-violent ‘plowshares’ action symbolically disarming the omniscient Trident submarines. On Apr. 9, after more than 3 years, the last of the 7 activists, Mark Colville, was sentenced to 21 months imprisonment, joint restitution along with the other 6, and three years of probation. He already served 15 months in jail pre-trial, and will report to prison on June 8.

Fr. Steve Kelly was finally released after 3 years and 8 days imprisonment. Since mid-December he had been transferred from prison to prison from Georgia to Washington, where he faced trial for violating the terms of a 2017 sentence for trespassing at the west-coast Trident nuclear submarine base. He was sentenced to time served and released on April 13. He said, “This is the way to love our fellow human beings, [it] is that I had to take a stand against the nuclear weapons.” On May 5, the Kings Bay Plowshares 7 were awarded the first “Berrigan-McAlister” award. At the ceremony on Zoom, long-time plowshares activist Elizabeth McAlister stated, “It is an odd experience to accept an award that bears my own name, and that of my husband Philip and brother-in-law Daniel... I hope our action, our community, our friendship invites, inspires and provokes each of you from word to deed.”

On May 26, Martha Hennessy was released from prison; after transitioning at a halfway house, she hopes to finish her sentence at her home. She shared a message by email, “I sit in a halfway house, not allowed outdoor exercise for 10 days. It is not clear how long I will be held here after 5 months in a federal prison. I await home confinement where family needs me and there is much work to be done. I know God and the cloud of witnesses are with me, and I’m grateful to not be at risk for serious physical torture or execution. Thank you all, I feel your presence with me.” The next day, Carmen Trotta was also released from prison. He will finish his sentence at a friend’s apartment since he was not allowed to do home confinement at a Catholic Worker house.

Resisting Militarization in Jeju and Northeast Asia

By Curry

Hosted online by the St. Francis Peace Center Foundation, “Resisting Militarization” met for 7 sessions from Apr. 9 to May 29. Gayoon Baek, Sunghee Choi, Youkyoung Ko, Corazon Fabros, Suzuyo Takazato, and Koohan Paik each gave a presentation, and 25 people with diverse backgrounds and ages joined in small group discussions and full group Q&A times. These are some of their reflections:

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This course gave me a wider vista. I was appalled by the destruction of coral reefs at Henoko, enraged with the way the local police and military treated inhumanely their own people, and my heart was broken with the Jeju April 3rd massacre. I knew now that the island nations are being transformed into a military arsenal by the US military forces. Though this struggle is seemingly formidable, I am still hopeful because I have found kindred spirits. For me, this course exemplified solidarity in action and the journey just begun. I am hoping to bring this issue to our local discourses. -Prescilla Tulipat

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Our histories, political struggles and joys are so bound up in one another but sometimes it seems that colonial borders, languages and mindsets have fragmented us and made it difficult to witness each other's stories. The Resisting Militarization program was a remedy for this separation and allowed me to dive deeper into the work of connecting the militarization of my ancestral homeland with other places across the Pacific. This program affirmed in me that my vision is much stronger when I am in conversation with others from different homelands, generations and political organizing lineages. -Sho

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One thing that always strikes me in learning about anti-military struggles is the common threads between different contexts. For example, the history of Jeju and the current resistance to base construction reminded me a lot of Okinawa's experience. Both the US military and host nation governments prefer to station troops and construct bases in more remote places like Jeju and Okinawa that are far from the "mainland" and "inconvenience" fewer people. In other words, they continue to marginalize historically marginalized groups and treat them like second-class citizens, in the name of "national security." -Charmaine

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Born in South Korea, I have been living with on-going war and taught to accept militarization as a necessity. Since moving to Gangjeong, I started questioning many beliefs. Participating in this course helped me loads in redirecting my questions. I was shocked how blinded I was. The truth can be so easily hidden by ideologies, as though people wanted us to feel insecure and insufficient. Through this course, I felt a deep sense of connection and humanity. I found hope for breaking the vicious circle of brutality by solidarity. I felt connected through our mutual concern for not repeating cruel histories. In fact, each of us are from different parts of the world, yet we belong to one humanity and one Earth. -Susan

Opposing Korean investments in Myanmar

In a statement released on Mar. 3, 238 organizations, including Gangjeong Peace Network, condemned the Myanmar coup and the massacre of civilians and called on the Korean government to take concrete actions to end Korean corporate ties to Myanmar. On May 4, at POSCO Center in Seoul, representatives from civil society organizations, including the Korean Metal Workers Union, delivered a petition with 10,485 signatures calling on the Korean steel company POSCO to cut ties with the Myanmar military. POSCO holds a 51% share in the Shwe gas field project, which generates .5% of the Myanmar government budget each year. This Korean investment is now being used by the military government to violently suppress the citizens who are protesting the Feb. 1 military coup. Many Koreans see parallels between the Korean democracy movement in the 1980s and the current movement for democracy in Myanmar. (Reference: PSPD).

