



PROJECT MUSE®

Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in
America (review)

Paul M. Edwards

The Journal of Military History, Volume 67, Number 1, January 2003, pp.
293-294 (Review)

Published by Society for Military History

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/jmh.2003.0028>



➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/40454>

warfare was the particular responsibility of none" (p. 12).

Speller is particularly strong in his account of the organization of COHQ and the service antipathy it faced. With the severe postwar cutbacks, COHQ was the unwanted stepchild of the services, particularly the Royal Navy. While the Army wanted to plan for future operations based on a return to the Continent, as in the last war, the navy bore the brunt of the costs. The Admiralty had been suspicious of COHQ since the July 1940 appointment of irascible old Admiral Sir Roger Keyes as Director of Combined Operations; it did not relish the manpower and shipping requirements for such an unglamorous role. This lack of urgency and the severe financial restrictions were largely responsible for the lack of operational capability. The consequences of this in the Abadan and Suez crises are also well explained.

This book is not without its flaws, however. For one thing, the tale is told in somewhat of a situational vacuum. There is practically no discussion of Britain's strategic situation, which would give this account a much-needed sense of "place." Furthermore, while he discusses amphibious training in a general way, Speller goes into little detail regarding the specifics of this training or the doctrine upon which it was based. Finally, Speller has an annoying habit of introducing individuals while not mentioning their first names, often not even in the index.

The more substantial of these criticisms could be due to the monograph's length. In the end, however, Speller has produced a very solid foundation upon which to begin the study of Britain's postwar amphibious policy and organization. This book will be a useful addition to staff college and other service libraries. It should also be useful to those interested in the postwar Royal Navy, British defense policy, and anyone interested in the formulation of policy, particularly in "joint-service" organizations.

J. Sills O'Keefe

Norfolk Academy
Norfolk, Virginia

Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America.

By Ji-Yeon Yuh. New York: New York University Press, 2002. ISBN 0-8147-9698-2. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xvii, 283. \$29.95.

One of the aspects of war that most Americans are inclined to ignore is that while wars end and nations forget, the impact of the wars never really ends. Among these long-term effects are everything from "flashbacks" to major alterations in the social and cultural context of the nation.

In her delightfully sensitive book, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown*, Professor Ji-Yeon Yuh has dramatically drawn our attention to one of the long-term and vital outcomes of America's involvement in foreign wars; the Korean war bride. Korean women who became the brides of American servicemen—black and white—and who came to the United States to live, faced an appalling adjustment. It was an adjustment like the invasion of British

wives after World War II, but one made vastly more difficult by the extremes of cultural diversity involved. The stories of these courageous women, in dealing with everything from the harsh realities of learning the English language to the difficulties of locating familiar food, provides us both joy and heartbreak for they are eloquent examples of both failure and success.

While we can never really comprehend the circumstances, we must nevertheless acknowledge with compassion the fact that for most of the women involved it was necessary “for the sake of the family and the marriage” (p. 138) to suppress their Korean identity and the essence of their culture. But despite this feeling, we learn through the author’s widespread interviews, there was some subtle multiculturalism involved as well. Not only did Korean brides learn of America and American ways but also the brides themselves served as ambassadors for a new and vastly altered American attitude. It is summed up best perhaps in this quote “[I] only thought of war when [I] thought of Korea. Now . . . [I] can think of beautiful silk dresses and fine art work” (p. 217).

Those seeking to understand war and its implications will find this work well researched, beautifully written, and highly informative. But more than that, it is a compassionate look at a significant period in American history, and in American and Asian relationships. For those who plan further inquiry the book contains an excellent bibliography of sources in English.

Paul M. Edwards

Center for the Study of the Korean War
Independence, Missouri

The CIA’s Secret War in Tibet. By Kenneth Conboy and James Morrison. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002. ISBN 0-7006-1159-2. Maps. Photographs. Notes. Index. Pp. x, 301. \$34.95.

The modern doctrine of subversive warfare was developed and refined by the British during the first desperate years of the Second World War. Adopted due to conventional military weakness and the mistaken notion that “fifth column” support had facilitated Germany’s victory in France, special operations became one of Britain’s principal means of striking against the Nazis before Pearl Harbor. Over time, however, even the most committed supporters of unconventional warfare realized that it was impossible to defeat the Wehrmacht solely through clandestine *coups de main*. By the summer of 1940, Hugh Dalton, the Minister responsible for the Special Operations Executive (SOE), had concluded that “subversion . . . is an essential element in any large-scale offensive action: *per contra*, it is of little or no value when the main strategy is defensive” (W. J. M. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE* [London: St. Ermin’s, 2000], 84). The notion that guerrilla activity could only succeed as part of a larger, conventional, military campaign later became axiomatic at the American Office of Strategic Services—the wartime precursor of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).