Okinawa update

By Curry

From Mar. 1-6, Takamatsu Gushiken, the head of Gamafuya, or ‘cave diggers,’ a volunteer organization that excavates war-victims’ remains, and 3 others held a hunger strike at the Okinawa Prefectural Hall. Solidarity hunger strikes were also held at the U.S. military Northern Training Area gate, at the Prime Minister’s residence in Tokyo, and in Hokkaido. They protested the use of soil from areas of southern Okinawa which still have unrecovered remains from the Battle of Okinawa for use as landfill at the US base construction site at Henoko. Several Okinawan municipalities released statements against the use of soil from southern Okinawa, and the prefectural assembly unanimously passed an opinion statement opposing the plan. Already a mountain has been destroyed at Awa mine in northwestern Okinawa. The construction is getting more and more expensive, causing serious harm to the ecology of Oura Bay, and the dust from construction trucks is causing health problems for citizens in the Awa and Henoko areas.

Due to COVID-19, smaller-than-usual peace rallies were held on April 28, the 69th “Day of Humiliation” since Okinawa was designated as a US military-administered territory, and on May 15, the 49th “reversion day” since rule of Okinawa was transferred back to Japan. Okinawa continuously faces threats from US military trainings, including military planes flying low near residential areas. Hundreds of soldiers from mainland US and Hawaii also conducted jungle training at the Northern Training Area to simulate war with China in the ‘first island chain,’ where new base construction and trainings like these are escalating tensions. Like Jeju, several islands in Okinawa prefecture are also resisting against bases which are used in the US indo-pacific strategy but are not official US bases. On June 2, an ex-mayor of Miyako Island was indicted for accepting 6 million JPY (~55,000 USD) for facilitating the sale of a golf course to the Japanese Ground Self Defense Forces for the new base which was completed last year. Miyako citizens have actively protested to stop the delivery of ammunition to the new Miyako base.

(References: Stand With Okinawa, Ryukyu Shimpō, ryukyuheiwa.)

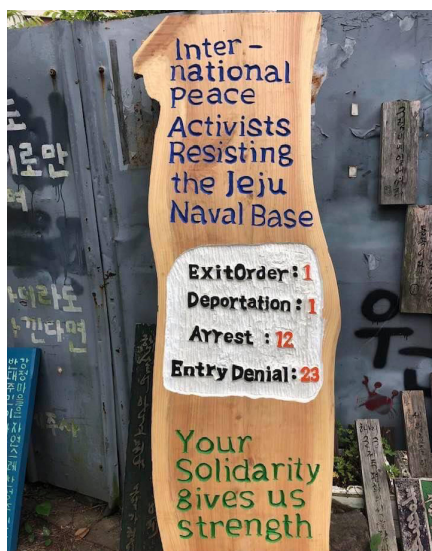
Properties of Perpetual Light

“All of us, without exception, are qualified to participate in the rescue of the world. But this is a quiet truth, and quiet truths are hard to hear when the cynics are outside howling.”

“I for one can say without pause that so large a part of my own devotion to the cause of justice is that I have hiked up my pants and stood in other people’s rivers. Moved to their music. Carried their babies. Watched them come back from burying their dead.”

“So much of our story as indigenous peoples has been about shouldering enormous loss and pressing on anyhow, with our hearts broken, and our eyes peeled for beauty.”

(see more wisdom, poetry, and memories in Guam-based human rights lawyer Julian Aguon’s new book “Properties of Perpetual Light”)



Father Mun Jeong-hyeon has carved three woodcarvings, in Korean, English, and Chinese, recognizing several ways that international activists have been targeted by the Korean government for their solidarity in the struggle against the Jeju Naval Base. The new carvings accompany a similar carving across from the Gangjeong street mass tent, recognizing the total numbers of activists who were arrested and imprisoned, and the fines and lawsuits against them. Photo by Fr. Mun Jeong-hyeon.



On Mar. 1, Jeju Citizens for Denuclearization picketed at Jeju City Hall, calling for an end to nuclear power in Korea, opposing the release of contaminated water from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant into the ocean, and also remembering the victims of US nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands with the slogan, “We are not alone.” On Mar. 11, people at the Gangjeong human chain also remembered the 10th anniversary of the Fukushima disaster and calling for a ‘Nuclear Free Earth.’ Photos by Forest Hill.

Jeju Environmental Declaration

Translated by Curry

We were born on this earth (Jeju), live in the nature of Jeju, and will return to the nature of Jeju. Jeju's skies, land, and sea and everything within them sustain all of our lives. As the source of all living things, including us, Jeju's nature is continuously changing according to delicate laws to create order and harmony. Due to indiscriminate development, Jeju's skies, seas and drinking water have been polluted and its green spaces have been gradually devastated. Now Jeju's nature has lost equilibrium, to the extent that the survival of all living things, including humans, is under threat. We who live on Jeju must renew our awareness of Jeju's nature, cherish and love nature, and do our best to achieve balance with the natural order and restore and maintain nature. Thus, in order to pass on a beautiful Jeju, as it is, to the next generation, we have gathered at the Bijarim-ro Forest which is becoming a symbol of overdevelopment, to make this second 'Jeju Environmental Declaration,' and to pledge to put it into practice.

1. In order to achieve harmony with the environment, our every action must prioritize the preservation of nature.
 2. Jeju's natural landscape, and its natural resources of cultural and academic value must be protected for the sake of humanity.
 3. We must recognize that loving Jeju and preserving the environment are the duty and responsibility of all residents including the state and public bodies.
 4. We must see to it that grave responsibility is taken for the pollution of Jeju's nature, its land, sea and air, and ensure the immediate restoration of Jeju's nature which has been destroyed. We must protect Jeju's streams and water table, and restore Gangjeong Stream (a water supply protection area and natural monument protection area) and the Gangjeong sea which have been destroyed by the construction of the Jeju Navy Base.
 5. In order to realize Jeju as an island of life and peace, military bases which intensify the militarization of Jeju and national projects (such as the National Satellite Integrated Operation Center) should be systematically regulated and their construction must be opposed.
 6. In Jeju, a UNESCO designated World Natural Heritage Site, we must find ways to put environmental education into practice in our daily life, in each sector of society, in our schools and families.
 7. Every resident of Jeju must begin this effort within their sphere of daily life and cultivate a beautiful, green Jeju.
- In order to protect and preserve Jeju, we have joined together to make this "Jeju Environmental Declaration" and pledge to put into practice each of these points.

This declaration was made on the occasion of the 51st Earth Day, on April 24, 2021 at the Bijarim-ro Forest, at the site where huge swaths of forest were cut in order to make a wide highway connecting Jeju City to the planned site of the Jeju 2nd airport. The cutting of the forest has been temporarily halted and small trees have grown up in its place. 16 Jeju civil society organizations signed the declaration, and children from multiple alternative schools performed at the declaration ceremony and hiked along the Cheonmi stream, learning about the unique natural environment which is threatened by the Bijarim-ro road project.

Jeju Council's approval of land sale for the Satellite Center

By Choi Sung-hee

On Apr. 30, 2021, despite Jeju civic groups' strong opposition, the Jeju Council passed a management plan draft for the sale of island-owned land in Deokcheon-ri, Gujwa-eup, Jeju, for the National Satellite Integrated Operation Center (hereafter, 'Center'), a government project. The vote was overwhelming: Among 41 attendees, 38 were in favor and 3 in opposition. Thus, the Center, which has brought up many concerns and controversies regarding procedure, environmental damage, and militarization in Jeju society since last December, came to be driven in earnest in Jeju. The electromagnetic wave environment of Jeju is considered 'pure,' according to the testimony of the Korean Aerospace Research Institute(KARI)'s Satellite Operation Director to the Jeju Council. The supplementary conditions attached to the passed draft include an item which reads "for the national space industry to be systematically settled in the Jeju industrial ecology system, there should be a drive for industry-academy joint research and cultivation of local talent."

The central and island governments had secretly driven the project since 2019, unbeknownst to the Jeju Council, not to mention the island people. The project includes building 10 antennas on land with a total area of around 88 hectares. The area is a combination of National Intelligence Service (NIS)-owned land and island-owned land. On the NIS-owned land, construction had secretly begun. Even though the KARI director above denies the critical role of the NIS in the project, the NIS revised the law at the end of last year so that it could 'collect, write on space information related to security using satellite assets and distribute them to relevant organizations.'

The area is Gotjawal, 'a unique forest created on a lava region' which contains underground water. It also has Mankyua chejuense, a unique fern which is seen only in Jeju. An area located just between the NIS-owned land and sale-approved island-owned land was excluded from the sale because it has relatively many Mankyua chejuense. Still, the Jeju Council members (including many ruling party members) indulged the national and provincial government's secret cooperation by approving the land-sale for the project. In fact, they became the betrayers themselves. It is hardly plausible to consider the Center project separate from the US Indo-Pacific strategy. On Mar. 25, President Moon Jae-in, announcing South Korea's space era, elevated the level of the National Space Committee. The chair is now the Prime Minister rather than the Minister of Science and ICT, which means the policy of space development and space-power build-up through civil-military integration became one of the core policies of the Moon Jae-in government. Otherwise, John W. Raymond, Chief of the US Space Force visited South Korea for the first time, right after the South Korea-US summit this May. He agreed on the need for cooperation in space situation awareness given the increase of satellites in space. He had also mentioned the need for the establishment of a South Korea-US partnership in space in a symposium last November.

Song and Ryu's appeal to the Higher Court was dismissed

By Ryu Bok-hee, the Frontiers

Mar. 7, 2020 was the 8th annual Gureombi rock remembrance day. The navy rejected several times Song Kang-ho and Ryu Bok-hee's request to enter the base on that day. Then, Song cut the wire fence and the two visited the remaining but small and humble part of Gureombi rock inside the base. They prayed sitting in front of it. For that, Song got an arrest warrant on Mar. 30 that year. On the day of the first court decision on Sept. 24, 2020, Song was sentenced with two years' imprisonment and Ryu with two years' imprisonment suspended with three years' probation. And on Mar. 31, this year, the higher court of Jeju ruled to dismiss both the defendant and prosecutor's appeals.

Song said in his final statement to the higher court, "[The court] is silent on the fact that the military took away the land and public waters of Gangjeong village, employing illegality and expediency. It is also silent on the fact that, due to enforcement of the navy base, the Gangjeong village community was destroyed and is seriously suffering from community conflict."

Ryu said, "Though small, my act was nonviolent resistance according to conscience. But the court, while accepting the illegality and expedience carried out by the state, says my talk on conscience is meaningless since an act based on conscience cannot be explained with legal principles."

Like Song, Ryu claims she is 'not guilty' for the act of conscience. The two have appealed to the Supreme Court and are waiting for the result. The people's statement following the court decision closes, "The militarization of Jeju means handing over Jeju to the forefront of US Indo-Pacific strategy. We should not hand over Jeju as a sacrifice again. 73 years later, Sasam [April 3rd Uprising and Massacre, 1947-1954] has not ended. Are we to repeat such history?"

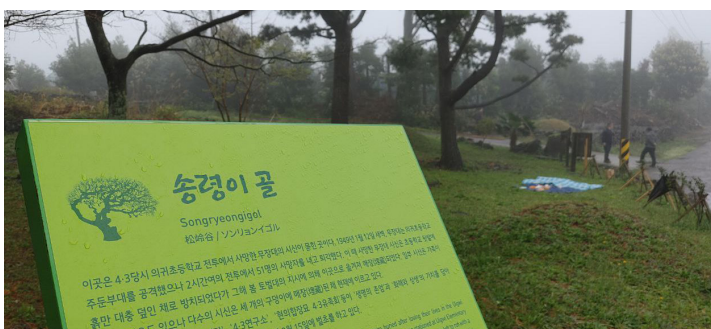
"White Terror, 'Red' Island: A People's Archive of the Jeju 4.3

By Curry

'The Abusable Past,' a digital companion of the Radical History Review, published a series of articles, interviews and films collected by Christine Hong, Associate Professor of Literature at UC Santa Cruz and author of the recent book, 'A Violent Peace: Race, Militarism, and Cultures of Democratization in Cold War Asia and the Pacific.'

Christine Hong opens her introduction to the collection by describing how, in the Korean War, "long before drone warfare enabled remote destruction, the United States was at the triggering end of a technologically alienated kill-chain that devastated life and relations in Korea, yet left scarcely a trace in American public consciousness... To no small degree, insistent U.S. disavowal of the ruthless counterinsurgency it waged in Korea enables the enactment of its contemporary military-imperial designs toward Asia and the Pacific, a region where Korea has historically served an indispensable function." This collection links the memory of Jeju's 'Sasam' (April 3rd) uprising and massacre to the continued state suppression in Jeju, and particularly in Gangjeong.

"Published to commemorate Sasam's seventy-third anniversary, this forum features essays written by established and emerging writers, historians, and scholars (the celebrated novelist Hyun Ki-young, the major Sasam researcher and public historian Kim Jongmin, and the feminist anthropologist Yuna Kim); a video excerpt of a multi-video installation by a visual artist (the feminist multi-media artist and scholar Jane Jin Kaisen); interviews with a dancer and musician and an activist and artist (the feminist performance artist Dohee Lee and the anti-base and anti-militarism activist and artist Choi Sung-hee); and a solidarity zine created by an anti-imperialist collective of diasporic Korean youth in Oakland, California (Hella Organized Bay Area Koreans, or HOBAK) and curated by Hyejin Shim." She continues, "The contributions to this forum further disclose critical lines of continuity between the past and the present, namely, the historic April Third uprising and the ongoing people's struggle against the imposition of the nominally 'South Korean' navy base in Gangjeong, a village along Jeju's southern coast, that has been sacrificially subordinated to contemporary U.S. geostrategic designs for containing China." You can find the eight parts of this collection at <https://www.radicalhistoryreview.org/abusablepast/2021/04/> (Gangjeong Village Story readers may be particularly interested in the interview with Sung-hee Choi.)



In Euigui-ri, Namwon-eup, Jeju, there are so-called 'Songryeongi-gol' armed guerilla tombs. It is where 39 bodies of unidentified armed guerillas, men and women, who were killed by South Korean soldiers in January 1949 were buried. Activists visit here every April 3rd to remember those whose deaths are still considered despicable even 73 years later. Photo by Choi Hyea-young



On April 16, a remembrance action for Sewol ferry victims took place in Gangjeong during the daily human chain event. People gathered for glueing words on the walls, hanging yellow ribbons and singing together. Photo by Grace.

US Pressures South Korea to secure land route for THAAD base

By Kim Young-Jae, No THAAD Situation Office, Soseong-ri, Seongju

For the last five years, people in Soseong-ri, Seongju, mainland of South Korea, have demanded the withdrawal of THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Aerial Defense). THAAD deployment raises concerns about the acutely growing military confrontation in Northeast Asia and the damage of sovereignty. As a way of protest, people have rejected and blocked the Soseong-ri land transit route for THAAD equipment, other US military-related equipment, and material such as oil for the operation of US military equipment. However, the US has recently started to intensely pressure the South Korean government, discussing the securement of a smooth supply line (a guarantee of land route transit). And pushed by coercion, South Korea finally presented the US a gift, the guarantee of land route transit twice a week, with the deceptive pretext of supposedly improving soldiers' lives. Since then, the South Korean government has enforced the land route access for construction equipment, material, and workers necessary for THAAD base construction, deploying thousands of riot police all day who exercise merciless violence every time against just tens of residents and their supporters. In May only, this happened five times. This enforced THAAD base construction is clearly illegal. The original deployment decision, the moving, and the operation of THAAD have all been illegal. The people's protest to stop the THAAD base construction is a righteous exercise of sovereignty. We expect that the South Korean government will attempt the securement of passage at all times in the future, surrendering to US coercion. We also predict that this would guarantee rapid THAAD performance improvement as well as base construction and US military passage at all times. We will never allow the completion of the THAAD base which seriously damages regional peace and heightens war risks. (Editor's note: According to Chosun Ilbo, a conservative media in Korea, "US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin strongly protested the poor conditions of the THAAD base during his [March] visit to Seoul, calling the neglect 'unacceptable.'")



Even on May 18, the 41st annual remembrance day of the Gwangju massacre, the police were deployed in Soseong-ri. Photo by No THAAD Situation Office, Soseong-ri.

A Dangerous Global Alliance

By Choi Sung-hee

Despite people's protest, the South Korea-US joint war drill was conducted Mar. 8-18. Even though it was said to be an 'indoor computer-simulated command post exercise,' it was essentially practicing a preemptive strike against North Korea. People's efforts to end the Korean War and build peace on the Korean peninsula were frustrated again. Still, in Pyeongtaek where the largest US overseas base is located, people carried out a '10,000 steps' peace walk to stop the ROK-US joint exercise.'

Otherwise, the US under the Biden administration is more actively moving to transform the ROK-US alliance as a 'global alliance' 'beyond the Korean peninsula.' Biden continues Trump's policy for the Quad, a US domination strategy in the Indo-Pacific region centered on four nations: Australia, India, Japan, and United States. The Biden administration not only constantly pressures South Korea to join the Quad but also actively drives the ROK-US-Japan trilateral alliance, as seen in the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee meeting (Mar.16), the ROK-US foreign and defense ministerial meeting (Mar. 18), the US-Japan Summit meeting (Apr. 16) and the ROK-US Summit meeting (May 21). The ROK-US-Japan trilateral military cooperation means that even if it does not directly join Quad, South Korea becomes in fact a part of Quad through its alliance with the US and Japan. On May 18, General LaCamera, a nominee for the command of the USFK, proposed a ROK-US-Japan joint drill in the Mojave Desert.

The May 21 joint statement between Biden and Moon in Washington D. C. is "an extremely unequal agreement." "It is an agreement wholly by the United States, for the United States, which makes void inter-Korean talks and cooperation by handing over to the Biden government power to maintain and strengthen hostile policies against North Korea while guaranteeing South Korea to be mobilized in the US vs. China competition for domination," according to the Korean civic group, Solidarity for Peace And Reunification of Korea. One of the noticeable points from the ROK-US summit meeting is the United States' termination of the missile guideline for South Korea which started in 1979. The missile guideline has long limited South Korea's own missile and rocket development according to range, fuel source, and warhead weight, etc. The end of guidelines means South Korea can develop missiles without limitation and accelerate rocket development. It connotes danger that South Korea may be more involved in US-led space domination policies under the name of space 'interoperability' and 'cooperation.'

It is also important to note that European nations such as the UK, Germany, and France have recently started and/or are active in joint drills with the Quad nations, eyeing the Indo-Pacific as the world geopolitical center. And Japan has been very active to strengthen meetings with those nations. The US Quad strategy is more than a military alliance. It is an intensified domination strategy for the United States to draw even some of the NATO nations to the Indo-Pacific region to contain China and Russia.

Defund the Military, Defend People and the Planet!

With the extension of COVID-19, the world is facing an initial disaster crisis. As of Apr. 25, there are about 140 million COVID-19 cases, while the number of dead reaches around 3 million. Disaster and economic recession are harsher to the socially vulnerable [...] However, in this unprecedented crisis of COVID-19 and climate change, military costs are soaring as in other years. According to SIPRI this April, the world military expenditure in 2020 was estimated to be \$1,981 billion USD, 2.6% higher than 2019 [...] South Korea's military expenditure is in the top 10 and maintained the same ranking for eight years. Its defense budget has increased by an annual average of 6.7% since the launch of the Moon Jae-in government in 2017. Its 2021 defense budget estimates over 52 trillion Korean won (about \$47 billion USD). However, the tailored counter-measures budget for COVID-19 damage support was only about 9 trillion won (about \$8 billion USD) [...] South Korea's military expenditure overran the total GDP of North Korea a long time ago [...] For true progress in the Korean peace process, this increment of military expenditure should be stopped first, then we should act accordingly for the practical implementation of inter-Korean agreements [...] Let's use our resources to save people and the Earth, not military build-up! Let's also totally change our policies toward halting the arms race and building peace in peaceful ways! (Excerpt from the 2021 GDAMS (Global Days of Action on Military Spending) statement by 23 Korean civic groups)

International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament

May 24 is the International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament. In 1981, 40 years ago, about 50 women from Europe gathered and designated this day in opposition to nuclear and military build-up. At the time, women in Britain resisted to stop US nuclear missile deployment to the Royal Air Force Greenham Common base. The base finally closed in 2000, and it has been transformed into a civic park. In South Korea, remembrance of the day began when Women Making Peace launched a disarmament campaign along with programs of 'helping North Korean pregnant mothers and children.' In Gangjeong, it started in 2015 with the visit by Women Cross DMZ. Since then, we have been remembering the day every year. Photo by Pang Eun-mi



Creating Cultures of Peace

By Haneul

There was a workshop titled 'Creating Cultures of Peace' hosted at the former Mal Cafe from Apr. 23 to 25. It was organized by Friends Peace Teams in Korea and many participants joined from different provinces of Korea. They shared their own experiences of violence and did many activities to realize who they are and where they are at emotionally. They also joined the human chain which Gangjeong peace activists do at the front gate of Jeju Naval Base at noon everyday. They walked along the road to the naval base, listening to a traditional song saying that residents were violated by the navy and then they danced together to pray for peace in Gangjeong. This Empowerment workshop was the first session for people who are willing to practice creating a culture of peace in their daily lives. There will be a second session in August and a final one in November. I was personally happy to understand the new meaning of "pause" and "refreshment". It had meant to me something like being lazy or falling behind. People need a pause. It can be a few minutes or some days or even some years. I think it doesn't matter whether people are back with full energy after a pause, as long as they are happy with their identity and the place they stand on.

Lifting the Whale

By Neulbo

Over a year has passed since the peace activist Dr. Song's imprisonment for entering Jeju Navy Base. Overlooking the military base is his boat, the Jonah's Whale, taken out of the water for repairs. Mask-clad crews of the 27 ft. sailboat are helping the boat get back in shape. Afloat for as long as we know, the ship gathered rich marine life at the hull bottom. Besides, several parts such as propeller wings, engine shaft and leaky stuffing box need replacements due to erosion. With all the maintenance work done by the end of May, hopefully the Whale will start sailing around Jeju island from June 2021. Plans for the future of the Sea of Peace and Coexistence project (共平海: Gong-Pyeong-Hae, for peace-solidarity between islands in East Asia) remain open to be dreamed on. Photo by Susan.





On May 1-2, Jeju gallery Artspace C hosted frottage (rubbing) workshops in Gangjeong and at Alddreu Airfield. Participants learned about Gangjeong's struggle against the Jeju Navy Base and about the Japanese military occupation at Alddreu Airfield. The rubbings from the workshops will be used at the upcoming (July 15- Aug. 4) exhibit of art by Masao Okabe, "Runway of Memory: From the Island of the Forest to the Island of the Stone." Okabe has documented and memorialized the physical remnants of history in places like Hiroshima and Alddreu, asking "Is there a future for our past?" Photo by Kun Kang.

Solidarity for People in Myanmar! No more Coup! Stop the Killing!

Solidarity for People in Palestine! No more Occupation! Stop the Killing!



On Apr. 26, the Korea Peace Appeal campaign used beamvertising at Gwanghwamun palace in central Seoul to mark the third anniversary of the Panmunjom Declaration. The campaign also released a short documentary about citizens' hopes for peace on Gyeongdong and Ganghwa islands, which are close to the coast of North Korea. You can find this video, webinars co-hosted by the Korea Peace Appeal Campaign, and more at endthekoreanwar.net, and if you haven't yet, please sign the appeal and share! Photo by the Korea Peace Appeal Campaign.



Each year, during the 'Holy Week' leading up to Easter, Catholics in Gangjeong host a foot-washing service (usually at the Gangjeong Stream, but moved into the Peace Center due to rain), a 'Stations of the Cross' procession, and a special Saturday night mass, remembering the suffering and hope represented by Jesus' death and resurrection and also by the struggle against the navy base. Photo by Pang Eun-mi.

How You Can Help

1. Write a letter to the South Korean government to close the Jeju base and to the US government to stop the use of it.
2. Stay updated by joining our Facebook groups and following us on twitter.
3. Organize a solidarity event (concert, movie screening, protest, etc...)
4. Then share about it on social media.
5. Visit Gangjeong!
6. For other ways to help and more visit us on the web.

For More Information

<http://www.SaveJejuNow.org>
<http://www.facebook.com/groups/NoNavalBase>
<http://www.facebook.com/SaveJeju>
<http://www.twitter.com/SaveJejuNow>

For Gangjeong related videos, visit savejejunow.org

or check these Vimeo/Youtube users :

Vimeo : cho sung bong / DH Song / Regis Tremblay
 Youtube : Gang-Jeong Il-Gi / Shalomsea / 1234yz100 / Sungbong2012

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16 civic groups held a press conference in front of the Jeju Provincial Government on April 29 to launch a rescue campaign for the last-surviving captive dolphin from Marine Park where 3 dolphins had died in the pool. Photo by Hotpinkdolphins.

